History from Loss

A Global Introduction to Histories Written from Defeat, Colonization, Exile, and Imprisonment

Edited by Marnie Hughes-Warrington and Daniel Woolf

ROUTLEDGE

"A timely and necessary challenge to the idea that history is always written by the victors."

—Margaret MacMillan, Emeritus Professor of International History, University of Oxford

"A truly global collection by a multi-generational and multi-national group of authors that goes beyond histories from below and histories from the margins to reflect on histories from loss, themselves written by a similarly broad group of history-makers, from expected voices such as Thucydides and Nehru to unexpected ones such as Chimalpahin and Jane Austen. At this point when angry losers seek to rewrite the past in order to control the future, the collection is even more timely than the editors could have anticipated."

—Merry E. Wiesner-Hanks, Editor-in-Chief, Cambridge World History

"Recorded in difficult times over the past, these voices from many lands are sometimes despairing, but are often resilient and resistant. *History from Loss* is a true gain for historians and for anyone eager to learn the sources of human courage and creativity."

—Natalie Zemon Davis, Henry Charles Lea Professor of History, Emerita, Princeton University


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HISTORY FROM LOSS

History from Loss challenges the common thought that "history is written by the winners" and explores how history-makers in different times and places across the globe have written histories from loss, even when this has come at the threat to their own safety.

A distinguished group of historians from around the globe offer an introduction to different history-makers' lives and ideas, and important extracts from their works which highlight various meanings of loss: from physical ailments to social ostracism, exile to imprisonment, and from dispossession to potential execution. Throughout the volume consideration of the information "bubbles" of different times and places helps to show how information has been weaponized to cause harm. In this way, the text helps to put current debates about the biases and weaponization of platforms such as social media into global and historical perspectives. In combination, the chapters build a picture of history from loss which is global, sustained, and anything but a simple mirror of history made by victors. The volume also includes an Introduction and Afterword, which draw out the key meanings of history from loss and which offer ideas for further exploration.

History from Loss provides an invaluable resource for students, teachers, and general readers who wish to put current debates on bias, the politicization of history, and threats to history-makers into global and historical perspectives.

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Although this book is about loss, and particularly about people writing history about or in various situations involving loss, we the editors feel that as historians we have been very much "winners" in terms of our joint debt to the many wonderful people who have contributed to bringing this project to fruition.

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Books, as is well known, are collective efforts even when (unlike this volume) they are sole-authored. We are grateful to staff at Routledge, including Eve Setch, who commissioned the book and her successive assistants Zoe Thomson and Jennifer Morrow. The original referees on the proposal helped us sharpen our thoughts and think more broadly about "loss" and its manifestations than previously. Other publishers have been gracious in their provision of permission or license to reprint extracts from works under copyright.

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ADVISORY FOR ABORIGINAL AND TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER READERS

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander readers are advised that this book may contain the names, words, and ideas of people who have died.

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FIGURES


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INTRODUCTION

History from Loss

Marnie Hughes-Warrington and Daniel Woolf

Imagine a world in which there is only one history to watch, read, or listen to. If you find this idea difficult, then you have understood something important about history: that there is never just one version of it on offer. Some people might not like this idea, and try to refute it, but no matter how much they argue, or even work to destroy histories, they will be unsuccessful. We live with a world of multiple histories and history-makers—our term to describe those who work to explain the past, including professional historians—and we do not assume that they will be the same as one another. At the same time, however, it is common for people to group, to order, or to categorize histories. In your local bookshop or online platform, for example, you might see histories arranged by approach, or by spatial or temporal scale. Military history and world history tend to have their own sections, as do biography and ancient and modern histories.

What we do not tend to see in these displays are labels or categories for histories made from the winning or losing side. This may stem from the assumption that all histories are made from the winning side. This is a commonplace thought, the origins of which are hard to pinpoint.[1] It is often attributed to Winston Churchill, who did have first-hand experience writing history as a victor.[2] If Churchill did say it, which seems doubtful, then it is virtually certain that he was repeating something he himself had heard long before. We keep on repeating the idea today, from the opening lines of the computer game *Call of Duty: Modern Warfare 2* (2009) to the final lines of the musical *Hamilton* (2015), and in the narratives of everything from the science fiction novel *Tiamat's Wrath* (2019) through to the experimental documentary *Sans Soleil* (1983).[3]

So too, we can find the idea of history being made from the winning side in works on the theory of history, or historiography. In *Nothing but History* (1995), for example, David Roberts asserts bluntly that "[h]istory is always written by the victors, and victory conflates with domination and exclusion."[4] He asks whether

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appeals to truth and reality in history by their very nature push against dissent, against alternatives, and thereby serve the powerful. In a similar vein, Michael Stanford has commented on the inherent bias of the historical record, noting "that the winners not the losers write history."[5]

There are many examples from history which also seem to bear out the idea of writing from the winning side. Richard Ovenden's *Burning the Books* documents the destruction and even the targeting of historical records in political transitions and in wars.[6] Ian Cobain's *The History Thieves* (2017) is one of a burgeoning number of treatments of how colonial governments have removed or restricted access to evidence of atrocities, under often specious claims of privacy and national security.[7] This is not just restricted to societies with written approaches to history-making: it is also possible to find examples where peoples with pictorial and oral approaches to history-making have painted over or excised different accounts of the past.[8] As Antoon De Baets so poignantly reminds us, the destruction of history is not just about objects, it is also about people. Thanks to his efforts, the persecution, exile, imprisonment and even murder of history-makers have been documented.[9]

The idea that history is always written from the winning side, however, is wrong. We, like Donald Bloxham, reject the idea that "[h]istory is always written by the victors, the powerful, the winners, and therefore amongst others, the killers."[10] It is not even universally true that history must be written by survivors of defeat, for even the dead can record, narrate, and testify to their fate. You will find at least one example in this book, with Samuel Kassow's account of Emanuel Ringelblum and the heroic project of preserving an account of life in the Warsaw Ghetto. The duty to bear witness has a lengthy history back to late antiquity, with the very word "martyr" deriving from a Greek word for "witness" (μᾰ̈ρτῠρέω, marturéō) and signifying ultimate spiritual victory beyond the earthly.[11]

Our argument in this book is that loss is a significant force in history-making. This is due in no small part to the forms of logic that shape our knowledge. These ways of thinking have deep historical roots. Plato's various philosophical works, for example, introduced the idea of the dialectic, an exchange of different ideas or a game of questions and answers designed to tease out an understanding of important ideas such as freedom, good, or beauty. We can find variations on the idea of the dialectic in Aristotle's philosophy but also, more recently, in the writings of Georg W. F. Hegel, Karl Marx, Francis Fukuyama, and Stephen Pinker.[12] Writing on the dialectic often focuses on what is being argued about—as with Hegel's, Marx's, Fukuyama's, or Pinker's notions of freedom and reason—and on whether it results in histories that offer a progressive succession of winning ideas or winners. This includes criticisms by writers like Walter Benjamin and Hannah Arendt of the idea of history as a linear progression of winning ideas.[13] There are also, however, works which explain why the dialectic is such a useful idea in history-making.[14]

Among the best known of these works on dialectic method is Thomas Kuhn's *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions* and *The Essential Tension*, which aim to explain the history and philosophy of science.[15] Kuhn characterized the history of science as the dynamic movement through periods of "normal science," crises, "extraordinary

science," and revolution. This sequence is preceded by "preconsensus science," in which there is no agreed view of phenomena such as optics or motion. Normal science emerges when people use largely accepted problem solutions and guides to practice—paradigms—and engage in consensus "expert" activities akin to illuminating "topographical detail on a map whose main outlines are available in advance."[16] When anomalies that cannot be ignored or explained arise, they can trigger scientific revolutions via crisis-driven extraordinary science. In extraordinary science, problem solutions and guides to practice are changed so much as to be incommensurable with old approaches. New ideas are so different as to be incompatible with old ideas. This means that we cannot systematically match and explain views, the solutions to problems, and even logic over time.[17]

Kuhn held that humanities subjects, including history, are in a state of preconsensus science.[18] That is, their practitioners never achieve the level of agreement needed to progress large-scale, transformational revolutions in knowledge. E. H. Carr, by contrast, held that the ethics of history turns on consensus and that history-making focuses in the main on those who achieved something.[19] In our view, however, world-changing creativity does not require consensus. Aristotle reminds of us this point in his account of the dialectic. We see this most in his description of the dialectic as the play of *endoxa* (ἔνδοξα). *Endoxa* are ideas or beliefs that are acceptable to all, to most, or to wise people. Importantly, he does not see debates as between two ideas that reflect consensus or agreement. A compelling idea by one wise person can be enough to trigger shifts in understanding. This idea is still pertinent. When we see debates about history in the media or social media, we ought not to assume that the various perspectives presented reflect the most popular views. Nor should we, Aristotle argues further, treat them as self-evidently right.[20]

The reason why we have debates about history is that there is no complete agreement on an idea, or such a difference in view that people do not have enough in common to engage with one another. History meets somewhere in the middle—where we agree enough about something to understand one another but disagree about how to explain it—though that middle is broad territory. Nor does history simply entail the meeting of opposing views. Rather, Aristotle suggests that arguments can turn on contraries (concepts opposed in meaning, such as win and loss), contradictories (concepts that are mutually inconsistent in meaning, such as victor and non-victor), possession or privation (concepts that have or lack a property, such as winner or loser), or relatives (concepts and their correlatives, as with big winner and small loser).[21] Of all of these kinds of concepts, it is worth looking at the idea of contraries more closely because it helps us better to understand the idea of history from loss. Contraries, for our purposes, can be understood in simple terms as ideas that are opposed to one another but which are not mutually exclusive. This means, in very simple terms, that they might be shaped by qualities in common, or as we shall see, contain some element of their opposite. This allows in some cases for a middle between contraries, such as a kind of history that is somewhere between a win and a loss.[22]

We are not the first people to consider the role of contraries in history. R. G. Collingwood explored contraries extensively, in books ranging from *Speculum Mentis* (1924), *An Essay on Philosophical Method* (1933), and *An Essay on Metaphysics* (1940). As James Connelly has noted, Collingwood made much the same points that Kuhn made decades later, but in a much more nuanced fashion.[23] Collingwood argued that the history of history-making is shaped by constellations of what might be called relative contraries.[24] Collingwood did not see good, for example, as the absolute privation of evil. Consideration of the past led him to suggest that some of the most important concepts are distinct from one another, not the privation or exhaustive contradiction of one another. In simple terms, they can be mixed, or related to one another in anything other than simple ways. If we extend his example to the idea of winning and losing, it is possible to think of winning as also entailing some notion of loss, and the other way around. Winning or losing may also differ in degree, or in kind: for example, we might see in a history the expression of what appear to be different kinds of loss—personal loss of health and military defeat experienced by a group—and more or less acute expressions of grief.

This means, importantly, that we should not expect histories to be cleanly assigned to sides or to be mirror opposites of one another, either in terms of content or in form. Indeed, as the examples in this book demonstrate repeatedly, history-makers often resort to forms of argument or expression that are unexpected or that are even defiantly not aligned in methodological terms. Their senses of loss stick out in all angles, to explain the point in simple terms. We ought not to think of this as a mistake or a reflection of poor practice. Importantly, as this book shows, people may use different forms of history-making to facilitate the survival of their ideas. A group of people may bury a history in the ground rather than publish it to ensure that more than one voice is heard. A writer might opt for visual, poetic, literary, or biographical forms to reach audiences that do not—or who are not permitted to—have access to books that might be more readily recognized as histories. A writer may opt for the dark web rather than publication to keep their ideas in some form of circulation. A history-maker may also adopt the language and the style of the people who wish to silence or to assimilate them to complicate the idea that there is one take on events. Conversely, a history-maker may work to advance our understanding of loss, even when they have not experienced such loss either as an individual or as part of a group.

Logical understandings of the dialectic have continued to grow since Collingwood's time, though writings on the logic of history are few and far between. They have focused increasingly on contrary and relative concepts, and on helping us to understand the non-linear nature of knowledge. Classical and non-classical logicians have, for example, asked whether arguments ought to be treated as fuzzy, probable, or as numbered ranges.[25] A simple way to appreciate their work is to look at multiple histories that you might have at hand and to rate them on a scale. If we asked you to arrange these histories in a series that represents winning at one end, or loss at the other, how would you fare? Are you able to delineate a clear transition

point from loss on one side, or winning on the other? Moreover, would you need to arrange them more than once, to account for different ideas of winning and losing? Exercises of this sort are not easy because our ideas of winning or loss in history-making can be both ambiguous and vague. Loss can be ambiguous because it can have more than one meaning, such as physical, personal, social, economic, political, or military. It can also be vague because we do not ordinarily rate the personal losses of people or groups with precise, clear-cut scales.[26] This reflects common approaches to ethics that do not weigh up and calculate what is good, fair, and just.[27] To understand loss in history-making, therefore, you have to be prepared to think about different kinds of loss and to understand that they are not easily subject to linear arrangement and judgement, or to calculation.

The non-linear, ambiguous, and even vague notion of history from loss may mean that it is more productive to think of history-making in relation to a range of possible past, present, and future worlds.[28] These possible worlds can include the idea of nested histories—smaller histories that can be contextualized within larger ones—or different approaches or arguments about the past, and even "what if?" or counterfactual questions. This is an appealing approach because it allows us to account for the existence of multiple histories. It can also help us to find a place for histories of nothing and the silences of history, which exist not only across the corpus of known histories but also within the process of history-making itself, as Michel-Rolph Trouillot argues:

> Silences enter the process of historical production at four crucial moments: the moment of fact creation (the making of *sources*); the moment of fact assembly (the making of *archives*); the moment of fact retrieval (the making of *narratives*): and the moment of retrospective significance (the making of *history* in the final instance).[29]

The interesting and perhaps even counterintuitive idea that a possible world's approach to history suggests is that choices made by history-makers constrain the past. There are potentially infinite histories that may be told, but we only come to know a few of them. In this view, it is possible to think of a history-maker as restricting our understanding of the past to what is plausible, or even to what they think we ought to think about the world. This includes even counterfactual or "what if?" histories.[30] This view sits at the base of Martin L. Davies's argument that history is "the ultimate form of mental coercion" and that we are imprisoned by history-making.[31]

Davies's view bestows a homogeneity on history-making that we do not see play out in practice. Not all of the possible worlds of history are equally strong or authoritative. Colin Brooks may have a point when he quips that historians "are terribly bad at writing about failure."[32] State-sponsored histories, to take just one example, have been around for a long time.[33] The 24 Chinese official dynastic histories made from around 91 BCE to 1739 CE, for example, were produced through complex bureaucratic processes. This tradition generated its own contrary

in what are called "strange histories," a much smaller corpus of works that blended history and fiction, fact and the fantastic, to provide oblique criticism of those in power, and social conventions and structures.[34] While strange Chinese histories are nowhere near as familiar to students of history as the official dynastic histories, they have persisted over time. Similar asymmetries can be found with public monuments, which can generate fraught debates. As Dean Ashenden has recently observed, for example, the Monument Australia website lists around 190 monuments that acknowledge Aboriginal history, from a total of just over 34,000.[35] Single monuments, though, can be powerful expressions of those who are lost, and those who are murdered. Genocide monuments such as the iconic, block-like shapes of Berlin's Holocaust memorial testify to the existence of victims of twentieth-century history in the millions, many of whose names are lost. Memorials such as these, as Dimitri Nikulin writes, are "a political gesture against oppression."[36] Historical textbooks are also a contested site, with one institute—the Georg Eckhardt in Braunschweig, Germany—working to address conflict, racism, anti-Semitism, and acts of extreme violence through multi-country projects.[37] A single book, as Richard Ovenden argues, can inspire conflict.[38]

The important point that these examples drive home is that history is not always by majority or even by agreement. This raises the important question of how we will know whether a history is good, or even fair or just. As a small number of examples from this book show, histories from loss can also be written from hate: for example, Claire M. Wolnisty's chapter on Edward A. Pollard highlights his dogged commitment to the lost "Southern cause" of the US Civil War of 1861–1865. How can we deal with this, particularly given the acts of violence that can arise from what are called "lost cause" histories?[39] The late journalist Erna Paris puts the issue in sharp perspective for us, noting that in the world of some of those writing from loss, "past and present [had] not yet diverged."[40] The present is read, as with the past, in ways that justify hate, and violence in the present. This reading is reinforced via association with those who share the same view. Gibbon, who knew how to write about decline and defeat, observed (quoting Voltaire) that "we should always distrust the exaggerations of a vanquished people."[41] The myth of the *Dolchstoßlegende* ("Stab in the Back")—a core plank in National Socialist propaganda—encourages us to look at the long history of works written from hate. The "Stab in the Back" view blamed Jews and communists for losses in the First World War. Subsequent generations of Germans, however, have taken responsibility for the past, including official apologies by German politicians.[42]

Indeed the proliferation of cases of historical reckoning and reconciliation in the past 20 years in South Africa, Rwanda, and the former Yugoslavia—to name just a few examples—might have given rise to what Wole Soyinka calls an alternative perception of history, "one that will no longer be written by the winners, the powerful, and the authority of states, but by previously ignored, dominated, and excluded peoples."[43] History from loss is therefore not just an abstract idea; it can have an acute bearing on the lives of people who have been displaced, lost opportunities, and lost loved ones.[44]

Aristotle was confident that things would tend to the good. Human beings, he writes in *Art of Rhetoric*:

> have a natural competency when it comes to what is true, and for the most part they do hit upon the truth.[45]

There are both familiar and beguiling ideas in this description. We have the capacity to discern arguments, and to do so without spiralling into an infinite regress. That capacity is not exact, for there is no guarantee that we hit upon the truth straight away, every time. Aristotle's "for the most part" prepares us for the idea of variation, and variation is the ethical heart of history-making. That variation is over time and space. This suggests to us that calling an outcome for history on any point in time—as a win, or as a loss—is likely premature. Aristotle invites us to take a wider view, over time and space. This is very helpful for us in thinking about history from loss. If you read the work of a history-maker from one point in time, you might miss their changes in view over the length of their lifetime. This is why a number of contributors in this volume have selected short extracts from multiple works by the same history-maker and put those extracts into the context of the history-maker's life. History-makers can, for example, survive changes in political regime—as is evident in Iva Glisic's account of the Russian historian Anna Mikhailovna Pankratova—or even switch allegiances or work with those who have persecuted them. The thirteenth-century Persian historian Atâ-Malek Joveyni, as Charles Melville highlights, became a willing historian of the victorious Mongols, and as Gary Ianziti reminds us, Niccolò Machiavelli strove to make himself useful to the restored Medici regime that had imprisoned and tortured him.

Yet it might not all be down to individuals in the way that Aristotle expected, as Hayden White notes. White argued in *Metahistory* (1973) that much of modern history is written in the form of a tragedy, which by its very definition ends in heroic defeat. The ways in which we expect stories to be told can shape histories of individuals and groups.[46] The philosopher Frank Ankersmit has argued, even more broadly, that in at least one important sense, tragic loss can be considered something like a necessary condition for both historical experience and historical writing. For Ankersmit, loss constitutes:

> the most tragic moments for historians, but also their greatest triumphs. Historians will then feel themselves part of what they are describing—viz. this divergence of present and past—and their desperation about the loss of a familiar world will then motivate their writing and inspire in them their profoundest thoughts.[47]

Roland Barthes and Jacques Derrida sharpen this argument considerably, noting that the power of loss comes from the recognition of our mortality as individuals and as a species.[48]

Beyond noting the power of narrative and the loss that is death, though, it is also important to acknowledge that individuals write from loss in wider social contexts. History from loss, in simple terms, is not just down to what individuals think or do. History-makers can write either from a position of powerlessness or from that of relative privilege, as Emily Greenwood shows in the case of the ancient Athenian author, Thucydides. The concept of cultural hybridity developed by postcolonial scholars such as Homi K. Bhabha teaches us that loss can be experienced from a position of comparative privilege, and even from a position of nominal victory.[49] As Antoon De Baets argues in his chapter on Jawaharlal Nehru in this book—an Indian nationalist and his country's first post-independence prime minister—recoiled against British dominance over his long career. But unlike his close associate the Mahatma Gandhi, who outright rejected the tenets of European historicism, Nehru signed on to both Western forms of historical writing and a European sense of progressive modernization. In effect, Nehru turned the Raj's own tools against them, not least in his prison-authored letters published as *Glimpses of World History*. This reveals an interest in human advancement kindred to that of a political prisoner from an earlier era, the marquis de Condorcet. Simona Pisanelli invites us into Condorcet's world in this book, noting as Sanne van der Kaaij-Gandhi does for the more contemporary historian Romila Thapar, that you can be simultaneously celebrated for the form of your history and persecuted on account of its content. This reminds us that narrative form alone cannot explain the power of history-making.

Histories written from prison highlight the paradoxical nature of some histories from loss. This paradox is perhaps even more strongly at play in histories written from exile. The plight of the exile or refugee, Peter Burke remarks, can present a "silver lining," stimulating and transforming thought and writing about the past.[50] Burke identifies multiple benefits of exile, or "deprovincialization": mediation (the capacity to translate between an exile's home culture and host culture), distanciation (a gaining of perspective on the home culture that non-exiles may lack, and the capacity to compare), hybridization (a mixing of cultures, values and intellectual outlooks in the same individual or group), a sympathy and interest in the history of *other* exiles, and what he refers to as displacement. From the perspective of this book, the last of Burke's benefits—displacement—is particularly interesting because it permits and perhaps drives historians to comment on their own times allegorically, through analogy with the past. Among his examples, Burke cites one of the many refugee historians from Nazi Germany, Hans Baron, whose studies of the "crisis" of the Florentine Republic in the early fifteenth century can be read as a comment on the collapse of Weimar, an endorsement of the virtues of republican government, and a thinly veiled warning against tyranny and militarism.[51] Jane Austen's and Mary Hays's contrarian takes on Tudor history—explored by Mary Spongberg and Frances A. Chiu in this book—illustrate that this form of displacement affected not simply exiles but even well-off authors writing against a dominant masculine take on the past.

To Burke's list might be added a different kind of displacement, that of taking refuge in the past.[52] Peter Fritzsche expresses this point well in his analysis of exiles from the French Revolution—a group that includes Germaine de Staël, the subject of Biancamaria Fontana's chapter—"[a]s a momentous break, the French Revolution forced upon the exiles of the revolution the feeling of complete abandonment in the present and reanimated the past as a historical site of confrontation, defeat, and resistance."[53] Many authors have also observed the flourishing of historical writing that occurred following the Norman Conquest of England in 1066.[54] As Sverre Håkon Bagge's chapter on Snorri Sturluson shows, a similar turn to the past manifested two centuries later in Iceland as saga writers mourned a decline in their autonomy from Norwegian rule.[55]

The intersection of historical refuge and providential explanation for misery and defeat can be seen in Western traditions from ancient Israel through medieval historical writing—as with Stephen J. Joyce's chapter on Gildas—all the way through the advent of the modern world around 1750 CE. Two examples included in this book are Nicholas Popper's account of England's Sir Walter Ralegh and Nicholas McDowell's chapter on John Milton. With the decline of appeal to supernatural explanation that began in the later seventeenth century through many, though not all, parts of the world, different kinds of explanation would be sought. It has been suggested that Fernand Braudel, for example, sought relief from being a prisoner of war in the large timescales of his history of the Mediterranean.[56]

It is possible to go on and to catalogue the features of histories from loss further, detailing types and subtypes across time and space. What this book demonstrates, though, is that history from loss is best understood as a contrary. There are at least three features of a contrary that bear this point out. Please forgive our rather simple use of labels like a "history made by those who win or prevail" to explain these points. First, contraries are relational: histories from loss have a connection to histories in which people win or prevail. This relation is not just between histories but also within them. That is, a history made from loss may also reflect winning or prevailing in some way. This mixed nature of history reminds us that histories from loss are not necessarily exact or mutually exclusive opposites to histories in which people win or prevail. This mixture also helps to explain why histories from loss may seem paradoxical. Burke puts this well when he talks of histories made in exile as reflecting a silver lining. Moreover, it explains why it is so hard to rate loss and winning on a simple linear scale. Second, as contraries are not related to one another as opposites, more varied options of relation are possible. A history from loss can be made in a format that is quite different to that of a history made by those who win or prevail. An argument from loss can be at odd angles to that made by those who win or prevail. Third, and drawing on a point from Collingwood's and Aristotle's works on contraries, they are relational over time, as well as at any point in time. History-makers can experience loss and victory over their lifetimes, and their works may also be lauded or hated over the long term. Loss can become victory, and the other way around.

This helps to explain not just why there is not just one history to watch, read, or to listen to. It more than likely explains why there are never just two, either. History-making is not the straight-line movement between opposites over time. Rather, because of association with contraries, it generates ever-expanding approaches to argument and to form. History from loss, therefore, helps us to understand that creativity not only helps the voices of individuals and groups to survive; it also likely helps the discipline to survive.

Taking the points discussed earlier together, this book is a challenge to the commonplace idea that "history is written by the victors." We say "challenge" rather than "refutation" for all the reasons outlined earlier and also because we would not wish to suggest that a fully level playing field exists in the curation, study, narration, and dissemination of versions of the past. Benjamin, Roberts, and others are quite right that popular perceptions of the past, and national memorial cultures, *are* dominated by victor-history, and not merely in the obvious realms of politics and war. The very hegemony of Western culture and its assumption of Euro-American modernity as a universal standard over the past two centuries at least attest to this. And there are far too many examples from three millennia of human descriptions of the past—and the relative scarcity of counter-narratives—to make such a refutation impossible. As George Orwell famously wrote in *1984*, dominance over the past is a high-stakes game with enduring consequences: "He who controls the present controls the past. He who controls the past controls the future" is the Party slogan parroted by the protagonist Winston Smith early in the novel and repeated several times thereafter.

We begin from the premise that history *is* often written by the victors, but that it very often is not, and that the very presumption that it is may itself be a side effect of Western historicity's two-century or more fixation on themes of social progress, nationalism, modernization, and technological/scientific advance—a very winner-oriented sense of the past. Despite decades of awareness of the dangers of teleological history, it is hard to escape in crafting narratives of how a becomes b, c, and ultimately z. History as the story of the emergence of the present (the temporal "winner") continues to manifest itself in popular culture. It is a signature feature of history-making in novels, cinema and television—who doesn't love a winner or a happy ending?—but no form of history-making has escaped it entirely. Even historiography's own history has been told and retold as a conflict between several binaries: sound truth-telling and fiction, scepticism and credulity, method and rhetoric, science and superstition, ending in the hegemony of European historicism and its global offshoots. Until relatively recently, the losers, the defeated, and even the runners up, as well as the nameless and obscure, have occupied much less page-space than the victors. We have questioned a strict, mutually exclusive winner-loser dyad in this introduction, and we hope that the chapters of this book, individually and collectively, will go some distance towards highlighting voices that spoke from loss in a variety of different ways.

Notes

1 See, for example, Matthew Phelan, "The History of 'History Is Written by the Victors'", *Slate*, 26 November, 2019, https://slate.com/culture/2019/11/history-is-written-by-the-victors-quote-origin.html. Accessed 12 July 2022; Prateek Dasgupta, 'Is History Written by the Victors? Here Are Five Examples of Losers Writing History', *Medium*, 18 September, 2021, https://historyofyesterday.com/is-history-written-by-the-victors-here-are-5-examples-of-losers-writing-history-815b4f28e37c. Accessed 12 July 2022; and Spencer McDaniel, "Three Times the Winners Did Not Write History" *Tales of Time Forgotten*, 26 Jan, 2019, http://talesoftimesforgotten.com/2019/01/26/three-times-the-winners-did-not-write-history/ Accessed 12 July 2022; and Daniel Sims, "Opinion: History Isn't Written by the Victors, It's Written by People Who Want You to Believe It", *Prince George Citizen*, 22 May, 2022, www.princegeorgecitizen.com/opinion/opinion-history-isnt-written-by-the-victors-its-written-by-people-who-want-you-to-believe-it-5338368. Accessed 12 July 2022.

2 Churchill did say in a speech in the House of Commons on January 23, 1948: "For my part, I consider that it will be found much better by all parties to leave the past to history, especially as I propose to write that history myself." See https://historynewsnetwork.org/article/173752.

3 *Call of Duty: Modern Warfare 2* [video game] (Firm: Activision, 2009), we thank Dillon Chicoski for this reference; Lin-Manuel Miranda, *Hamilton* [musical], 2015; James S. A. Corey, *Tiamat's Wrath* (London: Orbit, 2019); and *Sans Soleil* [film], dir. Chris Marker (Argos Films, 1983).

4 David D. Roberts, *Nothing but History: Reconstruction and Extremity after Metaphysics* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1995): 6.

5 Michael Stanford, *Introduction to the Philosophy of History* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1998): 66.

6 Richard Ovenden, *Burning the Books: A History of the Deliberate Destruction of Knowledge* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2020).

7 Ian Cobain, *The History Thieves: Secrets, Lies and the Shaping of a Modern Nation* (London: Portobello Books, 2017).

8 See, for example, Camilla Townsend, *Fifth Sun: A New History of the Aztecs* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2019): 33; Jan Vansina, *Oral Tradition as* History (Madison, WI: University of Wisconsin Press, 1985); and David Henige, *Oral Historiography* (London: Longman, 1982).

9 Antoon De Baets, *Crimes against History* (Abingdon: Routledge, 2019); and De Baets, *Censorship of Historical Thought: A World Guide, 1945–2000* (New York: Greenwood Press, 2002). See also Laura Hein and Mark Selden, *Censoring History: Citizenship and Memory in Japan, Germany, and the United States* (Armonk, NY: M.E. Sharpe, 2000).

10 Donald Bloxham, *History and Morality* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2020): 255–56.

11 Kelly Oliver, "Witnessing Otherness in History", in *What Happens to History: The Renewal of Ethics in Contemporary Thought,* ed. Howard Marchitello (New York: Routledge, 2001): 42–66.

12 See, for example, Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel, *The Philosophy of History*, trans. John Sibree (New York: Dover, 2004); Karl Marx, "Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts", *Selected Writings*, ed. David McLellan, 2nd ed. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000): 104–18; Francis Fukuyama, *The End of History and the Last Man* (New York: Free Press, 1992); and Stephen Pinker, *Enlightenment Now: The Case for Reason, Science, Humanism, and Progress* (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 2018).

13 Benjamin asked pointedly with whom history's adherents sympathised and replied "The answer is inevitable: with the victor." Walter Benjamin, *Illuminations*: *Essays and Reflections*, trans. Harry Zohn, ed. Hannah Arendt (New York: Basic Books, 1955), 258; and Hannah Arendt, "The Concept of History", *Between Past and Future* (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1993): 51.

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16 Kuhn, *The Essential Tension*, 235; see also Kuhn, *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions*, 36.

17 Kuhn, *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions*, 6, 66, 82–7, 91, 101.

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19 E. H. Carr, *What Is History?* [1961] (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 2018): 126.

20 Aristotle, *Topics I, VIII, and Selections*, trans R. Smith (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997): 160b 16–25.

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29 Michel-Rolph Trouillot, *Silencing the Past: Power and Production of History* (Boston, MA: Beacon Press, 1995): 26–7. For a history of nothing, see Susan A. Crane, *Nothing Happened: A History* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2021). See also Dominick LaCapra, *Writing History, Writing Trauma* (Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2001): 49.

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53 Peter Fritzsche, *Stranded in the Present: Modern Time and the Melancholy of History* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2004): 107.

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1

THUCYDIDES (CA. 460–399 BCE)

Emily Greenwood

As a canonical work of the Western tradition that has been used to authorize grand narratives of history and international relations, Thucydides's *History of the Atheno-Peloponnesian War* is not typically catalogued as "history from loss," even though it could be viewed as such. The war that Thucydides recounts lasted 27 years and represented a catastrophic defeat for the Athenians and the loss of their empire. Writing as an Athenian author, Thucydides wrote from the side of the defeated; in Greek, the first two words of his work are *Thoukudidēs Athenaios* [Thucydides an Athenian]. While the ultimate loss—Athens's final defeat by the Peloponnesians in the year 404 BCE—is not narrated by Thucydides, whose history is unfinished, the work as we have it alludes to this end and it casts a shadow over all the Athenians' interim victories.[1] The war also represented a significant personal loss for Thucydides, who had to endure a punitive period of exile, lasting 20 years, as a result of his failure as a general in an important military campaign in the Northern Greek city of Amphipolis in 424 BCE.[2]

It is one thing to recognize that Thucydides's *History* is a work that is profoundly shaped by loss, and it is another thing to recruit it as a counter to hegemonic history in the tradition of history from below.[3] As Judith Butler has observed, scholarship on loss has to contend with different kinds of losses and these losses are not easily commensurable.[4] One of the things that makes Thucydides's *History* such a rich object of study for history of loss is that, for much of the war, the Athenians seem to have projected themselves beyond the space of loss, outside of the strong normative expectation in Greek thought about the relentless reciprocity between victory and defeat.[5]

We could go even further and say that, although Thucydides includes powerful vignettes of loss, his focus is asymmetrical. As the narrative proceeds, we read a lot about the Athenians' experience of defeat and how hard it hits them but very little about the experience of those who had their cities and way of life destroyed by the

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Athenians. This criticism was already levelled at Thucydides by the literary critic Dionysius of Halicarnassus in the first century BCE.[6] David Whitehead has written memorably about the vanished losses of many of the minor Greek *poleis*, eclipsed by the affairs of larger "superpower states": "In the fifth-century particularly this [avoiding the superpower perspective] is exceedingly difficult, with the Athenians and the Spartans occupying stage-center and most of the rest of their fellow-Greeks (not to mention non-Greeks) cast in the unrewarding role of extras."[7] In other words, Thucydides's narrative ethics bear some responsibility for what Butler has described as "the loss of loss itself."[8] What we find in Thucydides's *History* is the complex intertwining of (a) a political logic of exemplary, "classical" failure and loss; (b) a hegemonic imperial mood; and (c) a cultural script—associated with Greek tragic thought—that binds victory and defeat in a close, circular reciprocity. The difficulty of accounting for all three influences simultaneously explains why Thucydides is variously interpreted as the father of political realism and as a critic of the will to power. My argument in this chapter is that the interaction of all three influences is key to understanding the degree to which it makes sense to read Thucydides's work as a "history from loss."

In recent scholarship on the presence of the idea of classicism within so-called classical antiquity, Thucydides's *History* has emerged as an important source for "prospective" or "proleptic" classicism. As analysed by Jim Porter, prospective classicism refers to the attempt of a work of art or community to model its own futurity, staking a claim to enduring cultural importance.[9] For Porter, the strongest example of prospective classicism in extant Athenian literature is the funeral oration which Thucydides's Pericles delivers over the Athenians who have died fighting in the first year of the war (*History* 2.25–46). Building on the typical praise for the city in the Athenian genre of the funeral oration, Pericles expounds an imperial logic whereby Athens is a paradigm without borders and without temporal limit, both retrospectively and prospectively. Thucydides employs the self-aggrandizing logic of prospective classicism for his own *History*, too, designating it as a "possession for all times" (*ktema es aiei*, *History* 1.22.4). It is hard to square the concept of history from loss as we understand it now with this Athenian version of classicizing cultural imperialism.

Another contributing influence to the representation of loss in Thucydides's *History* is the discourse of exemplarity in contemporary Athenian political rhetoric. The competent politician was expected to have a repertoire of examples for his audience to emulate (positive exemplarity) and examples to avoid (negative exemplarity). Thucydides composed his history according to these same rhetorical expectations and seems to have envisaged his work as a hyper-ambitious, extended rhetorical proof designed to surpass what any speech (*logos*) could achieve, no matter how impressive. The *History* contains copious examples of Athenian politicians—some of them generals in the field—arguing from past examples to influence Athenian audiences to vote or to act one way or another. This rhetorical habit tended to downplay susceptibility to loss: loss is something from which a confident power can learn to make future greatness more likely. We get a clear example of this

rhetorical reasoning in action in the first extract at the end of this chapter: a speech by the Athenian general Nicias in which he attempts to encourage the defeated Athenian troops as they tried to march across Sicily to safety in the summer of 413 BCE. This speech is preceded by a bleak account of the despondency in the Athenian camp as the troops contemplated the scale of the reversal that they had suffered in the Sicilian campaign. But drawing on his rhetorical education and on the great name of Athens, Nicias tells the troops, "those of you who are Athenians will raise up again the great power of the state, fallen though it be" (7.77.7).

In the later classical rhetorical tradition, this logic becomes axiomatic as theorists of rhetoric instruct their readers to study historians like Thucydides as a source of examples of "measures and successes and failures" and—to put it colloquially—how to bounce back from defeat. Dio Chrysostom spells this out:

> But the historians for many reasons the statesman must read attentively, because, even apart from the speeches they contain, it is most essential that the statesman, the man who chooses to conduct public affairs, should be acquainted with measures and successes and failures, which happen not only in accordance with reasonable expectation, but also at times contrary thereto, to both men and states.[10]

The prospect of failure only temporarily disrupts the progress of Dio's statesmen, just as the models of tragic loss or exemplary failure that undergird Thucydides's work are entirely compatible with the will to domination, providing one builds a calculus of contingency, indeterminacy, and the tragic logic of reversal into one's calculations. To this way of thinking, the study of loss is instrumental to power and success. Dio Chrysostom (ca. 40–110 CE) was a Greek-speaking intellectual from Prusa in Bithynia under Rome's empire and wrote this passage almost 500 years after Thucydides wrote his *History*, as part of a cultural movement in which writers of imperial Greek literature looked back to the classical Athenian literature of the fifth and fourth centuries BCE, as the highpoint of classicism. For these later writers, it was the Athenian model of classicizing cultural imperialism that made it such an attractive reference point.

In the second extract here (*History* 7.87.5–6), which concludes Thucydides's account of the Sicilian campaign, we see another facet of a classicizing mentality in which some losses are greater than others. As Thucydides writes it, the failure of the Athenian invasion of Sicily is epic, underscored by an allusion to Homer's *Odyssey*. According to Thucydides, the Sicilian campaign was the greatest military action not just in the whole Atheno-Peloponnesian war but in all Greek history, and the loss was especially great in proportion to the greatness of the power that suffered it. Here the narrative of exemplary loss is just as prepossessing as the narrative of classical greatness—loss is readily folded into a canonizing rhetoric.

In the third passage from Thucydides included here (*History* 8.1.1–4), Thucydides describes the disbelief when news of the defeat in Sicily reached Athens and the backlash against the politicians who had hyped up the expedition by giving

confident forecasts of Athenian success. But, as the news settles in, the Athenians rally and recommit to the war effort—giving in or terminal loss is not an option. It is not that Athenian politicians never counsel restraint in Thucydides's *History*, but arguments about the cautious, voluntary restraint of power prove precarious and vulnerable in a prevailing mood of expansion and imperial confidence. In a famous passage at 2.65.7, Thucydides praises Pericles's prudent war strategy, in which Pericles predicted that the Athenians would prevail if they did not try to expand their empire or jeopardize the city's security, and contrasts it with the strategy pursued by the Athenian politicians who came after him.[11] Thucydides gives us two famous examples of politicians addressing the Athenian assembly who struggle to persuade the Athenians to adopt a more cautious, less aggressive foreign policy: Diodotus in the Mytilene debate (428 BCE), who by a hair's breadth persuades the Athenians to reverse a previous decision to execute the entire adult male population of Mytilene (3.49.1), and Nicias in the assembly debates of 415 BCE, who fails to dissuade the Athenians from invading Sicily (6.9–14, and 6.20–23).

Steven Connor spells out what is at stake in human history in a study of cultural behaviours of "holding back," such as apologizing and losing. At the end of a chapter on "losing," Connor writes:

> There may at the very least be some utility in a confident awareness of the active power of holding back we possess, a power over power that is the only thing that makes civility or civilization possible for creatures as aggressive and appetitively ambitious as we show no signs of ceasing to be. Our best hope is that we will be able to extend what has historically been our greatest achievement, the deflection of our illimitable will-to-power into the power of limit.[12]

Thucydides's critical presentation of Athenian mistakes in the war would seem to endorse the need for "power over power," but in the *History* this intellectual insight coexists with a cultural and political conviction about the greatness and superiority of Athenian culture and an overarching classicizing logic. Within this framework, it makes sense to read Thucydides as "history from loss," providing that we accept that the lessons that Thucydides and his readers might have drawn from this historical study are not the lessons that we would draw as we study history in the wake of "history from below."

Extracts

From Thucydides, *History of the Peloponnesian War*, trans. Richard Crawley (London: Longmans, Green, and Co., 1874).[13]

a History 7.76–77.7

Nicias seeing the army greatly dejected and greatly altered, passed along the ranks and encouraged and comforted them as far as was possible under the circumstances, raising his voice still higher and higher as he went from one company to another

in his earnestness, and in his anxiety that the benefit of his words might reach as many as possible:

> Athenians and allies, even in our present position we must still hope on, since men have ere now been saved from worse straits than this; and you must not condemn yourselves too severely either because of your disasters or because of your present unmerited sufferings. I myself who am not superior to any of you in strength—indeed you see how I am in my sickness—and who in the gifts of fortune am, I think, whether in private life or otherwise, the equal of any, am now exposed to the same danger as the meanest among you; and yet my life has been one of much devotion toward the gods, and of much justice without offense toward men. I have, therefore, still a strong hope for the future, and our misfortunes do not terrify me as much as they might. Indeed we may hope that they will be lightened: our enemies have had good fortune enough; and if any of the gods was offended at our expedition, we have already been amply punished. Others before us have attacked their neighbours and have done what men will do without suffering more than they could bear; and we may now justly expect to find the gods more kind, for we have become fitter objects for their pity than their jealousy. And then look at yourselves, mark the numbers and efficiency of the hoplites marching in your ranks, and do not give way too much to despondency, but reflect that you are yourselves at once a city wherever you sit down, and that there is no other in Sicily that could easily resist your attack, or expel you when once established. … To sum up, be convinced, soldiers, that you must be brave, as there is no place near for your cowardice to take refuge in, and that if you now escape from the enemy, you may all see again what your hearts desire, while those of you who are Athenians will raise up again the great power of the state, fallen though it be. Men make the city and not walls or ships without men in them.

b History 7.87.5–6

This was the greatest Hellenic achievement of any in this war, or, in my opinion, in Hellenic history; at once most glorious to the victors, and most calamitous to the conquered. They were beaten at all points and altogether; all that they suffered was great; they were destroyed, as the saying is, with a total destruction, their fleet, their army—everything was destroyed, and few out of many returned home.

c History 8.1.1–3

When the news was brought to Athens, for a long while they disbelieved even the most respectable of the soldiers who had themselves escaped from the scene of action and clearly reported the matter, a destruction so complete not being thought credible. When the conviction was forced upon them, they were angry with the orators who had joined in promoting the expedition, just as if they had

not themselves voted it, and were enraged also with the reciters of oracles and soothsayers, and all other omen-mongers of the time who had encouraged them to hope that they would conquer Sicily. Already distressed at all points and in all quarters, after what had now happened, they were seized by a fear and consternation quite without example. It was grievous enough for the state and for every man in his proper person to lose so many heavy infantry, cavalry, and able-bodied troops, and to see none left to replace them; but when they saw, also, that they had not sufficient ships in their docks, or money in the treasury, or crews for their ships, they began to despair of salvation. They thought that their enemies in Sicily would immediately sail with their fleet against Piraeus, inflamed by so signal a victory; while their adversaries at home, redoubling all their preparations, would vigorously attack them by sea and land at once, *aided by the revolt of Athens's allies*.[14] Nevertheless, with such means as they had, it was determined to resist to the last, and to provide timber and money, and to equip a fleet as they best could, to take steps to secure their confederates and above all Euboea, to reform things in the city upon a more economical footing, and to elect a board of elders to advise upon the state of affairs as occasion should arise.

Notes

1 The war began in 431 BCE and ended in 404 BCE; Thucydides' *History* breaks off in the summer of 411 BCE—the twenty-first year of the war—but twice refers to how the war ended (at 2.65.12, and at 5.26.1).
2 Thucydides mentions the circumstances of his exile at 5.26.5.
3 On the origins of the term "history from below" and its influence on the study of the history of the ancient Mediterranean, see Cyril Courrier and Julio Cesar Magalhães de Oliveira, "Ancient history from below: an introduction", in *Ancient History from Below*, ed. Courrier and de Oliveira (Abingdon and Oxford: Routledge, 2022): 1–31, especially 3–5.
4 Judith Butler, "Afterword: After Loss, What Then?", in *Loss*: *The Politics of Mourning*, eds. David L. Eng and David Kazanjian (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2003): 467–73, referring to 467.
5 The clearest example of this Athenian attitude is the Melian dialogue in book 5 of the *History* (5.94.3–5.116).
6 Dionysius of Halicarnassus *Thucydides*, 15, "Sometimes he is so successful in portraying the cruelty, the horror and the pitiable nature of the sufferings involved [i.e. in the capture and destruction of cities] . . . on other occasions he makes them seem so trivial and petty that he lets fall no hint to help his readers appreciate the horrors." In Dionysius of Halicarnassus. *Critical Essays, Volume I: Ancient Orators. Lysias. Isocrates. Isaeus. Demosthenes. Thucydides*, trans. by Stephen Usher (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1974): 501–03.
7 David Whitehead, *Aineias the Tactician: How to Survive Under Siege. A Historical Commentary with Translation and Introduction* (London: Bristol Classical Press, 2003): 3. I have added the phrase in square brackets for clarity.
8 Butler "Afterword", 467.
9 James Porter, "Feeling Classical: Classicism and Ancient Literary Criticism", in *Classical Pasts: The Classical Traditions of Greece and Rome*, ed. Porter (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2006): 301–52, referring to 60–63.

10 Dio Chrysostom "On Training for Public Speaking", § 9, in Dio Chrysostom, *Discourses* 12–30, trans. by J.W. Cohoon, Loeb Classical Library 339 (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1939): 219.
11 Pericles died in 429 BCE, in the third year of the war.
12 Steven Connor, *Giving Way: Thoughts on Unappreciated Dispositions* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2019): 217.
13 Thucydides composed his *History* between 431- and ca. 399 BCE.
14 Crawley's translation has "aided by their own revolted confederates," which is potentially misleading; I have substituted the phrase in italics for the sake of clarity.

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2

AMMIANUS MARCELLINUS (CA. 330–391 CE)

Michael P. Hanaghan

1 Introduction

In the mid- to late 380s CE, the retired soldier Ammianus Marcellinus composed a history in 31 books, beginning where his generic predecessor Tacitus had stopped with the reign of Nerva (96–98) and continuing until the Roman disaster at the Battle of Adrianople (378). Little is known about Ammianus apart from what can be gleaned in his history; he was probably born in Syria to a family of some means, and his native language was Greek rather than the Latin of his history.[1] Arnaldo Momigliano dubbed Ammianus "the lonely historian" and the moniker has largely stuck; few ancient historians whose work is extant may be easily compared in place and time to Ammianus.[2] His history is a history of loss, a history loaded with longing for what could have been, imbued with false nostalgia for an imaginary, better time when the Roman political system and military operated more fairly and more efficiently.

The first 13 books of Ammianus's history are not extant. Those that remain (14–31) cover the period from 351 to 378 during which time the Roman emperor endured a series of foreign and domestic setbacks, culminating in the comprehensive defeat of the Roman army at the battle of Adrianople and the death of the Emperor Valens, who was, in all likelihood, burnt alive in the aftermath of the battle.[3] In the majority of these books (14–25), the narrative focuses on the struggles of Constantius II (326–360), including his efforts to contain the political ambitions of his cousins and junior emperors, Gallus and Julian, and then in the wake of Constantius II's death, Julian's brief and tumultuous reign as sole emperor, which featured an incredibly ambitious political and social agenda, including a full-scale invasion of Persia.[4] A mere two years later Julian was dead, mortally wounded by a spear thrown by an unknown assailant during that ill-fated campaign.

Such a brief and tumultuous reign left the empire in a worse state, but it also posed real historiographical challenges. How should Rome remember Julian? In

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some respects, Julian was treated like other emperors; his body was ultimately entombed in a porphyry marble sarcophagus, and he was accorded no formal condemnation by the emperors that followed.[5] In others, Julian was clearly a pariah; no investigation ever uncovered who threw the fatal spear, and in time, Julian became almost a byword for a disastrous emperor, whose memory need not be damned lest it fail to serve as an anti-exemplum for others.[6]

2 Julian as Titus

Ammianus's first mention of Julian occurs in his necrologue for Julian's brother Gallus. This is a set piece which includes a holistic assessment of an emperor's reign, including both positive and negative features of their person. Ammianus offers a positive comparison between Julian in terms of the Emperor Titus, but even as Ammianus tries to remain positive, he inevitably points to the more obvious parallel; both their reigns were short lived, Titus's eclipsing Julian's by a matter of months. In the aftermath of Gallus's death, several of his supporters were accused of treason and put to death. Julian faced accusations of his own, but Ammianus is quick to cut off the reader's imagination, reiterating that Julian would become a memorable emperor.

After his appointment as junior emperor (Caesar), Julian travelled to Gaul, fully cognizant of the challenges ahead of him, brought into focus by the recent barbarian destruction of the Roman city of Colonia Agrippina (modern Cologne). A rare moment of explicit metaliterary reflection informs the reader that the events will be related in order, in a manner more akin to the genre of panegyric than history but that Ammianus's praise of his hero Julian will use only firmly established facts.[7] Past emperors are invoked as comparanda, including Titus and Trajan; the former confirms Ammianus's earlier use of the comparison between Titus and Julian, while the latter works on two levels; both emperors prosecuted wars successfully, but both ultimately failed in Persia. By using comparisons to the Roman emperors of centuries earlier, Ammianus makes the subject of his history echo the distant past, drawing on both the glories of history and also its failures. In the wake of Julian's death, Rome and Ammianus's history fundamentally changed.

3 Julian versus Constantius II

In book 16 Ammianus creates an implicit contrast between the senior emperor (Augustus) Constantius II and Julian, as the latter enjoys continued successes on campaign in Gaul while the former struggles to make peace with the Persians and ultimately ends up marching into Rome to celebrate a triumph even though he has failed to defeat any foreign opponent (a prerequisite for any genuine triumph). The contrast becomes explicit after Julian's victory against the Alamanni at the battle of Argentoratum (near modern Strasburg), which Constantius claims as his own despite his distant absence from the battlefield. In Ammianus's concluding remarks, he reflects on the nature of writing a positive history about an individual

who does not have the trappings of supreme power to further their version of events. In the historiographical struggle that ensues, *fama*—Julian's reputation and the rumours that swirl about his actions—overcome both Constantius's lies and the concerted efforts of others to obscure Julian's role in the Roman victory. The contrast between Julian and Constantius continues through books 17 to 20. In book 21 the tension builds, as Julian, now a direct rival following his proclamation to the rank of senior emperor by his men, marches towards Constantius. This tension is only released by Constantius's death.

4 Julian as Sole Augustus

In political terms, Constantius's death meant that Julian had to assume the challenges that Constantius had so far borne on his own, including the enduring problems on the Persian frontier. In narratological terms, Constantius's death removes him as a point of (contemporaneous) contrast with Julian. Ammianus can no longer use Constantius's intrigues and military setbacks to present Julian in a positive light. If Julian had failed to receive the credit due to him for his successors as Caesar, as Augustus he would feel the full responsibility for his failures.

Ammianus's remaining books that feature Julian, 22 to 25, defy simple characterization. Initially, Julian's actions receive moderate endorsement from Ammianus; his assumption of sole power involved limited bloodshed, while his approach to Christianity is presented as an encouragement for individuals to follow their own beliefs. Julian handles foreign affairs with aplomb and is the epitome of tolerance, perhaps—Ammianus implies—overly tolerant towards perpetrators of violence against Christians.

In his campaign in Persia Julian is initially successful. These successes continue through book 24, until excessive ambition overwhelms Julian, and he decides to burn his own fleet (24.7.3–4). Julian's burning of his own fleet comes on the back of his successful use of fire against numerous Persian fortresses, including Anathas and Pirisabora, but Julian never again uses fire in the campaign. Instead, the Persians respond with fire of their own, burning the crops that Julian's men would need to support themselves, creating such a conflagration that his army must stay put until the flames die down. Julian is forced to retreat, but returning the way he came is impractical, given the desolation his army has caused by burning villages along the way, so they make for the city of Corduena. En route Julian's army fights of an ambush, suffers from lack of supplies, and the omens finally turn against him, including a blazing torch seen in the night sky. Eventually, Julian's army is forced into battle, during which he is killed.

5 Julian's Necrologue

Ammianus's account of Julian's death is followed by a necrologue. Positive qualities are outlined first, including Julian's modesty, wisdom, temperance, justice, courage, knowledge of war, command, fortune, and generosity. Each of these is treated in

some detail with multiple examples supporting Ammianus's claims. His faults are dealt with briefly; Julian could be inconsistent, overly talkative, and overly interested in omens—a clear nod at the omens that led him into Persia—excessive with sacrifices and prone to popular adulation. Critics of Julian's campaign in Persia are then directly refuted, as Ammianus thus tries to shift the blame of Julian's fatal loss in Persia to Constantine.[8] The necrologue is a historiographical microcosm for Ammianus's presentation of Julian, which is largely positive, focuses far more on successes than his failures, and looks repeatedly to put his ultimately disastrous campaign in Persia into a broader context, which diminishes (at least partly) Julian's accountability.

6 Ammianus's History as a History from Loss

To promote Julian, Ammianus repeatedly draws contrasts between his successes and Constantius's failures. This is an effective strategy, given Constantius II's unpopularity in historiography, especially among Christian authors, owing to his support of Arian Christianity (and negative comparisons with his father Constantine). It also means that while Constantius is alive, Julian's actions largely evade negative scrutiny, and given Julian only outlived Constantius by less than a couple of years, for most of Ammianus's account of Julian, he appears as the better, albeit more junior, emperor. Ultimately, Ammianus cannot avoid the fact of Julian's death and the strategic errors that put his army in such a vulnerable position, but the length of his narrative account of Julian's rise and reign makes the end only a small part of the whole. Ammianus works against the historiographical interpretation, dominant in Christian criticism of Julian, that Julian's reign and character can be reduced to the inauspicious nature of his death. For Ammianus, Julian may have lost, but he was hardly a loser.

Ammianus continues his narrative following the death of his hero Julian, but the sense of loss is profound. Julian's replacement Jovian dies within a year after concluding a disastrous peace with the Persians. Julian's cousin Procopius tries to usurp one of Jovian's successors, the Emperor Valens, but fails. The co-reign of the brothers Valentinian I and Valens are characterized by extra-judicial trials first at Rome and then Antioch that are an abomination to Roman jurisprudence and civility, and then, at the end of his history, the Roman army under Valens's leadership is outsmarted, outmanoeuvred and final outdone by the Goths at the battle of Adrianople. In book 28 Ammianus provides tantalizing awareness that the final books of his history will read as a grim tragedy, a bloody tale, akin to Phrynichus's tragedy about the fall of the ancient city of Miletus, that is unlikely to be all that welcome to his Latin-speaking readership.

Here Ammianus gestures at the triumphant tone of ancient historiography, which typically articulated how the past turned into the successful present. In the comparison with Phrynichus's tragedy, Ammianus accounts for his status as the "lonely historian," a historian duty bound to preserve for memory a tale of events that are tragic, bloody, and full of loss. By the end of the *Res Gestae* Rome has

suffered a horrific defeat, one of its worst, from which it never really recovered. Given the material that Ammianus had to work with, it was all but impossible for him to write a triumphant, secular (that is non-ecclesiastical) history of the mid to late fourth century. His history had to be a history of loss.

Extracts

These are my translations based on the Latin edition of Wolfgang Seyfarth, *Ammianus Marcellinus, Res Gestae* I-II (Teubner: Leipzig 1976). I have tried to give a sense of Ammianus's style rather than rigidly follow his syntax.

a Amm. Marc. 14.11.28

But he [Gallus] was as different from the moderate character of his brother Julian, as the sons of Vespasian, Domitian and Titus, were different from each other.

b Amm. Marc. 16.1.4

For he dazzled with such quick successes at home and abroad that he seemed in wisdom to be a second Titus (the son of Vespasian), in the glorious courses of his wars much like Trajan, calm like Antoninus, and aligned with Marcus Aurelius by his search of the correct and perfect thought, in emulation of whom he moulded his actions and character.

c Amm. Marc. 16.12.7

When the fighting happened near Argentoratum he [Constantius II] was 40 days' march away, writing down that he had arranged the battle line and had stood among the standard-bearers, and forced the barbarians to flee quickly, and indicating falsely that Chonodomarius was brought to him, without a word (the shame of it!) about the glorious deeds of Julian, which he would have buried completely, had fame not known about his great achievements, even as very many were obscuring them.

d Amm. Marc. 24.7.3–4

But he [Julian] devalued the remarks of those who were warning him, and castigated his commanders for urging him now to let his territorial acquisitions in Persia be lost, on account of their laziness and desire for relaxation. Leaving the river behind on his left, and with inauspicious guides in the lead, he proposed to march along the internal roads at a quick pace. And it was as if the fires had been lit by the deadly torch of Bellona herself when he ordered all the ships to be incinerated, except for twelves of the smaller vessels, which he had arranged to be transports on wagons as they would be useful for building bridges.

e Amm. Marc. 25.4.23–24

And since his [Julian's] critics pretend that he had stirred up anew the anxieties of war, endangering society, let them know, with the truth providing clear instruction, that it was not Julian but Constantius that lit the Persian fires, when he greedily agreed with the lies of Metrodorus, as I explained in full earlier: consequently our army were slaughtered, our soldiers captured sometimes en masse, cities wiped away, fortifications seized and destroyed, provinces exhausted by heavy costs, resulting in extensive threats, as the Persians demanded everything from Bithynia to the shores of Propontius.

f Amm. Marc. 28.1.1–4

Bellona was raging, burning everything throughout the eternal city, driven from insignificant beginnings to sorrowful disasters, and how I wish that silence had consigned these to oblivion . . . and although after thinking over many different factors, fear rightly pulled me back from narrating this bloody tale of history, still, relying on the sense of propriety of this present age, briefly explain what deeds are worthy of memory, nor will I be ashamed to indicate briefly that which happened in the past that scares me. When in the first Persian War, the Persians had sacked Asia, and they were besieged the city of Miletus with a large force, threatening the defendants with torturous deaths, and compelled the besieged into needing to kill their own loved ones, of burning their transportable possessions, and each one struggled together to be burnt on the communal funerary pyre of their dying country. A little while later Phrynichus wrote a play in the grandiose style of tragedy with this as its theme which he put on in Athens. At first, he was heard with pleasure, but as the sad story went on in too tragic a style, the people became angry and punished him, thinking that consolation was not his object but blame and reproach, when he had the bad taste to include among stage-plays a portrayal even of the sufferings which a well-beloved city had undergone, without receiving any support from its founders.

Notes

1 Roger C. Blockley, *Ammianus Marcellinus, A Study of His Historiography and Political Thought* (Brussels: Latomus, 1975): 8. See more recently D. Woods and M.P. Hanaghan, "Introduction", in *Ammianus Marcellinus, From Soldier to Author* (Leiden: Brill, forthcoming 2023): 1–4.

2 Arnaldo Momigliano, "The Lonely Historian Ammianus Marcellinus", *Annali della Scuola Normale Superiore di Pisa. Classe di Lettere e Filosofia*, 4.3(1974): 1393–407.

3 For discussion of Valens's death, see Noel Lenski "*Initium mali Romano imperio*: Contemporary Reactions to the Battle of Adrianople", *Transaction of the American Philological Association*, 127 (2005): 153. See also Guy Halsall *Barbarian Migrations and the Roman West, 376–568* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007): 178–79.

4 Julian's *Or.* 3 thanked Constantius's wife Eusebia for helping him avoid Gallus's fate, for which see Sean Togher "The Advocacy of an Empress: Julian and Eusebia", *The Classical Quarterly*, 48.2 (1998): 595–99. Amm. Marc. 15.8.1–22 links Julian's promotion

to the need to have an emperor focused on the worsening situation in Gaul. Amm. Marc. 20.4.1–20 provides the most detailed account in the ancient sources. See Bruno Bleckmann, "From Caesar to Augustus: Julian against Constantius", in *A Companion to Julian the Apostate*, eds. Stefan Rebenich and Hans-Ulrich Wiemer (Leiden/Boston: Brill, 2020): 97–123, at 99–101 for the nearly two-year period when Julian was an "illegitimate Augustus" since only an Augustus had the legal right to promote a Caesar.

5 Cons. Porp. *Lib. Caer.* 2.43 described Julian's porphyry marble sarcophagus, for discussion of which see David Woods, "On the Alleged Reburial of Julian the Apostate in Constantinople", *Byzantion* 76 (2006): 364–71, and Mark J. Johnson, "Observations on the Burial of the Emperor Julian in Constantinople", *Byzantion* 78 (2008): 254–60.

6 Ambrose *De obit. Theod. Or.* 51. In *Or.* 24 the great sophist Libanius sought to blame Rome's struggles in the wake of Julian's death on the affront to the gods caused by the failure of imperial authorities to investigate Julian's death.

7 For the relationship of Ammianus's treatment of Julian to panegyric, see Guy Sabbah, "Ammianus Marcellinus", in *Greek and Roman Historiography in Late Antiquity, Fourth to Sixth Century A.D.*, ed. Gabriele Marasco (Leiden: Brill, 2003): 43–84, at 65.

8 In the necrologue Ammianus also claims that Julian's fate in Persia was destiny, for which see Kelly, *Ammianus*, 96–8. For Ammianus's metaphysical conception of historical events, see Barnes, *Ammianus*, 167.

Ammianus Marcellinus's Work

Res Gestae with an English (translated by John C. Rolfe, vols 1–3). Harvard: The Loeb Classical Library, 1985–1986.

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Kelly, Gavin. *Ammianus the Allusive Historian*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008.

Ross, Alan. *Ammianus' Julian: Narrative and Genre in the Res Gestae*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2016.

3

GILDAS (*FL.* 5TH OR 6TH CENTURY)

Stephen J. Joyce

In relation to loss, perhaps no history in western Europe has been as influential as Gildas's *De excidio Britanniae* (*De excidio*) or *The Ruin of Britain*.[1] Dated variously from the late fifth to the mid-sixth century, Gildas's complaint is directed at five named British kings and the unnamed clerics of the British church.[2] The loss that he anticipates is that of Britain by the Britons due to endemic greed and corruption. The fear is made tangible by the current political situation: the pagan Germanic peoples subsequently known as the English have taken control of the eastern half of the former Roman province of *Britannia*.[3] Will the Christian Britons lose the remainder of their inheritance through inaction and sin? Gildas diligently sets out to warn his people in the manner of an Old Testament prophet: "guided by God," he declares to them "their current spiritual state."[4] Of course, from a modern perspective, Gildas's positioning against a nascent England is seen as a failure, and his *De excidio* as a powerless lament. But arguably the primary function of his history was to galvanize a call to arms, to orchestrate a spiritual and political revival to make *Britannia* whole again.[5] Retrospectively reading the *De excidio* purely in the context of loss may misread the aims of both the author and the text.

The innovations Gildas brings to both his lament and his call to arms are palpable: notwithstanding the uncertainty over dating, the text provides the earliest surviving instances of several medieval literary conventions. The *De excidio* is the earliest surviving text to construct a national history (as *Britannia*) of a former Roman province; Gildas is the first author to identify a post-Roman nation (the *Britones*) as a Chosen People of God; the *De excidio* is the earliest surviving work detailing the legal expectations, in a scriptural sense, of the authority of Christian kings and bishops, the emerging polity of post-Roman western Europe.[6] Despite possibly being one of the first medieval political theorists, Gildas's reputation as a difficult and tendentious historian remains influential.[7]

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Gildas's history of Britain forms a discrete section in the first of three books in his *De excidio*, acting as an introduction to and rationale for his complaint against contemporary secular and church leaders (books two and three, respectively). Ranging from the coming of the Romans and Christianity to an immediate political and spiritual crisis, Gildas charts the journey of his people, the Britons, in the same manner as the Old Testament charts the journey of the Israelites. His providential history interprets historical events on the basis of a God actively engaging with the moral choices of His people: keeping the covenant leads to peace and prosperity; breaking the covenant leads to war and dispossession. Generally devoid of historical anchors, Gildas's moral history situates the rise of sinful behaviour within an immediate political and spiritual crisis, the partition of his beloved *patria* or homeland with pagan powers. His opaque and frustratingly vague descriptions of the events leading up to this partition remain the only remotely contemporary narrative describing the significant arrival of the English in Britain.

Gildas begins his history by invoking both Latin literary traditions and those of the Bible. His language is rich and evocative, following the Late Latin exuberance of fifth-century Gallic literati, such as Sidonius Apollinaris (*ob. c.* 489), themselves also heavily influenced by classical and biblical styles.[8] Drawing on Roman Christian historians such as Orosius (*ob. c.* 420), Gildas first orients Britain in a classical and geographical sense: the island is located to "the west and north-west"; it contains "twenty eight cities and a number of castles" and is "well equipped with fortifications."[9] Subsequently, he styles his homeland as a biblical Garden of Eden. His evocative descriptions of Britain as "a chosen bride arrayed in a variety of jewellery," "decorated with wide plains and agreeably set hills," and "brilliant rivers that glide with gentle murmur, guaranteeing sweet sleep for those who lie on their banks" draw on profoundly visceral connections to place.[10] At the very start of his providential history, Gildas establishes Britain as a secure and bucolic paradise.

The purpose of establishing Britain as an Eden is, of course, to pre-empt the Fall as created by sin, the *excidium* or casting out of Adam and Eve. In bringing the reader up to his present day, Gildas presents preordained evidence, in the manner of an Old Testament prophet, as to why this expulsion from Eden was about to be re-enacted in his present. In laying out the transgressions of the recent past, he refers directly to Psalm 106.40 and its descriptions of the contempt poured by God on a people and a priesthood lying about in "drunken stupor, as though sodden with wine," abounding in "swelling hatreds," "contentious quarrels," and the "greedy talons of envy": for Gildas, like the Israelites before them, the Britons had been "seduced by their follies" and were wandering "in the trackless desert."[11]

"Then as now," warns Gildas, a key phrase in his *De excidio* reinforcing his view of the present as a reflection on the past.[12] Lessons can be learnt from the moral exempla of biblical history, and, indeed, his text has to be read in conjunction with that of the Bible. Having pointed out the warning in Psalm 106.40, he also alerts the reader to the solution: although they "reeled like a drunken man; and all their wisdom was swallowed up," they also "cried to the Lord in their affliction: And he brought them out of their distresses" (Psalm 106.27–28).[13]

Gildas subsequently reinvokes the evocative Latin used in his biblical description of Britain as Eden to describe the divine contempt brought about by the folly of the princes, that relating to the event that had partitioned Christian Britain, the rebellion of English mercenaries brought in to protect *Britannia* from the pagan peoples of the Picts (in the far north of the island of Britain) and the Irish (as *Scotti* or Scots). Here the lofty towers and walls of Eden had fallen and bucolic Britain was barren. Major towns had been "laid low by the repeated battering of enemy rams": war had devastated the land such that "there was rarely to be seen grape-cluster or corn-ear behind the backs of the vintagers and the reapers."[14]

In setting out divine punishment as represented by the savage English, Gildas calls on the prophet Isaiah and his descriptions concerning God's final destruction of sinners, a prophecy that anticipates the Last Judgement (Isaiah 24). Here, for the discerning reader, are some pointed references to the possible eschatological role of the few remaining good Britons: while the earth will be shaken and expelled from God's favour like a drunken man from temporary lodgings (Isaiah 24.20), the voices of the few will praise God from the islands in the sea at the ends of the earth (Isaiah 24.13–15).

Having established a pivotal moment in providential history, Gildas offers a choice to his readers, or, perhaps better, his listeners. In his powerful critique of kings and clerics, Gildas calls on thesis and antithesis to make this choice clear. These criticisms are powerfully reinforced by rhythm and rhyme: one can but imagine the thundering power of his accusations, whether from the pulpit or from the mouth of a messenger declaiming Gildas's denunciations to a royal court or a church synod. Here the English translation does not give full effect to the performative nature of the Latin. A sample of the Latin is laid out to highlight both the antithesis and the rhyming prose. First, are the tyrannical kings and wicked judges who punish the innocent and defend the guilty:

> Reges habet Britannia, sed tyrannos;
> iudices habet, sed impios;
> saepe praedantes et concutientes, sed innocentes;
> vindicantes et patrocinantes, sed reos et latrones.
> [Britain has kings, but they are tyrants;
> she has judges, but they are wicked.
> They often plunder and terrorize—the innocent;
> they defend and protect—the guilty and thieving.][15]

Subsequently, the foolish, shameless, and greedy clerics who prey on their flocks like wolves, drawing on images of the wicked shepherd from the prophet Ezekiel and the evangelist John:

> Sacerdotes habet Britannia, sed insipientes;
> quam plurimos ministros, sed impudentes;
> clericos, sed raptores subdolos;

> pastores, ut dicuntur, sed occisioni animarum lupos paratos.
> [Britain has priests, but they are fools;
> very many minsters, but they are shameless;
> clerics, but they are treacherous grabbers.
> They are called shepherds, but they are wolves ready to slaughter souls.][16]

Gildas immediately reinforces these criticisms with lengthy and detailed biblical examples of the divine judgement accrued by wicked and good leaders. In his *speculum principum* or "mirror for princes," the dire future of these tyrants and wolves is reflected in a biblical past.

In presenting a history of sin as a forebearer of loss, Gildas bookends his complaint with the lamentations of the prophet Jeremiah over the destruction of Jerusalem and the declaration of Ezekiel that God does not desire "the death of a sinner, but that he may turn and live."[17] He begins with an image of shipwreck but ends with a plank for the shipwrecked. It is understandable, therefore, to read Gildas in the context of loss, precisely because that loss eventuated: Britain became England, Wales, and Scotland. As Gildas chose not to anchor his history of Britain to identifiable events and personalities, his providential history of the Britons has subsequently allowed different interpretations to flourish but predominantly in a context of loss. Later Welsh grievances invoking Gildas's reports of the ruthless dispossession of the Britons have been countered by pointed English references to his descriptions of the Britons as a weak and sinful people unfit to hold the island. Gildas promised Britain to those that obeyed or who might choose to obey God's Law, not to those sinners who had held it in perpetuity.

Therein lies the paradox. Is the intention of Gildas's performative history to cement a loss in the image of the passive lamentations of Jeremiah? Or is his history an immediate eschatological intervention urging his people to stem a loss, in the active image of Jeremiah's contemporary, Ezekiel? If we retrospectively read Gildas's history as an affirmation of loss, we are left with just that. But if we situate Gildas's history within a loss that had not yet fully come about, perhaps his exhortation may shine new light on a dark age.

Extracts

From Gildas, *The Ruin of Britain and Other Works*, ed. and trans. Michael Winterbottom (London: Phillimore, 1978).

The Ruin of Britain III.1–4

The island of Britain lies virtually at the end of the world, towards the west and north-west. Poised in the divine scales that (we are told) weigh the whole earth, it stretches from the south-west towards the northern pole. . . . It is ornamented with twenty eight cities and a number of castles, and well equipped with fortifications—walls, castellated towers, gates and houses, whose sturdily built roofs reared

menacingly skyward. Like a chosen bride arrayed in a variety of jewellery, the island is decorated with wide plains and agreeably set hills, excellent for vigorous agriculture, and mountains especially suited to varying the pasture for animals. Flowers of different hues underfoot made them a delightful picture. To water it, the island has clear fountains, whose constant flow drives before it pebbles white as snow, and brilliant rivers that glide with gentle murmur, guaranteeing sweet sleep for those who lie on their banks, and lakes flowing over with a cold rush of living water.

The Ruin of Britain XXI.6

Everything they did went against their salvation, just as though the true doctor of us all granted the world no medicine. And this was true not merely of worldly men; the flock of the Lord and his shepherds, who should have been an example to the whole people, lay about, most of them, in drunken stupor, as though sodden with wine. They were prey to swelling hatreds, contentious quarrels, the greedy talons of envy, judgement that made no distinction between good and evil: it looked very much as though, then as now, contempt was being poured on the princes, so that they were seduced by their follies and wandered in the trackless desert.

The Ruin of Britain XXIV.3–4

All the major towns were laid low by the repeated battering of enemy rams; laid low, too, all the inhabitants—church leaders, priests and people alike, as the swords glinted all around and the flames crackled. It was a sad sight. In the middle of the squares the foundation stones of high walls and towers that had been torn from their lofty base, holy altars, fragments of corpses, covered (as it were) with a purple crust of congealed blood, looked as if they had been mixed up in some dreadful wine-press. There was no burial to be had except in the ruins of houses or the bellies of the beasts and birds—saving the reverence due to their holy spirits, if indeed many were found at that time to be carried by holy angels to the heights of heaven. For by then the vineyard that had once been good had degenerated into sourness, so that (as the prophet puts it) there was rarely to be seen grape-cluster or corn-ear behind the backs of the vintagers and the reapers.

The Ruin of Britain XXVII.1

Britain has kings, but they are tyrants; she has judges, but they are wicked. They often plunder and terrorize—the innocent; they defend and protect—the guilty and thieving; they have many wives—whores and adulteresses; they constantly swear—false oaths; they make vows—but almost at once tell lies; they wage wars—civil and unjust; they chase thieves energetically all over the country—but love and reward the thieves who sit with them at table; they distribute alms profusely—but pile up an immense mountain of crime for all to see.

The Ruin of Britain LXVI.1

Britain has priests, but they are fools; very many minsters, but they are shameless; clerics, but they are treacherous grabbers. They are called shepherds, but they are wolves ready to slaughter souls. They do not look to the good of their people, but to the filling of their own bellies. They have church buildings, but go to them for the sake of base profit. They teach the people—but by giving them the worst of examples, vice and bad character. Rarely do they sacrifice and never do they stand with pure heart amid the altars.

Notes

1 For Gildas's *De excidio Britanniae* see *The Ruin of Britain and Other Works*, ed. and trans. Michael Winterbottom (London: Phillimore, 1978): 87–142 (trans., 13–79). Reprinted by kind permission of Michael Winterbottom. Winterbottom's use of the title *De excidio Britonum* has been set aside for the more widely used title *De excidio Britanniae*.
2 The dating of Gildas's *De excidio* is uncertain, ranging from 479 to 550. For an analysis affirming a more traditional dating to 530–544, see Claire Stancliffe, "The Thirteen Sermons Attributed to Columbanus and the Question of Their Authorship", in *Columbanus: Studies on the Latin Writings*, ed. Michael Lapidge (Woodbridge: Boydell, 1997): 93–202, at 177–81. For a dating 483–485, see Stephen J. Joyce, *The Legacy of Gildas: Constructions of Authority in the Early Medieval West* (Woodbridge: Boydell, 2022): 158.
3 Gildas refers to these Germanic peoples purely as Saxons. This brief analysis will set aside a northern partition of *Britannia* with the Picts and, perhaps, Irish (as Scots).
4 Thomas Charles-Edwards, *Wales and the Britons, 350–1064* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012): 204.
5 For Gildas, the island of Britain was possibly demarcated in the north by the Firths of the Forth and Clyde. See Joyce, *The Legacy of Gildas*, 138–9.
6 E.A. Thompson, "Gildas and the History of Britain", *Britannia* 10 (1979): 208; Thomas O'Loughlin, *Gildas and the Scriptures* (Turnhout: Brepols, 2012): 25; Joyce, *The Legacy of Gildas*, 155–6.
7 A recent example is Susan Oosthuizen, who describes Gildas's *De excidio* as a book "never intended as a history." See Susan Oosthuizen, *The Emergence of the English* (Leeds: Arc Humanities Press, 2019), 22.
8 On biblical style in an insular context, see D.R. Howlett, *The Celtic Latin Tradition of Biblical Style* (Dublin: Four Courts Press, 1995). For Gildas's literary style as emulating that of continental literary notables such as Sidonius Apollinaris, see F. Kerlouégan, "Le Latin du De Excidio Britanniae de Gildas", in *Christianity in Britain, 300–700*, ed. M.W. Barley and R.P.C. Hanson (Leicester: Leicester University Press, 1968): 156.
9 Gildas, *The Ruin of Britain*, III.1–2, 89–90 (trans., 16). Neil Wright, "Did Gildas Read Orosius?" *Cambridge Medieval Celtic Studies* 9 (1985): 31–42; Neil Wright, "Gildas's Prose Style and Its Origins", in *Gildas: New Approaches*, ed. Michael Lapidge and David N. Dumville (Woodbridge: Boydell, 1984): 107–28.
10 Gildas, *The Ruin of Britain*, III.3–4, 89–90 (trans., 16–17).
11 Gildas, *The Ruin of Britain*, XXI.6, 96 (trans., 25).
12 Gildas, *The Ruin of Britain*, XXI.6, 96 (trans., 25).
13 Translations of the Vulgate are from the Douay-Rheims Bible available at www.drbo.org/.
14 Gildas, *The Ruin of Britain*, XXIV.3–4, 98 (trans., 27), alluding to Isaiah 24.13. These images of the failure of the grapevine as an outcome of divine punishment for sin can also be found in Micah 7 and Obadiah 1.
15 Gildas, *De excidio*, XXVII.1, 99 (trans., 29).

16 Gildas, *De excidio*, LXVI.1, 118 (trans., 52).
17 Gildas, *De excidio*, I.5, 87 (trans., 13), citing Lamentations 1.1; CX.2, 142 (trans., 79), citing Ezekiel 33.11.

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4

SNORRI STURLUSON (1179–1241)

Sverre Håkon Bagge

Snorri's *Heimskringla* [The Circle of the World, after the opening words] covers the history of the Norwegian kings and their predecessors from the time of the pagan god Odin until 1177. The "prehistory," that is, the period before the first king of Norway, Harald Fairhair (late ninth/early tenth century), is relatively short and based on various mythological material. The account of the following period is at least partly based on sagas that are still known but is mostly far more detailed. Earlier scholarship assumed that the sagas were largely based on oral information and that Snorri had preserved more of this than his predecessors. Since the early twentieth century, this view has met with increasing scepticism and Snorri's active role as an author has been emphasized.[1] This change has paved the way for regarding him as an important source in another sense, namely for information about contemporary views on society and politics.[2]

We do not know when Snorri wrote his *Heimskringla*, but it was probably well before he fell into disgrace with the king. Snorri visited Norway in 1218–1220 and became a close friend of Earl Skule, at the time the virtual ruler of the country, as King Håkon was only 14–16 years old. After his return to Iceland, Snorri became one of the most prominent chieftains of the island, several times holding the office of Law Speaker, the closest to leadership of this loosely organized community. However, Snorri's position in Iceland deteriorated in the 1230s, and in 1237, he had to leave the island and seek refuge in Norway, where he was once more received by Skule. Here, however, Skule's relationship to King Håkon had deteriorated, and in 1239, Skule rebelled. Shortly afterwards, Snorri left Norway against the king's explicit order. The king, therefore, ordered his Icelandic ally Gissur Thorvaldsson to send Snorri back to Norway or kill him. Late in 1241, Gissur attacked Snorri at his farm Reykholt and killed him.

Of course, there is enough in this story to conclude that *Heimskringla* represents history from loss—on the condition that it was written after 1239, which, however,

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is unlikely. We have no precise evidence of the date of composition, but there is a reference in the *Sturlunga Saga* to Snorri's nephew Sturla Sigvatsson visiting him during a period of peace between the two around 1230 and seeing some of his writings.[3] Most scholars, therefore, date the work to around this time. Thus, it is hardly possible to interpret *Heimskringla* against the background of what happened towards the end of Snorri's life. Still, there may be good reasons to consider the work from point of view of Snorri's role as an important Icelandic chieftain with a certain distance to the Norwegian monarchy.

Heimskringla does not cover recent events but ends with the Battle of Re (1177), where King Magnus Erlingsson defeated the rebellious Birchlegs. The reason for this may have been purely practical, as there already existed sagas of the following period. Nevertheless, the way *Heimskringla* ends may be significant. The battle of Re was a great victory for the young King Magnus Erlingsson, and Snorri ends by praising his courage and leadership, indicating further success. He makes no mention of Magnus's later defeat by a new pretender, Sverre, grandfather of the ruling King Håkon. Although there is no reason to be surprised at Snorri ending his work in 1177, the total absence of references to the ruling dynasty seems odd, particularly considering the fact that Snorri does mention Skule and even refers his genealogy.[4] As the relationship between Skule and Håkon was tense during most of the period when they ruled together (1217–1240), this may form further evidence of Snorri's attachment to the former.

As a politician, Snorri seems to have been typical of the contemporary Icelandic chieftains. They often sought patronage from the Norwegian king, which they had to repay with some concessions, usually promises of working for Iceland submitting to the king of Norway, promises which were only partly fulfilled or not at all. Snorri was apparently the first Icelander who did this, during his first stay in Norway, but there is little evidence that he kept his promise. His exile in 1237 may have made him more inclined to fulfil it, in particular in order to further Skule's interests. His sudden departure from Norway during Skule's rebellion would seem to indicate this, but Skule's defeat and death must have put an end to such a plan.

Snorri also includes some passages on Iceland, particularly one story dealing with the independence of the country. King Olav Haraldsson asks the Icelanders to give him a small, uninhabited island off the coast of the country, in return for his friendship and a similar territory in Norway. The Icelanders see no harm in this and are inclined to accept, until the wise Einar Nefjolvsson points to the danger. Even if the island is small, it is sufficient to hold an army. What will then happen if another Norwegian king wants to conquer Iceland? The Icelanders see the danger and refuse the request.[5]

Heimskringla thus shows both evidence of Icelandic patriotism and fear of a Norwegian conquest of the island, combined with sympathy for King Håkon's rival Skule. On the other hand, these passages comprise only a tiny part of Snorri's detailed and extensive work, covering around 300 years of the history of the Norwegian kings.

A more promising approach seems to be to consider Snorri's account of the Norwegian kings. The most important case to discuss from this point of view is the saga of St Olav, which is by far the longest, covering around one-third of the whole work. Olav Haraldsson ruled from 1015 until 1028, when he was deposed by a rebellion of the Norwegian aristocracy in alliance with King Cnut of Denmark and England. He was later killed in battle when he returned to claim the throne (1030). Shortly afterwards, he was canonized by a local synod and became the national saint of the country as well as being venerated in various other countries.

The case of St Olav presented Snorri with his greatest challenge: how could he combine his general sympathy for the aristocracy and constitutional government with respect for one of the greatest saints of the Nordic countries? In contrast to most other writers, Snorri points to the Norwegian magnates rather than Cnut as the more important of Olav's adversaries. His explanation of the rebellion consists of a series of detailed accounts of how some of the most prominent of these men became Olav's enemies.

The story begins with Asbjørn, a young and ambitious magnate in northern Norway, who has increased his influence and popularity by lavish hospitality.[6] However, bad harvests eventually threaten to put a stop to this. Asbjørn, therefore, goes south to his uncle Erling Skjalgsson of Sola, near present-day Stavanger, to buy grain from him. On his way there, he stops at Avaldsnes, a little north of Sola, where the king's bailiff, Sel-Tore, tells him that he might as well return at once, because the king has banned all export of grain from Western Norway, as he plans to visit the area himself in the same year. Nevertheless, Asbjørn continues, believing that Erling would not be bothered by the king's ban. However, Erling had just concluded a settlement with the king, which he does not want to break. Eventually, however, he finds a solution, namely, to let Asbjørn buy grain from his slaves, who were allowed to grow something on their own. As they were not the king's subjects like free men, they were allegedly not bound by the king's command. Asbjørn happily leaves for Northern Norway but is stupid enough to stop once more at Avaldsnes, where Sel-Tore confiscates his cargo. Asbjørn returns empty-handed to the ridicule of his neighbours. Next summer, he goes south once more and kills Sel-Tore.

King Olav reacts strongly against this, as Sel-Tore was a royal official, despite his low birth—Snorri hints that he descended from slaves. He captures Asbjørn and orders his execution. Erling manages to prevent this at the last moment, arriving with a great army and surrounding the king's farm. Olav gives in on the condition that Asbjørn replaces the dead bailiff. When Asbjørn fails to do this, he is killed by one of the king's men.

The immediate impression of Snorri's account is that he blames Olav. Once Asbjørn has been caught breaking the ban, why does Olav insist on his execution rather than trying to reach a settlement? Finally, Olav does this, but his condition for the settlement makes a new conflict almost inevitable. To replace a slave-born bailiff would of course be an extreme humiliation of Asbjørn, as well as of his uncle.

Some other stories may be added to this, which together explain why the three men who dealt Olav his deadly blows became his enemies. The stories begin with a local conflict between an aristocrat and the king's servant or client and then eventually involve the king himself. Snorri does not explicitly state who was right and who was wrong but gives the impression that Olav might have avoided conflict by a more moderate behaviour. However, Snorri does try to explain this behaviour, not as arrogance or haughtiness but as Olav's devotion to justice and God's will. On the other hand, Snorri clearly shows sympathy with Olav's enemies, who act to protect friends or clients or to take revenge for insults.

Snorri thus tries to manoeuvre between two opposite attitudes: on the one hand, Olav's sainthood and position as the eternal king of Norway; on the other, his sympathy as an Icelander and an aristocrat with Olav's aristocratic adversaries. Olav is the national saint of Norway and its eternal king. Nor can there be any doubt of Snorri's admiration for him. Although the sanctity is there throughout the biography, there are clear differences in the three parts into which it is divided. In the first part, Olav is a Viking chieftain and there is little mention of religion, apart from his conversion to Christianity. The second part deals with the ruler and portrays Olav as the ideal *rex iustus*, who completes the conversion of the country to Christianity, issues new laws, and rules justly and efficiently. Here there is a stronger focus on Olav's Christianity and his relationship to God. The third part, beginning with Olav's exile, is almost pure hagiography. Almost all Olav's miracles are concentrated here and his piety and obedience to God is repeatedly emphasized.[7]

It is, therefore, not impossible that Snorri is critical of Olav's behaviour in the passages discussed earlier. In particular, he must have known that Olav's demand that Asbjørn replace the dead Sel-Tore would lead to a new conflict. However, Snorri's main purpose seems to be to defend the Norwegian magnates, rather than to criticize Olav. Erling and Tore are great chieftains and honourable men who do not want to fight Olav but are forced to do so because of the behaviour of their relative, who acts spontaneously and imprudently.

Despite Snorri's sympathy with the Norwegian magnates, the following events make it clear that Olav was right: the consequence of his fall was increasing injustice and arbitrariness during the Danish-dominated rule in the following years. A reaction to this resulted in two prominent Norwegian magnates going to Russia to bring Olav's son Magnus back to Norway and expel the Danes. Magnus proved to be both a great and successful warrior and a ruler with a good relationship to the aristocracy.

This sketch of Snorri as a historian largely conforms to what may be expected of an Icelandic aristocrat. He is not anti-royal, but he prefers kings with a good relationship to the aristocracy and is therefore not without criticism of St Olav, who fails in this respect. As the few quotations from his work provided next may indicate, he is an excellent writer and often shows his superiority to other saga writers when his version of an episode is compared to theirs. Above all, he is a brilliant political historian, notably in his long saga of St Olav, where he gives an overall interpretation of his reign, explaining Olav's successes as well as his failures, and

gives a complex explanation of his ultimate defeat. We know little of his knowledge of historical texts from other countries, but there is little to suggest any deep influence from them. His main sources of inspiration must have been Icelandic historical writings and—not least—his political experience, although he was more successful as a historian than as a politician.

Extract

From *Heimskringla,* ed. Finnur Jónsson (Copenhagen: Gad, 1911).

Snorre presents the following account of the confrontation between Erling and King Olav:

When he [the king] came to the door, Erling went before the door and bowed to the king *and greeted him. The king answered and bade God help him. Then Erling said: "I have been told that Asbjørn, my kinsman, has committed a great crime, and it is bad if anything has happened that did not please you, my lord. Now I have come to offer amends for him and the fine that you will impose, in return for his life, limbs and the right to remain in the country." The king answers: "It seems to me, Erling, that you now believe to have Asbjørn's cause in your power, and I do not know why you care to offer amends for him. I believe that you have assembled a great army in order to decide the issue between us."*

Erling answers: "You need not remind me that when we have met earlier, I have had few men to confront you with. But now I shall not hide what I have in mind, that I want us to part in agreement, or else it is unlikely that there will be more meetings between us." Then Erling was red like blood in his face.[8]

Asbjørn's death and its consequences are described in the following way: two men in Northern Norway, Karle and Asmund, join Olav's service. They learn about Asbjørn's whereabouts and seek him out. One day they are sailing, Karle identifies Asbjørn on another ship and points him out to Asmund: "there sits Selsbane by the rudder in a blue gown." Asmund answers: "I shall give him a red gown." Then Asmund shot at Asbjørn Selsbane with a spear and it hit him in the middle and pierced through him so that he fastened in the hull of the boat. Asbjørn fell dead from the rudder. Afterwards they went different ways. . . .

They [Asbjørn's men] moved Asbjørn's body north to Bjarkøy. Sigrid [Asbjørn's mother] then let send for Tore Hund at Bjarkøy. He arrived when they were caring for Asbjørn's body according to their custom. And when they left, Sigrid chose gifts for her guests. She accompanied Tore to his ship and when they parted, she said: "So it has been now, Tore, that Asbjørn, my son, listened to your friendly advice. Now his life was not long enough to reward you as was his due. Now, although I seem less apt to this than he would have been, I shall nevertheless have the will. Now, here is a gift that I will give you, and I want that it becomes you well—it was a spear—here is the spear that pierced Asbjørn, my son, and there is still blood on it, so that you can remember better the wound you saw on your

nephew. Now you would act like a brave man if you let this spear leave your hands so that it stood in Olav the Big's [King Olav's] breast. Then she went away.

Tore was so struck by her words that he was unable to answer and neither did he drop the spear, and neither was he aware of the quay and he would have fallen into the sea if his men had not got hold of him and supported him when he went over to the ship. Tore and his men rowed away until they came south to Trondheim and met King Olav.[9]

Translated by Sverre Håkon Bagge

Notes

1 Lauritz Weibull, "Kritiska Undersökningar i Nordens historia omkring år 1000", in *Nordisk historia. Forskningar och undersökningar*, ed. Lauritz Weibull (Stockholm: Natur och Kultur, 1948).
2 Sverre Bagge, *Society and Politics in Snorri Sturluson's Heimskringla* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press).
3 Bagge, *Society and Politics*, 14, with references.
4 *Heimskringla. History of the Kings of Norway*, trans. Lee M. Hollander (Austin, TX: University of Texas Press): 660 (hereafter cited as "Hollander"); *Heimskringla*, 511.
5 Hollander, 394–95; *Heimskringla*, 302–05.
6 Hollander, 377–93; *Heimskringla*, 288–302.
7 Bagge, *Society and Politics*, 181–86.
8 *Heimskringla,* 296 [Bagge translation].
9 *Heimskringla,* 301–02 [Bagge translation].

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5

ATÂ-MALEK JOVEYNI (1226–1283)

Charles Melville

Atâ-Malek Joveyni (or Juvayni) was a member of a long-serving family of Persian bureaucrats from Joveyn in Khorasan, a region that bore the brunt of the devastating Mongol conquests under Chinggis Khan (d. 1227), which laid to waste the great cities of Transoxania and eastern Iran, such as Balkh, Bokhara, Herat, Merv and Nishapur. These were large centres of population, learning and trade on the major routes across Asia. Growing up in the immediate aftermath of these traumatic events, Joveyni entered the service of the new regime under the wing of his father, Bahâ al-Din, who had been received at court by Ogedei Khan, son and successor of Chinggis Khan, in 1236. Atâ-Malek travelled widely in his father's company across the empire, and finally made a journey in the entourage of the Mongol viceroy in Iran, Arghun Aqa, to Qaraqorum, the Mongol capital. He arrived in May 1252, after the accession of Mongke Khan, grandson of Chinggis, and it was here, a year later, that he accepted the task of writing a history of the Mongol conquests, "complying with the suggestion of friends, which is a definite command," "in order to perpetuate the excellent deeds and immortalize the glorious actions of the Lord of the Age,"[1] a turn of phrase that suggests a commission from the Great Khan, whose "magnificent and awful" presence he had witnessed at the Mongol court.

Joveyni returned to Iran with a decree confirming Bahâ al-Din as chief minister, and on the death of his father he himself effectively shared this role with two other officials under Arghun Aqa. By 1255 Mongke Khan's younger brother, Hulegu, was on his way west at the head of a massive Mongol expedition to complete the conquest of the lands of the Abbasid caliphate: western Iran, Iraq, Mesopotamia and eastern Anatolia. The first stop was to eliminate the "Assassin" castles of the Isma'ilis in the Alborz mountains, crowned by the surrender of Alamut in 1256, upon which Joveyni, in Hulegu's entourage, was able to inspect the famous library and choose many valuable books for himself.

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Joveyni went on to accompany Hulegu on his assault on the Abbasid capital, Baghdad, which fell in 1258. This ushered in the Ilkhanid regime in the West—the dynasty notionally subject to their cousins in China, the Great Khans descended from Mongke (d. 1259) in the East—that became fully consolidated under Hulegu and his successors. Joveyni was appointed civilian governor of Baghdad and the surrounding former caliphal territories in 1259. He survived several intrigues, including a failed Isma'ili assassination attempt, before finally falling victim to his enemies at court and died of a fall, possibly following a heart attack, in Arran in the south Caucasus on 5 March 1283; he documented these later travails in two *risâla*s (tracts) shortly before his death.[2]

Although not living through the first Mongol invasions, he was well placed to understand their consequences and to gather information from eye-witness sources as well as his own direct experiences of events under Chinggis Khan's successors. His *History of the World-Conqueror* (*Târikh-e Jahângoshâ*) is a source of the utmost importance for the period.[3] We have no history of the conquests written by (as opposed to for) the Mongols, and it is unfortunate that we have no account of their campaigns from their own point of view. Although his work is not, therefore, a case of "history written by the victors," it is nevertheless a history of their victories but narrated from the perspective of the defeated.

The work is in three volumes, of which the first describes the rise of the Mongols and their assault on the West. The destruction and losses are described in chilling detail by the author, giving unrealistically huge tallies of those killed but providing impressionistic evidence of the perceived scale and impact of these events. At Nishapur, for example, they severed the heads of the slain from their bodies and heaped them up in piles . . . *Their lands died for the loss of those (Ar. faqd) who had departed/it was as though they were its soul*. Abodes and dwelling places were levelled with the dust . . . rose gardens became furnaces.[4]

A long account of Ogedei Khan's justice and generosity immediately follows this passage, with numerous anecdotes that relieve the horror of the endless trail of destruction undertaken by Chinggis.

The second volume is devoted to the history of Persia in the century before the Mongol invasions, most notably the rule of the Khoremzshahs, Ghurids and Qara Khitai. This presents such a gloomy picture of endless warfare, treachery and violence that it might be supposed to suggest that the Mongols were not much worse than what had gone before. For Sultan Muhammad, whose misrule had effectively brought on Mongol assault, "filled with every kind of despair . . . the dirge in the wilderness of his sorrowing heart was:

> Neither the pleasure of union with the Beloved has
> remained, nor yet the Beloved.
> Nothing has remained of anything but grief and care."[5]

The running theme of much of this narrative is the role of Fate and the unpredictability of the World, a topic to which Joveyni repeatedly returns as he moralizes on

the death and destruction of one sultan and dynasty after another and the replacement of the notables with the riff-raff and undeserving: a topic that preoccupies the author as he sees the collapse of the old order and the rise of unscrupulous parvenues taking advantage of the upheavals in politics and society: the typical view of revolutions of those whose world is overturned by them.

The third volume covers the history of the Isma'ilis and Hulegu Khan's capture of their castle, at which point Joveyni brings his *History* to a close, celebrating the destruction of this heretical Islamic sect not only as a blessing—travellers "pray for the fortune of the happy king who uprooted their foundations and left no trace of any one of them"—but as a warning for those who reflect (Koran, vi, 116), to which Joveyni adds the pregnant, final phrase of the book: "may God do likewise to all tyrants!"[6] The structure of the work, which darts back and forth with several repetitions, tends to lead the narrative from the negative to the more positive aspects of the Mongol invasions.

It is not obvious that Joveyni himself suffered loss, except loss of his property at his demise and fear of the intrigues of his enemies. He secured an important and no doubt lucrative role in the provincial administration of Iraq, his brother Shams al-Din was first minister under the first three Ilkhans, thus affording him further protection and patronage, and he himself was able to buy a quarter of the ruined town of Khabushan (Quchan) from the inhabitants, an investment that must have paid off handsomely when in 1256 on his way west, Hulegu agreed to meet the expense of rebuilding the town from the treasury. Joveyni remarks that "no charge fell upon the people," but of course no charge fell on him, either.[7]

Joveyni was therefore faced, as a chronicler of his times, with the dilemma of reporting truthfully what he witnessed and learned of the disasters that beset his country, while seeking to explain and even justify what had happened for his readers in terms to which they could relate. He has been accused of being a servile, even "nauseating" flatterer, seemingly endorsing and even praising the Mongol conquerors.[8] This assessment could suggest one characteristic of "history written from loss," the servile effort of the defeated to ingratiate himself with the victor, thereby revealing what it is like to be the victim of events. But it must be remembered, first, that Joveyni completed his *History* in 1260—the year after being appointed to Baghdad after its conquest, which he does not even mention. It is moot whether this was because he was "too busy," too sickened by the event or indifferent to it, or because he wanted to end his work on the high point of the destruction of the Isma'ili castles: the point is that his History covers only the conquest phase of Mongol history, at a time when he was most probably writing at the "request" of the highest level at court and in everyday contact with senior officials. He was hardly in a position to write the sort of tirade that his fellow historian Juzjâni, safely tucked away in Delhi, could pen from a comfortable distance.[9] Joveyni says nothing of the more constructive years of his governorship of Iraq, when he used his authority to undertake important public works, most notably digging a new canal and restoring cultivation.[10]

Second, although he records the Mongol atrocities quite fully, albeit in somewhat metaphorical style,[11] he cannot be said to be glorifying them. And, in fact, it is highly unlikely that any Mongol patron could have read or understood his account, for Joveyni's language is highly literary, full of Arabic vocabulary and written in the ornate prose style favoured by the professional bureaucrats, with numerous quotations from the Koran and apposite verses of Arabic and Persian poetry interspersed throughout the text, particularly quotations from the eleventh-century Persian epic of the heroic pre-Islamic past, the *Shahnama* or "Book of Kings."[12] The latter was particularly relevant as one of its central themes is the cycle of wars and rivalries between Iran and "Turan" or the Central Asian steppe warriors across the Oxus, of which the Mongol invasions could be viewed as a new episode. In the epic, the Iranians won, of course.

Assuming, then, that the main audience for his work was his fellow litterateurs and guardians of Iran's cultural heritage, in the face of the boorish new masters who filled government offices and whose manners and ignorance he so eloquently derided in the opening passages of his book,[13] it is evident that his refined language conveys a powerful vehicle for asserting Iranian and Islamic values seemingly threatened with extinction. Its exaggerated flattery of the Mongol ruling elite, in a rhetorical style and vocabulary that conveys only an allusive sense of meaning, can also be a disguise for heavy irony. On the other hand, praising virtues, such as justice in particular, expressed the hope that they will, actually, become a reality. If Joveyni felt any loss especially keenly, it was in the threat to learning, the destruction of libraries and the degradation of public life, which he and his brother attempted to counteract through their patronage of many scholars and poets.

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The first extract gives a taste of the impact and severity of the Mongol invasions, making it clear that, indeed, Iran and Transoxania were conquered territories and how much was lost in terms of lives and city infrastructure. It is noticeable that much of what happened was doomed by Fate. This is one way in which the defeated could try to come to terms with what occurred; another was through the use of more religious terminology and seeing it as a punishment for their sins. This point is given a striking expression in the second extract, which describes the highly improbable moment when Chinggis Khan mounted the pulpit and delivered a sermon to the population of Bokhara—after which he burned the city, killed the defenders, and drove the citizens into the plain, sparing their lives but recruiting the able-bodied men to join his troops to attack Samarqand. Another mechanism for mitigating the blame for these events on the Mongols is by showing that it was the Muslims themselves who were responsible, specifically the Khorezmshah Sultan Muhammad, who provoked the attack, as related in the third extract, by ordering the murder of Chinggis Khan's merchant caravan. The language in this passage (lightly modified) is considerably more ornate than in the first two, cloaking the rage and murderous intentions of Chinggis under elegant and superfluous diction.

Extracts

From *Genghis Khan. The History of the World-Conqueror by 'Ala-ad-Din 'Ata-Malik Juvaini*, trans. J.A. Boyle, 2 vols (2nd ed., Manchester: University Press, UNESCO Publishing, 1997), 1:96–7, 104–7, 80–81. Available to download on Open Access at: https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000108630?1=null&queryId=4648027d-ec3e-4e00-a31d-c72a173a5026.

1 Chingiz-Khan came to these countries [Transoxania] in person. The tide of calamity was surging up from the Tatar army, but he had not yet soothed his breast with vengeance nor caused a river of blood to flow, as had been inscribed by the pen of Destiny in the roll of Fate. When, therefore, he took Bokhara and Samarqand, he contented himself with slaughtering and looting once only, and did not go to the extreme of a general massacre. As for the adjoining territories that were subject to these towns . . ., since for the most part they tendered submission, the hand of molestation was to some extent withheld from them. . . . The prosperity and well-being of these districts have in some cases attained their original level and in others have closely approached it. It is otherwise with Khorasan and Iraq, which countries are afflicted with a hectic fever and chronic ague: every town and every village has been several times subjected to pillage and massacre and has suffered this confusion for years, so that even though there be generation and increase until the Resurrection the population will not attain to a tenth part of what it was before. The history of which may be ascertained from the records of ruins and midden-heaps declaring how Fate has painted her deeds upon palace walls.

2 When Chingiz-Khan left the town he went to the festival *musalla* [prayer hall] and mounted the pulpit; and, the people having been assembled, he asked which were the wealthy among them. Two hundred and eighty persons were designated . . . and were led before him. He then began a speech, in which, after describing the resistance and treachery of the Sultan [the Khorezmshah Muhammad] he addressed them as follows: "O people, know that you have committed great sins, and that the great ones among you have committed these sins. If you ask me what proof I have for these words, I say it is because I am the punishment of God. If you had not committed great sins, God would not have sent a punishment like me upon you." When he had finished speaking in this strain, he continued his discourse with words of admonition, saying, "There is no need to declare your property that is on the face of the earth; tell me of that which is in the belly of the earth." . . . Although not subjecting them to disgrace or humiliation, they began to extract money from these men; and when they delivered it up they did not torment them by excessive punishment or demanding what was beyond their power to pay. And every day, at the rising of the greater luminary, the guards would bring a party of notables to the audience-hall of the World-Emperor. . . . One man had escaped from Bokhara after its capture and come to Khorasan. He was questioned about the

fate of that city and replied: "They came, they sapped, they burnt, they slew, they plundered and they departed."

3 Before this order arrived one of the merchants devised a stratagem and escaped from the straits of prison. . . . He made his way to the Khan and informed him of what had befallen his companions. These tidings had such an effect on the Khan's mind that the control of repose and tranquillity was removed, and the whirlwind of anger cast dust into the eyes of patience and clemency while the fire of wrath flared up with such a flame that it drove the water from his eyes and could be quenched only by the shedding of blood. In this fever Chingiz-Khan went up alone to the summit of a hill, bared his head, laid his face in the dust and for three days and nights prayed, "I was not the cause of stirring up this trouble: grant me strength to take vengeance." He came down from there, meditating action and making ready for war. . . . He then dispatched envoys to the Sultan to remind him of the treachery which he had needlessly occasioned and to advise him of his intention to march against him; so that he might prepare for war and equip himself with thrusting and striking weapons.

Now it is a fully established fact that whoever plants a dry root never reaps any harvest from it, while whoever plants the sapling of opposition by common consent gathers its fruit, namely repentance and regret. And so the fortunate Sultan had an evil outcome from the harshness of his disposition and the violence of his manner and nature. In the end, his descendants had to taste the bitterness of punishment and his successors to endure the gall of adversity.

Notes

1 *Genghis Khan. The History of the World-Conqueror, by 'Ala-ad-Din Ata-Malik Juvaini*, trans. J.A. Boyle. 2 vols, 2nd ed. (Manchester: University Press, UNESCO Publications, 1997) 1: 5, 10.
2 *Genghis Khan*, trans. Boyle, Translator's Introduction, 1: xxxii–xxxvii. Details of Joveyni's career are fully documented in E.G. Browne's "Introduction" to vol. 1 of Mirza Muhammad Qazvini's Persian edition of the text, summarized on pp. xv–xcii (including reference to the two *risâla*s). See further, George Lane, *Early Mongol Rule in Thirteenth-Century Iran: A Persian Renaissance* (London: RoutledgeCurzon, 2003): 177–212.
3 See Charles Melville, "Jahāngošā-ye Jovayni", in *Encyclopaedia Iranica*, ed. Ehsan Yarshater, vol. XIV, fasc. 4. (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 2008): 378–82.
4 *Genghis Khan*, trans. Boyle, 178; Arabic verse my translation.
5 *Genghis Khan*, 381–2.
6 *Genghis Khan*, 725.
7 *Genghis Khan*, 617.
8 David Ayalon, "The Great *Yasa* of Chingiz Khan: A Re-examination. A", *Studia Islamica* 33 (1971): 97–140, at 133; Morgan, D.O., "Persian Historians and the Mongols", in *Medieval Historical Writing in the Christian and Islamic Worlds*, ed. D.O. Morgan (London: SOAS, 1982): 114.
9 Morgan, "Persian Historians", 110–13.
10 Browne, "Introduction", xxviii–xxx; Lane, *Early Mongol Rule*, 194–97.
11 E.A. Poliakova, "The Development of a Literary Canon in Medieval Persian Chronicles: The Triumph of Etiquette", *Iranian Studies* 17 (1984): 244–47.

12 Nasrin Askari, *The Medieval Reception of the* Shāhnāma *as a Mirror for Princes* (Leiden: Brill, 2016): 68–70.
13 *Genghis Khan*, 5–8.

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6

NICCOLÒ MACHIAVELLI (1469–1527)

Gary Ianziti

Machiavelli is best known today as the author of *The Prince*, a book where he developed a new set of rules for the conduct of politics. Breaking with tradition, he grounded these rules not in abstract moral principles but in pure expediency, which in his view meant authorizing immoral conduct wherever it might prove politically advantageous. Success or failure he took to be the only criteria by which politicians should be judged. Leadership qualities we still hold sacred today—such as honesty, transparency, and accountability—he dismissed out of hand, even regarding them as potentially damaging, unless practised solely for the sake of maintaining appearances. It goes without saying that such views—now baptized as "Machiavellian"—shocked readers at the time and have continued to do so ever since. But suppose we ask what prompted Machiavelli to take on the world by openly and unashamedly advocating political conduct that we still regard as unacceptable? In what follows I will suggest that one answer to this question lies in Machiavelli's mid-career experience of failure and in his corresponding determination to win back what he had lost.

Failure came to Machiavelli in the year 1512: riding high up to that point as a key figure in the chancery of the post-Medici Florentine Republic, he was suddenly struck down by the flow of European events. The withdrawal of the French from the ongoing Italian wars deprived the republican regime in Florence of its prime protector. Left on its own, the citizen militia created, recruited, and trained by Machiavelli himself was no match for the mighty forces of Pope Julius II's Spanish-backed Holy League. Defeat came swift and disastrous. Florence was occupied, its republican institutions dismantled, the Medici restored to power. The former head of the Republic Piero Soderini fled into exile. Machiavelli—widely seen as Soderini's right-hand man—was dismissed from his post and confined to Florentine territory, where he could be kept under watch.

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Worse was to come. Early in 1513 a plot was discovered, the aim of which was to assassinate the new ruler of the city, Giuliano de'Medici, together with other members of the Medici clan. The ringleaders were rounded up along with their supporters. Machiavelli was among those suspected of involvement. There followed his arrest, imprisonment, and torture. He later reflected on how well he had borne up under the shackles and the strappado.[1] But at the time he pleaded with Giuliano to spare his life. Two of the conspirators had already been executed. One morning at dawn Machiavelli heard voices outside his cell intoning the litany for the dead and imagined the jailers were coming to take him off to the scaffold.[2] Instead, he was suddenly released in a general amnesty proclaimed to celebrate the election of Giuliano's brother, Cardinal Giovanni de'Medici, as Pope Leo X.

Machiavelli could now breathe again, but only just. Considered persona non grata by the new rulers of the city, seemingly broken and disgraced, he retired to his small farm near San Casciano, 14 kilometres from Florence. The distance was not so great that it prevented occasional visits. He also kept up as many contacts as he could through his correspondence. The Medici had made clear they mistrusted him. They were now more powerful than ever, since they ruled not only Florence but also—through the papacy—Rome and the Papal States. There were moreover plans afoot to further extend the family's influence by destabilizing and gobbling up some of the smaller states that still dotted the central Italian political landscape.

Consider then Machiavelli's position in 1513. He has lost what he held most precious in life: his post as second chancellor of the Florentine Republic. The Republic itself has vanished and been replaced by a top-down power structure under strict Medici control. The Medici distrust Machiavelli and have decided to keep him at arm's length. Relegated to his farm, far from the bustle of the chancery, Machiavelli has every reason to feel demoralized. He is only 43 years old and still at the top of his game. He has so much to offer, political skills finely honed during his busy career in public life (1498–1512). There are pressing material issues too. After all, his income has been slashed to near zero. He has a family to support, daughters to marry. For all of these reasons he longs to return to the fray: but how to bring the Medici around to accepting him as a useful addition to their staff? How indeed, unless by indicating his willingness to serve, and reminding them of his superior skills of political analysis?

The task was not an easy one. Machiavelli had powerful enemies at the papal court as well as in Florence. His direct appeals to Giuliano fell on deaf ears. The problem was to reach the Medici inner circle through a channel of communication that lay above all suspicion. Fortunately, Machiavelli had such contacts through his friendship with the Vettori brothers, Francesco and Paolo. Both were close collaborators of the Medici. Yet it was Francesco who became Machiavelli's most frequent correspondent in the crucial years 1513–1515. Francesco Vettori was in fact perfectly suited to act as a bridge between Machiavelli and the Medici. A former, if somewhat reluctant supporter of the Republic, he had shifted his loyalties with ease at the proper moment and was now Florentine ambassador in Rome. He knew Machiavelli well and respected his abilities: the two men had carried out

a delicate mission to the Holy Roman Emperor in 1508, spending the first half of that year together in foreign lands.

If ever Machiavelli needed such a friend the time was now. His early letters to Vettori betray a kind of desperation. He clearly wants to enlist the ambassador's help in convincing the Medici that he has changed his stripes, that he can be a useful and reliable member of their team, that he stands ready and willing to serve their interests. "If possible," he writes on 13 March 1513,

> remind Pope Leo of my existence; so that if it were at all possible, he might employ me in some capacity, either he himself, or some other member of the Medici clan, because I believe I would do you proud, and myself a world of good.[3]

Five days later comes a similar statement: "if these new lords of ours decide not to leave me in the lurch, I will be eternally grateful to them, and will be sure to behave in such a way that they will derive great benefit from my services."[4] These were not casual remarks. Machiavelli expected Vettori to convey them to Pope Leo and his entourage.

Vettori's initial response was to downplay his friend's chances. Machiavelli however hammered away insistently. "I just can't believe," he wrote on 16 April, "that if my case were properly handled, I would not succeed in finding some employment, if not in Florence, then in Rome, with the Pope."[5] On 21 April Vettori offered his friend an opening by inviting him to comment on an event whose significance had the experts at the curia stumped.[6] This was the recently announced Franco-Spanish truce. Machiavelli seized on the opportunity to showcase his talents. His carefully crafted response of 29 April was meant to demonstrate that his powers of analysis had suffered no decline: deprivation had actually made them more acute.[7] His hope was that his insights would impress key members of the papal court in Rome, enhancing thereby his reputation.

The correspondence between the two friends continued in this vein throughout the year 1513, but there was no change in Machiavelli's circumstances. His letter of 10 December (see extract below) paints a grim picture of what his daytime life had become since his fall from grace: the farm, the tavern, the petty quarrels, and above all the loneliness. Only upon entering his study in the evening does he find solace in his readings of the classical Roman historians. He imagines these readings as a conversation with the ancients. Here alone he is once again in his element and is able to give free rein to his true vocation, that of the statesman. In this capacity, regally attired as in his prime, he is not ashamed to interrogate the protagonists of old, to ask them to explain the reasons for their actions, and to listen carefully to their answers. And because knowledge so acquired deserves keeping, he has noted down what he has learned in a treatise *On Principalities*.[8]

Here then we have the first reference to the composition of what was soon to become the famous treatise *The Prince*. The subject of the treatise is also clearly stated in the letter: what a principality is, what different kinds there are, how they

are won, how they are maintained, why they are lost. Machiavelli's focus on this latter point—why principalities are lost—deserves particular emphasis. It reflects not only his personal experience of loss but also the more general political instability that prevailed in Italy at the time, a time when princely power rapidly gained could just as easily become princely power rapidly lost, as happened for example in the case of Cesare Borgia.[9] One of Machiavelli's leading concerns in *The Prince* is to draw upon his considerable knowledge of history and politics to teach princes how to avoid losing power once it is gained,[10] which is as much as to say that he regards holding on to power as the supreme good, even when to do so requires adopting measures that lie well beyond the bounds of acceptable standards of behaviour.

Who might be interested in reading such a book? Who indeed but princes themselves, and especially new princes? Here, Machiavelli can only be thinking of the Medici, newly installed in Florence and Rome and hungrily eyeing the prospects for further expansion. In fact he then reveals that he intends to dedicate his treatise to Giuliano de'Medici and seeks Vettori's advice as to whether or not this is a good idea. Machiavelli realizes such a move is fraught with danger. He is especially wary of the Pope's personal secretary, Pietro Ardinghelli. The letter ends with Machiavelli reiterating his earlier pleas for some sort of Medici appointment, be it that of rolling stones. He can no longer stand the enforced idleness of country life. He wants *The Prince* to become his best argument for a return to the political arena. He has conceived it primarily as a way of boosting his credentials, of convincing the Medici that with his vast wealth of knowledge and experience he can be their guide to consolidating and possibly extending their power.

These same ideas were to be repeated in the preface to Lorenzo de'Medici, to whom the completed *Prince* was finally dedicated sometime in 1515 or early 1516.[11] Even before that, however, Machiavelli had begun to cite specific chapters of the work in his correspondence with Vettori, particularly where their discussions touched upon current Medici policy.[12] Vettori had duly relayed Machiavelli's views to the Pope, and with spectacular results.[13] Pope and Cardinals were so impressed that Machiavelli appeared to be on the verge of securing a suitable appointment,[14] only to have his hopes dashed at the last minute. One of the men behind the rejection was none other than the papal secretary Ardinghelli,[15] whose scheming Machiavelli had always suspected of blocking his every move.

Odd as it may seem today—now that *The Prince* is recognized as a canonical text—the work was the result of Machiavelli's exile from power. Had he kept his lucrative job in the Florentine chancery, it is unlikely he would have found either the time or the inspiration to write his masterpiece. Instead, regime change brought his public career to an end, driving him into a sustained period of forced isolation. He nevertheless persisted in believing he could somehow be of service to the new rulers of Florence and Rome. *The Prince* was meant as a dazzling display of his political acumen, packaged in an iconoclastic format designed to open the eyes of the Medici inner circle. The radical nature of the treatise—its famously exasperated espousal of an amoral approach to politics—can ultimately be seen as a product of loss, in the sense that it was loss of position that sparked Machiavelli's

desperate desire to impress the Medici and to effect thereby a reversal of fortune. He certainly had reason to hope that a startling, realistic assessment of political action might bring him deliverance. As it turned out, that hope proved illusory. But though *The Prince* failed in its immediate goal of securing its author a second shot at a high-level career in politics, it circulated privately and was destined in time to become the most controversial political treatise ever written. Other important works by Machiavelli were to follow, including a well-regarded history of Florence, but none possessed the urgency and incisiveness of *The Prince*.

Extract

From *Lettere familiari di Niccolò Machiavelli*, ed. Edoardo Alvisi (Florence: Sansoni, 1883), 305–310.

Niccolò Machiavelli to Francesco Vettori

10 December 1513

To His Benefactor, the Honourable Florentine Ambassador to the Supreme Pontiff, Francesco Vettori in Rome

. . . I'm living here on my farm . . . and now I'll tell you what my life is like. I get up in the morning at sunrise and head for a wood I am having cut down; I spend a couple of hours there checking the work done the day before and pass some time with the woodcutters. . . . Leaving the wood I go to a spring, and thence to one of my bird traps. I've got a book with me, either Dante or Petrarch, or one of the lesser poets, like Tibullus or Ovid: I read about their amorous adventures and their love affairs; I recall my own and lose myself a while in these thoughts.

Next I take the road to the local tavern, chat with people passing through, inquire about the latest news from their neck of the woods, hear different stories, and note the strange fancies and foibles of men. By now mealtime has come, and I share with my family whatever food my poor farm and tiny patrimony provide. After lunch I return to the tavern: there I usually find the owner, a butcher, a miller, and a couple of bakers. With these fellows I waste the rest of the day in revelry, playing at cards and backgammon, arguing, trading a thousand insults, and most of the time we are squabbling over a penny or two, but our shouting can nevertheless be heard as far away as San Casciano. By carousing with such louts I sweep the cobwebs out of my brain and blow off steam, cursing the malice of Lady Fortune, happy to let her walk all over me in this way, just to see if she will be ashamed of herself.

When evening comes I return home and go to my study; and at the door I remove my mud-spattered, filthy day garb, and don the royal robes imposed by courtly etiquette. Thus suitably attired I advance into the hallowed halls of the ancients where, warmly welcomed as their guest, I taste of that nourishment that is mine alone, the nourishment I was born for. Here I make bold to speak up, and ask the men of old to explain the reasons for their actions, and they answer me

out of their kindness; and for four hours I no longer feel depressed, I forget all my troubles, I fear not poverty, and death itself ceases to terrify me, so completely am I absorbed in these encounters. And because Dante says that knowledge does not qualify as such unless it is retained,[16] I have noted down what I have learned from these conversations and composed a little work *On Principalities*, where I delve as deeply as I can into the thinking on this subject, discussing what a principality is, the various kinds that are found, how they are acquired, how they are maintained, why they are lost. And if ever one of my flights of fancy pleased you, you should enjoy this one; and it should find favour too with a prince, especially with a new prince, which is why I am dedicating it to His Magnificence Giuliano de'Medici. Filippo Casavecchia[17] has seen what I have written and can tell you something about it, as well as about the discussions the two of us have had. Keep in mind though that I am still revising the work and adding new material. . . .

My discussions with Filippo turned on whether or not it was a good idea to present my little work on principalities to Giuliano de'Medici; and if it was a good idea, should I bring it down to Rome with me, or rather send it to you? What argued for not presenting it was that Giuliano might at best not even read it, and that Ardinghelli might then steal the credit for this latest work of mine. What argued for presenting it were the dire straits I find myself in: I'm literally worn out and can't go on much longer like this without ending up a penniless object of contempt. And besides, I want desperately for the Medici to employ me in some capacity, be it just in rolling a stone. True, if I were to fail to win them over with my little book, I would be terribly disappointed; but if by any chance they were to read it, they would see that the fifteen years I have spent in politics have not been wasted in sleeping or playing games, and they would be glad to hire someone who has accumulated such a vast wealth of political experience at no cost to them. Plus there is absolutely no reason for them to doubt my loyalty, because I have always been dependable and now is no time for me to start betraying the trust of my employer. After all, a person who has been loyal and faithful for the entire forty-three years of his life is not about to change his spots: my poverty itself testifies to my honesty and loyalty. . . .

All translations, including extract, by Gary Ianziti

Notes

1 Niccolò Machiavelli, *Lettere*, ed. Franco Gaeta (Milan: Feltrinelli, 1961): 234–35.
2 Niccolò Machiavelli, *Il teatro e tutti gli scritti letterari*, ed. Franco Gaeta (Milan: Feltrinelli, 1965): 362–63.
3 Machiavelli, *Lettere*, 232.
4 Machiavelli, *Lettere*, 235.
5 Machiavelli, *Lettere*, 244.
6 Machiavelli, *Lettere*, 249.
7 Machiavelli, *Lettere*, 250–58 (rough draft); 510–16 (final version).
8 In Machiavelli's language a "principality" is any state or territory ruled over by a single individual. Kings, popes, emperors, dukes, and the like can all, in keeping with this usage, be generically described as princes ruling over principalities.

9 Niccolò Machiavelli, *Il principe e Discorsi sopra la prima deca di Tito Livio*, ed. Sergio Bertelli (Milan: Feltrinelli, 1960): 33–40. (*The Prince*, chapter 7).
10 Machiavelli, *Il principe e Discorsi,* 16–25 (*The Prince*, chapter 3).
11 Machiavelli, *Il principe e Discorsi,* 13–14.
12 See, for example, Machiavelli's letter to Vettori of 20 December 1514, where he advises Pope Leo to avoid taking refuge in neutrality, citing passages verbatim from *The Prince*, chapters 19 and 21: Machiavelli, *Lettere*, 364; Machiavelli, *Il principe e Discorsi*, 75, 91.
13 Vettori to Machiavelli, 30 December 1514: Machiavelli, *Lettere*, 369.
14 Machiavelli to Vettori, 31 January 1515: Machiavelli, *Lettere*, 374–75.
15 Pietro Ardinghelli to Giuliano de'Medici, 14 February 1515: Oreste Tommasini, *La vita e gli scritti di Niccolò Machiavelli*, 2 vols. (Rome: Loescher, 1883–1911): 105, 1064–1065.
16 Dante, *Paradiso*, V, 41–42.
17 A friend of Machiavelli's: see, for example, Machiavelli, *Lettere*, 179–81, 183, 195–99.

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7

FELIPE GUAMAN POMA DE AYALA (CA. 1550–AFTER 1615)

Rolena Adorno

For native peoples born under Spanish colonialism, the greatest challenge was communication, and it required knowing the colonizers' language of Spanish. How could colonized native peoples make their voices heard and tell their own history? A Quechua-speaking native Andean named Felipe Guaman Poma de Ayala (ca. 1550–after 1615) provided a remarkable answer in his manuscript book, *El primer nueva corónica y buen gobierno* [The first new chronicle and good government]. It is monumental, consisting of 1,200 pages, 400 of which are full-page drawings created by Guaman Poma's own hand.[1] His reliance on the visual medium underscores his tentativeness about writing in his non-native Spanish. The work is unique: there is no similarly comprehensive Indigenous account of the pre-Columbian past and the Spanish colonial present like it. Today it occupies an honoured place in UNESCO's Memory of the World Register (Figure 7.1).

Guaman Poma called his book a "new chronicle" because its history was future-oriented and revisionist. He did not repeat Spanish or Andean versions of the Spanish conquest of the Incas but rather crafted his own version of Andean history that would result, he hoped, in the reform of colonial governance and, ultimately, the restoration of Indigenous sovereignty over the Andes.[2] His work is also encyclopaedic; in making his proposals for governmental reform, his "buen gobierno" [good government] surveys the castes, classes, institutions, and practices of Andean society. Thus, he addressed the contemporary history of colonial Peru even as he recast the distant Andean past.

Guaman Poma referred to his work as a "chronicle or general history" because he framed it to follow the model of Augustine's ages of the world, beginning with Adam; he complemented it with a parallel sequence of successive eras of Andean and Inca history crafted from Western and autochthonous sources. Guaman Poma wove the universalizing Christian and specifically Andean strands together so that the birth of Jesus Christ coincided with the reign of the second Inca, but he did not naively weave the civilizations of the other great Abrahamic religions (Judaism and Islam) into the Western fold. His boldest move was to deny the historical Spanish military conquest

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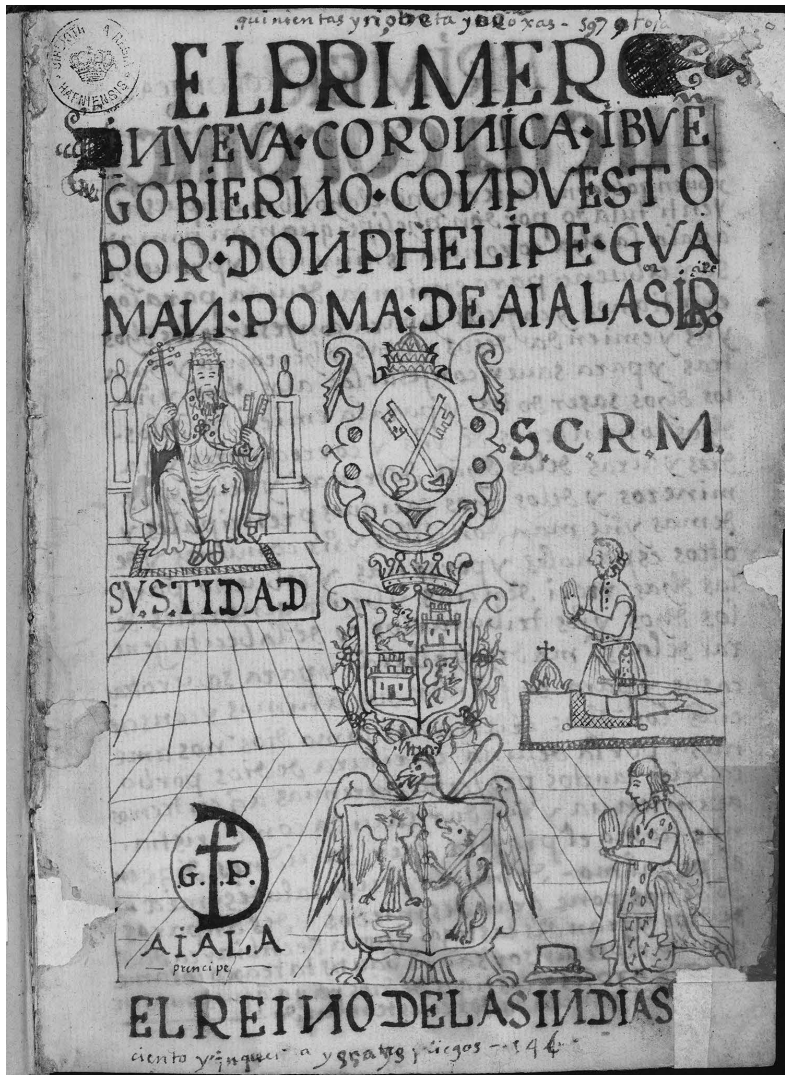

FIGURE 7.1 "*The first New Chronicle and Good Government composed by Don Felipe Guaman Poma de Ayala, lord and prince*." GkS 2232 4o, frontispiece.

Source: Courtesy of the Royal Library of Denmark, Copenhagen.

of Peru. He argued instead that the reigning Huáscar Inca's representatives, whom Guaman Poma identified as his own forebears and kinsmen, peacefully and voluntarily transferred the political authority of the Inca to the Spanish invaders Francisco Pizarro and Diego de Almagro, representing the emperor Charles V. Thus, Guaman Poma asserted, "no ubo conquista" [there had been no conquest] (Figure 7.2).

FIGURE 7.2 "*The First Ambassador of Huáscar Inca meets the Ambassador of the Emperor.*" GkS 2232 4o, 377.

Source: Courtesy of the Royal Library of Denmark, Copenhagen.

Because the general justification for the Spanish invasions in the Americas was Christian evangelization, Guaman Poma cemented his revisionist narrative with an essential corollary: Christianity had arrived in the Andes long before the Spanish invasion, in the apostolic era of the first millennium.

For Guaman Poma, the history that he sought to tell refused to be confined. Day-to-day colonial reality overwhelmed his efforts to make sense of things. In his attempt to interpret the historical experience of foreign conquest and colonization, he made use of the full gamut of Spanish letters as he knew them. To render ancient Andean and modern colonial history, he relied on such genres as professionally written annals and chronicles, compendia of the deeds of Christian kings, juridical treatises, polemical tracts, and catechisms and sermons, as well as on the expressive modes of allegory and satire. By employing the possibilities offered by lettered Spanish culture, Guaman Poma revealed its inadequacies in interpreting native American experience before and after the Spanish invasion and conquest. He unmasked the triumphalist pretentions of the Spanish conquest histories and challenged the theoretical juridical formulations about the rights of the conqueror. As he cast the members of the Inca dynasty in the heroic mould of great deeds, he usurped its mantle of Christian nobility and morality and conferred it upon the Incas and their royal consorts.

Guaman Poma revealed the racism of the proselytizing missionary sermon by turning its cruel attacks on the Andeans against the colonists themselves. His most ringing and dramatic condemnation of the foreigners' interventions came in the satirical Quechua sermons in which he replaced lessons of the Christian gospel with expressions of the Spaniards' criminal greed. This, too, was his telling of local, contemporary history. One of the greatest implications of Guaman Poma's efforts lies in his critique of Spanish letters, presenting his work as an act of literate resistance that turned Spanish historical and literary culture into its own enemy. He also revealed the subtle, ambiguous ways in which accommodation and resistance coexist in native responses to colonialism.

How did Guaman Poma learn Spanish and how did he come to write his book? The written word was the symbol and strength of Spanish colonial political and religious authority. The oral command of Spanish was essential in administrating colonial operations, and young Andeans like Guaman Poma were taught Spanish to be able to assist in those negotiations. He learned the rudiments of the Spanish language as he worked, likely by force and as an adolescent, identifying the practitioners of traditional Andean religion so that supervising Christian officials could humiliate and punish them. Later, Guaman Poma worked as an interpreter and witness in the transactions that deeded communal Andean lands to private Spanish colonial owners.

For the colonized like Guaman Poma, however, communication in Spanish was a double-edged sword. Because its use allowed for communication across linguistic and cultural boundaries, its bearers were often regarded with distrust. The Spanish colonizers were reluctant to spread the Spanish language too broadly because they viewed native Andeans, mixed-race *mestizos*, and enslaved Africans who gained such linguistic competency as potentially dangerous: Where did the loyalties of such modestly bilingual subjects lie? If for the purpose of evangelization Spanish churchmen relied on Spanish-speaking natives whom they called *indios ladinos*,

those same individuals were often called *ladinejos* ["ladino jerks"] and treated with suspicion if not contempt by the larger colonial community.

Having observed that the written Spanish language served the interests of the colonizers, Guaman Poma hoped that its use could equally benefit the Andeans. His portrayal of a Christianized Andean lord—note his Spanish-style dress and the Roman Catholic rosary on his desk—could as well be a portrait of the author-artist himself (Figure 7.3).

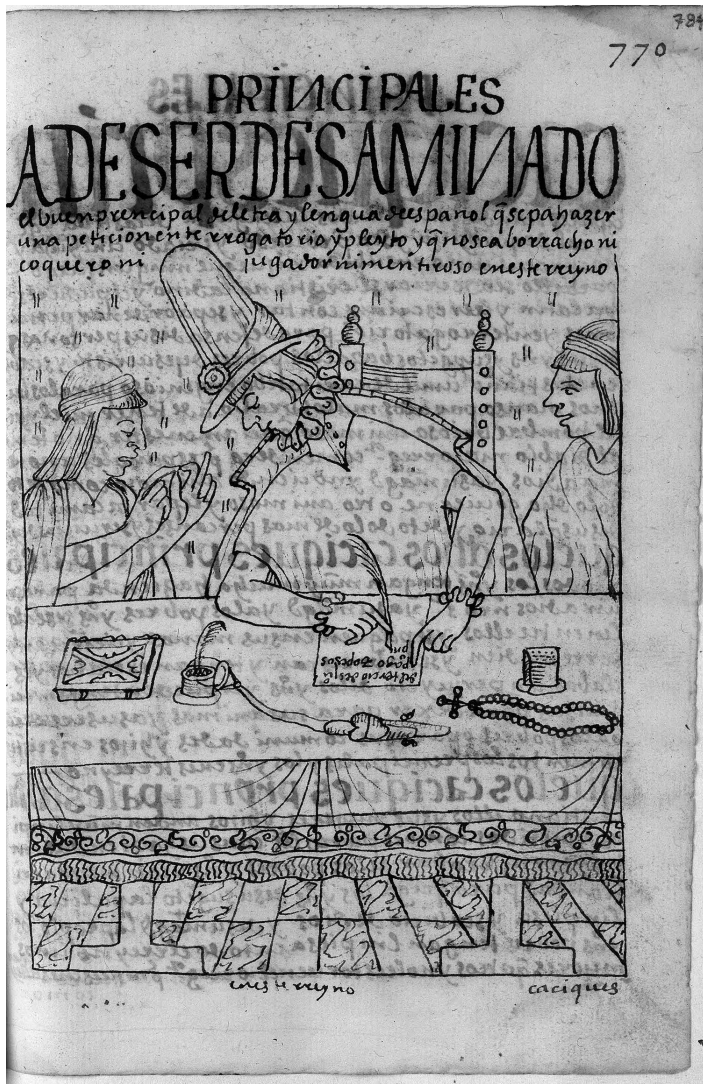

FIGURE 7.3 "*A Christian Andean lord prepares a list of grievances to be delivered to Spanish colonial authorities on behalf of the Andean petitioner who seeks redress.*" GkS 2232 4o, 784.

Source: Courtesy of the Royal Library of Denmark, Copenhagen.

By the same means, Guaman Poma sought to protect and confirm his and his kinsmen's titles to disputed ancestral lands outside the provincial city of Huamanga. His claims were upheld in the viceregal capital of Lima, but local authorities in Huamanga rejected them, convicting him of falsely representing himself as a person of inherited rank and sentencing him to a two-year expulsion from the provincial city.[3]

The year was 1600. At this juncture, there were no further avenues of social intervention available to Guaman Poma, either as a low-level adjunct to colonial administrators or as a steward of inherited ancestral lands. This is when he turned to writing his book. He dedicated it to the Spanish king Philip III and when he completed it in early 1615, he wrote a letter to the monarch announcing his work.[4] Then he set out for Lima with his completed manuscript in hand (Figure 7.4).

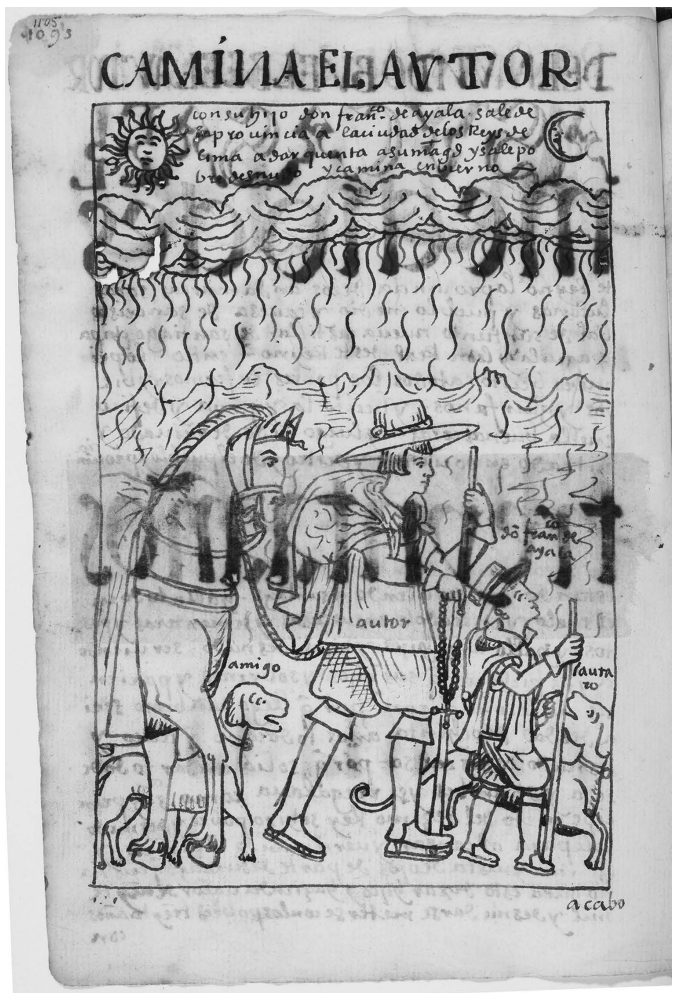

FIGURE 7.4 "*Guaman Poma carries his completed manuscript to Lima*." GkS 2232 4o, 1105.

Source: Courtesy of the Royal Library of Denmark, Copenhagen.

Guaman Poma's work is less a statement than a trajectory. What began as his hopeful, optimistic act of writing ended when he added his final, autobiographical chapter, "Camina el autor" [The author journeys], written after his arrival in Lima and having witnessed the brutality of extirpation campaigns along the way. Guaman Poma utters a heart-wrenching lament: "Where are you, our lord king Philip?" In doing so, he evokes the ancient Quechua prayer, "*Pacha camac, maypim canqui?*" [Creator of the world, where are you?].[5] If the ancient Andeans had been seeking the source of all worldly creation, Guaman Poma here seeks that of worldly justice. He answers his own question: "There is no god and no king," he writes, "they are in Rome and Castile."[6] Nevertheless, Guaman Poma tucked this new chapter into the already-sewn manuscript and delivered it to the viceroyal authorities. From Lima it was dispatched to the royal court in Madrid, after which it ultimately arrived, in the 1660s, at the royal house of Denmark.[7]

Extract

From "El primer nueva corónica y buen gobierno" [The first new chronicle and good government], GkS 2232 4º, 714–16. The Royal Library of Denmark, Copenhagen. http://www5.kb.dk/permalink/2006/poma/info/en/frontpage.htm.

[Translator's Note: Guaman Poma presents himself as an Andean noble (see Figure 7.1) who has become an impoverished spokesman for the poor while investigating their hardships (see Figure 7.4). He urges the Roman Catholic church authorities, particularly the much-feared officials who were rewarded for punishing the followers of traditional Andean spiritual practices, to use his book as a guide to proper conduct and to ferret out clerical evildoers within their midst; he warns them against abuse and enjoins them to temper their behaviour for the sake of the wellbeing of the Andean peoples.]

May Your Lordships read this book and its determinations and administer justice. This has been written not to do ill or harm but rather to serve God and seek justice and the reform of those Christians who are arrogant and evil. Your Lordships should know that if I wrote about every priest or Spaniard, there would not be enough paper, so I speak about all of them at once.

Your Lordships should use this book to administer justice and to ensure that every official who carries its acts justly. They all should keep records as they inspect the local communities and punish wrongdoers. And every ecclesiastical official should have a copy of this book, and parish priests should have theirs, every one of them, to confess the Indians and learn the languages, exercise their consciences, and restrain their passions.

As the author Don Felipe Guaman Poma de Ayala, I say that the Christian reader will be astonished and troubled on reading this book and its judgements and will ask, "Who taught you this, how can you know so much?" Well, I tell you it has taken me thirty years of toil, if I'm not mistaken, but at the very least, twenty years of privation and hardship. Leaving my houses and children and properties, I have entered the world of the poor and afflicted and, serving God and His Majesty,

I have learned native languages other than my own and, because of knowing how to read and write, I have served the learned and those who are not so, as well as those who are.

And I have been trained in the palace, that is, in the house of good government and in the highest royal court of the land, and I have served the lord viceroys, judges, presiding officers, and civil judges, as well as their very illustrious lordships, the bishops, and all the illustrious delegates of the church. And I have worked with the priests, municipal civil officers, those Spanish trustees [*encomenderos*] who hold grants to the labour and resources of the local native communities over which they rule, as well as the church and civil inspectors, serving them as an interpreter and conversing, learning about the travails of the poor Spaniards and the tormented Indians and the suffering, enslaved Blacks. I have witnessed the work of church and civil inspectors and the distribution of native lands to colonial owners.

And I deal with all of them as a poor man, and thus they reveal to me their wretchedness, and the priests, their overweening arrogance. If I were to write about all that has happened to me in the local communities because of the arrogant contempt of the priests, the municipal administrators, the encomenderos, and the native lords who collaborate with them—in short, all those who persecute the poor of Jesus Christ—you would sometimes weep, at other times laugh and have pity. I have seen it all with my own eyes, in hopes of helping the wretched and serving God and His Majesty. I have seen so many things that it is astonishing. But afterward you will accuse me of being against the priests and public officials and private citizens and against . . . the native lords who collaborate with them.

The lack of Christianity in this kingdom horrifies me, and I begin to weep, and I say that God is the great merciful One, the Holy Lamb who, despite so many sins and evils, does not send us His wrath and punishment, nor does He make the earth swallow us up, as he did to Sodom and the provinces that He consumed with holy fire. For in those provinces in pagan times, in the time of the Incas, God commanded whole communities to be swallowed up, creating a deep lagoon and consuming six settlements with the fire of heaven. Because there are in the world many saints that we do not know about, and because of the supplications of those blessed ones, God does not punish us. But I am terrified by His unrestrained, arrogant servants who are the masters of evil living. May God help us!

Do not be angry, Christian reader, on reading this book. Read it well and reform yourselves. It is true that there are municipal officials and priests and encomenderos and Spaniards, native lords, poor Indians, who are servants of Jesus Christ: Some priests have served for thirty years in a single parish, and in the city there are some very holy ones.

The good will laugh at this book, the evil will be alarmed, and it will outrage them, and they will want to kill me. But I tell you, Christian reader, you have never had a friend who has cared so much about the salvation of your soul and conscience, or who in this world has freed you from so many labours and sufferings and sins, or who has honoured you so much. For this reason, if you take this book

and read it word for word, you will affirm its truth and weep for your soul. And you will see where evil lies and where it does not.

Leaving all that behind, you will be able to speak with your lord and prelate with a clear conscience, and you will be honoured, and there will be a place for you among the great and small of the world, and you will live in harmony with the pope and the king, and they will keep you in their minds and hearts.

Reward me now with your prayers.

Translated by Rolena Adorno

Notes

1 Guaman Poma had served his artistic apprenticeship with the Mercedarian friar, Martín de Murúa, for whom he created some one hundred drawings. See Rolena Adorno and Ivan Boserup, "The Making of Fray Martín de Murúa's *Historia general del Perú*", in *The Getty Murúa: Essays on the Making of the 'Historia general del Perú'*, *The J. Paul Getty Museum Ms. Ludwig XIII 16*, ed. Thomas B.F. Cummins and Barbara Anderson (Los Angeles, CA: The Getty Research Institute, 2008): 7–75.

2 For example, Guaman Poma portrays the ancient Andeans not as pagan idolaters but rather as possessing "una sonbrilla de conocimiento del Criador" [a shadow of the knowledge of the Creator] (Felipe Guaman Poma de Ayala, *El primer nueva corónica y buen gobierno*, Gks 2232 4º, Copenhagen: The Royal Library of Denmark, 1615, 50, 52, 58, 62, 73, 201, 925).

3 For the chain of events, see Rolena Adorno, "The Genesis of Felipe Guaman Poma de Ayala's Nueva corónica y buen gobierno", *Colonial Latin American Review* 2 (1993): 53–92. http://www5.kb.dk/permalink/2006/poma/info/en/docs/adorno/1993/index.htm.

4 See Rolena Adorno, "Guaman Poma Informs the King about His Chronicle", in *Guaman Poma and His Illustrated Chronicle from Colonial Peru*, ed. Rolena Adorno (Copenhagen: Museum Tusculanum Press and the Royal Library, 2001): 79–86. The letter is conserved at the Archivo General de Indias, Sevilla in the section Audiencia de Lima 145. Its facsimile is available at: http://www5.kb.dk/permalink/2006/poma/info/en/docs/carta1615/index.htm.

5 Guaman Poma, 54, 1121–22.

6 Guaman Poma, 1136.

7 Adorno, "Witness", 16–23, reconstructs the trail from Madrid to Copenhagen. It is available at: http://www2.kb.dk/elib/mss/poma/docs/adorno/2002/witness.htm.

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8

WALTER RALEGH (CA. 1552–1618)

Nicholas Popper

Though known for the wide variety of roles he played in Elizabethan England—as courtier, pirate, poet, counsellor, soldier, and more—Walter Ralegh devoted much of the latter portion of his life to writing a massive universal history that was published in 1614 as the *History of the World*. This work is an ideal specimen of "history from loss," for while he is best known for his glittering career as Queen Elizabeth I's favourite, Ralegh turned to history as meagre consolation and lament during a period of suffering. The *History* contains no narratives celebrating the rise of worldly powers, nor any self-satisfied discourses justifying the inevitability of the status quo. Rather, Ralegh's history brims with details and minutiae of world history that he hoped his endeavour would preserve from the inevitable destructiveness of time. Moreover, it was written in response to deprivation of affection and friendship, power and patronage, influence and freedom. Loss permeates its tone, narrative, and vision of the past.

Ralegh began writing the *History* four years after Elizabeth's 1603 death. He had been imprisoned in the Tower of London later that year by her successor, James VI and I, on a questionable charge of treason. James was hostile to Ralegh for many reasons; in particular, he was swayed by improbable allegations that Ralegh spearheaded a conspiracy to replace James with Princess Arabella of Spain. At the last moment, James commuted Ralegh's execution, and the king quickly recognized that retaining such an experienced man close at hand might have benefits. Ralegh soon began writing position papers for James's government on topics ranging from war with the Spanish to potential royal matches, and while James often ignored them, his eldest son and heir presumptive Prince Henry (1594–1612) found them appealing, preferring Ralegh's militant Calvinism to James's ecumenical pacifism.

Ralegh devoted seven years to working on the *History*, which would become easily the longest of his Tower writings. Ralegh's turn to this genre reflected the common practice in early modern Europe of experienced statesmen spending their

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later years composing histories that aimed to encapsulate their wisdom.[1] Even then, the texts they produced were rarely reflections on their own achievements. More often—as in the case of Machiavelli (as discussed in this volume by Gary Ianziti)—the time devoted to such work had been opened by fall from favour, and authors typically pleaded for the readers to embrace neglected virtues and eschew the vices they perceived as dominating the world around them, perhaps hoping to earn the favour of the powers that had banished them.

While many such works examined the recent past, Ralegh conceptualized his as providing a universal history of humanity from Creation to his present, covering both civil and ecclesiastical matters. To fulfil this ambition, he imported a library of 500 books to his Tower quarters. These works represented the extraordinary scope of early modern scholarly print, containing the works of Renaissance luminaries like Machiavelli, classical sources like Livy, Latin Church Fathers such as Augustine, scriptural commentaries produced by clerics from across the contemporary religious spectrum, works of technical chronology and geography, and more. But the scale of his vision confounded its execution, for the roughly 1,500 folio pages (around 3,000 in its modern edition) of the published *History* only reached 168 BC; it did not even include Julius Caesar or Jesus. Ralegh would have covered more ground had he, like some of his contemporaries, devised the *History* as a synoptic overview of the rise and fall of kingdoms, or as a chronological chart containing major events in world history. Instead, his text was marked by minute erudition concerning questions like the location of the Garden of Eden or the names of the grandchildren of Noah as well as, occasionally, brilliant narratives vividly portraying the lives and lessons of the ancient world.

The *History* was published in 1614, and though initially recalled by royal order, after its licensed publication in 1617 it would become a lasting success, with more than dozen editions and reprints and several abridgements over the following century.[2] For almost two centuries, it was the premier English-language universal history, a staple on bookshelves across the British Atlantic. Scholars such as John Milton and David Hume took extensive notes from it or festooned their copies with manuscript annotations praising its strengths and cataloguing its errors; so too did obscure figures such as successive generations of female readers in the Cheshire town of Nantwich.[3] Moreover, Ralegh's perspective was never pinned to any one ideological framework, and while readers from all political and religious positions drew on his evidence to substantiate their beliefs—sometimes proclaiming their affinity with Ralegh, other times criticizing what they perceived as his convictions—others approached the *History* as their preeminent reference work for the ancient world.

Ralegh was executed in 1618—freed by James to lead a royally sponsored voyage to Guiana in search of El Dorado, his crew incited a diplomatically catastrophic skirmish with the Spanish—and thus he did not live to see the *History's* success. Nor does the perspective articulated by his text suggest that he would have anticipated it, for the experience of loss, defeat, and humiliation redounds through the *History*. This sense of decline and disfavour assumed several forms. The most general

one concerned the conditions of historical knowledge and writing as Ralegh and his contemporaries understood them. Modern observers have been quick to note that when discussing history's benefits, early modern European scholars incessantly invoked certain Ciceronian phrases of praise. Cicero called histories *magistra vitae*, teachers of life, and early modern authors were quick to state the practical and doctrinal benefits of histories, using this axiom to support encomiastic works lauding the virtues—and condemning the vices—of kings, statesmen, and clerics. But this was only one of Cicero's ways of praising histories, and early modern authors also reiterated his praise of histories for rescuing events of the past. In this formulation—which Ralegh conspicuously plastered on the frontispiece to the *History*—histories were the witness of time, herald of antiquity, light of truth, and life of memory.[4] Indeed, early modern European authors expanded this formulation to call them *subsidia oblivioni*, aids against forgetting. Oblivion was again the animating fear when they described histories as *tabulae ex naufragio*—literally, the planks with which a shipwrecked person preserves themself, figuratively the means of deliverance from destruction. Similarly, historians repeatedly invoked metaphors of light, casting histories as beacons that shined into the darkness to illuminate events obscured in the closing of time.

Histories, in short, were understood as efforts to stave off the time's inevitable devouring of all things. This imperative explains the size and scope of Ralegh's *History*; it aimed to consolidate sources in order to preserve the comprehensive extant knowledge of early world history. But Ralegh was aware of the limitations of such learning, and he most strongly praised histories, even those of mitigated value, as preferable to the alternative of oblivion.

Historical inquiry was thus not a sign of worldly knowledge but a gesture responding to loss. And the immanence of loss and decline also structured the specific historical narrative that Ralegh composed. The *History* traced the rise and fall of kingdoms and peoples in the ancient world; how divine favour appeared to smile and lift some to great heights; and then how diabolical arrogance, cruelty, and tyranny led to their divinely authored destruction and disappearance. It was arranged as five sections that melded two providential schemas of world history that revolved around such moments of cataclysm and disruption. The first two spanned the first four of the Six Ages of the World—a schema for world history best known from Augustine—beginning with Creation and ending with the Babylonian Captivity, when Solomon's Temple was destroyed and God's Chosen People captured and exiled. The subsequent three books roughly followed the organization of the schema of the Four Monarchies, an exegetical theory derived from the Book of Daniel that traced the movement of empire from the Assyrians to the Persians to the Greeks to the Romans—a recurring cycle in which seemingly insuperable earthly powers were reduced to dust. Accordingly, Ralegh would find a wide readership among millenarian writers who saw contemporary events as forewarning the onset of apocalypse. Similarly, when Ralegh discussed ancient figures such as King David or Alexander the Great, he typically did not emphasize their virtues but exposed their arrogance and pomposity. The devil was a more prevalent and powerful figure throughout his history than paragons of faith or justice; humanity's achievements

were always a pale comparison to divine mercy. Ralegh's story of humanity was thus a very Calvinist story of human depravity. Triumph was illusory, a symptom of pride. Histories could not be written by the winners, because there were none.

The final way in which the *History* depended on the condition of loss reflects what Ralegh wished to achieve from it. Above all he hoped his massive study would restore him to royal favour, or at least free him from incarceration. While many later scholars assumed Ralegh's ideological antipathy towards James, nothing in the *History* suggests that Ralegh was a republican monarchomach who believed that subjects were entitled to remove or even assassinate rulers guilty of violating civil or natural laws. Rather, his treatments of political obligations reveal that he believed that subjects owed their rulers obedience even if they were tyrants or heretics—a political philosophy that differed little from James's. Instead of rebuking his king, Ralegh's grandest hope while composing the *History* was likely that it would demonstrate his value as a counsellor who understood causation in a fallen world and was possessed of a worldliness and grasp of humanity that would help his king—whether James or, perhaps eventually, Henry—navigate the turbulence of their present. Again, the *History* was written not from a position of strength but in response to loss—in this case, of the royal favour that had given him status and prestige. Even Ralegh's decision to publish the incomplete text evinces not a wilful pursuit of power but a forlorn acceptance of defeat. As the final passage of the book exhibits, Ralegh hastily concluded it after the sudden death of Prince Henry and the evaporation of Ralegh's most likely route to restoration.

In short, there is little in Ralegh's *History* to suggest that a historian might or could write from a triumphant perspective. To be sure, many of his contemporaries did, extolling the worldly achievements, moral fortitude, and divine favour of kings, states, and dynasties. But they, in Ralegh's view, suffered from remarkable self-delusion, for in time their ultimate lesson would be the folly of exalting the human in the face of the divine, whose mercy alone saved humanity from its fallen nature.

Ralegh's *History* offers a case study of the myriad ways that historical study and writing could absorb and project the experience of loss, punishment, and failure. It was, at heart, a desolate gesture stimulated by humanity's fundamental condition and Ralegh's personal experience of loss. It was also, to be sure, a testimony to the power of historical knowledge. But the type of knowledge that it recommended did not celebrate human achievement but rather cautioned against doing so. For it suggested that all earthly glory is transient, merely a temporary respite from pain and calamity, and any such ephemeral triumphs will, in time, be reduced to a bleak story exemplifying the pathos of hubris.

Extracts

[Seventeenth-century spelling and capitalization have been modernized by Nicholas Popper.]

From Walter Ralegh, *The History of the World* (London: Walter Burre, 1614), A2r-A2v:

True it is, that among [history's] many other benefits, for which it has been honoured; in this one it triumphs over all humane knowledge, That it has given us life in our understanding, since the world itself had life and beginning, even to this day: yea it has triumphed over time, which besides it, nothing but eternity has triumphed over: for it has carried our knowledge over the vast & devouring space of so many thousands of years, and given so fair and piercing eyes to our mind, that we plainly behold living now, as if we had lived then, that great world . . . the wise work . . . of a great God, as it was then, when but new to it self. By it I say it is that we live in the very time when it was created: we behold how it was governed: how it was covered with waters, and again repeopled: How kings and kingdoms have flourished and fallen, and for what virtue and piety God made prosperous; and for what vice and deformity he made wretched, both the one and the other. And it is not the least debt which we owe unto history, that it has made us acquainted with our dead ancestors; and, out of the depth and darkness of the earth, delivered us their memory and fame. In a word, we may gather out of history a policy no less wise than eternal; by the comparison and application of other men's fore-passed miseries, with our own like errors and ill deservings.

I.vi.9, 97

Now the Devil, because he cannot play upon the open Stage of this World (as in those days) and being still as industrious as ever, finds it more for his advantage to creep into the minds of men; and inhabiting in the temples of their hearts, works them to a more effectual adoration of himself than ever. For whereas he first taught them to sacrifice to monsters, to dead stones, cut into faces of beasts, birds and other mixed natures; he now sets before them the high and shining idol of glory, the all-commanding image of bright gold. He tells them that truth is the goddess of dangers and oppressions . . . for true wisdom (says he) is exercised in nothing else than in the obtaining of power to oppress, and of riches to maintain plentifully our worldly delights. And if this *arch-politician* finds in his pupils any remorse, any fear of feeling of God's future judgment, he persuades them that God has so great need of men's souls, that he will accept them at any time, and upon any conditions. . . . And as the Devil our most industrious enemy was ever most diligent: so is he now more laborious than ever: the long day of mankind drawing fast towards an evening, and the world's tragedy and time near at an end.

II.xvi.1, 465

Only thus much will I say, that if practice do show the greatness of authority, even the best kings of *Judah* and *Israel* were not so tied by any laws, but that they did whatsoever they pleased in the greatest things; and commanded some of their own princes, and of their own brethren to be slain without any trial of law, being sometime by prophets reprehended, sometime not.

II.xxiii.4, 574

But in filling up the blanks of old histories, we need not be so scrupulous. For it is not to be feared that time should run backward, and by restoring the things themselves to knowledge, make our conjectures appear ridiculous: What if some good copy of an ancient author could be found, showing (if we have not it already) the perfect truth of these uncertainties? Would it be more shame to have believed in the meanwhile, Annius or Torniellius,[5] than to have believed nothing?

IV.ii.13, 191–2 [Second Pagination]

It is said and spoken in [Alexander the Great's] praise: That when his soldiers cried out against him, because they could not endure the extreme frost, and make way, but with extreme difficulty, through the snow, that *Alexander* forsook his horse, and led them the way. But what can be more ridiculous than to bring other men into extremity, thereby to show how well himself can endure it? His walking on foot did no otherwise take off their weariness that followed him, than his sometime forbearing to drink did quench their thirst, that could lesser endure it. For my own little judgment I shall rather commend that captain, that makes careful provision for those that follow him, & that seeks wisely to prevent extreme necessity, than those witless arrogant fools, that make the vaunt of having endured equally with the common soldier, as if that were a matter of great glory and importance.

V.vi.12, 776 [Second Pagination]

Oh eloquent, just and mighty Death! Whom none could advise, thou hast persuaded; what none has dared, thou have done, and whom all the world has flattered, thou only have cast out of the world and despised: thou have drawn together all the far stretched greatness, all the pride, cruelty, and ambition of man, and covered it all over the with these two narrow words, *Hic iacet* [here lies].

Lastly, whereas this book, by the title has, called itself, The first part of the *General History of the World*, implying a *Second*, and *Third* Volume; which I also intended, and have hewn out; besides many other discouragements, persuading my silence; it has pleased God to take that glorious *Prince* [Henry] out of the world, to whom they were directed; whose unspeakable and never enough lamented loss, has taught me to say with Job, *My harp also is turned to mourning, and my organ into the voice of them that weep* [*versa est in Luctum Cithara mea, & Organum meum in vocem flentium* (Job 30: 31 (KJV))].

Notes

1 See, for example, J.G.A. Pocock, *The Ancient Constitution and the Feudal Law: A Study of English Historical Thought in the Seventeenth Century* (Cambridge, MA: University Press, 1957); Gary Ianziti, *Humanistic Historiography under the Sforzas: Politics and Propaganda in Fifteenth-Century Milan* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1988); and D.R. Woolf, *The Idea of*

History in Early Stuart England: Erudition, Ideology, and the "Light of Truth" from the Accession of James I to the Civil War (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1990): 105–69.

2 See Anna Beer, *Sir Walter Ralegh and his Readers in the Seventeenth Century: Speaking to the People* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1997): 37–8, for a definitive demonstration that James did not object to Ralegh's project but rather to, as James put it, the one-sided "description of the kings that he hates, whomof he speaketh nothing but evil." *Letters of King James VI and I*, ed. by G.P.V. Akrigg (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1984): 388.

3 For Milton's notes, see British Library, London, UK, Add. Manuscript 36354; David Hume, *The History of England*, vol. 6 (Dublin, 1769): 134; For the notes of the Comberbach family of Nantwich, see Bodleian Library, Oxford, UK, shelfmark K 3.6 Art.

4 Cicero, *De Oratore*, II.ix.36.

5 Giovanni Nanni (aka Annius of Viterbo) was a Dominican friar and papal propagandist in the late fifteenth century well-known for controversial forgeries of ancient texts; Agostino Tornielli was a Barnabite monk and ecclesiastical historian contemporary with Ralegh.

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9

CHIMALPAHIN (B. 1579)

Susan Schroeder

Chimalpahin, as he came to be known, was born in 1579 in Amecameca, Chalco, an Indigenous state southeast of Mexico City. He was three generations removed from its nobility. Dominican friars had furnished primary education in Amecameca, but under unexplained circumstances in 1593 Chimalpahin went to Mexico City to live at the small church of San Antonio Abad in Xoloco, a Native district made famous as the site of the first meeting of the Aztec emperor, Moteucçoma Xocoyotl, and the Spanish conqueror, Hernando Cortés.

Chimalpahin worked as a fiscal (a term denoting those who performed various duties for their churches) and assisted his church's solitary friar. Over the course of the 30 years that he was there, he amassed a cache of ancient pictorial texts, interviewed elders about the past, and somehow gained access to a variety of contemporary works, some of which were published books. Essentially an autodidact, he also steeped himself in the writings of the church fathers and classical authors. He was cognizant of Latin and Spanish but largely wrote in Nahuatl, his native language and the dominant language of northern Mesoamerica. His purpose, he said, was to ensure that future generations would know of their glorious past. Doubtless aware of the church's practice of destroying all precontact Native accounts as well as the Spanish Crown's prohibition regarding writing about Indigenous peoples, he took it upon himself to transcribe the many pictorial histories into Nahuatl roman alphabetic script on European paper, certain to ensure their legitimacy and their longevity.

The Mexican philosopher Octavio Paz observed that "Mesoamerica was a historical world in itself," and Chimalpahin faithfully recorded the ancient annals, documenting the primordial migrations, settlement, and flourishing of the many diverse ethnic peoples who populated central Mexico.[1] Most of the annals, though, tend to exalt the great Mexica leaders and rulers who founded their capital, Mexico Tenochtitlan, and who came to exercise control over a vast region.[2] The Mexica

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even conquered Chimalpahin's home state, Chalco, in 1465, a fact that he lamented but that did not prevent him from exalting the worldly majesty of the imperial city. Metropolitan Mesoamerica was Chimalpahin's universe.

We may never know the extent of Chimalpahin's oeuvre, but while at the church he also copied ecclesiastical treatises, the Nahuatl and Spanish writings of contemporaries, and most of Francisco López de Gómara's popular but banned Spanish-language *La conquista de México* (1552). And all the while he diligently set down as Nahuatl annals the contemporary happenings in Mexico City. He was very much taken with all the activity in the capital and apparently moved with ease between the Native and Spanish societies. He obviously cared deeply about fellow Nahuas and identified with them (*timacehualtin*, "we commoners"), acknowledging his place in Mexico City. He was surely known as "Domingo de San Antón," yet signed himself with the Janus-like appellation, don Domingo de San Antón Muñón Chimalpahin Quauhtlehuanitzin, juxtaposing a Spanish title and a patron's and a saint's names with those of two high-ranking but long-deceased noblemen from his hometown, finding no contradiction even though such ostentatious designations were no longer used. It was probable and certainly proved true that few, if anyone, would read his manuscripts or know of him for centuries.

Towards the end of the sixteenth century and during the early decades of the seventeenth, Chimalpahin was one among other Nahua intellectuals who, recognizing the sheer magnitude of the destruction of Mexico Tenochtitlan and the intractable presence of the Spaniards, wrote legacy histories of their home regions. Affording a large view of Mesoamerican life, this flourishing of Indigenous letters was written in Spanish ostensibly for a Spanish audience. Chimalpahin is the only known Native author to have written in Nahuatl and signed himself in his texts.[3] In the Mexica capital, the palaces and temples were destroyed, the nobles and priests were dead, the emperor had been murdered and the royal dynasty was in shambles, the worship of the peoples' deities and religion was forbidden, and, 100 years after the battles, when Chimalpahin was recording his annals, nearly 90 per cent of the Native population had died of epidemic diseases and other hardships under Spanish rule.

Seeking favour, in 1522 Hernando Cortés wrote to Holy Roman Emperor Charles V of how "we had destroyed and razed it [Mexico Tenochitlan] to the ground," and so it would seem.[4] The Nahuatl term for loss is *tlapololiztli*, "the act of losing something," from the verb *poloa*, "to perish," "disappear," "lay waste."[5] Chimalpahin and other Nahuas used the term frequently to describe the Indigenous battles of conquest between ancient rival Mesoamerican polities. The utter immutability of English "conquest" and "loss" has no equivalent in Nahuatl, however. For Nahuas, although having lost political sovereignty, what mattered was that the polity (*altepetl*) and the royal lineage (*tlatocatlacamecayotl*) otherwise carried on as before, and very many did. Matthew Restall astutely reveals the difference between Nahua and Spanish concepts of conquest and loss: "The trick of turning calamity into continuity effectively weakens the impact of the Conquest by denying its uniqueness and its inexplicability; . . . it also serves to deny that the Conquest, as

the Spaniards saw it, ever occurred."[6] Cortés himself facilitated Native continuities by naming his Spanish capital after the Mexicas, by retaining the Indigenous sociopolitical structure of the capital and by making good use of the ongoing leadership of Mexica dynastic rulers, until the last of them died in 1565. He imposed Spanish political institutions, for example, the *cabildo*, "city council," that oversaw the workings of the capital: the collection of tribute, labour allocations, and local issues. Native officials in the many states in central Mexico did the same, and it was the traditional rulers and high lords who held those positions and worked to maintain the integrity of their polities. Even Catholicism became Nahuatized. For example, the friars, for want of anything else, chose the term *tlatlacolli* (something damaged) to describe "sin." But there was no such concept in Nahuatl and the neophytes kept to their own understandings while the friars railed against Native wretchednesses during their Sunday sermons.[7] As James Lockhart observes, "Chimalpahin documents a thriving Indigenous culture despite or perhaps because of the interconnectedness of the indigenous and Spanish worlds."[8] Philologically, then, Nahua perceptions and English meaning of loss in a volume dedicated to the topic may warrant accommodation.

Chimalpahin's Nahuatl annals are not annals of obsequies; indeed, there is almost a bonhomie as he wrote of life in Mexico City. Annals tend to be clinical, proceeding through the years while noting key events, whether horrific or splendid, and continuing to a given point in time. Some years report a variety of events, while other years proceed on with no information. But these annals, while following the traditional format with entries about solar eclipses, earthquakes, and floods, in addition to long lists of Indigenous rulers, then followed by the names of all the Spanish viceroys, archbishops, inquisitors, and audiencia officials, also contain what might be described as editorializing. He was a Christian, content at his little San Antón church but also seemingly an active member of the Franciscans' Nahua church of San Josef, which had a congregation of thousands. He marvelled at the religious imagery and processions and the piety of certain clergy, perhaps reminiscent of ancient Indigenous ceremonies. Yet he did not fail to note when some of them were derelict. He devoted ten manuscript pages to the funeral of Viceroy and Archbishop don fray García Guerra (d. 1612), detailing the participants and trappings of the proceedings. Yet, in spite of the prestige of the man and all the pomp invested in his funeral, Chimalpahin did not hesitate to record that Mexico City had experienced violent earthquakes that caused the collapse of homes and some churches. But the archbishop did not bother to address his flock, say prayers, or order processions, as was expected. Instead, he spent all his time watching bullfights in a ring at his palace. Chimalpahin added that fray Garcia sickened and died shortly thereafter.[9] Yes, there was despair, but there was also something good about moving on in the annals to whatever issue or event might be next.

Chimalpahin's last entry in his Mexico City annals was on Wednesday, 14 October 1615. We know that he was still at the church in 1620, and there are occasional entries in other annals, the last dated 1631. Years later, some of Chimalpahin's manuscripts came into the possession of the local savant and antiquarian, don Carlos

de Sigüenza y Góngora (1645–1700), who noted on one of the last pages of the Mexico City annals that the priest at San Antón had died suddenly in 1624 and the church was immediately taken over by Augustinian friars. It was necessary for city officials to padlock the church. Chimalpahin was out of a job. Over the decades, Chimalpahin's manuscripts scattered. However, all his known writings have now been translated into either English or Spanish and published, a sure sign that his Nahua histories of life in the marvellous but ruined capital of Mexico Tenochtitlan will still be known.

Extracts

From don Domingo de San Antón Muñón Chimalpahin Quauhtlehuanitzin, *Annals of His Time*, ed. and trans. (from Nahuatl) James Lockhart, Susan Schroeder, and Doris Namala (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2006). Reprinted by kind permission of Stanford University Press.

On Death and the End of Dynasties

[27.] 9 Reed year, 1579. . . . And this was when there was a sickness again (blood came from our noses). The sickness really raged; many people died.

[55.] It was in December of the year 1595 that an epidemic of measles broke out, from which people died; the epidemic really raged. . . . There were a great many deaths; every day very many were buried. . . . Absolutely everyone perished: youths and maidens, grown men, old men and old women, and little children.

[139.] And also . . . in the year 8 House, 1565, . . . the lord don Luis de Santa María Nacacipactzin, ruler in Tenochtitlan, passed away, having ruled for three years, and with him it came to an end that descendants of the Mexica and Tenochca rulers should rule in Tenochtitlan any more; at that time their governing as rulers was cut off forever.

[167.] Today, Monday, the 20th of the month of September of the year 1610, was when the lord don Miguel Sánchez Huentzin, a noble of Acatlan, passed away. He was the only one left, so that with him ended the line of the late lord Tlacaelleltzin the elder, the cihuacoatl, high constable in Mexico Tenochtitlan. With the said dead person the nobility of Acatlan came to an end, he terminated it once and for all.

On Environmental and Human Degradation

[81.] Monday the 11th of October of the year 1604 was when holding processions three times a day at San Francisco began . . . because of how we were flooded here in Mexico Tenochtitlan . . . There was great fear; it was said, What is happening to us in Mexico?

[293–5.] On the same said day of Saturday [15 November 1614] . . . don Pedro de Otalora, president of the Royal Audiencia here in Mexico, left Mexico to go to

inspect and to go all around the great lake that surrounds us. . . . He went slowly because he went inspecting the waters in each place everywhere, until finally he stopped at Citlaltepec to inspect the water excavation [drainage] being done there. The poor commoners were excavating a mountain there, making a hole in the side of it, where the said waters that as said surround us and are about to flood the city of Mexico cannot find a channel to come out. It was halted, and the excavation was done no more. . . . [A] great many poor commoners from far away, a full 50,000, died at the place of excavation. . . . And it was said that a million [pesos] of the king's assets were spent there.

[301–3.] Likewise in the said month of May, at the end of it [1615], the Spaniards began to dig on Chapoltepetl [Chapoltepec] by order of the lord viceroy don Diego Fernández de Córdoba, Marqués de Guadalcázar; they were searching for gold on the hill. . . . They knocked down all the cypresses that were there and left them scattered around; they cut them up and split them and they were brought here to the palace, where they were burned in the kitchen; with that things were left very bare at Chapoltepec. . . . Chapoltepec used to be a very marvelous place.

On Living among Spaniards

[45.] And Sunday, the 20th of June [1593], was when the Sacrament finally went in procession and went on its way [outdoors]. . . . All the celebration and dancing was performed, they strung flowers together, and many different things were done, of which the Mexica and the Tlatelolca were proud; and a great many carrying platforms and banners went in procession.

[67.] On Tuesday, the 15th of February of the year 1600, don Juan Cano de Moctezuma, a Spaniard, produced [a representation of] the late Moteucçoma. Don Hernando de Alvarado Tezozomoctzin impersonated Moteucçoma. They carried him on a platform and went sheltering him with a canopy. In his presence people went dancing as he came in front of the palace.

[195.] Today, Saturday the 21st of the month of January of the year 1612, . . . because of a complaint against him made by María López, chocolate seller. . . . She complained of fray Gerónimo de Zárate because he shamed her spouse named Juan Pérez on Sunday a week after [the feast day of] San Josef; he stood him up against a stone pillar, naked and quite ill, where by the order of our father they gave him a lashing. At that time they left him almost dead, having fainted from the lashing. . . . He did the same thing to them, shamed them in public, standing them up and stripping them. Josef Gómez he publicly stood up, stripped, displayed, and gave a lashing just because he talked back with a few words. And María Constanza he publicly stood up, displayed, stripped; her breasts were exposed. The reason they went to pick her up at her home on the said Sunday was just that they say she didn't go to hear mass at the church of San Josef.

[263.] [1613] . . . I, don Domingo de San Antón Muñón Quauhtlehuanitzin Chimalpahin, wish it [a long life for the new archbishop].

On the Past and the Future

From don Domingo de San Antón Muñón Chimalpahin Quauhtlehuanitzin, *Codex Chimalpahin*, vol. 1, ed. and trans. Arthur J.O. Anderson and Susan Schroeder (Norman, OK: University of Oklahoma Press, 1997).

[61.] And what they came to do, what they came to establish, their writings, their renown, their history, their memory will never perish, will never be forgotten in times to come. . . . Those children of the Tenochca yet to live, yet to be born, will go on telling them, will go on celebrating them.

From Domingo Chimalpáhin, *Las ocho relaciones y El memorial de Colhuacán*, v. 2, ed. and trans. Rafael Tena (Mexico City: Cien de México, 1998).

[304.] . . . and so now, I am again renewing and writing down this entire *huehuetlahtolli* (ancient story) in a book.

Notes

1 Octavio Paz, *The Labyrinth of Solitude, and the Other Mexico, Return to the Labyrinth of Solitude, Mexico and the United States, the Philanthropic Ogre* (New York: Grove Press, 1985): 90.
2 The Mexica established a triumvirate of three states that Prescott, in the first English-language history of the conquest, generally referred to as the Aztecs. William H. Prescott, *History of the Conquest of Mexico*, 2 vols. (Philadelphia, PA: J. B. Lippincott Company, [1843] 1873).
3 It is expected that only a fraction of the Native histories and documents written during those years are extant. Best known are those by Fernando de Alva Ixtlilxochitl and Hernando de Alvarado Tezozomoc.
4 Hernán Cortés, *Letters from Mexico*, ed. and trans. Anthony Pagden (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1986): 266.
5 Fray Alonso de Molina, *Vocabulario en lengua castellana y mexicana y mexicana y castellana* (Mexico City: Editorial Porrúa, [1571] 1970]): 132v.
6 Matthew Restall, *Maya Conquistador* (Boston, MA: Beacon Press, 1998): 43.
7 See Louise M. Burkhart, *The Slippery Earth: Nahua-Christian Moral Dialogue in Sixteenth-Century Mexico* (Tucson, AZ: University of Arizona Press, 1989).
8 James Lockhart, "Introduction," *Annals of His Time,* ed. and trans. James Lockhart, Susan Schroeder, and Doris Namala (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2006): 7.
9 Chimalpahin, *Annals of His Time,* 201–11.

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10

JOHN MILTON (1608–1674)

Nicholas McDowell

Paradise Lost (1667), John Milton's epic poem about the Fall of Adam and Eve, is unquestionably one of the greatest achievements in English literature. It is also an achievement that we owe to the experience of loss, both personal and public. *Paradise Lost* might never have been completed had it not been for the eventual failure of the English republican government for which Milton worked for a decade after the execution of the king, Charles I, in 1649. It was only after this political failure began to look increasingly inevitable that Milton turned in earnest to writing *Paradise Lost*. By imagining the originary moment of loss in the Garden of Eden, Milton sought to place the history of human weakness, of which the failed English republic was the latest example, in the context of eternity. He also sought to come to terms with the loss of his own eyesight, rationalizing the blindness that overtook him by his mid-40s as a necessary condition of his insight into prophetic knowledge. As the subsequent extracts from both his poetry and his prose illustrate, Milton regarded himself as a solitary voice of virtue in the dissolute world of Restoration England, thrust once again under the yoke of monarchical tyranny, and he blamed the lost opportunity to establish true religious and political liberty upon the moral cowardice of the English people.

Born into a prosperous (but not aristocratic) family in Jacobean London, Milton's youth is distinguished by the intensity of his belief that he could—indeed that he *would*—write an epic poem in English that could rival those of Homer, Virgil, and Dante. The first 30 years of his life were essentially dedicated to the daunting programme of education that Renaissance humanists insisted was a prerequisite to compose an epic poem: as the most encyclopaedic of literary genres, a writer undertaking epic was thought to require universal learning. Educated first by private tutors, then at St. Paul's School in London and Christ's College, Cambridge, where he took both BA and MA degrees from 1625 to 1632, Milton next dedicated himself to a further six years of private study at his family home, followed by

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an 18-month tour of Italy. By the time Milton returned to England in the summer of 1639, he had experimented with a wide range of poetic genres over the course of the previous decade and produced such enduring works as the funeral elegy "Lycidas" (1637). From a manuscript notebook of his poetic drafts, we know that around this time he envisaged writing his great national epic on the patriotic theme of the Arthurian myths; "Paradise Lost" was at this point only one of the various titles he considered for a tragic drama on the Fall.

However, Milton returned to a country that was sliding into civil war, and it was this conflict and its repercussions which dominated his life for the next two decades. As religious and cultural politics in the three kingdoms of England, Scotland, and Ireland became ever more polarized, Milton entered the world of polemical print in 1641 to issue a series of prose works violently attacking the episcopal structure of the Church of England. Then, in what seems to have been a misconceived belief in the new climate of intellectual freedom engendered by the fall of the bishops and the breakdown of state mechanisms of censorship, Milton published several prose works in 1643–1645, arguing for divorce on the grounds of incompatibility rather than merely adultery. The furious clerical reaction to these divorce writings, which were cited as evidence of the need for new restrictions on publication to prevent the proliferation of heresy and sexual immorality, provoked Milton to issue *Areopagitica* (1644), one of the most influential works ever written on the need for freedom of speech and intellectual inquiry.

Milton did not directly address the political issue of Charles I's responsibility for the civil wars before the trial and public execution of the king by Parliament in January 1649, but his capacity to compose and publish the most powerful of all defences of the regicide, *The Tenure of Kings and Magistrates* (1649), within two weeks of the event indicate that he had long considered the issues. Milton's performance in the *Tenure* impressed the new republican government, who needed eloquent defenders, and they quickly offered him the position of Secretary for Foreign Tongues—in effect, he became the regime's chief propagandist. Over the next six years, Milton published various apologies for the republic, both in English for a domestic readership and in Latin for a European audience. He seems to have set aside his long-standing poetic ambition, now regarding himself not as an English Virgil but as an English Cicero—a spokesman for the emergent British republic and an embodiment of its values, as Cicero had been for Rome. Milton represented the blindness that became total by 1652 as a necessary consequence of the arduous studies that had prepared him for this role: he had, as he put it in a sonnet around 1655, "lost them [his eyes] overplied/In liberty's defence, my noble task/Of which all Europe talks from side to side."[1]

Yet Milton's pride in his role as an architect of the new state was accompanied by his growing pessimism about the readiness of the English people to recognize and establish their own freedom. In *Areopagitica*, he had been rousingly optimistic about the capacity of the English people to advance knowledge and virtue through religious and political reform. But as early as 1650 he excoriated the continued affection of the people for Charles I as the "worthless approbation of an inconstant,

irrational, and image-doting rabble . . . begotten to servility."[2] If Milton was voluble in his scorn for popular resistance to republican liberty, it is less clear what he thought about the installation in 1653 of Oliver Cromwell, former commander of the Parliamentary Army, as (unelected) Lord Protector—a role that was widely perceived (then and since) as "king in all but name." Initially, Milton welcomed Cromwell for his record of martial virtue and commitment to religious toleration, and he continued to work for the Cromwellian Protectorate. But Milton never referred to Cromwell again after 1654 and was conspicuously silent on Cromwell's death in 1658.

The Protectorate quickly unravelled after Cromwell's death, and by the end of 1659 it was clear that the Stuart monarchy would imminently be restored in the form of Charles II. In his last-minute proposals for a new republican constitution, *The Ready and Easy Way to Establish a Free Commonwealth* (2nd ed., 1659/60), Milton declared that "to creep back so poorly as it seems the multitude would to their once abjured and detested thraldom of Kingship . . . argues a strange degenerate contagion suddenly spread among us fitted and prepared for new slavery."[3] After the Restoration, those involved with the regicide were rounded up and executed; the bodies of the dead, such as Cromwell himself, were dug up and their heads stuck on spikes around London. Although the exact sequence of events is unclear, Milton apparently went into hiding before eventually being briefly imprisoned. He was released and pardoned in December 1660: it seems the new regime concluded that a blind writer in his fifties was not worth making an example of, and other writers also interceded on his behalf. Whereas royalists such as the earl of Clarendon, subject of another chapter in this volume, had spent the 1650s in exile in Europe and now returned to power, Milton found himself in a kind of internal exile in his own country.

Milton had started writing *Paradise Lost* around the time of Cromwell's death, returning to poetry as he came to recognize the republic would not long survive. The poem registers his experience of imprisonment in the narrator's invocation near the beginning of the seventh book, which is the first part of the extract from *Paradise Lost* given subsequently. The voice is characteristically Miltonic in its defiance—"unchanged," though "with dangers compassed round,/And solitude." The "darkness" in which the narrator finds himself is the condition of blindness but also the prison cell in which Milton had been kept for several months; it is also the hellish state into which the nation had descended in its reversion to Stuart monarchy. From the opening lines of the first book, Milton had invoked the prophetic inspiration necessary to write an epic in which he "may assert Eternal Providence/And justify the ways of God to men" (1.25–6). The poem is equally an attempt by Milton to justify the ways of providence to himself. The disillusionment with the capacities of the people that had become increasingly pronounced in Milton's thought is evident in his expectation that his poem will a "fit audience find, though few." Milton's imagination had long been haunted by figure of Orpheus, the mythic archetype of the poet who could move even inanimate objects with his song but who was finally torn limb from limb by the female followers of Bacchus,

whose screams drown out his otherwise irresistible voice. Here "Bacchus and his revellers" represent the threat from the restored Stuart court, with its infamously libertine king, Charles II: the sundering of Orpheus's body is an image both of the threat to the poet of imprisonment and execution and the threat to his poem of censorship.

Milton's reputation and the dangers of censorship make it unsurprising that there is so little unambiguous political commentary in *Paradise Lost*. The second part of the extract from the poem provided subsequently is perhaps the clearest moment when Milton encourages the reader to draw contemporary conclusions from his narrative of biblical history. In the aftermath of the Fall, the archangel Michael takes Adam to a hilltop where they survey the future consequences for human history of the original sin of Adam and Eve, as recounted in the Old Testament narratives. In this extract, Adam has just reacted with horror and disgust to the actions of Nimrod, the first tyrant, whose ambition in building the Tower of Babel to reach heaven will be punished by the confusion of tongues (see Genesis 11.1–9). Michael underlines to Adam that Nimrod's ambition to "arrogate dominion undeserved/ Over his brethren" (12.27–8) is Adam's own fault—a consequence of his "original lapse." Milton represents tyrannical government as an external manifestation of the internal subversion that takes place within human beings in the aftermath of the Fall: just as passion usurps reason within the sinful creature, enslaving us to our material desires, so tyranny overthrows liberty in the public world and dooms a nation to political servitude. This internal loss of liberty is justly punished, Michael tells Adam, by the loss of outward freedom.

Michael tells Adam that "sometimes nations will decline so low/From virtue" that their enslavement to tyranny becomes less a consequence of specific choices than a kind of "fatal curse." In his *History of Britain*, from which the second extract provided subsequently is taken, Milton presents the English people as repeatedly unable to display the virtuous character required to retain their own freedom. Although the four books of Milton's *History* only get as far as the Norman Conquest, the opening of the third book makes explicit the contemporary lessons that he wishes his readers to draw. The third book narrates the abandonment of Britain by the Romans and the postcolonial failures of the British to rule themselves, which lead eventually to conquest by the Saxons. The "confused Anarchy," which characterized Britain after the withdrawal from the country of the Roman empire, is compared with "this interreign," as both episodes display "what kind of men the *Britons* generally are in matters of so high enterprise." It is not entirely clear what Milton means by "this interreign" but, in the context of the publication of the *History* in 1670, the most likely reference is to the Interregnum from 1649 to 1660. The execution of Charles I had offered the English an opportunity to regain true republican liberty but, just as they had shown themselves unfit for freedom after the collapse of the Roman empire, so they had again in the 1650s been unable to sustain "the wisdom, the virtue, the labour, to use and maintain true liberty." Those early Britons "secretly aspiring to rule" under pretence of establishing liberty foreshadow those in Milton's own time, Cromwell perhaps prime among them, who

had become enslaved to their own personal ambition. British history, whether the post-Roman period or the recent republican experiment of the 1650s in which Milton himself had participated, was exemplary of the loss of liberty, first inward and then outward, that originated in the Fall.

Extracts

From *Paradise Lost* (London, [1667], 2nd ed. 1674), Book 7: 21–38; Book 12: 79–101.[4]

> Half yet remains unsung, but narrower bound
> Within the visible diurnal sphere;
> Standing on Earth, not rapt above the Pole,
> More safe I sing with mortal voice, unchanged
> To hoarse or mute, though fallen on evil days,
> On evil days though fallen, and evil tongues;
> In darkness, and with dangers compassed round,
> And solitude; yet not alone, while thou
> Visit'st my slumbers nightly, or when morn
> Purples the East: still govern thou my song,
> *Urania*, and fit audience find, though few.
> But drive far off the barbarous dissonance
> Of *Bacchus* and his Revellers, the Race
> Of that wild rout that tore the *Thracian bard*
> In *Rhodope*, where woods and rocks had ears
> To rapture, till the savage clamour drowned
> Both harp and voice; nor could the Muse defend
> Her son.
> . . .
> To whom [Adam] thus *Michael*. Justly thou abhorr'st
> That son, who on the quiet state of men
> Such trouble brought, affecting to subdue
> Rational liberty; yet know withal,
> Since thy original lapse, true liberty
> Is lost, which always with right reason dwells
> Twinned, and from her hath no dividual being:
> Reason in man obscured, or not obeyed,
> Immediately inordinate desires
> And upstart passions catch the government
> From reason, and to servitude reduce
> Man till then free. Therefore since he permits
> Within himself unworthy powers to reign
> Over free reason, God in judgment just

Subjects him from without to violent lords;
Who oft as undeservedly enthral
His outward freedom: tyranny must be,
Though to the tyrant thereby no excuse.
Yet sometimes nations will decline so low
From virtue, which is reason, that no wrong,
But Justice, and some fatal curse annexed
Deprives them of their outward liberty,
Their inward lost[.]

From *The History of Britain, That part especially now called England. From the first Traditional Beginning, continued to the Norman Conquest* (London, 1670), Book 3: 99–100.

This third Book having to tell of accidents as various and exemplary, as the intermission or change of Government hath anywhere brought forth, may deserve attention more than common, and repay it with like benefit to them who can judiciously read: considering especially that the late civil broils had cast us into a condition not much unlike to what the *Britons* then were in, when the imperial jurisdiction departing hence left them to the sway of their own Councils; which times by comparing seriously with these later, and that confused Anarchy with this interreign, we may be able from two such remarkable turns of State, producing like events among us, to raise a knowledge of our selves both great and weighty, by judging hence what kind of men the *Britons* generally are in matters of so high enterprise, how by nature, industry, or custom fitted to attempt or undergo matters of so main consequence: for if it be a high point of wisdom in every private man, much more is it in a Nation to know itself; rather than puffed up with vulgar flatteries, and encomiums, for want of self-knowledge, to enterprise rashly and come off miserably in great undertakings.

The *Britons* thus as we heard being left without protection from the empire, and the Land in a manner emptied of all her youth, consumed in Wars abroad, or not caring to return home, themselves through long subjection, servile in mind, slothful of body, and with the use of Arms unacquainted, sustained but ill for many years the violence of those barbarous Invaders, who now daily grew upon them. For although at first greedy of change, and to be thought the leading Nation to freedom from the empire, they seemed a while to bestir them with a shew of diligence in their new affairs, some secretly aspiring to rule, others adoring the name of liberty, yet so soon as they felt by proof the weight of what it was to govern well themselves, and what was wanting within them, not stomach or the love of licence, but the wisdom, the virtue, the labour, to use and maintain true liberty, they soon remitted their heat, and shrunk more wretchedly under the burden of their own liberty, than before under a foreign yoke.

Notes

1 'To Mr Cyriack Skinner Upon His Blindness', lines 10–12, in Milton, *Complete Shorter Poems*, ed. John Carey, 2nd ed. (Harlow: Longman, 1997).
2 *The Complete Works of John Milton. Volume 6: Vernacular Regicide and Republican Writings*, ed. N. H. Keeble and Nicholas McDowell (Oxford: Oxford University Press): 424.
3 Keeble and McDowell eds, *The Complete Works of John Milton*, 483–5.
4 I have modernized the spelling in both extracts.

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11

EDWARD HYDE, EARL OF CLARENDON (1609–1674)

Paul Seaward

Clarendon's *History of the Rebellion* is the most sophisticated piece of contemporary history written in English before the nineteenth century. It is written by a man who for a quarter of a century was at, or close to, the centre of policy-making at the court of King Charles I (ruled 1625–1649) and his son Charles II (ruled 1649–1685). The *History* covers the English Civil War of 1642–1646, in which the king was defeated and ultimately executed by his vanquishers, and the subsequent period in which his son struggled in exile to find ways of reclaiming his throne. It ends as the final collapse of the various regimes that had tried to establish stability without a king resulted in Charles II's restoration in 1660. Clarendon had become one of Charles I's ministers early in the War, and had gone into exile with his son, establishing himself ultimately as his lord chancellor, and his dominant and ubiquitous adviser. He returned to England with the king, and for a few years maintained his dominance, until rivals succeeded in engineering his downfall in 1667. Clarendon was doomed to a second—perhaps more bitter—period of exile until his death in France in late 1674.

The *History of the Rebellion* as it exists today is the product of both of these separate periods of exile, written in the shadow of the loss of his home, of friends, and of power. Clarendon began his *History* as he fled England in 1646 with the then Prince Charles—the first page is dated from his initial refuge, the Scilly Isles, about 25 miles off the coast of South-West England. He worked on it for around two years before he rejoined the royal court in exile in the Netherlands and resumed his career as a minister. The text lay dormant until his second exile, when he returned to it after completing a more personal memoir of his life (*The Life of Edward, earl of Clarendon*) and then merged the two texts together into one. It was another 30 years before the resulting massive text was finally published. It would become the most famous account of the Civil War, seen both as a partisan and partial royalist account, but also as remarkably frank about the shortcomings of Clarendon's own

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side and prepared to accept some of the virtues, even the greatness, of some of his opponents. It was, as he wrote, intended to provide "an equal observation of the faults and infirmities of both sides."[1]

This lengthy and convoluted process of composition and revision means that the *History of the Rebellion* is afar from simple text. In an introductory section, written in 1646, Clarendon indicated his political and polemical purposes in beginning it. This was a work, he wrote, which would celebrate the memory of "those few who, out of duty and conscience, have opposed and resisted that torrent which hath overwhelmed them." Clarendon was always conscious of posterity: the *History* was necessary "that posterity may not be deceived"; and while he accepted, it might not be published soon, it was clearly intended that it should be, in the fulness of time, in order to preserve the memory and to celebrate the details of actions—both the iniquities of his enemies and the bravery and virtue of his allies—that otherwise could so easily be forgotten.

The *History* had a more practical and immediate purpose, though, as well: it would dissect the causes and progress of the Civil War, in the hope of understanding the past as a way of finding a path to peace in the future, "to inform myself and some others what we are to do, as well as to comfort us in what we have done."[2] Parts of it, as a result, read like a magisterial and official statement of an official royalist position, not unlike the many declarations that Clarendon wrote on behalf of the king in 1642 during the exchanges that preceded the descent into armed conflict. But when, in the late 1660s, Clarendon put this material together with his memoir, the work became not exactly more personal but certainly more circumstantial. More colour was allowed to creep in, and Clarendon allowed himself to remember details of his discussions with colleagues, with future enemies, even with the king. There was some loss in strict accuracy but a considerable gain in the interest and fascination of the work.

The *History of the Rebellion* itself ends with the Restoration of 1660. But there is a separate text, which he called a "Continuation" of his memoir, *The Life*, which describes what happened next: the struggle to re-establish the monarchy in England, his battles with the court factions and interests determined to topple him, the final crisis that precipitated his fall from favour, his prosecution and flight abroad. This work is more obviously designed as a vindication of himself and his policy: more defensive of decisions for which he was more clearly personally responsible, more bitter about the actions of his political enemies, painfully silent about the failures of some of those whom he had regarded as his friends.

Clarendon's *History*, though carefully protected by his sons, was not published until nearly 30 years after his death. When it was, its first readers remarked particularly on its literary quality. Celebrated in his own time for the magnificently assured, but also deftly sharp, style of his writing, Clarendon was steeped in the classical historians. He had been close to the poet, playwright and literary lion Ben Jonson in the 1620s, and had consorted with, and wrote about, many of the most significant literary figures of London in the 1620s and 1630s. Among his *History*'s most celebrated aspects were the "characters," the sketches of individual politicians

that Clarendon included in the text written in the 1660s. These pieces added to the sense that it was in part a sort of royalist war memorial to the dead of the Civil War: one of the characters, that of the man whom Clarendon admired most of all, his friend Lucius Cary, Viscount Falkland, became one of the most celebrated pieces of English seventeenth-century prose. Falkland's death in a reckless cavalry charge in the midst of a war he hated, was, Clarendon wrote,

> a loss which no time will suffer to be forgotten, and no success or good fortune could repair. . . . If there were no other brand upon this odious and accurse civil war than that single loss, it must be most infamous and execrable to all posterity.

Clarendon's work was conceptually quite different to anything produced in English previously: a contemporary history, written by someone who was not only present but a key figure in the events it described: most previous histories had been chronicle-type affairs, written by men who were compiling information second hand. Clarendon himself wrote in one of the several Baconian essays he wrote during his second exile that history ought to be written by people who were familiar with "the knowledge and course and method of business, and by conversation and familiarity in the inside of courts, and the most active and eminent persons in the government." What is often most striking about it is its avoidance of hindsight, the careful and forensic weighing up of political choices and options available to politicians as they seemed at the time, constrained by considerations which the later reader would have failed to appreciate, or might easily have dismissed. Clarendon was either there himself or able to recognize how difficult decisions could be. Clarendon brought to English history some of the personal engagement and immediacy that was much more familiar in histories from Italy and France of the period, particularly France, where the civil wars of the sixteenth century had encouraged the development of the political memoir among prominent politicians, as well as more ambitious accounts such as Enrico Caterino Davila's *Istoria delle guerre civile in Francia*, a work which had been translated and much admired by royalists in the 1640s.

Clarendon's first exile was penurious, dangerous, and long, but it was not forever. He lived long enough to return to England and to see, and take some credit for, the restoration of the monarchy, and to be regarded as wielding extraordinary power. Not only was he the king's chief minister, but with the marriage of his daughter, Anne Hyde, to the king's brother, the duke of York, he was the father-in-law to the heir to the throne. Clarendon was, in other words, ultimately on the winning side. But when he had begun the *History* in 1646, Clarendon was having to come to terms with the defeat of the king and to think through the implications for the future. In his description of the events leading to the division between the king and his adversaries in parliament and the outbreak of the Civil War, he recognized a series of disastrous errors of royal policy, particularly the way in which the king's ministers in the 1630s had abused constitutional norms and how royal judges had failed to stand by the law, and he could see how the king's opponents had been

able to make use of them. In his own service to the king and in the *History*, he had grimly struggled to try to associate the royal cause with the cause of law and the constitution. But he also worried about how the opponents of the established English Church were determined to strip it of its status as part of a settled structure of secular and religious government. As he wrote, while fruitless negotiations dragged on over a post-war settlement of the kingdom, he became ever more concerned that there were elements within the royal court that were prepared to make concessions, particularly on the Church, that he believed would contradict all that Charles I stood for.

The Restoration of the monarchy was in some sense a triumph for his strategy of sticking by the old constitutional settlement of the Church and the Law, though over the following period he was aware of enormous pressure from elements at the royal court to push legal boundaries and to chip away at the dominant position of the Church. His fall in 1667 left his strategy without highly placed defenders. In his second exile his writings—including, but not just, the *History* and the *Life*—were imbued with his anxieties about the threats to the English Church from the many adherents of the Roman Catholic Church at the royal court, and to the English system of government from the absolutist attitudes of some of Charles II's advisers and the ideas of the philosopher Thomas Hobbes. The most bitter blow of all, which lurks in the background of some of his latest works, was the conversion of his daughter to Rome, the religion of her husband, the duke of York, and her abandonment of the religion of her father.

Clarendon claimed not to be one to brood over loss. In his memoir, he said that his periods of exile from the court and from government had been among the happiest of his life, times when he had been free of "business of trouble and vexation," and had time to "make full reflections upon his actions" and to make an "entire resignation of all his thoughts and purposes in to the disposal of God Almighty, and in a firm confidence of his protection and deliverance in all the difficulties he should be obliged to contend with."[3] It may have been true, and Clarendon continued thinking and writing and engaging with others about the government of church and state up to his death. Even so, he was seeking, even in his last year, to return to England from exile. And hovering throughout his writings is a sense of a lost, pre-Civil War world of innocence and integrity and stability, destroyed by the conspiracy of enemies and the self-interest machinations of those on his own side who should have known better, a combination that had led, in the words of the great opening section of the *History* (reproduced here) "like so many atoms contributing jointly to this mass of confusion now before us."[4]

Extract

From Edward Hyde, earl of Clarendon, *The History of the Rebellion and Civil Wars in England*, ed. W.D. Macray, 6 vols. (Oxford, 1888), iii. 178–9.

That posterity may not be deceived, by the prosperous wickedness of these times, into an opinion that less than a general combination, and universal apostasy in the whole nation from their religion and allegiance, could, in so short a time, have produced such a total and prodigious alteration and confusion over the whole kingdom; and so the memory of those few who, out of duty and conscience, have opposed and resisted that torrent which hath overwhelmed them may lose the recompense due to their virtue, and, having undergone the injuries and reproaches of this, may not find a vindication in a better, age; it will not be unuseful, (at least to the curiosity if not the conscience of men,) to present to the world a full and clear narration of the grounds, circumstances, and artifices of this Rebellion, not only from the time since the flame hath been visible in a civil war, but, looking farther back, from those former passages, accidents, and actions, by which the seed-plots were made and framed from whence these mischiefs have successively grown to the height they are now at.

And then, though the hand and judgment of God will be very visible, in the infatuating a people (as ripe and prepared for destruction) into all the perverse actions of folly and madness, making the weak to contribute to the designs of the wicked, and suffering even those by degrees, out of the conscience of their guilt, to grow more wicked than they intended to be; letting the wise to be imposed upon by men of no understanding, and possessing the innocent with laziness and sleep in the most visible article of danger; uniting the ill, though of the most different opinions, divided interests, and distant affections, in a firm and constant league of mischief; and dividing those whose opinions and interests are the same into faction and emulation, more pernicious to the public than the treason of the others: whilst the poor people, under pretence of zeal to Religion, Law, Liberty, and Parliaments, (words of precious esteem in their just signification,) are furiously hurried into actions introducing Atheism, and dissolving all the elements of Christian Religion, cancelling all obligations, and destroying all foundations of Law and Liberty, and rendering not only the privileges but very being of Parliaments desperate and impossible: I say, though the immediate finger and wrath of God must be acknowledged in these perplexities and distractions, yet he who shall diligently observe the distempers and conjunctures of time, the ambition, pride, and folly of persons, and the sudden growth of wickedness, from want of care and circumspection in the first impressions, will find all this bulk of misery to have proceeded, and to have been brought upon us, from the same natural causes and means which have usually attended kingdoms swoln with long plenty, pride, and excess, towards some signal mortification, and castigation of Heaven. And it may be, upon the view of the impossibility of foreseeing many things that have happened, and of the necessity of overseeing many other things, [we] may not yet find the cure so desperate, but that, by God's mercy, the wounds may be again bound up, though no question many must first bleed to death; and then this prospect may not make the future peace less pleasant and durable.

And I have the more willingly induced myself to this unequal task out of the hope of contributing somewhat to that end: and though a piece of this nature (wherein the infirmities of some, and the malice of others, both things and persons,

must be boldly looked upon and mentioned) is not likely to be published, (at least in the age in which it is writ,) yet it may serve to inform myself and some others what we are to do, as well as to comfort us in what we have done. . . . And as I may not be thought altogether an incompetent person for this communication, having been present as a member of Parliament in those councils before and till the breaking out of the Rebellion, and having since had the honour to be near two great kings in some trust, so I shall perform the same with all faithfulness and ingenuity, with an equal observation of the faults and infirmities of both sides, with their defects and oversights in pursuing their own ends; and shall no otherwise mention small and light occurrences than as they have been introductions to matters of the greatest moment; nor speak of persons otherwise than as the mention of their virtues or vices is essential to the work in hand: in which as I shall have the fate to be suspected rather for malice to many than of flattery to any, so I shall, in truth, preserve myself from the least sharpness that may proceed from private provocation or a more public indignation; in the whole observing the rules that a man should, who deserves to be believed.

I shall not then lead any man farther back in this journey, for the discovery of the entrance into these dark ways, than the beginning of this King's reign. . . . Neither do I look so far back as believing the design to be so long since formed . . . but that, by viewing the temper, disposition, and habit, of that time, of the court and of the country, we may discern the minds of men prepared, of some to do, and of others to suffer, all that hath since happened: the pride of this man, and the popularity of that; the levity of one, and the morosity of another; the excess of the court in the greatest want, and the parsimony and retention of the country in the greatest plenty; the spirit of craft and subtlety in some, and the rude and unpolished integrity of others, too much despising craft or art; like so many atoms contributing jointly to this mass of confusion now before us.

Notes

1 Edward Hyde, earl of Clarendon, *The History of the Rebellion and Civil Wars in England,* ed. W.D. Macray, 6 vols (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1888), i. 3.
2 *The History of the Rebellion*, i. 3.
3 Edward Hyde, earl of Clarendon*, The Life of Edward earl of Clarendon*, vol. 2 (Oxford: The University Press, 1857): 588–9.
4 *The History of the Rebellion*, i. 4.

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12

LUCY HUTCHINSON (1620–1681)

Sarah C. E. Ross

Lucy Hutchinson's *Memoirs* of the life and times of her husband, the republican Colonel John Hutchinson, tell the history of the English revolution from her self-declared position as his "shadow" and his champion,[1] and from a wifely position of personal loss and political defeat. The *Memoirs* take us to the heart of the revolution in seventeenth-century England: the outbreak of civil war in 1642, the execution of King Charles I in January 1649, the establishment of the Protectorate under Oliver Cromwell, and the eventual restoration of the Stuart monarchy in May 1660. Composed retrospectively after her husband's death in 1664, Hutchinson's *Memoirs* outline the actions of the revolutionaries dedicated to the "good old cause" and depict the restoration of the monarchy as its failure, seeking always to justify the actions and elevate the posthumous reputation of her beloved husband.

Hutchinson was born Lucy Apsley, daughter of Sir Allen Apsley, Lieutenant of the Tower of London, and his wife Lucy St John, and was highly educated for a girl in the period: she describes, in her autobiography, having "at one time eight tutors in several qualities," and outstripping her brothers in Latin.[2] Her intellectual pursuits, including a translation of Lucretius's philosophical poem *De rerum natura*, were also encouraged by her husband, whom she married in 1638, and to whom she described herself as "a very faithful mirror, reflecting truly, though but dimly, his own glories upon him."[3] John Hutchinson was an ardent parliamentarian, appointed governor of Nottingham and of Nottingham Castle in 1643, and as a member of the High Court of Justice, he signed the death warrant of Charles I in January 1649. He refused to hold office under Oliver Cromwell's Protectorate in the 1650s and instead lived a largely retired life at his estate of Owthorpe in Nottinghamshire. Nevertheless, on the restoration of the monarchy in 1660, his situation and those of other regicides were precarious.

The extract of the *Memoirs* selected here describes vividly the events that mark the end of the English republic in which Hutchinson and her husband had so

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ardently believed: the arrival of King Charles II on English shores at Dover on 25 May 1660, and his entry into London on 29 May. The reinstatement of the monarchy had been negotiated with the English Parliament when Charles II sent from Breda in the Netherlands a declaration of general pardon promising exactly what is described in this extract—"liberty of conscience and remission of all offences"—although it was already known that regicides such as John Hutchinson would be excepted from the indemnity, which Parliament subsequently enacted. Charles II's entry into London was a moment of decisive victory for English royalists and is captured fulsomely by royalists such as Katherine Philips, in a series of poems on the occasion, and John Dryden in his panegyric, *Astrea Redux*.[4] Even the republican Hutchinson cannot deny the "universal joy and triumph" that greeted the king,

> even to his own amazement; who, when he saw all the nobility and gentry of the land flowing into him, asked, where were his enemies? For he saw nothing but prostrates, expressing all the love that could make a prince happy.

Hutchinson's vivid account of the king's triumphal entry, however, is told from a perspective not of victory but of defeat. She undermines the dominant narrative of "joy and triumph" in her devastating tricolon: "indeed it was a wonder in that day to see the mutability of some, and the hypocrisy of others, and the servile flattery of all." "Mutability" is for Hutchinson epitomized in General George Monck, first duke of Albemarle, who had been prominent in the Commonwealth military, fighting under Oliver Cromwell in Scotland in the Third Civil War (1650–1651) and during the First Anglo-Dutch War (1652–1654). John Hutchinson had supported Monck until late in 1659, believing him to be committed to the Commonwealth, but Monck's support for moderates in Parliament in the later 1650s was crucial to extending the invitation to Charles II to return. Here, he appears "like [the king's] better genius," conducting the new king through the crowds. Other officers of the Commonwealth army also now "change their condition, and disowned all things they had before adored." And even the ballad sellers, whose songs swell the "universal joy and triumph" perceived by the king, are to Hutchinson's ears peddling "ribald rhymes made in reproach of the late Commonwealth and all those worthies that therein endeavoured the people's freedom and happiness."

Colonel John Hutchinson was one of those Parliamentarian "worthies" for whom this was a day of unmitigated defeat. Hutchinson follows her barbed description of Charles II's entrance into London with one of a recriminatory debate about the trial and execution of King Charles I that took place in Parliament on 12 May 1660; here, she reports speeches from three defeated regicides, speaking in tripartite turn and culminating in John Hutchinson.[5] Mr Lenthall, son of the former speaker of Parliament, first delivers what Lucy Hutchinson describes as a "handsome and honourable" speech, before Sir Richard Ingoldsby makes a "most lamentable whining recantation." John Hutchinson, however, according to his not-unbiased wife, speaks with great honour in a speech "so handsomely delivered that it generally took the whole house." He attributes any error in his actions to "the

inexperience of his age and the defect of his judgement, and not the malice of his heart" and he describes himself as having undertaken all his actions, including the business of the king's death warrant, "in good conscience." Crucially, he offers himself up as a sacrifice "to the public peace and settlement."

While Lucy Hutchinson's description in her *Memoirs* of her husband's integrity in the face of defeat is detailed and apparently definitive, it contrasts strikingly with another extant document: a letter conveying her husband's recantation of his role in the king's trial and execution, delivered to the Speaker of Parliament in May 1660. The letter is in her handwriting and describes him in the third person, claiming that Colonel Hutchinson now recognizes "the ill effects" of his actions in the wars, and "throws himself upon the mercy of the Parliament."[6] Hutchinson claims in her *Memoirs* (in passages following this extract) that she wrote the letter herself in an act of wifely disobedience, driven by her desperate desire to save him. Historians are divided on whether this claim is entirely true, many believing that the Colonel played a part in it. Either way, Lucy Hutchinson's narrative in the *Memoirs* is tailored to present her husband in the noblest possible light, and to accrue to herself the dishonour of the letter of recantation. And both documents of defeat, letter and *Memoirs*, are mediated through the hand and narrating consciousness of Lucy Hutchinson, wife, shadow, and "faithful mirror" of her husband's "excellence."

Hutchinson's *Memoirs* are, throughout, written to vindicate her husband, the figure through whom all aspects of her historical narrative are refracted. She wrote the text in manuscript after John Hutchinson's death in Sandown Castle in 1664, where he had been imprisoned on trumped-up charges of association with rebels in Yorkshire in 1663, to commemorate his "mortal excellencies" to their children, to whom the *Memoirs* are dedicated. Her detailed and lengthy account of his life and times was based in part on a three-volume manuscript account she had kept during the wars, and of her husband's services to Parliament, also apparently to vindicate his actions. Her process in the *Memoirs*' compilation could, in this way, be compared to her contemporary royalist Edward Hyde, earl of Clarendon's reworking of earlier documents in his *History of the Rebellion*, the subject of another chapter in this volume. The orientation of her text, however, around retelling the "simple truth" of her husband's actions and commemorating his virtues is illustrative of the affordances of the apparently personal memoir for a woman writer to address politics in the period.[7] Hutchinson's is a rare woman's voice in the contemporaneous writing of English revolutionary history, and it is no coincidence that her *Memoirs*' closest comparator is also husband-centric: her contemporary Margaret Cavendish published a much briefer celebration of her royalist military commander husband William Cavendish, marquis of Newcastle in 1667.[8] Hutchinson, in contrast, wrote from a position of political defeat and personal loss and, more typically for a woman writer of the period, did not seek print publication.[9] The *Memoirs* were first published by her descendant Julius Hutchinson in 1806, after which they rapidly became regarded as one of the most important contemporary accounts of the English revolutionary period.

Like her fellow republican John Milton, the focus of another chapter in this volume, Hutchinson lived an occluded life after political defeat in the 1660s. Also like Milton, she wrote about her personal loss and political defeat in other forms, including, after the demise of the English republic and the death of her husband, *Order and Disorder*, a biblical narrative poem that can be compared to *Paradise Lost*, and a series of moving elegies and epitaphs on her husband's death. In her elegies, as in the *Memoirs*, her personal loss and the political demise of the English nation are conflated and mutually lamented. Elegy 10 describes her loss of her "love, life, crown, peace, treasure, joys," through imagery of the garden at Owthorpe and her husband as a beneficial patriarch of England. These elegies and a series of epitaphs for his monument in Owthorpe church continue the work of the *Memoirs*, constructing her husband as one of the "late commonwealth's" great "worthies." His grave, she describes, "doth close up the dark cave/where Liberty sleeps in her Champion's grave."[10]

Extract

From Memoirs of the Life of Colonel Hutchinson (1660s, Printed in 1806).[11]

Now the Colonel and Mr. Stanhope went up to the Parliament, which began on the 25th day of April, 1660; to whom the king sending a declaration from Breda, which promised, or at least intimated, liberty of conscience, remission of all offences, enjoyment of liberties and estates, they voted to send commissioners to invite him. And almost all the gentry of all parties went, some to fetch him over, some to meet him at the seaside, some to fetch him into London, into which he entered upon the 29th day of May with an universal joy and triumph, even to his own amazement; who, when he saw all the nobility and gentry of the land flowing into him, asked, where were his enemies? For he saw nothing but prostrates, expressing all the love that could make a prince happy; and indeed it was a wonder in that day to see the mutability of some, and the hypocrisy of others, and the servile flattery of all. Monck, like his better genius, conducted him, and was adored like one that had brought all the glory and felicity of mankind home with this prince.[12] The officers of the army had made themselves as fine as the courtiers, and every one hoped in this change to change their condition, and disowned all things they had before adored; and every ballad seller sung up and down the streets ribald rhymes made in reproach of the late Commonwealth and all those worthies that therein endeavoured the people's freedom and happiness. The Presbyterians were now the white boys,[13] and according to their nature fell a thirsting, then hunting after blood, and urging that God's blessing could not be upon the land 'til justice had cleansed it from the late king's blood. First that fact was disowned, then all the Acts made after it rendered void, then an inquisition made after those that were guilty thereof; and first only seven nominated of them that sat in judgement on that Prince for exemplary justice, and a proclamation sent for the rest to come in, upon penalty of losing their estates.

While these things were debating in the house, at the first diverse persons concerned in that business sat there, and when that business came into question, every one of them spoke it according to their present sense. But Mr. Lenthall, son to the late speaker of that Parliament, when the Presbyterians first called that business into question, though not [at] all concerned in it himself, stood up and made so handsome and so honorable a speech in the defence of them all as deserves eternal honour. But the Presbyterians called him to the bar for it, where, though he mitigated some expression which might be taken ill of the House, yet he spoke so generously as it is never to be forgotten of him, who indeed hath no other good thing to be remembered. Yet herein he behaved himself with such courage and honor as was not matched at that time in England, for which he was looked on with an evil eye, and the Lieutenant of the Tower's jealousy delivered him. When it came to Ingoldsby's turn to speak,[14] he with many tears professed his repentance for that murther, and told a false tale how Cromwell held his hand and forced him to subscribe the sentence, and made a most lamentable whining recantation, after which he retired. And another had almost ended, when Colonel Hutchinson, who was not there at the beginning, came in and was told what they were about, and that it would also be expected he should say something. He being surprised with a thing he had expected not, yet neither then nor in any the like occasion ever failed himself, but told them that for his actings in those days, if he had erred, it was the inexperience of his age and the defect of his judgement, and not the malice of his heart, which had ever prompted him to pursue the general advantage of his country more than his own; and if the sacrifice of him might conduce to the public peace and settlement, he should freely submit his life and fortunes to their dispose; that the vain expense of his age and the great debts his public employments had run him into, as they were testimonies that neither avarice nor any other interest had carried him on, so they yielded him just cause to repent that ever he forsook his own blessed quiet to embark in such a troubled sea, where he had made shipwrack of all things but a good conscience; and as to that particular action of the king, he desired them to believe he had that sense of it that befitted an Englishman, a Christian, and a gentleman. What he expressed was to this effect, but so very handsomely delivered that it generally took the whole House: only one gentleman stood up and said he had expressed himself as one that was much more sorry for the events and consequences than the actions; but another replied that when a man's words might admit of two interpretations, it befitted gentlemen always to receive that which might be most favourable.

As soon as the Colonel had spoken, he retired into the room where Ingoldsby was, with his eyes yet red, who had called up a little spite to succeed his whinings; and embracing Colonel Hutchinson, "Oh," said Colonel [Ingoldsby], "did I ever imagine we could be brought to this? Could I have suspected it when I brought them Lambert in the other day, this sword should have redeemed us from being dealt with as criminals by that people for whom we had so gloriously exposed our selves?" The Colonel told him he had foreseen, ever since those usurpers thrust out the lawful authority of the land to enthrone themselves, it could end in nothing else; but the integrity of his heart in all he had done made him as cheerfully ready to suffer as to triumph in good cause.

Notes

1 *Memoirs of the Life of Colonel Hutchinson, with a Fragment of Autobiography*, ed. N. H. Keeble (London: J. M. Dent, 1995): 51.
2 "The Life of Mrs Lucy Hutchinson, Written by Herself: A Fragment", in *Memoirs of the Life of Colonel Hutchinson*, ed. Keeble, 14–15.
3 *Memoirs*, ed. Keeble, 51.
4 See, for example, Katherine Philips, "Arion on a Dolphin, to his Majesty at his Passage into England".
5 For the date, see P. R. Seddon, "Hutchinson, John (*bap*. 1615, *d*. 1664)", *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* online at www.oxforddnb.com.
6 See Derek Hirst, "Remembering a Hero: Lucy Hutchinson's Memoirs of Her Husband", *The English Historical Review*, 482, vol. 119 (2004): 482.
7 "To My Children", in *Memoirs*, ed. Keeble, 16.
8 Margaret Cavendish, *The Life of the Thrice Noble, High and Puissant Prince William Cavendish* (London: printed by A. Maxwell, 1667).
9 "To My Children", in *Memoirs*, ed. Keeble, 16–17.
10 Lucy Hutchinson, "You sons of England whose unquenched flame". For this and a selection of Hutchinson's other elegies and epitaphs on her husband, see *Women Poets of the English Civil War*, eds. Sarah C. E. Ross and Elizabeth Scott-Baumann (Manchester: Manchester University Press): 277–95.
11 Note on the text: I have modernized spelling and punctuation throughout.
12 General George Monck, first duke of Albermarle.
13 White boys: favourites.
14 Sir Richard Ingoldsby (d. 1685), a colonel in the New Model Army.

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13

JONATHAN SWIFT (1667–1745)

Brian Cowan

Jonathan Swift was by all accounts an odd figure. Born Irish, Swift aspired to achieve professional success as a clergyman in the Church of England, but he failed to do so when he ran afoul of Queen Anne's displeasure with the irreverent style of his writings. He is now known as one of the founding fathers of Irish nationalism, even though he always remained proud of his English heritage and his connections to English political and cultural power brokers. Swift initially deemed his appointment as Dean of St Patrick's Cathedral in 1713 as an ecclesiastical booby prize equivalent to a form of exile that would remove him from the centre of action in London. His experience of loss was personal: he failed to gain either a bishopric or, failing that, appointment as Historiographer Royal, either of which he thought were appropriate rewards for his talents and just recompense for his services to the established church and state. Swift's appointment to an Irish deanship frustrated his ambitions to become recognized as a serious churchman as well as his plans to publish his major work of political history, *The History of the Four Last Years of the Queen*, a work largely written in England during the years 1712–1713 but which would only be published posthumously in 1758.

There are many ironies to Swift's *History*, not least of which is the title, which was only given to the work long after it had been composed. Swift could hardly know that the historical moment he was trying to record would be "the four last years of the queen" when Anne was still very much alive as he was writing it. The work itself was not a product of loss; it was written during a brief moment of supreme optimism, when Swift could imagine for himself a future role as lord spiritual or perhaps Historiographer Royal. This future was not to be, however, as the queen's death in 1714 put an end to his professional ambitions. The work would remain unpublished in his lifetime, and even today, it is often dismissed as a minor, even dull, work entirely unrepresentative of his literary genius. Swift never stopped thinking of himself as a historian in the neoclassical mode, however, and he would

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continue to work on revising his history of Robert Harley's "great ministry" for the rest of his life.[1] But he would never achieve fame or success as a historian, nor would he ever manage to return to political favour at the Hanoverian court or with Robert Walpole's new Whig oligarchy in England.

Instead, Swift managed to extrapolate from his personal loss to a more generalized political lament for lost liberties. In so doing, he found a new vocation as an Irish patriot. The works he composed in Ireland are today better known than his earlier English compositions that established his reputation as a formidable satirist and propagandist. Swift's *Gulliver's Travels* (1726) found a curious afterlife as a humorous tale for children rather than as the savage social and political satire that it was intended to be. Equally well known, if perhaps less often actually read, is his *A Modest Proposal for preventing the Children of Poor People from Being a Burthen to Their Parents or Country, and for making them Beneficial to the Publick* (1729), which ironically advocated selling Irish babies as food for the wealthy. The tract is widely regarded as the most brilliant, and surely the most notorious, satire written in the English language.[2] Despite his professional disappointments in England, Swift's personal exile to Ireland proved to be the catalyst that spurred his literary genius to new heights and provoked him to take up the cause of Irish patriotism at a moment when the notion of an Irish nation was inchoate and very much up for grabs. Swift's anger at perceived injustices fuelled his writings, and never more so than during the last three decades of his life in Ireland. In his self-composed epitaph, Swift declared that upon the occasion of his death, "savage indignation can no longer lacerate his heart," and he implored his audience: "Go, traveller, and imitate, if you can, this strong defender, to the utmost of his powers, of liberty."[3] Loss of the prospect of preferment spurred Swift's transformation from being an intellectual in the service of established power to an intellectual who took aim at governments and the social mores upon which they rested.

Swift excelled at opposing the status quo. He boasted that "Fair LIBERTY was all his Cry," and he railed against the modern slavery that he thought his fellow Irish people were subjected to by their English masters; he remained largely silent however about the practice of racialized slavery that was becoming an ever-more important part of the wider system of British colonialism which he challenged.[4] Swift credited his commitment to liberty to "having been long conversant with the Greek and Roman authors" and thus maintained that he was "much inclined to be what they called a Whig in politics." His old-fashioned Whiggery notwithstanding, Swift remained an authoritarian and a conformist at heart. Although he maintained throughout his life that his politics were those of a Whig, he achieved his greatest fame and success in the service of the Tory party. "As to religion," he confessed "to be a High-churchman," and this religious devotion to the monopoly prerogatives of the established church was of equal importance to his politics as his professed dedication to liberty.[5]

For the last four years of Queen Anne's reign, Swift enjoyed privileged access to Robert Harley's political machinations as the de facto leader of the Tory party, and he emerged as one of the ablest pro-ministry propagandists. Swift's pro-peace

pamphlet *The Conduct of the Allies* (1711) was a bestseller that helped to turn public opinion in support of the Peace of Utrecht (1713–1715) that finally brought an end to the War of the Spanish Succession (1701–1714) and an enduring peace with France. Despite his claim to being a Whiggish lover of liberty, for Swift these values did not extend to religious liberties. Swift had little sympathy for Protestant Dissenters or Roman Catholics, and he believed vehemently in the religious monopoly of the established Church of England (and Ireland). Swift's staunch belief in the need for religious conformity sits oddly with his claim to be a defender of liberty. In the Irish context, he only defended the liberties of a distinct minority of the population. Most Irish people were not members of the established Protestant Church of Ireland. Recent estimates suggest that somewhere between three-quarters to four-fifths of the population were Catholic; Roman Catholic predominance was obvious everywhere outside Ulster, and even there, the established church was challenged by a sizeable community of Protestant Dissenters, most of whom were Presbyterians of Scottish extraction. Outside Ulster as well, Presbyterians often outnumbered Irish Anglicans.[6] Throughout his life, Swift supported the Sacramental Test Acts and penal laws that barred both Catholics and Dissenters from holding public office and placed severe restrictions on the practice of their religion. In his steadfast opposition to any toleration for religious nonconformity, Swift was very much a Tory.

Swift's sense of loss was not limited to his professional disappointments; it was part of a larger political culture of nostalgia characteristic of early eighteenth-century Tory sensibilities shared by his fellow literati such as Alexander Pope, John Gay, and Henry St. John, Lord Bolingbroke.[7] Together, these writers comprised an informal "Scriblerus Club" devoted to satirizing what they all agreed to be corrupt, modern influences in contemporary literature and politics. They looked upon the rise of the "moneyed interest," centred particularly in the financiers and stock jobbers in the City of London and their political allies in the Whig party, with disdain and fear for the future. Chief among these Whig scoundrels was the prime minister, Robert Walpole, who appeared to the Scriblerians as the epitome of all that was wrong with modern society. He was self-interested and venal; he had no concern or care for the established church or likely even the Christian religion; and he declined to offer patronage to the best poets and artists of the age (i.e. to the Scriblerians themselves).

Swift's hatred of Walpole ran deep. Although he only met Walpole in person once during his return to England in 1726, Swift saw in Walpole's premiership the living representation of all that he had lost personally as well as the eclipse of the efflorescent literary culture of Queen Anne's reign. Swift largely refrained from criticizing Walpole explicitly in print, but his disdain for the man is clear from his unflattering characterization of the Liliputian Lord Treasurer Flimnap (who was clearly meant to represent Walpole) in *Gulliver's Travels*. In Swift's *History of the Last Four Years*, Walpole's political importance in Anne's reign is dismissed as "altogether obscure."[8] Swift even gave his long-time housekeeper in Dublin, one Mrs John Brent, the nickname "Sir Robert Walpole" and he did the same when Brent's

daughter, Mrs Ridgway, succeeded her in 1735. Swift encouraged everyone in his household and neighbourhood to do the same, presumably in order to denigrate Walpole by association with lower-class women.[9]

Walpole and Swift would both die within months of each other in 1745. As a reward for his services to the crown as Britain's first prime minister, Walpole had been elevated to the House of Lords as the earl of Orford, Viscount Walpole and Baron Walpole of Houghton in the County of Norfolk. By contrast, Swift had spent the last five years of his life in mental decline as the effects of his lifelong struggle with Ménière's disease finally disabled him. He had suffered from bouts of vertigo, giddiness, and deafness throughout much of his adult life. According to his cousin and his first biographer, Deane Swift, among his last words were "I am what I am" and "I am a fool."[10] Swift may have lost out on any chances at English preferment during his lifetime, but he died a culture hero in Ireland and had secured a prominent place in the literary canon as the greatest satirist in the English language.

Extract

From Jonathan Swift, *The Works of Dr. Jonathan Swift, Dean of St. Patrick's Dublin*, Deane Swift, ed., 18 vols., [Teerink-Scouten, 92], (London: W. Johnston, 1765) vol. 15, 33–37. Original spelling has been retained here.

Note: The original publication of Jonathan Swift, *The History of the Four Last Years of the Queen* (London: A. Millar, 1758), did not include this preface.

. . . it was very well understood, some years before her majesty's death, how the new king would act, immediately upon his entrance, in the choice of those (and those alone) whom he resolved to trust; and consequently what reports would industriously be raised, as well as spread, to expose the proceedings of her majesty herself, as well as of her servants; who have been ever since blasted as enemies to the present establishment, by the most ignorant and malicious among mankind.

Therefore, as it was my lot, to have been daily conversant with the persons then in power; never absent in times of business or conversation, until a few weeks before her majesty's death; and a witness of almost every step they made, in the course of their administration; I must have been very unfortunate, not to be better informed, than those miserable pamphleteers, or their patrons, could pretend to. At the same time, I freely confess it appeared necessary, as well as natural, upon such a mighty change as the death of a sovereign, that those who were to be in power upon the succession, and resolved to act, in every part, by a direct contrary system of politicks, should load their predecessors, with as much infamy, as the most inveterate malice and envy could suggest, or the most stupid ignorance and credulity in their underlings, could swallow.

Therefore, as I pretend to write, with the utmost impartiality, the following history of the four last years of her majesty's reign, in order to undeceive prejudiced persons at present, as well as posterity; I am persuaded in my own mind, as likewise

by the advice of my oldest and wisest friends, that I am doing my duty to God and man, by endeavouring to set future ages right, in their judgment of that happy reign; and, as a faithful historian, I cannot suffer falsehoods to run on any longer, not only against all appearance of truth, as well as probability, but even against those happy events, which owe their success, to the very measures then fixed in the general peace.

The materials of this history, beside what I have already mentioned, I mean the confidence reposed in me for those four years, by the chief persons in power, were extracted out of many hundred letters written by our ambassadors abroad, and from the answers, as well as instructions sent them, by our secretaries of state, or by the first minister the earl of Oxford. The former, were all originals, and the latter, copies entered into books in the secretaries office, out of both which I collected all that I thought convenient; not to mention several memorials given me by the ministers at home. Farther, I was a constant witness and observer of all that passed; and entered every particular of any consequence upon paper.

I was so far from having any obligation to the crown, that on the contrary, her majesty issued a proclamation, offering three hundred pounds to any person who would discover the author of a certain short treatise, which the queen well knew to have been written by me. I never received one shilling from the minister, or any other present, except that of a few books; nor did I want their assistance to support me. I very often dined indeed with the treasurer and secretary; but, in those days, that was not reckoned a bribe, whatever it may have been at any time since. I absolutely refused to be chaplain to the lord treasurer; because I thought it would ill become me, to be in a state of dependence.

I know very well the numberless prejudices of weak and deceived people, as well as the malice of those, who, to serve their own interest or ambition, have cast off all religion, morality, justice, and common decency. However, although perhaps I may not be believed in the present age, yet I hope to be so in the next, by all who will bear any regard for the honour and liberty of England, if either of these shall then subsist or not.

I have no interest, or inclination, to palliate the mistakes, or omissions, or want of steadiness, or unhappy misunderstandings, among a few of those, who then presided in affairs.

Nothing is more common, than the virulence of superficial and ill-informed writers, against the conduct of those who are now called prime ministers: and since factions appear at present, to be at a greater height, than in any former times, although perhaps not so equally poised; it may probably concern those who are now in their height, if they have any regard to their own memories in future ages, to be less warm against others, who humbly differ from them in some state opinions. Old persons remember, at least by tradition, the horrible prejudices that prevailed against the first earl of Clarendon, whose character, as it now stands, might be a pattern for all ministers; although even bishop Burnet of Sarum, whose principles, veracity, and manner of writing, are so little esteemed upon many accounts, has been at the pains to vindicate him.

Upon that irreparable breach between the treasurer and secretary Bolingbroke, after my utmost endeavours, for above two years, to reconcile them, I retired to a friend in Berkshire; where I staid until her majesty's death; and then immediately returned to my station in Dublin, where I continued about twelve years without once seeing England. I there often reviewed the following Memoirs; neither changing nor adding, farther than by correcting the style: and if I have been guilty of any mistakes, they must be of small moment; for it was hardly possible I could be wrong informed, with all the advantages I have already mentioned.

I shall not be very uneasy, under the obloquy that may perhaps be cast upon me, by the violent leaders and followers of the present prevailing party. And yet I cannot find the least inconsistence with conscience or honour, upon the death of so excellent a princess as her late majesty, for a wise and good man to submit, with a true and loyal heart, to her lawful protestant successor; whose hereditary title was confirmed by the queen and both houses of parliament, with the greatest unanimity; after it had been made an article in the treaty, that every prince in our alliance, should be a guarantee of that succession.

Notes

1 Ashley Marshall, *Swift and History: Politics and the English Past* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015).
2 Ian McBride, "Swift, Locke, and Slavery", *Past & Present Blog*, 23 September 2019: https://pastandpresent.org.uk/swift-locke-slavery/; Ian McBride, "The Politics of a Modest Proposal: Swift and the Irish Crisis of the Late 1720s", *Past & Present* 244.1 (2019): 89–122.
3 Claude Rawson's translation from Swift's Latin: "*Ubi sæva Indignatio / Ulterius / Cor lacerare nequit, / Abi Viator / Et imitare, si poteris, / Strenuum pro virili / Libertatis Vindicatorem*": see Claude Rawson, *Swift's Angers* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2014): 239.
4 Swift, "Verses on the Death of Dr. Swift", l. 351 in *Swift: Poetical Works*, ed. Herbert Davis (Oxford: Oxford Univ. Press, 1967): 507. Swift mentions the African slave trade only once—and even here with characteristic irony—in his unpublished 'Maxims Controlled in Ireland' (1729) in *Irish Political Writings after 1725,* eds. David Hayton and Adam Rounce (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2019): 179; McBride, "Swift, Locke, and Slavery".
5 Swift, "Memoirs Relating to the Change Which Happened in the Queen's Ministry" (1714) in *The Prose Works of Jonathan Swift*, ed. Herbert Davis, 14 vols. (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1953): 120.
6 Sean J. Connolly, *Divided Kingdom: Ireland 1630–1800* (Oxford: Oxford Univ. Press, 2008): 249; Ian McBride, *Eighteenth-Century Ireland: The Isle of Slaves* (Dublin: Gill & Macmillan, 2009): 290.
7 Isaac Kramnick, *Bolingbroke and His Circle: The Politics of Nostalgia in the Age of Walpole* (1968; reprint, Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1992).
8 Swift, *History of the Four Last Years*, 65.
9 David Womersley, "Long Note 11", in *Swift, Gulliver's Travels*, ed. Womersley (Cambridge: Cambridge Univ. Press, 2012): 486; Paul Langford, "Swift and Walpole", in *Politics and Literature in the Age of Swift: English and Irish Perspectives*, ed. Claude Rawson, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010): 52.
10 Deane Swift to the earl of Orrery (4 April 1744) in *The Correspondence of Jonathan Swift, D.D.*, ed. David Woolley, 5 vols, (Frankfurt: Peter Lang, 2007): 1506.

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14

PETER OLIVER (1713–1791)

Michael D. Hattem

The American Revolution produced an unprecedented amount of historical writing in the new United States. Their histories and other historical writings were one of the primary ways in which Americans tried to understand the meaning of the life-changing events through which they had lived. But the Revolution had also been a civil war between colonists who alternately styled themselves "patriots" and "loyalists." In the southern states, the war was especially brutal, pitting communities and even families against one another. For many reasons, loyalists from each colony and all social classes retained their allegiance to the British crown and Parliament. Many of these colonists ultimately paid a great price for their loyalty. Some were forced to live the rest of their lives in exile across the British Empire, especially in Canada and England. Those who remained were subject to acts passed by many states that allowed the confiscation of loyalist lands and assets. Like their revolutionary counterparts, they also spent the years after the war trying to make sense of what had happened to them. While historians often remember the patriot histories of the Revolution written in the years after the war by David Ramsay, William Gordon, and Mercy Otis Warren, loyalists too used historical writing as part of their efforts to understand how the world had been turned upside down.

Prominent loyalists such as Thomas Hutchinson, Rev. Jonathan Boucher, Joseph Galloway, and others wrote their own histories of the Revolution in the 1780s and 1790s. But these were not widely read in the United States. In the wake of the war, Americans faced the challenge of fostering unity among the new states and highlighting the dissent of the loyalists did not serve that purpose. After 1800, loyalists largely disappeared from the historical narratives of the Revolution. The first attempts to recover the loyalist experience came during the sectional crisis of the 1830s and 1840s. Northerners Charles Francis Adams and Lorenzo Sabine detailed the lives of famous Massachusetts loyalists, while the southerner William Gilmore Simms wrote about loyalists in the South. In the late nineteenth and early

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twentieth centuries, the United States developed a more friendly relationship with Great Britain. This change spurred new interest in loyalists among historians, such as Alexander C. Flick, who published *Loyalism in New York during the American Revolution* in 1901. In the twentieth century, loyalists received further attention but continued to remain peripheral to the triumphant narrative of nation-building that defined the popular memory of the Revolution.

Peter Oliver came from a prominent, old Massachusetts family that could trace its ancestry back to the colony's first settlers. He came of age in Middleborough, where he served various offices in the community while earning a fortune, partly through an iron foundry that was much in demand during the Seven Years' War. By 1756, Oliver was an associate justice on the colony's Superior Court and a few years later served on the governor's Council. Peter's brother, Andrew, had married into the even more prominent Hutchinson family. Thomas Hutchinson was perhaps the highest-ranking native-born official in the colony, eventually serving as lieutenant governor and acting governor of Massachusetts during the 1760s. Peter served as his advisor when, in 1765, Hutchinson gave Andrew a lucrative commission to collect duties from the newly passed Stamp Act. A large protest against the act resulted in the tearing down of Andrew Oliver's warehouse and the looting of Thomas Hutchinson's home. In 1770, Peter Oliver was a judge in the case against the soldiers who had fired into a crowd during the so-called Boston Massacre. When Andrew died in 1774, patriot protests made it impossible for Peter to attend his brother's funeral. As the colonies came closer to independence, Oliver and much of his immediate extended family remained staunch loyalists and eventually were forced to flee the colonies.

The manuscript history Peter Oliver wrote was completed in 1781. Entitled "The Origin & Progress of the American Rebellion," Oliver drew directly on his own personal experience in the upper echelons of Massachusetts politics in the decades preceding independence. One gets the sense that the colony (or at least its elites) enjoyed a golden age before the "rebellion" began in the 1760s. But the end of the Seven Years' War raised all kinds of questions for the administration of the British Empire. The new king, George III, brought in several Tory and conservative Whigs into his Ministry after Whigs had enjoyed decades of political dominance during the reign of his father, George II. These new ministers wanted to see the empire reorganized in ways that would allow for greater centralized control over its colonies. They also wanted to draw revenue directly from the colonies rather than generate them through trade, as Whig policies had long done. Their efforts, beginning with the Sugar Act and the Currency Act of 1764 followed by the Stamp Act of 1765, were met with strong resistance.

Oliver, like many of the loyalists who wrote histories in this era, attributed the rebellion in the colonies to a few factors. First, he believed that ordinary colonists had been led astray by enterprising demagogues with their own agendas. His character sketches of various patriot leaders, including James Otis, Jr, Samuel Adams, and John Hancock, reveal a deep mistrust and disgust of such figures. For those who followed Adams and Hancock, their rhetoric about the increasing

centralization of authority by Britain rang true. But, for Oliver, it was merely a cover for their own personal interests. Though he came from a well-respected family, Adams had been largely unsuccessful in his professional life. He had failed at managing a brewery and come up short on his receipts during a brief stint as a tax collector. For Oliver, Adams was a man who had failed to make it within the system of the British Empire and so he sought to tear it down.

Hancock, on the other hand, had become one of the wealthiest men in the colony as a merchant. But he had done it through smuggling from the Caribbean, unlike many of the prominent merchants in the loyalist camp who made their fortunes through trade with England. Oliver believed that Hancock was motivated against the Crown not by principle but because Britain began to crack down on illegal trade in the 1760s. In other words, these two men did not have the same ties to the British Empire and the Crown that more elite loyalists like Oliver did. And he believed their political muckraking was primarily a cover for their own personal economic interests. For Oliver, Adams and Hancock were demagogues who led otherwise loyal colonists astray with their grand but deceptive language about "liberty" and "tyranny." Oliver was not alone in this observation as many loyalist historians blamed demagogues like Adams and Hancock for fomenting the unrest that resulted in independence.

Like other loyalist historians, Oliver also believed that the incompetence of the British Ministry was a key factor in the success of the rebellion. Britain had not recognized the threat posed by these demagogues, which seemed obvious to Oliver based on his own personal experience. He routinely lamented the lack of more firm, decisive action from Britain against the leaders of the patriot movement. Britain's failure to treat those fomenting rebellion more harshly only encouraged more acts of dissent, including the Stamp Act riots of 1765 that destroyed elite colonists' property. Oliver's history gives the distinct sense that he recognized the potential of the threat posed by the patriots and that despite his protestations, they were allowed to continue poisoning the minds of colonists against the Crown. Oliver, like many other loyalist historians, also believed that independence was a goal of the demagogues from the very beginning.

Oliver's history betrays his bitterness on nearly every page. Before the rebellion, he had enjoyed a life of luxury, living in a mansion on a hill. He had also wielded significant political power through his family relationships, the multiple offices he held, and his connections to prominent royal officials. Like many loyalists, he retained this sense of bitterness over the events, but Oliver also retained his disdain for those he believed had caused his fall from grace. Oliver fled the colonies in March 1776 for Nova Scotia and, like Thomas Hutchinson, eventually made his way to England. There, he almost certainly shared a similar experience with the other loyalists who had fled in exile to Britain. Though they had a deep affection for their "mother country," those feelings were often not reciprocated. In England, some native Britons blamed the colonial elites for allowing the situation to get out of control. Others simply looked down on them because they were from the colonies. As a result, they no longer had the high status they enjoyed in the

colonies before the rebellion. And, in many cases, they were reduced to petitioning the king and Parliament for reimbursement for the property they had lost due to their loyalty. In other words, they were outsiders in England and more often the recipients of blame or pity than of the respect and power they had enjoyed before the rebellion had taken it all away.

Peter Oliver's manuscript, written in the form of a letter to someone inquiring about the rebellion, reveals a number of the challenges involved in writing history from loss. First, there is the challenge of overcoming one's own personal feelings. But, in the eighteenth century, history was not an objective, academic discipline. Americans wrote histories that praised the patriots who had caused the Revolution and despised the loyalists. At the same time, loyalists wrote histories that despised the patriots and found many places to lay blame. Therefore, Oliver was not bound by a sense of duty to produce an objective history by modern standards, though he also certainly believed that his account was accurate. Second, his own personal experiences reduced his account to focusing on the actions of individuals. One gets the sense that had Adams and Hancock been imprisoned immediately, the Revolution would have never happened. As a result, Oliver could not get beyond his own perspective to understand what broader forces may have been contributing to colonial dissent. Oliver's history, therefore, offers an important reminder that histories from loss are apt to be just as narrow as histories from those who won.

Extract

From *Peter Oliver's Origin & Progress of the American Rebellion: A Tory View*, eds. Douglass Adair and John A. Schutz (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1967). Spelling and punctuation rendered here as in original.

Sir!

The Revolt of *North America*, from their Allegiance to & Connection with the Parent State, seems to be as striking a Phaenomenon, in the political World, as hath appeared for many Ages past; & perhaps it is a *singular* one. For, by adverting to the historick page, we shall find no Revolt of Colonies, whether under the *Roman* or any other State, but what originated from severe Oppressions, derived from the supreme Head of the State, or from those whom he had entrusted as his Substitutes to be Governors of his Provinces. In such Cases, the Elasticity of human Nature hath been exerted, to throw off the Burdens which the Subject hath groaned under; & in most of the Instances which are recorded in History, human Nature will still justify those Efforts.

But for a Colony, wch. had been nursed, in its Infancy, with the most tender Care & Attention; which had been indulged with every Gratification that the most froward Child could wish for; which had even bestowed upon it such Liberality, which in its Infancy & Youth could not *think* to ask for; which had been repeatedly saved from impending Destruction, sometimes by an Aid unsought-at other times by Assistance granted to them from their own repeated humble Supplications; for such Colonies

to plunge into an unnatural Rebellion, & in the Reign of a Sovereign, too, whose publick Virtues had announced him to be the Father of his Country, & whose private Virtues had distinguished him as an Ornament of ye. human Species—this surely, to an attentive Mind, must strike with some Degree of Astonishment; & such a Mind would anxiously wish for a Veil to throw over the Nakedness of human Nature. [3]

I shall next give you a Sketch of some of Mr. *Samuel Adam's* Features; & I do not know to delineate them stronger, than by the Observation made by a Celebrated Painter in *America*, vizt. "That if he wished to draw the Picture of the Devil, that he would get *Sam Adams* to sit for him:" & indeed, a very ordinary Physiognomist would, at a transient View of his Countenance, develope the Malignity of his Heart. He was a Person of Understanding, but it was discoverable rather by a Shrewdness than Solidity of Judgment; & he understood human Nature, in low life, so well, that he could turn the Minds of the great Vulgar as well as the small into any Course that he might chuse; perhaps he was a singular Instance in this Kind; & he never failed of employing his Abilities to the vilest Purposes. . . . He was so thorough a *Machiavillian*, that he divested *himself of every worthy Principle, & would stick at no Crime to accomplish his Ends."* [39]

THE BOSTON RIOT

By this Time, there were 4 or 500 of the Rioters collected; the Rioters pelted the Soldiers with Brickbats, Ice, Oystershells & broken Glass Bottles. Capt. *Preston* behaved with great Coolness & Prudence. The Rioters calling out "*Damn You fire, fire if you dare!*" & Capt. Preston desiring them to be quiet, and ordering his Men *not to fire*. But at last, a Stout Fellow, of the Mob, knocked down one of the Soldiers; & endeavoring to wrest his Gun from him, the Soldier cried, "*D—n you fire*," pulled Trigger & killed his Man. The other soldiers, in the midst of the Noise, supposing it was ye. Captain who gave the Order, discharged their Pieces, & five Persons were killed. Let me here observe, that upon the Trial great Stress was laid upon the Captain's giving the Order to fire, but there was no Proof of it; & the Doubt was not cleared up for many Months after; when the Soldier who have the Word of Command, mentioned earlier, solved the Doubt. But it was immaterial in Law whether the Capt. gave it or not, for the Attack was so evidential of a murderous Design, that he must have been justified if he had given such Orders. The People, indeed, would not have discharged him of Guilt, for they had no other Idea of washing the Blood from the Streets, but by pouring greater Quantities of it. [89–90]

A FINAL VIEW OF THE REBELLION

The Congress in *1776*, published their Declaration of Independence. The Minority, or Opposition in Parliament said, that the Ministry had drove them into it by Oppression, & that Oppression would make a wise Man mad. The Faction in *America* seem to have made Dupes of all they had to do with. They duped the Clergy, they duped the People & they duped the wise Men of *Gotham* in *England*.

If these wise Men disown ye. Shame of being duped by an American, they must take the Shame of being the Betrayers of their Country, by encouraging them to the bold Stroke which they have struck for Independence. The Alternative is in their Choice. But they are mistaken in their Fact. Independence, it is true, was declared in Congress in 1776, but it was settled in *Boston*, in 1768, by *Adams* & his Junto. I have Authority for this Assertion; the Authority of a Gentleman who was tampered with by the aforementioned Major Gen. *Warren*, who was a most active Man among the Faction. *Warren* was in Hopes to take this Gentleman into their Number, & laid open their whole Scheme. He told him that "Independence was their Object; that it was supposed that *great Britain* would resent it & would lay the Town of *Boston* in Ashes, from their Ships; that an Estimate had accordingly been made of the Value of the Estates in Town; & that they had determined to pay the Losses of their Friends from the Estates of the Loyalists in the Country." The Gentleman refused to join with them, but *Warren* replied, that they would pursue their Scheme. This Scheme was not divulged to the People, for had it been generally communicated to the People, I believe, they would, *then*, have been shocked at the Proposal; although they have, since that, had the Charges of Popery & Slavery so often rung in their Ears, that they are now reconciled to it. [148]

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15

NICOLAS DE CARITAT, MARQUIS DE CONDORCET (1743–1794)

Simona Pisanelli

Jean-Marie Antoine Nicolas de Caritat, marquis de Condorcet (1743–1794) is one of the most important exponents of the French Enlightenment. A nobleman by birth, fatherless from his earliest years and brought up by his mother to pursue a career in the Church, Condorcet chose a completely different path. His early, yet extraordinary, knowledge of mathematics made him one of the youngest members, then permanent secretary, of the *Académie des Sciences* and one of the most brilliant visitors to Madame Lespinasse's salon, known as the "laboratory of the Encylopaedia." Here he was taken under the protective wing of Jean Baptiste Le Rond d'Alembert and met Anne Robert Jacques Turgot. When the latter became *Contrôleur Général des Finances* (1774–1776), he wanted Condorcet at his side as *Inspecteur Général de la Monnaie* (1774–1791) and with him drew up several social reform projects, which were only partially implemented.

After resigning from his role as commissioner of the State Treasury (1791), Condorcet stood as a candidate for the *Convention nationale*, the constitutional and legislative assembly in charge of transforming France into a Republic (1792). His election as vice-president was a sign of recognition of the political credit he enjoyed and the moral authority he was accorded. Within it, he supported the abolition of noble titles but rejected the proposal to condemn the sovereigns of France to death. This position made him unpopular with the Jacobin party which, now predominant in the National Convention, rejected Condorcet's constitutional project and condemned him to death in July 1793.

While in hiding in Mme Vernet's house, Condorcet wrote *Outlines of an Historical View of the Progress of the Human Mind*. Shortly afterwards, he was arrested. He was later found dead in his cell, apparently by suicide,[1] although this seems quite inconsistent with the optimistic attitude that had led Condorcet to write his *Outlines* even at such a dramatic time in his life.

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In April 1795, Condorcet was posthumously rehabilitated, and the National Convention ordered the printing of 3,000 copies of his last work. The *Outlines* is considered the ideological testament of Condorcet, also known as "the last *philosophe*." In it, Condorcet effectively summarized the conception of history that he shared with some Enlightenment thinkers, as opposed to the view that had dominated the pre-Revolutionary French cultural scene and still remained in vogue in other Enlightenment fringes. This chapter aims to demonstrate that, according to the *philosophes*, the main task of history was to prevent even the most unfortunate and poor individuals (and societies) from losses and defeats, caused by the lack of enlightenment.

Until the first half of the eighteenth century, history was often not much more than the explanation of events in religious or metaphysical terms: a single otherworldly subject determined the fate of human beings and the events that affected them, in a framework of predetermined metaphysical visions. The Enlightenment completely overturned this perspective: the study of history was no longer a passive observation of events but a reflection on human activities as the motor of material growth and intellectual development.

How did this new conception of history arise towards the end of the eighteenth century? The answer to this question lies in the change of pace brought about by the transformations of societies. Since the origin of societies (First Epoch in Condorcet's *Outlines*), there had been long periods of evolution, characterized by changes so slow as to be almost imperceptible to the historian's eye. By appearing stable, human behaviour could be explained by examples from the past, which were considered perpetually valid.[2] Consequently, before the affirmation of new scientific methods (the merit for which, in the Eighth Epoch, is attributed to Bacon, Galileo, and Descartes), knowledge of the world and social organization remained almost immutable. In the Age of Enlightenment (the Ninth Epoch), on the other hand, the pace of transformations of all kinds became relentless. The tumultuous succession of political and legal events and the rapid progress of technical and economic knowledge meant that what had previously been taken as natural could no longer be accepted as such. In the Middle Ages, everything was explained by authority and tradition. During the eighteenth century, there was a growing need to explain the social and moral order, the legitimacy of laws, institutions, and the state through reason and science rather than religion. The answers provided by the Enlightenment had a twofold effect: they "not only greatly affected our perception of man and society but helped shape man and society themselves."[3]

Mere knowledge of past experiences is not sufficient to explain the structure and dynamics of contemporary society. Nevertheless, when combined with the use of reason, it can enable people "to foresee, with considerable probability, future appearances."[4] The Enlightenment intellectuals considered the use of reason as the only instrument capable of propelling human beings along the path of progress, allowing them to actively plan their future, rather than accepting a destiny that they believed to be determined by an otherworldly entity. This made them place the concept of reason at the heart of their program.

According to the Enlightenment thinkers, the task of the study of history was twofold: to identify and develop the means necessary to realize human projects; and to recognize the obstacles that still stand in the way of the indefinite perfecting of human beings.[5]

Observing the progress already made by past societies leads one to believe that "nature has fixed no limits to our hopes." Consequently, man—comforted by the development of his knowledge—will be able to break down all kinds of obstacles, including inequalities within and between nations, crystallized over the centuries not as belonging to "civilization itself" but as the result of the current "imperfections of the social order." The negative influences that have so far prevented the rapid development of a happy and egalitarian society stem mainly from religion and the misuse of the means to ensure "individual and general prosperity."[6]

The theme of religion is particularly important because two different Enlightenment currents developed around it. On the one hand, the so-called radical Enlightenment—to which Condorcet belongs (together with Diderot, d'Holbach and Helvétius)—which rejects the idea that the destiny of humanity, determined by providence, is simply the result of divine intentions in the "theatre of the world."[7] On the other hand, the moderate Enlightenment, represented—among others—by Turgot and Voltaire, which tends towards the search for final causes that move the universe from the outside, independently of the mechanical causes known to human beings.[8] These opposing positions also gave rise to diametrically opposed intentions, which Condorcet and Turgot—although linked by friendship and institutional relations—perfectly embodied.[9]

Turgot proposes a use of reason that does not completely disregard tradition and does not attempt to rid society of inequality, which is seen as the real driving force behind technological progress and economic growth, and which has been predisposed for this purpose by the Creator.[10] Moreover, Turgot defines Christianity as a factor of civilization that has helped to illuminate an otherwise dark period of human history.[11]

On the other hand, Condorcet makes the elimination of inequalities one of the central themes of his *Outlines*. Convinced that social organization does not depend at all on an immutable divine will or on metaphysical assumptions, Condorcet has no doubt that the conditions in which peoples find themselves are determined solely and exclusively by the degree of diffusion of knowledge: the more knowledge progresses, the more the living conditions of human beings improve.[12] Once the laws of nature that guarantee the satisfaction of human needs have been discovered, it is a question of making decisive adjustments in a variety of areas: political, social, and economic.

To do this, one must actively use the lessons of history, not endure them. With the guidance of reason, we must proceed to eliminate persistent forms of theocracy and regulate the coexistence of human beings through "good laws."[13] The latter must guarantee both the access to education for all, in order to reduce inequalities between intellectual faculties,[14] and the access to the means of subsistence, in order to guarantee the exercise of substantive freedoms and respect for the

individual rights of citizens, in a new form of social coexistence. It is only in this way that "folly and wretchedness will be accidents . . . and not the habitual lot of a considerable portion of society,"[15] and the realization of the common good will be within reach.

Condorcet is not the only one to seek the extremely difficult (albeit dynamic) balance between individual and public happiness.[16] Awareness of this difficulty leads him not to consider his own defeat, or, in general, individual defeats, as equivalent to a definitive setback in evolutionary processes. His faith in human progress leads him to look forward to a world improved by the French Revolution, even if the actors who promoted it (including himself) will not be able to personally contemplate it. It is also for this reason that his interpretation of history as the "key to human evolution" has become an essential reference point for every reflection on progress that has developed in France[17] and Europe. Moreover, his *Outlines* influenced the rise of the social sciences, especially sociology. It is not by chance that both Saint-Simon and Comte credited Condorcet with placing the concept of progress at the heart of the study of mankind.[18]

Extract

From *Outlines of an Historical View of the Progress of the Human Mind* (Philadelphia, PA: Printed by Lang & Ustick, for M. Carey, H. & P. Rice & Co. J. Ormrod, B.F. Bache, and J. Fellows, New-York, 1796), 11–23.

This picture [of the progress of the human mind] is historical; since subjected as it will be to perpetual variations, it is formed by the successive observation of human societies at the different eras through which they have passed. It will accordingly exhibit the order in which the changes have taken place, explain the influence of every past period upon that which follows it, and thus show, by the modifications which the human species has experienced, in its incessant renovation through the immensity of ages, the course which it has pursued, and the steps which it has advanced towards knowledge and happiness. From these observations on what man has heretofore been, and what he is at present, we shall be led to the means of securing and of accelerating the still further progress, of which, from his nature, we may indulge the hope.

Such is the object of the work I have undertaken; the result of which will be to show, from reasoning and from facts, that no bounds have been fixed to the improvement of the human faculties; that the perfectibility of man is absolutely indefinite; that the progress of this perfectibility, henceforth above the control of every power that would impede it, has no other limit than the duration of the globe upon which nature has placed us.

. . .

We shall expose the origin and trace the history of general errors, which have contributed to retard or suspend the advance of reason, and sometimes even, as much as political events, have been the cause of man's taking a retrograde course towards ignorance.

Those operations of the mind that lead to or retain us in error, from the subtle paralogism, by which the most penetrating mind may be deceived, to the mad reveries of enthusiasts, belong equally, with that just mode of reasoning that conducts us to truth, to the theory of the development of our individual faculties; and for the same reason, the manner in which general errors are introduced, propagated, transmitted, and rendered permanent among nations, forms a part of the picture of the progress of the human mind.

. . .

It is even apparent, that, from the general laws of the development of our faculties, certain prejudices must necessarily spring up in each stage of our progress, and extend their seductive influence beyond that stage; because men retain the errors of their infancy, their country, and the age in which they live, long after the truths necessary to the removal of those errors are acknowledged.

In short, there exist, at all times and in all countries, different prejudices, according to the degree of illumination of the different classes of men, and according to their professions. If the prejudices of philosophers be impediments to new acquisitions of truth, those of the less enlightened classes retard the propagation of truths already known, and those of esteemed and powerful professions oppose like obstacles. These are the three kinds of enemies which reason is continually obliged to encounter, and over which she frequently does not triumph till after a long and painful struggle. The history of these contests, together with that of the rise, triumph, and fall of prejudice, will occupy a considerable place in this work, and will by no means form the least important or least useful part of it.

If there be really such an art as that of foreseeing the future improvement of the human race, and of directing and hastening that improvement, the history of the progress it has already made must form the principal basis of this art. Philosophy, no doubt, ought to proscribe the superstitious idea, which supposes no rules of conduct are to be found but in the history of past ages, and no truths but in the study of the opinions of antiquity. But ought it not to include in the proscription, the prejudice that would proudly reject the lessons of experience? Certainly, it is meditation alone that can, by happy combinations, conduct us to the general principles of the science of man. But if the study of individuals of the human species be of use to the metaphysician and moralist, why should that of societies be less useful to them? And why not of use to the political philosopher? If it be advantageous to observe the societies that exist at one and the same period, and to trace their connection and resemblance, why not to observe them in a succession of periods? Even supposing that such observation might be neglected in the investigation of speculative truths, ought it to be neglected when the question is to apply those truths to practice, and to deduce from science the art that should be the useful result? Do not our prejudices, and the evils that are the consequence of them, derive their source from the prejudices of our ancestors? And will it not be the surest way of undeceiving us respecting the one, and of preventing the other, to develop their origin and effects?

. . .

Everything tells us that we are approaching the era of one of the grand revolutions of humanity. What can better enlighten us to what we may expect, what can be a surer guide to us, amidst its commotions, than the picture of the revolutions that have preceded and prepared the way for it? The present state of knowledge assures us that it will be happy. But is it not upon condition that we know how to assist it with all our strength? And, that the happiness it promises may be less dearly bought, that it may spread with more rapidity over a greater space, that it may be more complete in its effects, is it not requisite to study, in the history of the human mind, what obstacles remain to be feared, and by what means those obstacles are to be surmounted?

Notes

1 For an overview of Condorcet's life, see at least Badinter, Élisabeth and Badinter, Robert, *Condorcet. Un intellectual en politique* (Paris: Fayard, 1988).
2 Reinhart Koselleck, *Futures Past. On the Semantic of Historical Time* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2004): 28.
3 Charles Michael Andres Clark, *Economic Theory and Natural Philosophy. The Search for the Natural Laws of the Economy* (Aldershot: Edward Elgar, 1992): 90.
4 Jean-Antoine Marie de Condorcet, *Outlines of an Historical View of the Progress of the Human Mind* (Philadelphia, PA: Lang and Ustick, 1796): 250.
5 On the Encyclopaedists' awareness of the multiplicity of obstacles that still existed and the need to devise instruments that would make it easier to overcome them, see John Bury, *The Idea of Progress. An Inquiry into Its Origin and Growth* (London: Macmillan & Co., 1920): 172.
6 Condorcet, *Outlines*, 251–53.
7 Dorinda Outram, *The Enlightenment* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2019): 135.
8 Jonathan Israel, *A Revolution of the Mind: Radical Enlightenment and the Intellectual Origins of Modern Democracy* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2009): 219.
9 On the idea that part of the Enlightenment movement led to the decline or change of meaning of religious faith, see at least Peter Gay, *The Enlightenment*, 2 vols (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1973).
10 Robert Mauzi, *L'idée du bonheur dans la littérature et la pensée françaises au XVIIIe siècle* (Paris: Slatkine Reprints, 1969): 153–4.
11 Bury, *The Idea of Progress*, 157.
12 On the belief in knowledge as a typical element of the Enlightenment, see Lucien Goldmann, *The Philosophy of the Enlightenment. The Christian Burgess and the Enlightenment* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1971): 5.
13 Condorcet, *Outlines*, 266.
14 Condorcet does not merely promote the access of all individuals, even the poorest, to a minimum level of education, capable of guaranteeing individual emancipation. He hopes that the spread of knowledge and scientific discovery will enable the broadest possible part of the population to master the laws and techniques of science. On this, see Robert Nisbet, *History of the Idea of Progress* (New York: Basic Books, 1980): 210.
15 Condorcet, *Outlines*, 252.
16 Just think of François-Jean de Chastellux, *De la félicité publique* (1772) and Claude-Adrien Helvétius, *De l'homme* (1773).

17 Bury, *The Idea of Progress*, 215.
18 Nisbet, *History of the Idea of Progress*, 207.

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16

ABD AL-RAHMAN AL-JABARTI (1753–1825)

Jane Hathaway

The Egyptian historian Abd al-Rahman al-Jabarti (1753–1825) is best known for chronicling the French invasion and occupation of Egypt from 1798 to 1801. The accounts he composed of the occupation depict the loss of the only society he had ever known. He prepared an overview of the first six months of the occupation as it happened, then a much harsher assessment after the Ottoman Empire regained its territory in 1801. He then embarked on an omnibus chronicle of Ottoman Egypt running from 1687 through 1821; the title of this longer work translates to *The Marvelous Chronicles: Biographies and Events*. *Marvelous Chronicles* incorporates the biographies of Egypt's religious and political luminaries that he had been compiling since early adulthood in collaboration with an older scholar. Consequently, the finished history is divided unevenly between narratives of events and these biographies, positioned at the end of every year. Only with the French invasion do biographies truly yield pride of place to the annalistic narrative. Although the work belongs to a genre of annalistic chronicles, written in straightforward, fairly colloquial Arabic, that had been produced in Ottoman Egypt since at least the early seventeenth century, the scope of the biographies and the detailed coverage of the final 23 years are unique. In depicting Muslim scholar-officials (ulema) as the most significant element of Egyptian society, the chronicle is, if not unique, then distinctive.

Al-Jabarti was born in Cairo in 1753, one of some 40 children fathered by Shaykh Hasan al-Jabarti, a noted Muslim scholar, with a series of wives and concubines. At the time, Egypt was the largest province of the Ottoman Empire. An Ottoman governor sat in Cairo's citadel, southeast of the city centre, and presided four times a week over a governing council that included the province's major military, administrative, and legal officials. Yet *de facto* authority rested with the officers of Egypt's powerful Janissary garrison, which since the 1730s had been dominated by the Kazdağlı household, a mafia-like network of officers bound by patron-client

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ties. Most of these officers came to Egypt as elite slaves (mamluks) from the Christian kingdom of Georgia in the Caucasus; after converting to Islam and joining the Janissary officer hierarchy, they rose through the ranks and accumulated wealth by trading Yemeni coffee through the Red Sea.[1]

By the time al-Jabarti was old enough to be aware of them, however, the Kazdağlıs had already begun to infiltrate the province's ranks of *sanjak bey*s, the officials who held the tax farms of Egypt's subprovinces. These tax farms insulated the Kazdağlıs from the decline in Yemeni coffee prices resulting from the appearance on the market of beans grown in France's Caribbean colonies.[2] Most of the Kazdağlı leaders who feature in al-Jabarti's chronicles hold the title Bey, reflecting their status as *sanjak bey*s. Two of these beys, Ibrahim and Murad, were essentially running Egypt when the French invaded in 1798.

Egypt's first inkling of the looming invasion came on 8 June 1798, when a British squadron sailed into Alexandria harbour to warn the city's governor that a French fleet was in the vicinity and to offer its protection. The governor brusquely refused.[3] Ten days later, the French ships arrived, carrying Napoleon Bonaparte, his land army, and an army of scientists who would ultimately catalogue Egypt's antiquities, flora and fauna, and contemporary peoples and customs in the massive *Description de l'Égypte*, a monument to Enlightenment scholarship. The French forces swept aside the defences of Alexandria and its hinterland, and advanced swiftly towards Cairo. Murad Bey attempted to stop them just north of Cairo but was defeated at the Battle of the Pyramids (21 July 1798) and fled to Upper Egypt. Ibrahim, meanwhile, fled into Ottoman Syria and took refuge with the autonomous governor of Palestine and southern Lebanon.

From Alexandria, Bonaparte issued a declaration to "the people of Egypt" (the first passage in the Extracts section) claiming that the French had come to liberate them from the tyranny of "the Mamelukes"—the Georgian grandees of the Kazdağlı household—and calling on Egypt's ulema to join the French. In his chronicle, al-Jabarti famously dissects the proclamation, disparaging Bonaparte's poor command of Arabic grammar and syntax.[4] His critique implies that the French, despite their pretensions, do not share any part of Egyptian Muslim identity, not even the language, and cannot claim solidarity with the ulema. They are alien intruders who have brought an end to Egyptian society as al-Jabarti knew it.

The remainder of the historian's output is, in a certain sense, a catalogue of the losses that the French occupation triggered. Still, he hardly pined for the return of the rapacious Ibrahim and Murad,[5] and the new French regime featured some laudable elements. After the British navy destroyed the French fleet at Aboukir in August 1798, Bonaparte, effectively trapped, marched into Greater Syria to attempt—unsuccessfully—to dislodge the Ottoman governor of Palestine and southern Lebanon. Meanwhile, the commander-in-chief of the French forces in Egypt formed a ruling council of ulema, including several of al-Jabarti's friends and even, for a brief spell, the historian himself. As part of their effort at "enlightening" Egyptian society, the French turned the abandoned mansion of one of the grandees into a library, which al-Jabarti visited and admired.[6]

These early months of uncertain attempts at rapprochement ended with a rebellion in October 1798, led by the shaykh of the residential college for blind students at the ancient al-Azhar theological seminary. To the French, the fact that the rebels belonged to the class whom they had singled out for leadership of a post-"Mameluke" society seemed a betrayal. They showed the defeated rebels no mercy, executing the blind shaykh and several of his colleagues whom they suspected of complicity in the revolt.[7]

By late 1800, the French had negotiated their evacuation of Egypt. While the British navy patrolled Egypt's Mediterranean and Red Sea coasts, an Ottoman army of occupation, featuring Sultan Selim III's "new-model" troops, moved into Egypt in July 1801. As appalled as he had been by the French soldiers three years before, al-Jabarti regarded these new troops as little short of barbarians.[8] Within their ranks was a force of Albanian irregulars led by an officer known as Mehmed Ali Sercheshme. He would spend the next four years jockeying for power with the various governors and military commanders whom the Ottomans appointed over Egypt until, in 1805, he himself won recognition as governor, inaugurating a reign that lasted until shortly before his death in 1849.

If Bonaparte initiated the loss of the Ottoman Egypt that al-Jabarti had known, then Mehmed Ali Pasha—he acquired the rank of pasha in 1805, when he became governor—completed it. He swept away the old regimental officer and *sanjak beg* cadres, replacing them with his own clients, many of them Albanian or Anatolian. Where religious institutions such as al-Azhar were concerned, he confiscated the charitable endowments from which they derived revenue.[9]

To al-Jabarti, Mehmed Ali Pasha was an agent of loss who was bent on annihilating every remnant of the old Egypt. In March 1811, Mehmed Ali engineered what was arguably the most audacious act of his career: he invited the remaining members of the old Georgian mamluk elite to the citadel to join a punitive expedition to the Arabian peninsula. Once the mamluks were inside the citadel, the pasha ordered his new-model troops to open fire on them, killing scores (the second passage in the Extracts section).[10] The terrified survivors fled the city. Ibrahim Bey, who had returned to Cairo after the French evacuation, fled to Sudan and never returned, dying there in 1815. This massacre purportedly set an example for the Ottoman sultan Mahmud II, who 15 years later similarly eliminated the remaining Janissaries.

The one grandee who the historian thought could have saved Egypt was Mehmed Bey al-Alfi, a manumitted mamluk of Murad Bey who continued to resist the French even after Murad, his former master, had made peace with them. After the French evacuation, he never returned to Cairo but roamed the Egyptian countryside with his private army, evading the Ottoman forces, then defeating a special expeditionary unit that Mehmed Ali Pasha had raised. When the pasha's troops finally trapped him in January 1807, al-Alfi suddenly began to cough up blood and died, but not before observing presciently, "It is all over. Cairo belongs to Mehmed Ali. There is no one who can challenge him. He has the mamluks

of Egypt in his power, and after today they will never raise their standard."[11] To the historian, al-Alfi was the last, best hope for the old Georgian mamluk regime against Mehmed Ali's encroachments: a natural leader, intelligent and cultivated, possessed of unmatched military and administrative skill. His death foreshadows the wholesale destruction of the mamluks and the final eclipse of the society over which they presided.

Marvelous Chronicles ends in 1821, as Mehmed Ali Pasha is preparing to invade Sudan, an expedition that ended with the annexation of the vast territory to Egypt, which would administer it until 1956. By this time, the pasha's authority was absolute, and all of Egyptian society bent to his will.

The cruellest loss that Mehmed Ali Pasha inflicted on al-Jabarti, however, is not recorded in *Marvelous Chronicles* or any of the historian's other works. Instead, the French translator of al-Jabarti's account of the occupation reported it. Mehmed Ali's agents assassinated al-Jabarti's son Khalil in 1822 in retaliation for the historian's criticisms. An Italian visitor to Egypt not long afterwards describes his bereaved father as blind and attributes his blindness to his overwhelming grief. Whatever the true cause, al-Jabarti never wrote again; he died in 1825.[12]

The *État moderne* portion of the *Description de l'Égypte* includes portraits of representatives of a number of professions from among Egypt's populace. One of these, "The Astronomer" (Figure 16.1), may well depict al-Jabarti, who was one of the few scholars in Cairo who owned the sort of astronomical instruments pictured.[13] If this is indeed al-Jabarti, then he is pictured as a man of about 44, at the height of his intellectual powers but with the wrenching changes wrought by the French occupation already weighing on him.

Extracts

Passage 1

Bonaparte's declaration to the people of Egypt, July 1798, from *Abd al-Rahman al-Jabarti's History of Egypt: 'Ajā'ib al-āthār fī'l-tarājim wa'l-akhbār*, eds. Thomas Philipp and Moshe Perlmann (Stuttgart: Franz Steiner Verlag, 1994), 3: 4–6. Reprinted by permission of Markus Wiener Publishers, who own the rights to the translation.

In the name of God, the Merciful, the Compassionate. There is no God but God. He has no son and no companion in his sovereignty. On behalf of France, which was built on the foundations of freedom and equality, the commander in chief of the French armies, Bonaparte, informs the inhabitants of Egypt that the *sanjak*s, who hold sway over the land of Egypt, have for a long time treated the rights of the French nation with disgrace and contempt. They have oppressed her merchants with all sorts of injury and offense. Now, the hour of their punishment has come. How sad that for centuries this band of mamluks, procured from Georgia and Circassia, has spread corruption in a most beautiful country, one whose equal is not to be found on the whole globe. However, the Lord of this world and the hereafter, the Almighty, has already decreed the end of their rule. Egyptians! They

FIGURE 16.1 "*L'Astronome.*" *Description de l'Égypte,* vol. 2: *État moderne,* section "Costume et portraits," Plate B, right. Public domain.

may tell you I came here solely to abolish your religion, but this is a patent lie: do not believe it. Tell these slanderers that I came to you only to restore your rights from the hand of the oppressors, and that I am more of a servant of God—may he be praised and exalted—than the mamluks, and that I venerate his Prophet and the great Koran. . . . Shaykhs, qadis [judges], imams, çorbacıs [a military honorific], and notables of the land! Tell your nation that the French, too, are sincere Muslims. . . . Furthermore the French have always been sincere friends of His Majesty the Ottoman sultan and enemies of his enemies—may God perpetuate his rule! But the mamluks have refused to obey the sultan, never complying with his orders. They have obeyed, in fact, only their own greed. How blessed are those Egyptians who agree with us without delay! . . . It is a duty of the shaykhs, the ulema, the qadis, and the imams to remain in their functions. Each inhabitant of the country must remain calmly in his house. Likewise, the prayers in the mosques shall be held as usual. It behooves the Egyptians altogether to thank God—may he be praised and exalted—for the termination of mamluk rule, saying aloud: May God perpetuate the glory of the Ottoman sultan. May God perpetuate the glory of the French army. May he curse the mamluks and improve the condition of the Egyptian nation. Written at the camp of Alexandria on the 13th of Messidor in the sixth year of the establishment of the French Republic, i.e., at the end of Muḥarram, 1213 A.H. [mid-July 1798].

Passage 2

From *Abd al-Rahman al-Jabarti's History of Egypt: 'Ajā'ib al-āthār fī'l-tarājim wa'l-akhbār*, eds. Thomas Philipp and Moshe Perlmann (Stuttgart: Franz Steiner Verlag, 1994), 4: 179–81. Reprinted by permission of Markus Wiener Publishers, who own the rights to the translation.

On Friday the sixth [of Safar 1226/1 March 1811], everyone rode up to the citadel. The amirs [the *sanjak beys*] went up with their mamluks, retainers, and soldiers. They went in to the pasha, greeted him, and sat with him a while drinking coffee and joking. . . . The pasha had plotted with Hasan Pasha, Salih Qawj, and Katkhuda Bey [his deputy] to betray the amirs and kill them. . . . The procession set out, and as soon as the troop of Dalāt [irregulars] and the [regiments] and Egyptian soldiers behind them passed through Bab al-Azab [one of the citadel gates], Salih Qawj ordered the gate locked and revealed the plan to his troops. They began firing on the amirs, who were all confined in the narrow passage cut from the rock above Bab al-Azab leading down from the square of the citadel street between the upper and lower gates. A number of soldiers had been posted on the walls above the passage. When the soldiers below began firing, the amirs wanted to retreat, but they could not turn around in the confined space because of the horses. Then the firing also began behind them. When the soldiers at the top learned of the plan, they also began firing. When [the amirs] saw what was happening, they were bewildered and confused. Many of them fell, and the others dismounted. Shahin Bey, Sulayman

Bey al-Bawwab ["the Doorkeeper"], and some of their mamluks rushed back to the top with the bullets flying around them from all sides. They stripped off their furs and heavy clothing. Unsheathing their swords, they kept running to the middle courtyard facing the hall of pillars. Most of them had fallen. Shahin Bey was hit and fell to the ground. They cut off his head and quickly took it to the pasha to get a reward. . . . The soldiers went berserk, butchering the amirs and looting their clothing. Showing their hatred, they spared no one. . . . They followed those who had scattered to the corners of the citadel and the streets and into the houses. They arrested those who had not been killed by the bullets as well as those . . . who had not been in the procession and were visiting Katkhuda Bey. They were robbed of their clothes and all put together in the prison under Katkhuda Bey's reception room. The executioners were brought, and they were beheaded one after the other in the courtyard from morning on into the night by torchlight until the courtyard was filled with the dead. . . . They even tied together the hands and feet of Shahin Bey and dragged him on the ground like a dead donkey to the courtyard. This is what happened in the citadel.

Notes

1 Jane Hathaway, *The Politics of Households in Ottoman Egypt: The Rise of the Qazdağlıs* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997).
2 Hathaway, *The Politics of Households in Ottoman Egypt*, 50, 95–101, 130–38.
3 Abd al-Rahman al-Jabarti, *Abd al-Rahman al-Jabarti's History of Egypt: 'Ajā'ib al-āthār fī'l-tarājim wa'l-akhbār*, vol. 3, eds. Thomas Philipp and Moshe Perlmann (Stuttgart: Franz Steiner Verlag, 1994): 1–2.
4 Al-Jabarti, *History of Egypt*, 3: 6–9.
5 For his unflattering biographies of the two beys, see Al-Jabarti, *History of Egypt*, 3: 259–65, 4: 370–71.
6 Al-Jabarti, *History of Egypt*, 3: 53–54.
7 Al-Jabarti, *History of Egypt*, 3: 40–46, 96–98.
8 Al-Jabarti, *History of Egypt*, 3: 291, 296–97.
9 On Mehmed Ali's reforms, see Afaf Lutfi al-Sayyid Marsot, *Egypt in the Reign of Muhammad Ali* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1984).
10 Al-Jabarti, *History of Egypt*, 4: 179–81.
11 Al-Jabarti, *History of Egypt*, 4: 56.
12 David Ayalon, "The Historian al-Jabarti and His Background", *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies* 23 (1960): 247–48.
13 André Raymond, "À propos de deux portraits de la *Description de l'Égypte:* 'l'astronome' et 'le poète'", *Annales Islamologiques* 35 (2001): 387.

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17

MARY HAYS (1759–1843)

Frances A. Chiu

History has long been said to be written by the victors. But it is equally true that history has also been written by its losers from a desire to vindicate themselves. As such, taking up her pen "in the cause and for the benefit of my own sex" during a period when the fledgling steps of early feminism were beginning to peter out during the burgeoning onslaught on political and social radicalism,[1] the frequently ridiculed Mary Hays compiled an ambitious six-volume *Female Biography*, a collection of biographical entries ranging from single paragraph sketches to 400-page narratives that aimed to "even the cognitive playing field" when encyclopaedia writing was focused almost exclusively on men, according to Gina Luria Walker.[2] More specifically, Hays sought to devote her labour to the "improvement and entertainment" of her female readers, professing to have their "advancement in the grand scale of rational and social existence" at heart. Like her novels and other publications, Hays's entry on Mary, Queen of Scots, in the fifth volume of *Female Biography,* can also be construed as part of a larger endeavour to push back against a determined history of misogynist interpretations of famous women, as suggested by Mary Spongberg.[3] Far from advancing "the prerogatives of female fancy" as imagined by Jayne Elizabeth Lewis in her otherwise impressive study of the afterlives of Mary, Queen of Scots,[4] Hays's entry is an attempt to vindicate Mary in the face of the allegations levied against her complicity in the murder of her second husband, Darnley, and to question her supposed passion for the earl of Bothwell.

Hays's biography of Mary is a particularly noteworthy one occupying more than 286 pages, thereby exceeding the entry on the longer-lived and more illustrious Queen Elizabeth in Volume 4 by nearly 60 pages. Few, including Lewis, have studied the entry on Mary thoroughly, much less Hays's sources. Although Hays mentions William Robertson's *History of Scotland*, Gilbert Stuart's *Life of Mary Queen of Scots*, John Whitaker's *Mary Queen of Scots Vindicated*, and David Hume's *History of England* as her sources, she relied predominantly on Robertson's *Scotland* even if

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she sided with Whitaker's conclusions, possibly because she viewed the former as a more readily accessible source for her lay audience. Given Hays's close adaptation of Robertson, what is especially illuminating are her departures from his text as she sought a more comprehensive assessment of the queen.

In order to understand the degree to which Hays diverged from popular perceptions of the queen, it is necessary to trace her evolving reputation through the centuries. Hays herself invokes the sense of a "history of loss" by providing a historiographical examination of Mary's afterlife in an endnote to the entry, from the negative portrayals by John Knox and George Buchanan to the contemporaneous suppression of more positive interpretations. As Hays explains, "a long and general acquiescence" in the interpretations hashed out by "the adverse party" eventually "silenced every doubt," whereby one historian copied another. But with the times growing "more enlightened and skeptical" (280), the queen's reputation improved in the eighteenth century as historians increasingly found flaws in the easy presumption of Mary's role in the death of Darnley and her authorship of the casket letters to Bothwell. It is possible that this growing sympathy for Mary may have influenced not only her sentimental portrayal in Sophia Lee's novel, *The Recess*, but also that in Jane Austen's juvenile *History of England* as examined by Mary Spongberg in this volume.

Even if David Hume and Dugald Stewart extolled Robertson's delineation of the queen as a profoundly sympathetic one,[5] Hays's account would prove even more so. Perhaps the single most significant difference is Hays's willing acceptance of Whitaker's theories on Mary's role in the murder of Darnley, and the notorious casket letters which the queen allegedly sent to her third husband, the earl of Bothwell—notwithstanding her desire to refrain from determining Mary's "real guilt or criminality" (278). As Hays reflects upon the marriage between the queen and Bothwell in her main text, she inserts a lengthy footnote below that references Whitaker, observing that the murder was most likely planned by the earls of Murray, Morton, and Bothwell, as well as by Queen Elizabeth (122). Far from happily accepting Bothwell's proposal as widely presumed, the queen largely rejected his advances since he had plied her "with stupifying potions" and exerted "brutal violence" (note on 123) before raping her: a scenario that recalls not only the infamous rape of Clarissa but also the rape of the protagonist in Hays's second novel, *The Victim of Prejudice* (1799).[6] Feeling "dishonoured, humbled, and degraded," Hays's Queen Mary—unlike Robertson's—feared that she had no other choice than to capitulate to him when he produced a bond which he obtained from the nobles accepting their marriage (footnote, p. 123); such would explain, according to Hays, why Mary also quickly abandoned Bothwell when an armed force came to rescue her. Hays would reiterate her statements in the extensive note following the entry.

Likewise, the infamous casket of letters and sonnets purported to have been written by the queen is accepted unquestioningly by Robertson but not by Hays since she asserts that the texts, "whether authentic or fabricated," were produced by the confederates as a means of self-justification (134). So, while Robertson lends credence to Mary's authorship of the letters by referring to "The letters which

Mary had written to Bothwell,"[7] (466), Hays leaves it open, describing them as "the letters attributed to Mary" (145). That Hays adopted Whitaker's interpretation of the relationship between Mary and Bothwell is particularly significant in light of the fact that Robertson rejected this view as recently as his 1787 edition of the *History of Scotland* (which incorporates a dissertation on the letters without mentioning Whitaker, 317–84); indeed, Hays would reinforce these ideas in the note following her entry on the queen. The overall impression to be gleaned from Hays's representation is that of a much-admired queen who was not only destroyed by her rapist but traduced and stripped of her sovereignty by other men—namely, the regent, the earl of Murray, and his cohorts. Deploring their "recourse to forgery, to blacken her character, and convict her of guilt" (285), Hays contends that the evidence in favour of Mary is therefore not negligible (285).

Equally striking are the ways in which Hays rephrases some of Robertson's statements. Applying Ian Plant's approach from his examination of Hays's descriptions of ancient queens,[8] I will show how some of Hays's choice of words and added material serve to enhance Mary's reputation. For instance, when revising Robertson's mention of her "perpetual imprisonment" after her capture by the confederates, Hays highlights her youthfulness (140). It is also telling that whereas Robertson rebukes Mary for being "extremely incautious," adding that "the presumptions of her guilt were many and strong" (482), Hays omits the criticisms, writing: "It appeared not impossible, from the presumptions of her guilt, that her subjects might be able to make good their charge against her." Similarly, where Robertson deprecates Mary's escape to England as "rash and dangerous" (I, 488), Hays explains more compassionately that "she was impelled by her fears to an irretrievable step, fatal to all her future hopes" (153). Moreover, when addressing the problematic issues of Mary's final trial, Hays highlights her difficulties much more vividly as if applying William Godwin's criticisms of the legal system from his *Enquiry Concerning Political Justice* (1793). Noting that Mary was brought unprepared to her trial and deprived of legal assistance, while the original letters were also missing, Hays concludes that "The judges of Mary were pre-determined to find her guilty" (Hays, 5, 258).

Even more fascinating, though not surprising, is Hays's overall assessment of the queen. Notice how Hays, while briefly acknowledging the weaknesses in her character, manages to accentuate her more positive aspects:

> The political parties which were formed in the kingdom, during her reign, have subsisted under various denominations, ever since that time. . . Among historians, who were under the dominion of all these passions, and who have either ascribed to her every virtuous and amiable quality, or have imputed to her all the vices . . . we search in vain for Mary's real character. She neither merited the exaggerated praises of the one, nor the undistinguishing censure of the other. (Robertson, 2, 179)

> The turbulence of the times, the rancour of party rage, and the medium of prejudice or partiality, through which every object in those periods was beheld, render it difficult to form a just opinion of the character of Mary. Her personal accomplishments and the graces which distinguished her as a woman, are admitted by all parties . . . Her piety was fervent and sincere, her talents, if not of the highest, were undoubtedly of a superior order. . . . (Hays, 5, 273–4)

Similarly, Hays refrains from reiterating Robertson's criticisms of Mary:

> Mary's sufferings exceed, both in degree and duration, those tragical distresses which fancy has feigned to excite sorrow and commiseration. . . . [W]e are apt altogether to forget her frailties, we think of her faults with less indignation, and approve of our tears, as if they were shed for a person who had attained much nearer to pure virtue. (Robertson, 2, 181)
>
> A long series of successive sorrows bespeak, with few exceptions, some imprudence in the sufferer: the misfortunes of Mary, both in degree and duration, exceeded the common measure of human calamities, and even render the distresses of fiction comparatively faint. The vicissitudes of her life have afforded a fine and a fruitful subject for the tragic muse. (Hays, 5, 275)

Here, Hays's overall assessment of Mary can be said, as D.R. Woolf notes, to "bridge the pedagogical space between Clarissa and true history," by inviting sympathy and engaging the reader's affections.[9]

That Hays did not regret her revisionist view of Mary, Queen of Scots, is evident in her *Memoirs of Queens* written nearly 20 years later in 1821. Possibly influenced by the trial of Queen Caroline for adultery in 1820—in addition to false rumours about Hays's own sexual affairs—Hays declares Mary's innocence boldly in the penultimate paragraph of her entry, maintaining that the letters "bear every mark of forgery."[10] In fact, Hays heightens the queen's positive traits, explaining that she possessed "fine talents, but with that flexibility of mind and softness of temper that are inseparable from great sensibility," which ultimately "seems to preclude the idea of the more atrocious crimes alleged against her": perhaps this assessment was inspired by Hays's personal experiences over the decades when she was ridiculed for her imprudence.[11] Or perhaps, Hays did ultimately seek to recover a feminist history that was quickly unravelling in her own fraught, post-revolutionary times by uttering truths overshadowed by those "in possession of power" (421).

Extract

From *Female Biography* (London, 1803), vol. 5, 278–287.

In the course of this narrative it has been studiously avoided to pronounce any actual decision respecting the real guilt or criminality of Mary, in those two

important transactions of her reign, the murder of Darnly [*sic*], and the subsequent marriage of his widow with the murderer.

If by the Catholics Mary was held up as a model of perfection, and by the calvinists represented as a monster of wickedness, this, by every mind that has attended to the history of party bigotry, even in ages of boasted civilisation and refinement, was necessarily to be expected. But why, it may be asked, do we see the same division, and the same prejudices, for nearly two centuries after these fervours have subsided. . . . To this question it has been answered, that it is a well-known fact, that the only histories of the reign of Mary which were suffered to be published in the language of the country . . . were penned by her avowed and open enemies. The frantic zeal of Knox in the cause of the Reformation, rendered him at once the easy dupe and the powerful tool of an artful and politic faction, which made successful use of his popular talents. In times of fanaticism and faction, religious zeal and political opinions are almost always inseparably connected. . . . While the lower classes of the Scots were the implicit disciples of Knox, the *Detection* of Mary, by Buchanan, had its effect among the learned. This work, patronized by Elizabeth, and the regency of Scotland, spread through the realm, and was distributed among foreign princes. . . . While these writings were thus favoured, those composed by the opposite party, whose credit and popularity, were suppressed by the arm of power, or were written in languages to which the people were strangers. The vindication of Mary by bishop Lesly, was stifled the moment it was known to be in the press; and the writer, notwithstanding his privilege as an ambassador, thrown by Elizabeth into prison. . . . A leaf was cancelled in the continuation of Hollinshed's history, for a single insinuation in favour of Mary. The Annals of Camden, written in Latin, were not printed for nearly a century after. . . . These were the principal works written in favour of Mary, whose cause circumstances had combined to render unpopular. A long and general acquiescence in the truth of the asseverations of the adverse party, gradually silenced every doubt; while one historian copied another, and everyone those which had preceded him.

At length, a small number of speculative persons began to examine the nature of the evidence produced against Mary; and, as the age became more enlightened and sceptical, the historic doubt arose. Mr. Goodall, late keeper of the advocate's library in Edinburgh, whose office gave him access to original records, was the first modern champion in the cause of Mary. . . . Tytler followed the same path, but took a wider circuit. Stuart succeeded, but without a perfect development of his plan. Whitaker next, by connecting incidents, and contrasting different accounts of the same transaction, illustrated many events, and threw a light on what had before appeared obscure. The period of Mary's life which he particularly investigates, is that which concerns the death of Darnly, the marriage of Bothwell, and the letters and sonnets said to be written by the queen. . . .

Respecting the real history of the murder of Darnly, evidence is brought forward to prove, that Bothwell performed the deed, that Morton certainly, and Murray probably, were consenting thereto. The whole plan appears, after a long and minute examination of circumstances and facts, with strong presumption, to have

originated between Elizabeth, Cecil, Morton, and Murray; while the former was to defend the conspirators in charging the crime on Mary; for the purpose of giving credit to which, she was to be betrayed into a marriage with Bothwell, the perpetrator. . . .

The marriage of Mary with Bothwell, the most disgraceful part of her conduct, still remains to be accounted for. Respecting her attachment to this nobleman, and her acquiescence in the pretended violence with which she was carried off by him, and confined in the fortress of Dunbar, historians seem to have agreed; but not so her present champion, by whom presumptions are brought forward in proof of contrary opinion. . . . According to this able and zealous advocate of the unfortunate Mary, she was forcibly, and wholly unexpectedly, seized and hurried to Dunbar, and confined there a close prisoner; where, for the first time, her bold and presumptuous ravisher dared to talk to her of love. That she spurned his proposals with contempt . . . . That on his shewing to her the bond he had obtained from the nobles, recommending him to her as a husband, she perceived the extent of the plot to betray her; which, nevertheless, she still resisted. . . . That, irritated at length by her continued coldness and repulses, he had recourse to stupifying potions, to humble her to his purpose, and triumph over the honour of his sovereign. It was then only, that degraded and desperate, deserted by her subjects, and the slave of a ruffian, the force of her mind began to fail, and she consented to elevate to the dignity of her husband, the man whose power she could not escape. . . . But when an armed force appeared in the field, to vindicate, as she believed, the freedom of her choice, she cheerfully abandoned the husband imposed upon her, and threw herself into the arms of those who opposed him. Little did she then suspect, that the persons in whom she now confided, were the original contrivers of the outrage which she mourned.

Notes

1 Mary Hays, "Preface", *Female Biography*, vols. 1–6 (London: Richard Phillips, 1803): 1: iii.
2 Gina Luria Walker, "Introduction" in *The Invention of Female Biography,* ed. Gina Luria Walker (London and New York: Routledge, 2017): 3–18, at p. 7.
3 Mary Spongberg, "Memoirs of Queens and the 'invention' of collective royal biography", in Walker, *The Invention of Female Biography*, 124–41, at p. 132.
4 Jayne Elizabeth Lewis, *Mary Queen of Scots: Romance and Nation* (London: Routledge, 1998): 164. It is worth noting that Lewis errs when stating that Robertson's comments on female desire are a criticism of Mary: it is in fact Elizabeth who is the subject of that commentary.
5 Quoted in Lewis, *Mary Queen of Scots,* 121.
6 There is a possibility that the character of Mary in *Victim* was inspired by the Queen: she is tall, brunette, and spirited, even if middle class. Her mother, like the queen's mother, is also named Mary. Both women, like the royal Marys, are perpetually betrayed by men.
7 William Robertson, *The History of Scotland*, vols. 1–2, 11th ed. (London: T. Cadell, 1787): 466. All quotations from Robertson are drawn from this edition.
8 See Ian Plant, "Mary Hays's classical women and the promotion of female agency", in Walker, *The Invention of Female Biography*, 83–104.

9 D.R. Woolf, "A Feminine Past? Gender, Genre, and Historical Knowledge in England, 1500–1890", *The American Historical Review* 102.3 (1997): 645–79, at p. 668.
10 Mary Hays, *Memoirs of Queens* (London: T. and J. Allman, 1821): 421. All quotations from *Queens* are drawn from this edition.
11 See Andrew McInnes, "Feminism in the footnotes: Wollstonecraft's ghost in Mary Wollstonecraft's ghost in Mary Hays' Female Biography", *Life Writing* 8.3 (2011): 282. He notes that "Her separation of the queen's natural genius from her problematic reputation reads as another defense of both Wollstonecraft and Hays herself".

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18

GERMAINE DE STAËL (1766–1817)

Biancamaria Fontana

The French Revolution of 1789 forms the ever-present backdrop to Germaine de Staël's extensive literary production. Her philosophical essays, her novels, her pamphlets, and her correspondence and recollections all carry the imprint of the dramatic sequence of events that stretched from the summoning of the Estates General in 1788 to the collapse of Napoleon's empire in 1815. The writer, who died at 51 in 1817, did not live to complete her work, *Considerations on the Principal Events of the French Revolution*, which was published posthumously in 1818. As she was drafting it, she hesitated between the mode of the detached, impartial historical narrative and that of the personal memoir. While she finally chose the first option, she inserted in the text some chapters relating her own observations and recollections. These "anecdotes," as she calls them, are still the most frequently cited pages of her book, as they offer historians a unique, direct testimonial of some crucial episodes. They also convey most vividly the author's personal sentiments of loss, of frustration, and of pain, inscribed within the broader historical picture.

In 1789 Staël was 23. She was the daughter of Jacques Necker, the Swiss director of finances of the King Louis XVI; heiress to a large fortune, she was married to Eric-Magnus de Staël, Swedish ambassador to the French court. This privileged background allowed her to satisfy her passionate interest in politics. From the benches reserved for diplomats, she followed the debates in the Constituent Assembly that was established in June 1789; soon she was active behind the scenes, canvassing on behalf of what she came to consider "our party," the *constitutionnels*, those moderate deputies who expected to see France transformed by their legislative action into a constitutional monarchy, just as England had been by the Glorious Revolution in 1688–1689. Between 1789 and 1791 the Constituent Assembly succeeded in abolishing feudal privileges, proclaiming the *Declaration of Rights* and drafting the first French constitution. However, all hopes of a legal, peaceful evolution of the French monarchy into a constitutional regime were soon shattered by a

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sequence of violent popular protests, and by the emergence of ferocious factional struggles within the Assembly itself. The result was the beginning of a war against the European monarchies that would last for over a decade and the establishment in France of an authoritarian regime that soon adopted a policy of terror against its real or imagined enemies.

Although this early political experience is somewhat overshadowed by Staël's later achievements as a writer, she was deeply affected by it and never got over the pain caused by the defeat of her original hopes and ideals. While she believed that the Revolution was the outcome of the long-term evolution of French society, she also thought that the drifting of the revolutionary process into conflict and violence was largely the responsibility of her own political friends, who had pursued personal rivalries and ambitions at the expense of their common cause. Far from being the product of some sort of fatality, the radicalization of the Revolution was the result of the inadequacies, the prejudices, and the wrong choices of the entire political class.

The defeat of the moderates, the imprisonment of the king and the establishment of the republic in September 1792 were accompanied by a wave of uncontrolled violence that swept over Paris. Hundreds of prisoners, many of them petty criminals and prostitutes, were massacred in the town jails as "counterrevolutionaries"; there were random assassinations and several former constituents and ministers found themselves under a mandate of arrest: among them Staël's lover, and the father of the child she was carrying at the time, the Count Louis de Narbonne.[1]

Protected to some extent by her diplomatic status, Staël remained in Paris, putting off her departure day after day, so that she might be able to assist her friends in danger. Finally, after securing Narbonne's safe passage to England, she resigned herself to leave for Switzerland, not without experiencing the hostility and petty vexations of various officials who tried to prevent her from doing so. Her visible pregnancy, she realized, made them even more aggressive, as, in recognizing her condition, they felt guilty and ashamed of the unsavoury role they were playing against a vulnerable woman. The narrative she presents in the *Considerations* of her last weeks in Paris is especially telling, as the atmosphere of fear, suspicion, and constant insecurity could belong to any other past or present experience of political persecution and police harassment.

Her flight from Paris in 1792 marked the beginning of Staël's long, if intermittent, exile from France, an exile that lasted for most of her remaining life. After the fall of the terrorist regime in July 1794 and the establishment of the liberal republic of the Directory, she was able to return to Paris, in the expectation that the constitutional ideals of 1789 might be finally realized. Soon, however, her active presence on the social stage and her many political connections in France and abroad awoke the suspicions of the new government; accused of taking part in a royalist conspiracy she had in fact opposed, she was forced once again to emigrate.

When Napoleon came to power as First Consul in 1799, Staël hoped for a while to gain his confidence, but soon their relations degenerated: he could not understand why she was not won over by the concession of personal favours, insisting

instead on matters of principle (he even offered to pay back 2 million *livres* her father had lent to Louis XVI before the revolution); she could not accept the authoritarian and arbitrary nature of his rule, and denounced the increasing resort to censorship. Forbidden to reside in Paris, she left France, her works were banned, and in time she became, for the French as for the European public, the voice of the liberal opposition to the Empire. Born and raised in Paris, Staël was never able to obtain French citizenship: both her parents were Swiss, and by her marriage she had become a Swedish subject, a convenient situation for the different governments who wished to keep her away from France. She deeply resented this exclusion from the nation she passionately loved and to which she felt she belonged.

By any standards, Staël's exile was a very comfortable one: she either lived in the chateau of Coppet, near Geneva, where her father had retired in 1790, or she travelled through Europe in a kind of protracted grand tour; meeting famous intellectuals and political personalities; and visiting the courts of Vienna, St Petersburg, and Stockholm. The literary works she published from 1800 were to a large extent the product of these cosmopolitan peregrinations and encounters: one can almost say that it was the experience of exile that made her into an original and influential writer, establishing her international reputation. Her prosperous financial circumstances meant that she did not experience the insecurity, deprivations, and loss of status suffered by many exiles; indeed, she was often able to assist her less fortunate friends.

Even so, Staël considered exile a subtly cruel form of punishment, precisely because it had the appearance of a relatively mild sanction, involving no direct violence, while in fact it deprived its victims of what they held most dear in life: the loss of their environment, of the places and people they loved, of their habits and activities, meant the destruction of much of what constituted their own identity. In her unfinished work *Ten Years of Exile*, published posthumously in 1820–1821, the writer confessed that what made her most vulnerable to the threats of arbitrary power was her excessive love of society: she was, she explained, terrified of boredom, and felt a constant craving for "variety, interest and distraction" that, in her case, only living in Paris could provide.

But besides being deprived of one's social environment there were other, more intimate losses. One of the consequences of her restless travelling across Europe was that Staël found herself in Germany in the spring of 1804 when her father became suddenly ill and died before she could return to see him. An adored only child, she had been passionately attached to him and felt utterly lost and abandoned without his support. The pain of his death was made more acute by the awareness that, had she stayed quietly at Coppet instead of wandering away from home, she might have been at his side during his last illness. Exile involved a sense of guilt, for choosing a line of conduct, however justified by circumstances, that caused suffering to the people one loved most as well as to oneself.

If leaving one's country was difficult, returning to it after years of absence might prove an equally frustrating experience. In May 1814, after Napoleon's abdication, Staël was finally able to come back to France. But her initial excitement at the idea

of rediscovering her beloved Paris was soon overshadowed by the realization that her country was now under the occupation of foreign troops: Prussian, Austrian, and Russian soldiers were quartered in the heart of the capital, presiding over the Louvre and the Tuileries. Obviously, the writer had been aware of the situation before she arrived; after all the removal of Napoleon and the arrival of Louis XVIII on the throne had only been possible because of the defeat of the French armies.[2] The occupation was meant to be only temporary, and the new king promised to establish a constitutional regime. However, Staël's instinctive patriotism rebelled against the sight of foreign uniforms and the sound of foreign voices; she had wished Napoleon gone, but she suffered deeply at France's humiliation. Yet another layer, loaded with frustrations and contradictions, was added to the pain of exile.

In conclusion, the appeal of Staël's history of the French Revolution rests to some extent on her capacity to convey her own personal memories and impressions: indeed, when the *Considerations* were first published, there was great curiosity as to the kind of revelations about single characters and episodes they might contain. However, the scope of her work is not confined to the mere autobiographical dimension but offers a broader historical interpretation, reflecting the author's moderate political views and liberal principles. Predictably, Staël's account does not share the heroic tones of Jules Michelet's or Victor Hugo's later romantic narratives of the events of 1789 and 1848. Coming from a direct witness, her version is far more realistic and dispassionate; at the same time, she does not subscribe to the unmitigated condemnation of the Revolution set forth by conservative writers, stressing instead its positive achievements.

What the *Considerations* show most vividly is the crucial role that individual and collective actions play within the broader context in dictating the course of historical events. Much of the pain and injustice caused to human beings during major upheavals such as that of 1789 was not the necessary product of historical laws but the result of the initiatives of individuals, groups, and institutions, each of them involving specific responsibilities. The plot of the drama may be written in advance, but the actors have still the choice of how to play their role on the stage. It is this sum of human passions, errors, and prejudices—not some blind, irresistible process, that the historian must confront and understand.

Extracts

From Three Works by Germaine de Staël

Considérations sur les principaux événements de la Révolution française (1818), ed. Lucia Omacini, 2 vols., in *Oeuvres completes de Mme de Staël*, série III, *Oeuvres historiques* (Paris: Honoré Champion, 2017).

Dix années d'exil (1820–21), ed. Simone Balayé and Mariella Vianello Bonifacio (Paris: Fayard, 1996).

Correspondance Générale, ed. Béatrice W. Jasinski, 7 vols. (Geneva: Slatkine, 1962–2009). All three works are out of copyright.

1 The French Revolution is one of the great epochs in the history of social order. Those who consider it as an accidental event have failed to take into consideration either the past, or the future. They have mistaken the actors for the drama; and, listening only to their passions, they have attributed to the men of the time events that the centuries had prepared. . . . My ambition would be to speak of the age in which we lived, as if it were already far from us. Those enlightened men, who by their thought are always the contemporaries of future centuries, will judge whether I have been able to achieve that impartiality I wish to attain.
(*Considérations*, vol.1, Part I, Ch 1, 5–6)

2 Common philosophy likes to believe that all that happened was inevitable; but what would be the use of man's reason and freedom, if his will could not have prevented what his will has accomplished?
(*Considérations*, vol.1, Part II, Ch 6, 238)

3 It is impossible not to feel a deep sentiment of pain in retracing those moments in the Revolution, in which a free constitution might have been established in France; instead, we have seen not only that hope destroyed, but the most atrocious events taking the place of the best of institutions. It is not just a simple memory that is recalled, but a vivid suffering that is revived.
(*Considérations*, vol.1, Part III, Ch 3, 357)

4 In the lapse of time from the 10th August to the 2nd September (1792) new arrests were made at every moment. Prisons were full . . . Austrian and Prussian troops had already crossed the frontier, and it was said everywhere that, if those foreigners won, the honest people of Paris would be massacred. Several of my friends . . . were personally threatened; each of them was hidden in the house of some ordinary citizen. But it was necessary to change place every day, as those who offered shelter were too scared. I had obtained passports to return to Switzerland; but I was so sad at the idea of running to safety alone, while so many friends were in danger, that I kept putting off my departure day after day to find out what had happened to them. To begin with we did not wish to use my own house because it might attract attention. On the other hand, as it was the residence of an ambassador, with the inscription: *Hôtel de Suède* on the front door, it might be respected, even if the ambassador himself was away. Finally, it was pointless to keep arguing, as no one was prepared any longer to take in the fugitives. Two of them came to my place . . . I hid them in the remotest room, and I spent the night in the part of the house overlooking the street, fearing at any moment one of what were then called "house visits."
(*Considérations*, vol. 1, Part III, Ch 10, 392)

5 I do not know if, born in Paris and recognizing everywhere in France the honourable traces of my father's public action and of my mother's charitable establishments, I should be considered a foreigner. But I do know that my staying in France depends on your will alone; and while I pray you to consent

to it, I would abase my character if I did not respect the conditions of what is accorded as a favour (i.e. permission to remain for two months in France in a country residence located at ten leagues or more from Paris). . . . I do hope that your goodness and, if I may, your sense of justice, will not confine themselves to those two months. Why should you upset the destiny of a woman who in her life has caused no evil to anyone? Why would you force a mother to seek elsewhere than in her own country the resources necessary for the education of her children? Especially from the height where you are placed, why should your regard fall on me other than with a feeling of protection?

(Letter to the First Consul Bonaparte, 26–27 Sept. 1803, *Correspondance*, vol. V, 18)

6 I was vulnerable by my taste for society. Montaigne said once: "I am French because of Paris"; and if he thought so three centuries ago, what can it be like now that we have seen gathered in the same town so many clever people, ready to employ their wit for the pleasures of conversation? The shadow of boredom has always pursued me: it is by the terror it causes me that I might have been induced to surrender to tyranny, if my father's example and his blood that flows in my veins had not prevailed over such weakness.

(*Dix années d'exil*, Part I, 1797–1804, 85)

7 I had no reason to feel any concern when I found on my table two letters announcing me that my father was dangerously ill. It was concealed from me that the courier who delivered them had brought at the same time the news of his death. I started on my journey with hope, and I kept hoping even when the circumstances should have deprived me of all confidence. When, as I arrived in Weimar, I learned the truth, a feeling of unspeakable terror was added to my despair. I saw myself without any support on this earth and forced to sustain alone my soul against such misfortune.

(*Dix années d'exil*, Part I, 1797–1804, 175)

8 After ten years of exile I landed at Calais, in the expectation of a great pleasure in seeing again that beautiful country, France, that I had missed so much: but my sensations were very different from what I had expected. The first men I saw on the shore were all wearing Prussian uniforms; they were the masters of the place, having acquired their right by conquest. . . . When I finally returned to the town where I had spent the happiest and more brilliant days of my life, I felt as if I was living in a bad dream. Was I in Germany or Russia? . . . to see Paris occupied, . . . the Tuileries, the Louvre guarded by troops coming from the borders of Asia, to whom our language, our history, our great men were less known than the remotest khan of Tartary, was an unbearable suffering.

(*Considérations*, Part V, Ch 6, 668)

All passages translated by Biancamaria Fontana

Notes

1 Narbonne had been Minister of War between December 1791 and March 1792, his appointment being largely the result of Staël's own political influence. Their son Albert de Staël was born two months later, on 20 November; however, their relationship did not survive their long separation.
2 The former count of Provence, brother of the executed Louis XVI. Louis XVI's son, briefly considered by the royalists as Louis XVII, had died in prison in 1795.

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19

JANE AUSTEN (1775–1817)

Mary Spongberg

In 1791, a 15-year-old Jane Austen produced a *History of England, from the reign of Henry IV to the death of Charles I*. Written in short monarch-by-monarch sketches and illustrated with 13 comical medallions painted her by sister Cassandra, this collaborative *History* distilled into 36 short pages one of England's most violent eras, a period which saw the demise of four royal dynasties. In Jane and Cassandra's hands, this pre-history of the "Glorious" Revolution became a boisterous tale of usurpation, imposture, and regicide. Due to its pronounced, albeit tongue-in-cheek, Stuart sympathies, the Austens' *History* has been read as a Jacobite history, and as a consequence as a history of loss and of losers. Early scholarship suggested that a hankering "for stern Stuart patriarchs" and a desire for absolute power could be gleaned in the text, a reading that neatly aligned with the Leavisite "Great Tradition" version of Austen.[1] Such a reading connected Austen with her Jacobite maternal kin, the Leighs of Adlestrop and Stoneleigh, endowing Austen with aristocratic pretensions that explained her "Toryism" as pre-ordained and apolitical. Later readings have concurred that the Stuarts were indeed "Austen's people," and it was these Jacobite connections on the maternal side of her family that allowed her to voice her sympathy for the Stuarts and history's other lost causes.[2]

Austen certainly had family associations to the Stuarts through her Leigh kin and was familiar with their tales of their sheltering King Charles and his army at Stoneleigh and marching the men of Adlestrop to oppose the landing of William III. The source of these tales of Jacobite loyalty was the *History of the Leigh Family of Adlestrop*, written by Austen's kinswoman, Mary Leigh (1731–1797). Leigh's *History of the Leigh Family* was written in 1788, in the months following the death of the Young Pretender.[3] Mary Leigh's *History* wrote the Leighs back into history, as their Jacobitism had led to their obscurity. Leigh's *History* was unapologetically a narrative of Jacobite lament, a history of loss and dispossession, written to remind the heir to the Leigh estates, James Henry Leigh, of his duties and his loyalties.

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Mary Leigh implored her nephew to remember that Leighs had provided "staunch asylum to every friend of the royalist cause."[4] There is little evidence that James Henry took much notice of his aunt's *History* or her plea for him to adhere to the principles of his ancestors. He rejected the low political and social profile the Leighs had assumed during the eighteenth century as supporters of Charles Edward Stuart, marrying into a famously Whig family and modernizing his estate.[5]

Leigh's female relatives, including Austen, were more attuned to her *History*'s themes of loss and dispossession and keen to maintain their Jacobite heritage. The Leigh *History* and later addendums made to this *History* by Leigh's female kin are the source of almost all our knowledge of Austen's Stuart connections and of the history of her maternal family. Leigh's *History*, written only several years before Austen's *History*, has not been considered an inspiration or a source. This omission is a history of loss in itself, reflecting the gendered nature of literary scholarship and biography, which tends to celebrate paternal influence and brotherly support. This is particularly true of Austen biographies, which are largely derived from the "family biographies" written by her Austen male kin.[6] These Austen biographies rarely considered the influence of her maternal family, the Leighs, or other female networks that undoubtedly shaped Austen's writerly self.[7] This occlusion of her maternal heritage, and its legacy to Austen as a writer, has been replicated in modern biographies, which not only ignore the Leighs but are sometimes actively hostile in their descriptions of maternal influence.[8]

The writing of family history by women during this period functioned as a form of personalized historiography and countered masculinist narratives of victory and the spoils of war. Women's historical writing was grounded in loss. It challenged women's absence from orthodox historical accounts, rescued women's reputation when they had been vilified by male historians, and reminded the reader that there was always loss even in the most glorious of victories. For Jacobite women, such as Mary Leigh, their historical writing also served to remind their male kin of the sacrifices their predecessors had made in the service of "King and Country," at a time when these men were increasingly rejecting their heritage, accepting Hanoverian rule, and being restored to their former rights and privileges.[9] Such absolution was not extended to Jacobite women, whose political influence, familial authority, and economic independence declined during the Hanoverian ascendency.

Mary Leigh and the Leigh women who followed her mitigated their experiences of loss and dispossession as preservers of their family legacy. In their works of history, they often recounted the provenance of artworks and other family heirlooms. Such recall enabled these women to insert themselves into records of descent and systems of laws, where their rights to property and identity had otherwise been denied.[10] Mary Leigh's *History* was certainly typical of women's historical writing of this period and its survival within the Leigh archive reflects the importance of this work to her female kin, who, even in the twentieth century, had been dispossessed by law and custom. Leigh's *History* was bound in white vellum and kept as a scrapbook by later generations of Leigh women, who added archival materials and historical addendums to the volume. These women followed Mary Leigh, writing histories of their

own. They edited excerpts of Leigh's *History* that appeared in newspaper articles and transcribed several versions of Leigh's manuscript kept in the Leigh archive. These transcriptions and other materials collected by Leigh women are a rich source of evidence of Leigh's Jacobite and Austen connections. When the Abbey became England's first stately home to open as a heritage site in 1946, the guide books brought Austen's connection to the Leighs to a wider audience and began to reshape the narrative around the inheritance of Stoneleigh.[11] The Leigh version of this narrative represents another history of loss for Austen, one that had been largely obscured, due to the ownership exerted by Austen family biographers over her narrative.[12]

To embed Austen's *History* into this Leigh tradition of family history is to set it in a tradition shaped by loss, but particularly, the loss of feminine historical subjectivity. The similarities in these texts lie in their nascent feminist historiographical approach. Both women used their histories to expose how traditional institutions and practices, such as "marriage, primogeniture and patriarchy," benefitted men while dispossessing women.[13] While Leigh's *History* was specifically written for her nephew, Austen addresses an unnamed reader, coaxing them into the sisters' secret world of loss and dispossession, much in the same way as sharing a private joke. Both histories critique patriarchal privilege, particularly patrilineal succession, and how it diminishes the legitimacy of women and excludes them from political power and both offer feminist revisions of the past, restoring women otherwise lost to history as central to their narrative. In Leigh's *History*, Alice Leigh, the Duchess Dudley (1579–1669), is the wronged woman, whose story dominates the narrative. Alice's life was a cautionary tale of the risks to women posed by the imperatives of patrilineal succession. Having given birth to four daughters Alice was deserted by her husband, Robert Dudley, the illegitimate son of the first earl of Leicester. Leigh wrote that Dudley, "after the manner of the Dudley's," had left England "married a young lady abroad; lived publicly with her; refusing to return to his real wife."[14] Leigh does not make much of the scandal of Dudley's desertion with Elizabeth Southwell, who had dressed as his page to avoid detection. Later generations of Leigh women added notes to Leigh's manuscript claiming that Dudley had "settled in Itally [*sic*]. turned Papist, and had a dispensation from the Pope allowing him to marry Elizabeth Southwell, the Protestant wife and children in England, being ignored."[15] While Leigh celebrates that Alice was eventually awarded Ducal honours in her own right, an underlying bitterness can be detected in the addendums created by later generations of Leigh's kin. Although much is made of Alice's support for the Stuarts, Leigh notes that Alice was ill-used by the court, regarding the purchase of Kenilworth Castle, which she had acquired upon her husband's desertion. Leigh claims that this grand estate had cost the earl of Leicester some 60,000 pounds, but the duchess only realized about 4,000 pounds from the sale having been worn down by extended negotiations with the Stuarts.

The Duchess Dudley is not mentioned in Austen's *History*, although there are veiled references to Alice and her errant husband, Robert Dudley (the "aristocratic dud") in her most "refractory" piece of juvenilia *Catharine, or the Bower* (1792).[16] Leigh's description of the House of Dudley's "ill-gotten greatness," however, sets the tone for the anti-Tudorism in Austen's *History* and shares its

sense of high drama and dudgeon. Her portrayal of Dudley's father, the villainous earl of Leicester, "[F]ew such abandoned characters as his, I trust, sully History" focuses on his alleged nefarious crimes, particularly against his wives, and rivals Austen's descriptions of the Tudors for its vitriol and hyperbole.[17] The Tudors are the most prominent dynasty to feature in Austen's *History*, although they are clearly the least favoured. Austen's narrative of the Tudor monarchs is not a celebration of their majesty but a sorry tale of criminality, usurpation, and the heinous consequences of tyranny. Austen's focus is on the women whom the Tudors coerced, traduced, and erased, literally and from the historical record. Of Henry VII she writes, "This monarch soon after his accession married the Princess Elizabeth of York, by which alliance he plainly proved that he thought his own right inferior to hers."[18] Of Henry VIII, she writes that the "Crimes & Cruelties of this Prince were too numerous to mention" but nonetheless draws attention to "Anne Bullen" and Katherine Howard, whom she describes as "His Majesty's 5th Wife . . . the Duke of Norfolk's niece."[19] This parodic erasure not only satirizes the tendency of male historians to render invisible victims of kingly tyranny but also emphasizes the violence of Howard's fate, demonstrating how the symbolic patriarchal order remains unchanged in death, as in life. Far from accepting Katherine Howard's loss to history, however, Austen refuses the elision of her identity resulting from her alleged crimes, claiming that she knows she is innocent by association, as she is related to "that Noble Duke of Norfolk who was so warm in the Queen of Scotland's Cause."[20]

Austen's pronounced sympathy for Mary is nowhere more evident than in her sketch of Elizabeth. Mary's legitimate claim to succession and her brutal treatment at the hands of Elizabeth forms the dramatic centrepiece of Austen's *History*. It is only during her description of Mary's execution that Austen's levity ceases and echoes of Jacobite lament are heard. Austen subverts the legacy of the Henrician Reformation and Elizabeth's glorious reign, through her rehabilitation of the Scottish queen, whose vindication not only dominates the section on Elizabeth but who is mentioned, sometimes more than once, in seven of the 13 reigns the *History* covers.[21]

Extract

From *The History of England, from the reign of Henry the 4th to the death of Charles the 1st, By a partial, prejudiced and ignorant Historian*, 25–30. The British Library Add. MS 59874.

www.bl.uk/onlinegallery/ttp/austen/accessible/introduction.html.

Extract Relating to Elizabeth I

Oh! what must this bewitching Princess (Mary Stuart) whose only freind [*sic*] was then the Duke of Norfolk, and whose only ones now Mr. Whitaker, Mrs Lefroy, Mrs Knight & myself, who was abandoned by her son, confined by her Cousin,

abused, reproached & vilified by all, what must not her most noble mind have suffered when informed that Elizabeth had given orders for her Death! Yet she bore it with a most unshaken fortitude, firm in her Mind; Constant in her Religion; & prepared herself to meet the cruel fate to which she was doomed, with a magnanimity that could alone proceed from conscious Innocence. And yet could you Reader have beleived [*sic*] it possible that some hardened & zealous Protestants have even abused her for that steadfastness in the Catholic Religion which reflected on her so much credit? But this is a striking proof of their narrow souls & prejudiced Judgements who accuse her. She was executed in the Great Hall at Fotheringay Castle (sacred Place!) on Wednesday the 8th of February—1585—to the everlasting Reproach of Elizabeth, her Ministers, and of England in general. It may not be unnecessary before I entirely conclude my account of this ill-fated queen, to observe that she had been accused of several crimes during the time of her reigning in Scotland, of which I now most seriously do assure my Reader that she was entirely innocent; having never been guilty of anything more than Imprudencies into which she was betrayed by the openness of her Heart, her Youth, & her Education. Having I trust by this assurance entirely done away every Suspicion & every doubt which might have arisen in the Reader's mind, from what other Historians have written of her, I shall proceed to mention the remaining Events that marked Elizabeth's reign. It was about this time that Sir Francis Drake the first English Navigator who sailed round the World, lived, to be the ornament of his Country & his profession. Yet great as he was, & justly celebrated as a Sailor, I cannot help foreseeing that he will be equalled in this or the next Century by one who tho' now but young, already promises to answer all the ardent & sanguine expectations of his Relations & Freinds [*sic*], amongst whom I may class the amiable Lady to whom this work is dedicated, & my no less amiable self. Though of a different profession, and shining in a different Sphere of Life, yet equally conspicuous in the Character of an Earl, as Drake was in that of a Sailor, was Robert Devereux Lord Essex. This unfortunate young Man was not unlike in Character to that equally unfortunate one Frederic Delamere. The simile may be carried still farther, & Elizabeth the torment of Essex may be compared to the Emmeline of Delamere. It would be endless to recount the misfortunes of this noble & gallant Earl. It is sufficient to say that he was beheaded on the 25th of Feb:[ry], after having been Lord Leuitenant [*sic*] of Ireland, after having clapped his hands on his sword, and after performing many other services to his Country. Elizabeth did not long survive his loss, & died so miserable that were it not an injury to the memory of Mary I should pity her.

Notes

1 Brigid Brophy, "Jane Austen and the Stuarts", in *Critical Essays on Jane Austen,* ed. B.C. Southam (London: Routledge, 1968): 21–38.

2 Christopher Kent, "'Real Solemn History' and Social History", in *Jane Austen in a Social Context*, ed. David Monaghan (London: MacMillan, 1981): 86–104; Christopher Kent, "Learning History with, and from, Jane Austen", in *Jane Austen's Beginnings:* The

Juvenilia *and* Lady Susan, ed. J. David Grey (Ann Arbor, MI: UMI Research Press, 1989): 59–72.

3 Mary Leigh, *History of the Leigh Family of Adlestrop* (Shakespeare Birthplace Trust, DR671/77).
4 Leigh, *History of the Leigh Family of Adlestrop*, 1: 15.
5 Edward Chandos Leigh, *Bar, Bat and Brick: Recollections and Experiences* (London: John Murray, 1913): 6.
6 Kathryn Sutherland, *Jane Austen's Textual Lives* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005): 55–118.
7 An exception is Claire Harman's *Jane's Fame: How Jane Austen Conquered the World,* (Edinburgh: Canongate, 2009): 26. Here Harman notes that networks of Austen's female/distaff relatives may have influenced her writing.
8 See, for instance, James Thompson, *Between Self and World: The Novels of Jane Austen* (University Park, PA: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1988). Alison Sulloway, *Jane Austen and the Province of Womanhood* (Philadelphia, PA: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1989); Peter Knox-Shaw, *Jane Austen and the Enlightenment* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004) Alison Upfal and Christine Alexander, "Are we ready for new directions: Jane Austen's History of England and Cassandra's Portraits", *Persuasions*, 30 (2010), https://jasna.org/persuasions/on-line/vol30no2/upfal-alexander.html.
9 James J. Sack, *From Jacobite to Conservative: Reaction and Orthodoxy in Britain c1760–1832* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993): 60.
10 Daniel R. Woolf, "A Feminine Past: Gender, Genre and Historical Knowledge in England 1500–1800", *American Historical Review*, 102.3 (1997): 645–679.
11 The first biography to note the significance of the Stoneleigh inheritance for Austen was Jon Spence's *Becoming Jane Austen: Biography of a Young Jane Austen* (London: Bloomsbury, 2003).
12 Sutherland, *Jane Austen's Textual Lives*, 63.
13 Claudia L. Johnson, *Jane Austen: Women, Politics and the Novel* (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 1988): xxiv. See also Antoinette Burton, '"Invention Is What Delights Me": Jane Austen's Remaking of 'English' History,' *Jane Austen and the Discourses of Feminism*, ed. Devoney Looser (New York, St Martin's Press, 1997): 35–50.
14 Leigh, *History*, 8.
15 Mabel Gordon Leigh, Transcript of Notes, *History of Leigh Family* (SBT DR671/476): 20.
16 Clara Tuite, *Romantic Austen: Sexual Politics and the Literary Canon* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002) "refractory" in the sense that certain pieces of Austen's juvenilia were deemed unmanageable by her Victorian kin, who produced "a tightly scripted [. . .] narrative of canonical development" in their biographical studies of Austen that continued to shape Austen's canon into the twenty-first century, 23. See also 44 on Robert Dudley.
17 Leigh, *History*, 8.
18 Jane Austen, *History of England from the reign of Henry the 4th to the death of Charles the 1st* (British Library MS 59874): 10.
19 Austen, *History of England*, 14.
20 Austen, *History of England*, 15.
21 B.C. Southam, "An Easy Step to Silence Jane Austen and the political context", *Women's Writing* 5.1 (1998): 13.

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20

ANDRÉS BELLO (1781–1865)

Iman Mansour

At 66 years of age, Andrés Bello sat at his desk in Santiago de Chile and wrote the following words to his family in Caracas, Venezuela:

> In my imagination, I see myself in Caracas speaking to you and hugging you all. Then I come back to my senses, and I see myself thousands of leagues away from the Catuche, the Guaire, and the Anauco; far away from Sabana Grande, Chacao, and Petrae. How sad it is to be so far from the objects of my love, and to have to compensate with illusions that last only an instant and leave a thorn in my soul![1]

Bello's letter is overflowing with emotion, full of nostalgia for the homeland he left four decades earlier, never to see again. The images of Caracas, its human and natural geography, and the family that he left behind, were a constant reminder to Bello of his exile and of the pain that had accompanied his years in London (1810–1829) and Santiago de Chile (1830–1865). These concerns also inspired his most famous poem, and what one historian has called "the first declaration of the spiritual and intellectual independence of Spanish America," the *Allocution to Poetry*.[2]

Bello wrote the *Allocution* in 1823 when he was exiled in London and watching the Spanish-American revolutionary wars (ca. 1808–1833) unfold from across the Atlantic. Immediately following its publication, the poem was hailed as the cornerstone of Americanism and the foremost expression of an autonomous American identity distinct from that of Europe. Yet more than a celebratory song that inaugurates postcolonial Spanish America, the *Allocution*, richly historical and deeply sentimental, is also a product of processes of loss, rupture, and trauma, both political and personal.

Written at a moment when Bello's personal fate and that of the Spanish American republics were hanging in the balance, the *Allocution* depicts the wars of

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independence as both an American political victory and a cultural loss. Bello sees victory in the creation of free and independent republics, equal in every measure to the greatest nations in history. At the same time, he identifies loss in the disintegration of the Spanish Empire and America's separation from its European cultural heritage. Might the new republics become disjointed and anarchy-ridden? Might they lose their connection to Western civilization and its rich history? Might Bello lose the orderly world in which he grew and its organizing logic? The *Allocution* is a response to these concerns, where Bello enlists Poetry, imagined as the personification of Western civilization, to unify and order America under the republican creed while still endowing it with an unbroken historical continuity that intertwines the European and American pasts.

Transatlantic Spanish America: Bello in London

Bello was born in colonial Caracas in 1781 to an American-born Spanish (creole) family. He was a bureaucrat in the Spanish administration and then took part in the establishment of the independent Junta of Caracas following the Napoleonic Invasion of the Iberian Peninsula in 1808. The Junta, which initially claimed to rule in the name of Spain's exiled King Ferdinand, soon moved for independence, and to gain international recognition for its cause, sent Bello along with Simón Bolívar in 1810 to Great Britain in the hope of securing military and financial aid. Bello spent 19 years in London, while violence, factionalism, and political differences with leaders in the revolutionary army prevented him from returning home.

Personally, Bello's exile in London was not easy; he witnessed the death of his wife and child, he struggled financially, and he lamented the loss of his homeland. Bello was also contemplating the political and cultural ramifications of the disintegration of the Spanish Empire, as he moved from one diplomatic mission to another, representing different nascent nations. His conservative approach to the revolution in its first years placed him on the opposing side of revolutionaries like Bolívar who opted for authoritarian governments for the new states. Growing anarchy and factionalism even led Bello to consider the importation of a European prince to America to rule in the name of order and liberty while maintaining a degree of autonomy for the new states. By the time of the publication of the *Allocution* this plan was no longer viable, but the poem can be read as a call for continental unity in the face of anxiety over disintegration and the loss of order and culture.

Bello's anxiety was not unfounded. From his exile in London, Bello observed cycles of liberalism and restoration sweep through both Europe and America. The 1812 Constitution of Cádiz, authored by liberal resistors to the French invasion, proposed a constitutional monarchy that gave the colonies new liberties while hoping to maintain the integrity of the empire. Upon Napoleon's defeat in 1814, King Ferdinand restored his absolutist monarchy and joined the Holy Alliance, a pact aimed at restraining liberalism and secularism in Europe. Liberals temporarily gained the upper hand in the early 1820s, but by the end of 1823 Ferdinand had triumphed and his absolutism hardened. Meanwhile, Bello watched as violence

between royalists and patriots culminated in a fratricidal war, torn between loyalty to Spain and freedom for America.

The works that Bello undertook in London, from diplomacy, philology, history, and poetry, express a profound anxiety about the historical and philological foundations for postcolonial Spanish America as it sunk deeper into anarchy and bloodshed. What history would constitute the American past? What literature would guide its people? And what language would it speak? To answer these questions, Bello turned to the study of literature, language, and history, using the extensive resources at the British Museum Library to locate the American past and its optimal future course in the transatlantic processes of conquest, colonization, and emancipation.

Ultimately, Bello's political exile and his personal nostalgia for the virginal landscapes of Caracas led to the solidification of his identity as an American thinker and patriot, and they resulted in the first republican American epic and the foundational story of its independence, the *Allocution to Poetry, which Introduces the Praises of American People who most Distinguished Themselves in the War of Independence*.

The World We Lost and the World We Gained: The Allocution to Poetry

The *Allocution to Poetry* is an invitation. It is a speech that Bello addresses to Poetry, urging her to abandon Europe and move to America. Bello opens his poem by extolling the virtues of American nature, juxtaposing it with European corruption, pomp, and falsehood (lines 1–21). Europe has changed, Bello argues, and it does not appreciate Poetry anymore. Where once its culture, history, and nature nurtured Poetry and gave it voice, now it is silencing its beauty, it is favouring material wealth, greed, and absolutism over liberty. "The World of Columbus," on the other hand, a rustic region unsullied by man, is imagined as a new home where Poetry can sing its songs uninterrupted.

Reflecting on Poetry's ancient role as "teacher to people and to kings," as the voice of the law and the carrier of human knowledge from antiquity to modern times, Bello points to the changes that it had suffered. Cast away and silenced, pushed aside for the sake of philosophy, materiality, and pageantry, Poetry is now only a semblance of what it once was. The crippling culture of Europe, the ostentatious ceremonies in her palaces, the corrupt politics of her courts, and the stifling of the spirit of freedom at the hand of stale monarchies are all hindering the advancement of Poetry as the expression of liberty, humanity, and truth. America, which fights to free her people from the chains of European despotism, is where Poetry should reside (lines 22–50).

Bello moves to describe the scenes that Poetry would see in America, intertwining pictures of nature with historical events. "What pleasant meadow will you make your home?" he asks Poetry. Would it be Buenos Aires where the British were defeated on the River Plate in 1807? Would it be the foothills of Mount Ávila where Diego de Losada founded the city of Caracas in 1567? Or would it be

Mexico, the land of the Aztecs conquered by Europeans in the sixteenth century? Bello then moves to list American bounty, creating a catalogue for Poetry to sing. Sugar, cactus, cotton, pineapple, banana, and coffee, all are waiting to be sung (lines 51–83).

From a pastoral tone of nature and allegory, the poem moves to a tone of violence and bloodshed (line 84). Bello asks Poetry whether instead of singing about nature she would prefer to sing of war. The tone of serenity is disrupted as Bello begins to describe the struggles that America is experiencing and the great price of her freedom. He makes a clear and potent distinction between American soldiers and "those of Iberia," denouncing the violence that Spanish royalist forces unleashed on the continent. Bello's poem, the first song of American freedom and the story of its epic battles for independence, is not one of celebration; it is rather an address that rejects European violence carried out in the name of restoration and absolutism. It places war in opposition to sublime nature, and it decries the bloodshed of the "impious war" and its tragedy, fearing all the while the impending loss of civilization and culture.

Sensing that three centuries of colonial rule are coming to an end yet fearing the consequences of emancipation, Bello enlists Poetry to order and unite the American people through its verse. He uses Poetry to create a catalogue of American places, things, and names; he determines an inventory of local heroes and recounts the events of the wars for the first time, documenting them for posterity; and he establishes a continuity, from pre-Columbian *and* European antiquity to the American present, to provide a useful and instructive past to guide the American republics and preserve their connection to their European heritage. By stripping Poetry of its current European dress and invoking its ancient role as the voice of liberty and civilization, Bello manages to offer America an epic story of war and freedom anchored in the Western tradition of liberty.

Bello's invitation to Poetry, the personification of classical Western civilization and its purest representation, is an attempt to overcome the repercussions of war while maintaining a crucial link between "the world of Columbus" and its historical and philological roots. It is an expression of American autonomy that rejects Europe and its cold, corrupt, and calculated culture where flattery, servility, and a fake kind of freedom are the norm, for the sake of American future and potential. It is also an expression of America's ongoing connection to the classical tradition that nurtured what is good in European civilization.

Bello portrays unity in the face of disintegration, establishes a historical process for Poetry to transcend, and provides America with a distinct identity, wholly American and inevitably Western at the same time. His *Allocution* and his use of the epic form are a conscious and deliberate act of endowing America with a foundational story, enclosed in verse, so that it might sing the song of its freedom for generations to come. It is a way to legitimize the wars of independence as a battle in the name of liberty, and it is a way to preserve order and unity in the face of exile, anarchy, and looming loss.

Extracts

From Andrés Bello, the Allocution to Poetry, 1823 (Excerpts)[3]

From La Biblioteca Americana, o miscelánea de literatura, artes i ciencias, vol.1. (London, 1823). All of Bello's Spanish-language works exist in public domain editions. https://archive.org/details/labibliotecaame00amergoog/page/n21/mode/2up.

Divine Poetry,
You, inhabitant of solitude,
Taught to learn your songs
In the silence of the shady forest,
You whose dwelling was the green grotto,
And whose companion was the mountains' echo;
It is time for you to leave cultivated Europe
Which loves your rusticity no longer,
And fly to where the world of Columbus
Opens before you its vast scene.
There, heaven respects the evergreen branch[4]
With which you crown courage;
There too the flowering meadow,
The tangled forest, the twisted river,
Offer a thousand colours to your brushes;
And Zephyr[5] stirs among the roses;
And brilliant stars adorn night's chariot;
And the king of heaven rises among
Beautiful curtains of pearly clouds;
And the little bird sings sweetly
Love songs in unlearned tones.
What have you to do, sylvan nymph,
With the pomp of gilded royal palaces?
Will you go there
Amid a crowd of courtiers
To offer the incense of servile flattery?
Your most beautiful days did not see you as such,
When in the beginning of humankind,
Teacher to peoples and to kings,
You sang the first laws of the world.
Oh goddess, do not stay
In that region of light and misery,
Where your ambitious rival,
Philosophy,

Which subjects virtue to calculation,
Has usurped from you the mortals' adoration;
Where the crowned hydra[6] threatens
To bring again to the enslaved mind
The past night of barbarity and crime;
Where they call vain delirium freedom;
Servility, faith; pomp, greatness;
And corruption, culture.
Take down from the rotten oak
Your sweet lyre of gold with which
You once sang to enraptured men
. . . And over to the vast Atlantic spread
Your vagabond wings, to other skies,
Another world, other people,
Where earth still wears
Its primitive dress, and is not yet subdued by man;
. . . What abode awaits you? What high peak,
What pleasant meadow, what robust forest
Will you make your home? On what happy
Shore will you first stamp your
Golden sandals? Where the clear river
Which saw the heroes of Albion humiliated,[7]
Reverberates the blue flags
Of Buenos Aires, and proudly draws in
From a hundred mighty rivers the tributes
To the astonished sea? Or where the twin peaks
Of mount Ávila hide among the clouds,
And where the city of Losada is reborn?
. . . Or the city, where the eagle, perched
On the cactus, showed the wandering Aztec,
And the land of inexhaustible rich veins,
That almost satiated greedy Europe?
. . . Oh goddess! A time will come when
Inspired by you, some American Virgil will sing
Of the harvests, of the herds,
Of the rich soil subjugated by man,
And of the thousand gifts with which the
Beloved region of Phoebus[8] crowns the labourer;
Where the canes bear honey,
And the prickly pear grows lively crimson,
Where the cotton trembles its snow,
And the pineapple ripens its ambrosia;
Where the palm tree yields the varied copy of its bunches,
The sapodilla tree gives sugared globes,
The green avocado offers it butter,

The indigo gives its blue colour,
The banana tree falters under its sweet burden,
The coffee perfects the aroma of its white jasmines,
And the cacao curdles its almonds in purple urns.
But, ah! Do you prefer to speak of the horrors of
The impious war, and at the sound of the drums
That shake the maternal breasts,
Depict the armies that furiously run toward
Destruction, swelling the ground with mourning?
Oh! If only you offered a less fertile theme,
Homeland, for warlike songs!
What city, what country has not been flooded
With the blood of your sons and those of Iberia?
What wasteland does not feed the condor with
Human limbs? What rustic homes
Can offer their darkness to hide
From the furies of raging civil discord?
Not even in Rome did love of country
Work such a wonder, not in austere
Sparta, not in generous Numantia;
Nor does any other page of history, Muse,
Give loftier deeds to your song.
To what province the first prize of praise,
And to what man the first tribute will you offer?
. . . Goddess of memory,
. . . Arriving at the happy port, one day
You will sing the heroes to whom
The first acts of audacity are owed;
Who faced the veteran ranks
With the poor, uneducated, and unarmed mob,
Lacking everything but courage;
And shook the bronze colossus, to whom for three
centuries they lent a firm base.
. . . Awake (oh Muse, it is time), awake
Some sublime genius, who will take
Flight to such a splendid theme,
And sing the deeds that took place at Popayán
And at Barquisimeto,
And of the town too, whose homes
The Manzanares[9] sees from its riverbanks;
Not that of poor waves and exhausted verdure,
That suffers the splendour of the royal court,
And is proud of its servitude,
But the river of abundant, beautiful waters,
Which, like its people, is full of beautiful souls,

Of the sky, which in its serene crystal,
Paints its pure blue, running through the palms
Of this and other delicious estate;
Sing of the feats of Angostura,
Haven of unassailable liberty,
Where the devastating storm
Came to crash; and gently tell the world
Of Bogotá, of Guayaquil, of Maracaibo
(which is now burdened under a barbaric chain)
And of the many provinces that the Cauca bathes,
Orinoco, Esmeralda, Magdalena,
And the many that under the name of Colombia[10]
Hold hands in fraternity.

Translation of excerpts and explanatory footnotes by Iman Mansour

Notes

1 Letter is addressed to Concha Rodriguez Bello, his niece, dated to 27 May 1847. Quoted in Ivan Jaksic, *Andrés Bello: Scholarship and Nation-Building in Nineteenth-Century Latin America* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006): 184–5.
2 Quoted in Antonio Cussen, *Bello and Bolívar: Poetry and Politics in the Spanish America Revolution* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992): 99. Originally in Pedro Henríquez-Ureña, *Literary Currents in Hispanic America* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1945): 99.
3 I would like to thank Luis Londoño, Max Lizano, and David Parker for their generous help with this translation. For a full translation of Bello's poem, see Bello, *Selected Works*.
4 The laurel.
5 The gentle breeze.
6 The Holy Alliance.
7 Albion is the historic name of Great Britain.
8 Ancient Greece and Rome.
9 Cumaná, present-day Venezuela. Bello is making a comparison between the River Manzanares in Spain and that in America.
10 Gran Colombia, one of the first states in Spanish America in the years 1819–1831. It included present-day Colombia, Ecuador, Venezuela, Panama, and parts of Peru and Brazil.

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21

FRANÇOIS-XAVIER GARNEAU (1809–1866)

Micheline Cambron (trans. Lisa Gasbarrone)

There can be no doubt that François-Xavier Garneau's *Histoire du Canada depuis sa découverte jusqu'à nos jours* [History of Canada from the Discovery to our Own Times][1] has its origins in the Act of Union of Upper and Lower Canada. The Act was proclaimed in London in 1841, shortly after the Rebellions that had taken place in both Upper and Lower Canada in 1837 and 1838, during and after which all civil rights had been suppressed. Since the seventeenth century, French descendants in Canada had designated themselves as *Canadien*s in distinction, first from more recently arrived French, and later, after the cession of the colony by France, from newly arrived British colonists.[2] The Act of Union was designed explicitly to anglicize the *Canadiens* and convert them to Protestantism. This colonial decision, which violated the previous Acts of 1791 and 1828, was considered illegal and was thought to signal the beginning of the end of the *Canadienne* nation: as Garneau puts it, it was a project of "denationalization." Garneau's work thus proceeds from two losses, that of the Seven Years' War (1756–1763) that had ended with the Treaty of Paris, and that of the Act of Union. Yet Garneau writes a history that is neither a complaint nor a guarantee. Even if the reception of his *Histoire du Canada depuis sa découverte jusqu'à nos jours* proves that it was to some extent polemical, it stands on its own as a historiographical essay that relies on scientific principles emerging in the nineteenth century from the works of Vico, Niebuhr, Michelet, Sismondi, and Guizot, whose works, as Garneau says in his *Discours préliminaire*,[3] placed *le peuple* (the "common people") at the centre of History.

François-Xavier Garneau and His Historiographical Enterprise

Garneau was the first Canadian historian to undertake such a large-scale project.

He wanted to write a history entirely from the *Canadien* point of view. To that end, he embraced both the earlier period of New France, which he characterized

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as marked by numerous battles with Indigenous peoples and with the neighbouring English colonies, and the later period of English rule, whose constitutional struggles he intended to detail. His work is the first to have adopted this division. Grounded in the principles of modern history, Garneau alternates between two kinds of historical writing: the more abstract *tableaux*, or set pieces, which establish the context and sketch out the stakes, and the *récits*, or narratives, in which events and actions are vividly retold. It should also be noted that the first edition (1845–1848) was the most ambitious printing venture ever undertaken in Lower Canada—Garneau himself covered the entire cost, except for a $1,000 subsidy from the government to publish the second edition.[4] Such an investment in time, effort, and money from a genuinely self-educated man is frankly astonishing—Garneau was the son of an illiterate carter. All that for a nation that lost? Why? What for?

Garneau writes in his "Discours préliminaire" that

> Whatever one does, destroying a nation is not as easy as one might imagine; and the prospects open to *Canadiens* are perhaps more a threat than a real danger. Yet some men are anxious and need to be reassured: for them, we now enter into the details that follow.

Garneau is writing in the present, about the past, and for the future.

Writing and Publishing the *History*

His work was much anticipated. Garneau was already known as a poet and historian; he had published a long series of battle narratives in 1837.[5] As early as 1843, he began to promote his project to those around him (as a member of the bilingual Literary and Historical Society of Quebec, he regularly encountered history enthusiasts). He presented a prospectus to members of parliament in order to recruit subscribers for his *History*; newspapers picked it up and the prospectus was published in Montreal and Quebec City in January 1844.[6] This period of anticipation was eventful. Garneau's printer lost his presses in a fire in 1844. The French-Canadian newspapers launched an appeal so that Aubin could buy new presses, and donations came in. Garneau's *History* was not just any book.

The first volume of his *History* was not universally well received.[7] Garneau wanted to move away from the "credulous piety" of previous histories and to anchor his *History* in a scientific and secular approach. European and American historians were largely admiring—some letters appeared in newspapers—but Garneau was attacked by members of the *Canadien* clergy for downplaying the importance of the missionary project and expressing regret with regard to the royal prohibition of Huguenot immigration. In spite of this, Garneau was well respected in Quebec as a highly placed civil servant in the Corporation of the City of Quebec.

As the second and third volumes of the *History* were being printed and published, as well as praised and scorned, Garneau worked to push the end of

his *History* to 1840, the very year that witnessed the Act of Union from which his project emerged.[8] Fernand Dumont writes that Garneau's project "has its origins in anguish. No one, it seems, experienced more deeply the feeling that the 1840s represented a definitive moment of crisis."[9] For Garneau, a sense of duty followed from this, "a task to complete for his country." His decision to tell a story that came as close as possible to the very time in which he was writing is both unusual and compelling from an epistemological point of view. Garneau stands in the midst of the inscrutability of time, as Paul Ricoeur might say.[10] He writes for a future that begins with his words. His narrative relies on historical traces, seeking a restitution of the past in order to refute prejudices and disparaging judgements. It derives its meaning from the present, and in the absence of hope that engenders thoughts of a future for the nation, it is pointless. It's the historical narrative itself that articulates these various timeframes: recounting the experience of the past based on the urgency of the present, the narrative finds its meaning in future readings. The loss of historical memory threatens, and the fear that the future may not be possible leads to despair, but the readings to come, the readers in need of reassurance, inscribe the future in the act of writing itself: "it's for them [those who are worried about the future] that we now enter into the details that follow."

Garneau distanced himself from the figure of Telari-o-lin (Zacharie Vincent), the Huron-Wendat painter depicted as held captive to the present, in the portrait by Antoine Plamondon and in Garneau's poem *The Last Huron*:[11]

> Their names, their games, their feastdays, and their history,
> Are buried forever with them,
> And I alone remain to tell their story
> To the peoples of our day!

Garneau wrote his *History* to ward off the fate that he attributed to the Huron-Wendat nation, which sheds light, tragically, on the indeterminate future of *Canadiens* in America.

In writing his *History*, Garneau proposed that the future begins immediately. Due to the pragmatic perspective that he adopted in his historiographic discourse (if not in the order of facts related), he avoided the justifiable concern expressed by François Hartog:

> For victims, the only available timeframe may very well be the present: that of the drama which has just taken place, or that might just as easily have occurred a long time ago, but which, for them, has always remained in the present.[12]

Isn't he issuing an invitation to the future in writing: "we were obligated also to express our hopes, which we believe are well founded"?

The Instrumentalization of the *History* or the Obstacles of Reading

But the story is not so simple: reading can be side-tracked, encumbered by obstacles that limit the impact of the work.

In 1856, the printer Augustin Côté offered Garneau a hundred pounds to write a textbook—none existed at the time—derived from his longer *History*, on what is henceforth designated as French-Canadian history. He accepted. The book reads like a catechism, and Garneau was not happy with the result. But the Bureau of Education bought 900 copies for the Ministry, and this abridged version was widely circulated, with many subsequent editions printed for which Garneau received no payment. And the volumes of his *History* were not selling: attempts to sell them in Paris and New York failed. The abridged version thus came effectively to obscure the original edition of his *History*.

The *History* would be further betrayed by Andrew Bell's English translation, still to this day the only existing version. Bell deleted some parts, misinterpreted the text according to his own convictions, and added a great number of errors.[13] Garneau tried to intervene, but to no effect, quarrelling with the translator and editors eager for the anticipated profits from the first major history of Canada.

Furthermore, the idea that the *History* was mainly a patriotic task began to overshadow its epistemological and historiographical dimensions. When Garneau died in 1866, he was honoured as Québec's "national historian." In their early biographies of the historian,[14] H.-R. Casgrain and P.-J.-O. Chauveau bypass the *tableaux* (set pieces) and emphasize the narrative dimension of the *History*, which they see as a chain of great narratives likely to inspire *Canadienne* literature. The *History* is also subordinated to the providentialist vision of history inherited from the late seventeenth-century French bishop and historian Jacques-Bénigne Bossuet (and observable in several other writers depicted in the present book, such as England's Sir Walter Ralegh), thereby erasing the indeterminacy of the future, an idea on which Garneau's project is founded. With its original intention deflected, Garneau's history becomes suitable for any instrumentalization.

From that point on, the *History* would be reduced to a reservoir of narratives, deprived of any complex and internally contradictory thought. It would be appropriated and quoted by writers, its contents offered as bits of edification. The later editions, blurred by additions and extensions, are not easy to read and therefore have not been used outside scholarly circles. Clearly, the *History* has become a national gospel that no one needs to read: its message is assumed to be already known. There is a loss of the loss.

Garneau's ambitious project, the true work of his historical writing, was rediscovered in the 1990s, thanks to the scholarship of Gilles Marcotte.[15] But beyond the narrow world of specialists in literature and history, Garneau continues to be seen as a conservative and almost folkloric figure. In a sense, this is the most radical loss: the inversion of signs brought about by the combination of hand-picked excerpts,

an unconscious rejection of theoretical frameworks and, moreover, a lack of regard for the judgement of the historian, whose work is reduced to no more than a collection of patriotic narratives.

Extracts

Three Extracts from the Work of François-Xavier Garneau

First Extract

From "The Last Huron" (fragments), *Le Canadien*, 12 August 1840

TRIUMPH, destiny! Your time has come at last.
O my people, you will cease to exist.
Soon only your nameless ghosts
Will wander these shores.
In the evening, from the mountaintop,
I call out a name in vain: there is only silence.
O warriors, arise; blanket this countryside,
Shadows of my ancestors!

But the Huron's voice vanished into thin air
and no longer called forth any echos.
[. . .]
All these heroes, descended into eternal tombs,
Sleep beneath fallow fields.
[. . .]

Their names, their games, their feastdays, and their history,
Are buried forever with them,
And I alone remain to tell their story.

Note: The poem is arranged here as it was typeset in the first newspaper's edition.

Second Extract

From Fragments from the Introduction, *Histoire du Canada depuis sa découverte jusqu'à nos jours* (Montréal, BQ, 1996), 53 and 62–63 and first edition, vol. 1 (Québec: Imprimerie N. Aubin, 1845).

If one considers the history of Canada in its entirety, from Champlain to the present day, one sees that it is divided into two notable periods defined by the colony's passage from French to English control, with the first period characterized by the wars between the French Canadians and the Savages, and the provinces

that are today the United States; and the second by the political and parliamentary struggles that French Canadians are still pursuing in the interest of national survival. The difference in weapons reveals these two militant time periods from two distinct points of view; but it's through the latter of these points of view that I find them most interesting. There is something both touching and noble in defending the nationality of one's fathers, this sacred heritage that no people, no matter how oppressed, has ever dared renounce openly . . .

It is because Canada has been subjected to such great reversals of fortune, which are not of its own doing but rather the product of its colonial dependency, that progress has advanced only by means of the obstacles, social upheavals, and—a complication exacerbated in the current moment by the difference between the races that the mother country has set in opposition to one another—the hatred, the prejudices, the ignorance and the inconsistencies of the governing class and occasionally the governed.

The union of the two Canadas was simply a means adopted to cover a great injustice with a veil of legitimacy. England, which views French Canadians merely as unruly colonials, tainted by disaffection and republicanism, forgets that their concerns are the result of their attachment to their institutions and customs, which are threatened, sometimes openly and sometimes secretly, by the "proconsular" authority. The abolition of their language, the restriction of their right to vote, in order to keep them in the minority and under control despite their numbers—don't these things prove all too well, moreover, that neither treaties nor the most solemn public acts have been able to protect them from outrages committed to the detriment of their rights?

But whatever one does, destroying a nation is not as easy as one might imagine; and the prospects open to *Canadiens* are perhaps more a threat than a real danger. Yet some men are anxious and need to be reassured: for them, we now enter into the details that follow. The importance of the cause we are defending will justify our approach to the reader. Happy the historian who does not have to perform this same task for his country!

Third Extract

From Casgrain, H.-R., *Un contemporain. F-X Garneau*, [Québec], J. N. Duquet, éditeur, Typographie du *Foyer canadien*, 1866, 87–90. Fragments excerpted by Casgrain (in italics): Patrice Groulx, *François-Xavier Garneau, poète, historien et patriote* (Montréal: Boréal, 2020), 246–248.

Letter to Prime Minister Lafontaine

Quebec, 17 September 1850

Dear Sir,

After having hounded and pestered you for access to the archives of the executive government, I may seem slow in benefitting from them. But this is not my fault. I am not at liberty to be away from my desk whenever I wish, and then, is it not a question of a history written by a French Canadian? . . . It seems that papers

are scattered in different departments, and that those of the executive council are in such vast and impressive disarray that it would inspire both joy and terror in your Jacques Viger. Pursuing research in such chaos would require more time than I can spend outside of Quebec . . .

In the interim, I will work on perfecting the first draft, which is completed. I have arrived at the year 1828, where I plan to stop, reviewing and drawing consequences from the events up until then in my conclusion.

It is likely, given the slow but inevitable turn that events are taking in our country, that this will be the last as well as the first historical work in French written in the rather obvious spirit and point of view easily noted in it, because I think few men after me will be tempted to sacrifice themselves to follow in my footsteps.

But in any case, I am honoured by what will unfortunately seem curious later on. I write with total conviction. If my book lives on after me, I want it to be the clear expression of the acts, the internal sentiments of a people whose nationality has been abandoned to the hazards of a struggle that holds little hope for so many people. I want to confer upon this nationality a character that will inspire respect in the future. In rectifying the military history of the conquest, I have placed French Canadians in a position to reject any insults in this regard, and it seems to me that the English newspapers no longer speak of this period as they once did. I believe I can do the same for all the rest.

Moreover, I can speak with complete independence. I owe no special debt of gratitude, *neither to the clergy*, nor to the government, nor to anyone *now on earth*, and I have played no part in public events; which affords me the greatest freedom to speak of men and events as an enlightened, independent, and truthful historian must do.[16]

François-Xavier Garneau

Chapter and extracts translated by Lisa Gasbarrone

Notes

1 Quotations from François-Xavier Garneau, *Histoire du Canada depuis sa découverte jusqu'à nos jours. Discours préliminaire, Livre I et II,* Montréal, BQ, 1996. First edition: 3 volumes going until 1791 (Québec: Imprimerie de N. Aubin, vol. 1 and 2, 1845 and 1846: Quebec: Frechette and brothers, vol. 3, 1848); fourth volume, going until 1840 (Quebec; John Lovell, 1852).

2 The expression "French Canadians" appears rarely before 1850: it becomes more usual with Canadian Confederation, in 1867. Gervais Carpin, *Histoire d'un mot. L'ethnonyme Canadien* de *1535 à 1691* [The History of a Word. The Ethnonym "Canadien" from 1535 to 1691] (Sillery: Septentrion, 1995).

3 François-Xavier Garneau, "Discours préliminaire" op. cit. BQ, 53–69. Édition originale, 1; 9–31. Garneau uses the expression "Discours préliminaire" as did d'Alembert for the *Encyclopédie*, Condorcet for his *Essai sur l'application de l'analyse à la probabilité des décisions rendues à la pluralité des voix* [Essay on the application of analysis to the probability of decisions rendered by a plurality of votes], and Germaine de Staël for *De la littérature*.

4 Pierre Savard et Paul Wyczynski, "François-Xavier Garneau", *Dictionnaire Biographique du Canada* www.biographi.ca/fr/bio/garneau_francois_xavier_9F.html.

5 "Extraits historiques ou Récits des combats et des batailles livrées en Canada et ailleurs, auxquels les Canadiens ont pris part depuis l'établissement du pays jusqu'à nos jours" [Historical Extracts or Accounts of the Fights and Battles fought in Canada and elsewhere, in which Canadians have taken part from the establishment of the country to the present day], *Le Canadien*, published on the front page between 15 February and 25 August 1837 (Louise Frappier, "Littérature, société, histoire dans *Le Canadien*", in *Le journal* Le Canadien. *Littérature, espace public et utopie 1836–1845,* ed. Micheline Cambron (Saint-Laurent, Québec: Fides, 1999): 281–324.
6 Patrice Groulx, *François-Xavier Garneau. Poète, historien et patriote*, Montréal, Boréal, 98–9.
7 Concerning the reception of the *History*, see, among other works: Micheline Cambron, "L'œuvre de François-Xavier Garneau: de l'Histoire et du savoir historique" [The Works of François-Xavier Garneau: History and Historical Knowledge], *Bulletin d'histoire politique* 27 (2018): 7–13; Suzanne Martin, "Hommages et condamnations. Le premier volume de l'*Histoire* devant la critique de son temps" [Tributes and Condemnations: the First Volume of the History in Contemporary Criticism], *Études françaises* 30 (1994–1995): 75–87.
8 The project of the Union of the two Canadas, embedded in the Durham Report (1839), was brought to the Westminster Parliament, passed in 1840, and carried out in 1841.
9 Fernand Dumont, "De l'idéologie à l'historiographie: le cas canadien-français" [From Ideology to Historiography: the French-Canadian Case], *Chantier* (Montréal, Hurtubise HMH, 1973): 110, quoted by Julie Potvin, "Relire le *Discours préliminaire*" [Re-reading the *Discours préliminaire*], *Études françaises* 30 (1994–1995): 90.
10 Paul Ricœur, *Temps et récit, vol. 3, coll. "Points"* (Paris: Seuil) 1985, 467–89.
11 On this painting and on Zacharie Vincent, see Louise Vigneault, "Zacharie Vincent: dernier Huron et premier artiste autochthone de tradition occidentale" [Zacharie Vincent: the Last Huron and First Indigenous Artist in the Western Tradition], *Mens* 6 (2006): 239–61.
12 François Hartog, *Croire en l'histoire* (Paris: Flammarion, 2013): 82–3.
13 Joël Lagrandeur, "L'histoire du Canada de Garneau et sa traduction anglaise: analyse comparative de deux livres*",* M.A. thesis, Université de Montréal, 2006, 2 volumes (v.1: 95; v.2: 205).
14 H.-R. Casgrain, *Un contemporain. F-X Garneau*, ed. J.N. Duquet (Québec: Typographie du *Foyer canadien,* 1866); P.-J.-O. Chauveau, *François-Xavier Garneau, sa vie et ses œuvres* [François-Xavier Garneau, his Life and Works] (Montréal: Beauchemin et Valois, 1883).
15 Gilles Marcotte (1925–2015) was responsible for an issue of *Études françaises* on Garneau (30–3, 1994–1995) and for publishing a new edition of the *History* (Montreal: Bibliothèque Québécoise, 1996).
16 As the comparison between the original letter of Garneau and the text created by Casgrain shows: *Patrice Groulx, François-Xavier Garneau, poet, historian and patriot* (Montreal: Boréal, 2020): 246–48.

Select Works by François-Xavier Garneau

Histoire du Canada depuis sa découverte jusqu'à nos jours. Discours préliminaire, Livre I et II (présentation de Gilles Marcotte, Montréal, BQ, 1996. First edition: first three volumes). Québec: Imprimerie de N. Aubin, 1845–1848 (4th vol) and, Quebec Lovell, 1852.

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22

EDWARD A. POLLARD (1832–1872)

Claire M. Wolnisty

In 1866, E.B. Treat and Co., Publishers lamented, "The history of the vanquished has too often fallen to the pen of the victor[.]"[1] These publishers claimed, in the wake of the US Civil War (1861–1885) that

> [T]o insure [sic] justice to the Southern cause, the pen must be taken by some Southern man who is willing to devote his time and talents to the vindication of his countrymen, in a history which shall challenge the criticism of the intelligent, and invite the attention of all honest inquirers.[2]

E.B. Treat and Co. believed they found their "Southern man" in the form of Edward A. Pollard. Pollard, a Virginia native and editorial staff member for the state's paper the *Richmond Examiner*, made a name for himself by writing, during the war, a four-volume, journalistic history of the conflict. By 1866, Pollard's works included multiple "southern rights" pamphlets, defences of southern slavery, critiques of Confederate President Jefferson Davis (1808–1889), and responses to Davis's by this time assassinated northern counterpart, President Abraham Lincoln (1809–1865). Pollard's wartime literary accomplishments prepared him to bring further "justice to the Southern cause" in a new book that answered the publishers' call for vindication, *The Lost Cause*: *A New Southern History of the War of the Confederates*.

Students of the US Civil War and Reconstruction Eras well know the phrase, "The Lost Cause." Authors who lived during these historical eras and who have lived in every decade since have written thousands of pages both creating and reflecting upon the incredibly complex ideology and lived experiences embodied in the phrase, "The Lost Cause." Multiple scholars have noted how in some ways "The Lost Cause" has never truly *lost*. Instead, as Pollard hoped it would in 1866,

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"The Lost Cause" has endured and continues to shape and malign twentieth- and twenty-first-century US experiences in profound ways.[3]

Edward A. Pollard coined the momentous phrase, "The Lost Cause," in the wake of the war with the publication of his 1866 book. Unlike other Lost Cause advocates such as Confederate general Jubal A. Early (1816–1894), Pollard shifted his stances on the causes and significances of the US Civil War over the course of his volatile life. *The Lost Cause* represents a point on Pollard's trajectory from pro-slavery apologist in the 1850s to pro-slavery, unreconstructed southern nationalist in the 1860s, to supporters of Liberal Republican Horace Greeley's unsuccessful US presidential campaign against Union general Ulysses S. Grant in 1872.[4] While Pollard adapted his ideas before and after *The Lost Cause*, it remains his most significant work because Pollard wrote the book in response to the Confederate States of America's overwhelming military loss to the Union in 1865. Faced with the racial, political, and social realities of that loss, Pollard desperately sought to vindicate the South through his writing and restore honour to White people in the South.[5]

Pollard defined four main tenets of "The Lost Cause" ideology in his book *The Lost Cause*. First, Pollard claimed political schisms, rather than slavery, caused the US Civil War. Second, while Pollard, like many Lost Cause advocates, avoided proclaiming that the Confederate States of America fought to protect slavery, he nonetheless infused his postbellum defence of the South with a white supremacist worldview. Third, Pollard argued that the South's fundamentally different culture inevitably clashed with that of the North. Fourth, Pollard laboriously claimed that the people of the South, in contrast to Confederate politicians and military leaders, had in fact never truly lost the war.[6]

Pollard highlighted political sectional differences other than slavery as the main causes of the US Civil War. According to Pollard, tariffs imposed on the South concentrated wealth in the North, and too much federal government power, which he called Consolidation, pushed the South into a war for states' rights and liberty.[7] Abolitionists, Pollard and other Lost Cause advocates claimed, stirred up trouble and needlessly pushed the issue of slavery among southerners far more interested in diffusing federal government power than in spreading slavery. If Pollard positioned the South as the champion of states' rights, then he could lessen the threat of Reconstruction in the wake of the US Civil War.[8] He reasoned,

> The doctrine of secession was extinguished; and yet there is something left more than the shadow of State Rights, if we may believe President Johnson, who has recently and officially used these terms, and affirmed in them at least some substantial significance.[9]

Vindication of the South, according to Pollard, might yet come with the Union's recognition of states' rights as a legitimate political stance; the Union was far less likely to recognize the Confederacy's blatant pro-slavery causes. Thus, Pollard elevated states' rights over slavery as a main cause of the war.

In the face of military loss, Pollard deliberately avoided a continued defence of slavery in the South. He no longer claimed in 1866 as he did in his 1859 book, *Black Diamonds Gathered in the Darkey Homes of the South*, that slavery in the South actually helped enslaved people and enhanced their lives.[10] Instead, he declared formerly enslaved people should never have social and political equality in the newly reunited country. In his words,

> But the war properly decided only what was put in issue: the restoration of the Union and the excision of slavery; and to these two conditions the South submits. But the war did not decide negro equality; it did not decide negro suffrage[.][11]

Pollard articulated a white supremacist motivation for endorsing Lost Cause ideology both through and after the years of Reconstruction.

Pollard claimed irreconcilable, long-standing cultural differences between the South and the "low and selfish" North led to civil war.[12] According to this line of reasoning, Northerners descended from Anglo-Saxons and Southerners descended from conquering, chivalrous, and honourable Normans.[13] Thus, the 1860s US military conflict was inevitable. Southerners could regain culture, and bloodlines, according to Lost Cause thinking, undiluted by the North in the postbellum Union, however. As Pollard explained after the war,

> It is not untimely or unreasonable to tell the South to cultivate her superiourity [sic] as a people; to maintain her old schools of literature and scholarship; to assert, in the forms of her thought, and in the style of her manners, her peculiar civilization[.][14]

Pollard cultivated a very particular explanation for the end of the war. He conceded that the Union had won the military war but only because the North controlled more material resources—often gained by trickery—than the South.[15] Pollard also blamed the defeat of the Confederate States of America on a few, select Confederate leaders, especially Confederate President Jefferson Davis.[16] Significantly, Pollard distinguished between specific members of Confederate leadership and the generalized "Southern people" when he explained why the Confederacy lost the war. The Southern people, according to Pollard, remained heroic, resilient, and gallant throughout the war despite the Union's ghastly treatment of them.[17] The Southern people, including women and children left on the home front and average soldiers in the Confederate military, deserved "the attention of all honest inquirers."

The Southern people, according to Pollard, could yet win the war for popular memory even if their Confederate leaders had lost the political and military war. As Pollard explained, "There may not be a political South. Yet there may be a social and intellectual South."[18] Pollard linked "The Lost Cause" ideology with

cultivating particular Southern memories of the US Civil War. He concluded, "The war has left the South its own memories, its own heroes, its own tears, its own dead."[19]

Pollard complicates definitions of loss. He claimed his side of a war did not truly lose the war because it could still win a "war of ideas." Pollard understood the important role that memory plays in defining the winning and losing sides of history and that those sides can fluctuate. Pollard also reminds scholars and students of history that the losing side history, if defined as such, is not always the meritorious side of history. As other chapters in this book illustrate, many people who shared their stories in the face of historical loss justifiably evoke empathy, righteous indignation, and anti-racist activism in modern-day audiences. Pollard cautions against always equating historical loss with the moral high ground.

Extract

From *The Lost Cause: A New Southern History of the War of the Confederates* (New York: E. B. Treat & Co., 1866), 751–753. This work is in the public domain.

The people of the South have surrendered in the war what the war has conquered; but they cannot be expected to give up what was not involved in the war, and voluntarily abandon their political schools for the dogma of Consolidation. That dogma, the result has not properly imposed upon them; it has not "conquered ideas." The issues of the war were practical: the restoration of the Union and the abolition of slavery; and only so far as political formulas were necessarily involved in these have they been affected by the conclusion. The doctrine of secession was extinguished; and yet there is something left more than the shadow of State Rights, if we may believe President Johnson, who has recently and officially used these terms, and affirmed in them at least some substantial significance. Even if the States are to be firmly held in the Union; even if the authority of the Union is to be held supreme in *that respect*, it does not follow that it is to be supreme in all other respects; it does not follow that it is to legislate for the States; it does not follow that it is "a national Government over the States and people alike." It is for the South to preserve every remnant of her rights, and even, though parting with the doctrine of secession, to beware of the extremity of surrendering State Rights in gross, and consenting to a "National Government," with an unlimited power of legislation that will consider the States as divided only by imaginary lines of geography, and see in its subjects only "the one people of all the States."

But it is urged that the South should come to this understanding, so as to consolidate the peace of the country, and provide against a "war of ideas." Now a "war of ideas" is what the South wants and insists upon perpetrating. It may be a formidable phrase—"the war of ideas"—but after all, it is a harmless figure of rhetoric, and means only that we shall have parties in the country. We would not live in a country unless there were parties in it; for where there is no such combat, there is no liberty, no animation, no topics, no interest of the twenty-four hours,

no theatres of intellectual activity, no objects of ambition. We do not desire the vacant unanimity of despotism. All that is left the South is "the war of ideas." She has thrown down the sword to take up the weapons of argument, not indeed under any banner of fanaticism, or to enforce a dogma, but simply to make the honourable conquest of reason and justice. In such a war there are noble victories to be won, memorable services to be performed, and grand results to be achieved. The Southern people stand by their principles. There is no occasion for dogmatic assertion, or fanatical declamation, or inflammatory discourse as long as they have a text on which they can make a sober exposition of their rights, and claim the verdict of the intelligent.

. . .

[752] Defeat has not made "all our sacred things profane." The war has left the South its own memories, its own heroes, its own tears, its own dead. Under these traditions, sons will grow to manhood, and lessons sink deep that are learned from the lips of widowed mothers.

. . .

[753] The war has not swallowed up everything. There are great interests which stand out of the pale of the contest, which it is for the South still to cultivate and maintain. She must submit fairly and truthfully to *what the war has properly decided*. But the war properly decided only what was put in issue: the restoration of the Union and the excision of slavery; and to these two conditions the South submits. But the war did not decide negro equality; it did not decide negro suffrage; it did not decide State Rights, although it might have exploded their abuse; it did not decide the orthodoxy of the Democratic party; it did not decide the right of a people to show dignity in misfortune, and to maintain self-respect in the face of adversity. And these things which the war did not decide, the Southern people will still cling to, still claim, and still assert in them their rights and views.

This is not the language of insolence and faction. It is the stark letter of right, and the plain syllogism of common sense. It is not untimely or unreasonable to tell the South to cultivate her superiourity [*sic*] as a people; to maintain her old schools of literature and scholarship; to assert, in the forms of her thought, and in the style of her manners, her peculiar civilization, and to convince the North that, instead of subjugating an inferiour [*sic*] country, she has obtained the alliance of a noble and cultivated people, and secured a bond of association with those she may be proud to call brethren!

In such a condition there may possibly be a solid and honourable peace; and one in which the South may still preserve many things dear to her in the past. There may not be a political South. Yet there may be a social and intellectual South. But if, on the other hand, the South, mistaking the consequences of the war, accepts the position of the inferiour [*sic*], and gives up what was never claimed or conquered in the war; surrenders her schools of intellect and thought, and is left only with the brutal desire of the conquered for "bread and games;" then indeed to her people may be applied what Tacitus wrote of those who existed under the Roman

Empire: "We cannot be said to have lived, but rather to have crawled in silence, the young towards the decrepitude of age and the old to dishonourable graves."

Notes

1 Edward Pollard, *The Lost Cause: A New Southern History of the War of the Confederates* (New York: E. B. Treat & Company, 1866), para. 2.
2 Pollard, *The Lost Cause*, para. 2.
3 The historiography on the origins and adaptions of the Lost Cause is exceedingly deep. Two works on this topic are Gaines M. Foster, *Ghosts of the Confederacy: Defeat, the Lost Cause, and the Emergence of the New South, 1865 to 1913* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1988) and Tony Horwitz, *Confederates in the Attic: Dispatches from the Unfinished Civil War* (New York: Vintage Books, 1999).
4 Jack P. Maddex, Jr, *The Reconstruction of Edward A. Pollard: A Rebel's Conversion to Postbellum Unionism* (Chapel Hill, NC: The University of North Carolina Press, 1974): 4, 6.
5 I use "the South" to refer to a geographic space and do not capitalize "southerners" to recognize the range of people, such as Black, Indigenous, and People of Colour, not included in traditional, nineteenth-century uses of the word, "Southerners." I use "White" to signify a historically created racial identity.
6 I use "Confederate" to refer to the political entity and "southern" to refer to people living in the geographic South of the United States. Pollard used "Southern" to refer to Whites.
7 See Edward Pollard, *Southern History of the War,* 4 vols (New York: Charles B. Richardson, 1862–1866): vol. 1: 98–99, for example.
8 Pollard also claimed that secession was constitutional: Pollard, *Southern History of the War*, vol. 2: 393, for example.
9 Pollard, *The Lost Cause*, 750.
10 Edward Pollard, *Black Diamonds Gathered in the Darkey Homes of the South* (New York: Pudney & Russell, 1859): 25, 45, 82 for examples.
11 Pollard, *The Lost Cause*, 752.
12 Pollard, *Southern History of the War*, 3: 300.
13 Gary W. Gallagher, "The Anatomy of the Myth", *The Myth of the Lost Cause and Civil War History* (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 2010): 16.
14 Pollard, *The Lost Cause*, 752.
15 See Edward Pollard, *Southern History of the War*, 1: 362 for example.
16 Pollard, *Southern History of the War*, 1: 270–71 for example. In keeping with his veneration of Confederate soldiers, Pollard did not rhetorically attack General Robert E. Lee.
17 See, for example, Pollard, *Southern History of the War*, 1: 174.
18 Pollard, *The Lost Cause*, 753.
19 Pollard, *The Lost Cause*, 752.

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23

GABRIEL DUMONT (1837–1906)

M. Max Hamon

Gabriel Dumont's narrative of the Northwest Resistance of 1885 in Canada is a tale of military defeat, but it anchors the resilience of the Métis as a nation. A heroic narrative, it suggests how histories of loss can motivate political futurity. He might have lost the Northwest Resistance, but today Dumont is a folk hero.[1]

Dumont was once seen as a frontier fighter who lost not just the battle but his world.[2] Born in the Red River area (today Winnipeg) in 1837, he is best remembered as Louis Riel's (1844–1885) military commander and a leader of the Métis buffalo hunt. A Métis of the northwest borderlands, he married Madeline Wilkie in St. Joseph, North Dakota, in 1858, and died in Saskatchewan in 1908. He was one of a group who travelled to Montana to ask Riel to join the Métis in their resistance, and he personally directed the armed resistance in 1885. Juxtaposed with the more spiritual and political Riel, historians celebrated his "instincts" and masculine pragmatism to conclude that he had little patience for politics and religion. However, more recent work critiques this reputation.[3] Despite his illiteracy, he understood that making history was not just actions it was also words and especially writing. The following analysis discusses Dumont's intentions in the text and the context in which it was produced, in order to critique a colonial caricature and reflect on the process of decolonizing Indigenous histories of loss. Produced from tragedy and evoking sympathy, this history from loss takes up arms against time to safeguard the future.

The losses that produced Dumont's history are undeniable. During the nineteenth century, Indigenous peoples across the North American continent lost their sovereignty as they were incorporated into new nation states. Indigenous peoples of the northwest of North America witnessed a particularly intense loss of life, community, culture, and independence. In 1870, Canada annexed the Northwest and initiated a national policy to settle the west. The *Nehiyaw* (Cree) know 1885 as *ê-mâyihkamikahk*, when it all went wrong. Conversely, settlers' stereotyping of Indigenous people as dangerous hardened.

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The Métis nation emerged from the cultural and personal relationships formed between European and Indigenous people in the fur trade and the bison hunt. By mixing Indigenous and European culture and socio-economic practices, the Métis developed a unique language, family structure, and religious beliefs. Often, the Métis strategically cast themselves as a people in between, a theme in the background of this text as well. It is important not to underestimate the diversity within Métis communities, however, by the mid-nineteenth century a political consciousness of nationhood, along with ideas of territorial sovereignty and political representation, had emerged in the Northwest. Infamously, the Canadian government neither expected nor respected this political organization and Métis petitions for legal recognition of their land claims were delayed or dismissed. In 1869 and again in 1885, the Métis responded with force.

The Northwest Resistance of 1885 was a series of skirmishes that culminated in a four-day siege of the village of Batoche, in what is today northern Saskatchewan. In the early days of the resistance the Métis, led by Dumont, defeated the ill-prepared North-West Mounted Police. Euro-Canadian settlers, who knew that many First Nations were desperate due to the Canadian government's starvation policies and feared a massive "Indian" uprising, called for protection. This fear was reinforced when *Nehiyaw* (Cree) warriors killed nine men, including an Indian Agent, and took prisoners at the settlement of Frog Lake. While most First Nations communities honoured the recently signed treaties, in which they had promised to "obey and abide by the Law,"[4] the Canadian government mobilized an unprecedented military response. Local militia were organized and over 3,000 troops with some of the most modern weapons were sent from the east by the almost completed Canadian Pacific Railway. On 4 May 1885, the village of Batoche was overrun by Canadian forces.

Since Dumont was himself unable to write, the excerpt presented here is taken from a 20-page transcription of his oral history, published in Montreal in 1888. The *récit* was published in a volume titled *La vérité sur la question métisse au Nord-Ouest: biographie et récit de Gabriel Dumont sur les événements de 1885* [The Truth concerning the Métis Question in the Northwest: The Biography of Gabriel Dumont and his Account of the Events of 1885]. Dumont defiantly contradicted the official reports of the British General Fredrick D. Middleton, who directed the Canadian forces. And he intentionally shamed his audience when he told them that French-Canadians from Quebec were among the invaders. Dumont described the brutality of the Canadians towards the old men, the death of a child, and the Métis resolve to defend their homes and protect their families. At face value the narrative is straightforward: the Métis resistance was brutally crushed.

Dumont's history of the events of 1885 was part of this cauldron of colonization, but it was also shaped by late nineteenth-century nationalism and politics in the new nation of Canada and especially the more easterly francophone and Catholic province of Quebec. As one modern author points out, transcribing the oral history rendered the voice of the author ambiguous.[5] On the one hand, Dumont's name and the list of witnesses emphasized the "authorial pact" proposed by this text to the reader.[6] The "I" of the *récit*, usually a characteristic of a *mémoire*, proposed an implicit contract to

describe the authentic past. On the other, the "pact" was destabilized by the intentions of the recorder and the publisher. This observation is relevant for understanding Dumont's description of the betrayal by the Catholic priests ("traitors, who I do not want to name"). This might be interpreted as a sign of Dumont's irreligion, but the religious context of French-Canadian nationalism, and Quebec's history of loss, suggests a more nuanced interpretation is needed. His audience would have drawn a parallel with the betrayal of the patriots during the rebellions in Lower Canada in 1837–1838. The treachery of the clerics, considered at the time staunch defenders of French Canadian nationality, would have been understood by his audience as a poignant loss—a loss of access to the sacraments would have painfully destabilized the Métis's resolve to defend their homeland. His listeners would have known that in 1837 Bishop Jean Lartigue (1777–1840) of Montreal issued a pastoral letter condemning the patriots.[7] Crafting the story over repeated performances, Dumont emphasized that the hand of God was directing him: "The Good Lord did not wish me to see poor Riel again . . . he might well have won me over." In other words Dumont too might have turned himself in to the Canadian authorities. Dumont's critique of the clerics was not a loss of faith but a discursive technique to evoke sympathy. The final line reaffirmed Dumont's faith, "we went with the grace of God."

Dumont's narrative was published in the shadow of Quebec's celebration of Louis Riel's martyrdom. To the outrage of French Canadians, Riel was executed for treason on 16 November 1885. Riel's own writings and a network of supporters in Quebec had already set the stage. Building upon this, Dumont defended Riel's reputation and took upon himself the task of completing his friend's mission to gain recognition for the rights of the Métis people. He toured eastern Canada and the United States to tell his story to crowds and cultured gatherings. Dumont became acquainted with Riel's champions such as Major Edouard Mallet of Washington, DC. In January 1888 Dumont met with Honoré Mercier, the premier of Quebec.[8] In the spring of that year, newspapers across Canada were full of rumours about a letter from Dumont to the Métis of the Northwest.[9] In April Dumont embarked on a tour of Montreal, Trois-Rivières, Quebec, and possibly even Ottawa. He was a guest of Montreal Mayor Honoré Beaugrand, and there were rumours of his involvement in the coming by-election. Dumont's *récit* was more than a lament, he used it to engage Quebec's political class and offer a justification of the Métis future. Dumont's determined message to Middleton expresses his will to fight: "I am in the woods, and I still have ninety cartridges."

Dumont's *récit* was not welcomed by all. On 25 November 1887, Dumont wrote to Cardinal Elzéar-Alexandre Taschereau of Quebec, informing him that he was planning to write his biography as a service to his nation. The Cardinal replied that Dumont lacked impartiality and advised against the project.[10]

Quebec publisher and lawyer B. A. Testard de Montigny contacted Gabriel Dumont for his own reasons. The volume also included a broader analysis of the "Riel Question" by other writers and a study of the 1885 treason trial, including a critique of prominent conservative politicians whom Montigny accused of betraying French Canadian national interests.

Originally delivered as a speech, this text is a genre distinct from the religious and political writing of Louis Riel. In Dumont's *récit* we get the "flash and bang" of the

frontier.[11] The sentences, with clipped and simple structure, might be considered crude. After all, Dumont honed his history as a performance in Bill Cody's Buffalo Bill's Wild West circus. However, this does not mean a lack of political sophistication or naivety. Playing up his frontier caricature in Montreal, Canada's cultural and economic metropolis, served a specific narrative goal in telling a history of loss: a simple soldier who only understood bullets and horses was a perfect foil to Riel's "civilizing" mission. Dumont was exploiting the trope of a people-in-between the "civilized" and the "Indian" worlds. In other sections of the text, Dumont used Riel's disapproval of "Indian" tactics for the same purpose. Dumont's savvy use of caricature is evident in contemporary photographs. In one he wears a suit and holds a pocket watch (Figure 23.1), in the other he is dressed as a frontier fighter with gun and buckskin coat (Figure 23.2).

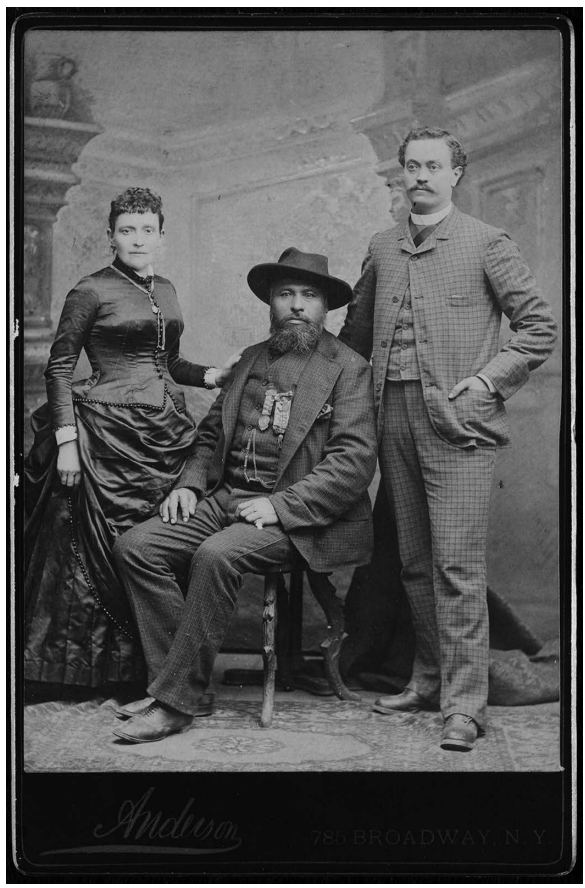

FIGURE 23.1 Studio portrait of Gabriel Dumont and Émile Riboulet and his wife Madame Riboulet.

Source: Edmond J. Mallet Collection. Emmanuel d'Alzon Library Manuscript and Photograph Collection. Assumption University, Worcester, Massachusetts. Copyright information: Used with Permission. This work is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution-Non Commercial-No Derivative Works 4.0 International License. See https://digitalcommons.assumption.edu/mallet-photographs/71/.

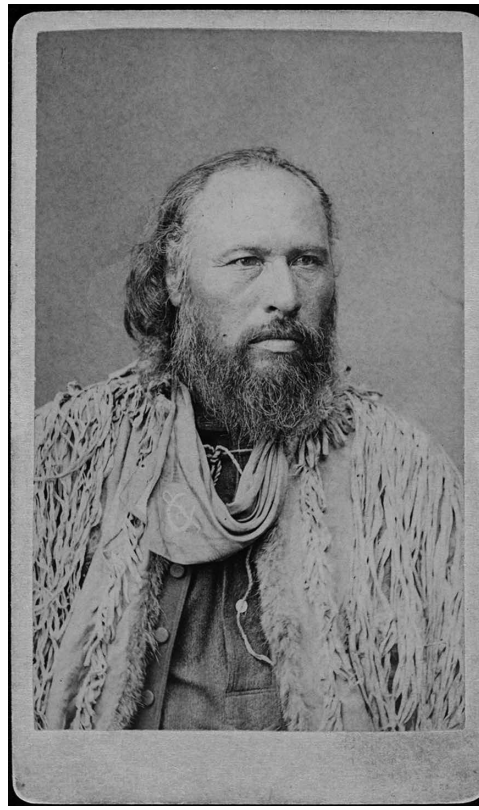

FIGURE 23.2 Studio portrait of Gabriel Dumont.

Source: Edmond J. Mallet Collection. Emmanuel d'Alzon Library Manuscript and Photograph Collection. Assumption University, Worcester, Massachusetts. Copyright information: Used with Permission. This work is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution-Non Commercial-No Derivative Works 4.0 International License. See https://digitalcommons.assumption.edu/mallet-photographs/70/.

In other words, to conclude that Dumont's discourse was co-opted for French Canadian causes is too simple. Métis futurity is a pressing concern throughout. The broader historiographical context of the late-nineteenth century signals the relevance of reading this history of loss as a performance of resilience rather than defeat. During the nineteenth century, public attention was increasingly directed to history as a vehicle for imagining and inventing identity.[12] In Canada, heroic figures like Samuel de Champlain (founder of the first permanent settlement in Québec) and Laura Secord (a Canadian heroine of the War of 1812 between Britain and the United States) were celebrated together in a negotiated national identity combining the new country's British and French origins. One analysis of Champlain's tercentenary (1908) reveals that public commemorations, historical re-enactments, and erection of monuments

framed a "negotiated space of repressed difference" to evoke a shared history and a new future.[13] Officials understood that "history would make a nation, and that history could best be understood in performance." The emerging consensus of official nationalism increasingly marginalized Indigenous histories, however, Dumont's own performance suggests that he aimed to overturn this defeat and secure the future of the Métis nation.

Dumont's history does represent real loss, but as Ned Blackhawk writes, the greatest challenge for historians, of colonial societies the world over, is to reconcile Indigenous narratives of loss, often reduced to caricature, with a world shaped by the foundational myths of nation states.[14] Negotiations regarding the interpretation of the Métis defeat at Batoche continued after Dumont's death. In 1929, the Royal Canadian Mounted Police discovered that the federal monument to the battle of Batoche had been defaced: the words "rebels" had been chipped off.[15] Today, the monument honours both Canadian and Indigenous veterans of the North-West Resistance. Dumont's history of the loss transforms the defeat on the battlefield into a performance of nationhood that sustains a modern nation and has become an inspiration for futurity.

Extract

From Gabriel Dumont, Account of the Events of 1885.

Source: B.A.T. Montigny, "Biographie et Récit de Gabriel Dumont sur les Événements de 1885," in Adolphe Ouimet, *La Verité sur la Question Métisse au Nord-Ouest* (Montreal: s.n., 1889).

We held the enemy in check for three days; and every night, they returned to their holes. During those three days, they did not kill a single man. They only hit the decoys we showed them and they struggled to hit those. During the fighting, Riel walked unarmed at the front line, encouraging the fighters. . . .

We heard it from an informed source: Middleton, despite the reinforcement he had received, had given up on defeating us; then traitors, who I do not want to name, told him that we did not have ammunition and, besides a few, all of the Métis were in despair. Without that, if the besiegers had not pushed, help would have soon come for the besieged. . . .

It made our soldiers lose focus, that they were refused religious support [sacraments], for them, for their wives and for their children!!!

On the fourth day, May 12, near 2 in the afternoon, on the directions provided by those who betrayed us, that we didn't have any more ammunition, the troops advanced and our people fled their trenches. And that's when they were killed: José Ouellet, 93 years; José Vandal, had two arms broken and disabled by a bayonet, 75 years; Donald Ross, mortally wounded and stabbed by a bayonet, also quite elderly; Isidore Boyer, also elderly; Michel Trottier, André Batoche, Calixte Tourond, Elzéar Tourond, John Swan and Damase Carriere, who had a broken leg and who the English afterwards dragged with a rope around his neck attached to the tail of a horse. Two Sioux were also killed.

The total casualties for four days of hard fighting was, for us, three wounded, and twelve dead, plus one child killed, the only victim during the whole affair of the famous machine gun *Gatling* . . .

The next day I hid my wife a little further away, and I went back to the river to try to find Riel . . .

For four days, I looked for Riel, despite my wife's entreating me to cross the line so that I would not be taken. I could not make up my mind to leave without knowing where was my poor friend.

On the third day I sent my wife to my father's home, three miles from Batoche. I followed to protect her and didn't leave her until she was out of danger . . .

My father then informed me that Moise Ouellet, my brother-in-law, had a letter from Middleton for Riel. I went to see Ouellet who told me that the letter had been read to him and that it said in it that Riel and I should have justice. I said to Ouellet, "Go to hell! the government has skinned you like sheep; it has taken your arms from you and now you are marching to their orders." He protested that they had surrendered out of love for their children.

"You tell Middleton," said I to him, "I am in the woods, and I still have ninety cartridges to use on his men."

I went back to Ouellet, he had given Riel the letter, and, he added, Riel went immediately to see the English general. I had planned to meet Riel before he gave himself up, but Ouellet led me to believe that he had already surrendered. But this was false. The Good Lord did not wish me to see poor Riel again, I wanted to advise him not to surrender; but he might well have won me over to his way of thinking.

When I saw I was the only one left, I resolved to seek refuge in the territory of the United States. It was May 16.

I saw Michel Dumas, who had formerly accompanied me to Montana, when I had gone to look for Riel. He too wanted to cross the line with me. He was unarmed, and he too had only a few dried bannock as provisions.

We left by the grace of God!

Translated by M. Max Hamon

Notes

1 Charles Duncan Thompson, *Red Sun: Gabriel Dumont, the Folk Hero* (Saskatoon: Gabriel Dumont Institute, 2017).
2 George Woodcock, *Gabriel Dumont: The Métis Chief and His Lost World* (Edmonton: Hurtig, 1976): 226.
3 See Darren Préfontaine, *Gabriel Dumont: Li chef Michif in Images and in Words* (Saskatoon: Gabriel Dumont Institute, 2010); *Gabriel Dumont: Souvenirs de Résistance d'un Immortel de l'Ouest*, eds. Denis P. Combet and Ismène Toussaint (Québec: Cornac, 2009).
4 Sheldon Krasowski, *No Surrender: The Land Is Still Indigenous* (Regina: University of Regina Press): 118–19.
5 Combet and Toussaint, *Gabriel Dumont,* 24.

6 Philippe Lejeune, *On Autobiography*, edited by Paul John Eakin (Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press, 1989): 4–19.
7 Allan Greer, *Patriots and the People: The Rebellion of 1837 in rural Lower Canada*, 233–39.
8 *L'Electeur*, 21 January 1888.
9 A search for Dumont's name in digital newspapers reveals an astounding interest in Dumont, for example *The Globe*, 15 March 1888*; Calgary Herald and Livestock*, 21 March 1888; *Victoria Daily Times*, 9 March 1888; *Montreal Gazette*, 18 April 1888. See Woodcock, *Gabriel Dumont*, 235–45.
10 Combet and Toussaint, *Gabriel Dumont*, 226–27.
11 Combet and Toussaint, *Gabriel Dumont*, 24.
12 Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism* (New York, Verso, 1991): 83–111. Eric Hobsbawm, "Mass-Producing Traditions: Europe, 1870–1914", *The Invention of Tradition* (Cambridge: Canto, 1983): 263–307.
13 Viv Nelles, *The Art of Nation-Building: Pageantry and Spectacle at Quebec Tercentenary* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1999): 11.
14 Ned Blackhawk, *Violence over the Land: Indians and Empires in the Early American West* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard, 2006): 293.
15 Robert Coutts, *Authorized Heritage: Place, Memory, and Historic Sites in Canada* (Winnipeg: University of Manitoba Press, 2021): 168–70.

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24

GERHARD RITTER (1888–1967)

Christoph Cornelissen

The son of a protestant pastor's household in Hesse (Germany), Ritter received his doctorate in 1911 with a thesis on "The Prussian Conservatives and Bismarck's German Politics." This book represents a remarkable contribution to the history of political parties, which was still very much in its infancy in German and international historiography at that time.[1] Ritter demonstrates how Bismarck successfully overcame the initial scepticism of Prussian conservatives and turned them into faithful adherents of the newly established German Reich. Thereafter, Ritter concerned himself with the intricate relationships between state politics and religious morals. In this field, he won initial renown for his studies of the origins of Protestantism and its legacy to the modern world, and for a biographical study on Martin Luther, the first edition of which appeared in 1925.[2] The book continued to be reissued until 1983 (7th edition), with the protagonist's image subtly changing from praising a national hero to emphasizing questions of social morality after the Second World War.

Before embarking on his university career, Ritter worked as a schoolteacher. He was then drafted as a soldier in the First World War (1915–1918) and took part in several major battles on the Western fronts. The experience of these years was to profoundly influence his moral and historiographical stance throughout his life. In 1923, Ritter was appointed professor of modern history at the University of Hamburg, from where he moved to Freiburg (Breisgau) in 1925, where he taught until 1956. Before the outbreak of the Second World War, his most important works included a highly acclaimed biography of "Freiherr vom Stein" (1931), which discusses the political and constitutional ideals of the liberal statesman. Furthermore, Ritter authored a highly praised biography of Frederick the Great (1936), which became famous because of its indirect criticism of the Nazi regime.

In political terms, however, Ritter had already assumed an ambivalent role before 1933, advocating an authoritarian revision of the German constitution

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during the final crisis of the Weimar Republic. As the 1930s continued, he moved from uncertainty through moments of enthusiasm in favour of the National Socialist regime, to opposition, identifying with the Confessing Church, and later joining a liberal-conservative resistance group ("Freiburger Kreis"). After the July plot against Hitler, the Gestapo found out that Ritter and his colleagues from the "Freiburger Kreis" had established contacts with other resistance circles around the protestant theologian Dietrich Bonhoeffer and the former lord mayor of Leipzig, Carl Friedrich Goerdeler (1884–1945). Ritter was arrested in November 1944 and remained in prison until April 1945.

The Months in Prison (November 1944 to April 1945)

Ritter was imprisoned by the Gestapo from November 1944 to April 1945 and sent to the Berlin prison in Lehrter Straße because of his involvement in drafting secret memoranda of the Freiburg Circle. As his "criminal records" went up in flames during an air raid on Berlin, the trial against him did not take place, and he could flee from prison in April 1945. Although he did not suffer torture or wear prisoner's clothing during his imprisonment, the psychological strain of these months weighed heavily on him. His prison notes, entitled "Meditationes de finibus vitae nostrae," bear witness to this. However, Ritter was allowed to receive a limited amount of official and private correspondence, extra food, and, above all, books. The documents from these months show how his traditional historiographical convictions slowly changed under the pressure of the circumstances. This is also evidenced by a study on Machiavelli conceived in prison, in which Ritter tried to understand the origins of modern nationalism and its manifold entanglements with religious creeds.

Furthermore, he studied the ideas of the theologian and historical theorist Ernst Troeltsch, who was well known for his books on problems of historicism. As a result, Ritter began with "a thorough reflection on my philosophy of history" because he felt that Troeltsch's writings had addressed a core historiographical problem: the "relativization of all values as the principal curse of historicism." According to Ritter, Troeltsch's books also showed that modern historiography should try to come to terms with general "webs of meaning" instead of concentrating on individual historical cases.

Revision and Continuity

Immediately after the Second World War, Ritter brought out various publications in favour of a fundamental revision of German historiography. They include the booklet "Geschichte als Bildungsmacht" [History as an Educational Power], which sets out some of the tasks of post-war German historiography that Ritter believed were urgent in 1946. In his eyes, historians had "to finally draw up a soberly clear picture of Western European history in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, or, better, since the Middle Ages, freed from national prejudices." He also accused

many of his German colleagues of having lost the universal breadth of Ranke's approaches in world history, resulting in "an idolization of a purely secular idea of power," as Ritter bemoaned. He expressed himself in a similar mode in his opening speech at the first conference of German historians after the Second World War in Munich in 1949. On this occasion, Ritter was elected the first chairman of a professional group that still self-confidently called itself a national "guild."[3]

A closer look at the semantics of Ritter's appeals for a general revision of German historiography reveals, however, that they date back to the eve of the Second World War. At that time, the Freiburg historian felt it was necessary to look more deeply into a core problem of political history: the "antinomies of politics." In his eyes, these represented two poles of a moral dichotomy, one side of which was personified by Niccolò Machiavelli (for whom see Gary Ianziti's chapter in this book), and the other by his near contemporary, Thomas More (1478–1535), the author of *Utopia*. Thus, Ritter regarded "Machiavellism and moralism" as opposite concepts for his study on the "reason of state," a theme which had intrigued him since the middle of the 1920s when Friedrich Meinecke published his influential book on the same subject (*Idee der Staatsräson*). Ritter published his book entitled *Machtstaat und Utopie* [Authoritarian State and Utopia] in 1940. After the Second World War, he brought out a revised fifth (1947) and sixth edition (1948), which only then bore the initially planned title *Die Dämonie der Macht* [The Corrupting Influence of Power].

In retrospect, Ritter claimed that many editions of his "war book" had consistently pursued the goal of exposing "the Machiavellianism of the Nazi dictatorship" in disguised form. Several of his contemporaries and also later commentators thought otherwise, and they criticized the author heavily for his concessions towards the Nazi regime. It must be acknowledged, however, that Ritter's comparative historical examination of Machiavellianism and moralism as "basic types of behaviour vis-à-vis the moral problem of power" discusses a fundamental question that reaches far beyond the political contexts in which the book was written. From Ritter's point of view, the morally ambiguous factor in modern politics results from the fact that the fight for power cannot be regarded as evil per se; it might even be necessary to accept, as he added, that power rivalry engenders creative qualities. However, for Ritter only those rulers who acted with the aim of building up "a peace-loving and orderly system" could claim political legitimacy. For obvious reasons, ideas of this kind could only meet with a limited echo due to the political oppression in the "Third Reich". After 1945, the situation changed substantially, when Ritter's writing of history from loss turned into a moral resource for the rebirth of German historical thinking in the western-occupied zones.

Ritter's Position in Post-War German Historiography

Ritter's willingness to undertake a fundamental historiographical revision visibly weakened during Germany's occupation years (1945–1949). His concern to defend the "truly great and healthy political traditions" of Prussia and Germany

became well known, both in Germany and abroad, in a period during which Ritter was regarded as the leading spokesman for German historiography. In January 1949, Ritter even went so far as to state that it would be wise to withhold criticism of the characteristic features of German political thinking, for this could appear like an admission that the Germans are "a hopeless case." The year before, he had published a book entitled *Europa und die deutsche Frage* [Europe and the German Question] (1948), which was to be seen as a concise counter-argument to all those theses which postulated a long-term "erroneous development" in German history. In this controversy, Ritter began to become a staunch defender of German national historiography. This means, first, that he noted a clear difference between Lutheranism and the idea of Lutheran obedience, and their supposed assistance for the advance of National Socialism. Second, he did all he could to liberate "Prussianism" from wrongly founded reproach, because he felt the moral concept of honour in Prussian political culture had represented a bulwark against Hitler and nourished the ideals of the German resistance movement. Third, he emphasized Bismarck's role as the exponent of a group of "responsible cabinet politicians" in European history. In Ritter's eyes, Germany's political "degeneration" under National Socialism should be regarded as the consequence of the rise of the "democratic people's state" in the wake of the French Revolution. In the end, the restorative considerations of Ritter's historiographical programme gained the upper hand over the revisionary goals he had envisaged during the Second World War and in its aftermath.

The debate on revising German historiography did not end completely with the foundation of the Federal Republic in 1949, but it lost both intensity and substance. In this context, Ritter intensified his campaign for a legitimate restoration of his discipline, thus giving his support to a more general "normalization" during the 1950s. The major consequences were that German historiography remained trapped in a "politically and morally tamed historicism" (Ernst Schulin). At the end of the 1950s, the American historian and philosopher Hans Kohn passed a similar judgement. The revision process "has in no way yet been concluded. The old trends are still most powerful."

Against this background, it cannot come as a surprise that late in his lifetime, Ritter was regarded by many contemporary critics, especially from a younger generation, as the epitome of an apologetically nationalist perspective. When in the early 1960s, Ritter hurled his harsh criticism against the Hamburg historian Fritz Fischer (1908–1999), who had published a controversial book on the origins of the First World War, this seemed to corroborate the image of a historian who had lost touch with new trends in historiography. Furthermore, Ritter's constant fear of the loss of national unity was increasingly put into question by the members of a younger generation of historians. However, his four-volume study on *Staatskunst und Kriegshandwerk* [The sword and the sceptre: the problem of militarism in Germany, 4 volumes, 1954–68] and also his biography of Carl Goerdeler (1954,[4] 1984) represented important milestones in two significant fields of contemporary history for a long time. Despite the intermittent loss of academic interest in his works,

Ritters's pioneering studies have attracted new appreciation under the changed conditions of international politics since the 1990s.

Ritter's Discussion of the Origins of Humans Rights

After the Second World War, Ritter's reflections on the relationship between the modern state and individual liberty directed his interest towards a profound exploration of the origins of modern human rights. In 1949, he published a groundbreaking essay on this subject in the *Historische Zeitschrift* (*HZ*) in 1949. This journal was one of the oldest of academic historical periodicals, and the flagship of German historiography, but past editors had made considerable concessions towards the Nazi regime. Thus, the first issue after 1945 was extremely important because Ritter's essay and those of his co-authors were meant to signal a clear break from the tainted past of German historiography in the "Third Reich." Ritter's exposition was based on a lecture he had given in Basel (Switzerland) in 1948, when human rights were being intensively discussed at the United Nations and when they were to be canonized by its General Assembly in the Universal Declaration. In this context, Ritter intended to further his attempts to build up a continental and transatlantic spiritual unity of the Protestant churches, which he and many followers felt was crucial in the face of the dangers from the East in the emerging Cold War. In his lecture, Ritter delineates a field of research that would not receive widespread attention in international historiography until decades later. Although Ritter's general historiographical impact began to wane a long time before he died in 1967, his essay on human rights still stands at the centre of a debate, which has increased in strength in recent years. It remains essential because of "the author's awareness that in actually lived history, the moralization of politics, however laudable, does not necessarily work out for the best."[4] Furthermore, the subsequent extract clearly demonstrates the extent to which the experience of imprisonment, defeat, and loss called forth a general revision of established historical concepts.

Extract

From Gerhard Ritter, "Origin and essence of human rights," *Historische Zeitschrift*, 169, August 1949, 233–63.[5] Reproduced (in translation) with the kind permission of de Gruyter Oldenbourg.

There can hardly be another topic in political history that focusses as directly on the burning problems of our time as the question of the origin and essence of universal human rights. When the national-liberal German historians of the last century spoke about this, for example about the universal human rights of 1789 or 1848, it was regularly done with a certain shaking of the head at the zeal with which our forefathers would have had heated debates about such abstract, unrealistic subject matter. Today, we in Germany have completely lost this shaking of our heads, because we have come to know a reality without human rights and feel it approaching us anew; we dread it. We now know that the belief in human rights

is genuine, that human rights are a reality and not just an idea, nothing less than the survival of Western culture depends on it; or, to put it more simply: on this depends, in the final analysis, whether or not life on this old European earth will still be worth living.

. . .

Whoever speaks of "universal human rights" today thinks first and foremost of those subjective rights of freedom that are supposed to surround the individual like a protective fence and cover him or her from violation by the arbitrary power of the state. Life, property, conviction of conscience, economic activity, freedom of expression in speech and in the press and many other things are to be protected from arbitrary interference. . . . This kind of freedom is regarded as an essential feature of occidental civilisation in contrast to "totalitarian" state slavery. But historical observation shows that it is a relatively recent product of this Western civilisation; that so-called human rights are not originally to be understood as the self-protection of a politically quiescent bourgeoisie, but as the expression of intensified political and economic activity; that they originate from an exceptional colonial situation, the historical preconditions of which have not been repeated anywhere else in Europe; that they have therefore had an effect on the very soil of our continent which cannot be called anything other than double-edged: partly beneficial, but partly also dangerous, even devastating; and that from the beginning they contained an inner tension of opposing principles which today threatens to blow them apart completely, or at any rate to make them virtually ineffective. It therefore seems to be an urgent task of our generation to work on overcoming this tension and to lead the system of human rights back to deeper and purer principles.

. . .

In conclusion, I only want to hint at the deep internal, not merely external, problems that human rights have encountered in the twentieth century. If I see it correctly, it goes back to the old tension between the principle of freedom and the principle of equality in natural law thinking. . . . The principle of equality of all human beings, we said, is not life-threatening to freedom of personal identity only if it is understood as equal opportunity for all and as a principle of justice in legislation. But where it is not the social ethics of Christianity that prevail, but the happiness ethics of rationalism, it is all too obvious that equality is understood as material wealth. This could be set aside in the age of bourgeois liberalism as long as there was no political heavyweight of intellectually and economically uniform, socially covetous masses to whom the freedom of the individual meant little or nothing. . . .

The bourgeois world, on the other hand, is spiritually defenceless as long as it remains grounded in rationalist natural law and the associated utilitarian philosophy. For how is it to make the proletariat understand its different ideals of freedom, if its own understanding of them is essentially as a claim to the free acquisition of material wealth? . . . To an increasing extent, therefore, modern liberalism has taken on a socialist hue. . . . The same applies (as could easily be shown) to most of the declarations of fundamental rights and freedoms of our time, also to the Atlantic Charter (1941), the very general UN draft of 1948, . . . and the rather

doctrinaire declarations of rights of German state constitutions since 1945. . . . The necessity of all these declarations is undisputed: after the total collapse of the liberal system, there is an urgent need for the world to reflect on a new ideal of society and state, to begin anew to establish moral principles for the reconstruction of its states. But one would hope that these new catalogues of freedom were more than pious wishes . . . Everything depends on social and political reconstruction taking place in the spirit of a new, more deeply founded social ethics, which is able to do justice to both at the same time: the principle of social justice and the principles of that freedom without which no genuine spiritual life, but also no creative initiative in economic life, can flourish.

But this requires a concept of justice that is deeper and more fruitful than the mechanical principle of equality of rationalist natural law. At the same time, a concept of freedom that does not misinterpret and misuse "human rights" as a cloak for mere private egoism: neither in the form of so-called "capitalism," i.e. the brutal exploitation of economic power and freedom without regard for the common good and fellow human beings, nor in the form of that modern mass egoism that regards the state only as a pension institution and considers shirking active co-responsibility and sacrificial commitment for the community to be a democratic human right. Freedom, however, does not fall from the sky, but must always be fought for anew and secured with many efforts—material and spiritual. It is constantly threatened both from outside and from within. In the white heat of the totalitarian nationalism of our time, humanitarian principles melt like butter in the sun. We have experienced it and experience it anew every day. Only a truly heatproof faith can withstand this.

Translated by Christoph Cornelißen

Notes

1 Gerhard Ritter, *Die preußischen Konservativen und Bismarcks deutsche Politik 1858–1876* (Heidelberg: Winter, 1913). For biographical data and all quotes from Ritter cf. Christoph Cornelißen, *Gerhard Ritter. Geschichtswissenschaft und Politik im 20. Jahrhundert* (Düsseldorf: Droste, 2001).
2 Gerhard Ritter, *Studien zur Spätscholastik,* 3 vols (Heidelberg: Heidelberg Winter, 1921, 1922, 1927); Gerhard Ritter, *Luther: Gestalt und Symbol* (Munich: Bruckmann, 1925).
3 Mathias Berg et al., *Die versammelte Zunft: Historikerverband und Historikertage in Deutschland 1893–2000*, 2 vols. (Göttingen: Wallstein 2018).
4 Samuel Moyn, "The First Historian of Human Rights", *American Historical Review* 116 (2011): 58–79, at 58 f.
5 The article was reprinted, with a few minor differences, in Ritter's own *Lebendige Vergangenheit: Beiträge zur historisch-politischen Selbstbesinnung* (Munich, 1958): 3–33.

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25

JAWAHARLAL NEHRU (1889–1964)

Antoon De Baets

Jawaharlal Nehru (1889–1964) was an Indian politician who spent many years in British colonial prisons, a situation which can be viewed as the epitome of loss. Rather than languishing in these prisons, he mustered the energy to write two memorable historical works there—a history of the world and a history of India—which are still widely read today.

Before anything else, Nehru was a politician who *made* history, first as a nationalist leader of the Indian National Congress for 30 years, when he fought for India's independence from Great Britain, and later as its first prime minister from 1947 until his death. But like his contemporary, opponent, and admirer, Winston Churchill, Nehru not only made history; he also *wrote* it. In fact, he was mesmerized by history. Only few political leaders have displayed a historical awareness that equalled his.

This unusual fixation on the past had a reason. Nehru's nationalist activities brought him into permanent conflict with the colonial authorities. Between 1921 and 1945, he spent almost nine years in prison and passed much of the rest with the prospect of detention or, conversely, of reintegration into normal life. All these prison terms, except the last, were preceded by trials, often for sedition.[1] To beat the solitude of prison and stay mentally fit, Nehru started writing and completed a history of the world, an autobiography, and a history of India while incarcerated. He observed that whereas his turbulent life as history-maker absorbed him too much to reflect, read, and write, it was in prison that he found serenity in abundance. Nehru the historian spoke when Nehru the politician was silent. Paradoxically, the loss of freedom was a precondition for his creativity as a historian. And in contrast to many other political leaders who wrote history, he penned his works before he led his country, and not after his political career. His politics as prime minister were imbued with his historical views from the outset.

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Although far from enviable, the British prison system in India allowed some categories of inmates to do intellectual work. Nehru may not have had access to a library with reference books, but he still read voraciously the books he could borrow, making copious reading notes despite the irregular supply of writing materials. In addition, the prospect of unexpected early release or of not being able to finish a manuscript before regular release, and the associated risk of dramatic loss of interest in his own writings, always worried him and forced upon him a steady work rhythm in prison that also bears traces of haste.

In these adverse circumstances, he wrote *Glimpses of World History* during his fifth and sixth prison terms (October 1930–January 1931 and December 1931–August 1933). The idea for it arose when he was still a free man. Over the summer in 1928, while travelling for his political work, he had written 30 letters to his daughter, Indira, who was ten at the time (and would also become a prime minister, as Indira Gandhi). As he had earned degrees in natural science and law, Nehru told her about the genesis of life and civilization on earth. They were published in 1929. When he was in prison from 1930 to 1933, then, he again turned to the epistolary form. He wrote nearly two hundred long letters to Indira, each describing one episode of world history. Nehru saw them as glimpses to awaken Indira's curiosity for history, as "little talks *entre nous*." Prison conditions, however, did not permit him to send them one by one, he had to keep the bundle of letters on him, with "many hundreds of hours of my prison life . . . locked up in them."[2]

Although intimate at times, the letters did not stay private for long because Nehru emerged as a much sought-after storyteller and national educator. They were quickly published in 1934 as a book of thousand pages. Unusual for the time, *Glimpses* was less Eurocentric than its mostly Western counterparts (like H.G. Wells, with whom Nehru shared a belief in science and progress and whose 1920 *Outline of History* he had thoroughly read, and Oswald Spengler, whom he disapproved of for his praise of violence). It made Nehru one of the first non-Western world historians. He frequently used prison metaphors as when he wrote that we "shall . . . have to break through the prison of tradition wherever it prevents us from our onward march,"[3] and "India herself is still in prison and her freedom is yet to come. What is our freedom worth if India is not free?"[4]

Curiously, Nehru was not the first to write a world history in prison. He followed the footsteps of Walter Ralegh (1554–1618), who drafted an unfinished *History of the World* (1614) in the Tower of London, and Condorcet (1743–94), who penned *Esquisse d'un tableau historique des progrès de l'esprit humain* in hiding before he was captured (it was published posthumously in 1795). Ralegh was eventually beheaded and Condorcet died in prison (see chapters in this book by Nicholas Popper and Simona Pisanelli), while Nehru spent three more terms in detention, eventually becoming the well-known political leaders who, despite four known assassination attempts and unlike his daughter (who would be assassinated in 1984), died in his own bed.

In August 1942, when Congress passed the Quit India Resolution asking the British to leave India, Nehru was again imprisoned with other leading Congress

members, this time for the better part of the Second World War. Most of this ninth, last, and longest imprisonment was spent in Ahmednagar Fort prison, Maharashtra, where he wrote *Discovery of India* between April and September 1944. As with *Glimpses*, this new, and more contemplative, historical exercise was also intended to prepare his future leadership. The central question that haunted him in *Discovery* was how to revitalize India's history plagued by internal backwardness due to racism and caste, gender, and class differences, and by external dependence caused by British imperialism. Nehru was driven to history because he desperately wanted to reverse India's plight, but he quickly lost interest in those parts of the past that seemed to contribute little to solve his central question. Prison provided him with sufficient time to find answers.

His quest was of epic proportions. Intrigued by the inexorable passage of time, Nehru aspired to nothing less than to sort out the past, the present, and the future. He wanted to organize the past with the help of a historicist approach to understand what he called India's spirit as it manifested itself in millennial continuity, distinguishing periods of growth, slumber, exhaustion, and decay, and carefully selecting those traditions that he thought stimulated progress. Armed with these historical insights, he wanted to also organize the present by embracing a secular and parliamentary democracy and humanist values at home, and an internationalist, non-aligned outlook abroad. Finally, he wanted to organize the future by introducing socialist planning in order to eradicate poverty and modernize economic development. With this triple approach of time, he justified his future actions.

Although Nehru denied that he saw India as an anthropomorphic entity,[5] that was exactly how he approached his country in *Discovery*: he engaged in a dialogue with Bharat Mata, Mother India, and, in the epilogue, in a lyrical celebration of her. This abstract love for India he shared with his mentor, Mahatma Gandhi, who was barely interested in history's vicissitudes. However, Nehru managed to remain self-critical and avoid self-glorification and self-pity. In a way, *Discovery*, published as a book of more than 700 pages in March 1946, 16 months before independence, can be seen as Nehru's gift to India. Remarkably, there is one other example of this. When historian Eric Williams, author of the seminal *Capitalism and Slavery* (1944), became the first prime minister of Trinidad and Tobago, he published *History of the People of Trinidad and Tobago*, on 31 August 1962, the day his country achieved independence. Coincidentally, Williams was an admirer of Nehru, though not uncritically.[6]

Nehru's prison writings were revised by family members, but their content stayed largely unaltered. Although very critical of the British, they were generally praised for their lack of resentment despite their author's years of captivity. Consequently, they were not censored and in fact became bestsellers from their first publication. Nehru used prefaces and postscripts to update the various editions. His works captivated generations, still finding avid readers in many languages today. In 1988, 42 years after its first appearance, *Discovery* was even adapted into a 53-part television series. Nevertheless, Nehru's critics were not blind to his

deficiencies. They pointed out his simplifications and romanticism, and his soft spot for certain authoritarian historical figures. Nehru himself, however, anticipated many of these shortcomings in his writings, conceding that he was not a professional historian.

When young and imprisoned, Nehru was full of hope about the future and determined to sacrifice his life for it, but with age and political responsibility came pessimism and his historical views slowly changed. He was devastated by the Second World War and the destructive possibilities of the atomic bomb, by the violence unleashed by the Partition of India in 1947, and by the 1962 war with China. A follower of Mahatma Gandhi's non-violence principle, he increasingly came to see violence as a factor in world history antithetical to his political goals. He was nominated 13 times for the Nobel Peace Prize between 1950 and 1961.

A secular humanist, Nehru also advocated a scientific approach to India's problems. He perceived religion and communalism as forces that on the whole kept India backward. He condemned the hate speech that often came with them.[7] In *Discovery*, he argued that "scientific temper" was needed to combat superstition, religious bigotry, and pseudo-science.[8] This formula, and the belief in science it conveyed, became a dominant motto to the extent that India included in its 1976 constitution a citizen's duty "to develop the scientific temper, humanism and the spirit of inquiry and reform."

Nehru's antagonism towards radical Hindu nationalism was not quickly forgotten, however. In 2004, Gopinath Munde, president of the radical Hindu Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) in Maharashtra, demanded that the state government either ban *Discovery of India* (58 years after its first appearance) or delete its "defamatory" references to Maratha King Shivaji (1630–1680). Historians were quick to point out that Nehru's treatment of Shivaji was laudatory rather than defamatory.[9] Since assuming office as prime minister in 2014, BJP leader Narendra Modi has repeatedly criticized Nehru's role and legacy, including in the Lok Sabha (parliament).[10] In addition, distorted depictions of, and falsified sources about, Nehru's life abound on the internet, feeding conspiracy theories and a certain cult of Nehru vilification.[11] This fitted into a broader trend in which some BJP politicians perceived secular historians, including Romila Thapar (see Chapter 29 by Sanne van der Kaaij-Gandhi), as "intellectual terrorists." Nonetheless, Nehru is still widely revered.

On balance, Nehru turned his prison reflections into a historically informed overall view of Indian society in order to steer it as its first prime minister through its early years of independence as the world's "largest democracy." In so doing, he transformed the disadvantage of prison into an advantage and proved that an initial position of loss could ultimately be beneficial for him and his country. However, his overwhelming passion for history probably had contradictory effects. Nobody understood the historical background of India's problems better than he did. But he was also humbled by the frightening responsibilities of representing a civilization that had survived millennia. Nehru's historical awareness spurred him to action while at the same time slowing him down.

Extract

From Jawaharlal Nehru, *The Discovery of India* [written in prison in 1944] (Calcutta: The Signet Press, 1946), 7–12. In the public domain and available at www.indianculture.gov.in/discovery-india.

Time seems to change its nature in prison. The present hardly exists, for there is an absence of feeling and sensation which might separate it from the dead past. Even news of the active, living and dying world outside has a certain dream-like unreality, an immobility and an unchangeableness as of the past. The outer objective time ceases to be, the inner and subjective sense remains, but at a lower level, except when thought pulls it out of the present and experiences a kind of reality in the past or in the future. We live, as Auguste Comte said, dead men's lives, encased in our pasts, but this is especially so in prison where we try to find some sustenance for our starved and locked-up emotions in memory of the past or fancies of the future.

There is a stillness and everlastingness about the past; it changes not and has a touch of eternity, like a painted picture or a statue in bronze or marble. Unaffected by the storms and upheavals of the present, it maintains its dignity and repose and tempts the troubled spirit and the tortured mind to seek shelter in its vaulted catacombs. There is peace there and security, and one may even sense a spiritual quality.

But it is not life, unless we can find the vital links between it and the present with all its conflicts and problems. It is a kind of art for art's sake, without the passion and the urge to action which are the very stuff of life. Without that passion and urge, there is a gradual oozing out of hope and vitality, a settling down on lower levels of existence, a slow merging into non-existence. We become prisoners of the past and some part of its immobility sticks to us. . . .

Yet the past is ever with us and all that we are and that we have comes from the past. We are its products and we live immersed in it. Not to understand it and feel it as something living within us is not to understand the present. To combine it with the present and extend it to the future, to break from it where it cannot be so united, to make of all this the pulsating and vibrating material for thought and action—that is life. . . .

There was a time, many years ago, when I lived for considerable periods in a state of emotional exaltation, wrapped up in the action which absorbed me. Those days of my youth seem far away now, not merely because of the passage of years but far more so because of the ocean of experience and painful thought that separates them from today. The old exuberance is much less now, the almost uncontrollable impulses have toned down, and passion and feeling are more in check. The burden of thought is often a hindrance, and in the mind where there was once certainty, doubt creeps in. Perhaps it is just age, or the common temper of our day. . . .

When actual action has been denied me I have sought some such approach to the past and to history. Because my own personal experiences have often touched historic events and sometimes I have even had something to do with the influencing of such events in my own sphere, it has not been difficult for me to envisage history as a living process with which I could identify myself to some extent.

I came late to history and, even then, not through the usual direct road of learning a mass of facts and dates and drawing conclusions and inferences from them, unrelated to my life's course. So long as I did this, history had little significance for me. I was still less interested in the supernatural or problems of a future life. Science and the problems of today and of our present life attracted me far more. . . .

The roots of that present lay in the past and so I made voyages of discovery into the past, ever seeking a clue in it, if any such existed, to the understanding of the present. The domination of the present never left me even when I lost myself in musings of past events and of persons far away and long ago, forgetting where or what I was. If I felt occasionally that I belonged to the past, I felt also that the whole of the past belonged to me in the present. Past history merged into contemporary history: it became a living reality tied up with sensations of pain and pleasure.

If the past had a tendency to become the present, the present also sometimes receded into the distant past and assumed its immobile, statuesque appearance. In the midst of an intensity of action itself, there would suddenly come a feeling as if it was some past event and one was looking at it, as it were, in retrospect.

It was this attempt to discover the past in its relation to the present that led me twelve years ago to write *Glimpses of World History* in the form of letters to my daughter. . . .

I suppose I have changed a good deal during these twelve years. I have grown more contemplative. There is perhaps a little more poise and equilibrium, some sense of detachment, a greater calmness of spirit. I am not overcome now to the same extent as I used to be by tragedy or what I conceived to be tragedy. The turmoil and disturbance are less and are more temporary, even though the tragedies have been on a far greater scale.

Is this, I have wondered, the growth of a spirit of resignation, or is it a toughening of the texture? Is it just age and a lessening of vitality and of the passion of life? Or is it due to long periods in prison and life slowly ebbing away, and the thoughts that fill the mind passing through, after a brief stay, leaving only ripples behind?

Notes

1 For an overview of Nehru's prison terms: https://nehruportal.nic.in/prison; for an overview of his trials: Ram Gopal, *Trials of Jawaharlal Nehru* (Bombay: The Book Centre, 1962).
2 Jawaharlal Nehru, *Glimpses of World History* (New Delhi: Oxford University Press, [1934] 1989): 274.
3 Nehru, *Glimpses*, 21.
4 Nehru, *Glimpses*, 54.
5 Jawaharlal Nehru, *The Discovery of India* (New Delhi: Indian Council for Cultural Relations, 1981): 59.
6 Eric Williams, "A Tribute to Nehru", (1964), in *Forged from the Love of Liberty: Selected Speeches of Dr. Eric Williams,* edited by Paul Sutton (Port of Spain: Longman Caribbean, 1981): 229–33.
7 Nehru, *Discovery*, 563–64.
8 Nehru, *Discovery*, 512.
9 Nehru, *Discovery*, 272–73; Vaishnavi Sekhar, "Has Mr. Munde Got His History Wrong?" *Times of India*, 21 March 2004.

10 Shekhar Gupta, "Why Modi Is Using Nehru to Try and Demolish the Gandhi Dynasty and Congress", *The Print*, 8 February 2020.
11 Amulya Gopalakrishnan, "The Nehru You Don't Know", *Times of India*,15 May 2016; Romila Thapar, "They Peddle Myths and Call It History", *New York Times*, 17 May 2019.

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Note: Most of Nehru's writings are freely available at: https://nehruportal.nic.in, https://nehruselectedworks.com, and https://archive.org.

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26

CHEN YINKE (1890–1969)

Q. Edward Wang

It has been well noted that Chen Yinke's career path experienced several notable turns, and especially his transformation from a philologist into a historian. But few have paid close attention to how his losses in war and revolution played their part in causing the changes. Born into a distinguished family of literati during the last years of China's imperial age, Chen's father and grandfather were reform-minded, supporting the ruling Qing dynasty in its last-ditch effort to modernize the country. Three years before Chen's birth, his grandfather became a provincial governor. While providing him with a good early education in Chinese learning, the family also sent him to study abroad. His first stop was Japan because the country had by then become China's model of successful East Asian modernization. Chen later studied in Europe at the Universities of Berlin and Zurich, as well as the Instituts d'Études Politiques de Paris, where he learned both classical and modern European languages.

Revolution and war interrupted Chen's study abroad. The 1911 Revolution overthrew the Qing dynasty which Chen's family had once served, ending China's imperial era. The outbreak of the First World War forced Chen temporarily to suspend his study in Europe and return home. Unable to go back to Europe, Chen instead pursued studies at Harvard in 1918. Interestingly, it was during his years at Harvard that Chen began to find a focus in his studies, which was to examine cross-cultural exchanges between China and South and West Asia from the third century CE, centring around the spread of Buddhism in the continent. To this end, he exchanged ideas on Buddhist doctrines with Irving Babbitt (1865–1933) and took Sanskrit and Pali courses with Charles Lanman (1850–1941) while at Harvard. To further his knowledge of languages and pursue a career as a philologist, Chen returned to Europe and took additional courses at the University of Berlin. While in Europe, he acquired over a dozen more languages, including Turkish, Persian, Manchu, and Tangut, as they were related to his comparative study of

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how Buddhist sutras were translated into Chinese from the post-Han through the Tang period. (This period, known in English as the period of disunity, referred to the time when China, in the wake of the fall of the Han dynasty in the early third century, experienced the invasion of northern nomads into the realm, comparable to the *Völkerwanderung* in Europe during and after the fall of the western Roman Empire. The era ended with the reunification of Chinese imperial territory under the Sui and Tang dynasties at the turn of the sixth-seventh centuries.) Chen was so engrossed in learning the languages that he did not care about earning a degree from the institutions in which he was enroled as a student. Nonetheless, he was regarded by his cohort as one of the most learned men of his generation because of his solid training in classical Chinese learning during his youth and his subsequent extensive educational experiences overseas.

In 1925 Chen returned to China to teach at the National Studies Institute at Qinghua University. The Institute was staffed by acclaimed scholars in Chinese culture and history as well as newly graduated holders of Western doctoral degrees. Though Chen himself held no formal degree, he received the offer because of his philological training. At the time, he was the only person who could teach Sanskrit at a Chinese university. Thanks to his philological aptitude and rich knowledge, which straddled cultures of the East and West, Chen's career at Qinghua was off to a good start. He quickly became a highly respected professor on campus; his lectures attracted not only students but also colleagues in various departments. He was especially well known at Qinghua for his examinations of the Chinese reception and translation of Buddhism and of the cultures of South and West Asia in general. Chen impressed his students with his erudition and his philological method in conducting meticulous criticisms of a wide range of texts in multiple languages.

But Japan's invasion of China in 1937 caused great losses to Chen—both his family and career. After settling in Beijing, where Qinghua University was located, he had started a family and had young children. He also managed to arrange for his father to live in the city so that they could visit each other regularly. However, on the eve of the Japanese army's siege of the city, his father died of a combination of hunger and anxiety. Chen, together with his wife and small daughters, also had to leave the city by retreating to the south. In the process, he lost the book collections he had accumulated since his student days. These books had contained his own extensive, and critical, research notes. Without these books and notes, it was hard for Chen to continue his philology-based historical research. In a word, Japan's invasion of China (in effect the beginning of the Second World War in Asia) inflicted terrible pains and losses on Chen Yinke—and a profound sense of personal loss. Chen also began to lose his eyesight because of his intense study over the years—the unstable life he led in wartime China meant that he was unable to receive timely medical treatment.

While Chen remained devoted to his teaching and research, his interest shifted from Buddhism to the history of the Tang dynasty. During his exile from the north to the south, he joined the faculty of the newly founded Southwestern Associated University, which was a temporary union of three transplanted universities from the

north, and taught courses on Tang history. He also chanced on a copy of *New Tang History*, which was a dynastic history of the Tang composed in the eleventh century under the Song dynasty. It is likely this book that encouraged Chen to offer new interpretations of the Tang's historical development from a multiethnic and multilingual perspective. Despite his tumultuous life in wartime China, Chen managed to publish two books, which would earn him an international reputation as a Tang historian. Differing from his earlier research focus, which was microscopically focused on textual criticism, these two works presented his general understanding and analysis of the founding of the Tang dynasty and the unfolding of its institutions and court politics on a macro level. What Chen offered was an original interpretation of the rise of the Tang, linking the phenomenon to changes that had occurred in earlier centuries. He pointed out that from the early third century when China entered the period of disunity, there had emerged a powerful Guanlong bloc, comprised of mixed ethnic groups in northwest China. Not only was the founding family of the Tang related to the bloc, but after establishing its dynasty the family also relied on the bloc's support to consolidate their power. It was not until the reign of Wu Zetian (624–705), the only female ruler in the history of imperial China to found her own dynasty, that the bloc's dominance became challenged and undermined. Chen's insights proved both bold and seminal; they provided a cornerstone for interpreting Tang history among generations of historians both in China and abroad. In both editions of the *Cambridge History of China*, the contributors acknowledged Chen's interpretative framework. His accomplishment received such praises in the following:

> The next major contribution to the interpretation of the political and institutional history of the period was the work of the great Chinese historian Ch'en Yin-k'o. In two major books, published in wartime Chungking, . . . Professor Ch'en put forward a view of T'ang politics and institutions far more carefully researched, more closely argued and considerably more persuasive than anything published before. His major contribution to our understanding of the period was his analysis of the various rival groupings and interests which provided the dynamics of T'ang court politics.[1]

In a word, due to the outbreak of the Second Sino-Japanese War, or the Second World War in Asia, Chen Yinke suffered losses on multiple fronts. But the losses also prompted him to steer his research and career in a new direction—he changed from a philologist to a historian. His metamorphosis earned him an offer from Oxford University to teach Chinese history in 1939, which he did not take up till 1945. By then, unfortunately, his eyesight had worsened irrevocably. Devastated, he returned to China, only to see his country being embroiled once again in a civil war, which would result in the Communist victory of 1949. Now a blind man living under Maoist rule, Chen once again launched a new project: drawing on his memory, he used a number of poems to compile a history portraying the fragile lives of several intellectuals and their associations with a courtesan during the Ming and Qing dynastic transition of the seventeenth century. Writing this

book, it was believed, reflected Chen's own mindset—his empathic descriptions of the protagonists in the book amounted to a lamentation of his later life as well as a veiled protest of the circumstance under which he was forced to live. In sum, Chen Yinke endured great losses throughout his life; his way of overcoming them became a trademark of his sterling career as a historian.

Extracts

Draft Outline of Tang Political History (Tangdai Zhengzhishi Shulungao)

According to their origin and nature, political revolutions in the Tang dynasty fell into two categories: central revolution and local revolution. Why before the An Lushan Rebellion (755–763)[2] had local political revolutions not been successful, and why had they had so little impact whereas central political revolutions had a least a mixed rate of success? In addition, imperial successions during the Tang tended to be troublesome—the occurrence of a succession was often accompanied by a court coup d'état. Why was this so? Outside the court, the government was often divided by factions, for example, the Niu-Li factional strife.[3] What distinguished one faction from another? All these questions are to be considered in this work because they were not clearly explained by previous studies.

In the previous part, I have discussed how Yuwen Tai (534–556)[4] coined the "Guandong First Policy" with great success, laying the foundation for the Sui and the ensuing Tang dynasties in unifying China and generating a prosperous era. In his memorial on the Guanzhong affairs, Lu Zhi (754–805)[5] remarked:

> After establishing his power and placing the whole realm in his control, the Yuwen Emperor was cautious about potential dangers. He formed the Fubing militia system and deployed garrison forces throughout [the country]. The Fubing system had over 800 units of which about 500 were stationed in Guanzhong. As such, no local forces could challenge Guanzhong, suggesting his biased strategy in maintaining order. However, after a long peace, military lost its vigor. While the system remained, its soldiers became undisciplined. Seizing the situation by using outside support, An Lushan stirred up the upheaval that swept over the realm, including ransacking the two capitals.

From *SuiTang zhidu yuanyuan luelungao/Tangdai zhengzhishi shulungao* [Draft Essays on the Origins of the Sui and Tang Institutions] (Beijing: Sanlian shudian, 2001), Part 2, 236–237.

Chen Yinke's Critique of Lu Zhi

What Lu Zhi said about the Tang policy on the Fubing system and how it related to Tang politics might indeed be quite true. But contemporary sources by the Tang people also tended to praise the beauty of the system created by their

ancestors—officials' memorials were no exception. In fact, there was a misunderstanding of the origin and development of the Fubing system. Though the system was key to Yuwen Tai's "Guanzhong First Policy," how it was actually executed became rather vague beginning with the early Tang. . . . I have discussed this issue in my *Draft Essays on the Sui and Tang Institutions*. Nonetheless, Lu Zhi's remarks could allow us to infer that before the "Guanzhong First Policy" was abandoned, anyone who controlled Guanzhong could also control the whole country. As such, political revolution taking place in the centre could succeed whereas those happening at the local level, some of which looked quite legitimate, all have failed. All this explained why, after occupying Guanzhong, the Sui and Tang rulers succeeded in establishing their dynasties. From the reign of Emperor Xuanzong (685–762), however, the "Guanzhong First Policy" was utterly changed, allowing local political revolutions to succeed. This was the cause of the decline and demise of the Tang, as the central power was challenged successfully first by An Lushan and Shi Siming (703?-761) and later by Huang Chao (835–884) and his associate Zhu Wen (852–912).

From *SuiTang zhidu yuanyuan luelungao/Tangdai zhengzhishi shulungao* (Beijing: Sanlian shudian, 2001), Preface, 3–4.

Preface

The Tang dynasty lasted about three centuries whereas the previous Sui dynasty had been short lived. . . . The influence of their institutions was very extensive. It reached northward to the Mongolian Steppe, southward to Vietnam, eastward to Japan, and westward to Central Asia. . . . While the institutions of the Sui and Tang dynasties were developed extensively and with sophistication, they had expanded on inheritances from three earlier periods: 1) the Northern Wei and Northern Qi; 2) the Southern Liang and Chen; and 3) the Western Wei and Zhou. The origin of the first could be traced back to the Han dynasty through the Kingdom of Wei and the Western Jin. It was carried on by those who had migrated to South China but was later absorbed by Northern Wei and developed further in Northern Qi.[6] This was called Shandong influence in old texts because Shandong was Northern Qi's base. But both Northern Wei and Qi had also been influenced by cultures that had passed through the Hexi Corridor,[7] which has not received much attention before. . . . The influence of the Southern Liang and Chen was absorbed by the Sui, which had represented the institutional influences of the southern regimes. The origin of the third differed markedly from that of the previous two. In terms of geography, it came from the Guanlong region which had merged the traditional Han culture with that of Xianbei and other non-Han ethnic groups. All new policies created in the name of reviving the earlier systems recorded by old histories fell into that category. However, their influence on the Sui and Tang institutions were of little importance. Accordingly, of the three, the third one paled in its significance with the first two. However, previous historians had believed that Sui and Tang inherited Wei and Zhou, shown for example in the case of the Fubing system.[8] These historians had not realized that some of the institutions existed only in name, but not in reality.

From *SuiTang zhidu yuanyuan luelungao/Tangdai zhengzhishi shulungao* (Beijing: Sanlian shudian, 2001), 175.

Postscript

What this book has covered is rather simple—I only cited several examples to illustrate some of the key points about the origins of Sui and Tang institutions and adumbrate their course of evolution. Generally speaking, a number of factors at different times and places influenced the developments, which are more or less traceable in historical texts, proving that their formation and evolution were by no means coincidental. I never see myself a knowledgeable person. In recent years, my life has encountered several crises. As I hurried to escape the war, I lost nearly all my collections of books with my comments and notes. But since it is necessary to produce something, I had to, despite my illness and worries in the trying times, embark on the writing, relying mostly on what I could remember at the time. I titled it "draft" not only because it was written in a hurried way, but also because it was something I had to do in times like this.

Chen Yinke in April 1940, just recovered from an illness.

Translated by Q. Edward Wang

Notes

1 Denis Twitchett, "Introduction," in *The Cambridge History of China, Volume 3, Sui and T'ang China, 589–906*, eds. Denis C. Twitchett and John K. Fairbank (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, [1979] 2007): 10. The modern spelling of Chen's name according to the pinyin system of transliteration is Chen Yinke; I have preserved here the older Wade-Giles transliteration system's version as rendered by Twitchett.
2 The An Lushan rebellion was led by An Lushan (703–757), a general officer of the Tang military system; it was often considered a turning point in Tang history, responsible for the dynasty's ultimate decline.
3 The Niu-Li factional strife referred to the contention in the Tang government by two camps of officials: those who supported Niu Sengru (780–849) versus those associated with Li Deyu (787–850).
4 Yuwen Tai was a general of the Xianbei-led Chinese Western Wei dynasty who paved the way for the founding of the Northern Zhou dynasty (557–581).
5 Lu Zhi was an advisor of Emperor Dezong, and later became the chancellor of the Tang government during Dezong's reign.
6 Northern Wei, Northern Qi, Southern Liang, Southern Chen, Western Wei, and Western Zhou were dynasties that existed in the period of disunity between the third and sixth centuries.
7 Hexi Corridor is a narrow stretch of traversable and relatively arable plain west of Yellow River's Ordos Loop, or a pathway that connects the Central Plain of China to Central Asia.
8 The Fubing system was a local militia system originated in Western Wei and continued in the Sui and Tang periods.

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27

ANNA MIKHAILOVNA PANKRATOVA (1897–1957)

Iva Glisic

Soviet historian Anna Pankratova was one of the twentieth century's most influential scholars of Russian labour history.[1] Widely recognized for her commitment to both revolutionary activism and history scholarship, through the course of her career Pankratova served in a series of prestigious positions, including as a member of the Academy of Sciences, head of history at Moscow State University, and editor-in-chief of leading Soviet history journal, *Voprosy istorii* [Questions of History].[2] Furthermore, though writing "under the banner of Soviet patriotism," Pankratova consistently challenged official doctrines, risking not only her professional standing but indeed her life. Writing history was a high-risk occupation in the Soviet Union, where efforts to control the historical narrative often transformed the work of historians "into a game of Russian roulette."[3] In recognition of her ability to negotiate this complex environment and survive numerous political purges within her profession, scholars have come to refer to Pankratova as the historian with nine lives.[4]

Pankratova was born in February 1897 in Odessa, Ukraine. Her father was a factory worker, who died in 1906 from injuries incurred while serving in the Russo-Japanese War of 1904–1905. To help her mother, Pankratova began working in a factory at the age of 14. A true child of the working class, throughout her life she remained dedicated to both elevating the level of education and political literacy among the Russian proletariat, and writing its history.

Pankratova's political and academic work developed in concert. After completing grammar school in 1914, she enrolled in history at Odessa's Higher Courses for Women, although this pursuit was interrupted by the outbreak of the 1917 Revolution. She subsequently joined the local branch of the Socialist Revolutionary Party, before switching her allegiance to the Bolsheviks in 1919. Recognized for her work in Odessa's revolutionary underground, in 1920 she was transferred to Ekaterinburg in the Ural Mountains—then the centre of Russia's metallurgical

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industry—to promote political literacy among the workers. This posting also provided Pankratova with the opportunity to work in the local factory archives and write about Russian labour history. Her political standing and research interests saw Pankratova accepted into the newly established Institute of Red Professors in Moscow, where she studied under influential Soviet historian Mikhail Pokrovskii (1868–1932).

After graduating from the Institute in 1925, Pankratova embarked on a career as an academic in an environment marked by political violence. Following Vladimir Lenin's death in 1924, Joseph Stalin launched an aggressive campaign against his political rivals to secure his leadership and rid the country of counter-revolutionary forces.[5] Waves of purges swept across the country, culminating in the Great Terror (1936–1938). The purges led to the imprisonment and death of numerous political leaders, army officials, members of the intelligentsia, and ordinary citizens who were deemed unreliable owing to their ethnic, social, or professional backgrounds.

In 1927 Pankratova's husband Grigorii Iakovin—a fellow graduate of the Institute and specialist in German history—was denounced as a supporter of Stalin's archenemy, Leon Trotsky. He was arrested, exiled to Uzbekistan, and later executed.[6] Pankratova subsequently witnessed the persecution of her mentor Pokrovskii for his so-called pseudo-Marxist errors, along with the repression of many other fellow historians.[7] She also found herself in the crosshairs on multiple occasions. At the height of the Great Terror, she was criticized for her alleged lack of vigilance in identifying spies and counter-revolutionaries among her colleagues. In 1937, Pankratova was stripped of her Communist Party membership, dismissed from her position at the Moscow State University and exiled to Saratov.

In light of her association with the Bolsheviks' political rivals in 1917, her marriage to a condemned Trotskyite, and the fact that she was Pokrovskii's protégé, Pankratova was "a pretty likely candidate for the GULAG and/or execution."[8] Yet in a fortuitous turn of events, she was readmitted into the Party in 1939 and allowed to return to Moscow—an unusual but not uncommon outcome under a regime that was known to dole out both terror and reward arbitrarily.[9] Pankratova resumed her work with dedication, mentoring students and contributing to numerous research projects.

Writing history under Stalin was a dangerous pursuit—in no small part due to the dictator's personal interest in the subject. His letter to the editors of the history journal *Proletarskaia revoliutsiia* [Proletarian Revolution] in 1931 set the tone for his interventions in the field. Stalin demanded "a tightening up of discipline" among historians,[10] denouncing them as "archive rats" who would do well to curb their interest in written documents and focus instead on the "deeds"[11]—expecting "more animated, heroic, and patriotic historical narratives."[12] Throughout his reign, Stalin continued to edit and critique the work of historians.[13] He also contributed directly to a range of publications, most famously the *History of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union: Short Course* (1938).[14] This official guide to Party history, however, was notoriously complex and ambiguous, with historians often

left "at sea with regard to what was required . . . and which positions were or were not acceptable to the Party."[15]

Stalin's death in March 1953 sent shockwaves throughout the country. Soon after, members of his inner circle set about to achieve reform.[16] At a closed session of the Twentieth Party Congress in February 1956, Stalin's successor Nikita Khrushchev delivered his famous "secret speech" in which he denounced Stalin's cult of personality and violent episodes of "arbitrariness and illegality."[17] Moreover, Khrushchev dismissed Stalin's *Short Course* and called for a new textbook on the history of the Party.

The death of the historian-in-chief and subsequent change in the Party's official line had major consequences for historians. As a distinguished leader in the field—and a deputy to the Central Committee—Pankratova was invited to give a speech at the Congress, in which she signalled the beginning of de-Stalinization in Soviet history. In March 1956, authorities allowed for limited circulation of Khrushchev's secret speech, which was read to selected audiences of Party and Youth League (Komsomol) members and "civically active persons" across the country.[18] Between 20 and 23 March, Pankratova delivered nine lectures in Leningrad, illuminating aspects of Khrushchev's report and its implications.[19] She was one of the first officials to confront public reaction to the report and provide an assessment of its impact based on questions she received from her Leningrad audience.[20]

Perhaps the most challenging question Pankratova faced at these sessions pertained to the complicity of historians in fortifying Stalin's regime. Her own troubled career demonstrates the complexity of this issue. Although she was expelled from the Party and exiled to Saratov, Pankratova had continued her work within the newly established History Faculty of the Saratov State University. While many of those close to her were arrested and executed, Pankratova miraculously "escaped the dragnet" a number of times, despite being accused of "every conceivable scholarly and political sin."[21] Pankratova was a victim of the Stalinist regime but also a beneficiary, rising to positions of great professional prestige and power—which at times resulted in her participating in public denunciations of her colleagues, and writing history that advanced Stalin's cult of personality.

Historians have demonstrated that the Soviet system was often unpredictable and that luck played a major role in determining an individual's fate. Pankratova's own professional and physical survival can perhaps be attributed to luck—yet her career also reveals a tactical flexibility that enabled her to operate simultaneously as both a member and critic of the establishment. Her Memorandum on the Leningrad sessions (an extract of which appears subsequently) provides a good case in point: it is at once a dutiful report to the Party leadership on the public reception of the new approach to Soviet history and an instrument that strategically highlights shortcomings in the handling of this change in policy.

Pankratova's career was certainly an exemplar of "the muddy, messy world of Soviet historiography."[22] Yet she did not shy from her responsibilities as a historian and an activist, and while admitting that she found the situation after the Twentieth Party Congress challenging, she remained an advocate for change.[23] Having

been appointed as editor-in-chief of *Voprosy istorii* just months after Stalin's death, Pankratova used this influential position to open debate about the Soviet past and address some of the questions that stemmed from Khrushchev's report.[24] She transformed the journal into a platform for the rejuvenation of historical inquiry in the country, igniting hope among reform-minded historians (and indeed the wider public) of increased access to sources and liberty to examine the past free from the distorting influence of censorship and Stalinist dogma.

This hope would, however, prove to be short-lived. Stalin's loyal supporters were quick to launch a vicious campaign against the journal: by March 1957, its deputy editor Eduard Burdzhalov was dismissed from his post; two months later, Pankratova died following a "nervous breakdown."[25] "A half-open door on the past," as one historian observed, "had been abruptly slammed shut."[26] Over the course of her career, Pankratova's personal, professional, and political battles intersected with momentous events that shaped the history of the Soviet Union—including the loss of the country's master narrative in the wake of Stalin's death. A key member of a generation of historians that operated simultaneously "as both loyal party historians and dissidents,"[27] Pankratova's experience provides a valuable case study of the challenge of writing history in dangerous times.

Extract

From "Pervaia reaktsiia na kritiku 'kul'ta lichnosti' I. V. Stalina. Po itogam vystuplenii A. M. Pankratovoi v Leningrade v marte 1953 goda." Publication prepared by A. V. Novikov. *Voprosy istorii*, no. 8 (2006), 3–22. Document courtesy of the State Public Historical Library of Russia, Moscow. Reprinted by kind permission of *Voprosy istorii*.

Memorandum by A. M. Pankratova to the Presidium of the Central Committee of the CPSU on the mood of the Leningrad intelligentsia after the XX Congress of the CPSU

Not before 28 March 1956

To the Presidium of the Central Committee of the CPSU
From Central Committee member Pankratova A. M.

Memorandum

I consider it necessary to report to the Central Committee of the CPSU some material about the mood of the Leningrad intelligentsia in connection with the reading of N. S. Khrushchev's speech "On the Cult of Personality and Its Harmful Consequences."

N. S. Khrushchev's speech was read at party meetings with the participation of non-party activists. But, apparently, there was too much laxity in the organization: it was not clear who should have been included as activists; among non-party scholars and cultural workers some were invited to the reading of the speech, others were not. Among Komsomol members, secondary school students were

allowed to attend. The speech gave rise to many burning questions, but the audience was warned that no discussion or questions would be permitted. No explanatory work was conducted after the reading. This caused dissatisfaction and gave rise to a huge number of very varied questions, indicating great agitation and confusion among the ranks of intelligentsia. Therefore, instead of a scholarly report concerning problems of history in the new five-year plan, which I had been invited to deliver, between 20 and 23 March I had to give nine reports and lectures on "The XX Party Congress and the tasks of historical scholarship," with an explanation of the problem of the cult of personality.

All speeches and lectures were held in crowded auditoria: about 6,000 representatives of the intelligentsia were in attendance—scholars, students, propagandists, writers, etc. Over 800 written notes were submitted, the vast majority of which were devoted to political questions.

. . .

Many notes raised the question of how to treat Stalin now. Most of the notes sharply condemn his activities and uncompromisingly demand to draw all the conclusions that follow from this.

. . .

In notes and discussions, many stated that there was not a single family in Leningrad that did not suffer either in 1937–1938, or in the first period of the war, or in the "Leningrad Affair."

This is probably the reason for the extremely harsh reaction among the majority of those who were present: in many notes questions were raised not only about condemning the cult of Stalin, but also all those who supported this cult.

. . .

Another group of notes, on the contrary, considers it inappropriate to review the case of "the departed Stalin" and expresses dissatisfaction with "defamation and mockery of the name of Stalin." These notes state that a "cult of personality in reverse" is now being conducted:

"Isn't the attribution of all mistakes to comrade Stalin also a cult of personality?"

. . .

The taking down and destruction of portraits of Stalin, the removal of his writings from libraries and bookshops, pulling down of memorial plaques, and similar acts, caused great consternation in Leningrad.

. . .

Many questions were asked about Stalin's real role in the revolutionary movement, the founding of the party, the October Revolution, the civil war, the building of socialism, and also about the evaluation of his theoretical works. One question was persistently and universally raised: can he still be considered a classic of Marxism-Leninism, as he has been until now?

. . .

In a number of notes the following question was raised: "Does the Central Committee intend to issue an official document soon on Stalin's place in history, in the party, in socialist construction?"

. . .

I do not think it is possible to remain silent about the most pointed questions that were raised at these meetings, including questions of the responsibility of those who were members of the Politburo under Stalin for spreading the cult of personality in the country.

Here is one such note:

"In the report of comrade Khrushchev at a closed session of the congress on the cult of personality, the response to the question 'What were the Presidium members doing?' was highly unconvincing. It is very difficult for us propagandists to explain this matter to the Soviet people. Do members of the Presidium know about this? And how will this matter be explained in more detail? Will it be clarified for party cells?"

. . .

A large number of notes are devoted to questions of the ideological work of the party and the state of our social science, in particular, the history of the party.

. . .

The authors of many notes accuse historians of distorting true history for base reasons (careerism, fear of reprisals).

. . .

The authors of many notes go as far as to assert that it is impossible to examine historical events objectively:

"How can the knowledge that we draw from the works of historians be reliable, if historians did not consult the materials used to turn many individuals into enemies of the people, or the documents based on which these individuals were rehabilitated?"

. . .

At a meeting of historians, I was asked:

"Will historians be given the opportunity to independently resolve controversial issues? Should they take speeches in the party press as directives, putting an end to discussion?"

. . .

A large number of notes were devoted to individual problems of historical materialism and questions of interpretation of various events in world history and the history of our country, as well as the history of the party, especially in the post-October period. I am not in a position to provide in this memorandum an analysis and evaluation of the historical matters raised in the notes, which I submitted to the scholarship section (*Otdel nauki*) of the Central Committee. I consider it necessary to give a scholarly explanation for some of these questions in the journal *Voprosy istorii*.

. . .

I have tried to give an objective account of the mood among the Leningrad intelligentsia. Many participants in the meeting asked me: "Will you be able to inform the Central Committee about the questions raised by the people of Leningrad?" I

am complying with their request in this memorandum, although I am fully aware we cannot draw comprehensive conclusions on the basis of the nine reports and 825 written notes received in response. Nevertheless, a study of the notes submitted to the CPSU Central Committee may be of some interest, especially if they provide additional material to those already at its disposal.

In my opinion the explanatory campaign about the cult of personality cannot be limited to one article in *Pravda*, although that article evoked a positive response among the general Soviet public.

Translated by Iva Glisic[28]

Notes

1 Reginald E. Zelnik, *Perils of Pankratova, Some Stories from the Annals of Soviet Historiography* (Seattle, WA and London: University of Washington Press, 2005): 12.
2 For Pankratova's biography, see Zelnik, *Perils of Pankratova*; *Istorik i vremia, 20–50-e gody XX veka, A. M. Pankratova* (Moscow: RUDN and Mosgorarkhiv, 2000); A. V. Savel'ev, *Neobychnaia kar'era akademika A. M. Pankratovoi* (Moscow: Progress-Traditsiia, 2012).
3 David Brandenberger and Mikhail Zelenov, *Stalin's Master Narrative: A Critical Edition of the History of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (Bolsheviks), Short Course* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2019): 5.
4 Zelnik, *Perils of Pankratova*, 48.
5 See Sheila Fitzpatrick, *Everyday Stalinism, Ordinary Life in Extraordinary Times: Soviet Russia in the 1930s* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000).
6 Zelnik, *Perils of Pankratova*, 17–18; Savel'ev, *Neobychnaia kar'era akademika A. M. Pankratovoi*, 30–31; 228.
7 In addition to Zelnik, see Konstantin F. Shteppa, *Russian Historians and the Soviet State* (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 1962).
8 Zelnik, *Perils of Pankratova*, 27.
9 Fitzpatrick, *Everyday Stalinism*, 218–27.
10 John Barber, "Stalin's Letter to the Editors of *Proletarskaya revolyutsiya*", *Soviet Studies* 28.1 (1976): 21–41, at p. 22.
11 Roger D. Markwick, *Rewriting History in Soviet Russia: The Politics of Revisionist Historiography, 1956–1974* (Basingstoke and New York: Palgrave, 2001): 39.
12 Brandenberger and Zelenov, *Stalin's Master Narrative*, 2.
13 Geoffrey Roberts, *Stalin's Library: A Dictator and His Books* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2022).
14 Brandenberger and Zelenov, *Stalin's Master Narrative*, 1–84.
15 Zelnik, *Perils of Pankratova*, 43.
16 See Sheila Fitzpatrick, *On Stalin's Team: The Years of Living Dangerously in Soviet Politics* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2015).
17 Brandenberger and Zelenov, *Stalin's Master Narrative*, 33.
18 Kathleen E. Smith, *Moscow 1956: The Silenced Spring* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2017): 2.
19 See Smith, *Moscow 1956*, 55–81.
20 Audience notes have been published in A. V. Novikov, "Pervaia reaktsiia na kritiku 'kul'ta lichnosti' I. V. Stalina. Po itogam vystuplenii A. M. Pankratovoi v Leningrade v marte 1956 goda", *Voprosy istorii* 8 (2006): 3–21, 9 (2006): 3–21; and 10 (2006): 3–24; A. L. Iurganov, "Zapiski slushatelei lektsii akademika A. M. Pankratovoi (Leningrad, mart 1956 g.)", *Filosofskii zhurnal* 14.3 (2021): 148–73.
21 Zelnik, *Perils of Pankratova*, 19, 45.
22 Zelnik, *Perils of Pankratova*, 12.

23 Smith, *Moscow 1956*, 65.
24 Markwick, *Rewriting History in Soviet Russia*, 38–72.
25 Markwick, *Rewriting History in Soviet Russia*, 61.
26 Markwick, *Rewriting History in Soviet Russia*, 49.
27 Yoko Tateishi, "The Post-Stalin Thaw and Soviet Historians: A. M. Pankratova and *Voprosy Istorii* from 1953 to 1957", 12, https://src-h.slav.hokudai.ac.jp/jcrees/2013Osaka/64YokoTateishi.pdf.
28 I am grateful for the advice of Kevin Windle and Elena Govor on matters of translation, and for Veronika Mkrtchyan's research assistance.

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Further Readings

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28

EMANUEL RINGELBLUM (1900–1944) AND OYNEG SHABES

Samuel Kassow

The Ringelblum archive did not appear in a vacuum but instead reflected a pre-war historiographical tradition that saw the writing of history and the establishment of archives as key components in the battle of an extraterritorial people, the Jews of Eastern Europe, for recognition and equality. By the same token, Jewish historians would show that Jewish history was the story not only of elites—the wealthy, learned rabbis—but also of the common people.

In the fall of 1940, the Polish Jewish historian and communal organizer Emanuel Ringelblum convened a meeting to found a secret archive in the Warsaw Ghetto. The archive bore the code name Oyneg Shabes, Yiddish for "Joy of the Sabbath." It became a collective that over time numbered about 60 people—men and women, well-known leaders and obscure young people, rabbis and communists, Bundists and Zionists. The members of this group put aside ideological differences in order to fulfil a mission to document and record Jewish life during the Nazi occupation.

After the Germans began the destruction of the Warsaw ghetto, Ringelblum ordered the materials buried in tin boxes and milk cans: the first cache in August 1942, the second cache in late February or early March 1943, and the third cache in April 1943, just before the outbreak of the Warsaw Ghetto Uprising.

Of the entire staff brought together by Ringelblum, there were only three survivors: Hersh Wasser, his wife Bluma, and Rachel Auerbach, who in time would organize the survivor testimony department at Yad Vashem in Jerusalem. The search for the caches, now buried under the mountains of debris that had once been Warsaw, began in 1946. The first cache was discovered in September 1946, the second in December 1950, and the third was never found. Although much material was ruined by water seepage or was never recovered, the enormous amount of material that did survive—about 35,000 pages of documents—has been an enormous boon to historians. The archive itself, held in Warsaw in the Jewish Historical Institute,

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was designated by UNESCO as a world heritage site. Later on, Rachel Auerbach would say that "we had better luck saving documents than in saving people."

Just before he was murdered in Majdanek in 1943, the historian Isaac Schipper, one of Ringelblum's key mentors, remarked that "what we know about murdered peoples is usually what their killers choose to say about them." But Ringelblum was determined to ensure that posterity would write the history of the Jews on the basis of Jewish and not German documents. Realizing that one could fight with paper and pen as well as guns, Ringelblum's archive was an important example of "cultural resistance." Even from beyond the grave the buried time capsules would serve future historians and also help bring the perpetrators to justice.

Had this archive disappeared forever historians would have been dependent on Germans documents, various Polish sources, and a few survivor memoirs. Scholars could have investigated the development of German occupation policy, and they might have traced Polish attitudes towards the Jews. But they could have written little of value about the inner life of the Jews themselves. The murdered Jews of Warsaw would have remained a mass of anonymous victims, without names, without identity, and without a record of what little agency they may have possessed. Of course, survivors would have written their memoirs and given their testimonies. But those accounts would have reflected what they knew after the event, not Jewish voices in real time. The testimony of those who survived mass murder was quite different from the words of those who still did not know the final outcome, who were still living in communities that were not yet destroyed.

Beginning in the 1970s, many superb studies have appeared about various aspects of Warsaw Jewry in the Second World War. One need only cite the works of Ruta Sakowska, Israel Gutman, Havi Dreifuss, Jacek Leociak, Barbara Engelking, Katarzyna Person, Leah Preiss, or Gunnar S. Paulsson.[1] Without the Ringelblum archive, it is hard to see how most of these books could have been written. Without the archive, what could we have known about the inner life of the ghetto: social conflicts, folklore, Jewish reactions to the tightening Nazi vice, the attitudes of intellectuals, religious life, economic conditions, resistance?

When he began the Oyneg Shabes in 1940, Ringelblum, who obviously had no idea of future Nazis plans for the Jews, was simply continuing a path that had begun long before, a path that saw documentation and the writing of history as a national mission.

By the early twentieth century, the study of Jewish history, closely linked to the collection of documents and folklore, was becoming an essential aspect of the search for a new secular Jewish identity in Eastern Europe. Intellectuals like Yitzhak Leibush Peretz and the historian Simon Dubnow saw Jewish history as a story of a Jewish people rather than a Jewish religion. Dubnow argued that history could become the new religion of the secular Jew.[2]

In 1891 Dubnow called on East European Jews to collect sources and organize archives.[3] Indeed only about 50 years separated Dubnow's appeal and the founding of the Oyneg Shabes archive in 1940, a half century during which East European Jewish historians—with no support from governments, state archives or

universities—turned the collection of sources and documents into a mass movement and the writing of history into a national mission for the Jewish people.

After all East European Jewry was an extraterritorial people, with no state of its own to found archives and protect historical materials. If Jews did not protect their own sources, then who would write their history? To collect documents, folklore, proverbs, material culture, and build archives, scholars turned to ordinary Jews. The "popular turn" in Jewish history heralded a new interest in social history and a new respect for the once despised language of the masses, Yiddish.

Quoting his mentor Isaac Schipper, Ringelblum wrote that it was high time for historians to shift their focus away from the "Sabbath Jew": the rabbis, the wealthy, the scholars, and their religious commentaries and to start studying the "weekday" Jew—the world of work, the culture of the common people, and economic history.[4] This new history would have a major focus on folklore, material culture, and what later historians would come to call *alltagsgeschichte*—the history of the everyday. A centre of this new historical turn was the YIVO, the Yiddish Scientific Institute founded in 1925, based in Vilna, and whose historical section included Emanuel Ringelblum.

Dubnow tasked future historians of East European Jewry such as Ringelblum to pursue two goals that were not necessarily congruent. The first was to write history that was objective, rigorous, and scholarly. The second was to use history to craft a modern, secular Jewish identity and bolster national self-confidence.[5] Historians would seek the truth—and at the same time they would teach and console their people. This creative tension between objective scholarship and scholarship as a national mission would characterize Jewish historical research in Eastern Europe and Ringelblum's own work before the war and in the archive.

Dubnow also signalled a new role for history itself in the consciousness of many East European Jews. In his provocative study *Zakhor*, Professor Yosef Yerushalmi stressed the tension that he believed existed between this emerging sense of history, propagated by Dubnow, and a Jewish collective memory that used salient archetypical events to highlight covenantal time, blur the distinction between past and present, and underscore God's special relationship with the Jewish people. Modern Jewish historians challenged this collective memory with facts and objectivity. God receded to the background and the Jews, in the mind of the historian, became a people to be studied like any other.

> The historian does not simply come in to replenish the gaps of memory. He constantly challenges even those memories that have survived intact. Moreover in common with historians in all fields of inquiry he seeks ultimately to recover a total past-in this case the entire Jewish past-even if he is directly concerned with only a segment of it. No subject is potentially unworthy of his interest, no document, no artifact beneath his attention.[6]

Although Yerushalmi's thesis had its critics, his description of the historian's task—to recover a total past and to retrieve every possible document and artefact—is strikingly similar to Ringelblum's description of the Oyneg Shabes.

Before the war Ringelblum had had little time for historical research—he worked at several part-time jobs to support his family. Nonetheless, in the 1920s and 1930s, he wrote several studies about the history of Warsaw Jewry before 1795, the Jewish book trade in early modern Poland, Jewish doctors, pre-1795 Jewish economic history, and Polish-Jewish relations. This latter subject was especially important to him as he believed that historians could help both peoples reach mutual understanding.

As Jacob Shatzky pointed out, Ringelblum helped to "democratize" the subject matter of Polish-Jewish historiography.[7] He felt a particular responsibility towards the forgotten Jews of the past: women, apprentices, and beggars. Jewish historians, Ringelblum believed, had paid too much attention to elites—rabbis, scholars, wealthy businessmen—and had forgotten the people. Alongside this interest in "history from below," Ringelblum showed a keen appreciation of the importance of material culture and of the history of everyday life. A history study plan developed by Ringelblum and Raphael Mahler for a workers' education project in the late 1920s, for example, projected intensive study of geography, material culture, the effects of climate on human societies, the evolution of diet, the impact of housing, a survey of clothing, and many other topics. The plan stipulated that Jewish and non-Jewish history be taught together, rather than as separate subjects.[8]

Ringelblum also stressed that historians should give as much priority to helping other historians through the organization of conferences and the publication of bibliographies and archival guides as they should give to their own work. Indeed a key priority of the Oyneg Shabes archive was to facilitate the work of future historians.

Ringelblum saw history not only as scholarship but also as community-building. Ringelblum urged historians to encourage lay people to start historical societies, write local histories, gather old chronicles, study old tombstones, and photograph synagogue architecture. Oral history fascinated him, and he wrote long and detailed questionnaires to guide local history buffs in the study of their regions. He also headed the Landkentenish (Study of the Land) Society, a group that encouraged educational tourism for Polish Jews.[9]

Ringelblum's agenda in the archive was sweeping and ambitious, a continuation of his pre-war work. Over time this agenda came to embrace the collection of artefacts and documents, the study of Jewish society, the gathering of individual testimony, the documentation of German crimes, and alerting the outside world to the German mass murder. These goals were not mutually exclusive and the archive would pursue them simultaneously.

Ringelblum did not survive to see the ultimate success of his mission, but no historian ever achieved so much in the face of such terrible difficulties.

Extract

From the *Oyneg Shabes Archive*. Reprinted from *The Posen Library of Jewish Culture and Civilization: Volume Nine, Catastrophe and Rebirth*, 1939–1973, eds. David G. Roskies and Samuel D. Kassow (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2020), 57–59.

1943

Everyone appreciated the importance of the work that was being done. They understood how important it was for future generations that a record remain of the tragedy of Polish Jewry. Some realized that the collection of writings would also serve to inform the world about the atrocities perpetrated against the Jewish population. There were several part-time co-workers who became so involved in the project that they stayed on full time . . .

Those who helped us with a single piece of work were ordinary people, who had lived the whole of their daily lives in their hometowns. Upon arrival in Warsaw with the horde of 150,000 refugees, they continued to lead their [fellow] townspeople in the so-called *landsmanshaftn* organized by the refugee center of the Jewish Self-Help. After a day of hard work at the committee, distributing bread or performing other kinds of assistance, these delegates of the *landsmanshaftn* spent the evening writing—according to our plan—the history of their town; or they related it to our coworkers, who later wrote it up. This was very arduous work. In the terrible overcrowding of the ghetto, the refugees lived in [housing] conditions that simply cannot be described. To preserve secrecy under such conditions was a difficult task. It was cold in the winter nights: last winter most of the Jewish houses did not have electricity. Writing necessarily has attendant risks and indescribable difficulties, and to obtain the chronicle of a town required long weeks and months of exertion. It demanded much effort to encourage my coworkers not to be distracted by all these obstacles and to do their work. Let me complete the picture by adding that at the beginning there was a fear of being discovered by the Gestapo informers. More than one manuscript destined for the Oyneg Shabes was destroyed as the result of the search of a tenement.

As we have mentioned, our coworkers were mostly [just] ordinary people. Among them were talented individuals whom we spurred on to literary creativity. Had these people not died of hunger or disease, or in the Deportation, we would have been enriched with their new writing talent. And new literary energy would have been infused into a field that was so neglected among us [east European Jews]—the writing of memoirs. Because most of the coworkers were suffering great hunger in Warsaw, that city of pitiless Jews, *Oyneg Shabes* had to provide for them. We lobbied the social institutions to supply them with food parcels.

Oyneg Shabes strove to give a comprehensive picture of Jewish life in wartime—a photographic view of what the masses of the Jewish people had experienced, thought and suffered. We did our best to arrange for specific events—in the history of a Jewish community, for example—to be described by an adult, by a youngster, by a pious Jew—who was naturally concerned with the rabbi, the synagogue, the Jewish cemetery and other religious institutions—and by a secular Jew, whose narrative emphasized other, no less important factor. . . .

Comprehensiveness was the chief principle of our work. *Objectivity* was the second. We aspired to present the whole truth, however painful it might be. Our depictions are faithful, not retouched.

The atrocities of the Germans against the Jewish population predominate in our work. However, quite a lot of material reveals humanity on the part of the Germans. There are constant indications, both in the completed essays and in the oral reports, that we must be objective even in the case of our deadly enemies and give an objective picture of the relationship of Germans and Jews.

The same can be said of Polish-Jewish relations. Opinions prevail among us that anti-Semitism grew significantly during the war, that the majority of Poles were glad of the misfortunes that befell the Jews in the Polish towns and cities. The attentive reader of our material will find hundreds of documents that prove the opposite. He will read, in more than one report on a town, how generously the Polish population behaved towards the Jewish refugees. He will encounter hundreds of examples of peasants who, for months on end, concealed and fed Jewish refugees from the surrounding towns.

In order to ensure the greatest possible objectivity and to obtain the most exact, comprehensive view of the events of the war as they affected the Jews, we tried to have the same events described by as many people as possible. By comparing the different accounts, the historian will not find it difficult to reach the kernel of historical truth, the actual course of an event.

Our co-workers wrote the truth; and they had an additional reason for doing so. We assured everyone that the material, insofar as it concerned living people, would not be exploited for immediate use. Therefore everyone should write as if the war were already over. He should fear neither the German nor those *kehillah* members who were attacked in a report on a given city. Because of this the material of the *Oyneg Shabes* is of the greatest importance for the future tribunal, which, after the war, will bring to Justice offenders among the Jews, the Poles and even the Germans.

The war changed Jewish life in the Polish cities very quickly. No day was like the preceding. Images succeeded one another with cinematic speed. For the Jews of Warsaw, now closed in within the narrow confines of a shop, the ghetto period seems like a paradise and the pre-ghetto period an unreal dream, Every month brough profound changes that radically altered Jewish life. It was there[fore] important to capture at once every event in Jewish life in its pristine freshness . . . the Oyneg Shabes therefore tried to grasp an event at the moment it happened, since each day was like decades in an earlier time.

[Words in brackets appear in the original translation.—Eds.]

1 Gancwajch headed the Office to Combat Usury and Profiteering in the ghetto, which was subject directly to the Germans. He vied with the Judenrat for control of the ghetto fell from power in July 1941.
2 An organization of Jews hailing from the same town or region.
3 Ringelblum uses this as a synonym for the Judenrat.

Translated by Elinor Robinson

Notes

1 Ruta Sakowska, *Ludzie z dzielnicy zamkniętej* (Warsaw: PWN. 1993); Israel Gutman, *The Jews of Warsaw, 1939–1943: Ghetto, Underground, Revolt*, trans. Ina Friedman (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 1983); Havi Dreifuss (Ben-Sasson), *We Polish Jews: The Relations Between Poles and Jews During the Holocaust* [Hebrew] (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 2009); Barbara Engelking and Jacek Leociak, *The Warsaw Ghetto: A Guide to the Perished City*, trans. Emma Harris (London and New Haven, CT: Yale University Press. 2009); Katarzyna Person, *Assimilated Jews in the Warsaw Ghetto, 1940–1943* (Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 2014); Leah Preiss, *Displaced Persons at Home: Refugees in the Fabric of Jewish life in Warsaw* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 2015); Gunnar S. Paulsson, *Secret City: The Hidden Jews of Warsaw* (London and New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2002).
2 S.M. Dubnow, "Ob izuchenii istorii russkikh evreev i ob uchrezhdenii istoricheskogo obshchestva", Voskhod, April-September, 1891, 1–91; see also his autobiography, *Kniga Zhizni* (Jerusalem and Moscow: Mosty kul′tury/(Seriia Proshlyĭvek)/(Biblioteka Rossiĭskogo evreĭskogo kongressa, 2004): 168–69.
3 Dubnow, "Ob izuchenii istorii russkikh evreev i ob uchrezhdenii istoricheskogo obshchestva", Voskhod.
4 Emanuel Ringelblum, "Di yidishe arbetershaft un di geshikhtsvisnshaft", Di fraye yugnt, 1924, No. 1. This is only one of the many times that Ringelblum repeats this quote from Schiper.
5 On this tension, see Steven Zipperstein, *Imagining Russian Jewry* (Seattle, WA and London: University of Washington Press, 1999): 90–91.
6 Yosef Yerushalmi, *Zakhor: Jewish History and Jewish Memory* (New York: Schocken Books, 1989): 94.
7 Jacob Shatzky, "Menakhem ben Fayvish Ringelblum" in *Emanuel Ringelblum, Kapitlen geshikhte* (Buenos Aires: Tsentral-farband fun Poylishe Yidn in Argentine; 713, 1953): xxxvi.
8 Di fraye yugnt, 1925, No. 2.
9 See Samuel Kassow, "The Jewish Landkentenish Society in Interwar Poland", in *Jewish Topographies: Visions of Space, Traditions of Place*, eds. Julia Brauch, Anna Lipphardt, and Alexandra Nocke (Abingdon: Routledge, 2008).

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29

ROMILA THAPAR (1931–)

Sanne van der Kaaij-Gandhi

Most commonly referred to as India's pre-eminent historian, Romila Thapar is the world's leading expert on early Indian history. Simultaneously, she is India's most *attacked* historian. From the mid-1970s onwards, there have been recurring calls for her books to be censored, and she has been the victim of political assaults, government harassment, and trolling campaigns.[1] Thapar's work, the honours received, *and* the attacks she has been subjected to make her profile fit equally well in an overview of historians who form the establishment, as well as in a work that seeks to review history written from loss.

Romila Thapar changed the way India's history is both studied and understood. Her oeuvre, consisting of over 15 substantial monographs, and a vast catalogue of articles and essays, "definitively reformulated central questions and issues in the field."[2] Her contribution to Indian historiography can be grouped into three broad categories. First, her scientific approach to Indian history revolutionized *how* early Indian history was studied. Colonial scholars had presumed they could analyse the corpus of ancient Indian sources in the same manner in which they had been trained to look at European sources.[3] Making use of findings from the auxiliary sciences of history, such as archaeology, numismatics, and palaeography, Thapar scrutinized the existing corpus anew.[4] Studying the ancient authors' intentions, she uncovered new motives for addressing particular historical audiences. This allowed for reinterpretation of the sources' creation and meaning.[5]

Second, the application of the scientific methods of critical inquiry, coupled with a shift of focus from political to social and economic history, allowed Thapar to draw conclusions which "frontally challenged received wisdom from the West [about India and her past]."[6] She particularly crushed old stereotypes of early India (3rd millennium BCE–1300 CE). Colonial historians had portrayed ancient India as a static period where for thousands of years no notable change had occurred. They were influenced by Indologists, such as the British philologist Sir William

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Jones and the German Sanskrit scholar Friedrich Max Müller, who based their study of Indian society entirely on their reading of the ancient texts and scriptures (and excluded empirical observations). These Indologists ascribed a uniqueness to Indian culture and society that ruled out its comparative study by historians and sociologists and thereby promoted an essentialist view of India and her past. Subsequently, historians influenced by anti-colonial nationalism reinterpreted much of India's past but continued to portray early India as a kind of static Golden Age, where no notable changes occurred. Society was defined by rigid social and religious structures (embodied in the caste system) and distinct ethnic categories (such as "Aryans").[7] Romila Thapar challenged this. She showed that early India was neither stagnant nor uniform. It was a dynamic time characterized by diversity and change, not a mythical Golden Age but an era occupied by real people with real conflicts, migrations. In sum, Thapar's work shifted Indian historiography in the 1950s and 1960s from Indology in the direction of social sciences.

Finally, Thapar discovered that the nature of historical recording in early India differed from the genres of history which the colonial historians had been looking for. As she writes in her magnum opus *The Past Before Us* (2012):

> While there may not in the early past have been historical writing in the forms currently regarded as belonging properly to the established genres of history, many texts of that period reflect consciousness of history. Subsequently there come into existence recognizable forms of historical writing. Both varieties of texts—those which reflect a consciousness of history and those which reveal forms of historical writing—were used in early times to reconstruct the past and were drawn upon as a cultural, political, religious or other such resource at various times, in various situations and for a variety of reasons.[8]

This, combined with the finding that early India was not a stagnant period, effectively meant that Thapar uncovered that early Indians had a history and a *sense* of historical consciousness. Something that was thus far thought to have been lacking.[9] This argument is at the core of *The Past Before Us*.[10]

From the mid-1970s onwards, Thapar's iconoclastic approach, coupled with her reach beyond academic audiences into the public domain (via school textbooks and active participation in the public debate), made the historian a target of attack by Hindu nationalists, paradoxically making her a "winner" in terms of her scholarly reputation and popular appeal, while at the same time on the receiving end of abuse and persecution—and thus a historian writing from a position of political loss.

In 1977–1979 two of Thapar's textbooks (*Medieval India* and *Communalism and the Writing of Indian History*, the latter co-authored with Harbans Mukhia and Bipan Chandra) formed part of a textbook controversy under the Janata government. Prime Minister Morarji Desai had a note sent to the Education Minister asking to withdraw several history textbooks from circulation, so as to ensure that students "do not get wrong ideas about various elements of our history and culture."[11] The

note was leaked to the press. Following a fierce public debate, and a change in government, the books were never formally withdrawn, but the issue continued to fester under the surface.[12]

Fresh attacks occurred when the Janata government, reincarnated as the Bharata Janata Party (BJP), returned to power in 1998 and 2014. In 2001, the Ministry of Education stated that several history textbooks "suffered, incurably, from a biased and jaundiced view of India's past, which had to give way to a balanced and healthy account."[13] Passages of Thapar's *Ancient India: A Textbook of History for Class VI* were first blacked out in existing copies and later deleted before reprinting the book. Discussion of these passages in classrooms was banned. The controversy reached its zenith when on 7 December 2001, at a gathering to support the ministry's reform of textbooks at the residence of Human Resource Development Minister Murli Manohar Joshi, attendees demanded the arrest of the textbook authors, Romila Thapar included. Joshi himself called for a "war for the country's cultural freedom" and warned that "intellectual terrorism being practised by Leftist historians by writing incorrect history was like a slow poison that was more dangerous than cross-border terrorism."[14]

Despite changes in government, attacks on Thapar's reputation and work continued from within India and from abroad. These took various forms: verbal attacks by Hindu-nationalist politicians and Hindu leaders were increasingly accompanied by online harassment by Hindutva (radical-Hindu) trolls and official intimidation. In 2003 Thapar became the subject of a vilification campaign aimed at preventing her appointment to the Kluge Chair in Countries and Cultures of the South at the Library of Congress in the United States. The campaign organized by USA-based Hindutva groups was political, not scholarly, as became clear from the fact that among the signatories was hardly "anyone identifiable for their scholarship or understanding of history or historiography."[15] In 2019 (the fully government-funded) Jawaharlal Nehru University, where Thapar co-founded the Centre for Historical Studies and taught history for several decades, sent her a letter asking to submit her résumé so that officials could review her status as an emeritus professor, an honorary title normally given for life.[16]

The Hindu-nationalist attacks on Thapar are fuelled by two main objections. First, Thapar, her attackers alleged, failed to celebrate ancient India, and the Hindu civilization associated with it. She was perceived to paint India, and Hindus in particular, in a bad light, thereby hurting religious (Hindu) sentiments. For example, Hindu nationalists objected against Thapar's descriptions of beef eating, cattle sacrifice, and the exploitative aspects of the caste system in early India. Her thesis that there is a lack of archaeological evidence to support the belief that Ayodhya was the birthplace of the Hindu God Ram and her support of the Aryan migration theory were taken as further attacks on core Hindu beliefs and Hindu pride.[17] What Thapar called demystification of the ancient Indian past was understood as a denigration of the past by her opponents.[18]

Second, Thapar was attacked for her work on the nature of the Indian "Medieval" period (approximately 1200–1757 AD), when much of the subcontinent was

under Muslim rule, and by extension her analyses of the relations between Hindu and Muslim communities. Her attention to social-economic history and her propensity to explain conflict among elites primarily in political rather than religious terms meant that Hindi nationalists felt she failed to see Muslims in India's past and present as enemies of the Hindus and denied legitimacy to their outrage.[19]

When Thapar's attackers claim she is "an avowed antagonist of India's Hindu civilization" who has indulged "in a war of cultural genocide,"[20] they are not engaging in a historical debate. Nor are the attacks rooted in a genuine, if fierce, *Historikerstreit* [historian's dispute]. The objections come from religious organizations and political parties, and their accusations are part of a religious and political attack by Hindu nationalists seeking to rewrite Indian history in order to fit their ideology. In other words, the attacks are not attempts to develop knowledge of India's past but to silence scholarship and to take away the right to criticize or to offer an alternative vision for India.

The attacks on historians have prompted Thapar to write:

> The confrontation among historians today is not between 'leftist and rightist' historians, nor is it about establishing a Marxist view of history, as is crudely stated by some, but over the right to debate interpretations of history. There cannot be a single definitive official history. If some of us feel that Hindutva history is less history and more mythology we should have the right to say so, without being personally abused, being called 'anti-national', 'academic terrorists worse that the cross-border variety' and 'perverts' and being threatened with arrest and with being physically put down. . . .[21]

The "confrontation" includes attacks on contemporary historians, such as Romila Thapar herself and, for example, Audrey Truschke, Wendy Doniger, and James Laine, as well as attacks on historical figures, including India's first prime minister, Jawaharlal Nehru. Nehru (the subject of a chapter by Antoon De Baets) wrote several volumes on Indian and World History. He took interest in the subject as he felt it could contribute to solutions for the central questions he wanted to solve as a politician. Unlike contemporary Hindutva-historians, Nehru's utilitarian approach to history did *not* get in the way of distinguishing between amateur and professional historians, nor from inviting others to point out mistakes. Thus, although Nehru's practical history was radically different from Thapar's *l'histoire pour l'histoire* approach, and despite their differences in terms of professional engagement, Nehru and Thapar are both part of the same conversation—as they write history on the same terms: possibly inspired by political ideology, but never directed by it.

Over five decades of rebukes to politically motivated attacks on Thapar's scholarship not only served Thapar to protect Indian history from contemporary and future fantasy history; it also created a body of insightful work on the nature of (Hindu-nationalist) use and abuse of history. It led Thapar to write extensively on defending the historical profession. The attacks, and more in general the precarious situation of historical writing under the *BJP* that ruled India from 1998–2004,

compelled Thapar to (successfully) advocate the inclusion of a clause on abuse of history in the Constitution of the International Committee of Historical Sciences.[22] Thapar extensively reflected on being a historian in the public domain and wrote on the importance of public dissent, importantly, but not exclusively, in essays bundled in *The Past and Present* (2014) and *Voices of Dissent* (2020). In fact, such interventions became Thapar's fourth major contribution to Indian historiography and can be viewed as the *harvest* of doing history from a position of loss.

Thus, while Thapar's main body of work is, to use Marnie Hughes-Warrington's words, "a powerful reminder that *itihasa* [history] comes clothed in many forms,"[23] the attacks on Thapar are an equally powerful reminder that so does the experience of writing history from loss. It comes in many forms. It can even become a lived experience notwithstanding being regarded the pre-eminent historian in your field by peers and public alike.[24]

Extract

From Romila Thapar, *The Past as Present: Forging Contemporary Identities Through History* (New Delhi: Aleph Book Company, 2014). Reprinted by permission of Aleph Book Company.

From 1999 to 2004, when a BJP government was in power, there were repeated attempts to silence historians. Similar happenings could occur again. To comprehend these events requires an understanding of why it is necessary to defend history as written by historians, as also the recognition of a past that is analytical and open to critical enquiry. The historians who were verbally assaulted and physically threatened were the ones that had taken this turn in writing history in the previous decades. Their studies incorporated historical enquiry and were pointers to new ways of extending that enquiry. They widened and sharpened the intellectual foundations of the discipline of history and enriched the understanding of the Indian past. Some among those who were opposed to these historians were also mocking the discipline of history, unable to grasp the change that the discipline had undergone. . . . [58]

If those who constitute both the political leadership as well as the rank and file of political parties today took the trouble to read, they might begin to understand that serious historical interpretation is not just a game of adopting this or that '. . . ism', but of attempting to use a method of analysis in interpreting the past. Gone are the days that one could talk intelligently about history to a Nehru or a Maulana Azad. They are not made like that anymore. The equally serious problem is that owing to our faulty educational system in which school education has become something of a joke, there is a yawning gap between those advancing knowledge and the general public. There is no category of intellectual middle-men and women who can communicate the happenings at the cutting edge of knowledge in a sufficiently popular and reliable form so that those who are not specialists can at least follow what is happening. Consequently, there is no problem for illiterate ideas to be spread among the public, to convince them that the myths and fantasies about

earlier times were in fact realities. Stories are spun about the past and sold as history with little attempt at teaching people how to tell a fantasy from real life. [59–60]

. . .

An attempt was made through government actions to terminate this intellectual efflorescence. The blight that began in the 1990s culminated in around 2000 in an enforced effort to clamp down on the process of exploring ideas. It reached the point where a systematic attempt was made to denigrate the independent intellectual and to undermine a historical understanding of our society and its past. The attempt took a variety of forms. Sometimes it took the form of political actions, later it resorted to intervening in and closing institutions connected to academic research, and thereafter it focussed on censoring books and textbooks. [60–61]

. . .

The confrontation among historians today is not between 'leftist and rightist' historians, nor is it about establishing a Marxist view of history, as is crudely stated by some, but over the right to debate interpretations of history. There cannot be a single definitive official history. If some of us feel that Hindutva history is less history and more mythology we should have the right to say so, without being personally abused, being called 'anti-national', 'academic terrorists worse that the cross-border variety' and 'perverts' and being threatened with arrest and with being physically put down. [70]

. . .

Basic to changing the Hindutva interpretation of history is the attempt to give a single definition to Indian culture, the roots of which are said to lie in Vedic foundations. This annuls the reality of Indian society being constituted of multiple cultures, in dialogue with each other. It ignores even the variant relations that have existed throughout Indian history between dominant and subordinate cultures. This sensitivity is particularly important today in forging cultural identities that are subcontinental, but at the same time incorporate the articulations of the region. [70]

. . .

In some ways the most serious challenge is the threat to close down discussion since it is an attempt to close the mind. Fortunately, it was not possible for the then government in 2002 to do so. But the attempts having been made once could be tried again. This is not a matter that concerns history alone, as it is a frontal attack on knowledge. As professionals engaged in its furtherance, it seems to me that we have no choice but to oppose it. The world has moved on since the nineteenth century and we have come to value independent thinking. There are enough historians in this country who will continue to write independently. There will be enough historical concerns growing out of the multiple cultural aspects of our society to ensure that the Indian mind is never closed. [71–72]

Author's Note: I wish to express my gratitude to Professor Romila Thapar for the interview she gave me on her work and career, at her residence in New Delhi on 9 March 2022.

Notes

1 Antoon De Baets, *Censorship of Historical Thought: A World Guide 1945–2000* (Westport and London 2002): 273, and Network of Concerned Historians, *Annual Report [1996–1997]* and [2000–2021], www.concernedhistorians.org.
2 Indira Viswanathan Peterson, "Thapar, Romila 1931-Indian Historian" in *Encyclopedia of Historians and Historical Writing. Vol 2. M-Z,* ed. Kelly Boyd (New York: Routledge 2019): 1177–78, at p. 1177.
3 This corpus includes the Ramayana and Mahabharata epics, the Vedic texts, the *itihas-purana* traditions, Buddhist and Jain canonical texts, inscriptions, and theatrical compositions.
4 Viswanathan Peterson, "Thapar, Romila", 1177; Romila Thapar, *The Past as Present. Forging Contemporary Identities Through History* (New Delhi: Aleph, 2014): 4–7.
5 Viswanathan Peterson, "Thapar, Romila", 1177; Thapar, *The Past as Present*, 7–8.
6 Harbans Mukhia, "Indian Historiography under Threat", *The Hindu*, 27 October, 2015. www.thehindu.com/opinion/lead/Indian-historiography-under-threat/article62119677.ece.
7 Viswanathan Peterson, "Thapar, Romila", 1177.
8 Romila Thapar, *The Past Before Us. Historical Traditions of Early North India* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2013): 3.
9 Cf. George Iggers, Edward Wang and Supriya Mukherjee, *A Global History of Modern Historiography* (London: Routledge, 2016).
10 Viswanathan Peterson, "Thapar, Romila", 1177. See for an in-depth discussion of Romila Thapar's approach to history as part of a postcolonial Indian historiography: Marnie Hughes-Warrington, *History as Wonder: Beginning with Historiography* (Abingdon and New York: Routledge, 2019): 158–77.
11 Lloyd I. Rudolph and Susanne Hoeber Rudolph, "Rethinking Secularism: Genesis and Implication of the Textbook Controversy, 1977–1979", *Pacific Affairs* (1983) 16; Susobhan Sarkar, "Delhi Crusade Against Modern Historians", *Mainstream* (1977): 31–33; 32–33.
12 Rudolph and Hoeber Rudolph, "Rethinking Secularism"', 16; Sarkar, "Delhi Crusade", 32–33.
13 Vishwa Mohan Jha, "A New Brand of History", *Frontline*, vol. 20 (2003). https://frontline.thehindu.com/the-nation/education/article30215755.ece.
14 Mushirul Hasan, "Textbooks and Imagined History: The BJP's Intellectual Agenda", *India International Centre Quarterly*, vol. 29 (2002): 85; Thapar, "In Defense of History", 70.
15 Praful Bidwai, "McCarthy, Where Are You?" *Frontline*, vol. 20 (2003) https://frontline.thehindu.com/columns/article30217109.ece An overview of the attack and related documents (including the text of the petition) can be found at: South Asian Citizen Wire (SACW) *In Defence of The Indian Historian Romila Thapar.* www.sacw.net/Alerts/IDRT300403.html#Romila%20Thapar%20Named%20as%20First%20Hol.
16 Network of Concerned Historians, *Annual Report* [2021]. www.concernedhistorians.org. See for in-depth discussions on how the attacks on Thapar's work are part of a wider (in Vinay Lal's almost euphemistic words) "polarity between Hindutva history and history associated with left, secular historians": Vinay Lal, *The History of History. Politics and Scholarship in Modern India.* (New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2003) and Lars Tore Flåten, *Hindu Nationalism, History and Identity in India. Narrating a Hindu past under the BJP* (New York: Routledge 2007).
17 Jha, "A New Brand of History", Lal, *The History*, 6, 9; Flåten, *Hindu Nationalism,* 10–11. India has a colonial-era law that makes deliberately "insulting religious beliefs" and "outraging [. . .] religious feelings" a criminal offence punishable with maximum 4 years of imprisonment (see: Section 295A of the Indian Penal Code). https://legislative.gov.in/sites/default/files/A1860-45.pdf.
18 De Baets, *Censorship of Historical Thought: A World Guide 1945–2000,* 273.

19 Rudolph and Hoeber Rudolph, "Rethinking Secularism", 26.
20 This is a quote from the petition with regard to the Kluge Chair. The text of the petition can be found here: www.sacw.net/Alerts/IDRT300403.html#%5BTEXT%20OF%20THE%20PETITION%20BY%20HINDU%20F.
21 Romila Thapar, "In Defence of History", in *The Past as Present. Forging Contemporary Identities Through History* (New Delhi: Aleph, 2014): 58–72, 70.
22 As Antoon De Baets recorded: "At the global level the International Committee of Historical Sciences is the profession's umbrella organization. In 1926, when it was 'created in order to promote the historical sciences through international cooperation,' the Committee drafted a Constitution, Article 1 of which contained the Committee's purpose. . . . [I]n 2005, the General Assembly of the Committee unanimously amended Article 1 again by adding the clause that 'it is opposed to the misuse of history'". Antoon De Baets, *Responsible History* (New York and Oxford: Berghahn Books 2009): 37–38.
23 Hughes-Warrington, *History as Wonder,* 173.
24 Lal, *The History of History,* 5.

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30

JAKELIN TROY (1960–)

Ann McGrath

Jakelin Troy's *The Sydney Language*, first published in 1993, and later in a 2019 edition, is a book of words—"lost" words. The author describes the Sydney language as "extinct."[1] That word grates for many Indigenous people because it echoes doomed race theories of the late nineteenth century and "last of" narratives that endure in popular fiction. Language extinction, however, is a real and imminent force, hence the United Nations' urgency in declaring the International Decade of Indigenous Languages 2022–2032. Embodying knowledge, collective identity, ways of thinking, and a wealth of intangible heritage, a people's native language epitomizes and transmits their culture.[2] In this book, Troy, a Ngarigu woman from the Snowy Mountains High Country of New South Wales and a Professor at the University of Sydney, demonstrates her profound commitment to the preservation of threatened languages.

Today's language revivals take place in the contemporary context of colonizing losses. Prior to British colonization, 250 languages were spoken in Australia, most of which are now endangered. Each language is associated with a particular tract of Country, a term that Aboriginal people use to indicate their discrete custodial lands, over which they never conceded sovereignty. When a person moves into another group's Country, they switch languages in order to respect and to avoid offending the ancestral spirits. Speaking the appropriate language on Country enhances the health of the environment—one increasingly under threat from extractive industries and land-clearing. This protocol protects residents and visitors from harm in the present and future. Language is a key point of transmission for Indigenous knowledge and for modes of historical practice, which include oral ancient memory narratives going back into the deep time of the Pleistocene. Such songlines and artistic traditions traverse the length and breadth of the Australian continent. These performative practices, ideally in their ancestral language, reinforce ongoing connections to Country, their intimate, interconnected kinship with people and place, and, crucially, their ongoing sovereignty.[3]

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The *History from Loss* project provides an opportunity to reflect upon themes of colonialism, loss, and modernity, as well as historical processes, including the nexus between orality, historical records, and the historical imagination. Jakelin Troy's *The Sydney Language* (1993, 2019) speaks a multivocal history of loss. Since 1788, when the first fleet of British convicts arrived at Botany Bay, then Port Jackson, British colonialism's onslaughts in the Sydney region have included violent dispossessions of Indigenous peoples from their lands—and without any official treaties. State-authorized removals of children, of whole families and of communities severed cultural transmission. With few exceptions, coupled with the draconian controls on reserves and missions, the English language was often forcibly imposed, with Indigenous languages discouraged or prohibited altogether. Understandably, the pain caused by losses associated with the theft and removal of tangible objects and of Indigenous human remain has received far more attention than language loss. Yet its cultural and psychological impact should not be underestimated.[4]

Even the contemporary nomenclature for the local language was lost. Consequently, Troy chose to use the Sydney Language as her descriptor. The term "Sydney" is an exemplar of how a word evolves to take on new meanings over time. Once there were many words for this region and all that was experienced in it—with specific etymologies, allusions, wordplays, interconnections, and associations with epic origin stories. As Rolena Adorno's chapter in this volume demonstrates, by communicating in colonizer languages, Indigenous people adapted and conformed linguistically in order to negotiate their changed world. The British, suffering a sense of loss from their homeland, tried to replicate what they had left behind. They used a foreign name, Sydney, for the whole region, thereby paying homage to an English viscount influential in this colonizing project.

Sumathi Ramaswamy, a scholar of lost continents, contends that "Historians, be they professional or amateur, always already write in the shadow of loss."[5] History can become a way of coping in modernity, where we are said to be exiles from our pasts. Nonetheless, I would argue that once something is declared lost or extinct, its finality is implicitly questioned. Is there a trace somewhere, a hope of renewal or resurrection—or at least the remnant of a story? A declaration of extinction does not close off the pathway for retrieval, and for *revival* in the literal sense of bringing something back to life. In their narrative practice, historical scholars bring back the lost, the dead, challenging any finality. The historicized past is never quite over.

For colonized peoples, however, "the shadow of loss" leaves a far longer darkness, their exile status is deeper, and their relationship to modernity is more complex. Excluding Indigenous peoples from Western history telling and its change narratives, historians have tended to underplay Indigenous dynamism—their embrace of new technologies, foods, economies, and lifestyles. Aboriginal people object to being defined by loss. They are not a deficit culture. Amidst great rupture, their resilience, cultural strength, and strong values are ever-present.[6]

In systematically documenting a language through her rigorous reworking of Australian colonial records, Troy has created an unusual historical work. Undertaking comprehensive research, she has collated, analysed, and critiqued the vocabularies left by the early English residents of the late eighteenth century. Out of this,

she has created a dataset—a Wordlist. The book also features illustrations: diagrams of weaponry and tools and some regional maps. The landscapes of that late eighteenth-century world have been changed irrevocably. With its high-rise metropolis and vast suburban sprawl, Sydney is now a city of over 5 million people, of which Aboriginal people make up approximately 1.5 per cent.[7] In 1787, the year prior to the arrival of the fleet of convicts and their guards, Indigenous nations comprised the entire population of this region.

Indigenous peoples often remark on the sense of loss they experience in not being able to speak their own languages. Rather than seeing these languages as dead, however, they often describe them as *sleeping*; languages, like their ancestral spirits, reside in the land itself, in their Country, and it is their people's duty to wake them up. In Indigenous thinking, language belongs to Country; it is heard on the wind; it is proper to use the right one for the Country—to speak the words and songs of its spirits and ancestors. All over Australia today, Indigenous people are reviving "lost" or nearly lost languages and enjoying the empowering benefit of language revival. Troy has provided a key resource for resurrecting the Sydney language. Repatriating it to its homelands, where she now works.

Through this book, Troy's language retrieval work has been enabling—its impacts profound. To date, Indigenous people, including those who conduct Welcome ceremonies at public events, as well as Indigenous and non-Indigenous novelists, playwrights, dance and theatre groups, actors, composers, artists and historians have drawn upon it. Grace Karskens's major histories *The Colony: A History of Early Sydney* and *People of the River: Lost Worlds of early Australia*, both cite Troy's work.[8] Novelists have reimagined the quest for lost languages: in *The Lieutenant*, Kate Grenville explored the relationship between Patyerang or Patye and Lieutenant Dawes—linguist, scientist, and researcher.[9] Pip Williams' *The Dictionary of Lost Words* retrieves the missing women's words of the Oxford English dictionary, however it ends with a reference to Kaurna, the Indigenous language of the locality of Adelaide in South Australia. A non-Indigenous lexicographer laments: "We are on their land, yet we do not speak their language."[10]

For the specialist and the lay reader alike, Troy's book was an early intervention into the revival of a lost language, and in doing so, it provided a mind-expanding journey. As a historian—one of non-Indigenous (mixed European) ancestry—I find the vocabulary lists revelatory, exceedingly rich, yet poignant. After all, they evoke worlds now lost. In the Sydney language, at times the words made me *mannyi mungala*—surprised, startled. For, via that very human interaction of talking—*djiyadi* and *bayidyiyadi*—each one offers a window into a people's once-present/now-past world.[11] After all, language goes beyond basic communication; it encompasses shared conceptualizations—the way people intrinsically learn to think, to be, and to see themselves.

This book comes to life when read aloud. Troy provides helpful clues to orality—the sound system, the consonants, the vowels—how each word was likely pronounced and sometimes how they fit together. All languages are evidence of human inventiveness, and the Sydney language reveals the richness of this culture: their knowledge of botany, biology, astronomy, general beliefs, laws, values, family

concepts, bodies, life cycles, adornments, and emotions—including ones pertaining to love and loss.

The vocabulary lists are organized into 28 easily accessible categories that cover a wide array of aspects of everyday life, thought, and knowledge. In my page selection, the first word is *buduway*, also pronounced *putuwi*. This was "a ceremony to prevent people becoming thieves—the parent of a child would scorch its fingers so that it would not steal."[12] *Garama:* to steal. To think that such behavioural expectations, such laws, with their warnings and corporal punishments, operated simultaneously in a British *penal* colony. I wondered how that conversation came up in the first place between Lieutenant Dawes's and his language teacher Patye. She might have asked why the English had travelled so far from their homelands. Perhaps Dawes told her about the extreme dysfunction in English society that resulted in high rates of theft, overflowing prisons and sentences of expulsion to this distant domain. Possibly Patye had offered him practical advice—as to how the English might improve their child-rearing and punishment practices so that they would no longer need to invade her people's lands.

Troy's lists provide refreshing insights about Indigenous ontologies, including the everyday logistics of life. We learn that the word for dream—"the dreaming" now a well-known English translation for a key aspect of Indigenous ontology—is *nanga-may*. "*Nanga*" means sleep and "*may*" eye, so the word aptly describes what one "sees" when asleep. The word for stranger, *mayal*, was also associated with sight—not seen before. There was a word, *mubaya*, for speaking an unknown language.

Although European stereotypes have suggested that Aboriginal people lived in a "timeless land" without a sense of history or chronology, their language included temporal words for historical times, including *gurugal* for long ago and *darimi* for long time. There are words for seasons, such as *warrin* for winter, and an encyclopaedic lexicon for each plant, animal, and insect. *Wadanggari was the name for* the "banksia" species imperial scientists renamed for *Endeavour* botanist Joseph Banks.[13]

Indigenous language teachers shared their astronomical knowledge—*warrawal* for the Milky Way, *ngarangalyong* and *buduwanung* for the Greater and Lesser Magellanic clouds. *Mulumulung* for Pleiades, *yanada* moon, *dhungagil* for Orion's belt. The Sydney people had quickly developed a vocabulary for newly introduced things. This included *djarraba* for gun or musket, which literally meant fire-giver or stick of fire. Other things were translated into preferred pronunciations: "*buk*" for "book"—similar *gandal* for candle and *badal* for bottle.[14]

We learn of words that convey emotions—anger, love, and laughter. A favourite term of reproach was *guninbada* or eater of human excrement. Words for laughter included *Djanaba* and *badaya patteya*, with its onomatopoeia—an associated laughing sound.[15] *Wuruwur* was a term of defiance meaning "go away!" as was *yan muru yan*, *yanwuri*, and *gugugu gugugu gugugu*. I urge you to try these aloud. (The "g" is probably somewhere between a "k" and "g" in English and the "u" rather like "oo" in cool.) No doubt this was used many times against the English, especially after they had kidnapped Arabanoo in 1788, a man known for his kindness and "soft, musical voice," who died after caring for some orphaned children who took ill during the smallpox outbreak of April 1789, which devastated his people.[16] Later

the following year, on Governor Phillip's orders, Bennelong was captured. These captives became the first teachers of the Sydney Indigenous language.

In evoking the poetics of everyday human experience, this book creates a dialogue between the past and present—one that sparks the historical imagination, conveys emotion, and that helps to fill some of the absences left by loss. We learn that to love was *ngubadi*. To court or make love to *duwana*. As an affectionate term, girls used *gamungali*. To be ashamed: *wural*. There are words that denote a sense of sadness or loss: to cry or weep is *dunga*. To forget is *mununu*. The word most associated with our book's theme is *barrbagay*, which means to lose. *Wari* also means to lose but implies that what is lost is "away," hopefully somewhere else.[17]

By repatriating its wordscapes—ones resonating with long-held human meaning—*The Sydney Language* provides the raw material for an ongoing cultural renaissance. The "lost" words rise again, sonorous. An enduring past momentarily pierces the present. The power of each word travels on the winds, on the rivers, and the sails on Sydney Harbour. The Sydney language is not exactly lost at all—just "away." Despite Troy having declared its "extinct" status, this book has effectively cancelled out her own adjective.

Extract

From Jakelin Troy, *The Sydney Language* (Canberra: Aboriginal Studies Press [1993] 2019), 42–43. Reprinted with the kind permission of Jakelin Troy.

Language, mythology and ceremony continued	
ceremony to prevent people becoming thieves—the parent of a child would scorch its fingers so that it would not steal	**buduway** (**buduway** 'scorch') putuwi (b)[1]
body decoration—putting clay on the face for decoration	**magalyinyara** megalliniara (c)
curative operation performed by women to cure illness in other women	**biyani** be-an-ny (C) One woman would sit on the ground with one of the lines worn by the men passed round her head once with the knot fixed in the centre of her forehead, the remainder of the line was taken by the sick woman who sat at a small distance from her, and with the end of it fretted her lips until they bled very copiously, it was believed the blood came from the head of the healthy woman and flowed down the line to the sick woman who spat the blood into a small vessel beside her which was half filled with water into which she occasionally dipped the end of the line.

Language, mythology and ceremony continued	
dream	**nangamay** (**nanga**-'sleep', **may** 'eye') nángami (a), nanga-ah mi (c)
laughter	**djanaba tenneba** (c), jen-ni-be (C), dyennibbe (A)
laugh violently	**baday patteya** ('violent laughter') (c)
woman with the two joints of the little finger of the left hand cut off	**malgun** mal-gun (c) Female children had the first two joints of the little finger of the left hand removed. The operation was performed by tying a cord around the second joint allowing the upper part of the finger to die and fall off. The colonists at first thought the operation was part of a marriage ceremony. However, when they saw the operation performed on children they were convinced they were mistaken. They were later told that the joints of the little finger were supposed to be in the way when women wound their fishing lines over the hand.
music—a tune	**bayumi** pýomee (b)
instrument music made by singers dancing or beating on two clubs	**yabun** yabbun (C), ye-ban (C), yibbun (C), yab-bun (C)
dance—name of a dance	**ngaramang** gnar-ra-mang (c)
body decoration—piercing the nasal septum for the purposes of body decoration	**nanung** gnah-noong (C) Between the ages of eight and 16 male and female Aboriginal people underwent an operation in which the nasal septum was bored to receive a bone or reed ornament. The colonist observed a number of people whose articulation was impaired by the process.
Human artefacts	
barb of a spear	yalga yélga (b), yal-ga (c)
basket	bangala beng-al-le (C) A vessel for carrying water made of bark, drawn together at the ends and fastened with thongs. The Aboriginal people of Botany Bay thought Captain James Cook's cocked hat looked like a bangala (Samuel Bennett quoted in Bertie 1924: 248).
basket—a vessel made from bark or wood for carrying things	gungun kungun (M)
basket—made from the knot of a tree	gulima goolime (W)
big ship—name given to the First Fleet ship *Sirius* by Aboriginal people	marrinuwi (marri 'big, nuwi 'canoe') murray-nowey (A)

block which was thrown along the ground as a target at which children threw a muring or stick like a toy spear	garagadyara karagadyéra (b)
book	buk buk (b)
boomerang for fighting	bumarit boo-mer-rit (c), wumarang wo-mur-rāng (C), womarang (W), bumarang bumarang (M), bumarañ (M), būmarin (R), galabaran cal-la-ba-ran (A), yara y-ā-rāh (Sth) Sword or scimitar shaped, large piece of heavy wood used as a weapon for hand-to-hand fighting or thrown. Capable of inflicting a mortal wound.
bottle	badal bottle (b)
camp	ngurra ngurra (M)
candle	gandal candle (b), kandul (b)

[1]Troy used these letters to indicate the specific citation of the word in a contemporary text. Please see her book for full details.

Notes

1 Jakelin Troy, *The Sydney Language* (Canberra: Aboriginal Studies Press, 1993, 2019]: vii.
2 United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs, "International Decade of Indigenous Languages 2022–2032", www.un.org/development/desa/indigenouspeoples/indigenous-languages.html. Accessed 1 May 2022.
3 For a full discussion of these themes, see *Everywhen: Australia and the Language of Deep History*, eds. Ann McGrath, Jakelin Troy, and Laura Rademaker (Lincoln: University of Nebraska, 2023).
4 For discussions that explore the theft and return of Mungo Man and Mungo Lady, see Ann McGrath and Malcolm Allbrook, "Collaborative Histories of the Willandra Lakes", in *Long History, Deep time*: *Deepening Histories of Place*, eds. Ann McGrath and Mary Anne Jebb (Canberra: ANU Press, 2015): 241–52; *Message From Mungo*, Documentary Film, dir. Andrew Pike and Ann McGrath (Ronin Films, 2014).
5 Sumathi Ramaswamy, *The Lost Land of Lemuria: Fabulous Geographies, Catastrophic Histories* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2004): 8.
6 See, for example, Anita Heiss*, Am I Black Enough for You? Twenty Years On* (Docklands Victoria: Penguin Random House, 2022).
7 City of Sydney. "City at a Glance: Greater Sydney Population". www.cityofsydney.nsw.gov.au/guides/city-at-a-glance#:~:text=In%202020%20the%20estimated%20Resident,number%20of%20surrounding%20national%20parks. Accessed 1 May 2022.
8 Grace Karskens, *The Colony: a History of Early Sydney* (Crows Nest: Allen & Unwin, 2010); *People of the River: Lost Worlds of Early Australia*. (Crows Nest: Allen & Unwin, 2020). For a general history of Australia opening in early Sydney, see Patricia Grimshaw, Marilyn Lake, Ann McGrath and Marian Quartly, *Creating a Nation* (Ringwood: McPhee Gribble, 1994). For violence in early Sydney, see Stephen Gapps, *The Sydney Wars: Conflict in the early colony, 1788–1817* (Sydney: UNSW, 2018).
9 Kate Grenville, *The Lieutenant* (Melbourne: Text Publishing, 2008).
10 Pip Williams, *The Dictionary of Lost Words* (South Melbourne: Affirm Press, 2020): 403.
11 Please note: Except in a few cases, I have not supplied page references to each language word cited. These are all taken from the work being discussed: Troy, *The Sydney Language*, 42–3.
12 Troy, *The Sydney Language*, 33 contains a key to sources for each word listing.

13 Troy, *The Sydney Language*, 79–80, 60.
14 Troy, *The Sydney Language*, 50, 43.
15 Troy, *The Sydney Language*, 81, 42.
16 Ann McGrath, "Arabanoo", in *The Oxford Companion to Australian history*, eds. Graeme Davison, John Hirst, and Stuart Macintyre (South Melbourne: Oxford University Press, 2003).
17 Troy, *The Sydney Language*, 78 and passim.

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AFTERWORD

Peter Burke

It has become commonplace that history is written by the victors, a remark variously attributed to Karl Marx, Winston Churchill, and Hermann Goering.[1] Like many commonplaces, the remark is half true, embodying insights but ignoring counter-examples. On one side, in a discussion of bias in history, the seventeenth-century historian La Mothe Le Vayer remarked that our image of the Punic wars would be very different if historians had access to accounts from the Carthaginian point of view, like that of the conquest of Gaul if Vercingetorix, as well as Caesar, had written his memoirs.[2] In extreme form, as the historian Isaac Schipper remarked, "what we know about murdered peoples is usually what their killers choose to say about them." Hence the importance of the secret archive or "counter-archive," assembled by Emmanuel Ringelblum, buried in the Warsaw ghetto and discussed in Chapter 28.[3]

Again, as long as General Franco was in power, the history of the Spanish Civil War was written—or at any rate, published, at least in Spain—from the perspective of the victors. In Finland, following the Civil War of 1918, "it took half a century before the perspective of the losing side could be dealt with in official, public forums," although memories were handed down in private.[4]

Examples of this kind can easily be multiplied, but counter-examples can be multiplied as well, as this volume illustrates in abundance. Early classics in the history of defeat and loss include Miguel León Portilla's *La visión de los vencidos* (1959) and Nathan Wachtel's *La vision des vaincus* (1971).[5] Over the last half-century or so, historical studies of losers have become increasingly common. Some of the most important, in chronological order, include Ivan Morris's *The Nobility of Failure* (1975), Christopher Hill's *The Experience of Defeat* (1984), Cioran Brady's *Worsted in the Game* (1989), Wolfgang Schivelbusch's *Die Kultur der Niederlage* (2001), and Fernando García de Cortázar's *Los perdedores de la historia de España* (2006).[6]

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Why there should have been a turn towards the history of losers at this time is a difficult question. It is surely linked to the rise of "polyphonic" history, which deliberately accommodates a variety of voices or points of view, but this explanation does not seem adequate by itself. In any case, a more profound observation was made by Reinhart Koselleck, himself deeply marked, as he confessed, by his participation—as a young soldier—in the defeat of Germany in the Second World War. "If history is made in the short run by the victors," he wrote, "historical gains in knowledge stem in the long run from the vanquished." Why is this the case? Because the vanquished, if they reflect on their defeat, "face a greater burden of proof to explain why something happened in this and not the anticipated way."[7]

A parallel point, which may seem contradictory but is not, might be made about memories: victors often forget, but the vanquished always remember, replaying defeat in their heads again and again in order to find out what went wrong. This replay looks like a form of the "repetition compulsion" famously analysed by Sigmund Freud in the cases of shell-shocked soldiers in the First World War. They have undergone a traumatic experience that they are unable to forget. We might speak of "collective trauma," whenever many individuals and families share the same experience at the same time, as in the case of defeat. In that sense whole communities, like hysterics according to Freud, may "suffer from reminiscences." As Nietzsche remarked in *The Genealogy of Morals*, "Only something that continues to hurt stays in the memory."[8] It is surely no accident that the Irish, the Poles, and white American Southerners all seem to be obsessed with their past.

Think, for instance, of Irish "mnemophilia."[9] Well-known illustrations include the slogan "Remember 1690," painted so many times on the walls of Belfast, or the song "Let Erin Remember" by the Irish poet Thomas Moore. In the case of Poland, think of the way in which memory pervades the poems and novels of Czesław Miłosz, who claimed like Nietzsche that "there is no other memory than the memory of wounds." In the case of the American South, the equivalent of Miłosz is surely William Faulkner, whose novel *Intruder in the Dust* (1948) described "every Southern boy" (meaning every white boy) as remembering General Pickett's tragic charge during the battle of Gettysburg "not once but whenever he wants it," hoping against hope for the inevitable not to happen. During the Centennial of the US Civil War, commemorations were much more important in the South than they were in the North. One Southerner remarked with the saving grace of humour, "We may have lost the war, but we are sure as hell going to win the Centennial!"[10]

As the editors of this volume argue, histories of losers, of failure, are an essential part of history. To understand the outcome of battles or wars, it is necessary to view them from both sides, to examine not only the role of Helmuth von Moltke in the Austro-Prussian War of 1866 but also that of Ludwig von Benedek, who has the ill fortune to be remembered, despite his earlier career, for losing the war. A similar point might be made about political, economic, and even intellectual history. In the history of science, for instance, Rosalind Franklin's contribution to the discovery of the "double helix," the structure of DNA, was not recognized in her

lifetime. In the history of Brazilian colonial history, the achievement of Gilberto Freyre has often been celebrated, while that of his friend and mentor the German scholar Rüdiger Bilden, who published little and was unable to follow an academic career, was forgotten until recently.[11]

The history of losers is an ambitious programme, but still more ambitious is this collective study of the history of loss, thanks not only to its global reach but also to its extension to "colonization, exile and imprisonment" as well as defeat. As some contributors to the volume admit, loss is difficult to define. In the case of Gildas, for instance, his theme is future loss, "that of Britain by the Britons" (Chapter 3). In a similar fashion, Sanne van der Kaaij-Gandhi shows Romila Thapar to be concerned with the threat of loss, the loss of "the right to debate interpretations of history" in India today (Chapter 29). The proto-feminist Mary Hays wrote female biography, so Frances A. Chiu suggests, "to bring awareness to the challenges faced by women," the rights that they had not lost but not yet gained (Chapter 17). In a similar fashion, Mary Spongberg suggests that family histories written by women were "grounded in loss," or more exactly "women's absence from orthodox historical accounts" (Chapter 19). Conquerors and conquered may not have the same concept of loss, as in the case of the Spaniards and the Nahuas (Chapter 9). Loss may be personal or shared with a group, or both: Swift, as Brian Cowan puts it, "managed to extrapolate from his personal loss to a more generalized political lament for lost liberties" (Chapter 13).

In a sense, all history is a response to loss, to the passing away of each generation together with its experiences and some of its knowledge. Some, like the Brazilian Gilberto Freyre, who described himself as a "Proustian" historian, admit that nostalgia for "the world we have lost" drives them to write about the past. Others, notably Emanuel Ringelblum and Jakelin Troy, conducted a salvage operation, rescuing planks from a shipwreck, in a famous metaphor employed by Walter Ralegh (the subject of Chapter 8) and before him, by the fifteenth-century antiquary Flavio Biondo.

This volume explores the consequences for historians of four forms of loss: defeat, colonization, imprisonment, and exile. These forms are explored via chapters about 30 individuals (23 men and seven women), some of them famous and others not so famous, at least in the West. Like Erich Auerbach's famous history of Western literature, each chapter includes short passages from the historian being discussed, in order to give readers a sense of the tone or the flavour of their writing.

Defeat looms large in the histories of Thucydides; Snorri Sturluson (assassinated in the course of civil war in Iceland); Joveyni (a Persian writing about the conquests of the Mongols); Peter Oliver, a Bostonian opposed to what he called the "American Rebellion" of 1776; al-Jabarti, the chronicler of the French occupation of Egypt; Edward Pollard, who coined the phrase "The Lost Cause" to describe the ideals of the Confederates in the American Civil War; Gabriel Dumont in Canada, fighting for the Métis in the Northwest Resistance of 1885; Gerhard Ritter in Germany during the Second World War; Milton (whose *Paradise Lost* is ingeniously presented by Nicholas McDowell as an allegory of the lost

English Republic); and Edward Hyde, earl of Clarendon, the first page of whose history announced his intention to present the "grounds, circumstances and artifices" of the great rebellion against the king that installed the English Republic. Germaine de Staël wrote about the French Revolution, so Biancamaria Fontana suggests, to deal with "the pain caused by the defeat of her original hopes and ideals," including "a free constitution" (Chapter 18). On the other hand, Condorcet, an aristocrat hunted by the revolutionaries, wrote a triumphalist account of the progress of the human mind.

Colonization, which may be viewed as a kind of defeat, looms even larger in this volume, thanks to its global approach including Guaman Poma in Peru, Chimalpahin in Mexico, al-Jabarti in Egypt, Jawaharlal Nehru in India, and the linguist Jakelin Troy in Australia, all exemplifying how "the empire writes back," appropriating the language of the colonizers and turning it against them. How did colonization affect the stories told by these individuals? In the case of Guaman Poma, it was the oppression of the Indigenous population that drove him to write, using Spanish to allow Indigenous voices to be heard. In the case of Chimalpahin, the history expresses nostalgia for the past, as in the remark that "Chapoltepec used to be a very marvelous place" before the Spaniards cut down the trees.

Imprisoned historians include Machiavelli (briefly), Ralegh (for several years), Condorcet (briefly, just after he had written his history), Gerhard Ritter (once again, briefly), and Nehru (nine times). Other famous historians who do not appear in this volume also spent time in prison, notably Pietro Giannone, Henri Pirenne, and Fernand Braudel. Once again, we might ask what difference imprisonment made to the work of these historians, besides the enforced leisure and freedom from distractions that it afforded. Might the decision of both Ralegh and Nehru to write the history of the whole wide world have been a compensation for their narrow circumstances?

In a similar fashion, Henri Pirenne, formerly known as the historian of Flemish towns, began a history of Europe, while Fernand Braudel, a prisoner of war in Mainz and Lübeck, wrote the first draft of his famous *Mediterranean* in captivity. One sign of the lasting effect of this captivity on Braudel—as it was on Nehru, so we learn from Antoon De Baets—was the recurrent use in his writings of the metaphor of imprisonment. Marc Bloch, who wrote a famous analysis of the French defeat in 1940, joined the Resistance, was captured by the Germans, and spent time in prison before his execution, depriving him of the opportunity to use the experience of defeat in his historical work.

Exiled historians include Machiavelli (though only to his estate, a few miles outside Florence), Hyde in the Scillies and in France, Germaine de Staël, Andrés Bello (an expatriate rather than an exile and a man of letters rather than a historian) in London, and Jonathan Swift (presented by Brian Cowan as an exile in Ireland, the land in which he was born). One might also include the internal exile of Anna Pankratova, who was dismissed from her chair in Moscow and sent to Kazakhstan, and Chen Yinke, who left Beijing for Hong Kong following the Japanese invasion of 1937. Once again it is worth asking what difference this fate made to their histories.

At a minimum, exile offered the leisure for thought and writing. Did the experience affect what was thought and written in other ways as well? In the case of Chen Yinke, as in that of Auerbach in Istanbul and Américo Castro in the United States, exile transformed him from a philologist concerned with detail to a writer of general history (in Chen's case, Tang China).

Certain historians who are not discussed in this volume made good use of the experience of exile. Polybius, for instance, drew on what he had learned in 17 years as a hostage in Rome. Some exiled historians choose to explain their homeland to their hostland. Others are bolder, and write the history of their new home from a different point of view to the natives, as in the case of the studies of the British Parliament by Sir Lewis Namier (formerly Ludwik Bernstajn Nemirowski). A few are bolder still and offer new interpretations of the history of their former homeland, as in the case of the studies of modern Germany by George Mosse and Fritz Stern, who once remarked that he saw "things German with American eyes, and things American also with German eyes."[12] The double vision of exiled historians such as Mosse and Stern allowed them to make an important contribution to the polyphonic history that in our age of increasingly frequent global encounters is becoming more and more necessary.[13]

Notes

1 Matthew Phelan, "The History of 'History Is Written by the Victors'", *Slate*, 26 November, 2019 https://slate.com/culture/2019/11/history-is-written-by-the-victors-quote-origin.html.
2 François La Mothe Le Vayer, *Du peu de certitude qu'il y a dans l'histoire* [On the lack of certainty in History] (Paris,1668).
3 Schipper is quoted above in Kassow, Chapter 28.
4 Ulla-Maija Peltonen, "The Return of the Narrator", in *Historical Perspectives on Memory, Studia Historica 61* ed. Anne Ollila (Helsinki: Suomen Historiallinen Seura, 1999): 118.
5 Miguel León-Portilla, *The Broken Spears: The Aztec Account of the Conquest of Mexico* (English translation, London: Constable, 1962); Nathan Wachtel, *The Vision of the Vanquished: The Spanish Conquest of Peru through Indian Eyes* (English Translation, Hassocks: Harvester Press, 1977).
6 Ivan Morris, *The Nobility of Failure: Tragic Heroes in the History of Japan* (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1975).
7 Reinhart Koselleck, "Erfahrungswandel und Methodenwechsel" [Change of Experience and Change of Methods], quoted in Niklas Olsen, *History in the Plural: An Introduction to the Work of Reinhart Koselleck* (New York: Berghahn, 2012): 237.
8 Quoted in Guy Beiner, *Forgetful Remembrance: Social Forgetting and Vernacular Historiography of a Rebellion in Ulster* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2018): 27.
9 Edna Longley, "Northern Ireland", in *History and Memory in Modern Ireland*, ed. Ian McBride (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001): 238.
10 Quoted in John Bodnar, *Remaking America: Public Memory, Commemoration and Patriotism in the Twentieth Century* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1992): 214.
11 Maria Lúcia Pallares-Burke, *O triumfo do fracasso: Rüdiger Bilden, o amigo esquecido de Gilberto Freyre* (São Paulo: UNESP, 2012).
12 Fritz Stern, *Five Germanies I have Known* (Wassenaar: NIAS, 1998): 14.
13 Peter Burke, "Cultural History as Polyphonic History", *Arbor* 186 (2010): 479–86.

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