

DOWNLOAD PDF THE PLEASURES OF FAILURE : JOURDANS LE GUERRIER PHILOSOPHE

Chapter 1 : blog.quintoapp.com: Sitemap

The Pleasures of Failure: Jourdan's Le Guerrier philosophe (pp.) Pleasure may well, as Hegel said of history, exist only in writing, only in the stories that portray it.

After some persuasion, he relented so far as to introduce into his picture a part of that offensive personage; and English visitors at the Louvre can now see, to their disgust or their amusement, the truncated image of rather less than half of the author of King Lear just appearing at the extreme edge of the enormous canvas. French taste, let us hope, has changed since the days of Ingres; Shakespeare would doubtless now be advanced "though perhaps chiefly from a sense of duty" to the very steps of the central throne. But if an English painter were to choose a similar subject, how would he treat the master who stands acknowledged as the most characteristic representative of the literature of France? Would Racine find a place in the picture at all? Or, if he did, would more of him be visible than the last curl of his full-bottomed wig, whisking away into the outer darkness? There is something inexplicable about the intensity of national tastes and the violence of national differences. If, as in the good old days, I could boldly believe a Frenchman to be an inferior creature, while he, as simply, wrote me down a savage, there would be an easy end of the matter. Now we are each of us obliged to recognise that the other has a full share of intelligence, ability, and taste; that the accident of our having been born on different sides of the Channel is no ground for supposing either that I am a brute or that he is a ninny. The perplexing question was recently emphasised and illustrated in a singular way. Within a few months of the appearance of Mr. The contrast is remarkable, and the conflicting criticisms seem to represent, on the whole, the views of the cultivated classes in the two countries. And it is worthy of note that neither of these critics pays any heed, either explicitly or by implication, to the opinions of the other. They are totally at variance, but they argue along lines so different and so remote that they never come into collision. Bailey, with the utmost sang-froid, sweeps on one side the whole of the literary tradition of France. Indeed, after reading M. It is no paradox to say that that country is as insular as our own. When we find so eminent a critic as M. Certainly they are not calculated to spare the susceptibilities of Englishmen. And, after all, this is only natural; a French critic addresses a French audience; like a Rabbi in a synagogue, he has no need to argue and no wish to convert. Perhaps, too, whether he willed or no, he could do very little to the purpose; for the difficulties which beset an Englishman in his endeavours to appreciate a writer such as Racine are precisely of the kind which a Frenchman is least able either to dispel or even to understand. The object of this essay is, first, to face these difficulties, with the aid of Mr. Whether the attempt succeed or fail, some important general questions of literary doctrine will have been discussed; and, in addition, at least an effort will have been made to vindicate a great reputation. For, to a lover of Racine, the fact that English critics of Mr. Strange as it may seem to those who have been accustomed to think of that great artist merely as a type of the frigid pomposity of an antiquated age, his music, to ears that are attuned to hear it, comes fraught with a poignancy of loveliness whose peculiar quality is shared by no other poetry in the world. To have grown familiar with the voice of Racine, to have realised once and for all its intensity, its beauty, and its depth, is to have learnt a new happiness, to have discovered something exquisite and splendid, to have enlarged the glorious boundaries of art. For such benefits as these who would not be grateful? Who would not seek to make them known to others, that they too may enjoy, and render thanks? His style in particular "using the word in its widest sense" forms the subject of the principal part of Mr. Before, however, discussing this, the true crux of the question, it may be well to consider briefly another matter which deserves attention, because the English reader is apt to find in it a stumbling-block at the very outset of his inquiry. Coming to Racine with Shakespeare and the rest of the Elizabethans warm in his memory, it is only to be expected that he should be struck with a chilling sense of emptiness and unreality. For what is the principle which underlies and justifies the unities of time and place? Surely it is not, as Mr. Very different were the views of the Elizabethan tragedians, who aimed at representing not only the catastrophe, but the whole development of circumstances of which it was the effect;

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they traced, with elaborate and abounding detail, the rise, the growth, the decline, and the ruin of great causes and great persons; and the result was a series of masterpieces unparalleled in the literature of the world. But, for good or evil, these methods have become obsolete, and to-day our drama seems to be developing along totally different lines. Thus, from the point of view of form, it is true to say that it has been the drama of Racine rather than that of Shakespeare that has survived. Plays of the type of Macbeth have been superseded by plays of the type of Britannicus. Britannicus, no less than Macbeth, is the tragedy of a criminal; but it shows us, instead of the gradual history of the temptation and the fall, followed by the fatal march of consequences, nothing but the precise psychological moment in which the first irrevocable step is taken, and the criminal is made. The method of Macbeth has been, as it were, absorbed by that of the modern novel; the method of Britannicus still rules the stage. But Racine carried out his ideals more rigorously and more boldly than any of his successors. His dramas must be read as one looks at an airy, delicate statue, supported by artificial props, whose only importance lies in the fact that without them the statue itself would break in pieces and fall to the ground. It is remarkable that Mr. But it is a little difficult to make certain of the precise nature of Mr. The truth is that we have struck here upon a principle which lies at the root, not only of Mr. How often this method has been employed, and how often it has proved disastrously fallacious! For, after all, art is not a superior kind of chemistry, amenable to the rules of scientific induction. Its component parts cannot be classified and tested, and there is a spark within it which defies foreknowledge. When Matthew Arnold declared that the value of a new poem might be gauged by comparing it with the greatest passages in the acknowledged masterpieces of literature, he was falling into this very error; for who could tell that the poem in question was not itself a masterpiece, living by the light of an unknown beauty, and a law unto itself? It is the business of the poet to break rules and to baffle expectation; and all the masterpieces in the world cannot make a precedent. There is only one way to judge a poet, as Wordsworth, with that paradoxical sobriety so characteristic of him, has pointed out "and that is, by loving him. Bailey, with regard to Racine at any rate, has not followed the advice of Wordsworth. Let us look a little more closely into the nature of his attack. And doubtless most English readers would be inclined to agree with Mr. Bailey, for it so happens that our own literature is one in which rarity of style, pushed often to the verge of extravagance, reigns supreme. Owing mainly, no doubt, to the double origin of our language, with its strange and violent contrasts between the highly-coloured crudity of the Saxon words and the ambiguous splendour of the Latin vocabulary; owing partly, perhaps, to a national taste for the intensely imaginative, and partly, too, to the vast and penetrating influence of those grand masters of *bizarrerie* " the Hebrew Prophets " our poetry, our prose, and our whole conception of the art of writing have fallen under the dominion of the emphatic, the extraordinary, and the bold. No one in his senses would regret this, for it has given our literature all its most characteristic glories, and, of course, in Shakespeare, with whom expression is stretched to the bursting point, the national style finds at once its consummate example and its final justification. But the result is that we have grown so unused to other kinds of poetical beauty, that we have now come to believe, with Mr. The beauties of restraint, of clarity, of refinement, and of precision we pass by unheeding; we can see nothing there but coldness and uniformity; and we go back with eagerness to the fling and the bravado that we love so well. It is as if we had become so accustomed to looking at boxers, wrestlers, and gladiators that the sight of an exquisite minuet produced no effect on us; the ordered dance strikes us as a monotony, for we are blind to the subtle delicacies of the dancers, which are fraught with such significance to the practised eye. But let us be patient, and let us look again. But is there not an enchantment? Is there not a vision? Is there not a flow of lovely sound whose beauty grows upon the ear, and dwells exquisitely within the memory? The narrowness of his vocabulary is in fact nothing but a proof of his amazing art. In the following passage, for instance, what a sense of dignity and melancholy and power is conveyed by the commonest words! *Mes ans se sont accrus; mes honneurs sont detruits*. Never, surely, before or since, was a simple numeral put to such a use " to conjure up so triumphantly such mysterious grandeurs! But these are subtleties which pass unnoticed by those who have been accustomed to the violent appeals of the great romantic poets. As Sainte-Beuve says, in a fine

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comparison between Racine and Shakespeare, to come to the one after the other is like passing to a portrait by Ingres from a decoration by Rubens. Who will match them among the formal elegances of Racine? His daring is of a different kind; it is not the daring of adventure but of intensity; his fine surprises are seized out of the very heart of his subject, and seized in a single stroke. Thus many of his most astonishing phrases burn with an inward concentration of energy, which, difficult at first to realise to the full, comes in the end to impress itself ineffaceably upon the mind. The sentence is like a cavern whose mouth a careless traveller might pass by, but which opens out, to the true explorer, into vista after vista of strange recesses rich with inexhaustible gold. But what is it that makes the English reader fail to recognise the beauty and the power of such passages as these? The great majority of poets — and especially of English poets — produce their most potent effects by the accumulation of details — details which in themselves fascinate us either by their beauty or their curiosity or their supreme appropriateness. But with details Racine will have nothing to do; he builds up his poetry out of words which are not only absolutely simple but extremely general, so that our minds, failing to find in it the peculiar delights to which we have been accustomed, fall into the error of rejecting it altogether as devoid of significance. And the error is a grave one, for in truth nothing is more marvellous than the magic with which Racine can conjure up out of a few expressions of the vaguest import a sense of complete and intimate reality. And Virgil adds touch upon touch of exquisite minutiae: *Cum tacet omnis ager, pecudes, pictaeque volucres, Quaeque lacus late liquidos, quaeque aspera dumis Rura tenent*, etc. What a flat and feeble set of expressions! He might have written every page of his work without so much as looking out of the window of his study. But he is constantly, with his subtle art, suggesting them. In this line, for instance, he calls up, without a word of definite description, the vision of a sudden and brilliant sunrise: And how varied and beautiful are his impressions of the sea! He can give us the desolation of a calm: *La rame inutile Fatigua vainement une mer immobile*; or the agitated movements of a great fleet of galleys: And then, in a single line, he can evoke the radiant spectacle of a triumphant flotilla riding the dancing waves: But it is not only suggestions of nature that readers like Mr. Bailey are unable to find in Racine — they miss in him no less suggestions of the mysterious and the infinite. No doubt this is partly due to our English habit of associating these qualities with expressions which are complex and unfamiliar. But there is another reason — the craving, which has seized upon our poetry and our criticism ever since the triumph of Wordsworth and Coleridge at the beginning of the last century, for metaphysical stimulants. But Milton is sacrosanct in England; no theory, however mistaken, can shake that stupendous name, and the damage which may be wrought by a vicious system of criticism only becomes evident in its treatment of writers like Racine, whom it can attack with impunity and apparent success. But if, instead of asking what a writer is without, we try to discover simply what he is, will not our results be more worthy of our trouble? And in fact, if we once put out of our heads our longings for the mystery of metaphysical suggestion, the more we examine Racine, the more clearly we shall discern in him another kind of mystery, whose presence may eventually console us for the loss of the first — the mystery of the mind of man. Look where we will, we shall find among his pages the traces of an inward mystery and the obscure infinities of the heart. *Nous avons su toujours nous aimer et nous taire*. The line is a summary of the romance and the anguish of two lives. *Les a-t-on vus souvent se parler, se chercher?* This last line — written, let us remember, by a frigidly ingenious rhetorician, who had never looked out of his study-window — does it not seem to mingle, in a trance of absolute simplicity, the peerless beauty of a Claude with the misery and ruin of a great soul? It is, perhaps, as a psychologist that Racine has achieved his most remarkable triumphs; and the fact that so subtle and penetrating a critic as M.

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Chapter 2 : Enlightened pleasures : eighteenth-century France and the new epicureanism in SearchWorks

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Reprinted by permission of the University of Wisconsin Press. Stages Series ; v. Etat des lieux Introduction 1 2. Building Babel 24 4. The Mourning After 5. Inside Wars 6. Grueling Prognostications T 7. My greatest debt is to Warren Motte, who not only directed the Ph. Several other people have read and commented on the manuscript at the various stages of its composition. I am especially grateful to William Cloonan, whose keen critical eye and warm support helped me through some of the most crucial phases of the writing. Unless otherwise indicated, all translations are mine. Etat des lieux Introduction Inventory We live in an age of cultural and ideological vacuity. This truism is being repeated ad nauseam from the right and the left, describing in turn the much mediatized death of the ideologies, the McDonaldization of the culture industry, the photos of Robert Mapplethorpe, the novels of Salman Rushdie, those of Barbara Cartland, the homogeneous banality of television, pornography, the Internet, the rise of sects and fundamentalisms, the godlessness of secular societies, censorship, the lack of censorship, and on. For his part Maurice Nadeau 2 Etat des lieux presents the new generation of French writers in the following terms: One may denounce the arrogance of the avant-gardes, their histrionics or vacuity, but the powers-that-be, under which literature toils today, are far deadlier. But the game is not without risks. Small publishing houses more than ever tarry under the pressure of bigger houses, and bookstores that may have carried obscure experimental literature are being ground down by the bookstore chain fnac and other major groups e. In the face of such pressure, in the absence of more consequential support from critical journals, and due to the plethora of texts that come out each year and the ever-slimmer chances of media coverage, it should not be surprising that writers now favor more adumbrative types of radicalism than did former avant-gardes. Indeed, there were sixty daily or weekly newspapers for every one hundred novels published each year before World War II, compared to a dozen or so newspapers for three to four hundred novels published per year now. And yet the avant-garde still went on to revolutionize aesthetics and become a cardinal part of the cultural capital, from Etat des lieux 5 academia to the art market. Likewise the current fears brought about by the development of the Internet sound like yet further McLuhanian doomsday predictions. But despite the warning signs emanating from some quarters, to this day nothing permits us to say that the computer, or the Internet, or both, will sound the death knell of the Gutenberg galaxy. For the most part it does not. Most writers today shun association and embrigadement, and the few ephemeral movements that surface now and again are the result of promotional campaigns rather than the efforts of authors themselves. Incidentally, a few decades earlier Lindon and Robbe-Grillet invented the New Novel for much the same reason. The successes of francophone writers, from Patrick Chamoiseau to Edouard Glissant, the colonization and subversion of traditionally male genres such as the thriller and the erotic story by women writers like Alina Reyes, Marie Redonnet, Virginie Despentes, and others: Yet postmodernism has not turned the page on everything that modernism accomplished, such as the need for art to be engaged in a perpetual revolution, or the importance of fantasy, even if it did undertake a critique of the modernist heritage. John Barth sums up the issue thus: What compounded modern anguish was the notion that, as modern physics taught us, the individual observer had come to play a singularly important role in determining the nature of physical—and by the same token, psychological—reality. Charting the evolution from modernism to postmodernism, N. In genre-breaking experimentalist Claude Ollier published a seminal piece entitled Fuzzy sets. Following upon Russell, Lofti Zadeh then coined the term fuzzy, which was popularized by mathematician Kosko in the s. But the mismatch problem was not exactly novel. What was groundbreaking was that fuzzy theorists now targeted the language of math rather than the reality described. In contrast a standard or Etat des lieux 13 non-fuzzy set contains its members all or none. What then distinguishes an object from other objects at the microscopic level, as microparticles interact and commingle, blurring borders? If fuzzy sets are permeable and changing, nonfuzzy sets are closed and markedly

deterministic, bespeaking a rationalist ethos, pointing to our impulse to trace borders and constitute categories. For Foucault, as for set theorists, we collocate things in a given category because of the need for the category itself; sets are only determined by their members, and these can be chosen at random. Rather than opting for unilateral tension, or polarizing concentration, it prefers to explore narrative possibilities, and questions prejudices and wagers—it is a meandering narrative that thrives outside the beaten path, across the margins. Plurality, differences, simultaneities, paradoxes: These texts are not undecidable; I will contend they are always decidable, but to a certain extent, between 0 and percent. They incorporate fuzziness and must be studied through it. I will argue further that the postmodern self is an undetermined ego, a fuzzy subject, contingent and ephemeral, speaking through a fractal narrator, but one that still functions as a narrative agency, one that indeed takes to task the kaleidoscopic or variable nature of the real. In the chaotic economy of the text narrators do come to occupy a singularly important position, functioning as strange attractors—Etat des lieux 15 tors—that is to say, points toward which the system irreversibly evolves—in an open-ended narrative environment that is permanently recomposing itself. Since the so much attention has been given to narration and narrators rather than to textualist praxes. The paradoxical nature of autobiography, Jean-Philippe Miraux suggests, proceeds from the fact that it is a genre torn between two imperatives: Considered together, and in spite of their disparities, all these oddballs articulate a general need for an inventory of epistemological categories. Palafoux licks our face and our hands. So our certainties vacillate. All engage the truth-building capacity of the text; all address the problematic relationship between the speaking subject and the world. In short, they point to the absence of referentiality in character development, while at the same time they underscore the inescapable need for heroes in literature. Michel Butor further argues that plurality must precede singularity: Voices intersect, overlap, commingle, completely or not, but none stands alone. Each endures as a minor interlocutor in a 20 Etat des lieux choir, as one narrative strand among many, in an archive where all strands potentially intercross. Narrative space remains dialogic and agonistic, as different voices vie for narrative control but fail to rule out the innate heterodoxy of discourse. Collective play is the aim of the game. No individual winners here, just mutual celebration. We are part of an immense collective subject that no longer exists as the thaumaturge of its own universe of representations. For in order to resist symbolic and physical destitution the writer must chart the deterritorialization of the self in language. Not surprisingly, travelers, explorers, and land surveyors crop up time and again in the texts of Chevillard, Redonnet, Bon, Volodine, and Toussaint. On the contrary, it cuts across categories of self, gender, and identity, creating systems that invite interpretation and frustrate it concurrently. Readers have known, from Ovid to Kafka, that in literature the metamorphic principle plays a liberating role, signaling the stochastic and liberating nature of change. Without a doubt, men-turned-beetles tend to be shunned by good society; they imply the abject, they suggest marginality, they might not even go to church. Yet they also climb to walls and ceilings; they turn our world upside down. To the metamorphic principle Chevillard appends the notion of free play, the chaotic and permanent inception of the self, where identity reconstitutes itself, constantly, in palingenetic fashion, evolving and devolving in unpredictable ways. Overall the paradoxical process of weaving and unweaving extends to the text itself. Readers may lose track of things, but the music of the text remains. The text then comes to function as a matrix, spelling out iterative patterns, as formal consistency ends up subtending topical randomness. Eventually the text opposes its own senescence, extolling both the loss of contiguity or sequentiality and the cathartic playfulness of its iterative processes. In so doing they map out a road through chaos and display a persistent tendency toward pattern and order. Even death does not silence these fractal voices, for death, says Baudrillard, only suggests the most extreme marginality. In the end fuzzy narrators are safely unreliable. But our loquacity is prenatal. A race of rhetoricians, of verbose spermatozoons, we are chemically linked to the Word. All in all, seven texts in nineteen years, all published by Editions de Minuit, for a total of 1, pages, at a spare average of pages per novel. To invent the unknown one must claim new forms, to quote from Rimbaud. Therefore since the literature has not so much challenged its limits as it has questioned the limits it sought for itself. In a word, he proposes a rereading of cultural and aesthetic codes,

particularly through the media of postmodern collages and cinematographic montage and the merging of semantic codes. Further, and most importantly, he shares certain tendencies with writers like Echenoz: The world of Toussaint is deceptively simple, unpredictable, and ludic. But before—and after—these two phlegmatic fellows there have been other examples of fundamentally reclusive and antisocial characters. The list one could construct contains an impressive array of names: For each narrator impassivity only serves to mask the chaos that threatens our lives, as violence may, at any time, throw life out of balance. However, such dillydallying is not the mark of plain indecision or ignorance on the part of the narrator, but an astute strategy of delay and temporization that allows him to wait until the most auspicious moment before acting. One of the ancillary aspects of impassivity in Toussaint is the banal and its psychological correlative, boredom. Patricia Meyer Spacks observes that boredom appeared as a concept in eighteenth-century England, a cultural by-product of the growth of leisure society. In the modern world, she contends, boredom appears as a construct more than as a natural state, conveying a sense of anxiety, of cultural decline and lack of authenticity. One may fear, however, that such self-imposed physical limitations may have serious consequences on the social and professional lives of these indolent characters; not surprisingly, with the exception of Monsieur, Toussaint conspicuously avoids describing work environments. Exertion, in other words, is left out of the frame. Even at work protagonists live at a sabbatical pace. The seriousness and urgency of such a festive and unhurried existence must not be underestimated, though. Back at the hotel, I spent hours lying on the rung bed that stood in the center of the room. I did nothing, and expected nothing in particular. Occasionally, putting one hand behind him on the smooth trunk of the plane tree, he pushed for an instant to stop the movement; then, giving a shove, he started the hammock swinging again, from left to right, for hours at a time. Of course this kind of project rarely lends itself to closure and manipulation, and entelechy cannot be regulated on a conscious level. For Toussaint narrators are intellectual creatures that stand in as the chosen observers of the human condition. For these writers political engagement and being-in-the-world engagement remain ideologically dubious, and politics and other orthogenic discourses history, science only serve to Reticent Narratives 31 provide protagonists with interesting tidbits to share at cocktail parties, bits of information that carry no more ethical or cognitive weight than anecdotes on pop culture. This does not mean, however, that politics and ideology play absolutely no role in impassive literature. Rather, totalizing discourses are only another discursive strand of the chaotic mesh that the text encompasses.

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Chapter 3 : Ø§Ù„Ù…Ø@Ø§Ø·Ø“Ø§Øª AL NÂ°pdf | MLIKA HAMDÍ and Thomas Dabay - blog.quintoapp.co

Get this from a library! Enlightened pleasures: eighteenth-century France and the new epicureanism. [Thomas M Kavanagh] -- "Novelists, artists, and philosophers of the eighteenth century understood pleasure as a virtue - a gift to be shared with one's companion, with a reader, or with the public.

A Sign of Inclusion or of Exclusion? Journal of the Canadian Society for the Study of Rhetoric, we see once again the richly vibrant results of inviting submissions that address rhetorical studies from diverse perspectives on diverse subjects. In these pages, then, you can expect to encounter multiple possibilities for what it means to engage in rhetorical studies. Such an approach suits the tradition of Canadian studies in the field, which has emerged largely despite the lack of explicit disciplinary frameworks in most universities to support rhetorical scholarship. This is a context that we hope to continue, through the contributions of both Canadian and international authors and readers. The nine articles in this volume signal the range of possibilities that the journal welcomes: Together, these articles also generate, explicitly and implicitly, critical insights for the development of rhetorical theory. Zawisza brings to light the rhetorical significance of the writings of Marie-Madeleine Jodin, the eighteenth-century French author, actor, and student of Diderot, who strategically appropriated dominant modes of masculine argumentative discourse to make a passionately incisive case for the equality of citoyennes in the new French Republic; Smith likewise illuminates the rhetorical accomplishments of an eighteenth-century female writer, intellectual, and conversationalist: Working from her expertise in Jewish studies, Saim focuses on the rhetorical theory of storytelling developed by the nineteenth-century scholar of Judaism, Moses Gaster. This study demonstrates the value of investigating literary texts as legitimateâ€”indeed, importantâ€”voices in public debates about political issues: Examining a wide selection of newspaper coverage on this issue, Senior demonstrates howâ€”despite their opposing views on the subjectâ€”different sides in this debate build their arguments on a similar foundation: Her critique thus reveals how similar rhetorical strategies may be used for dissimilar purposes and demonstrates the role that shared values or assumptions play in providing the grounds of possibility for a debate. Bush open-ended authority to engage in anti-terrorist warfare. Studies of rhetoric in the Canadian context are not, of course, absent from this volume of Rhetor. Her study clearly signals how a reinvigorated rhetorical theory of commonplaces can help to elucidate the intricate relationships between language and ideology. Whether you read all or a selection of the articles in this volume, we trust you will find within these virtual pages fresh perspectives and original research that stimulates your own thinking about rhetoric in multiple directions. We invite you to approach this collection, in true Canadian fashion, as a mosaic of views and topics on rhetoric: A Sign of Inclusion or Exclusion? Gordon et de P. Furbank; voir Marie Madeleine Jodin Le philosophe ne cesse de sermonner sa pupille: Voir, par exemple, Duhet. Puget de La Serre. A Critique of Enlightenment Rhetor: Le travail de persuasion de Jodin se poursuit donc.

Chapter 4 : David Madore's WebLog: Gratuitous Literary Fragments

"Novelists, artists, and philosophers of the eighteenth century understood pleasure as a virtue - a gift to be shared with one's companion, with a reader, or with the public. In this daring new book, Thomas Kavanagh overturns the prevailing scholarly tradition that views eighteenth-century France primarily as the incubator of the Revolution.

Introduction I David Hume was undoubtedly the eighteenth-century British writer whose works were most widely known and acclaimed on the continent during the later Enlightenment period. Ample proof of the great reputation he acquired in France as an historian and philosopher at this time is readily available. Contrary to various expectations, however, evidence of a profound influence as opposed to the mere reputation of his purely philosophical writings has proved to be disappointingly meagre. His unrivalled history of the Stuarts had not only enjoyed spectacular success in eighteenth-century France; it had related as well what many viewed as the most significant, or at least the most horrifying, series of political events in the annals of modern Europe, namely the seventeenth-century English revolution. It is perhaps necessary to indicate at this point certain limitations which I have felt it wise to impose on this study. Such considerations, however important they may be in themselves, seem largely irrelevant to an investigation of the kind I have undertaken. Similarly, I have not tried to make any general assessment of the merits of David Hume as an historian. My chief concern has not been with what really happened in England between and nor even primarily with what Hume really said about the Great Rebellion although, with regard to this last point, I have provided in the second part of my introduction a brief survey of his general views concerning the activities of that period. That the French misinterpreted the Scottish historian in many instances is, of course, entirely possible, but I have not insisted on this point. Influence thrives on illusion as easily as on truth. It is the image—whether faithful or distorted—that transmits influence. II When, in his History of the Stuarts, Hume came to consider the scholarly merits of his predecessor Clarendon, he gave expression to a sentiment Edition: The Whig party, Hume tells us, had, for a course of nearly seventy years, enjoyed the whole authority of government. In some particulars the state had not suffered as a result. But history, certainly, had suffered and truth had suffered. The biased writings of such apologists as Rapin-Thoyras, Locke, and Sidney were praised and propagated as if they equalled the most celebrated compositions of antiquity. Hume also observes that extremes of all kinds in these matters are to be avoided; truth and certainty are most likely to be met with on middle ground. There is little doubt that Hume hoped his own history would be seen as brilliantly impartial. However different it may have been in other particulars, the government of England under Elizabeth bore, with respect to the question of liberty, a distinct resemblance to that of the eighteenth-century Turks VI. Under Elizabeth the legislative power of Parliament was a mere illusion, the liberty of the subject nonexistent. The popular party, on the other hand, exclaimed constantly against the arbitrary principles of Charles I. We are not to believe, however, that Hume looked back with fond regret to the days of the Tudors or Stuarts. This would be missing the entire point he attempted to make. But the eighteenth-century English did have one obligation at least as they looked back on their own political history: Hume clearly felt that he had achieved this just sense of perspective and the result is that he made every effort while dealing with the civil-war period to understand and forgive the policies of James I and Charles I. Whether he also understood and forgave with equal sympathy and justice the policies of their opponents has remained, however, a matter of much heated debate ever since the first volume of his Stuarts appeared in For Hume the moral issues of the case are not simplified, moreover, by the fact that what were traditionally described as the major vices of these early Stuarts could equally well be viewed as ill-timed but honest virtues. These were not the grander virtues, to be sure, but the every-day virtues of sincerity, integrity, and conviction. Perhaps James erred occasionally in forgetting to ask himself the question What is best? This is because he believed in all piety that the question What is established? Hume has no doubts about what was established when James came to the English throne. Everyone accepted in those times the doctrine of blind and unlimited passive obedience to the prince. Under no pretence had it ever been seen as

lawful for subjects to depart from or infringe that doctrine. So completely had these principles prevailed that, during the reigns of Elizabeth and her predecessors, opposition to them was regarded as the most flagrant sedition not only by the monarch but by the people as well. James I had thus inherited an absolute throne. Was it not natural for him to take the government as he found it and to pursue the long-applauded measures of the popular Elizabeth? Perhaps, Hume adds, but it is something of an afterthought, James should have realized that his character and his circumstances could not support so extensive an authority. In fact his major difficulties arose chiefly from these circumstances which had suffered during his reign a radical transformation. Ordinary human prudence, the usual trust in cause and effect is baffled by it and the operation of every motive which normally influences human society fails VII. Now this spirit of religion or rather of enthusiasm, uncontrolled, obstinate, and dangerous, violently inclined the Puritans to adopt republican principles and to form a strong attachment to civil liberty. Laud and his associates by reviving a few primitive institutions of this nature had corrected the error of the first reformers. The net result of his action was to inflame that religious fury which he meant to repress. Was not Parliament after all the aggressor during this unhappy period of civil discord? The Stuart kings had fought only a defensive campaign forced on them by the fact that Parliament had unilaterally seen fit to change the rules of the game and had innovated violently in constitutional matters. The motivation of these patriots is suspect. Hume notes, for example, that the untimely end of Hampden leaves doubtful and uncertain whether his conduct was founded in a love of power or a zeal for liberty. With Cromwell, of course, there is no such doubt and uncertainty. The opponents of Charles did not fight for liberty; they fought for ignorant and fanatical trivialities. Their fathers had been entirely satisfied with the government of Elizabeth: And why not, at least, compound matters with him, when by all his laws, it appeared that he had agreed to depart from it? Perhaps the revolution, up to a certain point and despite its trivial origins, did achieve some positive good. Hume even confesses a willingness at one point to admit that a few old eggs had to be broken to make the new omelette. They forgot that authority as well as liberty is requisite to government and is even requisite to the support of liberty itself, by maintaining the laws which can alone regulate and protect it VII. Complaints against the oppression of ship-money, against the tyranny of the Star Chamber, had roused the people to arms: Having violently pulled the government to pieces, the patriots of Edition: Such schemes when held by men in power are dangerous. Dangerous also was the current doctrine of popular sovereignty. How they regretted the blind fury with which they had earlier rejected their king! The English soon realized that they had murdered an honourable and honest king, who was, moreover, innocent of the crimes with which he was charged. Nor is it even possible to say that with a little more tact here, a little more imagination there, Charles could have perhaps avoided this fatal clash with Parliament. Even long after the event, when it is commonly a simple matter to sort out the errors of bygone quarrels, one is at a loss to determine what course Charles, in his circumstances, could have followed to maintain Edition: If the English constitution and the extent of prerogative had been in his day quite fixed and certain, his integrity would have made him regard as sacred the boundaries of that constitution. Hume drewâ€”or at least seemed to drawâ€”various lessons from the great events of this period, and these too we shall leave until they are pointed out again by the French traditionalists who opposed, almost a century and a half later, what they considered to be extraordinarily similar tendencies and events in their own country. One of these lessons which was to strike with especially great force a good many disillusioned Frenchmen not long after nevertheless deserves mention here. It is, in effect, that the English revolution had been a pernicious act of folly, a wasted venture, and that perhaps all similar revolutions are condemned to a like fate. To emphasize the point, Hume concluded his chapter immediately preceding that which is devoted to Cromwell with the following warning: The scene which passed today really pleased me without embarrassing me. I attended Lord Hertford to Versailles in order to be presented to the Dauphiness and the young Princes, the only part of the royal family whom we had not yet seen. I count on having much enjoyment when I am able to read your fine history. With him ended the civilities of the royal family of France towards me; and I may say it did not end till their power of speech failed them: At the time, he could not have known the extent to which events described so skilfully in his

History would one day assume a new and urgent meaning in the political life of the French nation. Originality in epistemological writings has rarely given any philosopher a great popular audience. But history was a very different matter. As a genre it represented to the eighteenth-century reading public the most digestible form of narrative and was contrasted frequently with the novel which, though equally appealing to the mass of readers, was rarely considered to be a serious or worthy vehicle of truth. Such was the reputed superiority of history as a vantage point from which to view the human passions that many good and bad novels of the day conventionally attempted to pass themselves off as personal histories, memoirs, or collections of letters. History was an art the models of which were best found in antiquity. Speculation on almost any subject other than the physical sciences was considered worthless unless Clio had first been heard. Its chief use is only to discover the constant and universal principles of human nature, by showing men in all varieties of circumstances and situations, and furnishing us with materials, from which Edition: These records of wars, intrigues, factions, and revolutions, are so many collections of experiments, by which the politician or moral philosopher fixes the principles of his science; in the same manner as the physician or natural philosopher becomes acquainted with the nature of plants, minerals, and other external objects, by the experiments, which he forms concerning them. Nor are the earth, water, and other elements, examined by Aristotle, and Hippocrates, more like to those, which at present lie under our observation, than the men, described by Polybius and Tacitus, are to those, who now govern the world. Only the profound thinker was judged worthy of attempting it and such non-professionals as Smollett did little more than anger the French with their amateurish and pretentious imitations. Hume is writing his! The match is not equal. French interest in all things English from Edition: Gibbon tells of his welcome in Paris in and speaks of how English opinions, fashions, even games were adopted in France at this time and of how every Englishman was viewed as a born patriot and philosopher. After Voltaire published his Letters on the English and Montesquieu his two chapters of the Esprit des Lois, a strange appetite developed in France for knowing everything that happened or might happen, or might be thought, spoken or dreamed of in England. This enthusiasm was as much a matter of deeply reasoned admiration, as it was a kind of craze. One must also bear in mind the fact that English history, per se, was judged to be peculiarly superior to all other modern national histories, both as an artistic theme-source and as a scientific repository. Writing in to Gabriel-Henri Gaillard, he expressed the following bitter sentiments on the subject: That is why the compilations of French history bore everyone to death, myself included. As for our history, it is made up of petty court squabbles, great battles lost, small battles won, and lettres de cachet. Note too that we have never invented anything; and, finally, truth to tell, we exist in the eyes of Europe only in the century of Louis XIV. His conclusions were, however, rather hopeful: However, even if we have so many literary Edition: English history best fulfilled both of these requirements according to an anonymous counter-revolutionary work of Hume and Robertson appear to have followed most closely in their footsteps; perhaps they would have even caught up with them had they written in their language and been provided with equally interesting scenes to depict. We read the following observation, for example, in La Quotidienne of The great variety of events in English history and the order in which these had occurred seemed to permit a perfect fusion of both artistic and scientific elements in one literary genre. The modern world had, quite plainly, no greater or more significant story to tell.

Chapter 5 : Books and Characters / Lytton Strachey

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As for Shakespeare, it is possible to find throughout his plays and poetry, if not exactly the proper delineation of a determined philosophy, more or less easily identifiable, at least the handling of many philosophical problems, themes and ideas, as well as the traces of several philosophical influences and readings. In both authors, it is arguable that a kind of eclectic Scepticism can be seen developing through their respective works, though in quite different ways. The main purpose of this paper is, precisely, to show a way of conceiving how Montaigne and Shakespeare share this kind of philosophical inclination by highlighting its reflection in an aspect of the work of each author which bears traces of the genre mainly cultivated by the other and immediately associated with him. Thus, saying it straightforwardly and clearly but perhaps too simplistically, I shall here consider Montaigne as a sort of playwright and Shakespeare as something of an essayist, the works of both exhibiting a deep concern with sceptical problematics and procedures and with Scepticism, in general. What I mean is something else: He hints at its pedagogical virtues and formative importance, criticises its enemies and argues for the favouring of theatrical companies and of permanent playhouses, from a well-substantiated political and social standpoint i, 26, bb 2. It must be recalled that some lines up, and in the text, Montaigne, speaking of himself as a young reader, had mentioned Latin and Italian comedies as one of his passions then i, 26, a. Without this rich and varied knowledge it is for us difficult to imagine that the elements of theatricality in the *Essais* would be so abundantly expressed and so clearly understandable as they are. If we want to conciliate this firm architecture with the openness of the form of the *Essais* and the flexibility of its writing, perhaps the image of a theatrical and scenographic space would be the more adequate one. This framework encompasses the stage where the performances take place, its variable scenic background adapting itself to the diversity of stories, characters, speeches, arguments, images, opinions and ideas there presented and developed, the protagonist Montaigne playing several parts and functions and going from one place to the other in and off the stage. Of course, this remains an analogy, but it has the quality of providing a plausible model for the relation between the architectural building of the *Essais* and its openness of form, linked with the peculiarity of the essayistic text. While some seem perhaps no more than incidental observations or notes even then possibly significant, all the same, the vast majority of them are as relevant as revealing. I will recall briefly the most important passages in which they occur. Ainsi se peut prendre avec raison ce bon avis de Solon. En tout le reste il y peut avoir du masque: The theatre here is thus implicitly compared to the tribunal of posterity. Backstage, the masks falling off, both groups of comedians that looked unequal on stage become equal in their vileness and misery: However its connotations with theatre remain always altogether explicit and clear. That cannot be but quite understandable if we bear in mind that in the *Essais* the reflection on illusion and on the mechanisms of simulation and dissimulation plays such an important role 3. In the dialogues where there is a great equilibrium of voices, as well as in those dialogues that obey to the alternation of interlocutors which incarnate or declare antithetical postures, attitudes and theories, the clash of opinions, ideas and viewpoints, forming a zigzagging itinerary, is the most conspicuous element that contributes to confer to the genre its formal identity. The plurivocity, extrovert in the dialogues, thus becomes a fundamental element of the movement proper to each chapter of the *Essais* and a central piece of the multifarious course of the exercise of a iudicium that, inscribed in the text, examines, in their variety and through ever changing perspectives, the several subjects he has to deal with. An important aspect of that influence has been recognised by most authors as of a philosophical kind and of more or less clearly sceptical overtones. In *Six Plays of Shakespeare* 4. As I said at the beginning of this paper, it is my aim to show the essayist philosopher in Shakespeare. I intend to fulfil that purpose by focusing on a Shakespearean play from a point of view centred on philosophical Scepticism. That does not mean either that its depths and its grim vision of human nature as well as the *Weltanschauung* underlying it should be ignored or taken for what they

never can be taken: That task is after all made easier when we think of the full compatibility of this revival of Pyrrhonism not only with living but even with the cultivation of an extraordinary enjoyment of life as precisely shown by Montaigne and developed throughout the *Essais* 6. The point I shall try to stress is the possibility of seeing here especially in the ending at play a confluence of notions and devices that seem much akin to some we can find in Ancient Pyrrhonism, especially in the kind of Pyrrhonism described and explained by Sextus Empiricus. There we have a blend of epistemological issues and practical concerns, that may also be considered a distinctive characteristic of this extraordinary comedy, where the most poignant and dramatic dilemma, the existential and moral dilemma Angelo puts to Isabella, has also consequences concerning belief. Its dramatic impact is enhanced by Isabella, before her first encounter with Angelo, being shown as someone prone to doubt: Assay the power you have. Our doubts are traitors, And make us lose the good we oft might win, By fearing to attempt. Believe me, on mine honour, My words express my purpose. Who will believe thee, Isabel? To whom should I complain? Did I tell this, Who would believe me? Hear me, O, hear me, here! Believe it, royal prince: Harp not on that; nor do banish reason For inequality; but let your reason serve To make the truth appear where it seems hid, And hide the false seems true. Her conception of truth is, indeed, stated emphatically as an idealised absolute truth, which is most near to the idea of uniform truth that is implicit to most trends of sceptical thought: It is not truer he is Angelo Than this is all as true as it is strange; Nay, it is ten times true; for truth is truth To the end of reckoning. This is most likely! O, that it were as like as it is true! Similarly, there is no need to consider the opposition between seeming and being against the background of the History of Pyrrhonism to explain its function in a play where it is explored. Still, the highlighting of such parallels must not be shunned. After all, sceptical philosophy has some clear and manifest affinities with playwriting. And there are cases, such as, I believe, is the one of Measure for Measure, where the accumulation of elements of that sort can seem extremely meaningful. One of those elements may be considered relativism of some sort. Thus, attending to what is apparent, we live in accordance with everyday observances, without holding opinions "for we are not able to be utterly inactive. These everyday observances seem to be fourfold, and to consist in guidance by nature, necessitation by feelings, handing down of laws and customs, and teaching of kinds of expertise. The acceptance of others with their faults, rooted on self-knowledge, as a notion that a ruler has to bear in mind in governing a society and in administering justice, is one of the main lessons imparted by Measure for Measure 7. Social, political and moral reform in this world, if not complemented by an individual reform, reveals itself as unfeasible as the complete enforcement of too severe, too rigid laws, so much so that they seem inhuman and cannot but be bent, when not entirely forgotten and despised. On the other hand, individual reform seems feasible, even if quite difficult for the many obstacles that obstruct its way. And the way of individual reform consists precisely in self-perfecting and in cultivating the art of judgement. What is here at stake is basically the wish and the will to accomplish an internal metamorphosis leading to those aims. For Sceptics began to do philosophy in order to decide among appearances and to apprehend which are true and which are false, so as to become tranquil; but they came upon equipollent dispute, and being unable to decide this they suspended judgement. And when they suspended judgement, tranquillity in matters of opinion followed fortuitously. Sextus 10 39 What is here to be emphasised, in this text of paramount importance about the aim of ancient scepticism, is not so much the interrelation of a practical aim with a clear-cut epistemological attitude interrelation which I have already mentioned as characteristic of Sextian Pyrrhonism as the process through which this interrelation is expressed and carried on. Its scheme may be put forward in this simple way: In my interpretation, this attainment of the aim spiritual tranquillity or ataraxia involves an internal change without which it simply would be impossible. And this confirms our intuition that, in more than a way, Barnardine unconsciously behaves like a Pyrrhonian for even when he is pardoned he has a most wonderful Pyrrhonic reaction: I am thinking of Lucio, the garrulous bawd. The least we can say is that he is the one most rigorously and ironically punished character in the play. According to a sceptical art of judgement, justice is then dispensed. Shakespeare, William, Measure for Measure, edited by E. Houghton, Oxford, Clarendon Press, Cavell, Stanley, Disowning Knowledge: La

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Les cahiers du Grif was based in Brussels from to ; after a brief pause it started up again in Paris in and ran until The Belgian part of its existence has been well documented (Brau ; D'Hooghe), but not the French years. 4.