We are happy to publish this report on the Moscow conference by our distinguished Scandinavian colleague Eric de Geer. Nevertheless, during our short stay in Russia we observed many things and, more than ever, Montesquieu’s words on liberty have come to our mind: “Pour règle générale, toutes les fois qu’on verra tout le monde tranquille dans un État qui se donne le nom de République, on peut être assuré que la liberté n’y est pas ... Ce qu’on appelle union dans un corps politique, est une chose très équivoque ...”; “c’est une expérience éternelle que tout homme qui a du pouvoir est porté à en abuser ... pour qu’on ne puisse abuser du pouvoir, il faut que, par la disposition des choses, le pouvoir arrête le pouvoir”. Our experience teaches us that authoritarian, or limited democracy, has never been useful to nations. Echoing Montesquieu, we can say that Mr Putin has seized Crimea but has lost Ukraine. We don’t believe that this bargain has been in any way useful to the Russian people and to the future of European civilization. And our political beliefs, as our readers know, are strongly liberal and libertarian: i.e., clearly and firmly opposed to autocrats.

V. M.

2 Montesquieu, Esprit des Lois, XII chap. iv.

Italics mine.

A Report on the 2014 International Conference in Moscow

“Language Policy and Language Conflicts in Contemporary World”, Moscow, 16-19 September, 2014” at The Russian Academy of Sciences, The Institute of Linguistics of the RAS, Research Center on Ethnic and Language Relations

PAPER: Eric De Geer, Uppsala: A historic-geographic study of language and ethnos in Sweden in 1950 and 2009. My contribution to the workshop in Moscow was supposed to be a geographic study of the Sovietic and Russian persons living in Sweden in 1950 and 2009 according to the statistics available then. However, through contacts with the Statistiska Centralbyrån (SCB) in Stockholm I could obtain data as of Jan., 2014 covering all Swedish municipalities which give us many more possibilities of regional analyses today.

There is, however, an important difference between the years from a statistical point of view in the number of the external areas of calculation, because they are different both before and after the year 1992. Before 1992, as far as the definition of ‘the country of birth’ is concerned, the whole territory of the Soviet Union is implied in its inner meaning then, whereas after 1992, Russia is considered separately as is also the case with the Ukraine, Belarus’ and also the three Baltic countries (Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania) and Kazakhstan together with some other ex-Soviet republics. In all these countries it is only Russian statistics that are documented continuously.

1. The Flight to Moscow

I had booked with the SAS from Stockholm-Arlanda to Moscow-Sheremetyevo and had during the flight a splendid view from my seat of the Estonian islands (the former Soviet Republic) and Lake Peipus which is a border-lake to Russia. After that, the Precambrian plains with the taiga became visible which is only interrupted by moors and one or two lakes and villages. Closer to Moscow there was a more diversified topography with rivers, cultivated areas and lakes. Then suddenly the suburbs of Moscow appeared with a large number of rows of high buildings in a typical Russian style (between 8-12 storeys high) and other scattered settlements in between, filled with numerous datchas in the forests and along the lakes which look like our summer houses in Swedish recreational areas, and also a growing number of large Russian farm houses with green houses around. Suddenly Airport Moscow-Sheremetyevo became visible which is situated about 30 km north-west of Moscow. A friendly PhD-student from the Russian Academy was
already waiting for me there and, unexpectedly, two Italian colleagues at the airport exit. On the way down town we passed a Swedish IKEA-shop in yellow and blue colours. The speed of the taxi was very fast on the narrow roads and streets and the driving lanes on which we were travelling were hardly paid attention to by our taxi-driver who knew well how to find his way through the fast and intense car traffic with traffic jams into Moscow Centre. The surrounding settlements of buildings looked hazardous-ly constructed like a hotchpotch of small houses, modern villas, industrial buildings, scattered rows of modern well-kept high buildings.

2. Hotel Cosmos
Our hotel was Hotel Cosmos in the northern part of Central Moscow, which is a special guest house for a great mixture of foreigners, business and state executives, tourists and naturally guest researchers like us who all appeared in different groups suddenly queuing up for registration in the lobby after we had left the taxi and the Metro station (VDNX) behind us. From the hotel we could see the imposing skylines of the Space and Missile Museum built as a memorial to the glorification of the Soviet Space Programme and its heroic cosmonauts with their impressive explorations in space during the 1950s and 1960s. On top of the museum, there was also the huge construction of the Sputnik-rocket with its tail in a loop of metal pointing steeply-high behind, symbolizing with its exhaust sharply against the Moscow sky to commemorate the whole Soviet Space Programme.

We as new guests could see all this almost awe-stricken from Hotel Cosmos from our room windows and felt that we were watching into a new technical epoch which we could live to see. Also the hotel itself was modern and tastefully constructed with a brick façade in a bowlike fashion 35 storeys high. My room was on the 25th floor which had a magnificent view of the spectacular Space and Missile Monument in the west at sunset.

Below, close to the hotel entrance, one could also see a statue of General de Gaulle in triple size and an awfully big thoroughfare of a huge motorway east-west with 4 x 4 lanes and below it another motorway with 3 x 3 lanes for local traffic! In rush hours the traffic noise was deafening. On top of this, I also discovered a railway station which had been built close to the Metro station. It was evident that such a magnitude and concentration of massive traffic means was the consequence of the huge population of a metropolis like Moscow exceeding 10-12 million inhabitants outnumbering the population of a small country like Sweden.

However, watching the incessant stream of hotel guests of different nationalities, their varying clothes and listening to the melodies of their numerous languages was quite fascinating, because it gave me an overwhelming impression of the multi-ethnicity of Russia and its neighbouring countries, assembled here, so to speak under one roof.

The restaurant was also of high class and very international with self-service and extremely efficient personnel. Also the room with a balcony and a well-functioning TV-set was a stimulating asset and extra entertainment showing programmes of exotic Russian landscapes and peoples.

3. The Sputnik Missile Museum and The Moscow Metro
First, I would like to convey one or two observations concerning the Sputnik Missile Museum and the well-known Moscow Metro from the point of view of a newcomer in Moscow. In order to travel fast and safely to the main building of the Russian Academy of Sciences in the Leninskij Prospekt, the Brown Metro Line was recommended to us and by counting the number of stations between our hotel station (VDNX) to the Leninskaja station we only needed to count ten stops. Also with the kind assistance of another PhD student (Mrs Elena Krasnukhina) kindly appointed to guiding us the first few days to the Academy, we managed to arrive safely as a group at the tenth stop, from where the Academy building could be found easily.

The problem for us newcomers was namely to read the names of the Metro stations in Cyrillic script, which we passed at a very high speed and which were irregularly written on the underground walls but not repeated in the train carriages, neither acoustically nor visually, by electric signs for the next up-coming station names, whereby the stops often lasted less than one minute. The student’s help was therefore welcome and indispensable the first few days. What was even more difficult in the Metro was the lack of distinct numbering of the Metro lines underground when we wanted to change to other Metro lines travelling alone. However, generous and very friendly fellow travellers in the same Metro carriage were mostly very helpful in informing us on which Metro line to choose and at which station to get out in order to get to the best station for visiting the Kremlin for instance or some other place of interest. Traveling by the Moscow Metro in the beginning of a visit was consequently a real challenge to all beginners like us. It was only a question of trial and error whether the right line or Metro station was chosen. Even Prof. Ureland with some earlier experience with the Moscow Metro was bewildered and disoriented in leading us westerners to the correct trains and stations.

4. The International conference
Our conference building of the Acad-
emy in Moscow was beautifully situated on a hill close to the River Moscow which gave us all a very striking impression of a novel type of architecture with a large open court yard and with numerous gates leading to different lecture rooms, corridors and smaller seminary rooms for workshops and round table meetings. For security reasons, we had to show our passports before entering the respective gates leading to our meetings and lectures. The building also contained a very tasteful in-door Winter garden (“Zimnyy sad” Hall) for official receptions (“Fourchette”) where food and refreshments were served after the lectures of the first day in the evening and where also a small celebration of the successful programme of the 2014 International Conference took place for the participants and the organizers. More than a hundred participants had registered and all were assembled in this Winter Garden on Tuesday evening. Everybody enjoyed the delicious food, fruits and drinks served abundantly in the generous Russian way of hospitality between the standing small tables full of beverage and flowers. The official management was also excellent in spite of the mixture of the numerous languages spoken between 113 registered participants who came from 19 different countries of the world including the majority of 84 persons from the different parts of the Russian Federation, 6 persons from the Commonwealth of Independent Countries and 23 persons from other countries. The following countries were represented at the Conference: Australia, Azerbaijan, Armenia, Belarus’, Cyprus, Finland, France, Germany, Israel, Ireland, Italy, Kazakhstan, Laos, Lithuania, Moldova, Russia, Slovenia, Sweden and Vietnam. Of course the multitude of so many different countries and cultures with so many extremely deviating languages was a big communicational problem but which was solved to a certain extent by the choice of Russian or English in translations into these two official conference languages for general communication in the meetings and also in other auxiliary languages in discussions and private conversations. German, French and Italian for instance were also used between members of the West-European group. However, most of the participants were bilingual or multilingual speakers that it will be taken notice of and made known in the West, I have taken the opportunity of gratefully accepting the offers of publishing it also in the forthcoming proceedings of the Institute of Migration in Turku/Åbo, Finland and also in the forthc. No. 11 of the Series in Eurolinguistic Studies ed. by Prof. S. Ureland, Logos Verlag, Berlin, both in an enlarged version of my paper. The other speakers of the Round Table group treated minorities in Israel, Lithuania, Yukutia, Moldovia, Central Africa, Armenia, the Republic Karbadino-Balkaria (in Siberia) and also comparisons between German and Russian. Moreover there was a paper by E. Hamel, Munich, from our team on historical linguistics and genetics discussing contacts between Old European, Basque and Indo-European languages after the Last Ice Age. The workshop and Round Table on the last day of the Moscow Conference 2014 showed clearly what a wide spectrum of major and minor languages was dealt with, some of which only a few could be treated and discussed at length in the limited framework of a single workshop. However, the juvenile atmosphere and spontaneity in the organized workshop and Round Table was open and very cordial and created new contacts between the participants which the auditors knew how to appreciate.

6. Conference tourism

Since I had booked my return flight back to Stockholm a day later after the

The Moscow Round Table at the Academy of Sciences
We admired the exterior of all these buildings but also the decorations inside the Orthodox churches with all the painted pictures of the different Mediaeval icons. Unfortunately, The Arsenal was closed. Everything around us was perfect in style, clean and in good shape both inside and outside the historical buildings. Information on the history and style of the churches was also first-class and information was even copied and distributed for free on A-4 format sheets to the visitors. What was even more remarkable for us coming from the West was the fact that in the entire area here, including also the Red Square, there was absolutely no advertising or commercialism of any sort whatsoever. The result was that the historical environment was clean and beautiful so that the numerous visitors could enjoy themselves undisturbed in their experience of history and true beauty. We were very grateful for such a unique experience.

Next morning I took a taxi from Hotel Cosmos to the airport after waiting uneasily. It was Sunday morning and there was less traffic than a week earlier when I arrived. The flight to Arlanda was without any problems. Summarizing my impressions of the conference journey to Moscow, I found it extremely successful from a scientific as well as a tourist-geographical point of view.

Eric De Geer
Uppsala
(Translation by S. Ureland)
Montesquieu and Hume on the Balance of Powers

1. Introduction
Montesquieu did not argue for a separation but for a balance of powers. Hume believed in a separation of powers hoping in this way to reach balance in the social order. Both writers took the status quo within their respective countries for granted in developing their political theories. Monarchy in their opinion was the most efficient government in large countries such as France and Britain. Hume taught that monarchy (meaning an absolutist monarchy, not a limited monarchy as in Britain) was a stable form of government and was concerned that parliament, particularly the House of Commons, would usurp the executive powers of the monarch and so create chaos. Montesquieu feared that the monarchy would degenerate into a despotic regime.

2. Science and the Decline of Magic
By a slow but inexorable process the belief in ghosts, witches and magic receded into the background and became folklore.1 The scientific approach to the study of the world was responsible for this decline, but it was not the only cause or rather it was connected with the changing attitude of the professional and intellectual elite that came to mistrust any irrational explanation of events. Religion suffered because of this decline. Its magically inspired practices (such as transubstantiation) came under attack because science could prove that they did not work. Moreover, these practices could not provide any substance for the conclusions of religion’s metaphysical theology. Yet such was the power of the new approach that many clergymen were actively involved in the ‘study of man’. Hume wrote about it in the Introduction to his Treatise:

There is no question of importance, whose decision is not compriz’d in the science of man; and there is none, which can be decided with any certainty, before we become acquainted with that science. In pretending therefore to explain the principles of human nature, we in effect propose a compleat system of the sciences, built on a foundation almost entirely new, and the only one upon which they can stand with any security.2

George Turnbull, chaplain to the Prince of Wales, put in the same kind of claim for the study of man in his Principles of Moral Philosophy (1740) and regarded it as medicine for the mind.3 So the support for this science of man in Britain was widespread. As far as politics is concerned, Hume’s ambition is manifest in the title of the essay “That politics May Be Reduced to a Science”. It introduces a series of essays dealing with the politics of Hanoverian Britain at mid-century.

Montesquieu expresses his scientific approach with the lapidary sentence at the beginning of his De l’Esprit des Lois

Les lois, dans la signification la plus étendue, sont les rapports nécessaires qui dérivent de la nature des choses: et, dans ce sens, tous les êtres ont leurs lois; la Divinité a ses lois; le monde matériel a ses lois; les intelligences supérieures à l’homme ont leurs lois; les bêtes ont leurs lois; l’homme a ses lois.4

And Montesquieu sets it down as his task to study the laws of men and their necessary connections.

I have chosen to report on the political thinking of Hume and Montesquieu because their approach to politics is in certain basic aspects representative for the way politics was conceived in the world of the Enlightenment. Political thinkers in the seventeenth century focused on the problems of sovereignty and the legitimacy of authority; their eighteenth-century counterparts turned their attention to the functioning of civil society. The basic question

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began how individuals can work together to further not only their own interests but also those of others. If we accept Aron’s verdict that Montesquieu was one of the first sociologists, this means that Montesquieu thought in terms of collectivities. The leading principle of his book is that a group is motivated by an esprit général, which puts an imprint on their lives. Not only mankind, but every group has its own laws, which apply to their members. Hume criticized this approach. He wrote in a note to his Enquiry Concerning the Principles of Morals:

This illustrious writer, however set out with a different theory [in contrast with Hume’s version of utilitarianism], and supposes all right to be founded on certain rapports or relations, which is a system, that, in my opinion, never will be reconciled with true philosophy. Hume did not protest against an approach which starts with the study of relations between men. Relations are all important in Hume’s epistemology in which the relations between things perceived and things experienced gradually acquire the character of a moral universe. However Hume deals with relations between individuals, not collectivities, at least to start with. In modern jargon we should call him a ‘methodological individualist’, which makes him a forerunner of modern economics. This difference of approach is visible in their political philosophy. Both were concerned with the functioning of civil society. For Montesquieu this meant the balancing act between groups to guarantee the social order. Liberty is first of all security, as Montesquieu declares. Liberty is the freedom to do as one likes and the fact that civil society was a powerhouse created a political problem for Hume. Individuals try to better their lives, principally by acquiring wealth. Authority is a static fabric and must be able to withstand the dynamism connected with civil society. Politics for Hume is the effort to maintain the balance between the dynamics of civil society and the social order, which the Magistrate has to maintain.

Montesquieu, it is clear, is thinking of the rule of law and its effects on the safety of the citizens. Hume’s conception of liberty is markedly different. Liberty is the freedom to do as one likes and the fact that civil society was a powerhouse created a political problem for Hume. Individuals try to better their lives, principally by acquiring wealth. Authority is a static fabric and must be able to withstand the dynamism connected with civil society. Politics for Hume is the effort to maintain the balance between the dynamics of civil society and the social order, which the Magistrate has to maintain.

David Hume

3. Montesquieu’s Pouvoirs Intermédiaires and the English Constitution

In a study which, in my estimation, has received too little attention, Jean Jacques Granpré Molière explains how Montesquieu came to experience the English constitution during his stay in England (1729-1733). Back home he wrote a piece called La Liberté Politique (which remained a manuscript) in which he explained that the political system in England preserved the liberty of citizens, because one political power stopped the other. In his De l’Esprit des Lois the famous chapter 6 in book 11 on the English constitution became an example in a more general theory, when Montesquieu launched his theory of the three types of government. In

The idea that democracy is a regime based on the principle of one man one vote is new. Read Hume: democracy is a regime based on representation, as in the case of the Roman Republic.


11 Montesquieu probably also had in mind the provincial estates, which functioned in certain parts of France and which gave representation to the third estate of privileged citizens. The national Estates General had not convened since 1614.

12 Granpré Molière, La Théorie de la Constitution Anglaise chez Montesquieu (Leiden 1972: Presse Universitaire de Leyde).


6 To use l’esprit général as a term for the culture of groups and nations was common usage with a Classical origin. What was new is that Montesquieu analyzed the factors involved in the formation of such an esprit général.

and democratic elements] for the mutual independence of the legislative power (entrusted to both Houses of Parliament\(^1\)), the executive power (in the hands of the monarch) and the judicial power; and since it is only in passing that he deals with the judicial power, his contention is essentially that the legislative and executive branches of government must be in separate hands.\(^5\)

Yet even the separation of the legislative and the executive powers is not what Montesquieu was driving at. His own idea is framed in the following sentence:

> Ces trois puissances devraient former un repos ou une inaction. Mais comme, par le mouvement nécessaire des choses, elles sont contraintes d’aller, elles seront forcées d’aller de concert.\(^6\)

So the intermediate powers of Commons and Peers can block policy emanating from the monarch and if he or they want to get anything done they must work together. Montesquieu was thinking in terms of powers with their specific privileges and statutes. The doctrine of the separation of powers did not fit this situation. That doctrine was for the first time put into practice in the creation of the American Republic where all citizens have the same rights. As John Adams remarked, the greatest innovation of the American constitution was that “there are different orders of offices, but none of men.”\(^17\)

Montesquieu treated contemporary problems within the French monarchy with extraordinary discretion in his *De l’Esprit des Lois*. When he wanted to criticise the method of taxation in France, he referred his readers to practices in Ancient Rome and his chapter on the English constitution served the same purpose. He did not wish to introduce a balance of power English style, let alone a separation of powers into France. His point was that the French nobility must be able to play an active role as intermediate power between King and people. He was hoping against his better judgment that they could play this role, but his political analysis is in the end a form of wishful thinking. The powers in France did not work together. Royal power was ineffective and there was no alternative to its existence.

And Hume? I know of no evidence that he ever directly reacted to Montesquieu’s chapter on the English constitution, but we will see that he cannot have been charmed by the idea of this intermingling of powers.

This is at first sight an odd axiom, because it cannot be applied to the British political system, but that is Hume’s intention. His negative conclusion is that the British political system is not the best, which means to stay in a stable regime. Hume draws this conclusion in another essay, “Of theIndependency of Parliament”. He writes:

> But a limited monarchy admits not of any such stability; nor is it possible to assign to the crown such a determinate degree of power, as will, in every hand, form a proper counterbalance to the other parts of the constitution. This is an unavoidable disadvantage, among the many advantages, attending that species of government.\(^19\)

The problem, according to Hume, is that the balance of power cannot depend on property. The wealth, which the House of Commons represents, would make it the major power in the state that could interfere *ad libitum* in the business of the executive as represented by the monarch. This interference would lead to chaos and eventually to absolutist government. Hume was evidently thinking of the Commonwealth under Oliver Cromwell.

So the lesson was that the House of Commons should be moderate in its demands on the royal government and present its demands to the king in a spirit of moderation. If we keep in mind how extensive the powers allotted to the royal prerogative were, two things become clear. First of all Hume was in favour of a strong executive that could maintain public order and defend the nation. In this respect the role of the monarch in a limited monarchy as Britain in Hume’s view did not differ very much from that of the French king in an absolutist monarchy as Montesquieu did accept it. Secondly, Hume’s idea of a separation of powers excludes the possibility of a parliamentary democracy.\(^20\) No monarch could accept the mandate of the House of Commons as a leading principle and manage to stay in power according to him. In “Of the Origin of Government”, an essay which appeared after his death, Hume gave his final assessment of the nature of this authority:

> It may therefore be pronounced as an universal axiom in politics, *That an hereditary prince, a nobility without vassals, and a people voting by their representatives, form the best MONARCHY, ARISTOCRACY, and DEMOCRACY.*\(^18\)

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20 In which the executive derives its mandate from parliament and the members of parliament have a mandate of the voters.
In this sense, it must be owned [of a free government “which admits of a partition of power among several members"], that liberty is the perfection of civil society; but still authority must be acknowledged essential to its very existence: and in those contests, which so often take place between the one and the other, the latter may, on that account, challenge the preference.21 There is a trade off between authority and liberty. The House of Commons should respect the right of the monarch and his government to exercise authority, and the monarchical government should respect the right of his subjects to conduct their lives in the way they want. Hume remained vague about what that right implied. He gives us no clear definition of the fundamental rights of the citizens and so it is hard to determine when these rights will be violated. In his *Treatise* he considers the possibility of revolt against an existing government and he is parsimonious in admitting the legitimacy of this revolt.

The common rule requires submission; and ‘tis only in cases of grievous tyranny and oppression, that the exception can take place.22 Were the actions of James II a case of grievous tyranny? In describing the revolution of 1688-1689 in his *History of England*,23 Hume was not so sure that the revolution was justifiable. At the same time, from early on in his writing career he was convinced that people make revolution because they want, not because they have a right to do so.

There is another reason for leaving civil society to its own devices. In this way civil society can prosper and create the vitality and fun for doing things. Hume writes:  

In times when industry and the arts flourish, men are kept in perpetual occupation, and enjoy, as their reward, the occupation itself, as well as those pleasures which are the fruit of their labour.24

Take away the possibility for these activities and indolence and fatigue will be present. This was Hume’s image of civil society and the most remarkable aspect of it is that people do not only generate wealth in pursuing their activities, but also have fun and add to the mental health of society.

So Hume’s assessment of the situation, which the revolution of 1688 and its settlement had created, was that it had brought into being a situation which should be handled with care. On the one hand the limited monarchy, which was the result of the revolution, was unstable. On the other hand it was the only regime suitable to guarantee the dynamism of civil society. His recipe was to keep the executive and the legislative powers separate as much as possible.25 Hume’s ideal was an efficient but limited executive that held a close watch on the requirements of an expanding economy. By contrast Montesquieu held a static view of society.26 His concern was how the balance of the existing powers in the French kingdom could guarantee the rule of law. Hume agreed that the administration “must act by general and equal laws”.27 Both the executive and the legislative have the duty to maintain and obey these laws, but


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25 As Montesquieu already remarked, no one talked about an independent judicial power. The situation of that power was too complicated to talk about its independency.
26 His *De l’Esprit des Lois* contains many comments on French history, but they nowhere lead to an analysis of the regime of Louis XV.

Hume had to make way for the dynamism of civil society and hence he advocated his version of the separation of powers.

4. Political Theory and the Enlightenment

Leslie Stephen wrote in 1876:

During the quieter hours of the eighteenth century Englishmen rather played with political theories than seriously discuss them.28 That remark not only applies to Englishmen, but also to Frenchmen and other Europeans. There was a general feeling that the existing regimes might need some tinkering with, but on the whole they met national specifications for stability. Rousseau was of course the obvious exception, but Hume and Montesquieu were not. Their ideas represented the political thought of the Enlightenment on two counts. In the first place they both looked for a policy of moderation, which could correspond with balanced human relations. Secondly, Montesquieu accepted the *status quo* of the political structure for his long ranging discussions, and Hume went so far as to defend it as the only possible recipe for political stability. I have called this a recipe to implement the end of history, by which I mean that it is the only way to ensure political stability in the future.

The idea of the end of history does not put an end to the progression of events through time but, assuming that the right measures are taken, these events will not contain the surprises of unintended effects, which will threaten stability. It is hard to imagine how the French elite thought that the Ancien Régime could survive without drastic reforms. Only a few individuals – Turgot, Gournay and the Physiocrats – saw this need, but they stood no chance against all the interests invested in the Ancien Régime. Perhaps the most surprising aspect of political thought in the French Enlightenment is that when the Estates General convened in May 1789 no one had a clear idea what the alternative to the Ancien Régime should be, except Sieyès who published his famous pamphlet *Qu’est-ce que le Tiers État* in January of that year. That proclaimed that the third estate was the nation. However, he had

no idea what that nation was and how it was supposed to function. Part of an answer to the mystery why the established classes accepted the status quo with equanimity is that the Enlightenment primarily promoted a cultural program of improvement. The philosophers wanted to civilize and to educate, not to undertake political reforms. Yet it remains odd that no one saw the storm of the French Revolution coming. Hume faced a different situation in Britain. The economy was a going concern, but could it be left to its own devices? In most of his economic essays he was optimistic and even complacent in his conclusion that economic activities would lead to social harmony and increasing wealth, but there is one essay in which he was not so confident. Hume and Adam Smith were determined opponents of an increasing public debt. In his essay “Of Public Credit” he writes:

These are men, who have no connexions with the state, who can enjoy their revenue in any part of the globe in which they chuse to reside, who will naturally bury themselves in the capital or in great cities, and who will sink into the lethargy of a stupid and pampered luxury, without spirit, ambition, or enjoyment. Adieu to all ideas of nobility, gentility, and family.

What could the collusion of the royal government with the financiers mean? First of all the royal government by borrowing could bypass parliament, which controlled the expenditure of government. That would destroy the balance of power between parliament and monarch. However the evil influence of the financiers went much further. Corruption could disrupt the existing ties of loyalty and duty within civil society, and government by going on borrowing would destroy itself. The passage quoted from Hume’s “Of Public Credit” has a prophetic quality. The great transformation, which occurred after Hume’s death in 1776, which we call the Industrial Revolution, has certainly destroyed the ties of loyalty and duty as Hume experienced them. Today not only public but also private debts are threatening to disrupt the global economy. If it is true that the cash nexus determines human relations, they do not seem to make for stable relations.

VII. Economics and the Science of Administration

1. Introduction

John Stuart Mill’s Principles of Political Economy of 1848 became Alfred Marshall’s Principles of Economics in 1890. The title of change marks the development of economics into an autonomous field of inquiry. Economists since 1890 could (and would) give advice to politicians about how to administer the economy, but they concentrated their attention on the study of economic relations. That is not how the study of economics started its career. Sébastien de Vauban’s Projet d’une Dixme Royale (1707) dealt with tax reform and William Petty’s Political Arithmetic (published 1690) provided the statistics needed by the administration. For the French Physiocrats and the German Cameralists, fifty years later, the reform of the administration was their main concern. Of course they also saw it as their objective to promote prosperity, but even so they argued as administrators. More prosperity meant a greater yield of taxes. In Britain the perspective was different. There was no need for fundamental economic reforms. Economic forces lead to reform by itself and cleared away obnoxious regulations such as those associated with the guilds. The main message of economists such as Adam Smith and David Hume was to promote the free trade of goods where possible. However, those economists were not doctrinaire advocates of a laissez faire policy. Smith, for instance, accepted the navigation acts (so hated by the Dutch), because they were needed for the defense of the nation. Both Hume and Smith were aware that their observations on economic life in Britain had to fit social and political realities. There is one further general remark to be made before I turn to the specifics of eighteenth-century economic science. Economists of that age are primarily interested in flow or an optimal circulation of goods and not in growth. This becomes clear from Gournay’s slogan laissez faire, laissez passer. Gournay was an important official in Louis XV’s government and his focus was on the elimination of domestic tolls, cumbersome excises and obnoxious custom duties. The notion of the economic circle as developed by Richard Cantillon and François Quesnay served the same objective. Let the flow of goods and services, from production to consumption, take its natural course and so add to prosperity. That is also the message of Adam Smith’s Wealth of Nations. The moment that economic growth turned into a policy, objective came much later. In what follows I will take my examples from Germany, Austria, France

29 Some, like Montesquieu who was promoting the improvement of viniculture, were interested in reform on a personal basis, and we should not forget the impact of these personal efforts. How else would we drink chateau-wines today?


Vincenzo Morolli
Mommsen and Cicero

λογος Verlag, Berlin, May 2015
and Britain, to corroborate the general perspective in all these countries, but at the same time to highlight the major differences between Britain and the continent in the way they exploited opportunities.

2. The Prussia of Frederick the Great

Frederick II (reign 1740-1786), is regarded as the prime example of an enlightened despot. Enlightened he was in the sense that he took a lively interest in the French Enlightenment; he wrote in French and preferred French conversation with his courtiers. In his Anti-Machiavel, which he wrote just before he became king, he announced himself as the first servant of the state and indeed he worked hard as king to fulfill this role.

He was enlightened, because he was in favour of religious toleration and to a certain extent allowed everybody to think for himself, but he ordered them to act as he wished. In the confrontation between the philosophes (so Frederick preferred to regard himself) and the despot, the latter won out.

Frederick was a despot with an iron fist. He had a special reason for behaving like this. He earned his epithet ‘great’, because he almost single handed put Prussia on the map as a major European power. His policy of expansion was not on the agenda of the Enlightenment. The abbé de St. Pierre published a plan for arbitration between the European princes, and Voltaire, though skeptical about the feasibility of such a plan, preferred peaceful cooperation between nations to war and expansionist policies. In this view he was joined by most of the philosophers of the Enlightenment.

Frederick’s plans for reform were geared to his dream of creating a greater Prussia. Prussia had the highest literacy rate in Europe, because Frederick needed well-trained soldiers. Freeing the peasants from feudal burdens was also part of his plans for reform, but in this case Frederick did not get very far, because he not only needed soldiers, but also officers, and those the Prussian Junkers had to provide. So he had to have a regard for their wishes and interests and this made the liberation of the peasants a long winded process that stretched out to the middle of the nineteenth century. Frederick left as a troublesome legacy the militarization of Prussian life, which would haunt Prussia and Germany till the defeat of Germany in 1945 and the disappearance of Prussia from the map of Europe.

The greatest achievement of his reign was the codification of das allgemeine Landrecht. Ernst Ferdinand Klein, a loyal and conservative jurist who helped to create this new code of laws wrote:

Man hat, meiner Meinung nach, nicht wohl getan, dass man den Grossen das Selbstherrschen gar zu sehr angepriesen hat. Die berühmtesten Selbstherrscher waren nicht immer die vorzüglichsten Regenten.32

And so the Prussian king became the victim of his own reforms, because the new code made it impossible that the system of forced labour was abolished and so serfs legally became peasants. However, according to the new regulations, the peasant had to work three days in the week for his lord, but “the empress and the coregent [later Joseph II] found it difficult to enforce even the three days outer limit.”33

In the nineteenth century the Austrian-Hungarian Empire had an efficient bureaucracy. Yet the reforms had come and were coming from above and left little room for democratization until it was too late.

4. The Physiocrats in France

Joseph Schumpeter’s History of Economic Analysis is the bible of that history. The book combines erudition and a mastery of technical details. Schumpeter has a preference for Richard Cantillon’s Essai sur la Nature du Commerce en Général (1755) and Turgot’s Réflexions sur la Formation et la Distribution des Richesses (1769), compared to Quesnay’s Tableau Économique (1758) and to Adam Smith’s Wealth of Nations (1776). Schumpeter writes about Turgot:

Such as it is, ..., Turgot’s theoretical skeleton is, even irrespective of its priority, distinctly superior to the theoretical skeleton of the Wealth of Nations.

And:

It is not too much to say that analytic economics took a century to get where it could have got in twelve years after the publication of Turgot’s treatise had its content been properly understood and absorbed by an alert profession.34

Schumpeter has a preference for those economists who are able to raise economic transactions to a level of abstraction where they become variables in a web of interacting causes. He has a problem with Quesnay and Adam Smith because they start their analysis with one variable - with Quesnay that is the produit net and with Smith it is the quantity of labour – which then more or less monitors the other variables in the economy. Quesnay and Smith are first of all interested in the practical problems of their own time and that


focus determines their approach to economics, and that is why they single out the factor which to them is of the greatest importance. That is also the reason why their thought should take pride of place in this essay.

Before I turn to Quesnay’s Tableau Économique I must mention Jean Claude Maria Vincent de Gournay first. He is an elusive figure in the history of economic thought. Schumpeter praises him “as may have been one of the greatest teachers of economics that ever lived”. However, we know very little about Gournay’s ideas, because he never published anything. He taught Turgot and promoted Cantillon’s work and, as an influential civil servant, he spent his life in trying to reform the French economy. He came from a family of merchants and knew that liberty of trade was more important than its regulation. Quesnay was the physician of the French king and his mistress Mme de Pompadour. As such he lived in an entresol of the palace at Versailles. There he invited his friends and started the physiocratic movement. His followers included the Marquis de Mirabeau (father of the revolutionary whom he had locked up as a young man to teach him a lesson) and Dupont de Nemours, who emigrated during the French Revolution to the United States, where he founded the chemical works, which still bear his name. Quesnay’s major ideas are the produit net, the impôt unique and the circular flow of the economy. The produit net is the simple idea that a farmer sows his grain and the circular route and he warned for épargnes stériles. You could regard him as a precursor of John Maynard Keynes, but it seems more the case that the abstract nature of his scheme did not allow for the distinction between useful and harmful savings (if you want to make the distinction). The plans for reform came to nothing. Turgot, who favoured the idea of the impôt unique and who had learned from Gournay how important it was to introduce a free trade of corn, became contrôleur général des finances (minister of finance and public works) in 1774, and introduced it. It was a bad moment, the seventies had a series of bad harvests and grain prices rose steeply. The clamour of the people rather than the will of the king led to Turgot’s dis-
Agrarian revolution was coined in 1834 and afterwards commentators became aware that something extraordinary new was happening. Subsequently the term agrarian revolution was coined. In the eighteenth century, however, the new developments in industry and agriculture could still be fitted in a familiar world that was not likely to change very much and people could not conceive that it would alter out of recognition. This fact we should keep in mind when I discuss the economic thought of Hume and Adam Smith.40 A great number of competent economists appeared in eighteenth-century Britain, but I want to show how economists took the existing social order for granted, working on the analysis of the economic system. And as Hume and Adam Smith are regarded as creative economists and representative for the ideas of the Enlightenment, they are ideal for pointing out that on the one side they were enthusiastic about new developments and on the other side did not expect that these developments would corrode and eventually destroy the existing social order.41 I already cited Hume’s remark that industrial activities not only produce wealth, but that they invigorate the society and create pleasure. That remark comes from an essay entitled “Of the Refinement of the Arts”. Its original title was “Of Luxury” and in it Hume took issue with the conventional idea that luxury would lead to moral decay. Luxury adds to the comfort of life and the refinement of sensibilities. And that was the reason Hume changed the title of his essay. Writers since Montesquieu took the view that economic activity would lead to peaceful and civilised manners.42 Hume belongs to this group of writers. For him economic activities do not mean that what I take you lose. All participants can profit from the cooperation between economic actors. Cooperation is an essential element of economic transactions. While the Physiocrats emphasized the national aspect of this cooperation, Hume emphasized the international aspects of it: Thus industry, knowledge, and humanity, are linked together by an indissoluble chain, and are found, from experience as well as reason, to be peculiar to the more polished, and, what are commonly denominated, the more luxurious ages.43 Hume and Adam Smith were no liberals in the sense that economic liberty was their first priority. They accepted the regulation of trade for reasons of state and we have seen that Smith accepted the Navigation Act. On the whole they regarded them as sensible, because national defence is more important than wealth. Well-known of course is Adam Smith’s metaphor of the invisible hand:

By preferring the support of domestic industry to that of foreign industry, he intends only his own gain, and he is in this, as in many other cases, led by an invis-

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40 Another Scottish economist of note was Sir James Steuart, who made a plea for the development of the Scottish economy and for this goal was in favour of intervention by the government. See his Inquiry into the Principles of Political Economy (1767) (Edinburgh 1966: Oliver & Boyd), where A.S. Skinner provides a biography in his introduction.

41 I reported in a former essay that Hume had a premonition of this possibility.


43 D. Hume, Of the Refinement in the Arts, Essays, 271.
vable hand to promote an end which was no part of his intention. This quotation is remarkable for two reasons. First Smith was aware (like many of his contemporaries) of the importance of unintended effects. The sum total of human activities is a blind process, which nobody can control. And, secondly, Smith was convinced that this blind process would lead to equilibrium. Donald Winch has warned us not to study Smith from a liberal capitalist perspective. Equilibrium and the unobstructed flow of goods were more important to Smith than economic growth. Smith starts his chapter 2 with his famous definition of the division of labour. This division is not the outcome of human foresight, but of the "very slow and gradual consequence of a certain propensity to truck, barter and exchange one thing for another". This is not propaganda for economic liberalism in a nineteenth-century sense. Smith wants to point out how a natural economic order can come into existence, when people cooperate by pursuing their own interests. In his analysis Smith explains that wages, profits and rent are the component parts of the cost price of a finished product. Labourers earn wages, which means that they are living more or less at the subsistence level. Profit is the recompense of the capitalist who saves and invests. His capital is in effect hoarded labour and so he saves first and then invests. Credit should serve first of all the purpose of facilitating the flow of capital, and it was considered risky to give it for the reason of future expectations. Rent is the recompense for the landlord’s property of land and though Smith is not very clear on this point, he probably regards it as the only monopoly value which is acceptable. The quantity of labour controls the values of the component parts. Schumpeter is critical about this theory of value and calls it a detour from real insight in the economic process, which ends with Ricardo, Mill and Marx. However, in Smith’s world, to make the quantity of labour the measure of value makes sense, because, while the labourer is living at the subsistence level, food prices determine the productivity of the economy. In this respect he was as much a Physiocrat as the Physiocrats themselves, but he adds a new twist to the story based on his experience with the British experience:

The capital error of this system [of the Physiocrats], however, seems to lie in its representing the class of artificers, manufacturers and merchants, as altogether barren and unproductive. His reasoning is simple. If the merchant does not carry grain to the market and so adds value to it, the grain will rot in the fields for the greater part. Smith’s criticism — though the term ‘capital error’ is harsh — does not demolish the Physiocratic scheme but enlarges it. It adds trade and industry to it as independent factors.

Smith’s vision of the role of economics in society comes out clearly in his chapter 4 in Book III, “Of the Principle of the Commercial and Colonial Trade.” In it he offers a sharp and critical account of the monopolies and subsidies in the colonial trade:

The monopoly of the colony trade, therefore, so far as it has turned towards that trade a greater proportion of the capital of Great Britain than what would otherwise have gone to it, has in all cases turned it, from a foreign trade of consumption with the neighbouring, into one with a more distant country; in many cases, from a direct foreign trade of consumption, into a round-about one; and in some cases, from all foreign trade of consumption, into a carrying trade. So the colonial trade disrupts the natural flow of capital based on the symbiosis of agriculture, trade and industry. The irony of Smith’s advocacy is that the Scot who has the reputation of introducing free trade as a slogan in nineteenth-century politics regarded it as a weapon against the merchants, particularly the colonial merchants who tended to outwit other classes in society, the landlords in the first place. And just as Hume, Smith looked askance on those internationally oriented capitalists who threatened the happy symbiosis. He regarded the existing social order of labourers, capitalists and landlords, as the guarantee for an economic equilibrium, which was the product of citizens who were active in pursuing their own interests without hurting the interest of others.

6. Enlightened Political Economy

Reform on the continent meant reform of the rural economy. Efforts in this direction were not spectacularly successful. In Britain the idea was that the civil society could take care of economic progress and according to Smith and Hume, only monopolies, which distorted trade, had to be eliminated. The general notion of enlightened political economy was to create an equilibrium based on the cooperation of all economic agents. Of course the increase of national wealth was a desirable goal, but the main objective was to allow for the optimum flow of goods and capital. Flow might produce more wealth, but flow not wealth was the priority to which economic thought was directed.

The central weakness of this vision of economics was that it paid little attention to the position of the peasants in the land and the labourers in the towns. They had no political rights, very often they had the status of displaced persons who were only registered in criminal records, if at all. And it was regarded as a normal fact of life that they lived on the subsistence level. It was the great challenge of the nineteenth-century to include them in the social and political order.

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44 A. Smith, Wealth of Nations, vol. 2, p. 456. Smith was very proud of this metaphor. He used it twice more, in his Theory of Moral Sentiments and in his History of Astronomy. Smith was the first economist who employed a model to explain economic relations and was aware that the model influenced what he saw. He was much more intelligent than Schumpeter takes him for.
46 A. Smith, The Wealth of Nations, vol. 1, 1, 2, & 1, p. 25.
48 If we can catch Smith walking on one leg it is because of his distinction between productive labour, which adds value to the economy, and unproductive labour that does not. Civil servants and schoolteachers are in the latter category. And their example shows that the distinction cannot be made, for of course they add value to the economy, even if only indirectly.
The Notion of Time in *The Spectator* and in *Le Spectateur Français*

The subject of this article is the idea of time in two Eighteenth-Century periodicals, namely in *The Spectator* (1711-1712) by Addison and Steele and in *Le Spectateur Français* (1721-1724) by Marivaux; this study will also make use of articles from both periodicals.

Addison was a man of great culture and a fervent believer; his life was characterised by a strong religious commitment, which not only pervaded his everyday life but also overflowed into influencing his works in a tangible manner. This is why he always gives time a religious value when he refers to it, inserting this concept into a reality which sees the divine reward of afterlife as its goal. In the article entitled “The vision of Mirzah”, Addison presents the reader his idea of time through the allegorical tale of a vision of a boundless landscape, specifically an immense valley, characterized by some fog, water, a bridge, birds, islets, stretches of flowers and fountains. Even though these elements are part of the same vision, they are inside two different landscapes, one gloomy and distressing, the other harmonious and reassuring. The first one, characterised by a valley with thick fog at the edges and an expanse of water inside, represents “that portion of eternity that is called time” 1, and human existence is represented by a bridge. The bridge, in fact, crosses the sea of water but it is full of danger, snares and deceptions. Very few manage to cross it unharmed: the majority fall and are swallowed up by the water. Vultures, ravens, cormorants and harpies fly above the human beings and perch on the sides of the bridge: tradition gives these birds the negative values of envy, avarice, superstition, and desperation. The bridge, which represents our life, is the only way that God has given man to save himself from eternal darkness and to reach paradise: it represents two realities, material and spiritual. As for physical reality, the bridge represents the passing of instants, minutes, hours, days and years, therefore the “physicalness” of human existence. This bridge, which represents the earthly life, is the only means of reaching a destination: it allows man to pass over an obstacle and move from one place to another but is limited by and in time. The bridge, representing the lifetime, has a beginning and an end, just as a human life covers a period of time which is negligible in the context of eternity and men have to cross this bridge in an appropriate manner without falling into the traps it conceals. These traps are moral dangers (and this is the moral value of the bridge itself), as indicated above, but there is a safe way of crossing the bridge, which is to use well the period of time given to each human being in order to guarantee eternal rewards. The best way of doing this is firstly to avoid idleness, father of all vices, “to give advice to ignorant people, do justice to a worthy man, converse with a “discret and virtuous” friend, or to spend the time in refined pastimes such as art or music or, even better, reading “pleasant and useful” authors2.

Addison often reminds his public that the bridge, which is his life, is, He who has always been and who will always be: eternity is His essential

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1 Addison 1973, 159.
2 Addison 1973, 93.
3 Addison 1987, 394.
4 Stempel 1975, 63-78.
5 Addison 1973, 94.
characteristic and time with its limits does not apply to Him. Addison maintains that this concept may be too difficult for a human mind, in the same way that notions of time, space and eternity are difficult to envisage, but he explains the incomprehensibility of such notions as follows: in the vision of Mirzah, the expanse of water that Mirzah manages to see is only a "part of the great sea of eternity [...] that portion of eternity called time" but in reality the view of this landscape is not complete because there is some fog at the two ends of the immense quantity of water that blocks the complete vision. This means that man, no matter how much he tries to "see" inside things and understand their meaning, is never completely able to, because his mind is too limited for concepts that are so vast. The time and space in which man experiences his existence are the only realities he manages to perceive: he can't have any knowledge of the past and the future, because they do not belong to him. Only the present belongs to him, because it is tangible, while the rest is simply a blurred image: "the only Idea of any type of Duration that we can have is the one through which we, and all other created Beings, exist".

We know there has been a past, just as there is the certainty of a future, but it is only the present that counts because it is being lived, witnessed by the life of each individual. Human life therefore finds its place between past and future, but from a genuinely material and physical point of view, man has no notion of these realities. The only idea regarding the past that he can have, explains Addison, is that it has happened, it is finished, and that at one time it was also a present: "we consider Eternity, or infinite Endurance, as a Line that has no beginning and no end [...] in our Meditations of Eternity, we consider the Time that is present for us as the Midpoint (intended as what remains in the middle) that divides the whole Line into two equal parts. This is why many observant authors compare present time to an isthmus or to a narrow tongue of earth that rises in the middle of an Ocean, incommensurably free on each side of it".

Man, however, can employ two means of transcending the boundaries of time: literary works and imagination. The characteristic of books, maintains Addison, is that they last beyond time: they persist through years, centuries, eternity, until Nature itself, being the world, ends. This statement may seem a little too bold: do not statues and monuments in general have the same ability to endure through the years, from generation to generation and from century to century? Addison replies that only written works can surpass the limits of time and become immortal and eternal because copies of them can be made to replace, if necessary, the original work. "Men express their Ideas in Books which, thanks to this great Invention in these recent years, can last as long as the Sun and the Moon, and only perish in the general destruction of Nature [...] Books are the inheritance that a formidable Genius leaves to the Human Race, they (books) are transferred from Generation to Generation as gifts to Posterity to those who are not yet born [...] Statues can last but a few thousand years, Buildings still less, and Colours even less that Buildings [...] Authors (of literary works) [...] can multiply the Originals, [...] make Copies of their Originals".

**Imagination**

Another means to exceed the limits of time and even space is imagination. This mental faculty allows man to relive in his minds moments, landscapes and sensations which have appeared at a certain point in our life, a moment that has passed but which can still be present. Imagination therefore creates a bond between past and present, and brings to life what has passed and is finished: the contemplation of a painting, a statue, a landscape fills the mind with a sublime pleasure that can be relived each time the Imagination brings these visions back to memory. On this subject Addison gives the example of a prisoner: "thanks to this faculty (Imagination) a man in prison can entertain his mind with landscapes that are more beautiful that those he can find, as a free man, in nature". Imagination has no limits, so it leads the spectator or reader anywhere he wants to go and memories can be kept alive within his mind.

**Le Spectateur Français**

In the pages dedicated to the pleasures of imagination there are some passages which refer to other passages present in article XVII of *Le Spectateur Français* by Marivaux: there is nothing that revives the sight more than rivers or waterfalls where the landscape changes every second, over and over, and delights the sight each moment with something new. "We are quickly tired of watching hills and valleys where each thing remains fixed and stable in the same place and position, but we find our thoughts slightly agitated at the sight of those objects because they are always moving and run away from beneath the eye of the spectator". This brief extract places the emphasis not only on the beauty of certain types of landscape but also on the fleetingness/transition of the moment. Time moves on relentlessly: one moment is never the same as another. In truth, instants of time follow each other so quickly that we often do not even have time to enjoy the moment. In the vision that Addison proposes of these landscapes that change incessantly and quickly, we become aware of the impossibility of making the moment our own and the inability to stop time from passing, as Marivaux maintains in an article where he reports the thoughts of a woman in her seventies:

> I am seventy-four years old so it’s a long time since I was born [...] long time ago. But I am wrong, I live only in this moment which is already passing but another instant is coming [...] in this way my life

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6 Addison 1973, 590.
7 Addison 1973, 590.
8 Addison 1973, 166.
10 Brett 1969, 17.
11 Addison 1973, 412.
starts again every day so young or old, we will all have the same age.\textsuperscript{12}

The idea of time passing, of the moment that escapes and is no longer, and the idea that time makes man all the same are the characteristics of this short text. Man has to live in the present, in this moment, now: I am no longer in the past and I am not even in the future, which is nothing more than a becoming. This concept reminds us of Saint Augustine’s thought on time. He in fact maintains that time is made up of the past, the present and the future and that “the being of the present is a form of the past, the present and the future in fact maintains that time is made up in a reality where there are no limits: it lives and is renewed with each passing moment. While Addison makes eternity agree with the after-world, Marivaux makes eternity coincide with material time, that of human existence. Our essence and our soul enable us to break the chains that bind us to time and everything becomes relative if considered from this point of view.

The Real Essence of Living
For Marivaux it is therefore possible to connect this present moment, conceived as the real essence of living, with the artistic production (on the contrary Addison writes articles after careful reflection):

Reader, I do not wish to deceive you in any way and I warn you that it is not at all an Author that you are going to read here. An Author is a man who, in his leisure hours, takes a vague fancy to reflecting on one or several subjects; and one could call that thinking about what counts for these authors is the will to create a link with the reader, a dialogue with the readers. In both cases the artistic production is therefore free: it does not feel himself to be an author in the strict sense of the word, because he only writes when his spirit is ready to record on paper its sensations. Literary production is therefore free: it does not have barriers or rules to adhere to, but lives in the present. His writing is what Addison calls wild, almost rebellious and uncontrollable, and is the fruit of sudden promptings of the mind, transferred directly to the page without being tidied up.\textsuperscript{15}

This difference between these two authors is understandable: the English periodical wanted to improve the customs and habits of its readers, so its style and contents had to be organized in a coherent, very convincing manner, while for Marivaux the gazette was a dialogue with the readers. In both cases what counts for these authors is the will to create a link with the reader, a dialogue made up of exchanges of ideas and opinions, at times in the form of a letter, at times simply using essays and stories. It is a dialogue which, over the centuries, has remained alive and fascinating and which has surpassed the limits of time to expand into an endless future, obtaining that very literary immortality which Addison and Steele so often praised.

Marivaux underlines once more the importance of the moment: he does not feel himself to be an author in the strict sense of the word, because he only writes when his spirit is ready to record on paper its sensations. Literary production is therefore free: it does not have barriers or rules to adhere to, but lives in the present. His writing is what Addison calls wild, almost rebellious and uncontrollable, and is the fruit of sudden promptings of the mind, transferred directly to the page without being tidied up.\textsuperscript{15}

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\textsuperscript{12} Deloffre, Frédéric/ Gilot Michel 2001, 208.
\textsuperscript{13} Reale, Giovanni/Antiseri Dario, 1983, 345.
\textsuperscript{14} Deloffre, Frédéric/ Gilot Michel 2001, 114.
\textsuperscript{15} Addison 1973, 476.