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Thomas Carlyle

Thomas Carlyle (4 December 1795 – 5 February 1881) was a Scottish philosopher, satirical writer, essayist, translator, historian, mathematician, and teacher. Considered one of the most important social commentators of his time, he presented many lectures during his lifetime with certain acclaim in the Victorian era. One of those conferences resulted in his famous work On Heroes, Hero-Worship, and The Heroic in History, where he explains that the key role in history lies in the actions of the "Great Man", claiming that "the history of the world is but the biography of great men".

A respected historian, his 1837 book The French Revolution: A History was the inspiration for Charles Dickens’ 1859 novel A Tale of Two Cities, and remains popular today. Carlyle's 1834 Sartor Resartus is a notable philosophical novel.

A great polemicist, Carlyle coined the term "the dismal science" for economics, in his essay "Occasional Discourse on the Negro Question". He also wrote articles for the Edinburgh Encyclopaedia, and his "Occasional Discourse on the Negro Question" (1849) remains controversial. On a Christian, Carlyle lost his faith while attending the University of Edinburgh, later adopting a form of deism.

In mathematics, he is known for the Carlyle circle, a method used in quadratic equations and for developing ruler-and-compass constructions of regular polygons.

Early life and influences

Carlyle was born in Ecclefechan in Dumfriesshire. His parents determinedly afforded him an education at Annan Academy, Annan, where he was bullied and tormented so much that he left after three years. His father was a member of the Burgher secession church. In early life, his family's (and nation's) strong Calvinist beliefs powerfully influenced the young man.

After attending the University of Edinburgh, Carlyle became a mathematics teacher, first in Annan and then in Kirkcaldy, where he became close friends with the mystic Edward Irving. (Confusingly, there is another Scottish Thomas Carlyle, born a few years later, connected to living via work with the Catholic Apostolic Church.)

In 1819-21, Carlyle returned to the University of Edinburgh, where he suffered an intense crisis of faith and a conversion, which provided the material for Sartor Resartus ("The Tailor Retaliated"), which first brought him to the public's notice.

Carlyle developed a painful stomach ailment, possibly gastric ulcers, that remained throughout his life and likely contributed to his reputation as a crotchety, argumentative, somewhat disagreeable personality. His prose style, famously cranky and occasionally savage, helped cement an air of irascibility.

Carlyle's thinking became heavily influenced by German idealism, in particular the work of Johann Gottlieb Fichte. He established himself as an expert on German literature in a series of essays for Fraser's Magazine, and by translating German works, notably Goethe's novel Wilhelm Meisters Lehrjahre. He also wrote a Life of Schiller (1825).

In 1826, Thomas Carlyle married fellow intellectual Jane Baillie Welsh, whom he had met through Edward Irving during his period of German studies. In 1827, he applied for the Chair of Moral Philosophy at St Andrews University but was not appointed. A residence provided by Jane's estate was a house on Craigenputtock, a farm in Dumfriesshire, Scotland. He often wrote about his life at Craigenputtock - in particular, "It is certain that for living and thinking in I have never since found in the world a place so favourable." Here Carlyle wrote some of his most distinguished essays, and began a lifelong friendship with the American essayist Ralph Waldo Emerson.

In 1831, the Carlyles moved to London, settling initially in lodgings at 4 (now 33) Ampton Street, Kings Cross. In 1834, they moved to 5 (now 24) Cheyne Row, Chelsea which has since been preserved as a museum to Carlyle's memory. He became known as the 'Sage of Chelsea', and a member of a literary circle which included the essayists Leigh Hunt and John Stuart Mill.

Here Carlyle wrote The French Revolution: A History (2 volumes, 1837), a historical study concentrating both on the oppression of the poor of France and on the horrors of the mob unleashed. The book was immediately successful.

Writings

Early writings

By 1821, Carlyle abandoned the clergy as a career and focused on making a life as a writer. His first fiction was "Oorlers and Jonson", one of several abortive articles appraising the life and works of various poets and men of letters, including Goethe, Voltaire and Riderott.

Sartor Resartus

His first major work, Sartor Resartus ("The Tailor Retaliated") was begun as an article on "the philosophy of clothes", and surprised him by growing into a full-length book. He wrote it in 1831 at his home (which Jane provided for him from her estate), Craigenputtock, and was intended to be a new kind of book: simultaneously factual and fictional, serious and satirical, speculative and historical. Ironically, it commented on its own formal structure while forcing the reader to confront the problem of where "truth" is to be found. Sartor Resartus was first serialised in Fraser's Magazine from 1832 to 1834. The text presents itself as an unnamed editor's attempt to introduce the British public to Diogenes Teufelsdröckh, a German philosopher of clothes, who is in fact a fictional creation of Carlyle's. The Editor is struck with admiration, but for the most part is confounded by Teufelsdröckh's outlandish philosophy, of which the Editor translates choice selections. To try to make sense of Teufelsdröckh's philosophy, the Editor tries to piece together a biography, but with limited success. Underneath the German philosopher's seemingly ridiculous statements, there are mordant attacks on Utilitarianism and the commercialisation of British society. The fragmentary biography of Teufelsdröckh that the Editor recovers from a chaotic mass of documents reveals the philosopher's [Carlyle's] spiritual journey. He develops a contempt for the corrupt condition of modern life. He contemplates the "Everlasting No" of refusal, comes to the 'Centre of Indifference', and eventually embraces the "Everlasting Yea". This voyage from...
Everlasting Yea and No

The Everlasting Yea is Carlyle's name in the book for the spirit of faith in God in an express attitude of clear, resolute, steady, and uncompromising antagonism to the Everlasting No, and the principle that there is no such thing as faith in God except in such antagonism against the spirit opposed to God. The Everlasting No is Carlyle's name for the spirit of unbelief in God, especially as it manifested itself in his own, or rather Teufelsdrücker, warfare against it, the spirit which, as embodied in the Mephistopheles of Goethe, is forever denying - der stets verneint - the reality of the divine in the thoughts, the character, and the life of humanity, and has a malicious pleasure in scoffing at everything high and noble as hollow and void.

In Sartor Resartus, the narrator moves from the "Everlasting No" to the "Everlasting Yea," but only through "The Centre of Indifference," a position of agnosticism and detachment. Only after reducing desires and certainty, aiming at a Buddha-like "indifference," can the narrator realise affirmation. In some ways, this is similar to the contemporary philosopher Søren Kierkegaard's "leap of faith" in Concluding Unscientific Postscript.

Worship of Silence and Sorrow

Based on Goethe's having described Christianity as the "Worship of Sorrow," and our highest religion, for the Son of Man," Carlyle adds, interpreting this, "there is no noble crown, well worn or even ill worn, but is a crown of thorns.

The "Worship of Silence" is Carlyle's name for the sacred respect for restraint in speech till "thought has silently matured itself... to hold one's tongue till some meaning lie behind it to set it wagging," a doctrine which many misunderstand, almost wilfully, it would seem; silence being to him the very womb out of which all great things are born.

The French Revolution

In 1843, Carlyle moved to London from Craigmillar to begin to move among celebrated company. Within the United Kingdom, Carlyle's success was ensured by the publication of his three-volume work The French Revolution: A History in 1837. After the completed manuscript of the first volume was accidentally burned by the philosopher John Stuart Mill's maid, Carlyle wrote the second and third volumes before rewriting the first from scratch.

The resulting work had a passion new to historical writing. In a politically charged Europe, filled with fears and hopes of revolution, Carlyle's account of the motivations and urges that inspired the events in France seemed powerfully relevant. Carlyle's style of historical writing stressed the immediacy of action - often using the present tense - and incorporating many different perspectives on the changing events.

For Carlyle, chaotic events demanded what he called 'heroes' to take control over the competing forces erupting within society. While not denying the importance of economic and practical explanations for events, he saw these forces as 'spiritual' - the hopes and aspirations of people that took the form of ideas, and were often ossified into ideologies ("formulas" or 'sens', as he called them). In Carlyle's view, only dynamic individuals could master events and direct these spiritual energies effectively: as soon as ideological 'formulas' replaced heroic human action, society became dehumanised.

Charles Dickens used Carlyle's work as a secondary source for the events of the French Revolution in his novel A Tale of Two Cities.

Heroes and Hero Worship

Like the opinions of many deep thinkers of the time, these ideas were influential on the development and rise of both Socialism and Fascism. Carlyle moved towards his later thinking during the 1840s, leading to a break with many old friends and allies, such as Mill and, to a lesser extent, Emerson. His belief in the importance of heroic leadership found form in the book On Heroes, Hero-Worship, and The Heroic in History, in which he was seen to compare a wide range of different types of heroes, including Otto von Bismarck, Charles Darwin, Napoleon, William Shakespeare, Dante, Samuel Johnson, Jean-Jacques Rousseau, Robert Burns, John Knox, and Martin Luther.

The lectures of Carlyle's are regarded as an early and powerful formulation of the Great Man theory.

The book was based on a course of lectures he had given. The French Revolution had brought Carlyle fame, but little money. His friends worked to set him on his feet by organising courses of public lectures for him, drumming up an audience and selling tickets. Carlyle did not like lecturing, but found that he could do it, and more importantly that it brought in some much-needed money. Between 1837 and 1840, Carlyle delivered four such courses of lectures. The final course was on "Heroes." From the notes he had prepared for this course, he wrote out his book, reproducing the curious effects of the spoken discourses.

"The Hero as Man of Letters" (1840):

- "In books lies the soul of the whole Past; the articulate audible voice of the Past, when the body and material substance of it has altogether vanished like a dream."
- "A man lives by believing something; not by debating and arguing about many things."
- "All that mankind has done, thought, gained or been: it is lying as in magic preservation in the pages of books."
- "What we become depends on what we read after all of the professors have finished with us. The greatest university of all is a collection of books."
- "The suffering man ought really to consume his own smoke; there is no good in emitting smoke till you have made it into fire."
- "Adversity is sometimes hard upon a man; but for one man who can stand prosperity, there are a hundred that will stand adversity." (Often shortened to "can't stand prosperity" as an unknown quote.)
- "Not what I have, but what I do, is my kingdom."
Later work
All these books were influential in their day, especially on writers such as Charles Dickens and John Ruskin. However, after the Revolutions of 1848, and political agitation in the United Kingdom, Carlyle published a collection of essays entitled "Latter-Day Pamphlets" (1850) in which he attacked democracy as an absurd social ideal, while equally condemning hereditary aristocratic leadership. Two of these essays, No. I: "The Present Times" and No. II: "Model Prisons" were reviewed by Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels in April 1850. Carlyle criticised hereditary aristocratic leadership as "deadening", however, he criticised democracy as nonsensical, mocking the idea that objective truth could be discovered by weighing up the votes for it. Government should come from those most able to lead. But how such leaders were to be found, and how to follow their lead, was something Carlyle could not (or would not) clearly say. Marx and Engels agreed with Carlyle as far as his criticism of the hereditary aristocracy. However they criticised Carlyle's plan to use democracy to find the "Noblest" and the other "Nobles" that are to form the government by the "ablest persons. Anthony Trollope for his part considered that in the Pamphlets "the grain of sense is so smothered in a sack of the shoreest trash...He has one idea - a hatred of spoken and acted falsehood; and on this he harps through the whole eight pamphlets". A century later, Northrop Frye would similarly speak on Carlyle's "tanutram prose... rhetorical ecstapism".

In later writings, Carlyle sought to examine instances of heroic leadership in history. The Letters and Speeches of Oliver Cromwell (1845) presented a positive image of Cromwell: someone who attempted to weld order from the conflicting forces of reform in his own day. Carlyle sought to make Cromwell's words live in their own terms by quoting him directly, and then commenting on the significance of these words in the troubled context of the time. Again this was intended to make the "past" "present" to his readers: "he is epic, still living".

His essay "Occasional Discourse on the Negro Question" (1849) suggested that slavery should never have been abolished, or else replaced with servitude. It had kept order, and argued force, with work which would otherwise have been lazy and reckless. "West Indian blacks are emancipated and it, appears, refuse to work." This, and Carlyle's support for the repressive measures of Governor Edward Eyre in Jamaica during the Morant Bay rebellion, further alienated him from his old liberal allies. As Governor of the Colony, Eyre, fearful of an island wide uprising, brutally suppressed the rebellion, and had many black peasants killed. Hundreds were flogged. He also authorised the execution of George William Gordon, a mixed-race colonial assemblyman who was suspected of involvement in the rebellion. These events created great controversy in Britain, resulting in demands for Eyre to be arrested and tried for murdering Gordon. John Stuart Mill organised the Jamaica Committee, which demanded his prosecution and included some well-known British liberal intellectuals (such as John Bright, Charles Darwin, Frederic Harrison, Thomas Hughes, Thomas Henry Huxley, and Herbert Spencer).

Carlyle set up rival Governor Eyre Defense and Aid Committee for the defence, arguing that Eyre had acted decisively to restore order. His supporters included John Ruskin, Charles Kingsley, Charles Dickens, Alfred Tennyson and John Tyndall. Twice Eyre was charged with murder, but the cases never proceeded.

In 1852, he made his first trip to Germany to gather material, visiting the scenes of Frederick's battles and noting their topography. He made another trip to Germany to study battlefields in 1858. The work comprised six volumes; the first two volumes appeared in 1858, the third in 1862, the fourth in 1864 and the last two in 1865. Emerson considered it "infinitely the wittiest book that was ever written". James Russell Lowell pointed out some faults, but wrote: "The figures of most historians seem like dolls stuffed with bran, whose whole substance runs out through any hole that criticism may tear in them; but Carlyle's are so real in comparison, that, if you prick them, they bleed."
The work was studied as a textbook in the military academies of Germany. David Daiches, however, later concluded that "since his idea of Frederick is not really born out by the evidence, his mythic epic effort partially fails"

The effort involved in the writing of the book took its toll on Carlyle, who became increasingly depressed, and subject to various probably psychosomatic ailments. In 1853 he wrote a letter to his sister describing the construction of a small penthouse room over his home in Chelsea, intended as a soundproof writer's room. Unfortunately, the skylight made it "the noisiest room in the house"

Last works
Later writings were generally short essays, notably the (unsuccessful) The Early Kings of Norway, a series on early-medieval Norwegian warlords. Also An Essay on the Portraits of John Knox appeared in 1875, attempting to prove that the best-known portrait of John Knox did not depict the Scottish prelate. This was linked to Carlyle's long interest in historical portraiture, which had earlier fuelled his project to found a gallery of national portraits, fulfilled by the creation of the National Portrait Gallery, London, and the Scottish National Portrait Gallery. He was elected a Foreign Honorary Member of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences in 1878.

London Library
Carlyle was the chief instigator in the foundation of the London Library in 1841. He had become frustrated by the facilities available at the British Museum Library, where he was often unable to find a seat (obliging him to perch on ladders), where he complained that the enforced close confinement with his fellow readers gave him "a museum headache", where the books were unavailable for loan, and in comparison, that feelings were mutual, but social circumstances made the marriage impossible, as Carlyle was then poor. Both Margaret and Kitty have been suggested as the original of "Bluming", Teufelsdröckh's beloved, in Sartor Resartus.

Thomas also had a friendship with writer Geraldine Jewsbury starting in 1840. During that year Jewsbury was going through a depressive state and also experiencing religious doubt. She wrote to Carlyle for guidance and also thanked him for his well-written essays. Eventually Carlyle invited Jewsbury out to Cheyne Row, where Carlyle and Jane resided. Jewsbury and Jane from then on had a close friendship and Carlyle also helped Jewsbury get on to the English literary scene.

Private life
Carlyle had a number of would-be romances before he married Jane Welsh, important as a literary figure in her own right. The most notable were with Margaret Gordon, a pupil of his friend Edward Irving. Even after he met Jane, he became enamoured of Kitty Kirkpatrick, the daughter of a British officer and an Indian princess. William Dalmyns, a follower of White Mughals, suggests that feelings were mutual, but social circumstances made the marriage impossible, as Carlyle was then poor. Both Margaret and Kitty have been suggested as the original of "Bluming", Teufelsdröckh's beloved, in Sartor Resartus.

Marriage
Carlyle married Jane Welsh in 1826. He met Welsh through his friend and her tutor Edward Irving, with whom she came to have a mutual romantic (although not intimate) attraction. Welsh was the subject of Leightt Hunt's poem, "Jenny kiss'd Me".

Their marriage proved to be one of the most famous, well documented, and unhappy of literary unions. Over 9000 letters between Carlyle and his wife have been published showing the couple had an affection for each other marred by frequent and angry quarrels.

It was very good of God to let Carlyle and Mrs Carlyle marry one another, and so make only two people miserable and not four.

— Samuel Butler

Carlyle became increasingly alienated from his wife. Carlyle's biographer James Anthony Froude published (posthumously) his opinion that the marriage remained unconsummated due to impotence. The marriage has also been alleged to have been unconsummated due to impotence by author Frank Harris.

Although she had been an invalid for some time, her wife's sudden death in 1866 was unexpected and it greatly distressed Carlyle who was moved to write his highly self-critical "Reminiscences of Jane Welsh Carlyle", published posthumously.

Later life

London Library

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Later life

Death

Upon Carlyle's death on 5 February 1881 in London interment in Westminster Abbey was offered but rejected due to his explicit wish to be buried beside his parents in Ecclefechan. His final words were, "So is death. Well!"

Biography

Carlyle would have preferred that no biography of him were written, but when he heard that his wishes would not be respected and several people were waiting for him to die before they published, he retented and supplied his friend James Anthony Froude with many of his and his wife's papers. Carlyle's essay about his wife was included in Reminiscences, published shortly after his death by Froude, who also published the Letters and Memorials of Jane Welsh Carlyle annotated by Carlyle himself. Froude's Life of Carlyle was published over 1882-84. The frankness of this book was unheard of by the usually respectful standards of 19th-century biographies of the period. Froude's work was attacked by Carlyle's family, especially his nephew, Alexander Carlyle and his niece, Margaret Atkén Carlyle. However, the biography in question was consistent with Carlyle's own conviction that the flaws of heroes should be openly discussed, without diminishing their achievements. Froude, who had been designated by Carlyle himself as his biographer-to-be, was acutely aware of this belief. Froude's defence of his decision, My Relations With Carlyle, was published posthumously in 1903, including a reprint of Carlyle's 1873 will, in which Carlyle equivocated: "Express biography of me I had really rather that there should be none." Nevertheless, Carlyle in the will simultaneously and completely deferred to Froude's judgement on the matter, whose "decision is to be taken as mine."

Authors lifetime editions:

- There are several published "Collected Works" of Carlyle:
  - The Centennial edition, Chapman and Hall, 30 vols, 1896-99 (with reprints to at least 1907). Introductions by John Stuart Mill, who read Carlyle's biography of Frederick to Hitler during his last days in 1945. Many satirists of the 18th century in England and for forging a new tradition of Victorian era, criticism of progress known as page writing. Sartor Resartus can be seen both as an extension of the chaotic, sceptical satires of Jonathan Swift and Lawrence Sterne and as an enunciation of a new point of view on values.
  - The Library edition, Chapman and Hall, 34 vols (30 vols 1869-71, 3 additional vols added 1871 and one more 1875). The most lavish lifetime edition, it sold for 6 to 9 shillings per volume (or £1.5 the set)
  - People's edition, Chapman and Hall, 39 vols (37 vols 1871-74, 2 extra volumes added in 1874 and 1878). Carlyle insisted the price be kept to 2 shillings per volume.
  - Cabinet edition, Chapman and Hall, 37 vols in 18, 1874 (printed from the plates of the People's Edition)

Posthumous editions:

- Centennial edition, Chapman and Hall, 30 vol, 1896-99 (with reprints to at least 1907). Introductions by Henry Duff Traill. The text is based on the People's edition, and it is used by many scholars as the standard edition of Carlyle's works.

Influence

Tom Carlyle is notable both for his continuation of older traditions of the Tory satirists of the 18th century in England and for forging a new tradition of Victorian era, criticism of progress known as page writing. Sartor Resartus can be seen both as an extension of the chaotic, sceptical satires of Jonathan Swift and Lawrence Sterne and as an enunciation of a new point of view on values.

Carlyle's belief in the continued use to humanity of the heroic in history, is stated succinctly at the end of his essay on Friedrich the Great, Beyond Good and Evil. Carlyle's distaste for democracy and his belief in charismatic leadership was appealing to Joseph Goebbels, who read Carlyle's biography of Frederick to Hitler during his last days in 1945. Many critics in the 20th century identified Carlyle as an influence on fascism and Nazism. Ernst Cassirer argued in My The State of that Carlyle's hero worship contributed to 20th-century ideas of political leadership that became part of fascist political ideology.

Sartor Resartus has recently been recognised once more as a unique masterpiece, anticipating many major philosophical and cultural developments, from Existentialism to Postmodernism. It has been argued that his critique of ideological forms in The French Revolution provides a good account of the ways in which revolutionary cultures turn into repressive dogmatisms.

Essentially a Romantic, Carlyle attempted to reconcile Romantic affirmations of feeling and freedom with respect for historical and political fact. Many believe that he was always more attracted to the idea of heroic struggle itself, than to any specific goal for which the struggle was being made. However, Carlyle's belief in the continued use to humanity of the Hero. If a man is stated succinctly at the end of his essay on Muhammad (in On Heroes, Hero Worship & The Heroic in History), in which he concludes that: "the Great Man was always as lightning out of Heaven, the rest of men waited for him like fuel, and then they too would flame."

A bust of Carlyle is in the Hall of Heroes of the National Wallace Monument in Stirling.

Works

- (1829) Signs of the Times. The Victorian Web
- (1833-34) Sartor Resartus. Project Gutenberg
- (1840) Chartism. Google Books
- (1841) On Heroes, Hero-Worship, and The Heroic in History. Project Gutenberg
- (1843) Past and Present. Project Gutenberg
- (1845) Oliver Cromwell's Letters and Speeches, with Elucidations, ed. Thomas Carlyle, 3 vol. (often reprinted). Online version. Another online version;
- (1849) "Occasional Discourse on the Negro Question.” Fraser's Magazine (anonymous). Online text
- (1850) Latter-Day Pamphlets. Project Gutenberg
- (1851) The Life of John Sterling. Project Gutenberg
- (1858) History of Friedrich II of Prussia. Index to Project Gutenberg texts
- (1867) Shooting Niagara: and After. Online Text
- (1875) The Early Kings of Norway. Project Gutenberg
- (1882) Reminiscences of my Irish Journey in 1849. Online text
- (1892) "Lectures on the History of Literature"

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Definitions

Carlyle had quite a few unusual definitions at hand, which were collected by the Nuttall Encyclopedia. Some include:

Centre of Immunities
An expression of Carlyle's to signify that wherever any one is, he is in touch with the whole universe of being, and is, if he knew it, as near the heart of it there as anywhere else he can be.

Eleutheromania
A mania or frantic zeal for freedom.

Gigman
Carlyle's name for a man who prides himself on, and pays all respect to, respectability. It is derived from a definition once given in a court of justice by a witness who, having described a person as respectable, was asked by the judge in the case what he meant by the word; "one that keeps a gig" was the answer. Carlyle also refers to "gigmanity" at large.

Hallowed Fire
The Carlyle doctrine that Rights are nothing till they have realised and established themselves as Mights; they are rights first only then.

Mights and Rights
The name given by Carlyle in his Latter-Day Pamphlets, in the one on Jesuitism, to the widespread philosophy of the time, which regarded the human being as a mere creature of appetite instead of a creature of God endowed with a soul, as having no nobler idea of well-being than the gratification of desire - that his only Heaven, and the reverse of it his Hell.

Plagnoton of Undershoot
Carlyle's name for a "captain of industry" or member of the manufacturing class.

Present Time
Defined by Carlyle as "the youngest born of Eternity, child and heir of all the past times, with their good and evil, and parent of all the future with new questions and significance," on the right or wrong understanding of which depend the issues of life or death to us all, the sphinx riddle given to all of us to read as we would live and not die.

Prinzenslaub (the stealing of the princes)
Name given to an attempt to satisfy a private grudge of his, on the part of Kunz von Kaufungen to carry off, on the night of 7 July 1455, two Saxon princes from the castle of Altenburg, in which he was defeated by apprehension at the hands of a collier named Schmidt, through whom he was handed over to justice and beheaded. See Carlyle's account of this in his Miscellaneous.

Printed Paper
Carlyle's satirical name for the literature of France prior to the Revolution.

Progress of the Species
Carlyle's name for the literature of the day which does nothing to help the progress in question, but keeps idly boasting of the fact, taking all the credit to itself, like French Poet Jean de la Fontaine's fly on the axle of the careening chariot soliloquising, "What a dust I raise!"

Sauerteig
(i.e. leaven), an imaginary authority alive to the "celestial infernal" fermentation that goes on in the world, who has an eye specially to the evil elements at work, and to whose opinion Carlyle frequently appeals in his condemnatory verdict on sublunary things.

The Conflux of Eternities
Carlyle's expressive phrase for time, as in every moment of it a centre in which all the forces to and from eternity meet and unite, so that by no past and no future can we be brought nearer to Eternity than where we at any moment of Time are; the Present Time, the youngest born of Eternity, being the child and heir of all the Past times with their good and evil, and the parent of all the Future. By the import of which (see Matt. xvi. 27), it is accordingly the first and most sacred duty of every successive age, and especially the leaders of it, to know and lay to heart as the only link by which Eternity lays hold of it, and it of Eternity.

See also
- Annales School and Nouvelle histoire
- Curtis Varvs
- Max Weber's charismatic authority
- Philosophy of history
- Übermensc/h
- Whig history
- Famous Scots Series
- Historiography of the French Revolution

Notes

4. For a complete list of Carlyle's works, see Shepherd, Richard hame (1881), The Bibliography of Carlyle, London: Elliot Scott.

Bibliography


Further reading


Vanden Bossche, Chris (1991), Carlyle and the Search for Authority, Columbus: Ohio State University Press.

External links
- Thomas Carlyle's Birthplace, National Trust for Scotland
- Thomas & Jane Carlyle's Craigenputtock, the official site
- Works by Thomas Carlyle at Project Gutenberg
- Works by or about Thomas Carlyle at Internet Archive
- Works by Thomas Carlyle at LibriVox (public domain audiobooks)
- Poems by Thomas Carlyle at PoetryFoundation.org
- The Carlyle Letters Online
- "Archival material relating to Thomas Carlyle". UK National Archives
- A guide to the Thomas Carlyle Collection at the Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library
- Portraits of Thomas Carlyle at the National Portrait Gallery, London
- The Ecclefechan Carlyle Society
- The Green Snake and the Beautiful Lily: Thomas Carlyle's translation (1832) from the German of Goethe's, Märchen or Das Märchen

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Thomas Carlyle was a popular satirical writer, essayist, historian and teacher from Scotland in the Victorian era, born in the village of Ecclefechan, Dumfriesshire. Apart from being blessed with excellent thoughts, he was completely devoted towards his family. His work was extremely attracting to most Victorians who were clashing with changes in science and politics, which actually endangered the traditional social order. Thomas Carlyle (December 4, 1795 – February 5, 1881) was a Scottish essayist, satirist, and historian, whose writings were highly influential during the Victorian era. Coming from a strictly Calvinist family, Carlyle was expected by his parents to enter the ministry. He contemplates the “Everlasting No” of refusal, comes to the “Centre of Indifference,” and eventually embraces the “Everlasting Yea.” This voyage from denial to disengagement to volition would later be described as part of the existentialist awakening.