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MONTESQUIEU

A number of Montesquieu's lesser-known discourses, dissertations, and dialogues are made available to a wider audience, for the first time fully translated and annotated in English. The views they incorporate on politics, economics, science, and religion shed light on the overall development of his political and moral thought. They enable us better to understand not just Montesquieu's importance as a political philosopher studying forms of government, but also his stature as a moral philosopher seeking to remind us of our duties while injecting deeper moral concerns into politics and international relations. They reveal that Montesquieu's vision for the future was remarkably clear: more science and less superstition; greater understanding of our moral duties; enhanced concern for justice; increased emphasis on moral principles in the conduct of domestic and international politics; toleration of conflicting religious viewpoints; commerce over war, and liberty over despotism as the proper goals for mankind.

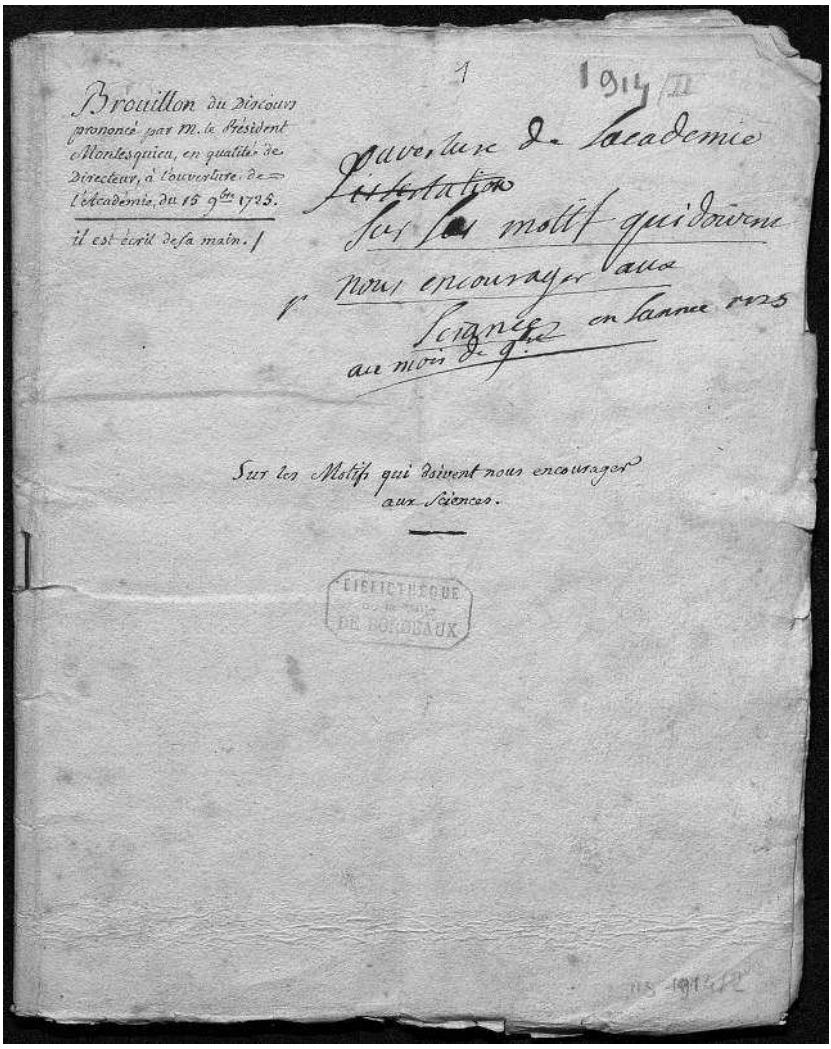
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Ouverture de l'academie
Sur les mottif qui doivent nous encourager aux sciance
en lannee 1725 au mois de 9^{bre}

Title in Montesquieu's hand of the manuscript of *On the Motives that Should Encourage Us Toward the Sciences* (Bibliothèque Municipale de Bordeaux, Ms. 1914). Other writing on the page is in the hand of François de Lamontaigne, secretary of the Bordeaux Academy where the discourse was delivered.

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Discourses, Dissertations, and Dialogues on Politics, Science, and Religion

Edited and Translated by
DAVID W. CARRITHERS
University of Tennessee, Chattanooga
and
PHILIP STEWART
Duke University

Introduction and Notes by
DAVID W. CARRITHERS

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Abbreviations

Catalogue	*Catalogue de la bibliothèque de La Brède* and *Bibliothèque virtuelle Montesquieu*, ed. Catherine Volpilhac-Auger, 2016. Online: http://montesquieu.huma-num.fr/bibliotheque/introduction
Chardin	Jean Chardin, *Voyages de Monsieur le chevalier Chardin en Perse et autres lieux de l'Orient*, 10 vols. (Amsterdam: Delorme, 1711); *Catalogue* 2739. Online: www.achemenet.com/dotAsset/738b64dc-7dc9-4d4b-8a8c-90adb6fd78ee.pdf
DM	*Dictionnaire Montesquieu*, ed. Catherine Volpilhac-Auger. Online: http://dictionnaire-montesquieu.ens-lyon.fr/en/home/
Encyclopédie	*Encyclopédie ou Dictionnaire raisonné des sciences, des arts et des métiers*, ed. Denis Diderot and Jean Le Rond D'Alembert, 17 vols. plus 11 vols. plates, 1751–1765. Online: https://encyclopedie.uchicago.edu/
(M)	Text preceding this sign is a note by Montesquieu.
Mélanges inédits	*Mélanges inédits de Montesquieu*, ed. Henri Barckhausen (Bordeaux: G. Gounouilhou and Paris: J. Rouam, 1892). Online: https://archive.org/details/melangesinditoomont/page/n21
OC	Montesquieu, *Œuvres complètes*, critical edition in progress by the Société Montesquieu (Oxford: Voltaire Foundation, 1998–2008; Lyon and Paris: ENS Éditions and Classiques Garnier, 2010–).
Pensées	Montesquieu, *Mes pensées*. *OC* XIV–XV (in preparation).[1]

1 There is a complete English translation by Henry C. Clark, entitled *My Thoughts* (Indianapolis: Liberty Fund, 2012). Online: https://oll.libertyfund.org/titles/montesquieu-my-thoughts-mes-pensees-1720–2012

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PL	Montesquieu, *Lettres persanes*. *OC* I (2004).[2]
RM	*Revue Montesquieu*, ed. Catherine Volpilhac-Auger, 8 vols. (Lyon: Société Montesquieu and UMR Lire, 1997–2006). Online: http://montesquieu.ens-lyon.fr/spip.php?rubrique21
Romans	Montesquieu, *Considérations sur les causes de la grandeur des Romains et de leur décadence*, ed. Françoise Weil and Cecil Courtney. *OC* II (2000).[3]
SL	Montesquieu, *De l'esprit des lois*. *OC* V–VI (in preparation).[4]
Spicilège	Montesquieu, *Spicilège*, ed. Rolando Minuti and Salvatore Rotta. *OC* XIII (2002).
Trévoux	*Dictionnaire universel français et latin*, known as *Dictionnaire de Trévoux* (fourth edition, 6 vols., 1743).

2 The only English print edition which uses the same letter numbering as the *OC* edition (i.e., that of the original edition of 1721) is *Persian Letters*, trans. Margaret Mauldon (Oxford: Oxford World Classics, 2008). A new translation of that same version by Philip Stewart is available on the website of the Société Montesquieu: http://montesquieu.ens-lyon.fr/spip.php?rubrique245

3 There is a complete published translation: *Considerations on the Causes of the Greatness of the Romans and their Decline*, trans. David Lowenthal (Indianapolis: Hackett, 1999).

4 There are two modern translations: Anne M. Cohler, Basia C. Miller, and Harold S. Stone (trans.), *The Spirit of the Laws* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989) and Philip Stewart (trans.), *The Spirit of Law*, online: http://montesquieu.ens-lyon.fr/spip.php?rubrique186. With respect to the serious flaws of the contemporaneous English translation (1750), see Philip Stewart, "On the Nugent Translation of *L'Esprit des lois*," *History of Political Thought* 39(1) (2018), 83–106.

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A General Note on the Texts

All translations of Montesquieu are our own and are based on the definitive texts established for the ongoing French edition of the complete works (see *OC* in the List of Abbreviations), used by permission of the Société Montesquieu. We also have sometimes benefited from the annotation supplied by the various editors for those volumes.

Few of the texts presented here were published during Montesquieu's lifetime; most remained in manuscript (some autograph and some recopied by secretaries) in the safekeeping of Montesquieu's son, Jean-Baptiste de Secondat (1716–1795), at La Brède or in Bordeaux. In 1818, Joseph Cyrille de Secondat, baron de Montesquieu (1748–1829), son of Montesquieu's daughter Denise, shipped a large number of manuscripts held at La Brède to Montesquieu's other grandson, Charles Louis de Montesquieu (1749–1824), son of Jean-Baptiste, who resided in England. A Catalogue of these manuscripts was made in which the various cartons are described, often repeating notations left on them by the author himself.[5] Eight of the titles included in translation in this volume are identifiable among the manuscripts on that list. One, it is specified, *Reflections on Universal Monarchy in Europe*, is a printed book.[6] The *Treatise on Duties* is described as *mis au net*, which means it is a clean copy, doubtless made by a secretary. The *Dialogue between Xanthippus and Xenocrates* and *Reflections on the Character of Certain Princes* are stated to be autographs; so is *Considerations on the Wealth of Spain*.

Six years later many of the papers which had been sent to England were burned,[7] and in 1828 those that survived were recovered and brought back to

5 This document, labeled *Catalogue des manuscrits envoyés à mon cousin en Angleterre*, is reproduced in the André Masson edition of Montesquieu, *Œuvres complètes* (Paris: Nagel, 1950), III, 1575–1581.

6 A note attached, in Montesquieu's hand, asserts: "This was printed from a bad copy; I am having it reprinted from another according to the corrections I have made on it."

7 Prosper simply notes: "A part of these manuscripts were burned by my uncle, with very few exceptions."

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La Brède by Joseph Cyrille's son Prosper de Secondat, baron de Montesquieu (1797–1871). He added his own summary of that shipment with, for the shorter works, descriptions so brief[8] that they cannot serve for positive identification (for example a carton labeled: "Duties, laws, reputation"), and he conflated them with other papers which he said had been willed directly to him or he had found at La Brède or in Bordeaux. Many remained there into the twentieth century.

The problems this history raises for the history of the texts is best exemplified by the fate of the *Treatise on Duties*. The catalogue of 1818 describes what can only have been a rather well fleshed-out work, the chapters of which are specifically delineated: (1) duties in general; (2) on God; (3) on our duties toward men; (4) on justice; (5) on some philosophical principles; (6) on the Stoics' principles; (7) the habit of justice; (8) imitation of the previous chapter; (9) gross ambiguity of the word justice; (10) the duties of men; (11) on some examples of the violation of man's duties; (12) what we owe to the Christian religion, for having given us equity for all men; (13) on politics; (14) on the limited utility of politics. Exactly how much of this structure survived its return to La Brède in 1828 is impossible to determine; the most evident anomaly concerns items 13 and 14, which appear to have been detached to form *On Politics*, which we include as a separate text in our volume. Certain of their titles intersect with parts of the *Pensées*, as we shall indicate below, but this is not in itself surprising, since *Mes pensées* had been a sort of repository of items to be included, if possible, in other works. But often we can no longer tell whether such a dissection and recombination was performed by Montesquieu or by someone else.

More details on individual manuscripts are provided in the headers to the separate texts.

8 *Œuvres complètes de Montesquieu*, ed. André Masson, 3 vols. (Paris: Nagel, 1950–1955), III, 1581–1582.

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