

A Unique Trajectory: Erik Zürcher's Studies of Chinese Buddhism

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Chinese Buddhism and the Scholarship of Erik Zürcher - Opening Lecture

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Your Royal Highness, Mrs. Zürcher, Prof. Zürcher, dear colleagues, distinguished guests,

It is truly an immense honour for me to have been invited to give this lecture. The only title I can claim to it is my debt of gratitude, which is just as immense: gratitude to Leiden University, and, more directly, gratitude to Erik Zürcher, as well, I may mention, as to another mentor of mine, the late Prof. Tilmann Vetter.

I came to Leiden – almost twenty years ago, in the autumn of 1994 – as a graduate student with a strong interest in Chinese Buddhist translations and an already great scholarly debt towards the master whose direct guidance I was hoping to receive. Believe it or not, *The Buddhist Conquest of China* was the very first book in English I ever read, and it shaped my view of early Chinese Buddhism to the point that it took a

long time before I could shake off a certain dogmatic reverence towards this awesome work.

Unfortunately, I do not have the privilege to count myself one of Zürcher's direct students. When I studied at Leiden, he had already retired, and Chinese Buddhism was no longer the main focus of his research.

I do not think that we met more than five times during the semester I spent here, in 1994-5. And yet I can say honestly that Erik Zürcher's *direct* influence in shaping my research and my scholarly career (apart from the obvious indirect influence exerted by his work) was disproportionate to this limited personal exposure: he suggested a topic for my doctoral dissertation which proved both rewarding from an academic perspective and in many ways crucial to my subsequent career. He also let me write what was to become my first published article (he even wrote the Chinese characters on the final draft for the journal in his beautiful hand, well-known from some of his publications: as he put it with compassionate humour after having seen my appalling characters, "at Brill they might not be familiar with your handwriting" ...).

So my few meetings with Erik Zürcher had, so to speak, a very high specific weight. And here I find a striking parallelism with a particular quality of his best articles: that rare ability of condensing in few

momentous pages breakthrough analyses which forever changed our way of looking at a certain issue, or even established new research fields – something which we could call “high specific weight scholarship” (I think, for example, of extremely influential articles such as “A New Look at the Earliest Chinese Buddhist Texts” or “Han Buddhism and the Western Regions”, both well below 30 pages).

There have been already a number of excellent contributions on Erik Zürcher’s scholarly career and, more specifically, on his extraordinary contributions to the study of Chinese Buddhism. So when I was invited to give this lecture, I felt the challenge of doing justice to him and his work in a manner that is accessible to an audience beyond that of my fellow specialists.

The solution that came to my mind is to play the historian and try focus on the particular trajectory of Zürcher’s research. By looking at the historical dynamics of his scholarship, we will also be able, I hope, to get a better understanding of its nature (its particular aims, distinctive qualities, “style” etc.). After all, this seems an appropriate approach to a scholar who in the first place defined himself as a historian.

Another reason for adopting this particular perspective is offered by the splendid volume edited by Prof. Silk, and presented a moment ago to Mrs. Zürcher, which, due to the chronological arrangement of the papers,

provides us with an unprecedented view of the diachronic development of Zürcher's work.

For there is little doubt that his research had a particular trajectory, almost unique among major historians of Chinese Buddhism. He made his debut in 1959, with *The Buddhist Conquest of China*, an extraordinary full-scale study of the first centuries of Buddhist presence in China which gives every appearance of being the crowning synthesis of a life-long research effort. Except that, as we all know, it is the PhD thesis of a young man who has not yet turned 31 (who among us, upon reading the book without being aware of its background did not take this for the work of a mature, perhaps even old, scholar? I certainly did, only to be shocked later, when I discovered the truth; and speaking frankly, well past 31 myself now, I remain shocked).

It is not just the fact of his writing the book itself that is almost a miracle, but all that writing a book of this kind presupposes – this is certainly not just a brilliant dissertation, but the fruit of a fully mature scholarship.

As Erik Zürcher himself tells us in a truly delightful little article on Brill's publishing activities in the field of East Asian Studies (1983), he began studying Chinese around 1947. This means that he acquired the astonishing mastery of sinology as a whole (and not just of literary

Chinese, or Chinese Buddhist literature), which shines through each and every page of *The Buddhist Conquest*, in little more than ten years. Here we are confronted with a prodigious unbalance between life and work which reminds me, *mutatis mutandis*, of the paradox highlighted with much wit and penetration by Henry James in his lecture on Balzac, so that we can also ask ourselves the same question he posed with respect of the French writer: “Out of what mines, by what innumerable tortuous channels, in what endless winding procession of laden chariots and tugging teams and marching elephants, did the immense consignments required for his work reach him?”.

After the publication of the *Conquest*, there followed sixteen years during which Zürcher’s contributions on Chinese Buddhism were few and of a rather general character, with no work at all being recorded in his list of Publications between 1968 and 1977 (this is a curious gap to which I will return later).

Then, from the late ‘70s on (especially up to the mid ‘90s), we witness a flow of important articles – almost all of which are innovative in various ways, and some absolutely ground-breaking.

It is precisely this overall historical structure of Erik Zürcher’s studies of Chinese Buddhism which I find intriguingly unusual: we have a mature work *of synthesis* at the beginning *followed* at a distance by explorations

and thrusts into uncharted territories in the form of his later articles. One would normally expect a monograph of the nature of the *Conquest*, on a topic as vast and complex as early Chinese Buddhism, to be *preceded* by a reconnaissance of the field in the form of some preliminary studies.

This, for example, was the course taken by Zürcher's most illustrious and influential precursor in this field, the great Chinese scholar Tang Yongtong, whose monumental *History of Buddhism* from the 2nd to the 6th centuries (first published in 1938, when the author had reached his full maturity) is still an indispensable book and another remarkable example of academic longevity. During the early '30s, Tang published a number of articles which are obviously preparatory notes for the 1938 *History*: they serve as a careful reconnaissance of the terrain, for example by defining the interpretative approach to a certain issue, or by critically discussing the relevant sources, addressing problems of chronology, and so on so forth.

But if we look at Erik Zürcher's studies in the field of Chinese Buddhism, we can observe what *on the surface* would seem to be the reverse pattern.

Focusing on this apparent paradox will, I hope, allow us a better understanding of the relationship between the *Buddhist Conquest* and its

scholarly models, but, at the same time (and more crucially for us), also of the nature of Zürcher's "post-*Conquest*" scholarship.

Let us start from the first aspect. As recognised by Zürcher himself in the preface to his book, his writing of the *Buddhist Conquest* had only been possible because its young author was able to move on the solid ground already prepared by predecessors such as Tang Yongtong. As already suggested by Stephen Teiser in his introduction to the third edition of the book—and what book on the history of Chinese Buddhism gets three editions?—Zürcher's main debt to Tang's *History* rests not so much in the approach to his subject, which is in fact very different. For Zürcher's book pays more attention to the social aspects of Chinese Buddhism, and this is one of the most original aspects of his work. Rather, it is the documentary basis, painstakingly selected and critically sorted by Tang Yongtong, which was essentially adopted *in toto* by Zürcher and constitutes his main debt towards the great Chinese master—although of course, the Chinese scholar was content to quote his sources in the original, while Zürcher was compelled to translate everything, hardly a trivial task, needless to say. This debt to Tang, incidentally, also explains, in my opinion, some profound similarities in the narrative structure of the two works, ultimately dictated by their common historical sources, among

which Huijiao's 6th century *Biographies of Eminent Monks* (*Gaoseng zhuan* 高僧傳) was given by both authors the place of pride.

In other words, Erik Zürcher's exceptional debut – the beginning of his unusual trajectory – was made possible (apart from his astonishing academic precocity) by Tang's more conventional preliminary work on primary sources. But then we could say that, from a different perspective, this very advantage enjoyed by Zürcher also constitutes the main limitation (of which he was keenly aware) of the early historiographical approach embodied by the *Buddhist Conquest*: this is a limitation defined, to a large extent, by dependence on traditional Chinese Buddhist historiography (with its particular agenda, cultural presuppositions, and formal characteristics), albeit filtered through the critical sifter of Tang and Zürcher's own modern critical scholarship.

If all this is true – and here I come to the second aspect alluded to before (i.e., the nature of his post-*Conquest* scholarship) – it is fair to say that Zürcher spent the rest of his career devoted to the study of Chinese Buddhism to address precisely this issue. It is, I think, the problem of sources – more precisely: the quest for new sources (and hence new perspectives) on early Chinese Buddhism – that can provide us with an important key for interpreting the “second Zürcher” represented by the

articles published between 1977 and 2002, after which he turned his attentions to the study of Christianity in China.

First of all, we have to observe that the historical period covered by the articles largely overlaps with that of the *Buddhist Conquest*: some, it is true, are concerned with periods not treated in the book (5th-6th centuries), but with few exceptions, they all deal with different facets of pre-Tang — that is, pre-7th century—Chinese Buddhism (the exceptions, however, are among his best works: such as the fascinating study of “Buddhism and Education in T’ang Times” [1989], his only important study devoted to the seminal Tang period, and the equally remarkable “Buddhist Art in Medieval China” [1995], which is not really restricted to any particular period).

But it is the internal, typological characteristics of the articles that I find particularly noteworthy. Apart from a couple of general studies, we can detect, under the surface of the main articles published from 1977 on, some recurring features: none of them is devoted to a specific text or an individual historical figure. Rather, they tend to be centred on a certain aspect of Chinese Buddhism and, in several cases they are built around a particular, previously unused *typology* of sources, which is the real — albeit not always apparent — core of the study.

So, for example, the 1990 article on “Han Buddhism and the Western Regions” – in my opinion one of the finest examples of Zürcher’s scholarship – starts with an analysis of the available textual sources on Han Buddhism, the period from the first to the third centuries of the common era, which takes into account also then recent archaeological information. But the real coup de theatre comes at the end of the article, with the discussion of demographic data on Central Asian kingdoms controlled by the Han empire as sources for studying the fashion in which Buddhism spread into China. This is a real academic masterstroke, regardless of whether we may entirely agree with his hypothesis or not.

One could also think of the intriguing official diplomatic documents he unexpectedly and innovatively discovered in Chinese dynastic histories and analysed in his last article on early Chinese Buddhism, the 2002 “Tidings from the South”. These official government memorials, preserved in the histories that were prepared for each dynasty by scholars of its successor in power, attest to the use of the form of written Chinese typical of, and generally restricted to, Buddhist translations as instead a language of diplomacy. These sources, then, reveal the important role played, from the 5th to the 6th century, by elements of Buddhist ideology in international relations between the Chinese southern dynasties and South-east Asian indianized kingdoms. This discovery of Zürcher’s is not

a self-contained, *limited* finding: in a single stroke it unveils a vivid and totally new image of Buddhism as a historical and cultural factor, full of far-reaching implications for our understanding of Asian history at large – and all this starting from the careful philological analysis of a few documents!

Or, again, one could mention the fascinating writing exercises preserved in some manuscripts discovered in the long-abandoned cave temple at the Chinese terminus of the Silk road, Dunhuang, and studied in his 1989 “Buddhism and Education in T’ang Times”, another gem of Zürcher’s oeuvre, with its penetrating analyses of some little-studied social aspects of Chinese Buddhism, centering on how young monks were taught to write, and what sorts of things they copied for practice.

Other important examples of the quest for new sources typical of the second Zürcher are the two articles on Messianism and Eschatology in early Chinese Buddhism from the early 1980s, which are centred on the study of some obscure apocryphal scriptures. Although Zürcher did not open up the field of “apocrypha studies”, arguably one of the most important developments in contemporary Chinese Buddhist studies, it is interesting to observe how immediately receptive he had been to new research in this area: his important contributions were published just a

few years after the Japanese scholar Makita Tairyō's epoch-making *Researches in Apocryphal Scriptures* (published in 1976).

Even Zürcher's study of the influence exerted by Buddhist translations on the major contemporary religious tradition we call Early Daoism can be read in this way (i.e., as aiming at extracting from Daoist scriptures fresh information *on Buddhism*), as convincingly argued by Prof. Silk in his Introduction to the new Brill volume.

The triptych of studies on early Chinese translations and their language, the first of which effectively inaugurated the “post-*Conquest*” phase in Erik Zürcher's research on Chinese Buddhism, holds an important place in his work. So I should like to spend a few more words on this area of Zürcher's research, which also happens to be the one I am most directly involved with. The chronological distribution of these articles testifies to Zürcher's lasting interest in this subject. They are obviously focused on a previously little-studied type of sources and hence represent perfectly well Zürcher's “second manner”.

These three articles have a trajectory of their own. The first, “Late Han Vernacular Elements in the Earliest Buddhist Translations” (published in 1977), is very technical and entirely devoted to the main linguistic features of 2nd century Chinese Buddhist translations. Here Zürcher

rolled up his sleeves and, working with obvious enjoyment and even more obvious success, cut a path through a veritable grammatical jungle.

I don't know if it was with a deliberate touch of academic nonchalance that he decided to publish this seminal work in a relatively obscure journal. As a result, the article circulated in an almost Samizdat fashion among enthusiasts of Buddhist philology, transmitted through lineages of increasingly unreadable Xerox copies, which showed over time a marked tendency to resemble the aforementioned Dunhuang manuscripts (an impression enhanced by the dark paper of the journal and, of course, by Zürcher's handwritten Chinese characters). Just as we now have access to lovely colour photographs of many of these Dunhuang manuscripts thanks to the International Dunhuang Project website run by the British Museum, thanks to Prof Silk's volume we can now read Zürcher's paper in a crisp, new and legible fashion.

However, despite these vagaries this short article soon became influential. Indeed, it is difficult to overstate its importance, and I would not hesitate to define it as epoch-making. As you know, Buddhism was born in India, and its basic scriptures created there in, naturally, Indian languages, chiefly Sanskrit and related dialects. The study (especially linguistic) of early Chinese Buddhist translations of these Indian texts has now become an important research field in its own right, particularly in

China, where it attracts considerable numbers of young sinologists interested in historical linguistics, and above all in the early written vernacular Chinese, of which the Buddhist canon contains the most important specimens. But previous to Zürcher's exploration this was still a largely uncharted and vaguely hostile land, a scholarly "hic sunt leones" regarded with a certain suspicion, and in fact these early translations tended to be known before his studies chiefly for their unreadability.

The intrinsic value of Zürcher's linguistic observations is very high. Here and elsewhere he offers proof of a linguistic sophistication which is all the more remarkable in a scholar who, as he himself pointed out, was "a historian rather than a professional linguist". The singular importance of his first linguistically oriented article lies in the fact that it put the whole new field on the right track from the outset. Right in the first page and in just six lines, in a remarkable display of his characteristic scholarly style, Zürcher established a critical methodological approach to the study of early Buddhist translations which, with its insistence on rigorous selection of genuine sources, still is (or should be) our compass in this particular research field.

This article has, in my opinion, however, two main problems. One is that little attention has been paid to the translation process through which these texts were produced. Indeed, the very notion that these are

translations does not figure prominently in Zürcher's discussion. He treated them essentially as *Chinese* texts (which they certainly are, but in a very complex way!), and he assesses their linguistic features as largely resulting from historical developments inherent in the Chinese language.

The other, more serious problem is that the article gives the wrong impression that these early translations are written in a single, homogenous "scriptural idiom" – *the* language of Later Han translations, whereas in actuality we are confronted by several different *idioms*, at the very least one for each translation team active in that period.

Although, to the best of my knowledge, Zürcher never explicitly reconsidered the views expressed in the 1977 article, his next two works on early translations made significant strides toward addressing at least the second problem outlined before: in both there is a great attention to stylistic and linguistic individualities (of specific translators, texts, and even specific contexts within texts), and both display a keen awareness of the complexities of early Buddhist translations. While the third article ("Vernacular Elements in Early Buddhist Texts" published in 1996) is, again, mainly concerned with the linguistic analysis of early translations, the second ("A New Look at the Earliest Chinese Buddhist Texts", 1991) was, in a sense, conceived as a sociolinguistic companion to the 1977 paper. It was an attempt, as Zürcher describes it, to extract from the

linguistic and stylistic features of Han translations “information about the intellectual and social context of the very first stage of Chinese Buddhism”. This remains, in my opinion, one of the best examples of Zürcher’s ability to squeeze fresh information from unexpected fruits.

In terms of long-term effects on contemporary scholarship, this has no doubt been one of the most influential areas of Zürcher’s activity. From this point of view, the fact that these three studies were all translated into Chinese proved particularly crucial, allowing Zürcher’s research to link up with recent momentous developments in current Chinese sinology.

So far I have examined some of the main subjects so successfully dealt with by Erik Zürcher in his studies on Chinese Buddhism. Are there also missed opportunities? That is, are there sources or lines of research which he could have explored, but did not? I am aware that, if framed in this way, this question may sound irrelevant, if not irreverent. Nevertheless, I think – not so much as a scholar of Chinese Buddhism, but as extempore biographer of Erik Zürcher – that raising this question could cast some light, albeit in an oblique way, on the development of his scholarly interests and inclinations.

There is, in Zürcher’s entire research output on Chinese Buddhism (including the *Conquest*), a conspicuous absence which, to the best of my knowledge, has remained unnoticed in recent critical assessments of his

work: the study of Chinese Buddhist exegetical literature. This absence is all the more remarkable not only because commentaries on translated scriptures are arguably some of the best (and yet still largely unstudied) sources we possess on Chinese Buddhist intellectual history (which was no doubt one of the main subjects covered by Zürcher), but also in view of what we know of the background of the *Buddhist Conquest*. According to Paul Demiéville's well-informed review of the book (not surprisingly, one of the best we have, given that Deméville was one of the greatest masters of Chinese studies, as well as Zürcher's teacher), Zürcher's original plan was to focus his dissertation on the celebrated Mahāyāna *sūtra* known as *Vimalakīrtinirdeśa* and its early Chinese reception. However, he soon realised that he could not properly study this topic without having at first carried out a preliminary study of the introduction and early adaptation of Buddhism into China: and this how he ended up writing the *Buddhist Conquest*.

We have every reason to suppose that, in Zürcher's original project, a key role was to be played by the early 5th century commentary on the *Vimalakīrtinirdeśa* produced in the circle of the great translator Kumārajīva, which is one of the main sources we possess on the thought of that period. In fact, I have a vague recollection that, in one of our last meetings in the Spring of 1995, Prof. Zürcher mentioned to me his

previous work on the *Vimalakīrtinirdeśa* commentary, and that conversation left me with the impression that he had done quite a lot of work on this text. Be that as it may, no published work on the *Vimalakīrtinirdeśa* commentary ever materialized, so that the *Buddhist Conquest* came to play the role of a sumptuous introduction not to a study of 5th century scholasticism, but to the whole of Erik Zürcher's subsequent research on Chinese Buddhism. I think that this fact bears witness to an important early shift in his scholarly interests, from doctrinal issues to social and cultural history. This may have happened when he was working on the *Conquest* (which nevertheless contains important discussions of philosophical questions), and in turn may account for the very little space and attention devoted to commentaries in his scholarly production. In the *Conquest* (p. 54) he did mention the earliest surviving Chinese Buddhist commentaries (composed during the 3rd century CE) as potentially important sources, and pointed out the need of studying them. But this was not, as it turned out, a suggestion he made to himself.

At this point, I should like to step back and take another look at the whole of Zürcher's scholarly production. It is important to stress that he himself explicitly regarded his later works as a continuation of the exploration of early Chinese Buddhism started with the *Conquest*.

In this respect, a comparison between the preface to the second edition of the *Buddhist Conquest* (1972) and that to its Japanese translation (dated December 1993) proves particularly revelatory. The former, in 1972, though listing a few aspects that “would deserve a fuller treatment than they have received”, states: “I do not think that a hypothetical second version of the book would substantially differ from the first one”.

The 1993 preface paints a completely different picture: certainly the picture of a project in need of update – but also the picture of a busy workshop, with a great deal of important work in progress.

It is important to keep an eye on the chronology of his publications: all the important articles discussed before appeared *several years after* the second edition of the *Conquest*. So it would seem that the profound rethinking of his initial project embodied by the *Buddhist Conquest*, which, as I have tried to show, is the driving force at the heart of his scholarship from the late '70s on, had not yet taken place in 1972! In other words, awareness of the limits of the original project (which is so strong in all the subsequent works) only emerged many years after the completion of the *Conquest*, and seems to have been the outcome of a long and gradual process, whose details remain largely obscure to me.

Indeed, the years between 1959 and 1977 are difficult to interpret, as the catalogue of his work is essentially silent for this entire period: it

would be tempting to take this as the phase in which he reshaped his view of early Chinese Buddhism and of the way of studying it (and, of course, this must have been the case, to a certain extent). But the 1972 preface shows that at that time a decisive reconsideration of these issues had yet to take place. Be that as it may, these “silent years” are yet another intriguing ingredient in Erik Zürcher’s unique trajectory.

On the other hand – and here I am trying to define the context of the later “Japanese preface” – the years 1989-1991 which immediately precede it constitute a real golden period in Zürcher’s Chinese Buddhist studies, both from a quantitative and a qualitative point of view.

In a deservedly influential article, “Perspectives in the Study of Chinese Buddhism” from 1982, Zürcher pointed out that the overwhelming majority of our sources on Chinese Buddhism are the product of (and, in turn, are only concerned with) a very restricted elite of scholar-monks and pro-Buddhist literati, closely related to the Imperial state. This leaves the largest part (i.e., the socially lower and culturally marginal part) of the “real”, historical entity that was Chinese Buddhism out of the picture.

In many ways, these are important and innovative ideas, which had a profound impact on subsequent Chinese Buddhist studies. Thus it would be tempting to interpret the works of the “second Zürcher” as an attempt

to address these issues (as he himself seems to suggest in the Japanese Preface).

However, if the 1982 article resembles the manifesto of a future research program, we have to say that Zürcher's subsequent production *did not* in fact translate that program into reality. If we read carefully what he published in the following years, we will notice that the only post-*Conquest* studies which really attempt to bring into focus forms of Buddhism cultivated in lower social strata, and entirely outside the mainstream tradition represented by the institutional monastic community are the two articles on messianism and eschatology, published in 1981 and 1982. It is probably not by chance that the programmatic "Perspectives" paper appeared at exactly the same time, possibly under the influence of the research on apocryphal literature he was carrying out at that time. Most of Zürcher's important works discussed in the preceding part of my lecture are really mainly concerned with finding new perspectives on areas of Chinese Buddhism which, in my view, can be largely traced back to precisely that very elite milieu of clerical Buddhism defined by its engagement in textual production.

In fact, one wonders whether the use of the category of elite is really productive, if conceived with excessive rigidity. One occasionally perceives in Zürcher's scholarship a certain tendency to stick to well-

defined descriptive categories (e.g. elite culture versus “popular” religiosity), neatly divided by boundaries which were, in actuality, more fluid and frequently crossed than he seems to have been prepared to admit.

There is a slight paradox here: for this possible shortcoming might well be, in fact, nothing but the flip side of one of the most remarkable and productive qualities of his scholarship. I am referring here to his ability of mastering a certain topic precisely by preliminarily defining clear boundaries. Most of his studies start exactly in this way, by drawing lines, selecting sources, delineating a clear perimeter of research etc., so that to the trained eye this comes through as a distinctive touch of his scholarly style. Here by “style” I do not mean a merely formal quality, but, in the first place, his distinctive and almost musical capacity of framing an argument, of formulating a theme in a way sure to lead to productive developments. This capacity is to be regarded, in the first place, as the product of an outstanding conceptual clarity. Indeed, Zürcher’s uncanny eye for unexplored sources and new perspectives would still not explain the success or the importance of his scholarship. What really mattered was his unfailing instinct for choosing the best path to approach a certain issue, and the ability to ask his sources the kind of questions *which could result in clear answers*. This, it is true, could have a cost: and an occasional

lack of appreciation of the often tangled nature of historical phenomena is the price he had to pay (and was prepared to pay) for the dazzling clarity of his studies.

Although I started my analysis from an apparent paradox (and here I come to my conclusions), the truth is that there is no paradox at all in Erik Zürcher's scholarly trajectory, which is unique for other, more profound reasons: the long-range, in-depth exploration carried out in the *Buddhist Conquest* – in spite of its appearance and, indeed, of the role it has come to play in modern Buddhist studies as a classic synthesis of early Chinese Buddhism – is probably best interpreted as Zürcher himself suggested in his preface to the first edition: “The present study is a preliminary account, a report on work in progress.” This, in a very fruitful way, proved truer than he perhaps imagined, or could have imagined, at that time, or even at the time of the second edition.

As I was writing these final lines, I felt that the reasons for the slight surprise I experienced when I was first struck by the unusual course of Erik Zürcher's long scholarly journey were finally becoming clear: that unique trajectory is in fact the manifestation of an unusually rich intellectual adventure, with the almost miraculous early maturity of the *Conquest* counter-balanced by the no less astonishing juvenile *esprit* of

exploration and discovery displayed by his later works. What scholar could ask for any greater legacy?