
HOLBEIN'S AMBASSADORS: ON THE TECHNOLOGICAL ABSTRACTION AND CONCRETIZATION OF DEATH

Anders Kølle¹

ABSTRACT

Although Hans Holbein's painting *The Ambassadors*, 1533, has been the object of much interest and research, the specific importance of scientific instruments and technology remains largely unexplored, or has played only a peripheral role in the investigations. In this article an attempt is made to analyze the significance of scientific instruments represented in the painting to the artistic practice and strategies of Hans Holbein, especially in the creation of a highly abstract and intellectual pictorial space. Drawing on the writings of Martin Heidegger and Norman Bryson, Holbein's depiction of scientific instruments is discussed in relation to the impact of the sciences in early modernity and the production of new perspectives on the dimensions of space and time.

Keywords: Scientific Instruments; Anamorphosis; Martin Heidegger; Norman Bryson



Much has been written about Hans Holbein's famous painting *The Ambassadors* from 1533.² So much, in fact, that one may doubt whether there could possibly be anything more to say. Like Velázquez *Las Meninas*, *The Ambassadors* has been the object of intense interest from art historians, art theorists, philosophers and psychoanalysts that now it seems impossible to look at the painting uncolored by these readings. The work is, in fact, so saturated with interpretation that the Albertian window seems shut in advance, and one's vision appears from the very beginning caught up in multiple layers of discourse and speech – unable to free itself from what has already been noticed, described and explained. Most famous among these readings is undoubtedly Jacques Lacan's analysis of the painting as given in his *Seminar XI* in which the painting's notoriously distorted skull, its anamorphosis, serves as a prime example of Lacan's theory of the gaze.³ The skull, which escapes both the two ambassadors looking out on

us as well as our own, frontal gaze, points to the ‘lack’ involved in vision and hence to our lack of mastery of the visual field itself. This analysis links onto Lacan’s greater analysis of the relation between subject and gaze, and subject and desire, just as Foucault’s equally famous analysis of *Las Meninas* served Foucault’s greater narrative and philosophical investigations.⁴ After such forceful and, indeed, brilliant interpretations it seems that the experience of the painting is somewhat exhausted. One is convinced that what one sees cannot be anything but an illustration of an outside theory, eliminating the uncertainties and continued mysteries of the painting itself. The painting is explained; the work of art has reached its final destination. Once the *idea* of the work has been decoded, the canvas with its figures, shapes, colors and brushstrokes appear almost superfluous. And yet it may happen, even on this clearly illuminated stage, this seemingly exhausted ground, that something still arises from the work and strikes one as odd, that some element, some aspect, some detail of the work continues to be unwilling to cooperate with a singular interpretation. One is then faced with a choice: either to dismiss this detail as peripheral and unimportant, or to follow where this lack of coherence and compliance may lead.

Let’s be clear: *The Ambassadors* is in several ways an odd painting, occupying an odd and puzzling place within the larger production and artistic oeuvre of Hans Holbein. This oddity derives not only from the strange and unsettling anamorphic skull, but emanates from the entire composition and the way the two ambassadors are depicted, displaying all their costly and awe-inspiring instruments of culture, science and knowledge. We see them, facing us, one as proud and colorful as a peacock, the other seemingly less assured and noticeably more reserved. Thanks to historical research we are able to name the two men and state their proper identities. On the left, dressed in ermine and silk, we see Jean de Dinteville, the ambassador to England from the French Court of King Francois I, and on the right, we find George de Selve, a French bishop and diplomat. They are the ambassadors; the representatives of French interests in England and the link between the two royal courts.

The very word “ambassador” stems from the Latin “am’bactus” meaning servant and this is surely how we are supposed to see them, as two noble servants of higher, political and royal aims. Yet, looking at the painting, it is hard to escape the impression that something more than the two men’s identities are at stake and that their portrait is not the only, perhaps not even the primary, reason and motivation for the painting – something that Hans Holbein more than hints at in several ways. Compositionally one may wonder why such prominence is given to the costly objects and instruments so that they, rather than the ambassadors, are placed in the center of the painting. Leaning on the table between them, resting their arms on the upper shelf, the men flank instead of occupy the central space, giving almost the impression of a group portrait, yet one which has no central human character.



Why, in a portrait, would one give so much attention to the things instead of the men, the inert instead of the living, if not to make a point, if not to say something that only these objects in their utter muteness can say? What is, in other words, the aim of this still life placed at the heart of the portrait and what is it supposed to represent? Surely the question of representation may have more than one layer of meaning

in a painting titled *The Ambassadors*. We are from the start led into a world of representation and representatives, serving different interests and needs. In a strict, utilitarian sense, the ambassadors are themselves, of course, nothing but instruments to the French court and king they serve, no less an ‘instrument’ than all the objects put on display, which would perhaps explain their compositional alignment. But the question of representation may also have another meaning to which the painting itself serves as a representative, an ambassador to Hans Holbein’s artistic agenda, demonstrating and articulating something uniquely on his behalf.

In his book *Looking at the Overlooked – Four Essays on Still Life Painting*, the art historian Norman Bryson describes the defining feature of still life paintings in the following way:

Still life is in a sense the great anti-Albertian genre. What it opposes is the idea of the canvas as a window on the world, leading to a distant view. Although its techniques assume a mastery of perspective... the vanishing point is always absent. Instead of plunging vistas, arcades, horizons and the sovereign prospect of the eye, it proposes a much closer space, centered on the body. Hence one of the technical curiosities of the genre, its disinclination to portray the world beyond the far edge of the table. Instead of a zone beyond one finds a blank, vertical wall, sometimes coinciding with a real wall, but no less persuasively it is a virtual wall, simply a cutting off of further space, like the outer boundary in medieval maps of the world. That further zone beyond the table’s edge must be suppressed if still life is to create its principal spatial value: nearness.⁵

Surely this description fits Hans Holbein’s painting. Here too there is no distant view, no horizons, no vanishing point, no portrayal of a deep and alluring world beyond the objects. Any desire or attempt to look beyond is blocked by a green, richly ornamented curtain. With no routes of escape we are entirely fixed to the table and objects at hand. In this regard, Hans Holbein painting functions as a fine representative, indeed

ambassador, to the formal characteristics of still life painting. Whether we look at apples and grapes or books and globes the fundamental principles remain unaltered. But despite these common traits, these important shared characteristics, there remains, however, one aspect in which Holbein's still life appears to differ from Bryson's definition. Although our curtailed gaze prohibits any escape into distant horizons and vistas, it seems questionable whether this curtailment proposes, as Bryson says, "a much closer space, centered on the body."⁶ The quality of nearness normally achieved by the suppression of depth appears conspicuously absent in Holbein's painting: Even if the objects are not distant and remote, they are hardly reachable and graspable either. The orientation towards the body, the hand, the tactile, the grasp so important in still life painting is far from obvious here. It appears instead that we have lost depth without being compensated in any way: the objects remain out of reach, close enough to be seen but not close enough to be touched – neither distant nor truly near. They are, in other words, kept pictorially and compositionally at arm's length.

This impression of distance, of unreachability becomes even more pronounced, albeit in a slightly different sense, once we begin to name and identify the different objects.

On the lower shelf we find, among other things, a lute, a hymn book, a book of arithmetic, and a terrestrial globe; and on the upper shelf there is a quadrant, a celestial globe, a shepherd's dial, a torquetum, and a polyhedral sundial. Knowledge concerning these objects is reserved only for experts. So the distance between viewer and object is not strictly spatial but cognitive and intellectual as well. If the instruments are usable only by an elite few then these instruments would be precisely what separates the elite from the masses, distinguishes the learned from the unlearned. It is by these instruments that a line is drawn between the ones who know and the ones who don't, placing the ambassadors themselves on the enlightened side of this divide, endowing them with an aura of wisdom, making them, in a sense, as distant and unreachable as the instruments themselves. Of course time is a crucial factor in this distancing as well,



making the objects appear ever more mysterious, unfamiliar and remote to every, new generation. By depicting scientific instruments Holbein is deliberately creating a room of uncertainty and unfamiliarity, subject not only to spatial but temporal movements and alterations. The homeliness and stability commonly associated with the genre of a still life retreats. Whereas vases, plates, glasses and knives establishes a wholly familiar world, scientific instruments upset this safe, enduring and homely world. In the words and analysis of Norman Bryson:

The familiar things shown in still life are all material descendants of what George Kubler has called 'prime objects', the prototypes of the series of artefacts called plates, bowls, jars and the rest. Yet even when a series is comparatively recent in Western history (forks, tankards, deep plates) such prime objects have long since disappeared without trace into the boundless mass of subsequent replicas. While complicated tools and technologies are subject to rapid change, simple utensils obey a slow, almost geological rhythm. In stratum upon stratum the archaeology of Western sites unearth endless variations on the same basic ideas, of storage jar, oil-lamp, beaker, vase. Such objects belong to the *aevum*, time which has a beginning but no end... For as long as such forms are able to do the job, they propose that human life can best be organized by submitting the requirements of the present to the solutions of the past and by subordinating the impulse of invention to the authority of cultural formulae. All such objects are tied to actions repeated by every user in the same way, across generational time; they present the life of everyman as far more a matter of repetition than of personal originality or invention. As Kubler puts it: 'the cage of routine binds (the individual) so closely that it is almost impossible for him to stumble into an inventive act: he is like a tightrope walker whom vast forces so bind to the cable that he cannot fall, even if he wishes, into the unknown.'⁷

Reading these lines, it is easy to understand why the genre of still life would appeal so strongly to Heidegger. The still life connects us with the lifeworld of everyday human existence, and is preeminently suited to show our natural and shared rootedness in the world. We shall return to Heidegger and his phenomenology later. For now, let's see how Bryson's thoughts may bring new aspects of Holbein's painting into play. If it is true that "complicated tools and technology" belong to a different rhythm than the slow, geological rhythm of prime objects, then this faster rhythm, this pacing and unsettling rhythm would be what disturbs and threatens the

order and authority of tradition, rendering the forms, ideas and solutions of the past no longer suited to meet the requirements of the present. Perhaps we may even give this rhythm a name and call it modernity. It is this fast rhythm, this beating techno-rhythm, that will soon after Holbein, soon after *The Ambassadors* was painted, in the 1570s and 80s, bring Montaigne to question the foundations of human knowledge and existence with a new and modernly shaped sensibility,⁸ and, in the century thereafter, lead Descartes to his radical and all-encompassing doubt and skepticism about man's place in the world.⁹ We thus find ourselves at the early beginning of a development that will lead, bit by bit, one scientific discovery after another, to a gradual dissolution of everything previously regarded as certain and immune to the questioning of man – a development that, as we know, will ultimately lead to Karl Marx's famous dictum: "all that is solid melts into air." (If ever there was a powerful vanitas image this most surely be it!). The ambassadors are *modern* men, inhabitants of a *modern* world, with all the pride as well as unease that modernity inevitably brings. Surely the bishop, George de Selve, the man of religion, the man of the Church, is seemingly less assured, less at home in this setting than his friend, the ambassador and landowner, Jean de Dinteville, and much literature has been devoted to exploring precisely the religious elements of the painting.

In particular, the half-observed crucifix in the top left corner and the open hymnbook, here depicted in Martin Luther's translation have led to speculations about the role of religious conflict in *The Ambassadors*. This is a period of wars and rivalries brought on by the Reformation, between the Kings of England and France as well as within the French Church itself. Such an interpretation accords – or rather *discords* – perfectly with the broken string of the lute on the lower shelf as a well-known and easily discernable symbol of disharmony. Religious instability and upheaval would, in other words, be the underlying theme and hidden motif of the painting, bringing discord and spreading disharmony to the entire reading and perception of the image. But although this interpretation pays much closer attention to the religious than to the secular and scientific elements, it does not, however, preclude a more modernistic oriented reading.



Whether Hans Holbein hints at religious rivalry or not, the fact remains that religion is no longer the unifying and stabilizing force it once was and that its ability to serve as a secure, unquestioned and unquestionable foundation has been irretrievably lost. Also the focus on religion leads therefore, albeit by other ways, to a similar result, leaving the ambassadors in a space of uncertainty and unrest, unanchored by the force of beliefs and traditions.

A closer look at the compositional space of *The Ambassadors* is needed. As already stated, this space is characterized by its lack of depth and absence of perspective, cut off and enclosed as it is by the green curtain in the background. We also claimed that this suppression of depth did not, as is otherwise typical for the still life genre, give rise to a sense and quality of nearness but that both the objects and the ambassadors remain ungraspable, out of reach. So what is this space then, neither close nor far, neither deep nor shallow? What can we actually say about it? It has

been suggested that what we see is in fact the interior of a church, perhaps even Westminster Abbey – something that the crucifix in the corner and the design of the floor mosaic would confirm. But if this is so, then why not simply show us the church? Why block our access to it? Why not present it to us in all its greatness and splendor? Surely the curtailment and the uncertainty produced most serve some particular, artistic purpose, although it is difficult immediately to pinpoint which. What we are left with is instead a strange sort of non-space, a floating dimension, not anchored in any discernable reality or location. With the Albertian window firmly shut, with no horizons, no coordinates to help us, all we find is a stage, theatrical and unreal, describing no recognizable worldly location. Perhaps then, all we can say about the space is this: it is an *abstract* space in the etymological sense of the word, meaning separate, cut off, “drawn away.” It is a severed space, an unconnected space, untied from the demands of specificity and concreteness. One cannot help feeling homeless here, unable to settle and rest anywhere.



Yet, this lack of foundation is not itself entirely unfounded but finds its premise and explanation in the picture itself: what are the globes, the quadrant, the torquetum, the sundial if not instruments of scientific and intellectual abstraction? Do they not lead to a highly abstract view on the space and world that is ours – a space of astronomy, geometry and mathematics, a space of concepts and ideas instead of bodily and sensory dimensions? We are confronted with a world that is no longer truly inhabitable for anything but thought. A space reserved for only the most specialized or sophisticated forms of knowledge. No wonder that this space must appear closed off and out of reach, inaccessible to our bodily and physical presence. And it is precisely from this abstract perspective that the base conditions of life, of space and time in their concrete dimensions, become themselves an abstraction. Life as well as death are impossible to see as anything but a blur, an amorphous and unreal stain hovering indecisively before us.

In the *Essays* by Montaigne we read the following on the consequences of man's divorce from nature:

We have abandoned Nature and want to teach her own lessons to her who used to guide us so happily and surely. And yet such traces of her teachings and whatever little of her image remain by favour of ignorance stamped on the life of that crowd of uncultured country-folk, Erudition is compelled to go and beg from them, day in, day out, in order to supply patterns of constancy, simplicity and tranquility for its own pupils... Nature, being equal and common to all, cannot fail to be just. But since we have unslaved ourselves from Nature's law and given ourselves over to the vagrant liberty of our mental perceptions, the least we can do is to help ourselves by making them incline towards the most agreeable direction.¹⁰

Today, almost 500 years later, it is easy to see how man's divorce from nature has had dire consequences, not only disturbing our tranquility

but threatening our very existence. Surely, it is exactly “the vagrant liberty of our mental perceptions,” our ability to *ab*-stract ourselves from nature’s law that is today leading us into chaos, confronting us with the terrible prospects of nature’s total breakdown. Interestingly, our attempts to address this problem, are not sought through reconnection with nature but through further distancing and abstraction. We place all our hope in the sciences, in the continued development of technology to provide the solutions to our ecological problems. Our mastery of nature is not to be challenged, only exercised in a different way. Abstraction remains our answer to the very specific and utterly concrete challenges of our world. Yet, it would be a mistake to think that all technology and all our tools and instruments can be grouped effortlessly under this same heading. As Bryson following Kubler noted a distinction must be made between our simple utensils and of complicated tools, pointing us in two different directions: the first towards customs, traditions, and the material basis of human life; the second towards transcendence of these same customs and material needs.¹¹ What characterizes the instruments displayed in *The Ambassadors* is precisely their disavowal of any earthly connection and of any linkage to the material conditions of human life. What hymn books, globes, and sundials have in common, what both religious objects and scientific instruments share, is their disconnection and abstraction from our empirical, bodily world. Indeed, we find ourselves at a Cartesian crossroad between “*res cogitans*” and “*res extensa*”, between the “thinking thing” and the “extended thing”, between mind and matter.¹² But this split also entails another split which will be of no less philosophical and historical consequence and which not least Karl Marx will explore.¹³ The situation when simple things which connect us to our concrete environment and are deemed low and unworthy, and abstract things, the objects of science, religion, and art are valued as the pinnacle of culture, as the very emblems of human capability, intelligence and excellence. This gulf between objects, this separation of “simple thing” from the “finer” and “higher” things is indeed an expression of power, reflecting class-distinctions as well as sexual difference, shaping and establishing identities in accordance

with access to sophisticated tools and technologies. You are not what you eat, but the tools and instruments you use! It is from this special relation between “higher things” and power that we may fully appreciate the superiority of the ambassadors and the way their instruments both lift and adorn them, placing them within the exclusive sphere of a remote, untouchable elite.



And it is also from this insight that we may come to understand why death, in the form of the skull, must appear so strange and distorted. It is marginalized. Here in the painting, death has no natural place, no obvious location in the higher space of elitist power and transcendence. It can therefore only appear unfamiliar and estranged, hovering indecisively above the ground, equally unsettled and unsettling. It is what we may call the “unheimlich” in the Freudian sense of the word meaning the return of something repressed. In order to see it, to really comprehend it, one must move to the side, away from the frontal gaze and abstract space of higher and pure intellectual power. But this movement, we must stress, is not, at least primarily, an inner movement of thought but a concrete, bodily movement, returning us thus to the concrete and physical dimensions of space and time, bringing us back to the specific, empirical realm of basic, human existence. Only here is death visible, only here does it take on form, and become a concrete image instead of a distant, abstract mirage.

It is interesting to contrast this anamorphic image of death with the vanitas-image Heidegger finds in his famous analysis of a still life by Van Gogh in *The Origin of the Work of Art*. Looking at a painting of a pair of shoes, what Heidegger calls “an example of a common sort of equipment”¹⁴, he presents us with the following picture:

From the dark opening of the worn insides of the shoes the toilsome tread of the worker stares forth. In the stiffly rugged heaviness of the shoes there is accumulated tenacity of her slow trudge through the far-spreading and ever-uniform furrows of the field swept by a raw wind. On the leather lie the dampness and richness of the soil... This equipment is pervaded by uncomplaining anxiety as to the certainty of bread, the wordless joy of having once more withstood want, and trembling before the impending childbed and shivering at the surrounding menace of death.¹⁵

For Heidegger, death is there, in the painting, even though it is not actually depicted.¹⁶ What interests us here is that in describing a “common sort of equipment”, a pair of shoes, Heidegger ends up finding the menace of death surrounding the shivering woman. Death is thus imagined, drawn forth in a painting in which it is actually absent – which would be the very reverse of *The Ambassadors* where death is there, depicted in the scene, yet not visible (to the ambassadors). This contrast echoes the opposition between simple and scientific tools as already described. The preeminent example of the shoes are almost emblematic in their pointing towards the raw and fragile reality of human existence. There is no room for any abstraction here – no digressions, no detours – from the basic conditions of life. Anamorphosis which plays on a double perspective, finds no place in Heidegger’s unambiguous analysis. It is a pure scene, undisturbed by disruptive and competing interpretations. Death has only one expression, one image and that image comes from the earth, the very foundation of human existence. In fact, Heidegger is himself playing the role of an ambassador here, speaking on behalf of the earth, negotiating a peace

between man and nature, between subject and object, mind and matter. Knowing the role that death plays in his larger philosophical project.¹⁷ and for the very possibility of leading an authentic life, it is hardly surprising that death shows up undisguised. What is truly “unheimlich” to Heidegger and thoroughly repressed is any indication of modernity, of that quicker and distressing rhythm of modern life with its constant challenging of the traditions and routines of the past. This repression appears all the more conspicuous given that Heidegger is in fact looking at a modern painting, itself a product of a modern way of expression, albeit reflected through Van Gogh’s unmistakable preference for rural motifs and settings.

We may wonder on which side Hans Holbein should be placed in this strife between immanence and transcendence, between the basic world of prime objects and the abstract spheres of scientific and religious objects. An often repeated interpretation of *The Ambassadors* announces, “see these two powerful men with all their fine and costly instruments – well, they too shall end in the grave.” Such a straightforward explanation would thus place Holbein in opposition to the ambassadors, ridiculing these serious, self-important and self-aggrandizing men. However, if this simple “memento mori,” this straightforward moral, was all Holbein wanted to show, one should think that a normally rendered skull or even just a small hourglass or candle placed on one of the shelves would suffice. Why complicate matters further? Perhaps we may think of the act of painting itself as playing a double role here, giving us two perspectives at once: to paint obviously means to abstract something, to separate and enframe something and thus cut it out from the temporal and spatial continuum of which it is a part. But to paint also means to specify something, to particularize and materialize, to render and express by material means. Abstraction and concretization, transcendence and immanence exist side by side, each equally dependent on each other in the artistic practice. Let’s be reminded that death seen in the form of a skull is still an abstraction, and that abstraction can only be expressed in a concrete, material form. The artist must constantly negotiate between the two, making him the representative, indeed the ambassador of these dual forces, moving both

his body and his mind. If Holbein is therefore to be placed on any side, we will suggest, it is on the side of painting itself – this both homely and foreign ground where everything that is rendered is constantly renewing what is both recognizable and estranging in art.

ENDNOTES

¹ Anders Kølle teaches at the International College, Khon Kaen University, Thailand. Email: anderskølle16@gmail.com.

² Hans Holbein: *The Ambassadors*. 1533. National Gallery, London. *Mutual Art*. www. <https://www.mutualart.com/Article/Decoding-the-Symbolism-in-Holbeins--The/84EE3AA0A2FBBB48>. Accessed 3 Dec. 2022.

³ Jacques Lacan: *The Four Fundamental Concepts of Psychoanalysis* (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 1998).

⁴ Michel Foucault: *The Order of Things: An Archaeology of Human Sciences* (New York: Vintage, 2012).

⁵ Norman Bryson: *Looking at the Overlooked – Four Essays on Still Life Painting* (London: Reaktion Books Ltd, 1990), 71.

⁶ Ibid., 71

⁷ Ibid., 138-139

⁸ Michel de Montaigne: *The Complete Essays* (London: Penguin Classics, 1993).

⁹ René Descartes: *Meditations on First Philosophy* (Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing Company, 1993).

¹⁰ Cited in Andrew Bowie: *Aesthetic Dimensions of Modern Philosophy* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2022), 24

¹¹ Norman Bryson: *Looking at the Overlooked - Four Essays on Still Life Painting* (London: Reaktion Books Ltd, 1990), 138-139.

¹² René Descartes: *Meditations on First Philosophy* (Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing Company, 1993)

¹³ Karl Marx: *The Communist Manifesto* (London: Penguin Classics, 2015)

¹⁴ Martin Heidegger: *Poetry, Language, Thought* (New York: HarperCollins Publishers, 2001), 32.

¹⁵ Ibid., 33.

¹⁶ Never mind the controversy between Heidegger and Meyer Schapiro as to who these shoes actually belong to. See for example the discussion of Jacques Derrida: *The Truth in Painting* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2017).

¹⁷ Martin Heidegger: *Being and Time* (New York: HarperCollins Publishers, 2008).

REFERENCES

- Alberti, Leon Battista: *On Painting*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013
- Arasse, Daniel. *Vermeer: Faith in Painting*. New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1996
- Bowie, Andrew. *Aesthetic Dimensions of Modern Philosophy*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2022
- Bryson, Norman. *Looking at the Overlooked – Four Essays on Still Life Painting*. London: Reaktion Books Ltd, 1990
- Bryson, Norman. *Vision and Painting: The Logic of the Gaze*. Connecticut: Yale University Press, 1986
- Derrida, Jacques. *The Truth in Painting*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2017
- Descartes, René: *Meditations on First Philosophy*. Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing Company, 1993
- Foucault, Michel. *The Order of Things: An Archaeology of Human Sciences*. New York: Vintage, 2012
- Heidegger, Martin. *Poetry, Language, Thought*. New York: HarperCollins Publishers, 2001
- Heidegger, Martin. *The Question Concerning Technology, and Other Essays*. New York: HarperCollins Publishers, 2013
- Heidegger, Martin. *Being and Time*. New York: HarperCollins Publishers, 2008
- Lacan, Jacques. *The Four Fundamental Concepts of Psychoanalysis*. New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 1998
- Marx, Karl. *The Communist Manifesto*. London: Penguin Classics, 2015
- Montaigne, Michel de. *The Complete Essays*. London: Penguin Classics, 1993