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For a New West: Essays, 1919-1958

Karl Polanyi

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KARL POLANYI

F O R A N E W W E S T



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Karl Polanyi : For a New West: Essays, 1919-1958 before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised For a New West: Essays, 1919-1958:

8 of 8 people found the following review helpful. A Treasure for Polanyi Scholars and Non-Scholars Alike By Shayn McCallum This book is an absolute delight and its publication in English is a boon for Polanyi scholars and a cause for celebration for anyone interested in the ideas of this extraordinary and inspiring man. Polanyi is only just beginning to receive the interest and recognition he has long deserved as, arguably, one of the best theorists of the origins of modern capitalism ever to have written on the subject. Those coming to Polanyi from a background in Marxism will instantly notice the profound difference in approach and basic assumptions that exists between these two great socialist writers. Polanyi's analysis of capitalism and his profoundly democratic understanding of socialism are both, in my view at least, much preferable to those of Marx, whose historical materialism is often more an obstacle than an aid to understanding how the capitalist market society first emerged and then spread out to conquer the world. The writings in this volume reveal, in even greater detail, the profoundly ethical, humanitarian concerns of Polanyi who, in the final

analysis, was a deeply compassionate man motivated by the question of how best to pursue freedom in a complex society. His insights and his proposed solutions are inspiring and offer a great deal to the world of the 21st Century. This collection of essays is an invaluable addition to those lamentably few works written directly by Polanyi that are currently available to scholars and activists in English. I had originally bought this volume when it was first published in Italian under the title "Per un Nuovo Occidente" but I was sad that English-speaking readers were to be denied its treasures. I am extremely grateful for this collection being made available in English. The next project should be to make the excellent collection of essays edited by Jerome Maucourant and Michele Cangiani, currently only available in French, also available to English-speaking readers. Polanyi is finally being (re) discovered as it is being realised just how relevant and contemporary his work is for the 21st Century. It is an extraordinary testament to the genius of a man that work of his dating back to the early to mid-twentieth Century can seem so fresh and up-to-date despite the massive changes undergone in the world in the interim. This book is a treasure and deserves to be added to the reading lists of university and college courses on political economy, political theory and philosophy, globalisation, sociology, anthropology and history. The sheer breadth of Polanyi's vision and his refusal to be confined to any single discipline gives his work a cross-disciplinary relevance that gives him immense value and applicability across all of the social sciences

At a recent meeting of the World Economic Forum in Davos, it was reported that a ghost was haunting the deliberations of the assembled global elite - that of the renowned social scientist and economic historian, Karl Polanyi. In his classic work, *The Great Transformation*, Polanyi documented the impact of the rise of market society on western civilization and captured better than anyone else the destructive effects of the economic, political and social crisis of the 1930s. Today, in the throes of another Great Recession, Polanyi's work has gained a new significance. To understand the profound challenges faced by our democracies today, we need to revisit history and revisit his work. In this new collection of unpublished texts - lectures, draft essays and reports written between 1919 and 1958 - Polanyi examines the collapse of the liberal economic order and the demise of democracies in the inter-war years. He takes up again the fundamental question that preoccupied him throughout his work - the place of the economy in society - and aims to show how we might return to an economy anchored in society and its cultural, religious and political institutions. For anyone concerned about the danger to democracy and social life posed by the unleashing of capital from regulatory control and the dominance of the neoliberal ideologies of market fundamentalism, this important new volume by one of the great thinkers of the twentieth century is a must-read.

This collection of Polanyi's writings addresses his significance for the world today more completely than any other. We encounter him here as an essayist, lecturer, social theorist and above all as an engaged public intellectual. The selection speaks very directly to our own concerns: on economy, history and freedom; on institutionalism as a method; on general economic history; on world crisis and transformation. This really is a Polanyi for our times. Keith Hart, London School of Economics I am delighted to see the publication of this collection of writings (many unpublished) of Karl Polanyi over a very long period. It is more than welcome. Karl Polanyi is one of a very rare breed - important thinkers who are always intelligent, incisive, and wide-ranging, and who ground their arguments in a deep knowledge of history. Even when one disagrees with him, one has to take his views into account, lest you miss out on a long-term perspective. I personally was profoundly affected by his marvelous book, *The Great Transformation*, both for its substantive arguments and its epistemological framework. That Polanyi is having a revival today is one of the most encouraging things about the current epoch. Immanuel Wallerstein, Yale University About the Author Karl Polanyi (1886-1964) was one of the most influential political economists of recent times. His book *The Great Transformation* is generally acclaimed as being among the most important works of economic history in the twentieth century.