Mutual (In)Comprehensions

Mutual (In)Comprehensions: France and Britain in the Long Nineteenth Century

Edited by

Rosemary Mitchell

CAMBRIDGE SCHOLARS
PUBLISHING

Mutual (In)Comprehensions: France and Britain in the Long Nineteenth Century,
Edited by Rosemary Mitchell

This book first published 2013

Cambridge Scholars Publishing

12 Back Chapman Street, Newcastle upon Tyne, NE6 2XX, UK

British Library Cataloguing in Publication Data
A catalogue record for this book is available from the British Library

ISBN (10): 1-4438-4777-1, ISBN (13): 978-1-4438-4777-3

TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF IMAGES

All images reproduced by the author of chapter two (Juliette Pochat) from works in her own collection.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This book is a collection of the papers delivered at the "Mutual (In)Comprehensions: France and Britain in the Long Nineteenth Century", a colloquium held at Trinity and All Saints College (now Leeds Trinity University), in West Yorkshire, in May 2008. This was the second in a series of joint colloquia, hosted alternately by the Leeds Centre for Victorian Studies and CICC (Civilisations et Identités Culturelles Comparées des Societiés Européennes et Occidentales), at the University of Cergy-Pontoise, Paris.

I am therefore grateful to everyone who participated in this colloquium, and everyone who supported it, especially the humanities academic staff, the postgraduate students, and the support staff of both universities. To Martin Hewitt, first Director of the Leeds Centre for Victorian Studies, and Odile Boucher-Rivalain, who took the lead in establishing and sustaining this link, a particular debt is owed. Long may this academic collaboration and exchange last.

The long-suffering contributors to this volume have waited many years for its publication: I am very grateful to them. Thanks are due also to the editorial staff of Cambridge Scholars Publishing, especially Carol Koulikourdi, Amanda Millar, and Emily Surrey, for their assistance and support in preparing this volume, and their exemplary patience in dealing with such a delinquent editor. I am also very grateful to Liz Fawcett for her swift and sterling work in preparing the index.

INTRODUCTION

ROSEMARY MITCHELL,
WITH DI DRUMMOND AND NATHAN UGLOW

> There were a king with a large jaw and a queen with a plain face, on the throne of England; there were a king with a large jaw and a queen with a fair face, on the throne of France.[1]

France and Britain have had a long and ambiguous relationship. Such terms as "the auld alliance" (the understanding between France and Scotland of their mutual enmity towards England) and the "entente cordiale" (the more recent tradition of diplomatic rapprochement between Britain and her nearest Continental neighbour) illustrate how the relationship between the rulers and governments of London and Paris has varied over the course of centuries.[2] Underpinning political interactions has been economic trade and rivalry, and cultural antagonism, exchange, and emulation. Dickens's quotation in the first chapter of *A Tale of Two Cities* (1859), an historical novel opening on the eve of the French Revolution, by its title invites the reader to compare and contrast the two national capitals—and to find a great resemblance, and a crucial dissimilarity: there is the sense of a mirror image which reveals an unexpected minor difference, an unsettling flaw in the glass. The overtly Francophobic Dickens will, of course, swiftly move on to demonstrate (at least to his own satisfaction) that the catastrophic events of the Revolution show the vast difference of character between the two nations. Dickens's attempt to establish a complete contrast between France and Britain seems like a more serious version of James Gillray's ironic cartoon of 1789, *British Slavery*: here a scrawny French man eats his meagre supper while extolling his new-found liberty, while an obese Englishman dines sumptuously, deploring the oppressive British government and its taxation policy. This constant process of comparison and contrast, of regarding and reflecting on the "other" nation as apart from, and yet a part of one's own, is the theme of this collection of essays.

A substantial scholarship on the relations between France and Britain in the eighteenth- and early-nineteenth-centuries is now developing. Jeremy Black's *Natural and Necessary Enemies: Anglo-French Relations in the Eighteenth Century* (1989) offers a survey of political interactions, which stresses the profound cultural differences between the two nations (such as their differing religious identities and artistic trends), and their conflicts over their expanding empires.[3] Linda Colley and Gerald Newman have both identified Francophobia as a key element in national self-definition in the period,[4] but equally Robin Eagles has stressed elite enthusiasm for the sister nation in his 2000 publication, *Francophilia in English Society, 1748-1815*.[5] Ambiguous responses to the French Revolution are equally apparent: historians and literary critics have both explored the liberal and Romantic responses to the French Revolution, as well as the subsequent disillusionment which followed, with war and intense national hostility to Napoleon Bonaparte.[6] Nevertheless, Stuart Semmel's 2003 study of *Napoleon and the British* revealed that the self-made French emperor unsettled British national certainties, provoking reflections on the British constitution and eventually soliciting sympathy as a liberal icon in his years of imprisonment after the restoration of the French monarchy in 1814.[7] The same experience of combined admiration for, and antagonism towards, the other nation was apparent in French society. Frances Acomb long since described the Anglophobia prevalent in pre-Revolutionary France among conservative monarchists, radical republicans, and liberal physiocrats, all of them equally deploring the constitutional character of British monarchical government.[8] Josephine Grieder explores an equally powerful enthusiasm for all things English in pre-Revolutionary France, focusing on cultural texts such as travel-writing and novels.[9]

Coverage of Franco-British relations in the later nineteenth century has been more episodic, making the picture even less straightforward. Beginning with the French doyen of British economic history, François Crouzet, there has been much interest in the comparative fortunes of the two nations and their economic interactions. The question of how and why Britain emerged as the predominant industrial power, eclipsing her Continental rival, has often been discussed, and indeed the differing "pathways" have been interpreted as divergent but equally valid.[10] Naturally, the 1860 Anglo-French commercial treaty, a free trade agreement between the two nations, garnered much scholarly attention in the 1970s.[11] More recently, J.V.C. Nye—taking the long view of Anglo-French trade—has suggested that some of the orthodoxies of economic history need revision: Great Britain, he argues, was not really the free

trade nation of our imagination, nor was its Continental rival "Fortress France".[12] The history of the diplomatic relations of the two nations in the post-Napoleonic period—and in particular the growth of the *entente cordiale*—has been a related area of interest: David Brown's work, for instance, has recently demonstrated that the amicable agreement reached in the 1840s by Peel's foreign secretary, Lord Aberdeen, was sustained more successfully throughout the Palmerstonian era than was previously believed.[13] Historians of political science have been exploring the extent to which French and British politicians and political writers contemplated the constitutional arrangements of the rival nation in order to define or develop their own.[14]

Cultural and intellectual interactions, however, have really dominated recent scholarship on Franco-British relations in the nineteenth century, although the prevailing tendency has been to undertake case-studies of specific interactions.[15] Works such as Edward Morris's magisterial survey, *French Art in Nineteenth-Century Britain* (2005), which attempts (not entirely successfully) to offer an overview of at least one aspect of the rich and complex pattern of cultural exchange across the century, are few and far between.[16] It is interesting to note an increasing awareness of competitive nationalism at work in cultural interactions: Holger Hoock's article on the British Museum's acquisitions in the first half of the nineteenth century suggests a far more state-driven, competitive policy in operation—something similar to the strategies of French cultural institutions—rather than the *ad hoc* reliance on donations which earlier commentators postulated.[17] Historians considering cultural organisations and events in the long nineteenth century—such as the expositions and world fairs which included the Franco-British Exhibition of 1908, which celebrated the *entente cordiale* of 1904—have seen them as crucial to the development of competitive national identities, as well as occasions of "cultural transfer".[18] Increasingly, there is a sense of the need for sophisticated analytical tools to understand how France and Britain related to each other, and developed and refined national identities, in a global context. Most recently, nuanced studies of Franco-British cultural relations have appeared in the area of Victorian Studies under the umbrella of "Victorian internationalisms" and the developing understanding of Victorian "geopolitics" as theorised by Lauren M.E. Goodlad.[19] Goodlad's argument—that Victorian literature needs to be seen as expressive of and embedded in multiple global contexts—is one that validates this current publication.[20]

This collection of essays thus contributes to a growing and increasingly sophisticated area of scholarship which explores Franco-British interactions and exchanges, and in particular the construction of national identities through the processes of mutual observation, emulation, vilification, and co-operation. All the essays in the collection were initially delivered as papers at the Mutual (In)Comprehensions colloquium, held at Leeds Trinity and All Saints' College (now Leeds Trinity University), West Yorkshire, in May 2008. This was the second in a series of joint colloquia, hosted alternately by the Leeds Centre for Victorian Studies, based in Leeds Trinity, and the CICC (Civilisations et Identités Culturelles Comparées des Societiés Européennes et Occidentales), based at the University of Cergy-Pontoise, Paris. The first colloquium, hosted at the University of Cergy-Pontoise, and with the title "Regards des Anglo-Saxons sur la France au Cours du Long XIX^{e} Siècle" had already explored British and American responses to nineteenth-century France—its politics, its economy, its culture—and how these perceptions shaped Anglo-Saxon ideas and activities.[21] At the 2008 colloquium, the aim was to consider French perceptions of Britain, too, and to establish a sense of the highly dialogic and interactive nature of Franco-British relations. The result was a rich and at times surprising *aperçu*, a discerning glance—or rather a series of such insights—into the collaborations, co-operations, competitions, comprehensions, and misunderstandings of two rival yet neighbourly nations.

It is no surprise to find that nineteenth-century French and British people continued to define themselves through perceptions and appropriations of the national other, as had their eighteenth-century predecessors. While French commentators reflected on the example of British political stability, educational success, technological expertise, and industrial prosperity, British observers contemplated the vibrant and sophisticated cultural traditions and movements of France, and were envious of the social poise and elegant fashions of the rival nation. While a Victorian Protestant Englishman of middle-class status might well deplore the Catholicism of some of the French bourgeoisie and the secular scepticism of others, a Frenchman might equally find his British counterpart materialistic, philistine, and Puritanical. But—as the following essays show—the pattern of mutual perception and interaction was always more complex: each people defined themselves as they defined the other, but each was open to unexpected encounters and experiences. A French architectural writer finds the British admirably informed about medieval arts and architecture; a British engineer finds the French government sensible and efficient. A British writer utilises French

history as a useful vehicle by which to challenge Victorian domestic ideology, while a French novelist moves from a critique of British imperialism in India to a sense of France and Britain as united western powers against the Indian "other". That last development is significant: in the face of empire and globalisation, both nations had to co-operate as well as compete, to recognise their common interests as well as their differing developments. While studies of artistic and literary connections and influences predominate here, this collection is unique in the breadth of its range, which includes topics as diverse as movements for educational reform, railway construction, British perceptions of French early modern religious history, French critiques of British architecture, and the exchanges of geographical societies in both countries. It demonstrates the significance of Franco-British interactions over the long nineteenth century, and shows that—as ever—British and French life and culture can only be fully understood within a broader and indeed global framework. National identity is defined as much by other nations as the home country. No man is an island, and no island is really an island either.

The collection opens with a section entitled "Through the Looking Glass: Reflections on/of the National 'Other'". Chapters in this section explore the perceptions of the British by the French, and of the French by the British, revealing that that each finds the experience of observing somewhat like that of Alice contemplating herself in the looking glass: everything is similar, yet reversed, and the experience often becomes more than a matter of observation. It becomes immersive, surprising, revealing, and self-defining—nor does the watcher go unwatched: the *regards*, to play on the multiple French and English nuances of the word, become mutual. Françoise Baillet's chapter on Gustave Doré's (1832-1883) famous collaboration with Blanchard Jerrold, *London: A Pilgrimage* (1872), begins an exploration of Franco-British perceptions of the national other. This nineteenth-century French Dante records his impressions of his tourist travels in Victorian London, although notably with the omission of purgatory: we have the hellish places of underworld London and the plight of the urban poor who struggle to survive in them, contrasted with the paradise of pleasure enjoyed by the social elite. Baillet demonstrates how the dramatic chiaroscuro and Michelangelosque allusions of the scenes of deprivation contrast with the light, rococo lines used by the artist to depict the aristocratic arcadias. Doré's images are dramatised, stylised and fantastical, influenced by his illustrations for such visionary works such as Dante's *Divine Comedy* and Milton's

Paradise Lost. However, Baillet argues, they are also works of social realism, based on his immersive experience of London life, a passionate empathy with the poor, and an interest in social documentation similar to that of British contemporaries such as Henry Mayhew and William Powell Frith. Here she identifies how the differing "pathways" of British and French industrial development nevertheless cross common ground in the rising concern for, and almost anthropological recording of, the urban working classes: Paul Gavarni and Emile Zola are similarly socially-concerned Frenchmen—and it is notable that Gavarni's social conscience, like Doré's, was particularly inspired by a visit to London.

But we have not only the French envisaging the British, but also the British imaging the French in Baillet's chapter. Doré's visions of London, mediated through the representational codes of both contemporary Romanticism and realism, were in turn interpreted by their British audience, who found them alarmingly foreign, too emphatically French. As Baillet argues, Doré's artistic training in France might explain some of the difficulty British critics experienced in appreciating his work—and even more the preferred British aesthetic of a down-to-earth naturalism. But a fuller explanation seems to lie in the disjuncture between Doré's images and Jerrold's project of social documentation, indeed social prescription: a means of not only recording the vibrant Victorian city, perhaps, but also of organising it into comforting categories which minimised the threat of social mobility and transformation. Baillet suggests that, ultimately, the problem with Doré's images was not their exaggeration and eccentricity, their lack of naturalism, as British commentators suggested, but the acuity of his social vision and the authenticity of his response to the plight of the London poor. Dramatic and stylised as his images are, they revealed the social reality of a class gap, and hinted (to the anxious British viewer) of a coming apocalyptic moment, a possible revolution. In a sort of reversed visual reprise of Dickens's *A Tale of Two Cities*, we have—not a British author narrating a historical tale of revolutionary Paris—but a French artist setting the scene for a future history of revolutionary London. Doré's famous futuristic image in *A Pilgrimage*, based on a comment by T.B. Macaulay and showing a New Zealander of a coming age contemplating the ruins of London, must have fed British subconscious fears of catastrophic upheaval and decline.

While Doré's perspective on life in the British capital was a decidedly critical one, Juliette Pochat finds evidence of French admiration for the British public education system in her chapter, which deals with the nineteenth-century political reformer, Frédéric Le Play (1806-1882), and

his influence. Pochat argues that Le Play and his contemporaries and disciples constructed a persuasive, but fundamentally flawed, myth about the English education system. This myth was connected to French envy of the British political system. British public schools were seen as the foundation of a society characterised by political stability and hierarchical social order: a contrast to upheavals and class conflict which, some French commentators held, were the particular curse of their own country. Studiously ignoring such developments in British education as the introduction of uniform elementary education in 1870, they focused on the British public school. In addition to praising their familial atmosphere and idyllic rural surroundings, French writers celebrated the "gentlemanly" values and physical education promoted in these establishments (it is no surprise to find Pierre de Coubertin among French admirers of the British public school). While J.A. Mangan has indeed demonstrated the centrality of physical education in selected later-nineteenth-century public schools,[22] Pochat points out that Le Play made substantial assumptions about the fundamental similarity of all such establishments. She suggests that this flawed method derived from the approach which he used in his other sociological studies, in which he used the budgets of sample working-class families to extrapolate on the experience of larger groups. However, by comparison with the sources employed by Hippolyte Taine (1828-1893), whose observations on British public schools were similarly celebratory, Le Play's methodology was exemplary. Pochat points out that Taine frequently refers his readers to British novels, such as Thomas Hughes's *Tom Brown at Oxford* (1862) and Edward Bradley's *The Adventures of Mr Verdant Green* (1851-53)—both of which describe university, rather than school, life.

But Pochat also points out that the French myth of the British public school did not go unchallenged: while it was received with complacency by British readers and reviewers, one M.J. Philipp—in a riposte to Edmond Demolins's *À Quoi Tient la Supériorité des Anglo-Saxons?* (1898)—defended the French and their educational system, pointing out the lack of critical edge in the account of their Anglo-Saxon rivals. It seems that Philipp identified himself with Matthew Arnold, who—while being the offspring of Thomas Arnold and a former pupil at the archetypal English public school, Rugby—was a school inspector well-versed in and appreciative of the merits of Continental education systems. In fact, Arnold thought education too important a matter to be left to private concerns, and supported state education as a necessary condition of a civilised society; he also

deplored British anti-intellectualism and emphasis on common sense practicality, an implicit acknowledgment that the cosmopolitan and intellectual culture of French and German schools was worthy of emulation.[23] Similarly, Richard Holt has pointed out that—while French promoters of sport were often inspired and impressed by Anglo-Saxon sporting activities and practices—French sports organisations were more centralised and state-orientated than British ones, and often decidedly nationalistic, even chauvinistic, in their ethos.[24] So both British complacency about the public school and French internationalism in sport had their limits.

Di Drummond's chapter also illustrates the complexities of Franco-British interactions. French admiration for British engineering led to the employment of British companies and personnel to build French railways: Drummond's chapter explores the experience of British railwaymen working in nineteenth-century France, and representations of that experience in biographical accounts of their lives. She paints a complex and changing picture of the comprehension and representation of the "other". As she shows, the opinions of the engineer Joseph Locke (1805-1860) and the contractor Thomas Brassey (1805-1870) are recorded in lives that owe much to Samuel Smiles's seminal *Lives of the Engineers*, which created a distinctly modern hagiographical genre celebrating British technological and scientific knowledge and achievement, and the values of self-help and self-improvement. Drummond suggests a complex interaction between the recording of Locke's and Brassey's "real-life" experiences and opinions, and the tropes of the genre, which necessarily celebrated the modernity, technological superiority, and independent achievements of their British subjects. This necessitated, she argues, an incomprehension of the foreign "others" who worked on the French railways, both the French and other Continental nationals, who are seen to lack the dynamism of the British. The interdependency of the construction of the "other" is illustrated by the re-shaping of the image of the British navvy. When he is working in England, Drummond argues, the British navvy is perceived by his employers and other contemporaries as Irish or Scottish: in other words, other than Anglo-Saxon. Lacking the discipline and diligence of the Englishman, he is figured as child-like, prone to drunkenness and improvident (not to mention, often Catholic). However, in the view of Locke and Brassey and the writings of their biographers, Drummond demonstrates, the British navvy moved from being the "other" to being "us": by comparison with Continental workers, he was seen as resilient, well-fed, hardy, hard-working, and skilled in the use of technologically-advanced tools.

Thus, Drummond's case-study aptly demonstrates both the complexity and the protean nature of the construction of the racial or ethnic other in nineteenth-century British culture. British men and women who encountered other nationalities and races both interpreted them through the existing lens of racial ideas and theories, and contributed to and reinforced such ideas—and so did their biographers, recording their lives and experiences. Similarly, the construction of a hierarchy of race in scientific and popular culture meant that a subject such as the British navvy could be seen both as "other" and "us", depending on context—as a Celtic inferior to the natural born Englishman with his Anglo-Saxon virtues, but as a British/Englishman superior to the Continental races (with the possible exception of the Germans, the Teutonic cousins of the English people). There is a final twist in the tail, Drummond suggests, as experience could genuinely impact on and modify entrenched cultural prejudices: Locke and Brassey eventually came to appreciate both the organisation and sensible regulations of the French government, and the financial prudence and personal temperance of the Belgian workers on the railways. While British views of the British navvy could shift in a given context, therefore, so too could British viewers of Continental workers. The instability of constructions of national identities—and thus the borders and relations between them—is readily apparent.

While Drummond's chapter illustrates a British interpretation of the French navvy as lacking the dynamism and modern work ethic of his British counterpart which shifts towards a more positive reading, Sayer's chapter suggests a similar attitude to the French peasant. She argues convincingly that British artists and authors imbibed the French cultural perception of the French peasant, which stressed the antiquity and continuity of French provincial rural life: a comforting contrast to the rapid change and deracination of British industrial cities. As early as the 1820s, Sayer argues (drawing on the work of Marcia Pointon), the Anglo-French circle of R.P. Bonington were exploring and depicting the French provinces. While in some respects and for some individuals, such as Parthenope, Lady Verney, French models of landownership produced brutalising conditions and grinding poverty which made the French peasantry hardly distinguishable from their beasts, other British observers were attracted by the traditions and stability of the French provinces, which—in the case of Normandy and Brittany—had the same Celtic appeal as the rural parts of Ireland, Wales, and Scotland. Sayer explores the travel-writing of Matilda Betham-Edwards (1836-1919) and the economic prose of Henry Higgs (1864-1940), stressing

that the more sympathetic response to French "continuity in the land" become more pronounced by the 1890s, when British concerns about rural depopulation and the loss of traditional rural communities was growing (and social unrest in the cities was increasing). She also identifies how the Irish Question also led to interest in the French system of *métayage*, which could seem to offer a potential solution. Additionally, Sayer points out that the growth in folklore studies also fuelled a more positive attitude to the French myth of the peasant, so ably formulated in a visual form by the French artist, Jean François Millet.[25] Sayer traces Millet's influence in the work of such artists as Herbert La Thangue and George Clausen, and the Newlyn Colony. As she ably demonstrates, "the myth of French continuity in the land allowed British authors to explore their own fears about national disruption, loss and decay".[26] Like Drummond's chapter, Sayer's essay demonstrates once again the complex character of British readings of the French other, which, in this case, were shaped as much by French representations as immediate experience and were determined by British anxieties and concerns.

Marialuisa Bignami's chapter explores the influence of the works of the French marine novelist, Pierre Loti (1850-1923) on the Anglo-Polish author, Joseph Conrad (1857-1924). This brings out an additional national dimension of Conrad, who—Bignami demonstrates—often thought creatively as much in French as English. While Conrad scholars such as Yves Hervouet have acknowledged the influence of French literature on Conrad, their main focus has tended to be on the impact of better known writers such as Flaubert, Maupassant, and Anatole France. Bignami argues that Loti is a far more significant influence than we have so far realised, and demonstrates how Conrad's prose—by a comparison of passages in Loti's *Mariage de Loti* (1880) and Conrad's awkward first novel, *Almayer's Folly* (1895), which is often interpreted as the textual version of Impressionism—is influenced by Loti's populist, heavily adjectival style, the product of late Romanticism. Similarly, she suggests that Conrad's later sea novels, which are characterised by increasingly spare yet evocative prose, owe much to Loti's *Matelot* (1893), finding close parallels between the careers and, in particular, the deaths and burials at sea, of Jean in *Matelot*, and Jimmy in *The Nigger of the 'Narcissus'*. She also suggests that Loti's Breton novels, *Mon Frère Yves* (1883) and *Pècheur d'Islande* (1886), are a crucial influence not only on Conrad's own Breton story, "The Idiots", but also the later novels. She continues by suggesting that, although Conrad resisted categorization as a novelist of the exotic—such was not the aim or central core of his fiction, which moved towards a psychological realism which anticipated the "stream of

consciousness" tendencies of modernism—nevertheless there are still traces of Loti's romantic orientalism to be found in his fiction. Her chapter suggests that the impact of French fiction on British late-nineteenth-century literature cannot be overestimated, and continues to deserve further study.[27] It also suggests that our tendency to focus on the more celebrated French (and British) writers and artists has blinded us to the impact of less well-known works on the culture of the other nation.

Nathalie Vanfasse's chapter explores the responses of perhaps the best-known British Victorian novelist, Charles Dickens (1812-1870), to the French terrains and peoples whom he encountered as he and his family travelled south to Italy. In *Pictures from Italy* (1846), Dickens recorded his impressions of French life from the city of Paris to the South of France. Vanfasse finds Dickens's travelogue essentially unoriginal, as it relied heavily on Murray's *Handbook*: a classic example of how existing British representations of France and the French shape the work of even this most inventive of writers. Dickens's abiding fear of Roman Catholicism made his account of French religious practices painfully jocular and lacking in any real insight, although Vanfasse also suggests that he was unable to resist the impulse to resort to traditional generic modes which he imagined would meet audience expectations. Accordingly, his representation of the pope's palace in Avignon was no doubt driven by British religious prejudices, but equally by the author's sense that the Gothic mode was what his readers would expect. Similarly, she suggests, an overblown dialogue attributed to a French inn-keeper is a traditional comic staple of the British travelogue, and the Corniche coast is portrayed with the common subversion of the picturesque mode found in Victorian travel literature by the 1850s: scenic by sail, the charming villages prove shoddy and dirty on closer inspection by road. Unlike Drummond's railway engineers, experience did not—Vanfasse suggests—change Dickens's view of the French, if we are to judge this text or indeed the evidence of his novels. But, she continues, the text may not be truly representative of Dickens's own views as he became more experienced in Continental travel: she cites his correspondence with his landlord in Condette as evidence of a far more positive response to an individual Frenchman. *Pictures from Italy* may, therefore, not reflect Dickens's prejudices so much as those he expected of his readers. It is salutary to recall, too, that caricature is fundamental to Dickens's style, and as freely applied to the British as the French.

The next two chapters deal with the narration of French early modern history by two very different British writers. The first is the complex, restlessly radical and yet reactionary Thomas Carlyle (1795-1881) whose little-known historical essay on "The Guises" is the subject of Nathan Uglow's chapter.[28] Uglow demonstrates that this account of the sixteenth-century French dynastic family's fatal influence on the politics of the courts of Henri II and his unfortunate sons can be viewed as an important turning point in Carlyle's historical writings. Arguing that Rodger L. Tarr's argument that "The Guises" is simply a dumping ground for tangential historical research undertaken for his monumental *History of Frederick II of Prussia* is too circumscribed, Uglow suggests that the essay should be seen as announcing a new thematic focus on the family in the work of Carlyle. Uglow argues that Carlyle uses the essay to begin a campaign against the domestic ideology of the family and the separate spheres prevalent in mid-Victorian Britain, which he believed endangered the creation of a unified moral perspective in and on society. Scholars have long recognised the influence of German Romantic ideals and Idealist philosophies on Carlyle, but Uglow here suggests that French Enlightenment sentimentalism was fruitfully combined with Teutonic influences in Carlyle's exploration of the relationship between the individual, the family, and society. For Carlyle, Uglow argues, "The Guises" was a necessary staging post in the development of the thematic structures which allowed him to understand the historical role of Frederick the Great as both a more successful reprise of his father, and a "hostel" for the tendencies of his age and society. In addition, the essay allowed Carlyle to understand his own relationship to his father, his appropriation and articulation of muted paternal ideals, and thus his own role in his own time and place.

Rosemary Mitchell's chapter, meanwhile, considers the Anglo-French historical novels of Charlotte Mary Yonge (1823-1901), who is so much better known for her domestic fictions such as *The Daisy Chain* and *The Pillars of the House*. Building on the work of Maria Poggi Johnson, Mitchell demonstrates that Yonge's historical novels —like her domestic fictions—need to be taken very seriously as theological works, as they offer a complex and sustained historical justification of the Anglican *via media* embodied in both the Laudian High Church of the seventeenth century and the Victorian Oxford Movement (Tractarianism). In the first of these novels, *The Chaplet of Pearls* (1868), Yonge's hero and heroine—Berenger and Eustacie—represent in their lives and their marriage that union of the best in the Catholic and the Reformed traditions which is, for Yonge, the Anglo-Catholic position. Separated by the Saint

Bartholomew's Day Massacre of 1572, the two battle to find each other, encountering the extremes of fanatic political Catholicism and Calvinism, but supported and succoured by representatives of both churches whose faith is more compassionate and genuinely Christian. While sixteenth-century France, torn by the Wars of Religion, represents the undesirable extremes of Catholicism and Protestantism for Yonge, Mitchell argues, Elizabethan England is peacefully building an Anglican *via media* in which both Berenger and Eustacie can find rest. Meanwhile, in the second novel in the series—*Stray Pearls* (1881-83)—Yonge traces parallels between the High Church Anglicanism of Charles I's court, and the best features of the reforming Catholic Church of seventeenth-century France, embodied by Bossuet, Vincent de Paul, and the Jansenists. For Yonge, French Gallicanism, which supported the idea of national and semi-autonomous branches of the Roman confession, offered a means of writing the Anglican Church back into the history of Western Christianity, as a branch of the universal church, rather than a schismatic sect. Mitchell argues that the final novel in the series, *The Release* (1896), further develops a rapprochement between the Anglican and the Roman Catholic churches, exploring as it does the impact of the secularising French Revolution, which brings elite French Catholics and English Protestants into contact and (sometimes) sympathetic understanding, united by a common fear of religious scepticism and political radicalism. This is emblematic of late-nineteenth-century Christian ecumenicalism in the face of advancing secularism: one end-of-century threat encouraged remembrance of another, similar moment of sympathetic alliance.

This note of religious rapprochement acts as a bridge for the movement into the second section of the collection, which is entitled "Association—Comparison, Collaboration, Conciliation". Here the case-studies show the impact of global contexts—of Victorian "geopolitics"—on Franco-British relations, and suggest a complex pattern of interactions which challenge simplistic analyses of either "national rivalry" or "foreign influences". Arkiya Touadi discusses a French reaction to another British institution—its global empire—and similarly records a sophisticated response. Touadi examines French perspectives on British colonialism through a case-study of Jules Verne's 1880 novel, *La Maison à Vapeur*, which narrates the events of the 1857 Indian Rebellion. Verne's title alludes to an impressively modern train which transports the British characters in the novel through the Indian landscape. It is no surprise to find Verne apparently in admiration of British technological expertise (Drummond's chapter

has already demonstrated French appreciation of the neighbouring nation in this respect), but Touadi suggests that the novel begins as a critique of British colonial government in India. This is compared most unfavourably with the rule of their own nation by French characters—such as Maucler—who argue that the British, with such policies as Dalhousie's Doctrine of Lapse (1848), have alienated the subjugated Indian peoples, who are naturally gentle and docile when well-managed.

However, while Touadi argues that Verne allows his French characters to interpret the insurgency of 1857 as a justified response to harsh British rule, she also suggests that he increasingly brings them into alignment with the attitudes expressed by such British figures as Colonel Munro. The rebellion may be justified for Verne, but it releases the sort of Indian savagery which he believes all Westerners must unite to repress. Touadi argues that it is on the grounds of gender ideology that the two European nations come into alliance: she contrasts the depiction of the warlike Rani of Jhansi with that of *la Flamme Errante*, a wandering woman, who eventually is revealed to be the long-lost wife of Munro. Driven out of her senses by her experiences at Cawnpore, she embodies the domestic and submissive womanhood which the Amazonian Rani subverts. The two women correspond to Indian gender types—the *sati*, the self-sacrificing widow, and the warrior queen, the *virangana*: as such, they stand for India itself and the positive and negative characteristics of its people in Verne's novel. The Rani has been slain in battle at the time of the 1857 rebellion by Colonel Munro himself: Touadi argues that this represents the suppression of Indian violence which Verne approves. In the person of *la Flamme Errante*, the lost Lady Munro, the better, the governable side of India subject to western civilization, survives: the attempt by Nana Sahib to slaughter her at Cawnpore has failed, and he himself perishes at the close of the novel. In his death, Touadi suggests, Verne negotiates an *entente cordiale* between Britain and France which might express, not so just a common platform of Western colonial opposition to indigenous insurrection, but a new alliance against the rising power of Germany—an "other" closer to home.

Meanwhile, Claire Huguet's chapter on the early-twentieth-century American writer, Ernest Hemingway (1899-1961), and the French painter, Paul Cézanne (1839-1906), offers a sophisticated analysis of the artist's influence on the writer. While earlier accounts of the important impact of Paris on Hemingway have failed to convince—as Hemingway seemed uninterested in French contemporary authors, and moreover under the influence of American writers resident in the French capital—Huguet considers instead the role of the paintings of a prominent and innovative

French artist. While other scholars have explored Cézanne's impact on the painter, Huguet offers a more in-depth and analytical perspective. She identifies a range of techniques which she believes that Hemingway developed from his passion for the works of Cézanne, viewed during his period in Paris. This included the use of blank areas in canvas and text, meaningful and deliberate omissions which pare down the image and the text to their essentials and force the audience to create visual and narrative connections themselves. Similarly, she argues, both painter and author produce complicated foregrounds and simplified, even stylised backdrops, and shaded and coloured their images and texts. She analyses the motifs of mountain, river, and road which occur in the works of both painter and writer, but also shows how these indicate the point of divergence: Hemingway simplified his text and utilised landscape motifs as a sort of symbolic shorthand, but he never moved on to the textual equivalent (is there one?) of Cézanne's abstract art. Huguet's convincing analysis offers not only an example of converging (and diverging) techniques in the works of French and Anglophone artists, but also is a model for interdisciplinary scholarship: national *and* generic interactions are both explored in her compelling analysis.

Zineb Bouizem's interesting chapter on Victor Hugo's *Le Dernier Jour d'un Condamné* (1829) and Charles Dickens's *A Tale of Two Cities* (1859) offers a similarly provocative comparative study: she shows how closely the views of these two eminent writers align on the topic of crime and punishment.[29] She begins with an exploration of their opposition to the death penalty, showing how they campaign through their writing for its abolition, offering similar reasons for this reform: a sense that the spectacle of execution dehumanises both the victim and the audience, and an anxiety that the innocent might be irreparably punished for a crime which is not theirs. While Hugo presents us with the inner experience of the condemned man awaiting death, Bouizem suggests, Dickens portrays the double injustice of Sydney Carton's execution during the French Revolution: Carton suffers in the place of Charles Darnay, who is himself innocent of the crime with which he is charged. As Bouizem demonstrates, both authors depict vividly and compellingly the transformation of the viewing public into inhuman participants in what equates to a ritualistic festival—into beasts, vampires, drinkers of human blood.

Drawing on the work of Foucault, Bouizem perceptively points out that the transformation of attitudes to capital punishment in the nineteenth century can be linked to concepts of the body: in the

writings of both the authors on whom she focuses can be found the common theme of the brutal dismemberment of the body as the characteristic feature of barbaric forms of punishment, which savour more of revenge than justice. However, as she demonstrates, the movement towards the use of prison rather than capital punishment (imprisoning the body rather than rending it apart) raised difficult questions about the nature of the criminal: are they are savages and madmen, beyond redemption, or victims of their environment, who can be rehabilitated? Bouizem suggests that Hugo, and even more clearly Dickens, remained ambivalent about the nature of the criminal—but that both held that, whether or not the criminal could be rehabilitated, prison was not the environment which would facilitate this transformation. In particular, they both deplored the new idea of solitary confinement as a means of allowing the prisoner to reflect and repent: in fact, these conditions could lead to madness. Dickens's portrayal of Doctor Manette in *A Tale of Two Cities* is, in Bouizem's opinion, a particularly telling exemplar of the dangers of such solitary confinement. Bouizem concludes with the reflection that the symmetry of opinion between French and British author is almost complete: both reflect the complexity of debates, and both conclude that society needs to acknowledge its responsibility for the creation of criminality. For this reason, Hugo's condemned man is an almost anonymous Everyman. The fact that the two authors have such similar views is striking, given the lack of known exchange between the two on these issues, and reflects the international character of the debates on crime and punishment in the nineteenth century.

Internationalism is also apparent in Odile Boucher-Rivalain's exploration of French architects' views of British architecture in the early Victorian period, when both countries were experiencing the Gothic revival in architecture and simultaneously facing demands for new sorts of architectural forms designed to meet new building requirements. Boucher-Rivalain argues that César Daly (1811-1894), the founder and editor of the influential *Revue Générale de l'Architecture et des Travaux Publics*, saw architecture as essentially a union of art and science, past and present; but he also promoted international collaboration as well as these other partnerships. His journal was distributed and read in Britain, and aimed to promote international understanding and architectural achievement. Despite his own collaborations with the antiquary Thomas Wright and the architect A.W.N. Pugin, the *Revue* was sadly short of articles by British architects and writers—but some, including Charles Barry, for instance, did contribute material. Daly himself greatly admired both the antiquity and the modernity of England and its architecture, seeing it as a model for

industrial development at the service of art. He used the modernity and originality of British architecture, as he saw it, as a medium to critique French architectural practice and in particular its tendency to copy historical styles. Napoléon Didron (1806-1867), a friend of the famous French Gothic architect, Viollet-le-Duc, was perhaps more attached to the Gothic Revival than Daly, but shared Daly's vision of a new style of architecture informed by tradition and an admiration for British developments. In his journal, *Annales Archéologiques*, he promoted the conservation of historic buildings, winning the support of Victor Hugo—and he found in the British archaeological movements of the 1840s a model for his own country.[30] Visiting the Great Exhibition in 1851, he acknowledged the British achievement in researching, understanding, and reviving medieval arts and styles, while also celebrating the role of his own journal in this process. While architectural historical scholarship, considering Anglo-French cultural relations at the time of the Gothic Revival, has identified national competitiveness and tension between the two countries,[31] Boucher-Rivalain here suggests the degree of co-operation and mutual admiration existed too, part of a spirit of international intellectual and scientific co-operation increasingly apparent in nineteenth-century Europe.

Isabelle Avila's chapter on interactions between the French and British geographical societies at the beginning of the 1870s is a similarly sophisticated analysis of Franco-British relations, which fittingly concludes the collection. In a novel contribution to the debate on geography and empire, Avila focuses on the international rather than the imperial dimensions of her subject: the relationship between the two western nations at work in the imperial arena, rather than the interaction between a western nation and the imperial "other". Her chapter explores the tension between the generation of geographical knowledge as a universalist, international scientific concern, and its production for national interests. Accordingly, the two societies exchanged information and shared maps and celebrated the achievement of explorers from the other country, but also exhibited underlying patriotic commitments, apparent in Avila's subtle readings of their maps and cartographic practices. She argues that:

> there were therefore two levels on which these societies operated: an upper level which was scientific and internationalist in character, bypassing national boundaries, and a lower level which developed within national boundaries and which aimed at serving the interests of a specific nation. Was this a distinction between ideal and real geography? Geography could

> be seen as the study of the whole world without any preferences, but it was also the study of the world from one particular point of view which discovered knowledge related to one's own interests. Geography and explorations were scientific endeavours which were both international (contributing to universal knowledge of the world) and national (producing knowledge that could be useful nationally): many articles presented in these journals belonged to both categories. For that reason, it is very difficult to distinguish purely scientific aims from nationalistic motivations, for they went hand in hand.[32]

Avila neatly identifies a problem for many nineteenth-century scholars and intellectuals—the tension between commitments to the scholarly and scientific community, and one's own country, between being an internationalist or a patriot—which has been more fully explored in the recently-published collection, *Anglo-French Attitudes*, edited by Christophe Charle, Julien Vincent, and Jay Winter.[33] In the wake of the Franco-Prussian war, Avila concludes, the French geographical society—despite being the first to be founded—lost ground in terms of prestige, allowing its British counterpart to emerge as the leading institution in the development of geographical knowledge. For Avila, this is reflected in the tendency of the French society to translate the British maps in its journal, a compliment which was not reciprocated by the British Geographical Society.

Bibliography

Acombe, F. *Anglophobia in France, 1763-1789: An Essay in the History of Constitutionalism and Nationalism*. Durham, N.C.: Duke University Press, 1950.

Aprile S., and Bensimon, F. *La France et l'Angleterre au XIX^e^ Siècle.* Paris : Creaphis Editions, 2006.

Bainbridge, S. *Napoleon and English Romanticism*. Cambridge : Cambridge University Press, 1995.

Bann, Stephen. "Paul Delaroche's Early Work in the Context of English History". *Oxford Art Journal* 29, no. 3 (2006): 341-369.

Bensimon, F. *Les Britanniques face a La Révolution Française de 1848*. Paris : L'Harmattan, 2000.

Black, Jeremy. *Natural and Necessary Enemies: Anglo-French Relations in the Eighteenth Century*. Georgia: University of Georgia Press, 1989.

Bordes, Philippe. "Jacques-Louis David's Anglophilia on the Eve of the French Revolution". *Burlington Magazine* 134, no. 1073 (August, 1992): 482-490.

Boucher-Rivalain, Odile. "Attitudes to Gothic in French Architectural Writings of the 1840s". *Architectural History* 41 (1998):145-52.

—. and Hajdenko-Marshall, Catherine, eds. *Regards des Anglo-Saxons sur la France au Cours du Long XIX^e^ Siècle*. Paris: L"Harmattan, 2008.

Bradley, Simon. "The Englishness of the Gothic: Theories and Interpretations from William Gilpin to J.H. Parker". *Architectural History* 45 (2002): 325-346.

Brown, D. "Palmerston and Anglo-French Relations, 1846-1865". *Diplomacy and Statecraft* 17, no. 4 (Dec., 2006): 675-692.

Bullen, R. *Palmerston, Guizot, and the Collapse of the Entente Cordiale.* London : Athlone Press, 1974.

Charle, Christophe, Vincent, Julien, and Winter, Jay, eds. *Anglo-French Attitudes: Comparisons and Transfers between English and French Intellectuals since the Eighteenth Century*. Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2007.

Cole, S. R. "National Histories, International Genre: Thackeray, Balzac, and the Franco-British *Bildungsroman* ". In L.M.E. Goodlad and Julia M. Wright, eds. Special Issue on "Victorian Internationalisms" . *Romanticism and Victorianism on the Net* 48 (2007). At http://www.érudit.org/revue/ravon/v/n48.

Colley, L. *Britons: Forging the Nation 1707-1837*. New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1992.

Connell, W. F. *The Educational Thought and Influence of Matthew Arnold*. London: Kegan Paul, 1951.

Crossley, C., and Small, I. eds. *The French Revolution and British Culture*. Oxford : Oxford University Press, 1990.

—. *Studies in Anglo-French Cultural Relations: Imagining France*. Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1988.

Crouzet, F. *Britain Ascendant: Comparative Studies in Franco-British Economic History*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990.

Cubbitt, G. "The Political Uses of Seventeenth-Century English History in Bourbon Restoration France". *Historical Journal* 50, no. 1 (March, 2007): 73-95.

Desaulniers, M. *Carlyle and the Economics of Terror: A Study of Revisionary Gothicism in the French Revolution.* Québec: McGill-Queen's Press, 1995.

Desmarais, J. *The "Beardsley Industry": The Critical Reception in England and France, 1893-1914*. London: Ashgate, 1998.

Dickens, Charles. *A Tale of Two Cities.* 1859. Oxford : Oxford University Press, 1949.

Dickinson, H. T. ed. *Britain and the French Revolution, 1789-1815*. London : Macmillan, 1989.

Dunham, A. L. *The Anglo-French Treaty of Commerce of 1860 and the Progress of the Industrial Revolution in France*. Michigan: University of Michigan Press, 1971.

Eagles, R. *Francophilia in English Society, 1748-1815*. New York: Palgrave, 2000.

Embry, K. "Towards an Entente Cordiale: The Cultivation of Cosmopolitan Sympathies in Ouida's *Under Two Flags*". *Studies in the Novel* 42, no. 3 (Fall, 2010): 227-48.

Gilmartin, K. *Writing against Revolution: Literary Conservatism in Britain, 1790-1832*. Cambridge: Cambridge, University Press, 2007.

Goodlad, L.M.E. "Cosmopolitanism's Actually Existing Beyond: Towards a Victorian Geopolitical Aesthetic". *Victorian Literature and Culture* 38, no. 4 (September, 2010): 399-411.

Grenby, M. O. *The Anti-Jacobin Novel: British Conservatism and the French Revolution*. Cambridge : Cambridge University Press, 2001.

Grieder, J. *Anglomania in France, 1740-1789: Fact, Fiction and Political Discourse*. Geneva and Paris: Librarie Droz, 1985.

Hicks, G. "An Overlooked *Entente*: Lord Malmesbury, Anglo-French Relations, and the Conservatives' Recognition of the Second Empire, 1852". *History* 92, no. 306 (Apr., 2007): 187-206.

Holt, R. "Contrasting Nationalisms: Sport, Militarism, and the Unitary State in Britain and France before 1914". In *Tribal Identities: Nationalism, Europe and Sport*, ed. J.A. Mangan, 39-45. London and Portland, Oregon: Frank Cass Publishers, 1996.

Hoock, H. "The British State and the Anglo-French Wars over Antiquities, 1798-1858". *Historical Journal* 50/1 (March, 2007): 49-72.

Iliasu, A. A. "The Cobden-Chevalier Commercial Treaty of 1860". *Historical Journal* 14, no. 1 (1971): 67-98.

Jenning, J. R. "Conceptions of England and its Constitution in Nineteenth-Century French Political Thought", *Historical Journal* 29, no. 1 (1986) : 65-85.

Kaiser, W. "Cultural Transfer of Free Trade at World Exhibitions, 1851-1862". *Journal of Modern History* 77, no. 3 (September, 2005): 563-90.

—. "Vive La France! Vive la République? The Cultural Construction of French Identity at the World Exhibitions in Paris, 1855-1900". *National Identities* 1, no. 3 (1999): 227-44.

Kelly, G. *Women, Writing and Revolution, 1790-1827*. Oxford : Clarendon Press, 1993.