Charles Dickens and Europe

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EDITOR'S INTRODUCTION

The origin of this book is a conference held at the University of Mulhouse in May 2012—one of the many events organised worldwide to celebrate Charles Dickens' bicentenary. Most of the contributors to this volume participated in the conference. Our understanding of the relationship between Charles Dickens and Europe was not the same after those three days of speeches and discussions, and it was generally felt that not to publish the fruit of this collective thinking would have been a pity. Some of the speakers have revamped their papers significantly so that we could put together a coherent, orderly volume.

Dickens' connections to Europe are manifold, from his numerous travels—and subsequent travel writings—to the representation of European locations in his novels, and to the reciprocal influence between his work and other European texts. Some authors focused on intertextuality, while others evaluated biographical data; the theoretical concepts deployed range from classical philosophy to intermedial studies. What binds the chapters together is precisely the aim of showing how the relationship between Dickens and the continent is susceptible to complementary, sometimes competing, interpretations. This is—we hope—a significant step forwards in the systematic study of Dickens as a European writer.

Obviously, we are not exploring uncharted territory. Recent publications on the topic include John Edmonson's *Dickens on France* (Interlink Books, 2007) and Michael Hollington and Francesca Orestano's *Dickens and Italy* (Cambridge Scholars Press, 2009). I am pleased that some of the authors who contributed to Anny Sadrin's *Dickens, Europe and the New Worlds* (Macmillan, 1999) have carried their ideas further at the Mulhouse conference and in this volume. For example, Dominic Rainsford's article expands on his study of "the Channel-crossing process" through the examination of Dickens' European maps, and Michael Hollington (who was present in Mulhouse) wrote a chapter called "The European context" in *Charles Dickens in Context* (edited by Sally Ledger and Holly Furneaux, Cambridge University Press, 2011). His forthcoming *The Reception of Charles Dickens in Europe* (Continuum, 2013) will offer a survey of the reception of the novelist's works across the continent. As a member of the Institut de Recherche en Langues et Littératures

Européennes, whose main purpose is to explore Europe's literary identity, I cannot but welcome such critical interest. As I write, in February 2013, the notions of "Britishness" and "Englishness" have returned to the foreground of political debate, as have discussions on the future of Europe. These questions also bear relevance in the field of literary studies. Dickens' Englishness is widely, and justly, celebrated. Is "Dickens' European identity"[1] also palpable? How can we measure his "rather unusual openness to what Europe represented?" What are the aesthetic and literary implications of the phrase "we in Europe,"[2] which he used when writing about America? Here are some of the questions which prompted our reflection.

"However fascinating his letters, journalism and travel books may be, they are not the main reason for studying Dickens. To discover the lasting significance of his attitude towards … Europe, we must turn to his fiction,"[3] Tore Rem wrote. This is what we mostly did but, as previously mentioned, our approach has been to connect fictional works with journalism, travel writing and biography to grasp the complexity of Dickens' relationship to Europe. Jeremy Tambling's. Neil Forsyth's and Martine Hennard Dutheil de la Rochère's articles, among others, are perfect examples. In the 1867 preface to *Dombey and Son*, Dickens himself mixed writing, imagination and memories from his stays on the continent in a rather surprising way:

> I began this book by the Lake of Geneva, and went on with it for some months in France, before pursuing it in England. The association between the writing and the place of writing is so curiously strong in my mind, that at this day, although I know, in my fancy, every stair in the little midshipman's house, and could swear to every pew in the church in which Florence was married, or to every young gentleman's bedstead in Doctor Blimber's establishment, I yet confusedly imagine Captain Cuttle as secluding himself from Mrs MacStinger among the mountains of Switzerland. Similarly, when I am reminded by any chance of what it was that the waves were always saying, my remembrance wanders for a whole winter night about the streets of Paris—as I restlessly did with a heavy

[1] Tore Rem, "*Little Dorrit*, *Pictures from Italy* and John Bull," in Anny Sadrin (ed.), *op. cit*., 136.
[2] "American Notes," in *American Notes and Pictures from Italy*, Oxford University Press, 1991 (1842), 249.
[3] Tore Rem, *op. cit.*, 131.

> heart, on the night when I had written the chapter in which my little friend and I parted company.[4]

Dombey and Son—like all novels—is a form of alternative reality, but the preface goes one step further, creating a second fictional world which takes in autobiographical elements and blurs the lines between fiction and reality. Are "the mountains of Switzerland" the actual summits that the writer could see, or a form of re-creation through memory? Interestingly, Henry James, in his preface to *The Portrait of a Lady*, describes a similar experience—what he sees on reading his own novel again for revision after twenty years is not the places in the story but the place of writing.[5] Venice, the Alps, and Lake Geneva become personal landscapes, and in both cases the texts seem to conjure images that only their authors can see:

> "The Portrait of a Lady" was begun in Florence … I remember being again much occupied with it, the following year, during a stay of several weeks made in Venice. I had rooms on Riva Schiavoni, at the top of a house near the passage leading off to San Zaccaria; the waterside life, the wondrous lagoon spread before me, and the ceaseless human chatter of Venice came in at my windows, to which I seem to myself to have been constantly driven, in the fruitless fidget of composition, as if to see whether, out in the blue channel, the ship of some right suggestion, of some better phrase, of the next happy twist of my subject, the next true touch for my canvas, mightn't come into sight … There are pages of the book which, in the reading over, have seemed to make me see again the bristling curve of the wide Riva, the large colour-spots of the balconied houses and the repeated undulation of the little hunchbacked bridges, marked by the rise and drop again, with the wave, of foreshortened clicking pedestrians.[6]

As Mario Martino writes, to read Dickens is to travel imaginatively across Europe, and it is striking how pieces of travel writing echo passages from the novels. Means of transport are recurrent in all of Dickens' writings, playing a role in the stories and of course acquiring symbolic significance. For Dickens, as for most British travellers, the first contact

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[4] Charles Dickens, "Preface," *Dombey and Son*, Cosimo, 2009 (1846), unnumbered page.

[5] On the relationship between writers and the space where they work, see Diana Fuss, *The Sense of an Interior: Four Rooms and the Writers that Shaped Them*, Routledge, 2004.

[6] Henry James, "Preface," *The Portrait of a Lady*, Serenity Publishers, 2009 (1881 for the novel, 1907 for the preface), 7.

with the continent was Calais Harbour, into which he was "bumped, rolled, gurgled, washed and pitched."[7] Inevitably, the reader will connect this to the mail-coach which "lumbered, jolted, rattled, and bumped"[8] in *A Tale of Two Cities*, and to the similar feeling of potential disaster experienced by the narrator in "A Flight," a short story describing a train journey between London and Paris: "a bugle, the alarm, a crash! What is it? Death? No, Amiens."[9] Ports and harbours also embody cosmopolitanism, a concept explored by several of the contributors. This is the case with Marseilles harbour in the opening chapter of *Little Dorrit*:

> There was no wind to make a ripple on the foul water within the harbour, or on the beautiful sea without. The line of demarcation between the two colours, black and blue, showed the point which the pure sea would not pass; but it lay as quiet as the abominable pool, with which it never mixed. Boats without awnings were too hot to touch; ships blistered at their moorings; the stones of the quays had not cooled, night or day, for months. Hindoos, Russians, Chinese, Spaniards, Portuguese, Englishmen, Frenchmen, Genoese, Neapolitans, Venetians, Greeks, Turks, descendants from all the builders of Babel, come to trade at Marseilles, sought the shade alike ….[10]

The list of nationalities echoes the list of objects used to describe the moorings at London Bridge in *Martin Chuzzlewit*:

> Little steam-boats dashed up and down the river incessantly. Tiers upon tiers of vessels, scores of masts, labyrinths of tackle, idle sails, splashing oars, gliding row-boats, lumbering barges, sunken piles, with ugly lodgings for the water-rat within their mud-discoloured nooks; church steeples, warehouses, house-roofs, arches, bridges, men and women, casks, cranes, boxes, horses, coaches, idlers, and hard-labourers: there they were, all jumbled up together ….[11]

Lists are familiar to all readers of Dickens. They create a visual effect of intricacy, boundlessness and hustle, but also, as Umberto Eco suggests in *The Infinity of Lists*, profusion of meaning, and they represent the

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[7] Charles Dickens, *The Uncommercial Traveller*, Cosimo, 2009 (1860–1869), 179.
[8] Charles Dickens, *A Tale of Two Cities*, CRW Publishing, 2003 (1859), 31.
[9] Cited by Alf Seegert in "'Steam of Consciousness': Technology and Sensation in Dickens's Railway Sketches," *Philament*, 14, August 2009, 91–115.
[10] Charles Dickens, *Little Dorrit*, Sheldon, 1863 (1855), 12.
[11] Charles Dickens, *Martin Chuzzlewit*, Routledge, 1870 (1844), 215.

struggle between the "passion for order and fascination with disorder,"[12] which Michael Slater insists on in his biography. This is why the first part of this book, "Maps and Boundaries," seeks to delineate the scope of Dickens' European or cosmopolitan frame of reference. The three chapters of the second part, "French Follies," focus on *A Tale of Two Cities* and on one of Dickens' numerous commitments in social issues—animal welfare in Britain and in France. The third part, "Across the Alps," evaluates the importance of Dickens' stays in Italy and in Switzerland, and analyses the representation of some of the geographical and political features of these countries in his work. The fourth part, "Dickens and His Contemporaries," bears on the relationships between Dickens and some other writers and artists—Hugo, Tolstoy, Daumier and Grandville.

It has been one of my aims, both at the conference and in this book, to bring together young researchers completing their PhDs with renowned academics who have already published extensively on Dickens and other authors. I hope that the former benefited from the experience, and that the latter took pleasure in helping form a new generation of Dickensians. I would especially like to thank Professor Jeremy Tambling, Professor Nathalie Jaëck and Professor Dominic Rainsford for their contribution in defining the scope of our research, and the staff at Cambridge Scholars Publishing for their friendly and professional help.

[12] Michael Slater, "Preface," *Charles Dickens: A Life Defined by Writing*, Yale University Press, 2009, xiii.

PART I

MAPS AND BOUNDARIES

CHAPTER ONE

DICKENS AND COSMOPOLITANISM

JEREMY TAMBLING

In what sense, if any, is Dickens aware of cosmopolitanism as a distinctive idea, and in what senses could he be described as cosmopolitan? But then, what is cosmopolitanism? Is it an effortless ability to be a global tourist, with the cultural superiority that implies, or does it represent an effort to think outside national boundaries? When and in what senses does Dickens use the word?

"Cosmopolitan" is a word of the 1840s, and OED cites four people, Emerson, Mill, Macaulay and Dickens himself, for it. Dickens uses it in 1847 in a letter saying that his new son, Sydney Smith, is of "a cosmopolitan spirit" (*Letters* 5.90). The word before "cosmopolitan" was "cosmopolite," and the cosmopolite was characteristically of Paris, part of the Enlightenment idealism of the eighteenth century.[1] Thomas Schlereth sees this ideal as one attempting to create an elite intellectual class, and having a belief in universalist thinking and political internationalism. Dr Johnson defines a "cosmopolite" as "at home in every place." The idea of being "a citizen of the world" adopts Goldsmith's language in *The Citizen of the World, Or, Letters from a Chinese Philosopher Residing in London, to his Friends in the East* (1762). Behind that phrase, its source lies in the cynic philosopher Diogenes (d.*c*.323 BCE), who responded to Alexander the Great's imperialism by saying that "the only true commonwealth is that which is as wide as the universe. I am a citizen of the world

[1] Thomas J Schlereth, *The Cosmopolitan Ideal in Enlightenment Thought: Its Form and Function in the Ideas of Franklin, Hume and Voltaire, 1694–1790*, University of Notre Dame Press 1977, xii; see also John Bryant, "'Nowhere a Stranger': Melville and Cosmopolitanism," *Nineteenth-Century Fiction* 39, 1984, 275–291. I have discussed cosmopolitanism in the eighteenth century, alongside Derrida, in "Subjectivity and Cosmopolitan Enlightenment: Music and *Don Giovanni*," in David Adams and Galin Tihanov (eds.), *Enlightenment Cosmopolitanism*, Legenda, 2011, 94–109.

[*cosmos*]," meaning, "I am not a citizen of any of your Greek states."[2] Diogenes's cosmopolitanism denies Alexander's triumphalism, refusing to belong to a self-confirming community; it is different from having a political position gaining strength from the *polis*. There is a marked change when eighteenth-century cosmopolitanism, Goldsmith's "citizen of the world," which respected differences as perhaps happened in eighteenth-century travel, is replaced by the universalism of the nineteenth century, annihilating cultural differences. Kant thinks of that danger in his "Idea for a Universal History with Cosmopolitan Intent" (1784), and *Perpetual Peace: A Philosophic Essay* (1795), wherein he wants to replace the law of nations with international law. Kant recognises what cosmopolitanism now means:

> Let us look now, for the sake of comparison, at the inhospitable behaviour of the civilised nations, especially the commercial states of our continent. The injustice which they exhibit on visiting foreign lands and races—this being equivalent in their eyes to conquest—is such as to fill us with horror. America, the negro countries, the Spice Islands, the Cape etc. were, on being discovered, looked upon as countries which belonged to nobody … Oppression of the native followed, famine, insurrection, perfidy and all the rest of the litany of evils which can afflict mankind.[3]

OED suggests that the idea of being "cosmopolite" at the beginning of the nineteenth century was to contrast it unfavourably with patriotism. So, for Coleridge, "Patriotism itself is a necessary link in the golden chain of our affections and virtues, and turns away with indignant scorn from the false Philosophy or mistaken Religion, which would persuade him that Cosmopolitism is nobler than Nationality, and the human Race a sublimer object of love than a People."[4] The contrast is with Byron, in *Childe*

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[2] Quoted, Donald R. Dudley, *A History of Cynicism: From Diogenes to the Sixth Century AD*, Methuen, 1933, 35.

[3] Kant, *Perpetual Peace: A Philosophic Essay* trans. M. Smith, Garland, 1972, 139–40. Quoted, Timothy Brennan, *At Home in the World: Cosmopolitanism Now*, Harvard University Press, 1997, 147. On cosmopolitanism, see Nick Stevenson, *Cultural Citizenship: Cosmopolitan Questions*, Open University Press, 2003.

[4] Coleridge, *The Friend* 1809, quoted Esther Wohlegemut, *Romantic Cosmopolitanism*, Macmillan, 2009, 2. Coleridge continues: "This is indeed Cosmopolitism, at once the Nursling and the Nurse of patriotic affection! This, and this alone, is genuine Philanthropy, which, like the Olive Tree, sacred to concord and to wisdom, fattens not exhausts the soil, from which it sprang, and in which it remains rooted, it remains rooted in the soil of the nation: nourished and nourishing the national soil"; quoted, 2–3.

Harold, which begins with a quotation from *Le "Cosmopolite," ou Le Citoyen du monde* by Fougeret de Montbron (1752). Byron's text is absolutely cosmopolitan, and not patriotic.[5]

The figure of Diogenes appears often in Dickens; for instance in *Pickwick Papers*, when the "little man" makes a speech and is showing off his references.[6] Diogenes appears too in *Martin Chuzzlewit*: "If Diogenes … could have rolled himself, tub and all, into Mr Pecksniff's parlour … he could not have faced it out, though in his surliest mood, but must have smiled good-temperedly," because to see Tom Pinch's satisfaction in eating, "no cynic in the world, though in his hatred of men a very griffin, could have withstood."[7] And the word "cynic" reappears when Pinch thinks the Man in the Monument "a Cynic, a worldly man" (*MC* 37.546). After this novel, cosmopolitan enough in setting scenes in America, comes *Dombey and Son* whose subject is thoroughly cosmopolitan, one form of it being implied in saying that "the earth was made for Dombey and Son to trade in, and the sun and moon were made to give them light. Rivers and seas were formed to float their ships; rainbows gave them promises of fair weather, winds blew for or against their enterprises; stars and planets circled in their orbits, to preserve inviolate a system of which they were the centre"[8] (*DS* 1.2). *Dombey and Son*, a novel about travel and the newness of speed, encompasses not just London, Warwick, Brighton, Dijon in France and Baden Baden in Germany, but also the Empire, both the West Indies, including Barbados, and the territories of the East India Company, such as Bengal and Canton in China. Major Bagstock, as an imperial figure rivalled by Thackeray's slightly later, India-based Colonel Sedley in *Vanity Fair*, keeps a "dark servant," "the Native," twice called "the exile" (*DS* 20.310, 29.455). There is also "a great hoarse shaggy dog, chained up at the back" of Dr Blimber's house. Paul Dombey has been trying to conciliate him, so that everyone will remember him kindly (*DS* 14.209). When Paul leaves Dr Blimber's he asks him to "take care of Diogenes," meaning the dog, which obviously only a classical scholar such as Dr Blimber could so have named (*DS* 14.228), since the cynics,

[5] Esther Wohlegemut, *Romantic Cosmopolitanism*, 95–118.
[6] *Pickwick Papers* ch. 7 ed. Robert Patten, Penguin 1972, 106. I owe this reference to Michael Hollington: see his "Diogenes and Dumkins: Status, 'Status Anxiety' and Humiliation in *Pickwick Papers*," in Alain Jumeau and Estelle Escuret, (eds.), *Hommage à Sylvère Monod*, Presses Universitaires de la Méditerranée, 2007, 65–81.
[7] Dickens, *Martin Chuzzlewit* ch. 6 ed. Patricia Ingham, Penguin, 2004, 98.
[8] Dickens, *Dombey and Son* ch. 1 ed. Andrew Sanders, Penguin 2002, 12.

outstandingly Diogenes, derived their name from the Greek for dog. Diogenes, who "ain't a lady's dog" is presented to Florence by Toots as a keepsake, the Blimbers being "glad to get rid of him," which says everything about them, and about the reason for his barking. Florence sees Diogenes:

> staring through the window of a hackney cabriolet, into which … he had been ensnared on a false pretence of rats among the straw. Sooth to say, he was as unlike a lady's dog as might be; and in his gruff anxiety to get out, presented an appearance sufficiently unpromising, as he gave short yelps out of one side of his mouth, and overbalancing himself by the intensity of every one of those efforts, tumbled down into the straw, and then sprung panting up again, putting out his tongue, as if he had come express to a Dispensary to be examined for his health.
>
> But though Diogenes was as ridiculous a dog as one would meet with on a summer's day; a blundering, ill-favoured, clumsy, bullet-headed dog, continually acting on a wrong idea that there was an enemy in the neighbourhood, whom it was meritorious to bark at, and though he was far from good-tempered, and certainly was not clever, and had hair all over his ears, and a comic nose, and an inconsistent tail, and a gruff voice, he was dearer to Florence in virtue of that parting remembrance of him … than the most valuable and beautiful of his kind. (*DS* 18.279–80)

After chasing off the dandy Toots, with his "pantaloons constructed by the art of Burgess & Co," the dog is installed, for "Diogenes the man did not speak plainer to Alexander the Great than Diogenes the dog spoke to Florence" (*DS* 18.280, 282). His absence of charm, cynicism in his general barking at all whom he thinks his enemies, and in his attraction to biting Toots' pantaloons, the regarding them "as if Burgess and Co. were his cooks, and had provided that dainty morsel for his holiday entertainment" (*DS* 22.347), suggests another meaning to cynicism, one discussed by Peter Sloterdijk, whose *Critique of Cynical Reason* distinguishes between cynicism with a c, and *kynicism*, which he associates with Diogenes's form. The first is summarised by Andreas Huyssen as the "average social character, fundamentally asocial, but fully integrated into the workaday world … a borderline melancholic able to channel the flow of depressive symptoms and to continue functioning in society despite constant nagging

doubts about his pursuits."[9] The second, Diogenes's cynicism, suggests both materiality against idealism, and what Walter Benjamin calls "the destructive character," one that attacks, and so reduces idealist systems of thought, in order to work through them. They may be compared with what Freud calls "cynical jokes," which work against institutions strictly guarded by moral regulations, such as marriage. [10] The *Arcades Project* quotes from the Preface to Félix Pyat's play, *Le Chiffonier de Paris*, for whom "the Cynic [Diogenes] suggested the Ragpicker."[11] The ragpicker or chiffonier has no idealism; he works through scraps and shards which are utterly material. Dickens writes, in 1851, of a February morning in Paris when he walks out "tumbling over a chiffonier with his little basket and rake, who was picking up the bits of coloured paper that had been swept out, overnight, from a Bob-Bon shop" ("A Monument to French Folly," 8 March 1851, *J2* 332). The chiffonier, in Baudelaire's poem, "Le Vin des Chiffonniers," is the image of the poet and revolutionary. Diogenes' poverty and refusal to be flattered, as well as the ragpicker's, are allegories of a type of thinking which works through scraps and ruins of knowledge. The dog Diogenes, the cynic turned back into the wholly material terms of being a dog, contrasts with social falsity, because the chief attraction of Toot's pantaloons, called "masterpieces" (*DS* 41.628), is that they are "fash'nable. But very dear" (*DS* 12.176, 18.279; see also 48.730, 56.849). "Very expensive" is, of course, one of the "leading merits" of Dr Blimber's school (11.160). The dog's cynicism picks out the irrelevance of what is fashionable and financially exclusive; that, of course, being the embodiment of everything Dombey and Son stands for, just as "the good duenna," Mrs Pipchin, is "the dearest and most cherished aversion of his breast" (*DS* 44.674). Accompanying Florence when she is a prisoner in the

[9] Peter Sloterdijk, *Critique of Cynical Reason*, trans, Michael Eldred, foreword by Andreas Huyssen, Verso, 1988, xii. Sloterdijk writes: "cynicism is *enlightened false consciousness*. It is that modernized, unhappy consciousness, on which enlightenment has laboured both successfully and unsuccessfully. It has learned its lessons in enlightenment, but it has not, and probably was not able to, put them into practice. Well-off and miserable at the same time, this consciousness no longer feels affected by any critique of ideology: its falseness is already reflexively buffered" (11).

[10] Freud, "Jokes and their Relation to the Unconscious," *Standard Edition of the Works of Sigmund Fredu*, trans. James Strachey, Vintage 2001, vol. 8, 110.

[11] Walter Benjamin, *The Arcades Project*, trans. Howard Eiland and Kevin McLaughlin, Harvard University Press, 1999, 380. See also Irving Wohlfarth, "Et Cetera? The Historian as Chiffonier," *New German Critique* 39 (1986), 142–168, especially 137–8.

great house (*DS* 23.352), he follows Florence when she finds herself houseless "in the streets" (*DS* 47.721,48.723), a phrase which associates with David Copperfield's former poverty, as Uriah Heep can recall, to Copperfield's bourgeois embarrassment.[12] It is the second time Florence is so exposed; pushed, as she is, outside the boundaries of patriarchy, and as she also steps outside them into a non-place "in the wildness of her sorrow, shame and terror" (*DS* 48.722). Being on the streets brings Florence into the material conditions of Diogenes in his poverty, which is why the dog is, significantly, named for the philosopher—as opposed to being called, say, Merrylegs, or Lion—in order to suggest that the bare life in the dog is the plain speech with which he speaks to the girl who has attained a cosmopolitanism, a definition of which is exile within the city, that being a condition for further knowledge.

The 1840s saw Dickens first in Paris in July 1844, on his way to Italy, travelling via Paris and Marseilles.[13] *American Notes* and *Pictures in Italy*, and *Martin Chuzzlewit* and *Dombey and Son* are all texts with substantial scenes abroad from Britain, even if Dickens did not quite achieve the degree of travel associated with Thackeray, with his months in Weimar from July to May of 1830 to 1831, and with his *Paris Sketch Book* (1840) and *Notes of a Journey from Cornhill to Grand Cairo* (1846).[14] Thackeray's generous relationships with other cultures from his own "Cockney" are documented in three books by S. S. Prawer; and that Thackerayan writing is of the same decade as when he discusses the snob, "he who meanly admires mean things," which is the antithesis of admiration of the other.[15] "Cosmopolitan" appears in the same decade as when Marx, in *The Communist Manifesto* quotes Goethe proposing "world literature," a term which suggests not so much that there is now a choice of how and what to read, but rather that the "worlding" (Gayatri Spivak's term) which is taking place within imperialism demands that texts from

[12] Dickens, *David Copperfield* 52, ed. Jeremy Tambling, Penguin 2004, 754.

[13] See *Letters* 4.154–5, note, and the letter to Count D'Orsay, August 7, 1844 (*Letters* 4. 166-7); see also *Letters* 3.588 for the spirit that travels through France, Switzerland and Italy and takes in Rome and Venice.

[14] S. S. Prawer, *Israel at Vanity Fair: Jews and Judaism in the Writings of W.M. Thackeray*, E. J. Brill, 1992; *Breeches and Metaphyiscs: Thackeray's German Discourse*, Legenda 1997; *W. M. Thackeray's European Sketch Books*, Peter Lang, 2000.

[15] Quoted, Ian Ousby, "Carlyle, Thackeray, and Victorian Heroism," *Yearbook of English Studies* (1982), 152–168, see 156.

the centre be placed in different contexts.[16] I want to suggest that the idea of being cosmopolitan and the idea of being a cynic are both double-edged and that both, especially in the 1840s, involve a complex reaction to Byron which, despite the disavowals, as in Dickens' letter, "it is not the province of a Poet to harp upon his own discontents, or to teach other people that they ought to be discontented. Leave Byron to his gloomy greatness" (to T. S. Horrell, 25 November 1840, *Letters* 2.155). I do not think this can be quite worked through because of the ambiguity implied in cynicism, and this applies equally to Carlyle, Thackeray or Dickens. Both cosmopolitan and cynical can imply the attempt to be superior, to deny heroism in the other, to assert the self and the nation. But both can mean something more admirable, or essential, though these are unconventional uses. To be cosmopolitan in relation to world literature is to not feel at home in any literature, certainly to not be possessive towards a national literature, since nationalism includes the danger of having what Derrida calls: "the imperialist or colonialist temptation to overstep borders."[17] Dickens' use of the word—I cannot find it in Thackeray—while sparing, is rich and complex, and includes a sense implying the opposite of either patriotism or nationalism and, following Derrida, as based on constraint, or exile, like Major Bagstock's servant, or Florence with Diogenes. It negates a humanism marked by implicit belief in the self, with entitlement either over others, particularly with the ability to forgive, or in relation to others. I argue that it is this non-conventional sense that Dickens shares with Derrida.

A cosmopolitanism which denies sovereignty conflicts, as we have seen, with other less complex responses in Dickens. In a letter to Angela Burdett Coutts of February 28, 1843, Dickens playfully tells her that: "I am in danger of turning misanthropical, Byronic, and devilish" (*Letters* 3.447). The opposition is to cynicism, and the association with Byron is apt. Misanthropy is always a topic for Dickens, identifiable with cynicism as when Dumps, in *The Bloomsbury Christenings*, is called a cynic.[18] Dickens parodies the Byronic mode of cynicism and cosmopolitanism. In *Pickwick Papers*, Mr Jingle, who has been in France and Spain, whose stories construct him as a Don Juan, analogous to Byron's *Don Juan*, is called "a traveller in many countries and a close observer of men and

[16] For "worlding," see Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, "Three Women's Texts and a Critique of Imperialism," *Critical Inquiry*, 12 (1985), 235–61.
[17] Jacques Derrida, *Sovereignties in Question: The Poetics of Paul Celan*, ed. Thomas Dutoit and Outi Pasanen, Fordham University Press, 2005, 102.
[18] Dickens, *Sketches by Boz*, ed. Dennis Walder, Penguin, 1995, 544.

things." However, he is actually an actor like his friend "Dismal Jemmy," who tells "The Stroller's Tale" about the death of the "low pantomime actor," playing the clown (*PP* 2.81,83, 3.104). In addition, Jem Hutley, whom Mr Pickwick saw apparently contemplating suicide from Rochester Bridge, and who has promised to send Pickwick a curious manuscript "from the romance of real life" (*PP* 5.130) is brother to Job Trotter and a hoaxing genius, and has emigrated to America, his dismal behaviour being all assumed (*PP* 53.842). In America, the young Martin Chuzzlewit receives a letter from America Junior, asking him for critical observations on "Cain, a Mystery," by the Right Honourable Lord Byron (22.348).[19] Back in England, there is the rejected and self-hating lover, Mr Moddle, who calls himself a "Vampire," which is Byronic, being associated with Polidori's story of 1819. In Phiz's picture, "Mr Moddle is both particular and peculiar in his attentions," and copies of *Childe Harold* and *Young Werther* surround him (*MC* 32.484, 487)—the lover is cosmopolitan. That cynicism is negative is suggested in *Martin Chuzzlewit* through comments on Tom Pinch, who shows his anti-Byronism in saying that "people who read about heroes in books, and choose to make heroes of themselves out of books, consider it a very fine thing to be discontented and gloomy, and misanthropical, and perhaps a little blasphemous, because they cannot have everything ordered for their individual accommodation" (*MC* 50.718). This paraphrases Carlyle's critique of the pursuit of happiness, which makes the soul speak to itself: "Art thou nothing other than a Vulture, then, that fliest through the Universe seeking after somewhat to *eat*; and shrieking dolefully because carrion enough is not given thee? Close thy *Byron*, open thy *Goethe*."[20] But Byronism cannot be closed off. It returns more sophisticatedly in the aristocratic revolutionary Steerforth in *David Copperfield*, who includes in himself the self-hatred which gives him his cynicism, and he is succeeded by such figures as Jack Maldon, James Harthouse, Henry Gowan, Sydney Carton, Eugene Wrayburn and Edwin Drood, each, in different modes, travellers, misanthropic or manipulative.[21] Each suggests two possibilities within cynicism. Recalling

[19] For the literary references here, see Nancy Aycock Metz, *The Companion to Martin Chuzzlewit*, Helm Information, 2001, 311–2.

[20] Carlyle, "The Everlasting Yea" in *Sartor Resartus and On Heroes and Hero-Worship*, ed. W.H. Hudson, Dent, 1959, 145.

[21] See William R. Harvey, "Charles Dickens and the Byronic Hero," *Nineteenth-Century Fiction* 24 (1969), 305–316, and Vincent Newey, "Rival Cultures: Charles Dickens and the Byronic Legacy" in Andrew Radford and Mark Sandy (eds.), *Romantic Echoes in the Victorian Era*, Ashgate, 2008, 67–83.

Sloterjik, cynicism, with a "c," is egotistical, narcissistic and associates with the sense of superiority that goes with cosmopolitanism; cynicism with a "k" suggests placelessness and exile, and refuses national feelings.

A specific reference to cosmopolitanism in Dickens, from *Bleak House*, where the word is used by Mr Skimpole, lying under a tree and looking at the sky, connects the word with being international in attitude:

> "Enterprise and effort," he would say to us (on his back), are delightful to me. I believe I am truly cosmopolitan. I have the deepest sympathy with them. I lie in a shady place like this, and think of adventurous souls going to the North Pole, or penetrating the heart of the Torrid Zone, with admiration. Mercenary creatures ask, "What is the use of a man's going to the North Pole? What good does it do?" I can't say, but for anything I *can* say, he may go for the purpose—though he don't know it—of employing my thoughts as I lie here. Take an extreme case. Take the case of the Slaves on American plantations. I dare say they are worked hard. I dare say they don't altogether like it, I dare say theirs is an unpleasant experience on the whole; but they people the landscape for me, they give it a poetry for me, and perhaps that is one of the pleasanter objects of their existence. I am very sensible of it, if it be, and I shouldn't wonder if it were!"[22]

Critics who think that the Mrs Jellyby satire weakened the attack on American slavery by making fun of Mrs Stowe miss the point. Dickens critiques slavery by getting at a philosophy of cosmopolitanism in the negative sense of that term, that is in its conventional use. Harold Skimpole shows how the discourse of being cosmopolitan could cover the advantages to Britain of being a colonial power, because he just pretends not to know that the explorations he describes have a material motivation behind them, disavowing his own mercenary approach. Negatively, being "cosmopolitan" means pretending that all travel and all other parts of the world are equal, and that Skimpole could, if he wished, be at home in any of them. The satire shows an immense topical awareness, both of the new word "cosmopolitan," with its sense of superiority, and of the Sir John Franklin expedition, which by 1852 had generated thirty groups in pursuit of a trip which had foundered in 1847, and of African exploration. Skimpole's phrase the "Torrid zone"—where Dickens had originally written "African"—is appropriate for an aestheticism which plays with names and language out of a sense of innate superiority. His languid comment about slavery recalls the superiority of Carlyle's "On the Nigger Question" (*Fraser's Magazine* 1849), which on this basis, criticises

[22] Dickens, *Bleak House* ch. 18, ed. Nicola Bradbury, Penguin, 2003, 294–5.

Carlyle as the Skimpolean cosmopolitan: "A poor Negro overworked on the Cuba sugar-grounds, he is sad to look upon; yet he inspires me with sacred pity, and a kind of human respect is not denied him."[23]

Cosmopolitanism could not be claimed by anyone else than Skimpole; he *is* cosmopolitan in being different from the English bias which other characters show. He has been in "the household of a German prince," acting as a doctor—until he was sacked because was "generally found lying on his back in bed, reading the newspapers or making fancy-sketches in pencil, and couldn't come" (*BH* 6.89–90). Unlike Mrs Jellyby, "who throws herself into objects with surprising ardour," Skimpole "can sympathise with the objects. I can dream of them. I can lie down on the grass—in fine weather—and float along an African river, embracing all the natives I meet, as sensible of the deep silence and sketching the dense overhanging topical growth as accurately as if I were there" (*BH* 6.91). The interest in Africa was topical.[24] But in so aligning himself with Mrs Jellyby, he shows something new; not the evangelical spirit which was determined to do good to the colonies, and which is satirised in the idea of Jo sitting on the doorstep of the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts, with no idea of "the spiritual destitution of a coral reef in the Pacific, or what it costs to look up the precious souls among the cocoanuts and bread-fruit" (*BH* 16.258), but an aestheticism which also underlines colonialism. That aestheticism diminishes the colonised other by miniaturising the colonial scene, by creating an image of the colonies which fits the fancy of the coloniser, making them that which the imagination of a latter-day Romantic such as Mr Skimpole can use to enlarge his own ego with the thought of what he can comprehend. Skimpole is more modern than Mrs Jellyby, and fits the idea of being cosmopolitan—effortlessly at ease in all cultures—in a way which her earnest-minded philanthropy does not.

But I want to defend Skimpole's cosmopolitanism, whose context is an argument with Mr Boythorn, who is engaged in a legal battle with Sir Leicester Dedlock. Skimpole says "very unexpectedly" that it is agreeable to him to see a man of Sir Leicester's sort, and that he does not object if the man wants to "patronise" him. "Here I am, content to receive things

[23] See Susan Shatto, *The Companion to Bleak House*, Unwin Hyman, 1988, 151–2 for discussion of Dickens's allusions, and for the Carlyle reference; see Thomas Carlyle, *Critical and Miscellaneous Essays: Collected and Republished*, Chapman and Hall, 1872, vol. 7, 93.

[24] See Humphry House, *The Dickens World*, Oxford University Press, 1942, 86–91.

childishly … if you have anything of an agreeable nature to show me, I shall be happy to see it; if you have anything of an agreeable nature to give me, I shall be happy to accept it." He says he would say the same to anyone who was opposite to Sir Leicester. Skimpole lives entirely by hanging on, for everyone's "business in the social system is to be agreeable … it's a system of harmony, in fact." He denies that is, for him, "such a thing as principle" (*BH* 18.293–4). The cosmopolitan lays no claim to any principle, being a child, but the dialogue raises a question of whether being a child, a profession about which Bucket is cynical (*BH* 57. 875), is a cover for a basic inadequacy, both in terms of poverty and in terms of ability, which means that he is very funny, but is best expressed by his daughters' qualities—Beauty (Arethusa), Sentiment (Laura) and Comedy (Kitty) (*BH* 43.676). It means that he needs patronage to survive. Skimpole is the cosmopolitan who reacts in a different way to his Alexander, i.e. Sir Leicester, than how Diogenes does, but it is too easy to dismiss him, as Esther learns to do. It seems that Skimpole's performance is intended by him to be parody the complacent cosmopolitan; the irony is that he fits more into the sense of the word associated with dispossession—he does not have an effortless superiority to the other, but is rather dependent, and lives by disavowing that state.[25] Certainly, Skimpole is cynical in his treatment of Jo and Richard, as well as in his autobiographical writings about Mr Jarndyce, which announces that "Jarndyce, in common with most other men I have known, is the Incarnation of Selfishness" (*BH* 61.935), as though Jarndyce belonged to the *dramatis personae* of *Martin Chuzzlewit*. Yet I am tempted to read this as the Dickens who would respond positively to Lacan on: "the aggressive motives that lie hidden in all so-called philanthropic activity,"[26] turning against the uncynical Dickens who admires philanthropy. That Dickens does not see that Jarndyce needs to give money to Skimpole to support his own identity, even to survive, though in another way he does see it since he creates Jarndyce, a figure internally split as is evident from his sudden misanthropic states when he knows he has been deceived or disappointed, as he says (*BH* 8.117). Jarndyce has, in some part, no illusions about his

[25] See Stephen F. Foge, "Skimpole Once More," *Nineteenth-Century Fiction*, 7 (1952), 1–18; James Atterbury Davies, "Leigh Hunt and John Forster," *RES* n.s. 19 (1968), 25–40; Donald H. Ericksen, "Harold Skimpole: Dickens, and the Early 'Art for Art's Sake' Movement," *Journal of Englih and Germanic Philology* 72 (1973), 48–59.

[26] Lacan, "Aggressivity in Psychoanalysis," *Ecrits* trans. Alan Sheridan, Tavistock, 1977, 13.

philanthropy. But the writer puts all the cynicism of Jarndyce, that he disavows in himself, into another part of the fiction—into Skimpole. Cynicism here, while it is also disavowed since the moral voice of Esther passes judgment on Skimpole and his "cosmopolitan mind" (*BH* 18. 295), is also an essential form of destructive thinking, essential to produce a new way forward in thinking, which involves cutting out the authority given to illusions.

The next two appearances of "cosmopolitan" appear in *Little Dorrit* (1855), which opens in the port-city of Marseilles. Here the imprisoned murderer Monsieur Rigaud, probably modelled on Lacenaire (1800–1830), tells the other prisoner, Cavalletto that: "I am a cosmopolitan gentleman. I own no particular country ... I am a citizen of the world."[27] Before commenting on this Diogenes and Goldsmith parody, I will note the other occasion when it is used, which is when the Italian Cavalletto reflects that if he is caught with the French and Belgian Rigaud, he will share his fate of being lynched, since "he remembered what a cosmopolitan gentleman M [Rigaud] was, and how few weak distinctions he made" (*LD* 1.11.147). Being cosmopolitan here means getting the other to take the blame, using the other as a shield against the crowd. In the use of the word in the prison at Marseilles, Rigaud's bogus theatricality indicates that being cosmopolitan means that he has no responsibility—he trades on everybody in all the world that he claims to be citizen of.[28] Marseilles is called "Babel," as the place where all nations have come to trade flaunting their cosmopolitanism, but the suggestion of equality here is superficial because *Little Dorrit* shows it to be compromised by something else, an awareness of global tourism which induces a narrative contempt for the cosmopolitanism of metropolitan culture and induces cynicism. Besides France, Switzerland and Italy, *Little Dorrit* mentions Egypt as a tourist destination, and the Polynesian gods that Cook brought back with him and which were put in the British Museum, as are kitsch souvenirs acquired from all over Europe bought by the bourgeois banker Mr Meagles. When Italy is visited, seen through Mr Eustace's guide-book which, incidentally, Byron rejected in relation to writing about Italy in *Childe Harold*, there is nothing to see, for experience is coded, silenced. Most significant is the point that the London

[27] Dickens, *Little Dorrit*, ed. Stephen Wall and Helen Small, Penguin, 2003, 24. For Lacenaire, see Trey Philpotts, *The Companion to Little Dorrit*, Helm Information, 2003, 28–31.

[28] On *Little Dorrit* in this light, see Amanda Anderson, *The Powers of Distance: Cosmopolitanism and the Cultivation of Detachment*, Princeton University Press, 2001, 63–90.

trading house of Clennam has been working in Canton, China, which suggests the unequal relationship that Kant speaks about, which was inaugurated fully in that same decade of the 1790s when the British Lord MacCartney began a new approach to Chinese trade, depending on open exploitation of the Chinese through the opium trade. This cancelled out a previous century's enlightenment—no more Goldsmith and his Chinese as the citizens of the world. The Chinese trade in *Little Dorrit* remains a matter of guilt and repression, its nature unspoken of. If the novel is set in 1825, "thirty years ago," Arthur Clennam, seen first at Marseilles (an equivalent port-city into France as is Canton for China), has been in China from 1805 to 1825, years which saw free trade companies such as Jardine and Mattheson pushing at the East India Company's Calcutta-based monopoly of trade in China, and illegally selling opium. Therefore, if *Little Dorrit* really evokes 1855, the year of its writing, then Clennam has been in Canton from 1835 to 1855, years which saw the opium war of 1841 which won the British Hong Kong, an unmistakable colonial acquisition not named in this narrative. Culture must be nationalistic in this text, and "cosmopolitanism" would imply the strongest form of Orientalism.[29]

Dickens could not have been unaware of the opium trade in China, but while the text remains silent on what was happening in Canton, its effects are felt on Arthur Clennam, who is not cosmopolitan. It implies a confident internationalism, but feels disempowered from citizenship anywhere: "I am such a waif and stray everywhere, that I am liable to be drifted where any current may set" (*LD* 1.2.35). He calls himself an exile: "shipped away to the other end of the world before I was of age and exiled there until my father's death there" (*LD* 1.2.35). The third chapter is called "Home," meaning the Clennam house and London; it evokes the sense that the cosmopolitan is absolutely bound to the city, the polis, but the city has the force of exiling him. The phrase "my long exile" returns in Clennam's meditation in his lodgings in London, "looking out upon the blackened forest of chimneys" (*LD* 1.13.181). Here it is noticeable that the narrative specifies his meditation that despite his disappointments and hard upbringing, he is not Byronic, not misanthropic, since he is not holding that "happiness … was reducible, when found in appearance, to the basest elements;" that though "a disappointed mind he had, but a mind too firm and healthy for such unwholesome air." Clennam, though "sorrowful to think upon the way by which he had come to that night, [was] yet not

[29] See Jeremy Tambling, "Opium, Wholesale, Resale, and for Exportation: Dickens and China," *Dickens Quarterly* 21 (2004), 28–43 and 104–113.

strewing poison on the way by which other men had come to it" (*LD* 1.13.181). The text is overly anxious to affirm a normality within Clennam; in the repeated word "not," these negations of any cynicism, repeating the spirit of Tom Pinch, are too much like disavowals, drawing attention to themselves as such. Perhaps the disavowal relates to Dickens' own desire to identify himself with Clennam, but, as I have suggested with *Bleak House*, what is disallowed with Clennam returns elsewhere in the novel.

> We can approach this from Forster's *Life of Dickens*, which notes how readers felt there was a deficiency of high and noble humanity in *Nicholas Nickleby*. Forster says in defence of Dickens that his books "were never for a moment alien to either the sympathies or feelings of any class."[30] This seems to be a half-quotation from Chremes's sentiment in the comedy by Terence (c.185–159 BCE), *The Self-Tormentor*: "Homo sum, humani nil a me alienum puto"—I am a human, and deem nothing human alien to me. That is parodied by Dickens in *Dombey and Son*, using it to get at the social climbing of Dr Blimber: "I like to know my fellow men in general, Sir Barnet. What does Terence say? Any one who is the parent of a son is interesting to *me*" (*DS* 24.376). In meta-novelistic terms, that is true of Dickens, who is interested, if not fascinated, by Mr Dombey, as much as he is by the now dead "son." But, taking Terence's statement, it is ambiguous—it may justify busybodying, or it may be used, as in Cicero's Stoicism, as an awareness of the suffering of others and be a call to justice.[31] It links with Diogenes's cosmopolitanism on the basis that this stems from being human, which in turn implies recognising that the human contains everything strange, as in Julia Kristeva's phrase, "strangers to ourselves."[32] Its danger is that if I deem nothing human to be alien to me, allowing for the moment, *concesso non dato*, that the human should exclude the animal world, that of Dickens' Diogenes, then the "human" becomes a discourse allowing me to exclude whatever I judge to be inhuman. It slides between making what is human an apparently objective state, and a value judgment. Here Derrida's work on cosmopolitanism in relation to forgiveness is relevant: the inhuman becomes the unforgivable, the opposite of a cosmopolitanism which necessitates allowing for the transgressive or the heterogeneous. *Little Dorrit*, a novel centred on forgiveness, silently alludes to Terence in the chapter "The History of a self-Tormentor," a woman's autobiography, that of Miss Wade, Arthur

[30] Forster, *Life of Dickens*, ed. A.J. Hoppé, Everyman, 1969, vol. 1, 97.
[31] See H. D. Jocelyn, "Homo sum: humani nil a me alienum puto," *Antichthon* 7 (1973), 14–46.
[32] Julia Kristeva, *Strangers to Ourselves*, trans. Leon Roudiez, Columbia University Press, 1991.

> Clennam's "fellow traveller" (*LD* 1.27.345) in more ways than one, since she seems to identify with him as well as having been shut up in quarantine with him. Miss Wade is a cosmopolitan in the way she has no citizenship other than of the world, being found in a house in London in a mode implying rootlessness, an absence of home. She "appeared to have taken up her quarters there, as she might have established herself in an Eastern caravanserai. A small square of carpet in the middle of the room, a few articles of furniture that evidently did not belong to the room, and a disorder of trunks and travelling articles, formed the whole of her surroundings" (*LD* 1.27.347). Miss Wade, who doubts that it is easy to forgive (*LD* 1.2.37), and who has experienced from the beginning the houseless state of Florence Dombey, has transferred onto her all the "unhappy temper," as it is called, that the novel disavows as far as Clennam goes. His lack of anger is implicitly criticised by hers. Her narrative brings into relation two types of cosmopolitanism when she describes meeting Henry Gowan, first seen coming from abroad. Miss Wade describes a cynical and bourgeois Byronism in Gowan's "coldly easy way," in his "light protestations of admiration" of the man Miss Wade is engaged to, in "his hopeful congratulations on our future wealth and his despondent references to his own poverty." She says that Gowan "made me feel more and more resentful, and more and more contemptible, by always presenting to me everything that surrounded me, with some new hateful light upon it, while he pretended to exhibit it in its best aspect for my admiration and his own." She compares him to the dance of death figures (*LD* 2.21.700), and describes how she was seduced by him, Gowan ending the relationship by saying "we were both people of the world, that we both understood mankind, that we both knew there was no such thing as romance" (*LD* 2.21.701).

Miss Wade, as a truly complex case of dispossession and heterogeneity, of which her lesbianism is part, represents a cosmopolitanism opposite to Gowan's egocentric and manipulative form, which itself is akin to that of Rigaud, with whom he associates (*LD* 2.6). Yet it may be questioned whether she is a "stranger to herself," even though there is so much she does not know about herself, including her name ("I have no name" [1.27.351]: does this mean her surname, or her first name, which is never given?), and her parentage. As Pancks says, "She is somebody's child—anybody's—nobody's. Put her in a room in London here with any six people old enough to be her parents, and her parents may be there, for anything she knows" (*LD* 2.9.565-6). She maintains a hard self-protectedness, which makes her "that immoveable woman" (*LD* 1.27.344), and that quality in her makes her autobiography a way of not knowing herself, in which sense it is also a model by which autobiographies are critiqued in Dickens, or indeed any narrative which involves saying "I,"

such as those which Skimpole gives. But her effect in *Little Dorrit* is to make readers strangers to themselves, since she challenges the text's capacity to absorb her. Hence the significance of her having a chapter to herself, outside the narrative flow which includes several forms of heterogeneity, and people who are strangers to themselves, such as Mrs Clennam; but none where it is this woman who is so determined to be outside its capacity to homogenise, to bring about resolution of differences.[33] The cosmopolitanism of the novel is implied here, existing not in its ease of reference, in which it is effortlessly rich, but in its awareness of what will not, and cannot be, assimilated into other people's objectifying knowledge about the self. Here, it connects with Foucault's resistance to knowledge of the self as power over the self. If Miss Wade brings out a cosmopolitanism which is both contrasted and in uneasy association with Gowan, and Rigaud (she also knows the latter, this novel's original cosmopolitan), this brings out something of which Dickens may be uneasy. Miss Wade begins her autobiography with "I have the misfortune of not being a fool" (*LD* 2.21.693). Is this her cynicism, which may also be a false consciousness? It meets the cynicism of Gowan, and is defeated by it. Is Gowan Thackeray, and is Thackeray an instance of a cynicism which compromises in a way that Sloterdijk analyses in, for instance, *Vanity Fair*, that most cosmopolitan of novels in almost every sense? Dickens' critique of Thackeray is familiar: "I thought that he too much feigned a want of earnestness, and that he made a pretence of undervaluing his art" (*The Cornhill*, February 1864, *J4* 328). Yet that spirit of lightness, which is also Skimpole's, cannot be dismissed, without it seeming too idealistic in its own way, or without questioning the necessity of cynicism, as Dickens' own text uses it, though disavowing it.

"Cosmopolitan" reappears twice in *The Uncommercial Traveller*, where the claim of the "I" is to be travelling on behalf of the great house of Human Interest Brothers; this again recalls Terence. The same text proclaims, in a late addition written in 1869, that the laughter in it shall not be "cynical."[34] In an early essay, "City of London Churches" (5 May 1860, *AYR*), it is noted how the smell of the "staple character of the neighbourhood" fills the churches: "behind the Monument, the service had

[33] I discuss this in "*Little Dorrit*: Dickens, Circumlocution, Unconscious Thought," in Alexis Grohmann and Caragh Wells (eds.), *Digressions in European Literature: From Cerantes to* Sebald, Macmillan, 2011, 36–48.

[34] "A Flyleaf in a Life," *All the Year Round* 22 May 1869, see *The Uncommercial Travller and Other Papers 1859–1870* in *Dickens's Journalism* vol. 4, ed. Michael Slater and John Drew, Dent, 2000, 391.

a flavour of damaged oranges, which, a little further down towards the river, tempered into herrings, and gradually toned into a cosmopolitan blast of fish" (*J4* 115). All fish of all genres are to be found with no distinction of class. However, a later essay, "In the French-Flemish Country" (12 September 1863, *AYR*) gives a much more resonant use of "cosmopolitan." The Uncommercial Traveller has been visiting the unromantic, non-cosmopolitan border between France and Belgium, completely pulverised in the First World War, and he comes to a town, perhaps Gravelines or Dunkerque or Hazebroucke, to see a play performed in a little theatre above the Hotel de Ville, by the P. Salcy family; he then sees the Fair in the town's "Place." After the entertainment, the town resumes its dullness, and the Uncommercial Traveller sees, in the Place:

> four male personages, evidently not belonging to the town, and having upon them a certain loose cosmopolitan air of not belonging to any town. One was clad in a suit of white canvas, another in a cap and blouse, the third in an old military frock, the fourth in a shapeless dress that looked as if it had been made out of old umbrellas. All wore dust-coloured shoes. My heart beat high; for in those four male personages, although complexionless and eyebrowless, I beheld four subjects of the Family P. Salcy … As I stood admiring, there emerged from the yard of a lowly Cabaret, the excellent Ma Mère, Ma Mère, with the words 'The soup is served;' words which so elated the subject in the canvas suit, that when they all ran in to partake, he went last, dancing with his hands stuck angularly into the pockets of his canvas trousers, after the Pierrot manner. Glancing down the Yard, the last I saw of him was, that he looked in through a window (at the soup, no doubt) on one leg. (*J4* 305)

This tableau is rendered as if in a picture by Watteau, painter of Pierrots. What is essential here is the idea of the impoverished troupe of actors, travelling players whose motley assortment of costumes have something of the character of the Harlequinade, as being types of the cosmopolitan. Perhaps both senses that the term can have are being played on; the troupe affects independence, and insouciance, but these are also strolling players, so figures of exile. The passage evokes, for me, the Fifth Elegy of Rilke's *Duino Elegies*, inspired by the Picasso picture *Les Saltimbanques* (1905). This includes a Harlequin figure but not a Pierrot who is, in Dickens, the one member of the troupe who is singled out, whom OED calls "a stock character in French pantomime, usually played as a sentimental lovesick youth with a whitened face, characteristically dressed in a loose white costume with a neck ruff, and a high hat with a wide floppy brim," though Baudelaire suggests that the English Pierrot was much funnier than the French, with "unconcern and detachment, and