Alexandre Dumas as a French Symbol since 1870

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All for One and One for All in a Global France

Edited by

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INTRODUCTION

ERIC MARTONE

Is there anyone alive unfamiliar with the musketeers' motto "all for one and one for all"? Alexandre Dumas *père*'s novel *The Three Musketeers* is among the best-known and loved pieces of French literature around the world. Both Dumas and his works, which also include *The Count of Monte Cristo*, have become emblematic of France and its culture. Consequently, we can perceive Dumas as not only a historical figure but also as a *lieu de mémoire*, or "any significant entity, whether material or non-material in nature, which by dint of human will or the work of time has become a symbolic element of the memorial heritage of any community."[1] Since his death in 1870 to his 2002 interment in the Panthéon in Paris as one of France's greatest citizens, the constant re-imagining of Dumas over time has created a mythical one of memory selectively distinct from the historical one, with subsequent generations imposing intentionally anachronistic interpretations on the Dumas of the past to create one to meet the needs of different presents. However, as a symbol of the French patrimony, Dumas has been a controversial figure for nearly two centuries, primarily because of his mixed-racial heritage as a descendent of an Afro-Caribbean slave.

Dumas was born in Villers-Cotterêts, France in 1802 to Marie-Louise Élisabeth Labouret, a local innkeeper's daughter, and Thomas-Alexandre Dumas, a French Revolutionary War general from the French colony of St. Domingue (now Haiti). His father's parents were Marie-Césette Dumas, a slave of black African descent, and the Marquis Alexandre-Antoine Davy de la Pailleterie, a Norman aristocrat.[2] During the French Revolution (1789-1799), Thomas-Alexandre abandoned his father's noble surname in favor of his mother's upon joining the revolutionary army. He later served with Napoléon Bonaparte, but royalists captured him as he returned to France from Egypt and held him prisoner under wretched conditions in southern Italy. He died in 1806 not long after his release.[3] The young Dumas, raised under modest financial resources, enjoyed only a rudimentary education. His early education was received from the noted cleric, Abbé Grégoire, who ran a local school. In the late 1820s, Dumas, skilled in penmanship, secured

a position in Paris as clerk to the duc d'Orléans, who later ruled as King Louis-Philippe from 1830 to 1848.

While eking out a living in the duc's employment, Dumas began a career as a dramatist. Dumas's first success in the theater was *Henri III and His Court* (1829). He soon became a leader of the French Romantic Movement in drama, and a modern celebrity. Following his fame as a dramatist, Dumas tried his hand at composing novels. He habitually collaborated with assistants, a practice carried over from the theater. Among the best known of Dumas's collaborators was historian Auguste Maquet. The duo worked on such seminal works as *The Three Musketeers* (1844), *The Count of Monte Cristo* (1845-1846), *The Vicomte de Bragelonne* (which includes *The Man in the Iron Mask*, 1848-1850), *Queen Margot* (1845), *Le Chavalier de Maison-Rouge* (1845), *Joseph Balsamo* (1846-1848), and *The Queen's Necklace* (1849-1850). Dumas's vast literary output spanned various genres, including travel books, short stories, memoirs, poems, journals, children's books, and cookbooks.

Although Dumas typically declared republican sentiments, he nevertheless enjoyed the patronage and companionship of many aristocrats. Due to his fame, Dumas was the subject of much contemporary gossip and half-truths. He gained notoriety for being free with his money and often had to flee creditors despite earning vast sums of money. He also gained attention for his numerous romantic conquests and several illegitimate children (among them was Alexandre Dumas *fils*, also a noted French writer). Dumas's achievements even incited one detractor, Eugène de Mirecourt, to accuse him of establishing a writing factory in which he placed his name on works others composed. The pamphlet, titled *Fabrique de romans: Maison Alexandre Dumas et compagnie* (1845), also used the French word *nègre*'s double meaning as both a black slave from the colonies and a ghostwriter to attack Dumas professionally and personally.[4]

Many literary critics did not respect Dumas as a writer, despite—and perhaps because of—his popularity, and the prestigious French Academy never selected him as a member. Contemporary commentator Delphine de Girardin summarized this position:

> Is being famous such an obstacle?...Why is it the famous find it so difficult to get elected? Is it a crime to have a right to recognition?...Balzac and Alexandre Dumas write fifteen to eighteen volumes a year, and that, it seems, cannot be forgiven them. But these novels are excellent! That is no excuse; there are too many of them. But they are terrifically successful! That makes matters worse. Let a man write just one short, mediocre book which nobody reads, and then we'll think seriously about him.[5]

Dumas also faced various forms of racial prejudice in France.[6] Cartoonists Cham and Nadar, for example, regularly drew Dumas as a grotesque figure by emphasizing his "African features" (i.e. his lips and hair). Cham's most notorious caricature depicts Dumas as an African cannibal stirring a pot. Such images were not unusual. Others include Dumas leading a parade of tribal Africans carrying his awards.[7] In addition to Mirecourt's pamphlet mentioned previously, contemporaries debated how to "classify" Dumas, illuminating another aspect of French racism. Some described the "racial wars" fought within him. Journalist Hippolyte de Villemessant argued that the white race was victorious, for "the *nègre* had been beaten by civilized man; the impulsiveness of African blood had been tempered by the elegance of European civilization." As a result, "what was repulsive in…[Dumas] had been transfigured by the clarity of his intelligence and his blossoming success."[8] However, Dumas's detractors argued the opposite. Victor Pavie claimed that "the refinements of an exuberant civilization have not been able to tame… [Dumas's] black blood."[9]

After a long career, Dumas died in 1870 during the Franco-Prussian War. After a temporary burial, his remains were transferred in 1872 to a cemetery in his hometown of Villers-Cotterêts. At the time of his death, Dumas was already one of the best-known French writers around the world.

However, the half century after Dumas's death did not result in more positive critical reassessments of his literary works. At the same time, other Romantic writers (such as Victor Hugo) became held in increasingly higher esteem. While Dumas's popularity was not refuted, his work's "quality" was often circumspect. As literary scholar A. Craig Bell noted in 1950, "Dumas is a river which academicians, critics and literary snobs have been fouling for half a century." He felt that French literary historians generally ignored him and "dismiss Dumas in a paragraph."[10] Similarly, French intellectual André Maurois noted in 1957 that previous generations of French literary critics "had denied… [Dumas's] importance." Yet, even Maurois did not rank Dumas among the greatest nineteenth-century French writers.[11]

French biographical studies on Dumas, particularly during the decades immediately after his death, often downplayed the impact of his black ancestry to buttress perceptions of French culture as the creation of a people of European stock, or "whites." Dumas and his works, especially his "Drama of France," which sought to depict French history from the early modern period to Dumas's era as climaxing in a destined republic, had been regarded as a component of the French patrimony helping to crystalize a

distinct national identity.[12] In 1902, Hippolyte Parigot, for example, wrote of the musketeers as "a living sense of France":

> Fierce determination, aristocratic melancholy, a somewhat vain strength, an elegance, at once subtle and gallant – it is these qualities that make of them… an epitome of that gracious, courageous, light-hearted France which we still like to recover through the imagination… D'Artagnan, the adroit Gascon, caressing his moustache; Porthos, the muscular and foolish; Athos, the somewhat romantic *grand seigneur*; [and] Aramis…the discreet Aramis, who hides his religion and his amours, able student of the good fathers… – these four friends…typify the four cardinal qualities of our country.[13]

As a symbol of France during the rise of the New Imperialism and scientific racism, Dumas posed a conceptual dilemma because of his black African ancestry and past experiences with racism. Consequently, Dumas's portraits and caricatures often took a departure from those during his lifetime. Rather than emphasize his "black" features, they instead emphasized his Caucasian features. Therefore, Dumas's status as "symbolically white" by virtue of being part of the French heritage cast him in a contradictory role, and French intellectuals generally continued to cite him as a popular, though not great, writer.[14]

The French Third Republic (1871-1940)—largely because of its French Revolutionary heritage—generally perceived France as the source of "liberty, equality, and fraternity," and as the birthplace of the rights of man. It maintained this view despite its colonial endeavors. The French state had established a colonial empire in the early modern era centered in the Caribbean that had served as a source of enormous wealth. However, in the wake of the Haitian Revolution (1791-1804) and conquest of Algeria (1830), French colonial endeavors focused increasingly on Africa and Asia. The European colonial enterprise, founded on the concept of modernity, necessitated social constructions of difference. As a result, the French faced difficulties in conceiving individuals associated with the colonies as "French," despite a strong belief in a theoretically "open" French political identity, and reconciling a restricted sense of Frenchness with France's new global condition.[15] During the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, individuals from the French colonial world were relatively few in metropolitan (or mainland) France. Therefore, debates about French identity's "openness" could remain largely philosophical exercises at the time.

However, post-World War II immigration and migration of people from former French colonies to mainland France revealed increasingly within the metropole the global France created through its colonial endeavors. The

rapid rise in the number of citizens and permanent residents from beyond the European continent put many French at unease.[16] How to deal with this postcolonial condition remained among France's pressing challenges at the dawning of a new millennium. Also complicating matters during the twentieth century was the decrease of the French state's global influence, especially after World War II and the subsequent loss of its colonies.[17] The French state sought to retain its authority during and after decolonization by way of alternative means viewed as more in line with the changing times.[18] Postwar immigration, the changing face of France, and efforts to adapt to a limited global role all came to a head by the twenty-first century.

In 2002, Dumas's remains were transferred to the Panthéon, a mausoleum reserved for the greatest French citizens, amidst much national hype during the bicentennial of his birth. Such praise (and the general intellectual enthusiasm greeting Dumas's interment) would have surprised French literary critics a century earlier or during the height of Dumas's fame. Contemporary France transformed Dumas into a symbol of the colonies and the larger francophone world to integrate its immigrants and migrants from its former Caribbean, African, and Asian colonies to help improve race relations and promote French globality.[19] There had already been many concerted (and contradictory) efforts to realize greater socio-cultural cohesion amongst diverse and marginalized groups.[20] As Pierre-André Taguieff has suggested, twentieth- and twenty-first century French racism emerged not from a white/black historical divide as in the United States, but as a tension between "authentic/native" citizens and increasingly numerous "ethnic outsiders," arriving mostly from former colonies since the end of World War II.[21]

Consequently, such celebrations represented a radical reassessment of Dumas. The reevaluation of Dumas's "genius" and biraciality were connected. For example, French President Jacques Chirac's numerous praises of Dumas's genius did not fail to cite a specific source of "his roots overseas and in Africa."[22] While Dumas's biracial background was not the sole reason for his interment in the Panthéon, this aspect of his identity, combined with his family's colonial history, separated him from his literary contemporaries and occupied a crucial role in the portraits of Dumas constructed after his death and during the interment. As one writer noted, "a panthéonized author must personify the qualities attributed to 'French genius.'"[23] The simultaneous celebration of Dumas's "certain ethnic traits" and his nature as a symbol of French identity acknowledged the contributions from former French colonies in the construction of "French" culture rather than perceiving "French" culture as emanating overseas exclusively from the metropole.[24] One journalist even asked rhetorically if Dumas's

panthéonization was "another celebration or a celebration of the Other" and historian Jean Tulard made the cynical accusation that Dumas had been "transferred to the Panthéon…less for the quality of his writings… than for having a black slave grandmother."[25] During the bicentennial, which followed the 150th anniversary of the French abolition of slavery in 1998 and public debates about France's role in the slave trade and continued inequalities, Chirac declared that France was not only honoring Dumas's "genius," but was "repairing an injustice," the racism that "marked Dumas at childhood just as shackles previously marked his slave ancestors."[26]

Such a re-conception of Dumas has made him a major figure in ongoing debates on French identity and colonial history, and French literary critics continue to systematically praise his works. However, he has still not achieved the same level of literary prominence as many contemporaries of comparative achievements. While studies in English have focused on Dumas as a francophone writer, as well as his legacy in the French Atlantic world, there has been less of a focus on Dumas and his legacy in metropolitan France.[27]

One Alexandre Dumas or Many? The Dumas of French Memory and the Forging of a Contemporaneous Humanity

These multifaceted conceptions/constructions of Dumas reflect attempts to realign this symbol of "France" with changing, seemingly crystalized notions of French identity circulating within the collective French consciousness. What it means to be French, however, has not been static, but rather in a constant state of revision during the past two centuries despite proclamations of cultural continuity. Narratives of national development erase the incongruities through which national identity was formed into a linear and seemingly inevitable progression. As Etiénne Balibar has argued, the "formation of the nation thus appears as the fulfillment of a 'project' stretching over centuries, in which there are different stages and moments of coming to self-awareness."[28] Nations, as imaginary constructions whose authentication rests on a system of cultural fictions, rely on popular media and public ceremonies to help preserve stories of national origin and evolution that create a national memory. The Dumas of memory has emerged as an integral component of the memorial heritage of the French nation's formation in the construction of these cultural fictions.

Since *lieux de mémoire* are in a state of flux, the Dumas of memory has had its own complex construction dating from Dumas's lifetime. The Dumas of memory and the historical Dumas are obviously intertwined: the

Dumas of memory derives its reality from the Dumas of history, and the Dumas of history is reconstituted in retrospect by the Dumas of memory. Elites occupy key roles in manifesting, actualizing, and articulating national identity.[29] The consensus views reached when government officials or their representatives, along with intellectuals, arrived at a general agreement about how Dumas and his works should be perceived and evaluated in broader French society have changed over time. French intellectuals and politicians of different generations have thus created multiple Dumases, imposing intentionally anachronistic interpretations on the Dumas of the past to create ones to meet the needs of different presents. Each instance resulted in a Dumas selectively distinct from the historical one. The conflict over how to classify, or situate, Dumas, a symbol of French culture, as a result of his biracial heritage reflected a larger conflict over who and what constituted being French. At the heart of Dumas's (re)conceptualizations over time has been the problem of how to reconcile his dual racial identities within his context as a French symbol.

This "Dumas puzzle" reflected a local variation of a wider Western geo-psychology dating from the early modern era that organized the globe temporally, creating contemporaneous (in the present) and non-contemporaneous (backward) peoples even though all existed in the same present to justify European dominance over an "expanding" globe. Such a process formed individual European identities in opposition to "distant" Others.[30] However, the spreading of transportation, communication, and information networks via colonialism, particularly during the New Imperialism, unintentionally resulted in the rise of a single "technoscientific civilization" and the socio-cultural collapse of identities based on distance/difference.[31] Consequently, a new dominant geo-psychology has formed since the World War II era characterized by a contemporaneous humanity—a newly conceptualized form of social integration in which individuals/groups increasingly identify themselves as part of a single and equal human race in which all exist in the same time/present.[32] Colonial empires thus served as globalizing agents that resulted in a sense of time-space compression that displaced non-contemporaneity in our global era and allowed a reassessment of Europe's relationship to the wider world.[33] Conceiving national identities within a contemporaneous globe has provided new challenges to Western nation-states.

Because of Dumas's simultaneous connections to France and perceived connections to Africa due to his black heritage, examining the different conceptions of Dumas over time at specific moments reveal French attempts to resolve or come to terms with problems of national identity linked to a globalizing world and the shift to contemporaneity. Dumas's

heritage/hybrid status is non-variable; one cannot change someone's ancestry. But different, or variable, interpretations of this ancestry, and of Dumas's role within French society and culture, reflect not only changing perceptions of French identity but also shifting conceptions of the contemporaneous and non-contemporaneous worlds, or changing conceptions of Europe's relationship to global diversity. As a result, changing interpretations of Dumas reflect aspects of the local (i.e. national) cultural and social effects of the processes of globalization. Dumas thus reflects part of the French localization of globalization, or how local French culture and society is continually reshaped through diverse processes of globalization.[34] It thus sheds light on how some of globalization's cultural and social consequences were internalized and adapted in France.[35] Globalization processes consequently consist of an interaction, rather than confrontation, between the global and the local resulting in the reconstitution of both.[36] Broadly speaking, shifting views of the Dumas of memory reflect perceived, accelerating processes of globalization, or what might be called a heightened global imaginary, and their socio-cultural ramifications on national identity in France.[37]

For the sake of analysis, the different symbolic interpretations of Dumas can be perceived as falling into four dominant types: the "non-contemporaneous" Dumas (chapter one), the "imperial" Dumas (chapter two), the "postwar" Dumas (chapter three), and the "global" Dumas (chapter four). The composition of each different Dumas over time—rearranging and constructing diverse aspects, characteristics, and interpretations of Dumas in a mosaic fashion to generate various and different "portraits" of him after his death to meet the needs of changing notions of Frenchness—can thus be contextualized within attempts to resolve or come to terms with problems of French national identity linked to a globalizing world and shifting notions of France's place in the world (as well as its relationship with non-Western peoples and cultures).[38]

Dumas's Legacy as a Controversial Symbol of France since 1870

This interdisciplinary collection, the publication of which coincides with the 150th anniversary of Dumas's death, focuses on his legacy as a controversial symbol of France since 1870, as it has struggled to deal with colonialism and its aftermath, and increased diversity and globalization. While the chapters in part one trace the evolution of this legacy and the formation of the multiple conceptions of Dumas, those in part two contain chapters reevaluating Dumas's literary works in light of this legacy.

To open part one, Lynne Bermont's chapter, "Ovations and Omissions: A Summary of Alexandre Dumas's Oscillating Literary Legacy," focuses on Dumas's literary reputation in nineteenth-century France. Bermont explores how Dumas, along with Victor Hugo, emerged as the founders of the French Romantic Movement in the theater. Dumas gained much initial praise for his dramatic work. After Dumas moved toward writing a growing number of serial novels, he became highly criticized as operating a writing factory (even though the practice of using collaborators was a common practice in the theater that Dumas carried over to his novels). The transition of literature for art's sake to a commercial enterprise was therefore a controversial transition in literary history, and Dumas largely became a symbol for popular literature. Over the course of the nineteenth century (and even during his own lifetime), Dumas's critical reputation steadily decreased in favor of other contemporaries; indeed, Hugo's reputation in particular escalated as Dumas's declined. Moreover, some critiques of Dumas bore racist undertones. A primary example was Mirecourt's use of the word *nègre* (which has a double-meaning in French as both a person of black African descent and a ghostwriter) in his infamous 1840s pamphlet accusing Dumas of organizing a writing factory in which he placed his name on works composed by other authors. Such critiques suggest Dumas had difficulty in being accepted as "French" during the nineteenth century.

In "Recasting Alexandre Dumas as a Popular Educator in France during the New Imperialism," Eric Martone examines how Dumas faced racial prejudice in France because of his Caribbean family origins, biracial ancestry, and descent from a slave. During the late nineteenth century, the rise of scientific racism and aggressive European imperialism around the globe resulted in racial perceptions and worldviews that supported European superiority and equated "European" with being "white." Such developments complicated perceptions of Dumas and his works as part of the French patrimony, causing intellectuals and reformers to adapt various and often conflicting approaches to reconcile Dumas's heritage with dominant perceptions of French identity as "white," as well as search for ways to simultaneously praise and critique Dumas's literary works. This critique of Dumas paradoxically manifested itself during the French Third Republic. By separating his works from the more elite "world of letters" and reclassifying them as unsophisticated and suitable to the more rudimentary educational needs of the common working classes and adolescents for French nation-building purposes, intellectuals, policymakers, and education reformers found a way to critique Dumas's "Africanness" indirectly while praising his Frenchness openly. Much of the French criticism levied at Dumas and his work had applied negative African stereotypes to the manner

in which he lived and constructed his novels. As Dumas and his works became symbols of the French patrimony (and therefore France itself) at this time, criticizing his "Africanness" indirectly was preferred, as to do so openly would suggest that the French patrimony had "African" elements. This reclassification prevented Dumas from being regarded as equal to other "great" French writers; this stigma lasted until the early twenty-first century.

In the subsequent chapter, "French Intellectual Engagement with Alexandre Dumas in the Postwar Era and Emergence of the Global Age," Martone explores French intellectual engagement with Dumas in the mid-to-late twentieth century. During the era of the First and Second World Wars, a growing disillusionment with progress, a heightened realization that a new global order had emerged, and changing perceptions of France's (and Western Europe's) relation to Others spurred a radical geo-psychological shift. Such a rupture with the old paradigm for conceiving Europe and the rest of the world ultimately marked the emergence of an ongoing and probing search for a new identity, and new relations with peoples and cultures beyond Europe. In a period of growing uncertainties and destabilized identities, the French took a nostalgic turn toward the familiar past as represented by the collective memory invested in Dumas as a symbol of the French patrimony. Intellectuals thus renewed their attention in Dumas, and used his and his historical fiction's global popularity to remind Frenchmen of what being French was all about, and to provide a sense of stability to the Frenchness that was perceived as once existing. Such intellectuals, who became steadily more numerous, suggested a reevaluation of Dumas's ranking in French literature and culture.

In "From the Literary Myth to the *Lieu de Mémoire*: Alexandre Dumas and French National Identity(ies)," Roxane Petit-Rasselle examines how Dumas's most famous protagonists, the musketeers, became a literary myth through the countless theatrical adaptations, films, sequels, and rewritings that perpetuated the characters' existence in the cultural environment. Through the appropriation of this myth for patriotic, national, and republican purposes, it became a "*lieu de mémoire*," or a symbolic element of the community's identity. As such, the "diversity" within the musketeers and their servants came to represent the regional and social diversity within metropolitan, republican France. During Dumas's bicentennial and interment in the Panthéon in 2002, the collective memorial symbol of the musketeers was transferred to the persona of Dumas to represent France in its contemporary, postcolonial diversity. Such a use shows how Dumas and his musketeers continue to (re)define French identity.

Part two opens with Hilary A. Heffley's chapter, "Conquering Nature: Elements of Early Nineteenth-Century Ethnology in Alexandre Dumas's

Georges." By examining the intersection between natural disasters and sociopolitical turbulence in this nineteenth-century novel set in France's colonies, Heffley explores how Dumas's eponymous hero in *Georges* (1843) uses his metropolitan education to dominate dangerous natural spaces in a justification for French imperialism. In her analysis, she reveals how Dumas alludes to the dangers of rationalizing nature, from the notion of a "natural" revolution to the "scientific" justifications of racism and imperialism.

Virginia Payne Dow's chapter, "Alexandre Dumas: Hidden within His *Doppelgänger* Paradigm," concludes this section. She argues that Dumas created narratives involving the *doppelgänger* motif, which both challenged the accepted social ideals and spawned a plethora of imitations by critiquing social stratification and racial discrimination. Given the current influx of interest in the *doppelgänger* paradigm within the media, and particularly in light of rising cultural studies involving race, class, and social stratification, the two novels explored in this chapter—Dumas's *The Man in the Iron Mask* and *Georges*—warrant ever-increasing interest due to their discourse in the inequities of the caste system. Although written in the nineteenth century, the novels contain thematic elements that continue to plague societies throughout the world: discrimination, mistreatment, and warped variations of racism. For Dumas to address the inherent evils within the marginalization of the subaltern, whether through caste systems or discrimination, is both relevant and productive.

Notes

[1] Pierre Nora, "Introduction: Between Memory and History," *Realms of Memory: The Construction of the French Past*, eds. Pierre Nora and Lawrence Kritzman, trans. Arthur Goldhammer, vol. I (New York: Columbia University Press, 1996), xvii.

[2] For biographies on Dumas, see: Claude Schopp, *Alexandre Dumas: Genius of Life*, trans. A.J. Koch (New York: Franklin Watts, 1988); Daniel Zimmerman, *Alexandre Dumas le Grand*, new ed. (Paris: Phébus, 2002).

[3] For biographies on Dumas's father, see: Victor E. R. Wilson, *Le Général Alexandre Dumas: Soldat de la Liberté* (Quebec: Les Éditions Quisqueya-Québec, 1977); John G. Gallaher, *General Alexandre Dumas: Soldier of the French Revolution* (Carbondale and Edwardsville: Southern Illinois University Press, 1997); Claude Ribbe, *Le Diable Noir: Biographie du général Alexandre Dumas, père de l'écrivain* (Monaco: Éditions Alphée, 2009); Tom Reiss, *The Black Count: Glory, Revolution, Betrayal, and the Real Count of Monte Cristo* (New York: Broadway Books, 2012). For works on Dumas's family, see: Gilles Henry, *Monte-Cristo ou l'extraordinaire aventure des ancêtres d'Alexandre Dumas* (Paris: Perrin,

1976); Gilles Henry, *Les Dumas, Le secret de Monte Cristo* (Paris: France-Empire, 1999); Gilles Henry, *Dans les pas des…Dumas. Les mousquetaires de l'aventure: Normandie, Haïti, Paris* (France: OREP Éditions, 2010); W.J. Hemmings, *Alexandre Dumas: The King of Romance* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1979); André Maurois, *The Titans: A Three-Generation Biography of the Dumas*, trans. Gerard Hopkins (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1957).

[4] See: Eugène de Mirecourt, *Fabrique de Romans, Maison Alexandre Dumas et compagnie* (Paris: Hauquelin et Bautruche, 1845).

[5] "Lettre IV: 5 mai 1845," *Vicomte de Launay, Lettres Parisiennes*, ed. Émile de Girardin, 4 vols. (Paris: Michel Lévy, 1857), IV: 192.

[6] Eric Martone, *Finding Monte Cristo: Alexandre Dumas and the French Atlantic World* (Jefferson, NC: McFarland, 2018), 13-49.

[7] See: Christiane Neave and Digby Neave, eds. *Iconographie d'Alexandre Dumas père* (Marly-le-Roi: Éditions Champflour/La Société des Amis d'Alexandre Dumas, 1991).

[8] Hippolyte de Villemessant, *Mémoires d'un journaliste: Les Hommes de mon temps*, 2nd series (Paris: E. Dentu, 1872), 236.

[9] Victor Pavie, *Les revenants: Alexandre Dumas père* (Angers: Librairie Germain et G. Grassin, 1881), in *Alexandre Dumas en bras de chemise*, ed. Claude Schopp (Paris: Maisonneuve & Larose, 2002), 56.

[10] A. Craig Bell, *Alexandre Dumas: A Biography and Study* (London: Cassell, 1950), ix-x.

[11] André Maurois, *Les Trois Dumas* (Paris: Librairie Hachette, 1957), 11-12.

[12] While a definitive list of which novels comprise the "Drama of France" has not been created, there is general agreement on the inclusion of the Valois trilogy (*Queen Margot*, *Madame de Monsoreau*, *The Forty-Five Guardsmen*), the Musketeers trilogy (*The Three Musketeers*, *Twenty Years After*, *Vicomte de Bragelonne*), the French Revolution pentalogy (*Joseph Balsamo*, *The Queen's Necklace*, *Taking the Bastille*, *The Comtesse de Charny*, *The Chevalier de Maison-Rouge*), the Napoléon trilogy (*The Companions of Jéhu*, *The Whites and the Blues*, *The Comte de Sainte-Hermine*), and *The Count of Monte Cristo*. On Dumas's novels comprising a "Drama of France," see: Claude Schopp, "Le Testament perdu," in Alexandre Dumas, *Le Chevalier de Sainte-Hermine* (Paris: Phébus, 2005), 47-66; Youjun Peng, *La nation chez Alexandre Dumas* (Paris: L'Harmattan, 2003).

[13] Hippolyte Parigot, *Alexandre Dumas père* (Paris: Librairie Hachette, 1902), 140-141.

[14] For an explanation of the concept of "symbolically white," see: Susan Koshy, "Morphing Race into Ethnicity: Asian Americans and Critical Transformations of Whiteness," *boundary 2* 28, 1 (Spring 2001), 168.

[15] See: William B. Cohen, *The French Encounter with Africans: White Response to Blacks, 1530-1880*, reprint ed. (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2003); Alice L. Conklin, Sarah Fishman, and Robert Zaretsky, *France and Its Empire Since 1870* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011); Raymond Betts, *Assimilation and Association in French Colonial Theory, 1890-1914*, new ed. (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2005); Gary Wilder, *The French Imperial Nation-State: Négritude and Colonial Humanism between the Two World Wars* (Chicago: University of

Chicago Press, 2005); Dino Costantini, *Mission civilisatrice: Le rôle histoire coloniale dans la construction de l'identité politique française* (Paris: Découverte, 2008); Rogers Brubaker, *Citizenship and Nationhood in France and Germany* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1992).

[16] See: Yves Lequin, ed., *La Mosaîque France: histoire des étrangers et de l'immigration en France* (Paris: Larousse, 1988); Gérard Noiriel, *The French Melting Pot: Immigration, Citizenship, and National Identity*, trans. Geoffroy de Laforcade (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1996); Alec G. Hargreaves, *Immigration, Race and Ethnicity in Contemporary France* (New York: Routledge, 1995); Peter Sahlins, *Unnaturally French: Foreign Citizens in the Old Regime and After* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2004); Max Silverman, *Deconstructing the Nation: Immigration, Racism and Citizenship in Modern France* (London: Routledge, 1992); Patrick Weil, *Qu'est-ce qu'un français? Histoire de la nationalité française depuis la Révolution* (Paris: Editions Grasset, 2002).

[17] It has positioned a French alternative to globalization, perceived as roughly synonymous with Anglo-Americanization. See: Philip H. Gordon and Sophie Meunier, "Globalization and French Cultural Identity," *French Politics, Culture, and Society* 19, 1 (Spring 2001): 22-41; Steven Philip Kramer, *Does France Still Count? The French Role in the New Europe* (Westport, CT: Praeger, 1994).

[18] See: Albert Demangeon, *L'Union française: France et outre-mer* (Paris: Hachette, 1942); Patrick Manning, *Francophone Sub-Saharan Africa, 1880-1985* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998); Dennis Alger, *"Francophonie" in the 1990s: Problems and Opportunities* (Philadelphia: Multilingual Matters, 1996).

[19] See: Catherine A. Reinhardt, *Claims to Memory: Beyond Slavery and Emancipation in the French Caribbean* (New York: Berghahn Books, 2006); Françoise Vergès, *La Memoire enchaînée: questions sur l'esclavage* (Paris: Albin Michel, 2006); Patrick Weil, ed., *L'Esclavage, la colonisation, et après…* (Paris: Éditions des Presses Universitaires de France, 2005).

[20] See: Henrice Altink and Sharif Gemie, eds., *At the Border: Margins and Peripheries in Modern France* (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 2008); Laurent Dubois, "*La République métissée*: Citizenship, Colonialism, and the Borders of French History," *Cultural Studies* 14, 1 (2000): 15-34; Hafid Gafaiti, Patricia M.E. Lorchin, and David G. Troyansky, eds., *Transnational Spaces and Identities in the Francophone World* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2009).

[21] Pierre-André Taguieff, *The Force of Prejudice: On Racism and Its Doubles*, trans. and ed. Hassan Melehy (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2001). On race in France, see: Herrick Chapman and Laura L. Frader, eds., *Race in France: Interdisciplinary Perspectives on the Politics of Difference* (New York: Berghahn Books, 2004); Sue Peabody and Tyler Stovall, eds., *The Color of Liberty: Histories of Race in France* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2003).

[22] "Jacques Chirac: La République répare une injustice," *Le Monde*, 3 December 2002.

[23] Bernard Fillaire, *Alexandre Dumas et associé* (Paris: Bartillat, 2002), 118.

[24] Elisabeth Levy, "La France, une chance pour les immigrés?" *Le Figaro Magazine*, 7 May 2004, 60.

[25] Claire Andrieu, "Le pouvoir central en France et ses usages du passé, de 1970 à nos jours," in *Politiques du passé*, 21; Jean Tulard, *Alexandre Dumas, 1802-1870* (Paris: Figures et plumes, 2008), 18.
[26] Jacques Chirac, President of France, Speech at the Panthéon, November 30, 2002, in *Le Mousquetaire (La Société des Amis d'Alexandre Dumas)* 3 (2003), 29-33.
[27] Examples: Eric Martone, *The Black Musketeer: Reevaluation Alexandre Dumas within the Francophone World* (Newcastle-upon-Tyne: Cambridge Scholars, 2011); Martone, *Finding Monte Cristo*; Silvia Marsans-Sakly, "Geographies of Vengeance: Orientalism in Alexandre Dumas' *The Count of Monte Cristo*," *The Journal of North African Studies* 10, 2 (2018): 1-20.
[28] Etiénne Balibar, "The Nation-Form," in *Race, Nation, Class: Ambiguous Identities*, eds. Etiénne Balibar and Immanuel Wallerstein (New York: Verso, 1991), 86.
[29] Mikael Hjerm and Annette Schnabel, "Social Cohesion and the Welfare State: How Heterogeneity influences Welfare State Attitudes," in *The Future of the Welfare State: Social Policy Attitudes and Social Capital Europe*, eds. Ervasti, Heikki, Jørgen Goul Andersen, Torben Fridberg, and Kristen Ringdal (Cheltenham: Edward Elgar, 2012), 174.
[30] Ernst Bloch, although writing regarding fascism, expressed this geo-psychology of contemporaneity and non-contemporaneity in 1932: "Not all people exist in the same Now. They do so only externally, through the fact that they can be seen today. But they are thereby not yet living at the same time with the others." See: Ernst Bloch, *Heritage of Our Times*, trans. and ed. Neville Plaice and Stephen Plaice (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1991), 97.
[31] See: Wolf Schäfer, "Global History and the Present Time," in *Wiring Prometheus: Globalisation, History, and Technology*, eds. Peter Lyth and Helmuth Trischler (Aarhus, Denmark: Aarhus University Press, 2004), 103-125; Wolf Schäfer, *Ungleichzeitigkeit als Ideologie: Beiträge zur Historischen Aufklärung* (Frankfurt Am Main, Germany: Fischer Sozialwissenschaft, 1994); Johannes Fabian, *Time and the Other: How Anthropology Makes Its Object* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1983); Stephen Kern, *The Culture of Time and Space, 1880-1918* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1983); Wolf Schäfer, "Global Civilization and Local Cultures: A Crude Look at the Whole," *International Sociology* 16, 3 (September 2001): 301-319.
[32] Marc Augé, *An Anthropology for Contemporaneous Worlds*, trans. Amy Jacobs (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1999); Bruce Mazlish, *The Idea of Humanity in a Global Era* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2008); Roland Robertson, *Globalization: Social Theory and Global Culture* (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, 1992), 58-59.
[33] As Richard Mansbach has argued, "much of the global interconnectedness that we take for granted was produced by European imperialism." Colonial empires created political, cultural, and social links between individual European states and the non-contemporaneous world that forged them into a single entity, reinforced "by revolutions in transportation and communication." David F. Bell has argued that colonial empires were made possible through a monopoly of the communication and transportation networks "that brought together far-reaching and disparate regions of

the globe under the controlling power of nation states." See: Richard W. Mansbach, *The Globle Puzzle: Issues and Actors in World Politics*, 2nd ed. (Boston and New York: Houghton Mifflin, 1997), 29; David F. Bell, *Real Time: Accelerating Narrative from Balzac to Zola* (Urbana and Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 2004), 130. Also worth noting is that Bell's examination of how rapidly developing transportation and communication networks affected nineteenth-century Frenchman's perception of time-space compression as demonstrated in the works of Balzac, Stendhal, Dumas, and Zola argues that Dumas's Count of Monte Cristo possesses "mastery of time and distance" in chapter 4.

[34] Wolf Schäfer, "Lean Globality Studies." *Globality Studies Journal* 7 (28 May 2007), 23; Wolf Schäfer, "The New Global History: Toward a Narrative for Pangaea Two," *Erwägen, Wissen, Ethik* 14, 1 (2003), 75.

[35] Raymond Grew, "Global History and Globalization," in *Globalization, Philanthropy, and Civil Society: Toward a New Political Culture in the Twenty-First Century*, eds. Soma Hewa and Darwin Stapleton (New York: Springer, 2005), 23, 24; Schäfer, "Global History and the Present Time," 108. As historian Lynn Hunt has observed, memory studies in history connect with those of time, yet the link between the two has remained underdeveloped. See: Hunt, *Measuring Time, Making History* (Budapest and New York: Central European University Press, 2008), 16-24.

[36] In other words, a globalization (or universalizing) of the local and the localization (or particularization) of the global. See: Grew, "Global History and Globalization," 17; Schäfer, "Global Civilization and Local Cultures," 301-319; Augé, *An Anthropology for Contemporaneous Worlds*, x.

[37] Manfred Steger defines the global imaginary "as a concept referring to people's growing consciousness of global connectivity." See: Manfred B. Steger, *Globalization: A Very Short Introduction*, 3rd ed. (New York: Oxford University Press, 2013), 10.

[38] On the relationship between a "portrait" and its subject, see: See: José Ortega y Gasset, *The Dehumanization of Art and Other Essays on Art, Culture, and Literature*, trans. Helene Weyl (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1968).

CHAPTER ONE

OVATIONS AND OMISSIONS: A SUMMARY OF ALEXANDRE DUMAS'S OSCILLATING LITERARY LEGACY

LYNNE BERMONT

In 2019, the Musée de la Vie Romantique in Paris opened an exhibit on literary salons between 1815 and 1848 and the fecund interactions among writers, artists, and composers. The museum setting itself is emblematic of Romanticism given its convergence of the arts: its location, behind a courtyard strewn with roses and lilacs, is within the former home and studio of painter Ary Scheffer (1795-1858), who regularly hosted George Sand, Charles Dickens, Eugène Delacroix, Frédéric Chopin, Gioachino Rossini, Hector Berlioz, Ivan Turgenev, and Franz Liszt. The press release issued for the occasion referred to the greatest writers of the period, listed as Victor Hugo, Honoré de Balzac, Alfred de Musset, and Théophile Gautier. In its twenty pages, Alexandre Dumas was mentioned only once as one of Sand and Chopin's neighbors, along with lesser-known Romantics such as "pianist Pierre-Joseph Zimmermann, singer Pauline Viardot, and painters Claude-Marie and Édouard Dubufe."[1]

The exhibit also included a painting by François-Joseph Heim encumbered with the title *François-Guillaume Andrieux faisant la lecture de sa tragédie Junius Brutus dans le foyer à la Comédie-Française le 26 mai 1828.* Despite the prolixity of its title, the painting offers a concise depiction of the French Romantic Movement: a panoramic portrait of writers including Hugo, Alfred de Vigny, and François-René de Chateaubriand. Dumas's position in the painting echoes his devalorization in the exhibition as a whole: he is displaced at an oblique angle from Hugo and those occupying the illuminated center. He rests against the wall, his outline partly obscured by tenebrous space. By 1828, Dumas had already emerged, even sooner than Hugo, as one of the preeminent voices of Romantic theater. The composition is therefore prescient in that Hugo would continue to

overshadow Dumas, despite the latter's dramaturgical prowess. Dumas would be subject to scabrous critique, even as his works became among the most successful French works of all time, not only in France but also across the globe. For example, according to UNESCO's *Index Translationum*, he ranks thirteen among the world's top fifty most translated authors, just behind the Brothers Grimm and just ahead of Fyodor Dostoevsky.[2]

Dumas's literary ambition launched in his late adolescence. Rapt with the theater since his first provincial encounter with *Hamlet* at age eighteen, Dumas fled his northern village for Paris as a twenty-one-year-old to pursue his writing career. To pay the carriage fare, he sold etchings his father had brought back from Napoleonic battles in Italy and bartered six hundred glasses of absinthe won in a billiards game.[3] Once in Paris, Dumas supported himself with secretarial work for the Duke d'Orléans and attended weekly performances at the Théâtre de la Comédie-Française while he toiled away at poetry, short stories, and farces.

As an aspiring dramatist, Dumas also submitted work to be read in the foyer of the Comédie-Française, the culmination of an arduous audition ritual as depicted in Heim's aforementioned painting. Undaunted by the failure of his first scripts, *Christine* and *Fiesque*, Dumas submitted an even more audacious work, *Henri III et sa cour* (1829), which was accepted and staged. Written in prose, like comedies and melodramas of its day, the play was an amalgam of history and imagination, layered with rousing plots, salacious betrayal, and preternatural interventions. While purportedly a political fable or historical drama, its fantastical elements vexed conservative critics while enthralling the young Romantic contingent who embraced it as brazenly modern.[4]

The success of *Henri III* secured Dumas's place among the most distinguished writers of his time and entry into the most storied literary salons described in the exhibit at the Musée de la Vie Romantique. For example, Dumas participated in Hugo's *Cenacle*, which included Gérard de Nerval and Musset, and the convivial soirées hosted by librarian Charles Nodier alongside Hugo, Alphonse de Lamartine, and Vigny. Among the literati at least, there was no question as to his prominent role in the burgeoning Romantic Movement.

In February 1829, Dumas's *Henri III et sa cour* ushered in an era of French Romantic theater at the Comédie-Française, which had been offering audiences William Shakespeare translated by Vigny and Johann Wolfgang von Goethe translated by Nerval. As Dumas described in his memoir, *Comment je devins auteur dramatique*, the play progressed with the audience's "growing delirium."[5] Even the Duke d'Orléans, whom Dumas had invited, tipped his hat to the writer and joined in the uproarious

applause.[6] Enthusiastic young Dumas fans ran through the theater after the performance, proclaiming the end of Jean Racine, the canonical seventeenth-century tragedian, and attempted to defenestrate the busts of ancient playwrights.[7]

However, in February 1830, Dumas was demoted from his leading role in French Romantic theater. Hugo's *Hernani* was performed in the Comédie-Française and has since been deemed the "public triumph of Romantic doctrine."[8] Gautier presided over the young, Romantic faction in the audience while wearing a red doublet, a ribbon around his neck under his scandalously long hair. As historian Anita Brookner explains, "he was reported to have seen the play forty times, and no doubt loyally joined in the roar of approval when the famous enjambment, or irregularly stressed couplet, was heard."[9] This metric aberration was just one example of theatrical transgressions that scandalized the audience as Hugo breached the three unities of classical theater: unity of setting, time, and plot.

Dumas, Balzac, Berlioz, and Nerval were also in attendance that night and compounded the pro-Hugo clamor, impassioned debate, and polemical paroxysm that ensued in newspapers long after the performance.[10] While Dumas's epochal play, *Henri,* preceded *Hernani*, Hugo's work somehow became inscribed in literary history as the cataclysmic event that initiated Romantic theater. It would not be the last time literary laurels would elude Dumas in favor of Hugo, his dear friend and contemporary.

Despite the demotion, the ardor of Dumas's literary ambition and audacity were undiminished. For example, during the Revolution of July 1830, Dumas joined the insurrection in the streets of Paris protesting King Charles X. The king's promulgation of undemocratic constraints, exacerbated by high unemployment and high wheat prices, instigated riots in which 2,500 members of the royal troops were killed.[11] When hordes stormed the Museum of Artillery seeking arms, Dumas saw an opportunity to theatricalize his participation in the revolt. According to his memoirs, Dumas donned the helmet, shield, and sword of King François I, and then returned to the streets decked out in Renaissance armor.[12] The insurgence resulted in the removal of King Charles X and a new constitutional monarchy led by his nephew, Louis-Philippe, Duke d'Orléans.

In an August 1830 letter to the poet Marceline Desbordes Valmore, Dumas admits that his fervid historical narratives seem pallid in contrast to the revolt in which he participated, and yet he recounts it as an aesthetic event rather than a political reality: "What I have just seen is so beautifully poetic and dramatic, Madame, that there are moments when I believe I have now given up writing, even one word; what is there to be done after what has already been done? What theatrical drama can match that of the

street?"[13] Despite this momentary incertitude, Dumas emerged from the barricades an emboldened playwright, adamant as ever to subvert the traditional temporal constraints of the genre. He invested this vigor into his next theatrical endeavor, *Napoléon Bonaparte, ou Trente ans d'histoire de France* (1831), a one-hundred-character, six-act play about a previously censored subject during the reign of King Charles X. The play epitomized Romantic theater through its multiplicity of settings, expansive timeline, and its use of historical themes, amplified by dramatic fictional elements, such as the spy Dumas created to weave together various scenes in Napoléon's career. For Dumas, this historically vast epic also was trenchantly personal given his father's act of defiance against Napoléon thirty years prior. Having challenged the hubris of Napoléon's Egyptian campaign that imperiled French soldiers under his command, General Thomas-Alexandre Dumas was subsequently scorned by Napoléon, imprisoned for a time in Italy after getting captured during his return to France, and denied his rightful pension despite his failing health and young family.

Dumas's next dramaturgical triumph, entitled *Antony* (1831), incorporated autobiographical elements of his turbulent affair with Mélanie Waldor. Gautier described the premiere of this play in his memoirs as "an agitation, a tumult, an effervescence."[14] The young hero, Antony, falls in love with the married Adèle, who tries to resist his overtures and distance herself from the temptation of her suitor. However, Antony throws himself in front of her carriage, thus coercing her to acknowledge him and help dress his wounds. Adèle then leaves Paris to join her husband stationed in Strasbourg, but Antony joins her there and she yields to her desire for him. Faced with ignominy and the consequent disgrace of her daughter, Adèle implores Antony to kill her. He does so, and to restore her honor, he confesses to her murder and claims she brought it upon herself by resisting him. As Gautier attests, the audience erupted and Dumas captivated Paris with his work's unbridled passion and unmitigated violence. Dumas also enticed the highbrow crowd to venture into one of the Boulevard theaters despite their tawdry reputation for bourgeois melodrama.[15] *Antony* subsequently permeated the cultural imagination, inspiring young dandies to adopt the Byronic chic and melancholy air of the protagonist at their fashionable salon gatherings. Not yet even thirty years old, Dumas had gained immense notoriety and profitability.

Dumas succeeded again with *La Tour de Nesle* (1832), a macabre and orgiastic melodrama originally conceived by a young, provincial playwright, Frédéric Gaillardet. The contribution of multiple playwrights to one script was common practice in the French theater, where several works underwent

revision by various contributors. Dumas's use of this collaborative writing in his later novelistic endeavors would result in a drama of its own.

While inciting critics who deemed Romantic theater a bastion of turpitude, *La Tour de Nesle* animated Parisian audiences despite their elegiac mood: a cholera epidemic was ravaging the city at the time, decimating the population and depleting its store of coffins.[16] Dumas had fallen ill soon after having tea with Liszt, but still completed the script of *La Tour de Nesle* in his febrile state without succumbing to the disease.[17]

Audiences also embraced his 1834 work, *Catherine Howard*, a retelling of the fate of the fifth wife of King Henry VIII of England, replete with passion and violence in a sepulchral setting. However, the critics again excoriated him for what they saw as the deliberate debauchery of his work. Following immense theatrical success in the early 1830s, Dumas experienced several years of financial flux, and critical and romantic histrionics on and off the stage. Incessant negotiations with directors and actors depleted him, and his debts mounted with each production. Dumas reinvigorated himself by traveling extensively through Switzerland, Italy, Germany, Russia, North Africa, and the Middle East. Between 1834 and 1848, he published ten accounts of his travels, giving rise to the genre now known as travel writing.

Dumas's subsequent foray into fiction may have been due to the vicissitudes of theater or his appetite for challenge and recognition, as evinced by his ambition to enter the Académie Française. He began this campaign by appealing to friends with literary clout, such as Hugo and Nodier.[18] This goal would never come to fruition, a slight often attributed to malicious scrutiny of his indulgent lifestyle, commercial success, and prodigious output.

Critique of Dumas's behavior may have been inevitable at the time, given his flagrant flouting of social convention, many mistresses, and numerous illegitimate children.[19] However, profitability and prolificity have been disproportionately attributed to Dumas, even though they can be correlated to epochal changes in the Romantic literary landscape: new printing techniques, reader demographics, and the advent of serialized fiction.

The innovations in printing, as summarized by scholar Michael Moriarty, involved "a combination of cheaper paper (produced mechanically in continuous rolls), faster presses (powered by steam, integrating the various phases of the printing process into a singular mechanism) and more economical methods of producing the text (the stereotype)."[20] Consequently, the inexpensive profusion of transient media, such as daily newspapers, rose with the growing population of readers among the

increasing middle class. These technological advances, coupled with expanding readership, increased both supply and demand for fiction, especially for diverting narrative. This convergence of events engendered a new genre: serialized fiction (also known as the *roman-feuilleton* or *feuilleton*), the beguiling stories published in successive chapters in widely affordable newspapers.

Dumas's talents served the new genre tremendously well, given its emphasis on historical setting, swashbuckling protagonists, vigorous action, and animated dialogue—a forte of Dumas manifest in his plays. The new genre also dispensed with vast passages of description and reflection, which were already absent from Dumas's work, since they would have stymied the narrative celerity.

Dumas become synonymous with this cloak-and-dagger novel and mass market genre, although he was in good company. Several eminent Romantic writers participated in the profitable genre and even the effusive sentimentality and narrative exuberance that appealed to readers of all social strata. As James Smith Allen observes:

> The list of writers who earned remarkable incomes from the sale of their work begins with P.J. de Béranger, Eugène Sue, Alphonse de Lamartine, George Sand, Alexandre Dumas, among others. The publication of pot-boilers became more deliberate as the trade expanded and adopted new, more profitable means of production and distribution, especially for the four-sous newspaper that paid up to 100,000 francs for a *roman-feuilleton* - when the average *journalier* was fortunate to make 750 francs a year.[21]

Even Gautier, the Romantic poet who composed the apothegm "art for art's sake," entered the game when he was recruited to write a weekly column for *La Presse*, which also boasted Dumas on its payroll.

The voracious appetite for these stories induced improbable demand, which Dumas met by collaborating with other writers. As previously mentioned, this method had been a common practice among playwrights. When introducing this practice to fiction, Dumas brought it to a new level. The critic Sainte-Beuve accused him of employing seventy-three assistants to produce "industrial literature."[22] Another scholarly compendium reports that Dumas worked with fifty-one collaborators, but also helped write twenty-nine plays for which he received no acknowledgement.[23]

Most notably, Dumas met demand with the help of Auguste Maquet, who traveled in the same theatrical circles as Dumas and frequented the same bohemian salons along with Nerval, who introduced the two writers.[24] The fervid productivity of their partnership was unprecedented, resulting in, as Eric Martone summarizes, such celebrated works as *The Three*