

## Introduction

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The essays in this volume are the product of the eighteenth George Rudé Seminar in French History and Civilisation, jointly sponsored by the University of Auckland and Massey University, and held from 12-14 July 2012 in Auckland, New Zealand. The overall theme of the conference was “Rights and Identities” in French history and culture, and it attracted an interdisciplinary group of scholars – historians as well as specialists in language and literature – from Australia, New Zealand, France, the United Kingdom, and the United States. Five keynote talks and eight panels, involving twenty-three separate papers, made for a very productive exploration of diverse manifestations of French identity.

Conference participants were privileged to hear several keynote addresses of sparkling quality. Professor Carla Hesse (U.C. Berkeley) offered a rethinking of French Revolutionary justice; Professor David Andress (University of Portsmouth) spoke on the melodramatic self-understanding of French Jacobins; Jeremy Popkin (University of Kentucky) discussed how to re-integrate Haiti into the “Age of Democratic Revolutions”; Professor Simon Burrows (University of Western Sydney) reappraised the debate over the “High Enlightenment” and pre-revolutionary literature on the basis of the French Book Trade Database; and Professor Jean-Marc Olivier (CNRS Framespa, Université de Toulouse Le Mirail) analysed the contribution of women and rural dwellers to the dynamism of small-scale industry in early nineteenth-century France. These keynote lectures were open to the public, as was the 13 July 2012 address by His Excellency Monsieur Francis Etienne, then Ambassador of France, who spoke eloquently about the interconnections of different cultures and histories in France and the Pacific. With so many attendees exploring the symbols and meanings of Frenchness, it was only fitting that the end of the conference coincided with Bastille Day.

As the contributions to this volume show, the Rudé Seminar continues to be strongly marked by the legacy of its namesake and founder, the historian George Rudé, whose career at the University of Adelaide left a distinctive imprint on the Antipodean scholarly community.<sup>1</sup> The conference theme of “Rights and Identities,” understood both collectively and individually, was chosen to pay homage to Rudé’s influence but also in anticipation of the momentous historical anniversaries in 2014 and 2015. The Centenary of the outbreak of the Great War, apart from already inspiring an outpouring of scholarship, was a particular focus at the nineteenth George Rudé Seminar, hosted by Deakin University in Geelong, Victoria, Australia, on 10-12 July 2014. Likewise, the 2015 bicentennial of Waterloo, marking the closure of the Revolutionary and Napoleonic eras, will no doubt reverberate in the Antipodes in no small part because of the scholarly community that is sustained by the George Rudé Society.

The present volume contains fifteen essays, which originally represented one keynote address and fourteen individual papers from the 2012 Seminar. The essays in this volume have been organized partly according to chronology but also by thematic focus. Chronologically, contributions range from the early modern period through the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, while geographically these essays span not only Europe but also France’s colonial and cultural engagements in America, Asia and Australasia. In methodology and historical style, the essays include linguistically-influenced analyses of politics and identity, archivally-grounded social and institutional history, and examinations of individual and collective experience through memoirs, diaries and other types of private materials.

This volume is structured in three clusters, meant to offer loose thematic unity for these widely different essays. It begins with a quartet of papers devoted to eighteenth-century France and the French Revolution, then moves to five contributions appraising various literary, historiographical and political manifestations of French culture from the early nineteenth century to the First World War. The volume concludes with a final group of six essays that are loosely united by attention to the international dimensions of French history, ranging from religious and missionary projects, to colonial and imperial culture, to perceptions of nationality and sporting identity.

The four essays devoted to eighteenth-century France and the French Revolution begin with David Andress’s keynote paper, which offers an interpretation of Jacobin identity as a dynamic process of self-narration embedded in a melodramatic sensibility. Andress shows how the raw materials of conspiracy, virtue, and heroism could be melodramatically recast to create templates of revolutionary action, and his paper offers a compelling and original analysis of the contemporary understanding of violence and Terror. David Garrioch’s essay takes a step back to explore the secularisation of the Paris Guilds across the eighteenth century, emphasizing the changing relationships between religious and secular practices and stressing the crucial contribution of royal policy. Garrioch illustrates the complex processes, many of which the Monarchy facilitated, through which modern urban guilds gradually shed their religious identities, a story of

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<sup>1</sup>For excellent discussions of George Rudé’s Australasian career as an historian, see James Fruguglietti, “A Scholar in ‘Exile’: George Rudé as a Historian of Australia,” *French History and Civilization. Papers from the George Rudé Seminar*, 1 (2005); and Gemma Betros, “Introduction” *French History and Civilisation: Papers from the George Rudé Seminar*, 3 (2009)

secularization and displacement that preceded the Enlightenment and was largely unanticipated by contemporaries. Peter McPhee's paper returns to the French Revolution and seeks to explore the role of friendship in the career of Maximilien Robespierre. McPhee argues powerfully that the trajectory of Robespierre's career as a revolutionary – and the illness and exhaustion that marked its end – was shaped by the destruction of previously intense friendships. McPhee focuses on the political choices that transformed former allies such as Georges Danton and Camille Desmoulins into “false” friends, and he weighs the impact of the dissolution of these friendships upon Robespierre's life as a revolutionary. Ian Coller's contribution also uses a single individual to explore the experience of revolution, but he examines the participation of the relatively unknown Al-Kahin Diyunysius Shawish, a Melkite Arab known to French revolutionaries as Dom Denis Chawich. Through Chawich's personal involvement in the French Revolution and his claims to revolutionary identity, Coller shows the unstable nature of rights grounded in internal and external forms of reciprocity and the wider challenge of reconciling revolutionary participation with personal identity as a Muslim subject.

The second cluster of five essays shifts to nineteenth- and early twentieth-century France and examines the impact of different literary practices and genres, from the memorial to the literary to the historiographical. Three essays focus on the nineteenth-century, beginning with Jolanta Peckacz's reassessment of the “making” of the Enlightenment salon in the aftermath of the French Revolution. Peckacz examines the eulogistic representations and misrepresentations of Madame Geoffrin, the great eighteenth-century *salonnière*, arguing that nineteenth-century disputants created an image of the salon that would be perpetuated, for personal as well as political reasons, through the nineteenth century and into present-day historical thinking. Jean Anderson shifts our attention to nineteenth-century French fiction in her comparative analysis of the conditions of workers' lives in Émile Zola's *L'Assommoir* (1876) and Henry Gréville's *Cité Ménard* (1880). Anderson examines these authors' highly different depictions of male and female roles and masculine and feminine spaces, and shows the possibilities for both pessimistic and sympathetic forms of novelistic realism. In yet a different genre of writing, visual space serves as a central theme for Elizabeth Gralton's examination of contemporary criticism of the *Expositions universelles* in the second half of the nineteenth century.<sup>2</sup> Gralton seeks to expose a contemporary “counter discourse,” which attacked the visual culture of the Expositions in order to challenge modernity as well as the exhibitionary impulse.

The final two essays in this cluster deal with the complex intellectual and political legacies of the Great War. Alison Moore offers a new analysis of the origins and evolution of the Annales School against the backdrop of interwar culture and politics. Moore stresses the extent to which the political and nationalist rivalries of the early twentieth century excluded German schools of historical thought from the institutional site of the Annales – the University of Strasbourg – as well as from our own understanding of the movement's intellectual genealogy. Margaret Goldswain turns our attention to the contribution of a crusading journalist in the woman who wrote under the pseudonym of Marcelle Cappy. Cappy's extensive career featured not only the exposure of poor working conditions but also a refashioned identity during the Great War as a

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<sup>2</sup> Joint-winner of the Alison Patrick Memorial Scholarship.

pacifist, whose journalism and fiction deserve greater recognition from today's historians than they have received.

This volume closes with a group of six essays that explore the complex international expressions of French culture and identity from the seventeenth to the twentieth centuries. The opening duo in this group examine the complex entanglement of politics and religion in French colonialism. Catherine Ballériaux's contribution looks at the languages of civic inclusion and exclusion employed by French officials and missionaries in seventeenth-century New France. Focusing on the concept of "adoption," Ballériaux articulates the differences between monarchical and missionary understandings of identity, revealing the tension between attempts to assimilate or segregate the peoples of the New World. William Jennings likewise focuses on the entanglement between religion and colonial policy, but via the complex position of Marist missionaries in New Zealand in the critical years between 1836 and 1842. Jennings suggests the extent to which Marists missionaries were conscious of the difficulties of propagating a religious mission in what, from 1840 onward, was formally a British colony. The next pair of papers focus on the tensions and contradictions surrounding indigenous politics and culture within France's imperial mission. Robert Aldrich examines the use of exile as a political tool in Vietnam, where between 1885 and 1916, the French "banished" three different Vietnamese emperors in the search for complaisant indigenous authorities. The successes and failures of this policy, Aldrich suggests, help illuminate the fractious relationship between indigenous ruling elites and French authorities. John Strachan's paper turns our focus to twentieth-century Africa, and examines transformations in French ethnographic interest in the Dogon people of Mali. Shifting views of Dogon culture, Strachan argues, should complicate the narratives of the colonizing relationship between Africa and France.

The final duo of papers share a focus on Antipodean ramifications of French culture. Alexis Bergantz<sup>3</sup> examines the diaries of two young Australian girls who encountered French culture quite differently while traveling in Europe. In the writing of these young women, Bergantz shows, various conceptions of France – a locale of cultural prestige, a foreign yet intimate land, or a place of familial origin – served to shape self-perception of Australian identity. Geoffrey Watson approaches questions of identity via the avenue of sports, suggesting the myriad ways in which perceptions of French rugby styles have influenced New Zealand's own view of the game. Watson's paper offers a way to understand not just the sporting rivalry between the All Blacks and Les Bleus, but the wider cultural meaning attached to styles of play and sensibilities of rugby itself.

In closing, the conference organisers and volume editors would like to extend several votes of thanks. First, we wish to extend particular gratitude to the Alison Patrick Memorial Fund, which has established an award to honour the memory of that great historian and scholar of the French Revolution. The Alison Patrick Memorial Scholarship is intended to support advanced graduate students to present their work at the Rudé Seminar, and we were delighted to be able to award the inaugural scholarship jointly to Elizabeth Gralton and Alexis Bergantz, whose essays are included in this volume. Second, we wish to thank the attendees who submitted their papers for publication, as well as the international cadre of referees who recommended changes, improvements, and

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<sup>3</sup> Joint-winner of the Alison Patrick Memorial Scholarship for 2012.

amendments to many of the submitted papers. The lifeblood of scholarship remains this unremunerated sharing of expertise and specialist knowledge, usually carried out in the midst of busy academic teaching and research schedules. Finally, we wish to acknowledge the support of H-France and its web editors, and particularly the individual contribution and editing of David Kammerling Smith, H-France's Editor-in-Chief. A volume such as this would be impossible without this vast reservoir of collegial generosity and support.

The Organizing Committee of the 2012 Rudé Seminar was drawn from several New Zealand institutions and included Kirsty Carpenter (Senior Lecturer in History, Massey University); Joseph Zizek (Senior Lecturer in History, University of Auckland); Peter Lineham (Professor of History, Massey University); France Grenaudier-Klijn (Senior Lecturer in French, Massey University); Jean Anderson (Associate-Professor in French, Victoria University); and Isabelle Poff-Péncolé (Président of the Alliance Française of Palmerston North, New Zealand). The organisers would like to convey their gratitude to the institutions and agencies that provided financial and in-kind support for the Seminar, including the Department of History and Faculty of Arts at the University of Auckland; the School of Humanities at Massey University; and the Embassy of France in Wellington, New Zealand. The French Embassy and the Alliance Française of Auckland also garner our gratitude for their ongoing support for French History and French culture in New Zealand. Thanks to their efforts, many Auckland conference attendees were able to partake in the tradition of the Bastille Day "Bal populaire," hosted by the Auckland Alliance Française on 13 July 2012.

The legacy of George Rudé lives on in the vibrant Antipodean Seminar that carries his name, and which has been shaped from its earliest moments by an international sensibility and an outward-looking perspective. Long may this community of scholars explore "Rights and Identities" in French history and culture.