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Christine Haynes, *Lost Illusion: The Politics of Publishing in Nineteenth-Century France*. Cambridge, Mass., London: Harvard University Press, 2010. xvi + 328 pp. ISBN 978-0-674-03576-8.

Review by Pieter François, Oxford University.

In *Lost Illusions: The Politics of Publishing in Nineteenth-Century France*, Christine Haynes offers a skilfully argued analysis of publishing in nineteenth-century France. The focus of *Lost Illusions* is firmly placed on the book trade and not on the better studied world of the periodical or the press. The main focus is the debate which ran through the whole of the nineteenth century between, on the one hand, “corporatists” (mainly printers and book dealers) who viewed books as a commodity on which society could exercise certain rights and who were willing to balance intellectual freedom with public order and, on the other hand, “liberals” (mainly publishers) who saw books as a commodity as any other and who were therefore in favour of as little regulation as possible. Over the course of three more general chapters, which are well-informed by the relevant historiography, including the scholarship of Martyn Lyons and Carla Hesse, and three meticulous research chapters that introduce a wealth of new source material to the reader, Haynes reconstructs how this debate unfolds throughout the nineteenth century and how both groups lobbied government and public opinion with their views on publishing. A distinctive feature of Christine Haynes’ work is that it aims to build bridges between different strands of historiography, especially between business and political history.

In the first chapter, “The Birth of the Publisher,” Haynes addresses three sets of key questions. Firstly, she analyses the social background of the first generation of publishers and the role these publishers played in the book trade. Through the lives of two famous publishers, Charles-Joseph Pancoucke and Pierre-François Ladvat, she opens up the worldview and ambitions of this first generation of publishers. Secondly, and most interestingly, Haynes offers a radically new interpretation of the causes of this successful emergence of the publisher. Up to now, scholarship has seen this emergence as a direct consequence of what Roger Chartier called the “new typographical regime” and Frédéric Barbier, the “Second Printing Revolution” which took place around 1830. According to Haynes, the rise of the publisher has therefore so far been explained as a side effect of structural and technological modernization. This explanation was first offered in the mid-nineteenth century and has, since then, been frequently recycled in the historiography without being properly tested.

Haynes’ close analysis of the first generation of publishers reveals, however, that this first generation predates the second printing revolution by several decades. Haynes explains the rise of the publishers as a result of a political revolution. She stresses that the publisher emerged in conjunction with a major transformation in the regulatory framework of the book trade during the French Revolution and the Napoleonic period. In fact, according to Haynes, this new publisher, in his quest to cultivate new markets, was therefore as much a cause as a product of the Second Printing Revolution. Finally, she analyses the consequences of the arrival of the publisher on the book trade. She concludes that the new publisher did not alter fundamentally the level of production or the content of literature. The publisher did however revolutionise the marketing techniques and distribution practices. The emergence of the publisher also transformed the occupation of authorship, which now became, for the first time, a viable career option (for the lucky few) as these authors were freed from patronage.

The second chapter, "The Battle between Corporatists and Liberals," tracks the changes in the policy of the French state and in the attitudes of public opinion towards the book trade during the period 1789-1848. In 1791, in the wake of the French Revolution, literary privileges and the book guilds were abolished in France. To most, this situation was soon perceived as unsatisfactory. The growing calls for some measure of regulation resulted in the Napoleonic compromise of 1810 which introduced a number of state controls on the book trade, most notably the creation of the Administration of the Book Trade, the introduction of a compulsory licence for printers and book dealers and the extension of literary property rights to twenty years after the death of author and spouse. However, satisfaction with this compromise of 1810 evaporated extremely quickly. The compromise was in its turn challenged and the book trade divided between the above-mentioned corporatists and liberals. The printers and book dealers of the corporatist camp shared a more collectivist and democratic worldview. The publishers of the liberal camp, by contrast, adhered to a more individualist economic doctrine.

As so often is the case for nineteenth-century French history, the battle between corporatists and liberals was also very much a battle between two different interpretations of the French Revolution. To structure the different stages of this debate, Haynes focuses on two key issues. Firstly, both camps had different ideas on how to change the existing licensing requirements, as the corporatists were in favour of more strict rules and the liberals wanted to abolish them altogether. Secondly, opinions were split again on the issue of literary property rights. The corporatists saw texts as social goods on which individuals could only exert temporary rights, whilst the liberals saw them as private properties on which perpetual rights could be exercised. The great strength of this chapter is that Haynes places these debates firmly in an international context. The context of widespread Belgian literary piracy is especially key to understanding the complexities of the debates. Furthermore Haynes has turned this chapter into a powerful reminder of the ambiguities of nineteenth-century liberalism, of how intellectual freedom was often balanced with economic freedom and of how a balance was sought between the goals of individual liberty and property on the one hand and the interests of public order and access on the other.

In the third chapter "Laurent-Antoine Pagnerre and the Publishing Coterie," Haynes analyses the increasing number of attempts by the publishers to form associations and thus to increase their effectiveness as a lobby group. She reconstructs this push towards organisation and association by analysing four episodes, namely the attempt to found a circle for publishers in 1829; the participation by publishers in a state loan to commerce and industry following the Revolution of 1830; the foundation of the Cercle de la Librairie in 1847; and, finally, their use of "premiums" in the form of lottery tickets to market books from the mid-1830s to the early 1850s. Haynes shows that the publishers were increasingly successful in their attempts to organise themselves and that their growing influence was at the expense of the printers and book dealers. As a result the publishers were increasingly depicted by those printers and book dealers as a coterie and they were accused of unfair competition.

"The Cercle de la Librairie," Haynes' fourth chapter, focuses on the most successful and long-lasting association of the publishers. This chapter is the first in-depth study of the Cercle de la Librairie and taps into a wealth of new source material. According to Haynes, the success of the Cercle lay in the fact that it combined the structures, discourses and practices of three different types of institutions: the prerevolutionary trade corporation; the bourgeois leisure association and the modern professional syndicate. Although the Cercle represented foremost liberal entrepreneurs, it appropriated elements of the corporate idiom in the form of the language, symbolism, rituals and attributes of the old craft guilds. It therefore combined a backward-looking idiom with more modern discourses and practices. Combining these different styles was useful. For example, by incorporating many elements of the trade corporation, the Cercle was shielded from the harshest criticisms of the printers. At the same time, its appearance as a bourgeois leisure association meant that it was tolerated by the government.

In “Louis Hachette and the Defense of the Publisher”, Haynes focuses on two episodes of the legal power struggle between the publisher Louis Hachette and the printer Napoléon Chaix in the 1850s and 1860s. The most famous of these struggles is Chaix’s lengthy, but ultimately unsuccessful challenge of Hachette’s exclusive right to sell books at kiosks in railroad stations. However, equally important was Hachette’s successful attempt, against the fierce resistance of Napoléon Chaix, to allow publishers to take part in international exhibitions. Haynes reconstructs both episodes to demonstrate how, by the late 1860s, the power balance had swung decisively in favour of the publishers. According to Haynes, what both debates had in common was that they centred around a different definition of the “producer” of a book. According to Napoléon Chaix, the producer could be no one other than the actual manufacturer, and thus printer, of the book. According to Louis Hachette, the definition of the producer also included the entrepreneur/ publisher who conceived of the idea and had coordinated the execution of the product.

In the last chapter, “The Divorce between State and Market,” Haynes reconstructs how the compromise of 1810 was finally altered during the Second Empire of Louis-Napoleon and how the growing influence of the publishers had resulted in changing the legislation in their favour. The two main areas where the 1810 compromise was amended were the extension of literary property rights and the abolition of licensing requirements. The first main consequence of these changes was that it mostly benefited publishers, often at the expense of both printers and authors, and thus led to disillusion from authors. The second, and unforeseen, consequence was that, once these changes were achieved, the opinion of some publishers towards regulation started to shift and that there was a growing call amongst some publishers for some special protection, especially in the areas of controls on prices and standards. A corporatist view of the literary market therefore persisted after the abolition of the 1810 compromise.

The most important question for Haynes is why the attempts to challenge the 1810 compromise proved to be successful during the Second Empire and not during the previous regimes. Two main reasons can be singled out according to Haynes. Firstly, she points out that the publishers had managed to forge more durable and effective political networks. Secondly, she points out that the state had changed its priorities, shifting from public security and morality to promoting commercial growth. This second point, which places the new regulation of the market for literature in an authoritarian, as opposed to a republican, regime has left, according to Haynes, a distinctive mark on publishing in France throughout the twentieth and twenty-first centuries. She argues that, as this move was driven less by ideological commitment to intellectual liberty than by economic interest in commercial liberty, intellectual property and press freedom have remained fragile in France.

Lost Illusions is a well-researched monograph and both researchers and advanced postgraduates will find it a welcome addition to the study of the history of publishing in nineteenth-century France and, to a lesser extent, to the study of nineteenth-century French politics and liberalism. The main strengths of *Lost Illusions* lie in the way it sees publishing as an economic activity and analyses the competition between printers and publishers for a share of the book-publishing market. Haynes convincingly argues that the publishers and their individual motivations and choices must be seen as the main drivers of change. However, Haynes’s analysis of these motivations hinges to a very large extent on rational choice and the self-interest of the publishers and this underpinning has serious implications for the explanatory weight she attaches to the role of politics and ideology in her analysis. In my opinion too often the role of politics, especially in the form of very general concepts like “the contingencies of politics” (pp. 67, 201, 225), is reduced to explain why the publishers were slowed down or failed in their attempts to reform.

A more profound contextualisation in the broader political and ideological context and a more explicit comparison with other branches of publishing would not have diminished the explanatory power of Haynes’s analysis of the corporatist-liberal struggle, but would have made it stronger. It would definitely have opened up *Lost Illusions* for a more general readership interested in nineteenth-century

French politics. The sections of *Lost Illusions* where politics and ideology play larger and more autonomous roles and where business and political history are therefore more evenly balanced, like the sections on the rise of the publishers in the early nineteenth century or on the international debate on literary property rights, are also the strongest of the book. Maintaining this balance throughout the whole book is however a lot of ground to cover, especially given the paucity of historiography on this topic, and probably falls beyond the scope of this monograph. This criticism is therefore, above all, intended as the expression of a hope that Haynes will continue to pursue her interesting research along these lines.

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