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Philip Mansel, *Paris Between Empires: Monarchy and Revolution, 1814–1852*. New York: St. Martin's Press, 2003. ix + 559 pages. Maps, figures, notes, bibliography, and index. \$35.00 U.S. (cl). ISBN 0-312-30857-4.

Review by Victoria E. Thompson, Arizona State University.

Paris Between Empires was first published in London by John Murray in 2001. Readers can be grateful that St. Martin's published an American edition in 2003, for it is a well-written, entertaining, and thought provoking account of Parisian life and politics during a period of intense transformation.

According to Philip Mansel, the two empires that most shaped the role of Paris in both France and the world are not those the chronology in the title of his book would lead you to expect. While the empire of Napoleon is the first, the second is not that of his nephew, but rather the German Empire proclaimed in the Hall of Mirrors on January 18, 1871. It was between the defeat of Napoleon's empire and the birth of the German empire that Paris reigned, Mansel argues, as a cosmopolitan model for all of Europe. 1814 was "the start of a period in which Europeans played as prominent a part in French politics and culture as Frenchmen did in European politics and culture" (p. 10). 1871, on the other hand, "ended the hegemony of Paris in Europe" (p. 430).

To examine the title once again, this book is not really about monarchy and revolution. It is not that they are absent, for Mansel discusses both topics in detail. He discusses the challenges faced by Louis XVIII as he attempted to re-establish the monarchy in Paris, and the increasing difficulty that Charles X and Louis Philippe faced in controlling Paris. Mansel also discusses revolution, examining the impact of the revolutions of 1830 and 1848 on the city, its inhabitants, and observers throughout Europe. However, while monarchy and revolution are both important themes of this book, they are not the axis around which Mansel's arguments revolve. This axis is rather the opposition between cosmopolitanism and nationalism. Mansel places these two forces in opposition to each other, arguing that an era of cosmopolitanism—associated with the monarchy, an older generation of the aristocracy, bankers, and a certain group of intellectuals—was increasingly challenged during this period by a rising tide of nationalism—associated with a younger generation of aristocrats who did not experience the emigration, another group of intellectuals, and the people of Paris.

These two forces—cosmopolitanism and nationalism—can be correlated with those of monarchy and revolution, but they are not the same thing. Both the changing fates of the French monarchies during this period and repeated incidences of violence (revolutionary or otherwise) shaped the perceptions that Parisians had of others and that others had of Parisians. The cosmopolitanism of both an older generation of the aristocracy and of the reigning monarchs during this period—both Bourbon and Orléans—was shaped in large part by the experience of emigration. Louis XVIII bowed to English men and women on the street, while Louis-Philippe, who had spent time in several different cities, including Havana and Palermo, "boasted that he could speak to every ambassador accredited to Paris in their native tongue—except the Russian" (p. 354). The international outlook of these monarchs caused them to be ardent advocates for peace among nations, and effective coalition builders. They welcomed Europeans of all nationalities to their capital and their court, and encouraged the international exchange of ideas. Under these monarchs, Mansel argues, Paris was, "a factory and a crossroads of ideas," a place where those seeking to escape "the prison of their nationality" could come to enjoy the vibrant social, intellectual, cultural and political life of the French capital (pp. 389, 146).

The cosmopolitanism of the monarchs in particular, and perhaps of the aristocracy in general, can also be attributed to their unease with the Paris of the common people. Louis XVIII, Charles X, and Louis-Philippe realized that their legitimacy rested upon both international opinion, given that the restoration of the monarchy was accompanied by international oversight, and acceptance by the people of Paris. While each monarch made a point of making himself visible in the city, he also displayed a distrust of the people of Paris. Mansel demonstrates that with each reign, life in the countryside, at palaces and estates close to, but outside of, Paris, became more and more attractive to both the royal families and to the aristocracy. The period after 1820 became the “golden age of *la vie de château* [...] During the summer in Paris everyday was as quiet as a London Sunday” (p. 221). While Mansel first attributes this willingness to leave the capital to the growing confidence of the monarchy, he later argues more convincingly that unease over Parisian popular opinion, as well as anxieties concerning disease, revolt, and physical assault caused monarchs to retire more and more often to the countryside. Louis-Philippe spent only five months a year in the Tuileries during most of his reign.

Mansel helps us to understand the choice of the bourgeois monarch to remain outside the city as much as possible by demonstrating how unnatural monarchy had become in Paris by the late 1830s. At an 1837 reception for the Duc d’Orléans and his new bride, a German princess, most of the guests wore frock coats instead of uniforms and observers noted that the newest member of the Orléans family was the only one who seemed graceful and at ease. This unease with, and even dislike of, Paris was increasingly shared by other members of the European aristocracy during the Restoration and July Monarchy. The murder of the Duc de Berri in 1820 shocked foreigners and caused them to see Paris as a source of anarchy. The Revolutions of 1830 and 1848, along with Parisians’ support for other revolutionary causes throughout Europe, further convinced many that Paris was becoming a center of international revolution. At the same time, Paris became a model for another group of Europeans, those inspired by nationalism and willing to undertake revolution to see political change in their own countries.

As Parisians became increasingly nationalist and, Mansel argues, war hungry, the cosmopolitanism and pacifism of the monarchy came under attack. While this Parisian nationalism brought another Bonaparte to power, the policies of Napoleon III contributed to diminishing the importance of Paris in French national life. During the Second Empire, Mansel argues, “the railway and the ballot box were [...] making it easier [to control Paris]. An insurrection in Paris was henceforth less likely to be successful than in February 1848, July 1830 or July 1789. The introduction of universal male suffrage proved that the workers of Paris did not [...] represent the French people” (p. 411). At the same time, the construction of a railway network allowed for the quick transport of troops to the capital in case of rebellion. Napoleon III thus lessened the importance of Paris in French politics while trying to increase the importance of France in Europe. He “wanted to impose a new pattern on the states of Europe as he had on the streets of Paris” (p. 425). Ironically, however, his support for nationalist causes in other countries proved his downfall, and with him, the downfall of Paris as capital of Europe.

This argument is compelling for a variety of reasons, if not always convincing. Mansel offers a new look at Parisian politics and attitudes during the First and Second Restorations, the 100 Days, and the July Monarchy (the bulk of the book is devoted to these regimes; out of 432 pages of text only 33 treat the Second Republic and Second Empire). He has extensively mined the memoirs, correspondence, and private papers of the wealthiest, most influential, and well-connected Europeans to create a fascinating picture of aristocratic life in early nineteenth-century Paris. We see, throughout his pages, an aristocracy in the process of redefining itself, reasserting itself, and defending itself. This process occurs sometimes in conjunction with, and sometimes against, the monarchy, and it helps shed light on the process by which France moved from Revolution to Republic. We see, for example, aristocratic ladies crowding into the Chamber of Deputies to hear the speeches the same way their lower middle-class counterparts crowded into the morgue at century’s end, while at the same time painting the family’s coat of arms on enormous, luxurious carriages that sped through the city’s streets and over the

doorways of splendid homes in the Faubourg Saint-Germain. The “rearistocratisation” of the physical landscape of Paris during these years was thus accompanied by a vibrant interest in the budding institutions of democracy (p. 209).

Mansel brings to light such provocative contradictions through the use of well-placed anecdotes and an insightful eye for the telling detail. This book is a true “panorama” of elite Paris, in which each small detail contributes to an overview of the whole. Mansel argues, for example, that the popularity for wallpaper patterned with views of foreign cities was evidence that “after 1814 Paris expanded its cultural horizons” (p. 342). While on its own such a statement might seem a vast overreach, the accumulation of such details throughout the book works to create a convincing vision of Paris as a cosmopolitan city, and reminds us that in the early nineteenth century, one could consider oneself “Parisian” without being or feeling particularly “French.” However, while the argument for Parisian cosmopolitanism is well-constructed, that for Parisian nationalism rests upon more shaky foundations. Perhaps due in part to a source base that overwhelmingly reflects an aristocratic and European point of view, we never see the same accumulation of telling details concerning the rise of French nationalism. While it was undoubtedly there, and certain telling anecdotes spread throughout the book remind us of its presence, the reader does not see with the same sort of clarity why nationalism emerged as an important political force, how it shaped the lifestyle and outlook of Parisians who espoused it, or when it overtook cosmopolitanism as the guiding principle of Parisian life. Mansel himself seems to be unclear on this last point, for he repeatedly proclaims the “death” of cosmopolitanism, placing the date of its demise in 1840, 1848, 1851, 1867, and 1871. One ends by wondering if cosmopolitanism was ever really dead, or just channeled into new directions, such as imperialism, during the Third Republic. This is particularly confusing in his discussion of Napoleon III, whom he portrays as a nationalist while at the same time demonstrating his European orientation. Why would Louis Napoleon, who had also lived abroad and who attracted numerous foreign admirers to his renovated capital, not qualify as cosmopolitan? This question is not adequately answered, or even raised.

This imbalance in a discussion of the two forces that clashed in Paris—cosmopolitanism and nationalism—is reflected in the discussion of the physical landscape of the city as well. The idea that, by 1871, Paris had lost its status as a European capital as it became the capital of France is intriguing and opens up new ways of thinking about both Haussmannization and the continuation of renovation projects after 1871. However, detailed discussion of the changes to the city that were part of a shift toward a more cosmopolitan (and royal and aristocratic) outlook is not matched by a similar discussion of the ways in which the city became “nationalized.” That being said, Mansel makes the actual landscape of the city come alive in this book, showing how the city was transformed with each change of regime and ideology. One of the great strengths of this book is the wealth of detail it provides concerning the way in which the city was being constantly remade in the first half of the nineteenth century.

Mansel writes well, and the book is a pleasure to read. He makes wonderful use of his sources, and creates a compelling narrative. Throughout, his arguments are more implied than explicitly stated, and he does not engage existing historiography. While in some ways this makes the book more enjoyable to read, it also contributes to the sense of imbalance I have outlined in this review, and to the impression that Mansel has not clearly identified the true topic of this work. In addition to a title that does not really represent Mansel’s focus, the book also leaves us, at the end, knowing little about what came of that aristocratic elite with which we have spent so much time. It is their voices that “narrate” much of this story, and in the end I wanted to know more about how they accommodated themselves to the Second Empire and its defeat. Perhaps Mansel will bring us this story in a later work. In the meantime, he has produced a volume that creatively tackles issues that help us to see Paris and the Parisians in a new light and that will be of interest both to all those who work on the nineteenth century, and, more generally, to those who enjoy getting lost in the pages of a good read.

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