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Pascal Bastien and Simon Macdonald, eds., *Paris et ses peuples au XVIIIe siècle*. Paris: Éditions de la Sorbonne/Comité d'histoire de la Ville de Paris, 2020. 304 pp. Figures, indexes, and abstracts. €25.00 (pb). ISBN 9791035105310.

Review by Katie Jarvis, University of Notre Dame.

Nearly forty years has passed since Daniel Roche published his deeply influential 1981 book *Le peuple de Paris*. Roche's landmark study turned social historians' attention to new actors like the urban police, soldiers, and wet nurses while excavating the material realities central to everyday life. The book's innovative use of notarial and death records inspired many historians to pursue similar circumlocutory approaches to access people from across the social hierarchy.[1] The 2020 collection *Paris et ses peuples au XVIIIe siècle* showcases the abundant new research on Parisians and the capital that Roche's work continues to inspire.[2] This ambitious volume is composed of eighteen independent contributions, which resulted from a 2017 conference celebrating the reverberations of Roche's 1981 study on current scholarship. The authors include North American, European, and Australian scholars, all but two of whom are historians. Editors Pascal Bastien and Simon Macdonald characterize the collection as "un large spectre de perspectives pour penser une histoire sociale et politique de la capitale en mettant au premier plan l'effet du lieu et des modalités de proximité des *sociabilités urbaines*, avec les conditions de *mobilisation* des acteurs sociaux qui fabriquent la ville et sont fabriqués par elle" (p. 8).

The volume's eighteen chapters are divided into three thematic sections. The first section takes up Roche's lead in focusing on "trajectoires, individus, communautés, [et] métiers." After reflecting on the collective homogeneity that the term "peuple" might imply, Sabine Juratic seeks to dispel the myth of a unified "peuple du livre" within the Parisian-centered publishing trade. She explains how, over the course of the eighteenth century, strict corporate regulations increasingly distanced workers and employees from their employers. By limiting the number of masterpieces and excluding those from outside established families of Parisian printers, the corporation reduced employees' opportunities for social advancement during the very period that the number of print trade workers swelled. Juratic's piece includes a short autobiography of a *libraire* named François Servoin to illustrate his lifelong struggle to advance within the hierarchies of the book trade (pp. 24-26). Picking up the thread of familial and trade networks, Laurence Croq examines marriages between families of *marchands merciers* of unequal economic power. She demonstrates how women surprisingly profited from hypogamous unions by gaining extra-economic advantages in marital contracts and in widowhood. Some women, like Madame Roland, whose maternal family included three *merciers*, extended these advantages into political and public spaces. Colin Jones's contribution turns to the residential networks of the

conventionnels in 1793. Although the deputies rhetorically claimed to represent the “souveraineté du peuple” (p. 75), Jones argues that few actually came into daily contact with the popular classes. After mapping the deputies’ addresses across the capital, Jones concludes that most deputies lived in “le secteur Louvre-Tuileries-Palais Royal” and other areas to the northwest, which were close to the seats of government and bourgeois amenities. The deputies’ neighborhood preferences prevented many of them, including Robespierre, from frequently interacting with the popular class citizens, who tended to live in other neighborhoods with high concentrations of workers.

Three contributions follow Roche’s legacy by sounding the relationship between the police and the people. Clyde Plumauzille’s chapter examines the state’s attempt to increasingly regulate wet nurses and to administer nursing placement in the Parisian region over the course of the eighteenth century. Plumauzille meticulously outlines regional concentrations of rural wet nurses, the *recommandaresses* who managed them, and the police who ultimately took control of pairing city children with urban families and guaranteeing the milk of the nurses and parents’ payments. The piece offers a fascinating window into the unequal codependency between “les mères de la ville et celles des campagnes” (p. 48). Vincent Milliot examines the evolution of the Parisian police throughout the Enlightenment. Focusing on the reformed tactics of police commissioners, inspectors, lieutenant generals, and the justice system, Milliot demonstrates why Parisians increasingly turned to police mediation and community-protection by choice. Thanks to these benefits, inhabitants did not linearly develop negative views of the police during the Enlightenment. Critics instead began to associate the police with general Old Regime repression during pre-revolutionary conflicts when royal administrators ordered the police to fulfill “sa fonction brute de maintien de l’ordre” on behalf of the monarchy (p. 63). Vincent Denis’s article analyzes the Parisian grocery riots of February 25 and 26, 1793 to ask how the Revolution refashioned relationships between the *commissaires de police*, who were charged with keeping order, and the population that elected them. Denis carefully traces how *commissaires* from across the capital responded to their neighbors who resold goods at a just price, pillaged shops, and attacked merchants. He demonstrates that the *commissaires* embraced different strategies including negotiating with pillagers, assisting sales at a just price, surveilling the scene, and using the National Guard to maintain order. Denis concludes that the riots revealed “les ambiguïtés d’hommes élus comme des représentants politiques de leur section et en même temps voués à une fonction conservatrice” (p. 73).

In the second section of the volume, five scholars turn their attention to “vie matérielle, espace urbain, [et la] ville productive.” David Garrioch’s brilliant chapter reveals how fire socially, economically, and occupationally delineated Parisian society. While detailing diverse fuels, from the high-quality carted timber purchased by the rich to the smoky lard candles harnessed by the poor, Garrioch reveals how Parisians consumed fire to heat and light apartments, to cook food, and to protect themselves in the streets at night. While fire was an essential occupational tool for some workers, such as dryers of animal skins, it increased the occupational risks for others, including gilders who used varnish. Garrioch concludes that fire unequally advantaged and disadvantaged Parisians in the eighteenth century and that fire-related tragedies disproportionately affected the poor and women with long garments. In the vein of local production, Haim Burstin studies how Paris’s “société urbaine” responded to the threat of war in 1792 and 1793 by mobilizing workers to manufacture clothing and provisions for troops. Burstin demonstrates that patriotism did not readily translate into efficient production. Instead, mounting a defense on the distant frontier translated into “un terrain de difficultés

administratives, une zone trouble de contestations, d'affrontements, et aussi d'échecs" over production within the capital itself (p. 151).

Three scholars consider unique urban spaces in the second section. Nicolas Lyon-Caen's piece traces the trajectory of Parisian commercial space throughout the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. He demonstrates how, during the eighteenth century, the police and monarchical officials increasingly sought to differentiate common spaces where trade should occur (such as specialized markets) from common spaces that trade should not encumber (such as busy streets). At the same time, speculators privatized commercial space. In some ways, these developments marked a return to the semi-enclosed commercial spaces like the Palais-Royal and place-based fairs of the seventeenth century. By the end of the eighteenth century, however, merchants lost the ability to administer public commercial spaces. Turning to Parisian gardens, Jan Synowiecki illustrates how eighteenth-century officials wrestled with the connections among "théories de la sociabilité des plantes," human sociability, and admittance criteria for public gardens. While ordinances forbade the popular classes from entering most Parisian public gardens, botanist Antoine de Jussieu and later naturalist André Thouin argued that the Jardin du Roi provided visitors of all ranks with educational, moral, and utilitarian benefits. In seeking to admit well-intentioned city-dwellers of all classes, their theories legitimized a wider public, one which the revolutionaries embraced. Youri Carbonnier's contribution spatially examines the cloister of Notre-Dame, which occupied the north-eastern part of the Île de la Cité. Because of its location and canonical status during the Old Regime, the cloister developed a different profile from that of its neighbors. Gated and closed to commerce, its residents were mainly religious persons connected to the cathedral, *bourgeois de Paris* living off investments, judicial officials who enjoyed the proximity to the Palais, and secular single women who appreciated the safety of the cloister.

The third and longest section of the collection addresses "représentations, débats, et polémiques." Hans-Jürgen Lüsebrink deploys Parisians' observations to ask how rumors spread through the orality of public spaces and encouraged widespread debate during the eighteenth century. To trace these nebulous concepts concretely, Lüsebrink focuses largely on the journal of Siméon-Prosper Hardy who, from his position as a bookseller and curious observer of his contemporaries, traced the development of rumors in the streets.[3] Lüsebrink also probes how, in 1777, public opinion rallied in favor of Antoine François Desrues whom the Parlement of Paris had sentenced to death. This *marchand-épiciier* was convicted of a double murder despite maintaining his innocence. The chapter briefly closes with the Réveillon riots to illustrate the relationship between rumors and violence. Natacha Coquery's study explores debates over commercial regulations under the Terror to reveal the porous boundary between essential and luxury goods during the Revolution. On the one hand, Parisians agitated to protect their own access to colonial goods like sugar. On the other, the deputies realized that the export of luxury goods partially fueled the French economy. As a result, the revolutionaries struggled to clearly separate essential and nonessential goods in the context of the Maximum (price controls) and other regulatory legislation like international trade. In her analysis of parricides and the polemics of criminal justice, Julie Doyon reveals that Parisian courts applied a broad definition of paternal authority in the eighteenth century. Courts not only included fathers in this definition, but any head of household including widowed mothers and stepfathers. Doyon compares the severe trial outcomes of sons and daughters who killed a familial leader with the more lenient sentences of parents who killed their children during the Old Regime. She concludes that, after the Damiens Affair, the Parlement of Paris increasingly sought to reinforce the monarch's paternal authority

and to solidify “un ordre familial fondé sur la verticalisation des rapports de parenté” through parricide procedures (p. 235).

The remaining contributions within the third section explore Parisians’ perspectives on others and themselves. Stéphane Van Damme takes up Roche’s call to analyze how eighteenth-century French persons became increasingly concerned with “savoirs antiquaires sur Paris.” Following the 1711 discovery of the Pillar of the Boatmen, which had been erected by the boatmen’s guild in the first century, French thinkers began to reevaluate Gaulish religion and society. Van Damme argues that French thinkers projected their historical interpretations upon the contemporary capital to support the city’s political and judicial autonomy. This position also elevated the patrons who financed antiquarian inquiries. In his article on Ahutoru, the first Tahitian to arrive in Paris and all of Europe in 1769, Antoine Lilti argues that Parisians were far from being transfixed by the visitor from the South Pacific, on the one hand, or embracing him as an equal, on the other. Ahutoru’s one-year stay did not engender Enlightenment cosmopolitan attitudes among Parisians nor the sense of otherness that would underpin nineteenth-century colonial zoos. Many Parisians did not take great interest in the foreign visitor. Ironically, the literary version of Ahutoru achieved more notoriety since it more closely corresponded with Europeans’ preexisting ideas of what a Tahitian should be like.

Laurent Cuvelier’s finely wrought contribution considers *affiches publicitaires* situated within the urban environment of the eighteenth-century capital. From this material perspective, Cuvelier demonstrates where printers of posters hung their commercial advertisements and how city dwellers encountered, read, and critiqued them. As billposting flooded Paris late in the century, advertisers listened to popular criticism to maintain their audience’s attention. They continued to experiment with new forms such as the mobile *homme affiche* during the nineteenth century. Coming from a literary perspective, Geneviève Lafrance closes out the volume by examining the fortune teller to whom Louis Sébastien Mercier devotes a chapter in his *Nouveau Paris*. Published in 1799, *Nouveau Paris* illustrates Mercier’s encounters with a city and populace much changed by the Revolution that had taken place during the decade since he finished *Tableau de Paris*. While Mercier continues to depict *le peuple en masse* as unintelligent, overly emotional, fickle, and stubborn, his encounter with the legless fortune teller pokes holes in his own blanket generalizations. The fortune teller, who shrewdly profits from his marginal trade and whom the police even consult, impresses Mercier and exhibits some of the writer’s own strengths. Mercier’s reaction, Lafrance argues, reflects his ambivalence towards the people of Paris. He continued to stereotype the Parisian popular classes as a collectivity, while spotlighting individual members of *le peuple* who undercut his assumptions.

The essays in this volume vary in scope and stage of research, but most are thematic inquiries or case studies. Among the studies that spotlight the police, for example, Plumauzille’s thematic analysis investigates how the police centralized the administration of wet nurses from 1715 to 1770 and draws on sources by nonpolice actors as well such as letters by *curés* and a *registre* kept by a *recommandaresse*. In contrast, Denis’s police-centered case study pointedly scrutinizes two days of riots and is based largely on reports by sectional *commissaires*. Some authors, like Milliot, build from their own corpus of existing work, while others, like Jones and Burstin, present new projects in progress. The wide array of sources cited within the collection hints at Roche’s own archival fluency and creativity. The authors probe *lettres patentes*, lease agreements, journals, marriage contracts between merchant families, ordinances concerning commercial spaces,

registers of imprisoned Parisians, botanical treatises, Convention debates, and architectural renderings, just to name a few.

The authors connect their analysis to *Le peuple de Paris* in three ways. Some scholars frame the genealogy of their subject through Roche. For example, Cuvelier directly responds to Roche's call for a study of the posters Parisians encountered every day, and Garrioch takes up the themes of heating and lighting from Roche's own work. Others, like Synowiecki and Coquery, deploy Roche as secondary source evidence. Two pieces on the cloister of Notre-Dame and commercial spaces do not explicitly include Roche in the text or cite him as a source. They rely instead on Paris and Parisians as their implicit point of contact.

As one would expect in a collaboration of this magnitude, some essays are pitched to slightly different audiences and levels of specialists. The majority, like the chapter on fire, assume the reader has no specialized knowledge—in this case, regarding the role of fire and the materials needed to produce it. The chapter on Parisian antiquarian interest, in contrast, assumes that the reader has a working knowledge of Parisian savants and does not introduce many of the authors of the antiquarian accounts analyzed. However, such variations are unavoidable in a volume of this magnitude and do not hinder the collection as a whole.

Supplementary materials impressively tie together the volume. Abstracts in both French and English (pp. 283-298), intellectual biographies of the authors (pp. 299-302), and name and place indexes (pp. 269-282) help the reader to navigate the dense but rich collection. Of special note, *Paris et ses peuples* contains thirteen color illustrations and figures, ranging from a map of the *conventionnels'* residences to publicity posters (pp. 263-268). The authors clearly put much effort into these sophisticated visuals, and at first glance they are a rare, colorful treat. However, the press squeezed two to three visuals onto each page, which renders some of their details nearly impossible to read. This is a lost opportunity and a tantalizing taste of what the images have to offer. Perhaps a future electronic edition might allow for a way to enlarge these visuals.

Paris et ses peuples au XVIIIe siècle fittingly closes without a conclusion. The volume's open-endedness is its central strength and its diverse contributions attest to proliferating paths that socio-cultural scholars of the capital continue to forge. As with Roche's 1981 book, French historians of many periods will find methodological inspiration here, and specialists of the subtopics will find complex analyses that are not watered down. This robust volume will energize the next generation of sociocultural historians in Roche's wake.

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NOTES

[1] Daniel Roche, *Le peuple de Paris: Essai sur la culture populaire au XVIII^e siècle* (Paris: Aubier-Montaigne, 1981), 4-6.

[2] A festschrift following Roche’s retirement and a forum in *French Historical Studies* have considered his legacy and body of work beyond *Le peuple de Paris*. See Vincent Milliot, Philippe Minard, and Michel Porret, eds., *La grande chevauchée: Faire de l’histoire avec Daniel Roche* (Geneva: Droz, 2011); Robert Darnton, David Garrioch, Carle Hesse, Lynn Hunt, Daniel Roche, and Timothy Tackett, “Forum: The Work of Daniel Roche,” *French Historical Studies* 27 (2004): 725-763.

[3] A recent edition of Hardy's journal has been published as Siméon-Propser Hardy, *Mes loisirs, ou Journal d'événemens tels qu'ils parviennent à ma connoissance (1753-1789)*, ed. Pascal Bastien et al., 7 vols. (Paris: Hermann, 2012-2019).

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