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Mediating Anglophobia: Political and Cultural Conflict in the French Periodical Reception of British Travel Writing (1792–1814)

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ABSTRACT

This article analyses a set of French periodical articles on British travel writing, exploring the complex and ambivalent relationship that the French press entertained with translations of British travelogues. As travel writing was a highly popular genre in this period, but also politically charged, its periodical reception in revolutionary and Napoleonic France offers a rich object of study for understanding the entanglement of political and cultural conflict. In a political climate heavily influenced by the military conflicts between France and Great Britain, and dealing with a travel book market dominated by translations from English, the French periodical travel review partakes in the overall mediation of national stereotypes. Relatively restrained in literary journals such as the *Magasin encyclopédique* and *La Décade philosophique*, the mediation of stereotypes turns into outright Anglophobic propaganda in the Napoleonic *Journal de l'Empire*, but without hiding a deeper and more complex dynamic of cultural transfer, characterized by a mix of fascination and concern for the influence of British travel writing.

KEYWORDS

Travel writing; periodical reception; British travel writing; eighteenth century; nineteenth century; French periodical press; political and cultural conflict; national stereotypes

As David Avrom Bell writes in his book *The Cult of the Nation in France*, ‘there were two great xenophobic moments in eighteenth-century French history: the Seven Years’ War [...] and the revolutionary wars that started in 1792’. The American historian sees the second as the greatest, ‘dwarf[ing] the first in intensity’.¹ From the beginning of the revolutionary wars to the end of the Napoleonic First Empire, France was abundant with anti-British propaganda that took various generic and material forms: pamphlets, plays, popular songs, and newspaper articles.² It is interesting, in this context, to ask what happened in this period to the reception of British travel writing, which had a strong position on the French book market,³ and was one of the foremost symptoms of a craze in France for British culture, described by its detractors as an ‘Anglomania’.⁴

This article analyzes a set of French periodical articles dealing with British travel writing, taken primarily from the two literary journals *Magasin encyclopédique* and *La Décade philosophique*, and from the daily newspaper *Journal de l’Empire*, exploring the complex and ambivalent relationship that the French press entertained with the translations of British travelogues. The two literary journals were both important media for the reception and transmission of travel writing, regularly publishing reviews, extracts, adverts, and notices on travel books.⁵ They were also similar in their liberal and republican tendencies. As for the *Journal de l’Empire*, which combined the format of the daily newspaper with cultural content previously restricted to the specialized periodical press, it was an equally important medium for travel mediation,⁶ but had a completely different political profile, not to mention a much smaller leeway during its lifetime compared to the two literary journals in the 1790s.⁷ Therefore, by looking at these three titles in particular, from before and during the Napoleonic regime, we will be able to examine the continuity, as well as the complexity and ambivalence, of anti-British discourse in travel reviews under shifting political and ideological conditions.

This specific part of French print culture — the periodical travel review from the turn of the century — is particularly interesting in how it performs continuous

- 1 David Avrom Bell, *The Cult of the Nation in France: Inventing Nationalism, 1680–1800* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2003), p. 44. On the topic of Anglophobia during the Seven Years’ War, see also Edmond Dziembowski, chapter 2, ‘Une France anglophobe’, *Un Nouveau patriotisme français, 1750–1770* (Oxford: Voltaire Foundation, 1998), pp. 59–110.
- 2 Jean-Paul Bertaud, Alan I. Forrest, and Annie Jourdan, *Napoléon, le monde et les Anglais: Guerre des mots et des images* (Paris: Editions Autrement, 2004), pp. 40, 60–64. Dziembowski also examines the different genres and forms through which Anglophobia was mediated (see *Un Nouveau patriotisme français*, pp. 62–71).
- 3 Proportionally, though, the interest in British travel writing had diminished somewhat in the 1780s compared to earlier in the century, notably because of an increased interest in publications from the German language area. See Yasmine Marcil, *La Fureur des voyages: Les Récits de voyage dans la presse périodique (1750–1789)* (Paris: Honoré Champion, 2006), p. 84.
- 4 On the topic of French Anglomania, see Josephine Grieder’s pioneering study, *Anglomania in France 1740–1789: Fact, Fiction, and Political Discourse* (Genève: Droz, 1985). On pro-anglo sentiment during the Seven Years’ War, see again Dziembowski, chapter 3, ‘Les Anglophiles dans la tourmente de la guerre de Sept ans’, *Un Nouveau patriotisme français*, pp. 111–62.
- 5 Yasmine Marcil has estimated that more than 8 per cent of the reviews in the *Magasin Encyclopédique* were of travel books. See ‘Voyage écrit, voyage vécu? La crédibilité du voyageur, du *Journal encyclopédique* au *Magasin encyclopédique*’, *Sociétés & Représentations*, 21.1 (2006), 23–43 (p. 27).
- 6 I have found more than 260 articles and notices on travel writing in the *Journal de l’Empire* from 1805 to 1814.
- 7 Both *La Décade philosophique* and the *Magasin encyclopédique* were published also during the Consulate and the First Empire, but under very different conditions than before. André Cabanis, *La Presse sous le Consulat et l’Empire (1799–1814)* (Paris: Société des Études Robespierriennes, 1975), pp. 30–32. The present article is based on a study of 29 articles in *La Décade philosophique* between 1794 and 1798, 50 articles in the *Magasin encyclopédique* between 1792 and 1801, and 120 articles in the *Journal de l’Empire* between 1805 and 1814, as well as a selection from other titles (listed in the bibliography), all digitized by the Bibliothèque nationale de France and published in the digital library Gallica.

negotiations between the political and the cultural.⁸ Reviews of translated British travel writing often give way to a patriotic discourse that mobilizes a set of national stereotypes. A considerable level of Anglophobia was expressed in many travel reviews of this period, notably during the First Empire, where such reviews mobilized common stereotypes and caricatures that aligned with Napoleon's propaganda machinery.⁹ However, there also seem to have been genuine cultural concerns underlying some of the Anglophobe reviews: for the Danish-born journalist and geographer Conrad Malte-Brun,¹⁰ for instance, the British dominance was not only a political issue, but also a cultural and scientific one, as it was thought to hinder other perspectives on the world.

It can therefore be difficult to distinguish between political and cultural/scientific motivations for the anti-British critique. Travel reviews constitute particularly interesting and complex examples of the mediation of conflict, where political and cultural concerns become enmeshed and interact in numerous ways. It is surprising, in fact, that more attention has not been given to this part of periodical culture, which has an important political resonance.¹¹ Travel writing as such commonly deals with the representation of other places and cultures, through which the political and cultural viewpoints and prejudices of the travel writer appear, more or less explicitly pronounced. By extension, how British travellers perceived and described the world offered an entry for French reviewers to assess their Englishness, in ways which are revelatory of the French perception and representation of their neighbours across the Channel.

Travel writing certainly belongs to the cultural domain, as a literary genre dealing with a variety of topics, from *mores*, customs, and politics, via art and archaeology, to geography and the natural sciences. But travel books were also objects with potentially great political value, notably when it came to official or semi-official expeditions aimed at expanding a country's global influence. As I. S. MacLaren has pointed out, 'the British initiated claims to the portions of the globe that they explored by publishing printed volumes by command of their monarch'.¹² Publishing the accounts of global expeditions was a way of asserting the political and economic influence of the nation. French authorities seemed sensitive to this: not only was the fatal naval expedition

- 8 The following collective study on cultural exchanges between Britain and France in the eighteenth century gives much attention to the role of the press, with one out of three parts (five articles) bearing on the topic: part II, 'Journalism', *Cultural Transfers: France and Britain in the Long Eighteenth Century*, ed. by Ann Thomson and others (Oxford: Voltaire Foundation, 2010), pp. 129–201. In their introduction, the editors argue for the value of studying book reviews for their 'significant role in cultural transfer'; Ann Thomson and Simon Burrows, 'Introduction', in *Cultural Transfers*, ed. by Thomson and others, pp. 1–15 (p. 10). Their claim that book reviews have previously been underestimated as historical sources is underlined by the fact that the press is curiously absent from other broad studies of this topic, such as *British-French Exchanges in the Eighteenth Century*, ed. by Kathleen Hardesty Doig and Dorothy Medlin (Cambridge: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2007).
- 9 Anglophobic propaganda was also virulent under the Directoire (Bertaud, Forrest, and Jourdan, p. 40). However, the control over the press was much greater during the First Empire, especially from 1804 (Cabanis, pp. 34, 95.)
- 10 I use the term 'journalist' here to describe any person writing for a journal/review/newspaper, not to be confused with the modern meaning of the term that points to the established profession of journalism. This is a common use of the term in French-language scholarship on the press of the Ancien Régime, as testified by Jean Sgard's *Dictionnaire des journalistes (1600–1789)* (Oxford: Voltaire Foundation, 2011 [1991]).
- 11 A notable exception is Marcil's fundamental work on travel writing in the French periodical press, which deals mainly, however, with the Ancien Régime; see Marcil, *La Fureur des voyages*. As for the early nineteenth century, Sylvain Venayre has written interesting articles on travel writing in the press, but gives fairly little attention to the period before 1814; see Sylvain Venayre, 'La Presse de voyage', in *La Civilisation du journal: Histoire culturelle et littéraire de la presse française au XIXe siècle*, ed. by Dominique Kalifa and others (Paris: Nouveaux Monde éditions, 2011), pp. 465–80, and 'Le Voyage, le journal et les journalistes au XIXe siècle', *Le Temps des médias*, 1.8 (2007), 46–56.
- 12 I. S. MacLaren, 'In Consideration of the Evolution of Explorers and Travellers into Authors: A Model', *Studies in Travel Writing*, 15.3 (2011), 221–41 (pp. 223–24).

of Jean-François de Galaup, Comte de La Pérouse (who disappeared in 1788), in which Louis XVI was said to be personally invested, an attempt at responding to the exploits of the British explorer James Cook; the expedition was also appropriated by the revolutionary National Assembly, which in 1792 ordered the publication of La Pérouse's remaining travelogue, turning it into a symbol, albeit a tragic one, for the French response to the British domination on the seas.¹³

A similar function was given to the account of Étienne Marchand's global circumnavigation, edited by Charles Pierre Claret de Fleurieu based on journals from crew members. As a notice in the literary journal *L'Observateur des spectacles* indicates, the publication seems to have been used by the French government as a tool for affirming to other European regimes, and especially to Britain, France's capacities as a seafaring nation:

Mr Marchand's global circumnavigation, published by Fleurieu, was sent, by order of the French government, to all the sovereigns of Europe. The King of England has received a copy. We may recall that the First Consul had sent this work to the president of the Royal Society of London, with a letter from his own hand.¹⁴

Marchand's circumnavigation, although a private and commercial one, attests to the capacity of revolutionary France to compete with Britain as a power of global exploration. Sending the book to the British monarch was all the more symbolic considering that Fleurieu's introduction also hails the exploits of La Pérouse and Marchand, and contains several attacks on their English counterparts.¹⁵ Thus, the travel book can be said to be the object of a chain of politically charged acts: Fleurieu's edition may be seen partly as a political appropriation of what was in fact a private and commercial circumnavigation; and its shipment to foreign rulers, as well as the news notice of this shipment in the press, contributed to publicizing and thus enhancing the political value of the book. The last step of this chain was the reception of the book by the French press, which we will look at below.

The late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries saw non-fictional travel writing as one of its most important and popular genres. The French press showed an unprecedented interest in travel and exploration, through reviews, excerpts, notices, and book adverts, often testifying to the idea of living in a golden age where travel writing had reached a new paradigm of greater scientific accuracy and trustworthiness. The second part of the eighteenth century also saw the rise of a British dominance on the French travel book market, from official accounts of global exploration to travelogues from the Grand Tour, facilitated by an increased rapidity of translations.¹⁶ In a French press greatly preoccupied with the genre, this market situation was a topic that would not go unnoticed.

13 See Dominique Le Brun, *La Malédiction Lapérouse* (Paris: Omnibus, 2012), pp. VI–VIII. The publication was effectively postponed by the Terror and not accomplished until 1797.

14 'Le voyage autour du monde de M. Marchand, publié par Fleurieu, a été envoyé, par ordre du gouvernement français, à tous les souverains de l'Europe. Le roi d'Angleterre en a reçu un exemplaire. On doit se souvenir que le premier consul avoit envoyé cet ouvrage au président de la société royale de Londres, avec une lettre écrite de sa main.' *L'Observateur des spectacles*, no. 60 (27 April 1802), p. 2. I have respected the original spelling in all quotes. For more on Marchand's expedition and Fleurieu's publication, see Odile Gannier, 'Consigner l'événement: Les Journaux du Voyage de Marchand (1790–1792) et les Isles de la Révolution', *Annales historiques de la Révolution française*, 320.1 (2000), 101–20. All translations from the French are my own.

15 Charles Pierre Claret de Fleurieu, *Voyage autour du monde, pendant les années 1790, 1791 et 1792, par Étienne Marchand* (Paris: Imprimerie de la République, 1797–99), p. cxvii.

16 Marcil, 'Voyage écrit, voyage vécu?', p. 34.

In 1792, the *Magasin encyclopédique* presented travel and travel writing as particularly British domains: ‘Travels are rather more a need than a natural inclination for the English [...]. The most beautiful collections of this genre appear in England, and they are always helped by numerous subscriptions.’¹⁷ In 1795, the same journal commented on the importance of travel writing and the preponderance of travel book translations from English on the French book market: ‘it is especially in England that one publishes the greatest number [of Travels], and, most of them, with a grand luxury of engraving and typography. Their translation is always a success; and it is one of the most important branches of the French book market’.¹⁸ Almost a decade later, the French press was continuing to make a case of the British dominance, attaching it to a specific form of travel writing: the published results of official global expeditions. In a review of Valentia’s *Voyage dans l’Hindoustan*, the *Journal des arts, des sciences et de la littérature* pointed out that ‘England has been prolific with productions of this kind. The most famous of the modern sailors was born in its midst, and the Macartneys, the Barrows, the John Carrs, etc., have proven worthy to be his successors’.¹⁹ Note that the reviewer does not even feel the need to name James Cook, the ‘most famous of modern navigators’. The exploits of Cook were the symbol *par excellence* of a British hegemony, both on the French travel book market and in terms of global exploration.

A Nation of Merchants and Tyrants of the Sea

The French ambivalence towards British travel writing is attested by the national stereotypes that flourished in the periodical discourse of the time. Notably, the image of Great Britain as a nation of merchants was deeply rooted, not only in France, but all over Europe, and could take a hostile form, presenting the country as a new Carthage that was driven towards its demise by greed and a commercial spirit.²⁰ Commonly used in the Anglophobe atmosphere following the Seven Years’ War, this image found renewed strength in Napoleonic propaganda.²¹ According to one French libeller writing in 1802, ‘England is nothing but a merchant house of which all the inhabitants are the associates’ [‘l’Angleterre n’est qu’une maison de commerce dont tous les habitants sont les associés’].²² Napoleon’s regime sought to present Britain as exercising a tyranny on the seas, preventing other (European) nations from developing their trade. France was, according to the same propaganda, the counter-power capable of liberating Europe from this political and commercial tyranny.²³

But even in periods less marked by regime propaganda, and in journals not particularly invested in political discussion, articles on travel could perpetuate these

17 ‘Les voyages sont plutôt encore un besoin qu’un goût naturel pour les anglais [...]. Les plus belles collections en ce genre paroissent en Angleterre, et sont toujours aidées par de nombreuses souscriptions.’ *Magasin Encyclopédique*, vol. 1 (1792), p. 73.

18 ‘c’est sur-tout en Angleterre qu’on publie le plus grand nombre [de Voyages], et, la plupart, avec un grand luxe de gravure et de typographie. Leur traduction a toujours du succès; et c’est une des branches importantes de la librairie française.’ *Magasin Encyclopédique*, vol. 5 (1795), pp. 490–91.

19 ‘[l]’Angleterre a été féconde en productions de ce genre. Le plus fameux des navigateurs modernes est né dans son sein, et les Macartney, les Barrow, les John Carr, etc., se sont montrés dignes d’être ses successeurs.’ *Journal des arts, des sciences et de la littérature*, no. 242 (20 August 1813), p. 227. I will refer to the British travel books in the titles of their French translations in all cases where we look at travel books from the perspective of French reviews.

20 Bertaud, Forrest, and Jourdan, p. 20. The image of Britain as a new Carthage had become a topos already during the Seven Years’ War. See Dziembowski, *Un Nouveau patriotisme français*, pp. 83–86.

21 Bertaud, Forrest, and Jourdan, p. 54.

22 Jacques Christophe Germain de Colleville, *La Guerre pendant la paix, ou Précis de la puissance qu’exercent les Anglais sur tous les peuples du globe* (Paris: Desenne, 1803), p. 12. Quoted from Bertaud, Forrest, and Jourdan, p. 91.

23 Bertaud, Forrest, and Jourdan, pp. 58–59.

stereotypes. Translated British travel accounts from extra-European expeditions and commercial journeys were read with a particular interest in the depictions of commerce, which could evoke critique but also admiration. In 1780, the *Affiches, annonces et avis divers* published a review of Thomas Forrest's *Voyage aux Moluques et à la Nouvelle Guinée* (1780). The review expressed admiration for the accomplishments of Forrest, praising the commercial industriousness of the English, which formed an example for other nations:

Captain Forrest has fulfilled his mission perfectly. He visited all the places that were fertile with these rich productions; he even discovered new islands where they can be found, and brought to the English settlements thousands of trees that carry cloves and cinnamon. We see there the activity of the English in appropriating all branches of trade. What an example for the other nations!²⁴

It is interesting to note that, despite being written during the American War of Independence, when anti-British sentiment in France was strong, the review treats with benevolence a topic often mobilized for satirical purposes.²⁵

Seventeen years later, during another war, this time between Great Britain and a France governed by the Directoire, a notice written by Pierre-Claude-François Daunou (1761–1840) published in both the *Magasin encyclopédique* and *La Décade philosophique* puts forward a very different opinion of British commerce. The industriousness of Albion is no longer an example to follow, but is rather perceived as a national fault, which puts an imprint of one-sidedness on the observations made by British travellers, and which poses a hindrance to scientific discoveries. The notice, which recounts the public reading of the travelogue from Marchand's circumnavigation by its editor Fleurieu, presents the French expedition as a counter-example to earlier British ones in its capacity to unite commercial interest with scientific endeavour.

The notice highlights how Marchand's expedition had been able to bring forward new observations and results on the archipelago of Mendoça that 'one would look for in vain in the writings of Cook, of Misters Forster, and of the other English travellers' ['on chercheroit vainement dans les écrits de Cook, de Messieurs Forster et des autres voyageurs Anglois'].²⁶ If, before Marchand, the north-west coast of America had been known first and foremost through the account of George Dixon's global circumnavigation, *A Voyage round the World* (1789), this travelogue had, according to the notice, provided only 'all-too-imperfect notions' ['des notions trop imparfaites'], precisely due to a one-sided interest in trade: the British captain was 'much more preoccupied with his trade than with the progress of human knowledge' ['beaucoup plus occupé de son commerce que du progrès des connoissances humaines'].²⁷ Whether true or not, the depiction of Dixon falls into a well-established stereotype of the English as putting commerce above all else.

The Frenchman Marchand, on the other hand, had proved himself capable of uniting the two concerns: 'It was up to a Frenchman, to captain Etienne Marchand [...], to prove that a sailor, without neglecting the interests of his principals, can usefully

24 'Le Capitaine Forrest a parfaitement rempli sa mission. Il a visité tous les lieux fertiles en ces riches productions; il a même découvert des isles nouvelles où l'on en trouve, & a transporté dans les établissemens Anglois des milliers d'arbres qui portent les clous de girofle & la cannelle. On voit par-là quelle est l'activité des Anglois pour s'approprier toutes les branches du commerce. Quel exemple pour les autres nations!' *Affiches, annonces et avis divers*, no. 23 (7 June 1780), p. 90.

25 Grieder, pp. 18–20.

26 *Magasin encyclopédique*, vol. 17 (1797), p. 597; *La Décade philosophique*, no. 13, (28 January 1798), p. 197.

27 *Magasin encyclopédique*, vol. 17 (1797), p. 597.

serve the sciences.²⁸ The notice seemingly delegitimizes the entire tradition of British exploration in the wake of Cook, by pointing to how a French traveller was more capable than the British of making disinterested, scientific observations. If it is true that a stereotype of others is created in opposition to oneself,²⁹ then the image of the greedy British merchant is here effectively constructed in opposition to the disinterested French discoverer and scientist.

The most striking example from the periodical notice comes with the mention of how the Marchand expedition was to have given a severe blow to the proud tradition of British global exploration by discrediting the British discovery of the Sandwich Islands:

In speaking of the Sandwich Islands already described several times before, the author shows that it is not to the English that we owe its discovery, and in the chapters concerning the island of Saint Helena, he makes an effort to look at it from all the most useful viewpoints concerning history, general physics, trade, and the political sciences.³⁰

In fact, in one single sentence, the notice not only discredits the discovery, but also highlights the capacities of its compatriot Marchand to adopt multiple viewpoints, in implicit contrast to the one-sided British merchants. Thus, the text accomplishes a double undermining of the precursory British expeditions.

If this notice is primarily a scientific text, there is nonetheless an important political value to it. We saw previously how the travelogue from Marchand's journey was treated as a politically symbolic object, in its capacity to counter-balance the endeavours of Cook and his successors. The topic of commercial interest versus scientific disinterest in the periodical notice adds a new dimension to the rivalry with Britain — or, in less benign terms, to what appears as a French inferiority complex with regard to global exploration — by playing on national stereotypes, notably of Great Britain as a nation of merchants whose lust for profit overshadows all other concerns.

The Marchand expedition, which was first and foremost commercially motivated, appears as a convenient example to prove how the French could aspire to equal the British in commerce, while at the same time surpassing them in scientific observation. That said, when the travelogue edited by Fleurieu was finally published, it became clear that the commercial results of Marchand's journey had been meagre. As a result, the actual review of the travel book in the *Magasin encyclopédique*, without hiding this fact, nonetheless puts the emphasis on the scientific results of the expedition. Overall, the review is less direct than Daunou's notice in its critique of British exploration. At one point, however, it plays on the exact same stereotypes of British greed and commercial interest by implying how, through the British influence, the natives of Cloak Bay had become 'a people instructed by interest, and enlightened by greed' ['un peuple instruit par l'intérêt, et éclairé par la cupidité'].³¹ The *Magasin encyclopédique*, which took pride in its political neutrality and its 'vocation for the sole transmission of culture' ['vocation à la seule transmission de la culture'], rarely expressed anti-British sentiment in its travel

28 'Il étoit réservé à un Français, au capitaine Etienne Marchand [...] de prouver qu'un navigateur, sans négliger l'intérêt de ses commettans, peut servir utilement les sciences.' *Magasin encyclopédique*, vol. 17 (1797), p. 597.

29 Bertaud, Forrest, and Jourdan, pp. 9–10.

30 'En parlant des îles Sandwich déjà plusieurs fois décrites, l'auteur démontre que ce n'est point aux Anglais que l'on en doit la découverte, et dans les chapitres qui concernent l'île Sainte-Hélène, il s'applique à la considérer sous les points de vue le plus utilement relatifs à l'histoire, à la physique générale, au commerce et aux sciences politiques.' *Magasin encyclopédique*, vol. 17 (1797), p. 597.

31 *Magasin encyclopédique*, vol. 36 (1801), 7–26 (p. 26).

reviews.³² As we can see from this example, however, certain national stereotypes also slip into the cultural content of this journal; a sign, perhaps, of the strong presence of these stereotypes in the contemporary political climate.

La Décade philosophique expressed overall a similar attitude to British travel writing. Although usually quite benevolent, this journal, which was close to the group of liberal and republican philosophers named ‘les Idéologues’, did not refrain from occasionally playing on anti-British stereotypes, notably with regard to official travels, such as the British embassy to China led by George Macartney in 1792.³³ The opening line from the review of the official account (written by Macartney’s secretary George Staunton) presents the British embassy as a potential threat to Chinese sovereignty, something which the reviewer claims legitimized the relatively hostile reception the British received from the Chinese: ‘the usurpations of the English in Hindustan would naturally lead to them being considered at the Peking Court as the most dangerous of the foreigners that frequented the ports of China; they were therefore treated in Canton with the greatest rigour’.³⁴ The reviewer evokes the ‘greed’ of the British, and presents their embassy as a plot of seduction to gain benefits for British commerce:

They assumed that once their Ambassador had been received, and his residence approved by the Government, they would easily find a way to appeal to the people, to seduce the Mandarins, to tie close relationships with all the parties of the Empire, and to secure for England all the benefits of its trade. But if their greed was fooled, it must be admitted that the mission to which this greed gave birth, has been useful to the Sciences in general, and to Philosophy in particular.³⁵

However, apart from this opening, which emits a certain satisfaction at the commercial failure of the embassy and plays on the usual stereotypes, the remainder of the review concentrates on the travelogue’s contributions to science and philosophy. The evaluative conclusion of the review is largely positive, and indicates that the use of national stereotypes does not prevent the journal from being favourably inclined towards the British contribution to the field of travel writing.

Another review from *La Décade philosophique* reveals, moreover, that the national stereotypes of British commercial greed were not always put to use, even in contexts where it would have been easy for the reviewer to do so. Concerning John Matthews’ *Voyage à la rivière de Sierra Léone*, the journal severely criticizes the British slave trader for his dehumanizing perspective on the Africans, for perceiving them as products and not as human beings.³⁶ This critique is posed, however, without playing on the stereotype of the British merchant, a tactic which the subject may easily have induced. At the same time, the journal praises the counter-example of a British philanthropic

32 Cristina Trincherro, ‘Regards sur l’Italie entre XVIII^e et XIX^e siècles: Le *Magasin encyclopédique* de Millin’, *Annales historiques de la Révolution française*, no. 351 (2008), p. 68.

33 According to Christina Trincherro, Aubin-Louis Millin de Grandmaison (1759–1818), the editor of the *Magasin encyclopédique*, was probably also influenced by the ‘Idéologues’, but did not officially belong to their group; Trincherro, p. 64.

34 ‘Les usurpations des Anglais dans l’Indostan, devaient naturellement les faire regarder à la Cour de Pékin comme les plus dangereux des étrangers qui fréquentaient les ports de la Chine; aussi étaient-ils traités à Canton avec la plus grande rigueur.’ *La Décade philosophique*, no. 24 (19 May 1798), p. 337.

35 ‘Ils ont compté que leur Ambassadeur étant une fois admis, et sa résidence autorisée par le Gouvernement, ils trouveraient aisément le moyen de se rendre agréable au peuple, de séduire les Mandarins, de lier des relations intimes avec toutes les parties de l’Empire, et d’attirer à l’Angleterre tous les bénéfices de son commerce. Mais si leur cupidité a été trompée, il faut convenir que la mission dont elle a suggéré la première idée, a été utile aux Sciences en général, et particulièrement à la Philosophie.’ *La Décade philosophique*, no. 25 (29 May 1798), p. 408.

36 *La Décade philosophique*, no. 18 (20 March 1797), p. 542.

society established in Sierra Leone. It seems that the ideological, abolitionist viewpoint of the journal in this case trumps the temptation to generalize the British author's commercial greed.

In fact, the perception of British exploration in the *Magasin encyclopédique* and *La Décade philosophique* appears as quite balanced compared to what would be the case in the *Journal de l'Empire*, the most influential newspaper of the First Empire (in terms of print run).³⁷ There, the perspective on British commercial power takes on a much greater degree of hostility. Far from expressing any admiration for the mercantile powers of Britain, the *Journal de l'Empire* searches rather to praise the French as a counter-power. In a review of the *Voyage au Cap de Bonne-Espérance* by the English officer Robert Percival, the journalist and historian Étienne Jondot opens with a series of thoughts on the current political situation, which allows him to express his patriotic pride in a France capable of countering the British realm of the seas, and even of inspiring jealousy and fear in the enemy:

The English, after the resumption of the hostilities, desired the possession of the Cape of Good Hope, an important naval point, from which the Dutch could disturb their trade, and attack their fleet; but the Isle-de-France [Mauritius], another point more formidable still, as France is its ruler, excites no less vividly the jealousy and the fears of the English. From this island, we may intercept their communications with India, obstruct the progress of their galleons, and keep their power at bay.³⁸

The Cape of Good Hope had been a point of dispute following the rupture of the Treaty of Amiens, Britain having first hesitated to surrender it to the Dutch, despite this being part of the treaty, then having invaded it again at the Battle of Blaauwberg in January 1806.³⁹ The publication of the French translation came at a time when the Cape was at the centre of attention in the war. The review immediately contextualizes Percival's travelogue by inserting it in the frame of the 'resumption of the hostilities' ['reprise des hostilités'] that eventually led to the British reinvasion of the Cape. It should also be noted that the review appeared at a time when the propaganda war between France and Great Britain had regained strength, the death of the British Prime Minister Charles James Fox on 13 September 1806 having put an end to diplomatic talks.⁴⁰

It is not an uncommon tactic for travel reviews in this period to 'politicize' a travelogue with reference to the current political situation. In this case, the reviewer undermines the British victory at the Cape by highlighting the value of the Isle-de-France (Mauritius Island). It is interesting to note that, apart from the opening paragraph, there are few traces of an overt Anglophobic discourse in the review. The major part of the text is rather aimed at denigrating the Dutch settlers who, because of their cowardice, made the Cape an easy target for the British. In other words, the anti-British discourse is more indirectly constructed in the rest of the article than in the opening: by subscribing to the negative depiction of the Boers made by the British

37 Claude Bellanger and others, *Histoire générale de la presse française: 1: Des origines à 1814* (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1969), p. 561.

38 'Les Anglais, depuis la reprise des hostilités, ambitionnoient la possession du Cap de Bonne-Espérance, point maritime important, d'où les Hollandais pouvoient gêner leur commerce, et attaquer leurs flottes; mais l'Isle-de-France, autre point plus formidable encore, puisque la France en est la maîtresse, excite non moins vivement la jalousie et les craintes des Anglais. De cette île, on peut intercepter leurs communications avec l'Inde, contrarier la marche de leurs galions, et tenir en échec leur puissance.' *Journal de l'Empire* (6 November 1806).

39 See Bertaud, Forrest, and Jourdan, p. 51.

40 Bertaud, Forrest, and Jourdan, p. 71.

travel-writer, the reviewer offers an explanation for the defeat of the French ally, thus undermining the value of the British victory.

Another travel book review in the *Journal de l'Empire* the following year repeats the topic of French global power inspiring fear in the British. The book in question is John Barrow's *Voyage à la Cochinchine*, which the reviewer, with the signature 'F.', depicts as presenting a double interest to French readers, precisely because it, on the one hand, describes the 'glorious' and 'patriotic' exploits of a French missionary and, on the other, reflects British fears and failures:

Here we are at the main part of this Journey or at the description of Cochin-China. This piece is of double interest to the French reader: we learn the details of the glorious and patriotic enterprise of a French missionary to acquire for his nation a beautiful and rich colony; we read the confession of all the envy and all the fears that this attempt inspired in the English, and even the fruitless attempts they made to harvest that which the French had sowed.⁴¹

As in Jondot's review of Percival, the opening lines of this review of Barrow highlight its relevance to current affairs, albeit in less explicit terms: 'The importance of the new details provided by this Journey, published eight months ago in London, will be felt through a simple outline in which we will follow the order of the chapters.'⁴² Barrow's travel book is treated here as a geopolitical document, providing updated information on parts of the world over which the French and the British fought for influence. The reviewer points to how the account is revelatory of the commercial spirit that governs British foreign policy and has Albion conspiring to overthrow regimes in Brazil and Peru in order to sell its merchandise.

If we compare this text to the 1780 review of Thomas Forrest in the *Affiches, annonces et avis divers*, where British commercial industriousness was presented as an example for other nations, all admiration, or even acknowledgement, of this industriousness is absent here. The dominant rhetorical objective is, on the contrary, to ascertain French power to the detriment of Britain. This difference could be attributed to the distinct political profiles of the two journals in question, but it is just as pertinent to see in it a notable change in public discourse. According to Bell, 'vilification of national enemies and assertions of France's superiority had very narrow applications under the old regime — far narrower than in the Revolution or the nineteenth century'.⁴³ The increased politicized aggression of travel reviews in the *Journal de l'Empire* compared to the *Affiches, annonces et avis divers* should be seen in part as the result of a greater nationalist and anti-British sentiment.⁴⁴

National Partiality, Inwardness, and Gluttony

If the stereotype of the British commercial greed lent itself easily to the critique of global expeditions, other stereotypes prevailed in travel writing from the European continent,

41 'Nous voilà arrivés à la partie principale de ce Voyage ou à la description de la Cochinchine. Ce morceau offre un double intérêt au lecteur français: on y apprend à connoître les détails de l'entreprise glorieuse et patriotique d'un missionnaire français, pour procurer à sa nation une belle et riche colonie; on y lit l'aveu de toute l'envie et de toutes les craintes que cette tentative inspira aux Anglais, et même des essais infructueux qu'ils ont fait pour recueillir ce que les Français avoient semé.' *Journal de l'Empire* (2 February 1807).

42 'L'importance des renseignements nouveaux que fournit ce Voyage, publié il y a huit mois à Londres, se fera sentir par un simple aperçu dans lequel nous suivrons l'ordre des chapitres.'

43 Bell, p. 44. *Journal de l'Empire* (2 February 1807).

44 See also Grieder, p. 117.

which confronted the French readers with a sort of double mirror: seeing the British as they looked not at the ‘uncivilized’ world overseas, but at continental Europe. It was to a large extent travel accounts by French travellers to Britain that had helped to create the interest in British culture, but also to forge national stereotypes.⁴⁵ In return, the large number of British travel books being published in France in the second half of the eighteenth century offered the opportunity to affirming these stereotypes, notably that of the self-centred English glutton, less interested in understanding other cultures than in what the taverns had to offer.

In an article for the *Journal de l’Empire* of 10 June 1806 entitled ‘Critical review of some journeys’ [‘Revue critique de quelques voyages’], Conrad Malte-Brun attacks the French craze for British travel writing, what he terms ‘*Anglomania* in matters of travel’ [‘*Anglomanie* en fait de voyages’].⁴⁶ Using the example of Portugal, on which ‘twenty Englishmen have published accounts’ [‘vingt Anglais ont publié des relations’], he argues that the British travellers had done nothing but denigrate this proud nation and, far from doing proper research, usually did nothing through their relations but spread rumours picked up from compatriot merchants established in Lisbon.

As a counter-example to these superficial and ethnocentric depictions of another culture, Malte-Brun poses the German naturalist and travel writer Heinrich Friedrich Link, whose travelogues reveal, according to the reviewer, a much greater attempt to go to the depths of Portuguese culture: ‘He studies the language of the country, he compares the national writings between them and with what he sees; he enters into the rich man’s palace and into the shepherd’s cabin; he visits the provinces situated far away from the capital.’⁴⁷ Juxtaposing Link with the mass of British travellers, Malte-Brun portrays the German as a solitary hero who, thanks to his ‘enlightened eagerness’ [‘zèle éclairé’], was able to save ‘a famous nation’ [‘une nation célèbre’] from ‘this abyss of ignominy into which the slandering genius of Great Britain had thrust it’ [‘cet abyme d’ignominie où l’avoit plongée le génie calomniateur de la Grande-Bretagne’].⁴⁸ For Malte-Brun, the example of Portugal is symptomatic of a clear tendency in British travel writing about Europe, a ‘manner of travelling’ [‘manière de voyager’] resulting from a typically British taste for comfort:

This manner of travelling [of Link] differs considerably from that of the English, who do nothing but pace the main roads and stay in the big cities. The reason for this is really simple. The Englishmen who travel in Europe love their creature-comforts too much: they are first and foremost concerned with dining well. Even Mont Blanc did not become fashionable in London until after the Genevans had established an inn at Chamonix.⁴⁹

As opposed to Link, who had made the effort to study Portuguese, the British ‘do not condescend to study the langue of the country where they travel’ [‘dédaignent d’étudier

45 Grieder, pp. 33–63.

46 This was the second article in a series of two; the first was published in the daily newspaper on 29 May 1806.

47 ‘Il étudie la langue du pays, il compare les écrits nationaux entre eux et avec ce qu’il voit; il pénètre dans le palais du riche et dans la cabane du berger; il visite les provinces éloignées de la capitale.’

48 *Journal de l’Empire* (10 June 1806). As a geographer, Malte-Brun was primarily rooted in a German tradition. Anne Godlewska, ‘L’Influence d’un homme sur la géographie française: Conrad Malte-Brun (1775–1826)’, *Annales de Géographie*, no. 558 (1991), 190–206 (p. 202).

49 ‘Cette manière de voyager [de Link] diffère beaucoup de celle des Anglais, qui ne font qu’arpenter les grandes routes et séjourner dans les grandes villes. La raison en est fort simple. Les Anglais qui voyagent en Europe, aiment trop leurs aises: ils pensent avant tout à bien diner. Le Mont-Blanc même n’a eu de la vogue à Londres que depuis que les Genevois eurent établi une auberge à Chamonai.’ *Journal de l’Empire* (10 June 1806).

la langue du pays où ils voyagent'] and 'never put aside their national prejudices' ['ne déposent jamais leurs préventions nationales'].⁵⁰ It is worth noticing, though, that Malte-Brun aims specifically at British travellers in Europe, excluding from his critique the exploits of overseas expeditions.

In the travel reviews of the *Journal de l'Empire*, the British 'national prejudices' ['préventions nationales'] were a recurring topic, entering into the general anti-British discourse of the Napoleonic daily newspaper. It was, however, far from being a new idea. In earlier French travelogues from Britain, this '[n]ational pride [had been] a constant source of comment'.⁵¹ Moreover, the image of the Briton letting his prejudice and national pride colour his depiction of the Grand Tour had also been made famous by Laurence Sterne, in the shape of the characters Smelfungus and Mundungus in *A Sentimental Journey* (1768). Sterne's fictionalized travelogue offered ammunition to Malte-Brun's anti-British harangue. To anchor his critique of the British travellers and their inability to put aside their 'préventions nationales', the reviewer quotes Sterne (from memory, thus wrongly attributing the passage to Smollett, who, ironically, was one of the objects of Sterne's satire):

An English author (Smollet, if my memory serves me right) has depicted this default in his countrymen in a small story which goes something like this: 'M. Smelfungius, a bourgeois of the city of London, goes travelling; he is attacked by jaundice in Calais; this does not prevent him from wandering through France, Italy and Switzerland; he returns home; upon disembarking in Dover, the jaundice leaves him; here we have Mr Smelfungius convinced, but really convinced, that, outside of the British isles, the sky, the waters, the flowers, etc.; in one word, all of nature had a yellowish complexion.'⁵²

Through the reference to Sterne (or Smollett), Malte-Brun is denouncing the entire tradition of the British Grand Tour, turning the inward-looking Smelfungus into a shorthand for the English traveller.

These stereotypes are not restricted to travelogues from the Grand Tour, but also put their mark on British long-distance expeditions and official journeys. Jondot mobilizes the very same clichés in his review of John Barrow's *Voyage en Chine*, another of the many accounts to come out of lord Macartney's embassy to China. Estimating that Barrow's account is marked by partiality and a 'national bitterness of British pride' ['ressentiment national de l'orgueil britannique'], Jondot criticizes the 'bad mood' ['mauvaise humeur'] of the members of the embassy, who complain about their lodgings in Beijing:

At least the English, in these miserable lodgings, could not complain about their hosts who always served them excellent meals. This good food could certainly compensate these islanders for all their other privations; their joy would probably

50 *Journal de l'Empire* (10 June 1806).

51 Grieder, p. 2.

52 'Un auteur anglais (Smollet, si ma mémoire ne me trompe pas) a dépeint ce défaut de ses compatriotes dans un petit conte que voici: "M. Smelfungius, bourgeois de la cité de Londres, part pour voyager; il est attaqué de la jaunisse à Calais; cela ne l'empêche point de parcourir la France, l'Italie et la Suisse; il retourne chez lui; en débarquant à Douvres, la jaunisse le quitte; voilà M. Smelfungius persuadé, mais fortement persuadé que, hors des îles britannique, le ciel, les eaux, les fleurs, etc.; en un mot, toute la nature avoit une teinte jaunatre". *Journal de l'Empire* (10 June 1806).

have been more complete if only they had been provided with stronger liquids than beer.⁵³

Jondot adds sarcastically that, despite the ‘good food’ [‘bonne chère’], Barrow was able to uphold his bad mood, thanks to his ‘sober’ character: ‘This good treatment was not able to disarm Mr Barrow, in all likelihood more sober and less sensual than his countrymen; and he complains more bitterly than all his travel companions.’⁵⁴ In this passage, a whole range of stereotypes is being used: when the British are not gluttons who think of nothing but food and drink, they are austere and sombre, something which resonates with another well-used stereotype, namely the British *spleen* and melancholic constitution.⁵⁵

The Enemy within: Denouncing ‘Anglomania’

The Anglophobia expressed in these reviews must be seen in the light of its opposite, namely the ‘Anglomania’ that put its mark on French society, particularly in the second half of the eighteenth century. The immense interest in all things English, from politics to fashion generated considerable commentary, from the so-called ‘anglomanes’ themselves as well as from their detractors.⁵⁶ Numerous works were published, among others French travel accounts from Britain, that were, in the terms of Josephine Grieder, ‘designed to interpret the English — their institutions, their manners and mores, their character — to their countrymen’.⁵⁷ In turn, translated British travel books allowed the French press to assess and censure the customs of their neighbours. Moreover, for a newspaper such as the *Journal de l’Empire*, the term ‘anglomanie’ would serve as a politically charged invective in the debate on the dominance of British travel writing, but also reveal other concerns, cultural and scientific, which became enmeshed with the propaganda.

The cultural section of periodicals, and the book review in particular, was one of the few places where ideological nuances between different newspapers could be expressed.⁵⁸ For the *Journal de l’Empire* that notably meant an anti-revolutionary and anti-philosophical discourse, which the daily newspaper balanced with praise of the Emperor, all finding a place in travel reviews. A review in 1806 of John Moore’s travels to France in the 1780s gave Jondot the chance to revisit the pre-revolutionary society of the Ancien Régime, which he considered as overrun with philosophers, anglophiles, and English conspirators, working together to denigrate the French nation:

The English and the philosophers were in unison; they worked in the same direction, although for different reasons. [...] There was no more France. England dominated in most parts of society. An Englishman did not believe that he was away from his island, when he met with the great minds of the day. We displayed our admiration for these islanders in gardens, in fashion, in furniture, and even in

53 ‘Du moins les Anglais, dans ces misérables logemens, n’eurent pas à se plaindre de leurs hôtes qui leur firent toujours servir d’excellens repas. Cette bonne chère pouvoit certainement dédommager ces insulaires de toutes les autres privations; leur joie eût été sans doute plus complète si on leur eût fourni des liqueurs plus fortes que la bière.’ *Journal de l’Empire* (10 June 1806).

54 ‘Ces bons traitemens n’ont pu désarmer M. Barrow, vraisemblablement plus sobre et moins sensuel que ses compatriotes; et il se plaint plus amèrement que tous ses compagnons de voyage.’ *Journal de l’Empire* (2 September 1805).

55 Grieder, p. 26.

56 The term ‘Anglomania’ was, according to Grieder, popularized by Louis-Charles Fougeret de Montbron’s pamphlet *Préservatif contre l’anglomanie* from 1757; Grieder, p. 7. See also Dziembowski, *Un nouveau patriotisme français*, pp. 30–31.

57 Grieder, p. 33.

58 Cabanis, p. 105.

clothing. Common sense, patriotism withdrew to a small number of distinguished families who were outraged at the very mention of the English and of the projects of improvement proposed by blind enthusiasts.⁵⁹

Jondot treats the ‘philosophes’ and the anglophiles as anti-patriots, something which, in the context of war, had a particularly grave resonance.⁶⁰ Jondot’s accusation was not built on a completely new argument, but one that predated the 1780s.⁶¹ In fact, ‘anglomanie’ was a malleable invective: if it was often used against the ‘philosophes’, the Bonapartists behind the coup of 18 Brumaire also played on Anglophobia against the monarchist faction, which received support from Britain. In any case, the direct, political tonality of the travel review seems particular to the Napoleonic period, and could indicate that the censorship and the overall pressure from the regime had reached an unprecedented intensity. That the reviewer seems ready to lend his pen to the interests of the regime is attested by the conclusion of the article, which places Napoleon above Charlemagne and other great emperors of the past. The travel review is mobilized for anti-British propaganda purposes.

That said, nothing prevents reviewers from being concerned about the British dominance in the field of travel and exploration by cultural and scientific reasons beyond ideology or political propaganda. What seems clear from reading the reviews of the *Journal de l’Empire* is rather that the boundaries between political and cultural/scientific concerns are blurry at best. If we return to Malte-Brun’s criticism of the British ‘way of travelling [‘manière de voyager’], studied in the previous section, we can see that he deems it dangerous because it exercises a destructive influence on the discipline of geography, notably through two of the most influential British geographers of the period, the Scotsmen William Guthrie and John Pinkerton.⁶² Again using the stereotype of the British glutton, Malte-Brun sarcastically notes that Pinkerton seems more interested in food than in the ‘real’ facts of the discipline:

Thus, the culinary geography is perfectly treated by the English authors who are the weakest in statistics and in politics. Mr Pinkerton did not fail to record in his sublime Geography: ‘that in Vienna the goose liver is tender.’ But the factories, that provide a living for 60,000 people in the same capital, appeared as not very remarkable to this learned and judicious writer. The same so-called geographer forgets in his calculations the entire province of West Galicia, inhabited by more than a million souls; but he knows wonderfully well that one eats snails in Vienna.⁶³

59 ‘Les Anglais et les philosophes étoient à l’unisson; ils travailloient dans le même sens, quoique pour des causes différentes. [...] Il n’y avoit plus de France. L’Angleterre dominoit dans la plupart des sociétés. Un Anglais ne se croyoit point hors de son île, quand il se rencontroit avec les beaux esprits du jour. On faisoit éclater son admiration pour ces insulaires dans les jardins, dans les modes, sur les meubles, et jusque sur les vêtemens. Le bon sens, le patriotisme se renfermoient dans un petit nombre de familles distinguées qui s’indignoient au seul nom des Anglais et des projets d’amélioration que proposoient d’aveugles enthousiastes.’ *Journal de l’Empire* (11 June 1806).

60 See Bertaud, Forrest, and Jourdan, p. 44.

61 Grieder, p. 17.

62 See Robert J. Mayhew, *Enlightenment Geography: The Political Languages of British Geography, 1650–1850* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2000).

63 ‘Aussi la géographie des cuisines est parfaitement traitée par les auteurs anglais les plus foibles en statistique et en politique. M. Pinkerton n’a pas manqué de consigner dans sa sublime Géographie: ‘qu’à Vienne les foies d’oies sont délicats.’ Mais les manufactures, qui font vivre 60,000 hommes dans cette même capitale, ont paru peu remarquables à ce savant et judicieux écrivain. Le même soi-disant géographe oublie dans ses calculs toute la province de Gallicie occidentale, peuplée de plus d’un million d’ames; mais il sait à merveilles qu’on mange des escargots à Vienne.’ *Journal de l’Empire* (10 June 1806).

The neologism ‘culinary geography’ [‘géographie des cuisines’] is not the only expression, although undoubtedly the most amusing, serving here to mock the entire contemporary contribution of British geography. The same defects that he observes in British travellers to Portugal, Malte-Brun identifies in these compiling geographers: a superficial and ridiculous interest in culinary pleasures combined with a negligent and inexact treatment of the important information needed to really know a place.⁶⁴

In his reviews for the *Journal de l'Empire*, Malte-Brun engaged in a veritable campaign against the Anglomania on the French travel book market. There is little doubt that he considered the British dominance in the field of travel writing and geography to be a genuine cultural and scientific problem. According to Anna Godlewska, Malte-Brun ‘understands the disfavour in which French geography finds itself towards the end of the eighteenth century, a symbol of its inferiority with regard to German geography’, and sees himself as a ‘reformer of French geography’ [‘réformateur de la géographie française’].⁶⁵ Certainly, the image of British travellers as superficial, prejudiced, and self-centred forms one of the central arguments of this sustained critique. At the same time, a main point in Malte-Brun’s reviews seems to be that the Anglomania of translators and booksellers prevented travelogues written in other parts of Europe from reaching the French readership:

Every day the French, the Germans, the Danish, the Italians, publish new details on the natural, commercial, and political state of their respective countries [...]. All of this is as good as non-existent for the Anglomaniacs of Paris. The most insignificant little book by an English traveller or geographer always appears to them worthier of the honours of translation, than the best of works printed on the continent: the vaguest, the falsest, the most outdated of outlines, translated from English, is announced pompously as serving to ‘*make known this or that absolutely unknown region,*’ or ‘as a very interesting work that was *lacking from the discipline of geography*’.⁶⁶

Likewise, when Malte-Brun reviews Boucher de La Richarderie’s grand *Bibliothèque universelle des voyages* in 1808, he praises the work as a tool against the ignorance and narrowmindedness of a readership that primarily knows the world through translations of British travel books.⁶⁷ In these texts, the Danish reviewer and geographer appears to be genuinely concerned for the state of the French book market and the discipline of geography.

On the other hand, his repeated attacks on the British and the ‘anglomanes’ border on the obsessive, to the point of indicating not only a disciplinary concern, but perhaps also a personal hatred. One could ask if the anti-British sentiment of the Danish

64 In a letter to the editor published in the *Journal de l'Empire* on 27 October 1809, Malte-Brun invokes Alexandre von Humboldt as a witness against Pinkerton by quoting a passage from the *Essai sur le Mexique* where the German explorer treats the Scottish geographer as a ‘just as inexact as a daring compiler’ [‘[c]ompilateur aussi inexact qu’audacieux’], and accuses him of spreading ‘the most erroneous of ideas on physics and on descriptive natural history’ [‘les idées les plus fausses sur la physique et l’histoire naturelle descriptive’].

65 ‘comprend la disgrâce dans laquelle la géographie française se trouve vers la fin du XVIIIe siècle, symbole de son infériorité vis-à-vis de la géographie allemande.’ Godlewska, pp. 201–02.

66 ‘Tous les jours, les Français, les Allemands, les Danois, les Italiens, publient de nouveaux renseignements sur l’état naturel, commercial et politique de leurs pays respectifs [...]. Tout cela est comme non avenu pour les anglomanes de Paris. Le plus insignifiant bouquin d’un voyageur ou d’un géographe anglais leur paraît toujours plus digne des honneurs de la traduction, que le meilleur ouvrage imprimé sur le continent: l’aperçu le plus vague, le plus faux, le plus surannée, traduit de l’anglais, est annoncé pompeusement, comme servant à “*faire connaître telle ou telle contrée absolument inconnue*”, ou bien “*comme un ouvrage très-intéressant qui manquoit à la géographie*”.’ *Journal de l'Empire* (26 May 1808).

67 *Journal de l'Empire* (26 May 1808).

reviewer was not influenced by the British bombardments of Copenhagen in 1801 and 1807. That does not, of course, prevent the attacks from falling neatly into the overall discourse of the Napoleonic propaganda machinery. In any case, there is a discourse of conspiracy in Malte-Brun's reviews that resembles Jondot's implicit denunciation of the 'anglomanes' and 'philosophes' as anti-patriots. In his aforementioned article on the problem of Anglomania, Malte-Brun identifies in the works of Guthrie and Pinkerton numerous 'grave mistakes in politics and in morality' ['erreurs très-grave en politique et en morale'] that spread into the public, thus constituting a 'infected source' ['source infecte'] which the French 'anglomanes' actively draw from and thereby threaten the quality of French public instruction.⁶⁸ He goes as far as to imply that the errors identified in Pinkerton might even be intentional, entering into some dark, geopolitical plot:

But maybe the hundreds of mistakes of this kind that I have noted in this Abridgement are not mistakes. We know that the Greek Hercules changed the face of the globe, by opening the Strait of Gibraltar: who knows the revolutions that may be traced back to the labours of the Scottish Hercules?⁶⁹

A somewhat burlesque and vague accusation that fits well with the overall tone of mockery which characterizes the article, this conspiracy theory nonetheless has serious implications when followed by a fierce attack on the French 'anglomanes', responsible for spreading the errors and insults of British travellers:

There is something worse than an Englishman; that is an Anglomaniac. How was this race formed? It is up to the philosophical press to explain this mystery to us, these publications that dare recommend for the use of our youth these English travellers and geographers who do not cease to insult the whole of Europe and every European nation in its customs, in its civil and religious institutions, in its language and its literature, and who do not make up for these defects by any scientific or literary merit.⁷⁰

Similar to Jondot's denunciation of 'philosophes' and anglophiles as anti-patriots running the errands of Britain, this attack resonates gravely in the context of the Franco-British conflict, indicating that the 'anglomanes' are veritable traitors. In other words, there is in this text, dealing primarily with a cultural and educational topic, a clear political undertone, bordering on propaganda.

Conclusion

We saw initially how travel books could be perceived as politically charged objects, even on a geopolitical level. Not only does this appear as the underlying premise of Malte-Brun's critique in the article quoted above, where he indicates that British travel

⁶⁸ *Journal de l'Empire* (10 June 1806).

⁶⁹ 'Mais peut-être les centaines d'erreurs de cette espèce que j'ai notées dans cet Abrégé, ne sont pas des erreurs. On sait que l'Hercule grec changea la face du globe, en ouvrant le détroit de Gibraltar: qui connoit les révolutions qui peuvent être dues aux travaux de l'Hercule écossais?' *Journal de l'Empire* (10 June 1806).

⁷⁰ 'Il y a quelque chose de pis qu'un Anglais; c'est un Anglomane. Comment cette race s'est-elle formée? C'est aux journaux philosophiques à nous expliquer cette énigme, à ces journaux qui osent recommander à l'usage de la jeunesse ces voyageurs, ces géographes anglais qui ne cessent d'insulter l'Europe entière et chaque nation Européenne dans ses mœurs, dans ses institutions civiles et religieuses, dans sa langue et sa littérature, et qui ne rachètent ces vices par aucun mérite scientifique ou littéraire.' *Journal de l'Empire* (10 June 1806).

books and geographies are damaging, or even subversive; we can also conclude that the periodical review in itself forms a genre readily mobilized for political purposes. In a political climate heavily influenced by the military conflicts between France and Britain, the periodical genre of the travel review partakes in the overall mediation of national stereotypes. Relatively restrained in literary journals of the Directoire such as the *Magasin encyclopédique* and *La Décade philosophique*, the mediation of stereotypes turns into outright Anglophobic propaganda in the Napoleonic *Journal de l'Empire*.

However, if the cultural content of the two literary journals cannot escape the political in their reviews of British travel writing, inversely, the politicized reviews of the *Journal de l'Empire* are also inextricably linked with cultural concerns. In a period wrought with political and military conflict, the British hegemony on the French travel book market also brings forward conflicts of a cultural and scientific nature. Even the most Anglophobic, propaganda-ridden review seems to contain concerns that go beyond the political. Unless it is in fact the other way around: that the unclear border between these concerns highlights the political aspects of travel, exploration, and geography.

Recent scholarship has shown how cultural transfers between France and Britain through the agency of the press in the last decades of the Ancien Régime were highly complex and ambivalent.⁷¹ The reception of British travel writing in French periodicals testifies to this, also with regard to the turbulent period going from the revolutionary wars to the end of the First Empire. Simon Burrows has argued that the press prior to 1792 can be less easily ascribed a role of 'forging [...] (often xenophobic) nationalism' compared to what would be case in the nineteenth century.⁷² If the *Journal de l'Empire* in that respect belongs to the new century, its mediation of Anglophobia cannot — even in the most virulent moments of propaganda — completely hide a deeper and more complex dynamic of cultural transfer, characterized by a mix of fascination and concern. Non-fictional travel writing and its reception in the press seems to constitute a particularly complex field, where the entanglement of issues pertaining to politics, culture, and science is symptomatic of the profound ambivalence of the Franco-British relationship.

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71 Edmond Dziembowski, 'Le Peuple français instruit: Edme-Jacques Genet et la traduction des écrits politiques britanniques pendant la guerre de Sept Ans', in *Cultural Transfers*, ed. by Thomson and others, pp. 175–88; Simon Burrows, 'The *Courier de l'Europe* as an Agent for Cultural Transfer (1776–1791)', in *Cultural Transfers*, ed. by Thomson and others, pp. 189–201.

72 Burrows, p. 189.

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