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The New Bibliopolis: French Book Collectors and the Culture of Print, 1880-1914

Peter Schulman

Old Dominion University, pschulma@odu.edu

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nuts poured down the Croix-Rousse—that massive hill with its *traboules*, the passageways between and through buildings that served to keep the silk dry—with banners that shouted out “Live free or die fighting!” Many silk weavers bravely did the latter, even if the first time around the insurgents managed to hold onto virtually the entire city for ten days. Lyon’s silk industry enriched the merchant-manufacturers of the city, even in tough economic times that followed the July Revolution of 1830—seemingly a victory of “the people” that really was not—made worse when in 1832 cholera tore through France’s second city, as most everywhere else. The *fabrique* and the workers in the hierarchy of skill suffered, with the piece-rate falling, as many of the 30,000 tall Jacquard looms fell silent.

L’Écho de la Fabrique, founded in October 1831, several weeks before the first insurrection, has long been considered the first working-class newspaper. The self-proclaimed organ of the *canuts*, it was an important part of the “creative democracy” (p. 177) of the *canuts*. Lasting into 1835, it became “*une arme nouvelle, formidable*” (p. 119). Ludovic Frobert, a specialist on political economy and the French press, presents the first focused study of the newspaper. He uses *L’Écho* as a prism to understand *les canuts lyonnais* (*chefs d’atelier* and *compagnons*), as they tried to defend artisanal silk manufacturing and thus their autonomy against the threat of further “mechanization, specialization and concentration” (p. 169) during the highly contentious early years of the July Monarchy. The very existence of the *fabrique* seemed menaced. *L’Écho* described the declining conditions of work confronting the *canuts*, denounced the fact that the Conseil des prud’hommes was weighted against them, considered ways of usefully reorganizing the *fabrique*, provided accounts of work stoppages, defended the dignity of the *canuts*, and, increasingly, that of all workers. The paper denounced those who exploited workers (the merchant-manufacturers) or defended those who did, such as Saint-Marc Girardin, who famously claimed in December 1831 that “the barbarians who threaten society are not in the Caucasus or the steppes of the Tartary but in the faubourgs of our manufacturing cities.” Amid increasing calls for social equality and insistence that proletarians were “the foundation of the social edifice” (p. 54), a banquet celebrating the first anniversary of the founding of the newspaper proclaimed a “*fête prolétaire*.” This excellent analytical study brings to life a dramatic time. Moreover, Frobert has worked to make the newspaper, a fantastic resource for historians, available online.

Frobert provides a close, informed, and fascinating reading of the pages (3,000) of the newspaper’s dramatic history. He divides the existence of *L’Écho de la Fabrique* into three periods, each corresponding to one lengthy chapter: “*Une feuille tout industriel*”; “*Le journal de la ‘caste prolétaire’*”; and “*L’Écho du Mutuellisme*.” Frobert effectively presents the convergence of Saint-Simonianism (insisting on the benefits of technological progress while underlining the difference between “producers” and “non-producers”) and the develop-

ment of republicanism. Political emancipation increasingly was seen as necessary in order to achieve economic reforms, as reflected in a fascinating debate in *L’Écho de la Fabrique* in 1832, when the newspaper took up the banner of republicanism, despite the doubts of some *canuts* that republicans would leave the “social question” secondary in their efforts. Through all, we follow the influence of Marius Chastaing (and Antoine Vidal, the first editor-in-chief, not a *canut* but a republican lawyer who guided *L’Écho* beginning in August 1832, and used the poems and songs of local republican poets to evoke the moral dignity of the *canuts*). As *L’Écho* became a forum for debates on the political economy in a time of intense reflection, Frobert marshals the interpretations of the British observers (whose already enormous factories and mechanization were viewed by the *fabrique* as ominous portents) John Stuart Mill, Jeremy Bentham, and John Bowring as they considered the challenges of growth, decline, and the increasing explosion of work out of the Croix-Rousse faubourg and into the countryside.

Readers not familiar with Lyon and its silk industry and the two insurrections may regret that much is assumed. Essential context is only briefly provided in the introduction, with further references here and there: the social geography of Lyon and particularly the faubourg of the Croix-Rousse (which would be annexed to the city in 1852); the timeless struggle between Lyon’s “federalist pretensions,” as state prefects like to put it, seeing in it precocious republicanism, and the Parisian-centered state; and even the Revolution of 1830 itself, which played a crucial role in the evolution of radical politics. This led to a remarkable period of political and social contention—and indeed a subsequent insurrection in Paris—that was part of the revolutionary process. A law following the second insurrection restricted the creation of associations and another restricting freedom of the press followed the attempted assassination of King Louis-Philippe in July 1835. Inside footnotes identify significant terms (Society of the Friends of the People) and important people (Casimir Perier) in the compelling story.

But no matter. *L’Écho de la Fabrique* provides a fascinating entry into the Lyon silk industry and the troubled world of the *canuts* during the first years of the July Monarchy, as well as into the publishing strategies of early nineteenth-century journalists. The world of the *gônes*—the *canuts*—has long-since disappeared, even if some of their favorite dishes remain staples in Lyon’s *brasseries* and *bouchons*. The silkworkers’ struggles, and their remarkable accomplishments, are central in the collective memory of Lyon, and in the history of large-scale industrialization.

JOHN MERRIMAN
Yale University

WILLA Z. SILVERMAN. *The New Bibliopolis: French Book Collectors and the Culture of Print, 1880–1914*. (Studies in Book and Print Culture, number 21.) Buffalo, N.Y.: University of Toronto Press. 2008. Pp. xvii, 312. \$75.00.

In an age of the Kindle and e-books, how refreshing and meaningful to read Willa Z. Silverman's fascinating study, which so eloquently describes a time when printed books not only mattered but were treasured, sought after, and treated almost as lovers at times. Far from being a treatise on monomaniacal, "nebbishy" bookworms, Silverman sheds light on a facet of *Belle Époque* history hitherto underdeveloped and introduces us to a colorful, eccentric, artistic, and fanatically driven set of bibliophiles bent on creating a haven for the book, a "bibliopolis," or as one of Silverman's subjects, Robert de Montesquiou, put it referring to the importance of a book's cover, "a portal into a world of illusion" (p. 153). Contrary to the "Ancients," represented by the Société des Bibliophiles Français, who were focused on collecting old and rare books and who concentrated on the book as though it were a museum piece, the "new" bibliophiles Silverman delineates were passionate about books as a sign of the modern. For them, since books were synonymous with the excitement of the times, books needed to be perceived as "exclusive, unique, and contemporary" (p. 88).

With great elegance and insight, Silverman introduces us to the vanguard of the Third Republic, pre-World War I bibliophiles, who knew that appreciating and collecting books could become a highly sensual, artistic conduit. For Octave Uzanne, one of the most engaged and innovative leaders of these "moderns," the latest technological or technical improvements to the ways books felt and looked were keys to a new form of "luxury book" (it is interesting to note how prescient he was when one considers the current wars contemporary book publishers are waging against "big box" stores like Wal-Mart that discount books to such a degree as to devalue their worth in the eyes of the public.) Similarly, de Montesquiou also viewed books not only as evolving artistic endeavors but as extensions of his own daily life. Montesquiou considered his library, which Silverman describes in sensual detail, as the "mirror of [his] soul." Although Montesquiou actually wrote his novels in a spartan room void of any decoration, the library was the room where he could luxuriate in the pleasure of reading and savor books as art objects. As Silverman recounts, "With its glistening, lacquered leather walls and peacock-eye motif, this library was meant to stimulate the intellectual work and inspiration associated with writing and reading" (p. 155), and as his contemporary Edmond de Goncourt remarked, the rest of the rooms in Montesquiou's house were also arranged "like the chapters of a book" (p. 157). In her intricate and extremely well-documented narratives of these engaged bibliophiles, Silverman touches upon how they had to maintain a delicate balance between a perceived fetishization of the book, which they considered *bibelots* or little objects on the one hand, and their appreciation of the book as filled with texts they savored on the other. Silverman does an extraordinary job of chronicling the intensity of the Parisian literary world at that time through its polemics, journals, salons, and literary discoveries.

In her last chapter, "The Enemies of Books? Women and the Bibliophilic Imagination," Silverman delves into the role of women within a male-dominated bibliophilic tradition in France. As most of the bibliophiles Silverman writes about were bachelors, it is not surprising that they perceived women as "the bibliophile's hell" (p. 164) since they treated their own books as lovers, wives, or objects of fantasies. Yet what is truly fascinating in Silverman's study is the progressive feminization of the exclusive male club of bibliophiles who were so wrapped up in the dreamy romance book collecting held for them that they became exceedingly "woman-like" themselves, appropriating many of the feminine characteristics they claimed to dislike.

Silverman's concluding chapter is particularly entertaining as it describes the numerous inventions and imaginative technologies many of the bibliophiles came up with to preserve the book from extinction. Inventions such as the télectroscope and the théâtrophone anticipated today's audiobook, for example; yet, over a hundred years since the fanciful and sybaritic bibliophiles Silverman studies began their mission to elevate the book as a luxurious artistic pleasure, it is gratifying to know that contemporary bibliophiles are still fighting the fight to keep books from fading into a computer screen. Indeed, Silverman has written a marvelously entertaining and rich mosaic, filled with many equally enriching illustrations, which will ensure that her own book should be an integral part of any future bibliophile's library for many years to come.

PETER SCHULMAN
Old Dominion University

ROXANNE PANCHASI. *Future Tense: The Culture of Anticipation in France between the Wars*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press. 2009. Pp. xi, 203. \$39.95.

In this fascinating volume, Roxanne Panchasi seeks to draw salient conclusions about post-World War I French culture via an examination of the ways in which the French in the 1920s and 1930s anticipated what the future portended for themselves, their nation, and the globe. The intention is thus to explore the future as history, as Panchasi notes explicitly at the outset. Citing the value of cultural anticipation as a fertile ground for historical study, she puts a unique twist on the well-established literature regarding memory and commemoration, using those concepts as launching points to suggest that attitudes and images about the future, "a cultural remembrance of things not yet past" (p. 5), can illuminate valuable and significant lessons about inter-war French society.

While fiction, film, and cultural criticism provide an important basis for the study, there is as well a sizeable quantity of material from the realms of urban and military planning as well as parliamentary and diplomatic records. The cumulative weight deriving from the integration of such variegated sources makes for a highly persuasive argument. Each chapter in the text analyzes a distinct element of French concerns about the future: