

**Stendhal and Europe:
The Portrayal of National Character
and Cross-Cultural Consciousness
in the Early Nineteenth Century**

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Prefatory Declarations

This thesis is the result of my own work and includes nothing which is the outcome of work done in collaboration except as declared in the preface and specified in the text. It is not substantially the same as any work that has already been submitted, or, is being concurrently submitted, for any degree, diploma or other qualification at the University of Cambridge or any other University or similar institution except as declared in the preface and specified in the text. It does not exceed the prescribed word limit for the relevant Degree Committee.

Abstract

This dissertation is the first monograph on the subject of Stendhal and Europe. Covering a great range of Stendhal's writing, and focusing on lesser-known texts and materials, it aims to explore his perception of national character, and the role of inter-European dialogue in his realism.

Part One hypothesizes the importance of national identities as integral to Stendhal's anthropological approach. It outlines how Stendhal's European consciousness is expressed through the depiction of national character and subtle, sustained cross-cultural interest in France's neighbours, both to the North and South. By considering numerous moments from a range of his writings in the light of the socio-historical life of the early nineteenth century, we argue that these themes represent a defining feature of his realism.

Part Two consists of an interlude of several readings to investigate the relevance of the national character as an interpretative lens for Stendhal's writings. In particular, we propose a reinterpretation of *Mina de Vanghel* in light of Emile Durkheim's *Le Suicide*, highlighting the use of national characteristics as catalysts of action in Stendhalian fiction. This section emphasizes their strategic importance in character description and demonstrates their crucial and decisive role in plot development.

Based on a biographical investigation of Stendhal's diplomatic archives at the French Ministry of Foreign Affairs, we make a case to reassess the underappreciated influence of Stendhal's career as a civil servant and diplomat on his corpus and his realism. Part Three investigates the complexity of Stendhal's identity as a novelist-diplomat, challenging the traditional view of these roles as distinct, and arguing for their complementary nature. Through a detailed study of selected documents, reproduced in the Appendices, it underscores the stylistic relationship between his fictional and diplomatic writings.

This research not only illuminates the nuanced ways in which Stendhal depicted national character and cross-cultural dynamics but also reaffirms the relevance of his work to ongoing discussions about individualism and identity, nationalism and intercultural understanding.

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Acknowledgments

After extensive research and exciting discoveries, I submit my thesis, which I hope will contribute to contemporary interest in Stendhal.

I began to contemplate drafting this thesis on Stendhal's vision of Europe after a long period marked by numerous travels across the continent. I undertook this work in a century marked by national fragmentation and uncertainty. The current political context in Europe, far from a deterrent, served as a motivation to delve deeper into this complex landscape.

After having the pleasure of sharing my reflections on 'Stendhal et l'esprit français' in an article published in *HB Revue d'études stendhaliennes* in 2020, I spent several years exploring Stendhal's portrayal of national character, a subject which draws out Stendhal's playfulness, wit, subtlety and also taste for provocation.

My heartfelt thanks go primarily to my two supervisors, Dr Miranda Gill who initiated me into this project at Cambridge, and Dr Edmund Birch, who guided me toward its completion. I am profoundly grateful to them for helping me identify the most compelling topic among my all too many interests, and most importantly, for their positivity and support, fostering productivity and keeping my motivation intact throughout these years.

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I dedicate this thesis to my husband, August, and my two daughters, Zélie and Léonie.

Introduction

National character remains understudied and underdefined. Even if the psychology of national character has been a source of interest for historians since Herodotus and geographers since Strabo, the subject has never fully matured into a recognized field within psychology or sociology. After the Second World War, there was an effort to scientifically analyse the character of nations, an endeavour triggered by the political and military traumas of the conflict and led by Abel Miroglio who termed it 'Psychological geography'.¹ Together with a group of researchers, they founded the Institut havrais de Sociologie économique et de Psychologie des peuples, as well as a review in 1946, *Ethnopsychologie* or *Revue de psychologie des peuples*, which is still published today under the name *Cahiers de sociologie économique et culturelle*.² This style of writing markedly diverges from the playful prose of Stendhal on the same subject.

In a letter to his sister Pauline Beyle, dated 3 August 1804, Stendhal wrote: 'Tu sais bien que, dans les romans, l'aventure ne signifie rien: elle émeut, et voilà tout; elle n'est bonne ensuite qu'à oublier. Ce qu'il faut, au contraire, se rappeler, ce sont les caractères.' Stendhal emphasizes the understanding of character over the narrative itself. The 'character' for Stendhal is a crucial capacity that precedes every action and thought, as expressed to his sister Pauline in 1814: 'Je suis charmé de voir que tu aies un peu de cette chose nommée caractère. Quand on en a, on trouve qu'il n'y a rien de si simple. C'est comme savoir lire.'³ Of his own character, Stendhal says: 'Le bon côté de ce caractère est de prendre une retraite de Russie comme un verre de limonade.'⁴ The 'character' is what generates the individual's wants and desires: 'J'appelle caractère la somme des désirs qui affectent un personnage.' Stendhal adds in the margins: 'Plus ses habitudes.'⁵ And this pushes the notion of 'habits' closer to 'character,' though 'character' conveys a more existential and personal meaning (while 'habits' verges on the social).

¹ Abel Miroglio, *La psychologie des peuples* (Paris: PUF, coll. 'Que sais-je?', n°798, 1971).

² Philippe Claret, 'Psychologie des Peuples ou identités culturelles? Un regard havrais (1946-1982)', in *Etudes Normandes: De Gaule et la Normandie*, 45th year, n°3 (1996), pp. 29–38.

³ *Correspondance*, Vol 4, 325, to Pauline, 3 December 1814.

⁴ *Correspondance*, Vol 5, 107, to Mareste, 21 March 1818.

⁵ *Pensées*, I, 223

In 1790, the Académie de Lyon organizes a *concours d'éloquence*, the theme for which, chosen by Abbé Raynal, is 'researching happiness'.⁶ Napoléon Bonaparte, at that time a young lieutenant, decides to participate and notably suggests: 'vivre d'une manière conforme à notre organisation est la condition *sine qua non* du bonheur'⁷ Pondering over the German character, Stendhal provides us with a similar thought on the national character: 'G. Dandin doit être allemand. C'est chez cette nation que j'ai trouvé les caractères (collections des manières habituelles de chercher le bonheur) les plus approchants de ce que je viens de dire'⁸. This definition is recurring in *Histoire de la Peinture en Italie*: 'L'artiste remarque que le caractère d'un homme, c'est sa manière habituelle de chercher le bonheur.'⁹ Stendhal connects the notion of happiness to national character, observing that the distinctive way individuals pursue happiness is deeply tied to their cultural identity.

In *Quand l'Europe parlait français*, Marc Fumaroli frames the eighteenth century with the notion of happiness: 'Le siècle des Lumières commence en 1713-1714, avec la signature des traités d'Utrecht et de Rastadt qui sauve l'essentiel des positions de la France en Europe. Il s'achève en 1814, avec l'entrée des Alliés à Paris et la chute de l'Empire napoléonien.' It is 'Le siècle qui a cru au bonheur sur la terre', 'l'un des plus optimistes que l'histoire du monde ait connus'.¹⁰ Infusing the idea of happiness with a national and collective dimension, Stendhal reads as a testimony of late eighteenth-century thinking. Stendhal's heroes are historically and culturally located individuals, their ability to act independently and make their own choices is a constant dialogue with pre-designed schemes or structures. This differs from 'modern happiness' defined by Eva Illouz as a process of individualization and psychologization, based on emotional self-management and the widespread belief in the ability to shape oneself.¹¹

⁶ The precise topic is: 'Quelles vérités et quels sentiments importe-t-il le plus d'inculquer aux hommes pour leur bonheur?'

⁷ Napoléon Bonaparte, *Le Discours de Lyon*, 'Préambule' (Paris: E. Driault, 1929). See also Guizot, *Histoire de la civilisation en Europe* (1828): 'La société est-elle faite pour servir l'individu ou l'individu fait pour servir la société?'

⁸ Stendhal, 'Notes sur George Dandin', in *Molière, Shakespeare, la Comédie et le Rire*, Texte établi par Henri Martineau (Paris: Le Divan, 1930), pp. 69-102.

⁹ *Histoire de la peinture en Italie*, II, 111.

¹⁰ Marc Fumaroli, *Quand l'Europe parlait français* (Paris: Editions de Fallois, 2001), p. 9.

¹¹ Edgar Cabanas and Eva Illouz, *Happycratie: Comment l'industrie du bonheur a pris le contrôle de nos vies* (Paris: Premier parallèle, 2018), p. 88.

Through his reflections on the character of nations, Stendhal aims to portray how the pursuit of happiness is practiced across various countries. Happiness is not merely a sign of personal fulfilment but also a reflection of national fulfilment, a matter of political and social significance. If 'character' is a form of individual consciousness, the national character is to be envisaged as a form of collective character or collective consciousness. Stendhal notably remarks in *Voyages en Italie*: 'Le bonheur français n'a rien de comparable au brio italien, au snug anglais, au gemuetlich allemand [...]'.¹²

The entry 'Nation' of the *Encyclopédie ou dictionnaire raisonné des Sciences, des arts et des métiers par une société de gens de lettres* written in the second half of the eighteenth century states: 'Chaque Nation a son caractère particulier, c'est une espèce de proverbe que de dire léger comme un Français, jaloux comme un Italien, grave comme un Espagnol, etc'.¹³ The *Encyclopédie* also presents a section 'Caractères des nations':

Le caractère d'une nation consiste dans une certaine disposition habituelle de l'âme, qui est plus commune chez une nation que chez une autre, quoique cette disposition ne se rencontre pas dans tous les membres qui composent la nation: ainsi le caractère des François est la légèreté, etc. La forme du gouvernement influe sur le caractère d'une nation. Dans un état despotique, par exemple, le peuple doit devenir bientôt paresseux, vain et amateur de la frivolité; le goût du vrai et du beau doivent s'y perdre; on ne doit ni faire ni penser de grandes choses.

Stendhal gives credit to the *Encyclopédie* by d'Alembert and Diderot for having introduced rationality in popular beliefs: '*L'Encyclopédie* pénétra rapidement dans toutes les bibliothèques, ce fut un coup mortel porté aux préjugés dans tous les genres'.¹⁴

¹² Stendhal, *Voyages en Italie*, p. 899.

¹³ *Encyclopédie ou dictionnaire raisonné des Sciences, des arts et des métiers par une société de gens de lettres*, 28 Vols (Paris: Neuchâtel, 1751–1772), ii, p. 666, 'Nation'.

¹⁴ Stendhal, 'Publications étrangères', *New Monthly Magazine* (January 1823), in *Stendhal Paris–Londres*, ed. by Renée Dénier (Paris: Stock, 1997), p. 106.

Historical writings on ‘character’ dwelt on moral character, social character, psychological character more than national character. Studies of the character of nations predating Stendhal’s work (for instance Hippocrates, Aristotle, Machiavelli) mainly focused on the influence of climate and the ethnicity of the inhabitants. In *La Politique*, Aristotle discusses the Hellenic character as a whole and compares the Greek nations to one another, dwelling on ‘l’État idéal’ and ‘le caractère national’: change of scale releases new thoughts on unity and diversity, the zooming in and out leading to more refinement, as is the case of Stendhal about France in *Mémoires d’un touriste*. Hippocrates (460–377) developed four main types of character (sanguine, bilious, phlegmatic, melancholic). These categories remained in popular use until the nineteenth century, up to the work of characterologists René Le Senne and Gaston Berger, who developed a theory of psychological characters—or types.¹⁵ Stendhal knows the work of moralists of his time and previous centuries, notably Theophrastus and La Bruyère.¹⁶ Humoral medicine is going out of fashion by the mid-nineteenth century, slowly being replaced by modern psychiatry. As studied by Richard Sieburth, Paris in the 1830’s is swept by the craze for physiology, i.e. figurative or pictorial representations of social roles (‘les amoureux’, ‘le cocu’, ‘les demoiselles de magasin’, ‘le rentier’). These cheap, throwaway books contained illustrations of each of these types along with mocking pseudo-scientific descriptions, this having led to anthologies such as *Les Français peints par eux-mêmes (1840-1842)*.¹⁷ Close to the notion of ‘character’—in late eighteenth-century Europe—is Lavater’s physiognomy, according to which facial features can be held to show qualities of the mind, launched another frenzy—people are said to have chosen their spouses and servants according to his precepts.¹⁸ Stendhal is debating with these trends. As he discusses ‘Six classes d’hommes’ in *Histoire de la peinture en Italie*, he remarks: ‘J’aurais dû placer ici une copie de la caricature des quatre tempéraments (Lavater, I, 263) ou faire graver les dessins que j’ai fait faire dans mes voyages, d’après des gens qui me semblaient offrir les tempéraments à un degré remarquable de non

¹⁵ René Le Senne, *Traité de caractérologie* (Paris: P.U.F., 1945).

¹⁶ Victor Del Litto, *La Vie intellectuelle de Stendhal, Genèse et évolution de ses idées, 1802–1821* (Paris: P.U.F., 1959).

¹⁷ Richard Sieburth, ‘Same Difference: The French Physiologies, 1840–1842’, in *Notebooks in Cultural Analysis: An Annual Review*, ed. by Norman Cantor (Durham: Duke University Press, 1984), 163–99 (p. 163). See also: Nathalie Preiss, 1999.

¹⁸ Melissa Percival, *Physiognomy in Profile: Lavater's Impact on European Culture* (Newark: University of Delaware Press, 2005).

mélange.¹⁹ Stendhal notes: 'Occupé du moral, la description du physique m'ennuie.'²⁰ His main interest goes for manners and mores: 'La dernière de ces choses [les mœurs] est la seule dont l'étude me plaise dans les voyages.'²¹

Before Stendhal, depictions of national and regional character are sketchy, vague and often tied to climate and health considerations. In his *Essays*, Hume notes in 1741: 'The only observation, with regard to the difference of men in different climates, on which we can rest any weight, is the vulgar one, that people in the northern regions have a greater inclination to strong liquors, and those in the southern to love and women [...] As the genial heat of the sun, in the countries exposed to his beams, inflames the blood, and exalts the passion between the sexes.'²² A whole literature predates Stendhal on the influence of the political form of government for national definition. In *Paris, le modèle des nations étrangères ou l'Europe française*, Louis-Antoine Caraccioli notes in 1777: 'Le terroir, ainsi que le climat, n'est pas la seule chose qui différencie les nations, la seule chose qui glace les Hollandais, qui embrase les Italiens; la forme du gouvernement influe singulièrement sur l'esprit et sur les mœurs.'²³ Montesquieu compellingly theorised in *De l'Esprit des lois*: 'Plusieurs choses gouvernent les hommes: le climat, la religion, les lois, les maximes du gouvernement, les exemples des choses passées, les mœurs, les manières; d'où il se forme un esprit général qui en résulte.'²⁴ Echoing this notion of 'esprit général', Montesquieu frequently uses the expression 'l'esprit de la nation', being referred to as a form of 'génie naturel', within the frame of which 'liberty' can express.²⁵

¹⁹ Stendhal, *Histoire de la peinture en Italie*, Chapter 90: 'Six classes d'hommes'.

²⁰ Stendhal, *Souvenirs d'égotisme* (Paris: Gallimard, Pléiade), p. 434.

²¹ Stendhal, *Œuvres intimes*, i, 'Voyage à Brunswick', 1808, p. 1047. / *Journal*, Cercle du Bibliophile, 1969, t. XXIX, p. 429.

²² Hume, David, 'Of National Characters', in *Essays: Moral, Political and literary [1741]*, ed. by Knud Haakonssen (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), Political Essays, Chapter 12, 78–92 (p. 90).

²³ Louis-Antoine Caraccioli, *Paris, le modèle des nations étrangères ou l'Europe française* (1777), Gallica.

²⁴ Montesquieu, *De l'Esprit des lois*, 2 Vols (Paris: Gallimard, 1995), Vol 1, Part 3, Livre 19: 'Des lois dans le rapport qu'elles ont avec les principes qui forment l'esprit général, les mœurs et les manières d'une nation', 564–592, Chapter 4: 'Ce que c'est que l'esprit général', p. 567.

²⁵ Montesquieu, *De l'Esprit des lois*, 2 Vols (Paris: Gallimard, 1995), Vol 1, Part 3, Livre 19: 'Des lois dans le rapport qu'elles ont avec les principes qui forment l'esprit général, les mœurs et les manières d'une nation', 564–592, Chapter 5: 'Combien il faut être attentif à ne point changer l'esprit général d'une nation', p. 568; Chapter 6: 'Qu'il ne faut pas tout corriger', p. 569.

We argue that Stendhal moves the development of national character one step forward. Stendhal gets particularly interested in the national character as a subject of passing time and historical evolution. He repeatedly urges his sister Pauline to reflect on Ancillon's *Tableau des révolutions et du système politique de l'Europe depuis la fin du XVe siècle*: 'Ce livre est excellent, fais tout au monde pour le lire (...) donne les masses de l'histoire, tous les faits nécessaires pour suivre la marche des États'.²⁶ This idea recurs in the *Correspondance*: 'Chaque nation a des mœurs différentes façonnées par l'Histoire'.²⁷ With a mixture of creativity, playfulness and methodological sense, Stendhal is tempted to develop a systematic theory of national character: 'On n'a qu'à faire passer chacun des trois ou quatre gouvernements différents par chaque climat'.²⁸ Stendhal is able to lead characters to develop one stage ahead in psychological refinement and subtlety, as this passage in *Souvenirs d'égotisme* reveals: 'Si ce livre est ennuyeux, au bout de deux ans il enveloppera le beurre chez l'épicier; s'il n'ennuie pas, on verra que l'égotisme, *mais sincère*, est une façon de peindre ce cœur humain dans la connaissance duquel nous avons fait des pas de géant depuis 1721, époque des *Lettres persanes* de ce grand homme que j'ai tant étudié, Montesquieu. | Le progrès est quelquefois si étonnant que Montesquieu en paraît grossier'.²⁹

Our study of the character of nation in Stendhal does not give Stendhal's narrative fiction its usual pride of place. Interestingly, Stendhal (1783-1842) did not venture into novel writing until 1827, with the publication of *Armance*, which was not well received at the time and was considered a failure. Stendhal writes to Balzac in 1840, about *La Chartreuse de Parme* (1839): 'Je parlais des choses que j'adore, et je n'avais jamais songé à l'art de faire un roman'.³⁰ Even Stendhal's most famous novels betray an emphasis on painting the social sphere. *Le Rouge et le Noir*, tellingly not titled *Julien*, is subtitled 'Chronique de 1830', the 'Red' symbolising the army, and the 'Black' the religious orders.³¹ *La Chartreuse de Parme* also draws its source from

²⁶ *Correspondance générale*, Vol 1, To Pauline, 22 March 1806, p. 523. This book is also mentioned in *Correspondance générale*, Vol 1, To Pauline, 8 November 1806, p. 571.

²⁷ Stendhal, *Correspondance générale*, Vol 1, Pauline, August 1804, p. 193-195.

²⁸ Stendhal, *Histoire de la peinture en Italie*, p. 250.

²⁹ Stendhal, *Souvenirs d'égotisme*, p. 487.

³⁰ Stendhal to Balzac, 16 October 1840, following Balzac's article on *La Chartreuse de Parme* in *Revue parisienne*, 25 September 1840.

³¹ Philippe Berthier, *Stendhal, littérature, politique et religion mêlées* (Paris: Classiques Garnier, 2011), Chapter 11: 'Le rouge et le blanc', 117-131.

the Chronicle of the Farnese family. As a corollary, Stendhal was not necessarily recognized as a novelist by his contemporaries. To both Nietzsche and his closer contemporaries, Stendhal was primarily seen as a thinker. Auguste Bussière, in his section 'Poètes et romanciers modernes de la France' of *Revue des Deux Mondes* in 1843, articulates Stendhal's position succinctly: 'Il faut se bien convaincre d'abord que l'auteur de *Le Rouge et le Noir*, des *Promenades dans Rome*, de *l'Histoire de la peinture en Italie*, de la *Vie de Rossini*, n'a visé ni à la gloire du romancier, ni à celle du voyageur ou du critique, ni à celle de l'historien, ni même, quoique sa manière d'écrire soit tout épisodique et anecdotique, à celle du biographe. L'histoire, le roman, le voyage, la biographie, ont été tour à tour le cadre dans lequel il a fait entrer l'objet unique et constant de sa pensée. [...] En effet, M. Beyle est essentiellement un penseur.'³² About Stendhal, Gérard Genette comments in *Figures*: 'L'œuvre romanesque ne jouit d'aucune autonomie définissable par rapport à l'ensemble des écrits.'³³

This can also be due to the disciplinary blend of the time. Stendhal lives at a time in which science and art, diplomacy and culture, were seen as complementary rather than strictly opposing forces. In 1699, Fontenelle in *Histoire de l'Académie royale des sciences* described mathematics as 'un genre de littérature'.³⁴ In Edmond Huguet's *Dictionnaire de la langue française du seizième siècle*, the entry for 'Littérature' defines it as follows: 'Science, savoir.' Examples provided include phrases like 'homme de merveilleuse littérature' or 'homme de grande littérature'. The dictionary presents 'littérature' as the opposite of ignorance, illustrated by the example taken from Rabelais: 'Un homme ayant littérature s'estime seul, si d'avanture il est avec un homme ignare.'³⁵ As Stendhal's time was characterized by a more integrated approach to knowledge and culture than our own, this thesis seeks to respect this reality.

Stendhal as an author-diplomat in the early nineteenth century partakes of this vision of culture and the arts as essential components of civil life and international relations. According to Marc Fumaroli, the 'Belles-Lettres' and the 'Beaux-Arts' were considered as 'fruits et ornements de la

³² Auguste Bussière, *Revue des Deux Mondes*, 'Poètes et romanciers modernes de la France', XLVIII: Henri Beyle (M. de Stendhal) (1843), p. 254.

³³ *Figures* II, 171.

³⁴ Fontenelle, *Histoire de l'Académie royale des sciences* (1699). See also: Pierre Brumoy, *Discours sur l'usage des mathématiques par rapport aux Belles-Lettres* (Paris: Rollin, 1741).

³⁵ Edmond Huguet, *Dictionnaire de la langue française du seizième siècle* (Paris: Didier, 1961), Vol 5, p. 32.

paix,' highlighting the role of cultural understanding as a fundamental aspect of diplomatic engagement.³⁶ It is in the eighteenth and nineteenth century that the word 'literature' progressively acquired a more restricted aesthetic meaning and became a perfect synonym for 'belles-lettres'. For Voltaire, 'littérature désigne dans toute l'Europe une connaissance des ouvrages de goût'.³⁷ This historical shift marks the beginning of the modern conceptualization of literature as a distinct category of writing, characterized by its imaginative or fictional quality and as opposed to factual or expository texts. In that regard, an interdisciplinary lens proves crucial to envisage Stendhal's approach to Europe and the character of nations. Stendhal's interest in territories and belonging echoes how geography at the time was not purely a scientific discipline but also a branch of literature, with narrative and descriptive elements intertwined, factual reporting merging with the art of storytelling. Even more telling, Stendhal's passion for economics and mathematics today would seem radically antithetical to his work as a novelist, but actually stands as an integral part of his engagement as a civil servant and consul.

Stendhal always invited interpretation and engagement from his audience, encapsulated in his famous dedication 'To the happy few'.³⁸ Given the non-linearity of Stendhal's work as regards national character, the corpus draws on a range of texts from across Stendhal's writing. Unlike Flaubert, Stendhal never wrote his *Dictionnaire des idées reçues*. His thinking on the national character eschews a preconceived structure and needs to be deciphered among eclectic leaps and bounds. The non-linear nature of Stendhal's work was discussed in the newspapers of 1838:

Chez M. de Stendhal ce désordre est poussé si loin qu'il semble avoir quelque chose de systématique, et je défie l'homme le plus habitué, par métier ou autrement, à résumer les idées qu'un livre renferme, je le défie, dis-je, d'extraire de celui-ci une conclusion, je dirai plus, un fait ou une impression complète. L'analyse d'un musée suit une conversation sur les races d'hommes: immédiatement après vient un

³⁶ Marc Fumaroli, *Quand l'Europe parlait français* (Paris: Editions de Fallois, 2001), p. 11.

³⁷ Alain Viala, *La Naissance des Institutions de la vie littéraire en France au XVIIe siècle* (Paris: Thesis, Paris III University, 1982).

³⁸ Stendhal, *Histoire de la peinture en Italie*, Livre II, Chapter 34: 'Le véritable artiste toujours fou, souvent ridicule', p. 162. *Promenades dans Rome, Voyages en Italie*, p. 1189. *Le Rouge et le Noir*, fin, Part II, Chapter 45, *Œuvres romanesques complètes*, I, p. 805. *La Chartreuse de Parme*, *Œuvres romanesques complètes*, Part III, p. 597. *Lucien Leuwen*, beginning, p. 83.

morceau d'histoire contemporaine, dans lequel s'enchasse une anecdote scandaleuse qui donne lieu à une dissertation sur les femmes en général, et se termine par une discussion archéologique; de telle sorte qu'après quelques pages, bien que chaque chose à part soit en elle-même nette et claire, neuve assez souvent par le fond ou par la forme, assaisonnée de réflexions piquantes et concises, leur ensemble confus fatigue l'esprit et le plonge dans un état de torpeur, assez semblable aux somnolences fiévreuses que procure la diète.³⁹

For Jean Rousset in *Forme et signification*, when it comes to 'esthétiques du hasard et de l'improvisation déclarée', there is 'une ligne qui va de Montaigne à Stendhal'⁴⁰. Auerbach writes about the life of Stendhal as a 'storm-tossed boat' for which he slowly discovered that 'there was no fit and safe haven.'⁴¹ He also reckons 'something unsettled about his whole nature.'⁴² He comments about his work: 'His ideas are often forceful and inspired, but they are erratic, arbitrarily advanced, and, despite all their show of boldness, lacking in inward certainty and continuity.'⁴³ We thus cover a broad spectrum of Stendhal's works in order to gather up and analyse all the references to Europe and the national character.

This thesis offers new insights into Stendhal's role in social realism, arguing that a significant aspect of his work lies in his international awareness. Although Anglophone critics, particularly Ann Jefferson in *Reading Realism in Stendhal*, have included Stendhal in the broader history of literary realism, he is often overlooked due to the difficulty in classifying him within the literary canon and academic programmes. Erich Auerbach, in his seminal work on mimesis, considers modern consciousness of reality to have first found literary form in Stendhal.⁴⁴ Zola, in an article published in May 1880 in *Le Messager de l'Europe*, acknowledged Stendhal's

³⁹ *Le Commerce*, Sunday 8 July 1838, Paul-Émile Daurand-Forgues (Old Nick), Critique au rédacteur, Briouze (Orne), 3 July, *Mémoires d'un touriste*, 'Notice, notes et variantes', 'Documents', p. 893.

⁴⁰ Jean Rousset, *Forme et signification, Essai sur les structures littéraires de Corneille à Claudel* (Paris: José Corti, 2006), p. 46.

⁴¹ Erich Auerbach, *Mimesis: The Representation of reality in Western literature*, trans. from German by Willard R. Trask (1946; Princeton University Press, 1953), Chapter 18: 'In the Hôtel de La Mole', 454–492 (p. 460).

⁴² Auerbach, *Mimesis*, p. 459.

⁴³ Auerbach, *Mimesis*, p. 468.

⁴⁴ Auerbach, *Mimesis*, p. 468.

influence by stating: 'Il est notre père à tous'.⁴⁵ Addressing the tendency to sideline Stendhal in studies of nineteenth-century realism—which broadly considers *La Comédie humaine* (early 1830s) as the starting point and the novelistic fresco *Les Rougon-Macquart* (early 1870s) as the endpoint—this thesis aims to highlight the international dimension as a neglected aspect of his realism.

Examining the theme of nationhood in Stendhal's work provides fresh insights into his narrative stance. Stendhal could have been recognized as the father of literary realism had he adhered strictly to the well-known sentence from *Le Rouge et le Noir*: 'Un roman est un miroir qui se promène sur une grande route.'⁴⁶ However, this should not overshadow the lesser-known reiteration of the same theme in the novel project *Le Chasseur vert* (written between 1834 and 1836) which introduces ambiguity: 'Mais l'auteur pense que, excepté pour la passion du héros, un roman doit être un miroir.'⁴⁷ In his realistic portrayal of the surrounding world, Stendhal continues to emphasize passion and its two manifestations, the aesthetic sentiment and romantic love, assigning them a subjective viewpoint: that of the hero.

From the narrative idealism of the eighteenth century, represented by Rousseau and Richardson, to Stendhal, passion has shifted from the author to the hero. As Thomas Pavel accurately analyses, in Stendhal's time, it was no longer possible to describe the world purely in moral terms and without reference to the physical reality or the historical and social physiognomy of the world, as Goethe and Benjamin Constant did in *Elective Affinities* (1809) and *Adolphe* (1816).⁴⁸ Stendhal also departs from the Romantic style of Chateaubriand or Madame de Staël. Yet, his stance differs from the positive skepticism and sharp expression of novelists of the latter half of the century—Flaubert, the Goncourt brothers, and Zola's radical anti-idealism. Stendhal's narrative voice blends irony and empathy, skepticism and tenderness, reminiscent of Fielding's style. His stance is 'egotistical' and thus immersed in the reality he describes. This immersion adds an element of complexity in grasping Stendhal's vision of Europe and the character of nationhood. Constantly siding with his heroes or empathizing with the social or

⁴⁵ Zola, *Les Romanciers naturalistes* [1881], *Le Messager de l'Europe*, May 1880.

⁴⁶ Stendhal, *Le Rouge et le Noir*, Chapter 19.

⁴⁷ Stendhal, *Le Chasseur vert*, Second preface, p. 722.

⁴⁸ Thomas Pavel, *La pensée du roman*, Part 3: 'La naturalisation de l'idéal', VI. 'L'héritage du scepticisme moral', 'L'école de l'ironie', p. 261.

national realities he describes, it seems as though Stendhal theorized realism but did not fully apply it to himself.

Critical Assessment

In the latter part of the nineteenth century, Stendhal's literary works garnered acclaim both domestically and internationally, attesting to their cross-border appeal. The primary audience for Stendhal was predominantly European, as Victor Del Litto's assessment reveals. Various publications and international reviews made mention of Stendhal.⁴⁹

Even today, as accurately elucidated by Béatrice Didier and Marie-Rose Corredor, studies on Stendhal continue in Europe and extend to countries such as Japan.⁵⁰ The list of modern and contemporary admirers of Stendhal is endless, including José Ortega y Gasset, Evgueni Zamiatine, Carlo Emilio Gadda, Leonardo Sciascia, Italo Calvino, W.G. Sebald, among others. Stendhal's allure persists as a master of the art of living and a model of the free individual.⁵¹

The Stendhal-Club has played a pivotal role in collating and disseminating Stendhal's reception across various nations. Their bibliographies meticulously catalogue critical analyses, academic theses, and various adaptations of Stendhal's work, reflecting his influence across diverse media and cultural landscapes.⁵² This burgeoning interest in Stendhalian studies is evident from the surge in journal publications and international colloquia dedicated to his work.

⁴⁹ *Beilage zur Allgemeine Zeitung, Continental Miscellany, Eclectic Review, Edinburgh Review, Foreign Review, Gazzetta di Milano, Gentlemen's Magazine, Manneken, Monthly Review, Morning Chronicle, New Monthly Magazine, Paris Monthly Review, Quarterly Review, Rivista Europe*. See: Victor Del Litto, *Stendhal sous l'œil de la presse contemporaine (1817–1843)* (Paris: Champion, 2001).

⁵⁰ Béatrice Didier, 'Ferveur stendhalienne à l'ouverture du XXI^{ème} siècle', *Dix-Neuf*, 19, 1 (April 2015), 6–10.

⁵¹ *Lectures et lecteurs de Stendhal*, ed. by Marie-Rose Corredor, Béatrice Didier and Hélène de Jacquolot (Paris: Champion, 2019), Part II: 'Lecteurs de Stendhal européens et modernes', 219–32.

⁵² See for instance: 'Stendhal en U.R.S.S., Bibliographie (1933–1960)', in Stendhal Club, *Revue trimestrielle* (Grenoble: 15 October 1960), n°9, pp. 87–96. See also: 'Stendhal aux États-Unis, Bibliographie 1818–1963' and 'Stendhal en Pologne (1947–1960)', in Stendhal Club (Grenoble: 15 January 1965), n°26, pp. 55–81 and pp. 87–92, along with: *M Walther, La Présence de Stendhal aux Etats-Unis, 1810-1920* (Aran: Editions du Grand Chêne, 1974). See also: 'Stendhal au Japon: Bibliographie (1946-1961)' and 'Stendhal en Yougoslavie', in Stendhal Club (Grenoble: 15 October 1962), n°17, pp. 69–80 and pp. 81–84.

And yet, Francesco Manzini and Maria Scott, in their recent critical compendium, note an intriguing paradox: while Stendhal's influence is widespread, his presence in Anglophone academia remains notably scarce, particularly in university curricula.⁵³ What's more, despite Stendhal having travelled all around Europe and embraced a career in foreign affairs as a diplomat, 'Stendhal and Europe' is a topic that falls within something of a critical blindspot.

A handful of thematic studies have addressed topics akin to our thesis, as they have presented an in-depth study of Stendhal's interactions with one specific country at a time. Michel Crouzet's seminal work, *Stendhal et l'Italianité*, sheds light on Stendhal's relationship to Italy, demonstrating how Stendhal was deeply influenced by Italian culture and history, the Italian setting in many of Stendhal's novels being not just a backdrop but integral to the thematic and cultural depth of the narrative. Elaine Williamson analyses Stendhal's relationship to the Netherlands from the biographical perspective of his administrative work, recounting how Stendhal at the Conseil d'Etat carried out inventory work for the Musée Napoléon and the mobilier de la Couronne.⁵⁴ Alexis François focuses on Geneva as a key European crossroads for Stendhal, mainly between France and Italy.⁵⁵ Robert Vigneron and Inmaculada Ballano explore Stendhal's connection to Spain.⁵⁶ Michel Crouzet and Philippe Berthier study Stendhal's relationship to America.⁵⁷ André François-Poncet analyses the relation of Stendhal and Germany.⁵⁸

⁵³ Francesco Manzini and Maria Scott, 'Stendhal in the Twenty-First Century', *Dix-Neuf*, 19, n°1 (2015).

⁵⁴ Elaine Williamson, *Stendhal et la Hollande. Correspondance administrative inédite* (London: Institute of Romance Studies, 1996).

⁵⁵ Alexis François, *Stendhal à Genève* (Neuchâtel: A La Baconnière, 1954), p. 8.

⁵⁶ Robert Vigneron, 'Stendhal en Espagne', *Modern Philology* (The University of Chicago Press, August 1934), Vol. 32, 1, 55–66; Inmaculada Ballano, *España en Stendhal* (Kassel: Edition Reichenberger, 1997), Part VI: 'Integración de la 'imagen' colectiva en el universo personal del escritor: El 'españolismo' de Henri Beyle', 157–162.

⁵⁷ Philippe Berthier, *Stendhal, littérature, politique et religion mêlées* (Paris: Classiques Garnier, 2011), Chapter 13: 'Stendhal et la 'civilisation' américaine', 143–161. Michel Crouzet, *Stendhal et l'Amérique* (Paris: Classiques Garnier, 2011).

⁵⁸ André François-Poncet, *Stendhal en Allemagne* (Paris: Hachette, 1967), pp. 7–10.

Investigations into Stendhal and specific countries will serve as a valuable foundation for our research on Stendhal's engagement with Europe and his depiction of national character. Yet as Daniel Roche remarked, the geographical framing that defines most works on travel and travellers are restrictive and arbitrary: a stay in such-and-such a country, or stay of such-and-such a nationality in such-and-such a country.⁵⁹

Our proposition in this thesis is a broader consideration of Stendhal's relationship with European countries, envisaging the conceptual reality of 'Stendhal's character of nations.' As Michel Crouzet explored in his seminal article 'Stendhal 'bon européen', romantisme et nations': 'Stendhal croit aux nations: elles existent, ce sont des réalités irremplaçables de son anthropologie.'⁶⁰ This scholarly work, along with another of his articles, 'Stendhal et la nation', will provide a foundation to our research. Philippe Berthier's article 'Stendhal et l'Europe' will also provide a solid foundation to our discussion.⁶¹

Stendhal is often referenced in literary history for his theory of the 'mirror,' or the idea of the novel as a mirror walking along a road, reflecting society. Auerbach claims in *Mimesis* that Stendhal's novelistic fiction is embedded in history to such a degree that it cannot be understood without detailed knowledge of its specific context of production.⁶² Stendhal is recalled by Auerbach as a cornerstone in his quest for a cohesive Western literary tradition and universal humanism, positing that texts from different periods and genres are part of a continuous dialogue about the representation of reality. One underlying postulate of this thesis is that national identity is not inherent or natural but created and constructed through various social and cultural processes.

In Stendhal's anglophone criticism, Jefferson, Pearson and Prendergast place Stendhal within the broader social and historical context of his time, the political upheavals of early nineteenth-century France, the post-Napoleonic era, and the Restoration period, delving into how Stendhal

⁵⁹ Daniel Roche, *Humeurs vagabondes: De la circulation des hommes et de l'utilité des voyages* (Paris: Fayard, 2003).

⁶⁰ Michel Crouzet, 'Stendhal 'bon européen', romantisme et nations', *Stendhal et le romantisme*, Actes du XV^e congrès international stendhalien, Mayence, 1982 (Aran: Editions du Grand-Chêne, 1984), 59–87 (p. 60).

⁶¹ Philippe Berthier, 'Stendhal et l'Europe', in *Espaces stendhaliens* (Paris: P.U.F., 1997), pp. 167–185.

⁶² Erich Auerbach, *Mimesis: The Representation of Reality in Western Literature* [1946] (Princeton: NJ Princeton UP, 1991), p. 455.

incorporates autobiographical elements into his novels. Our study of Stendhal's work as a diplomat in Part Three, examining the interplay between his professional experience and his literary work, partakes of this form of historical and biographical criticism, gesturing towards an innovative decoding of Stendhal's themes, characters and narrative choices through his professional engagements.

Studying Stendhal's mimesis in *Reading Realism in Stendhal*, Ann Jefferson considers his representation of provisional and contextual truths, accentuating cultural relativity in both literary creation and interpretation.⁶³ 'Relativism' in Stendhal was further interrogated by Roger Pearson in his seminal work, *Stendhal's Violin: A Novelist and his Reader*.⁶⁴ These lines of argument prove telling when considering Stendhal's juxtaposition of national character and serve as a base for envisaging Stendhal's nuanced cross-cultural psychology.

We note the key role of innovative narrative techniques in Stendhal's picturing of national mores and customs, to mock social pretensions and the absurdities of habit. Prendergast and Michel Crouzet highlighted Stendhal's unique narrative style, marked by irony and a somewhat detached narrative voice. Blin, Pearson and Jefferson extensively analysed his break from traditional storytelling methods, incorporating elements such as unreliable narrators, rapid shifts in perspective, and direct addresses to the reader, paying attention to Stendhal's use of irony and satire. These narrative tools form the basis of Stendhal's national characterology, as further shown in Part Two related to fiction and Part Three related to diplomacy.

Delving into Stendhal's literary realism in Part Two, we seek to explore how the historical and social contexts shaped literary forms and themes in *Mina de Vanghel*.⁶⁵ Offering a bridge between literary criticism and social history, our working hypothesis will be to envisage this short novel as a 'narrative of national stereotypes,' a concept we would see as instrumental to better decoding the representation of reality in nineteenth-century literature. Studying the interplay between the national character and the individual in *Mina de Vanghel*, our analysis

⁶³ Ann Jefferson, *Reading Realism in Stendhal* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988).

⁶⁴ Roger Pearson, *Stendhal's Violin: A Novelist and his Reader* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1988).

⁶⁵ Stendhal, *Mina de Vanghel, Œuvres romanesques complètes*, ed. by Philippe Berthier and Yves Ansel (Paris: Gallimard, 2006–2014), Vol 1 (2006), 297–330 (p. 306).

draws on critical tools of Emile Durkheim's *Le Suicide* (1897), touching upon the deterministic influence of national characteristics in the determination of individual behaviours.

In cultural studies, Samuel Huntington and Benedict Anderson provide a solid theoretical foundation for discussing the culturally constructed nature of national identities as reflected in Stendhal's literature. Samuel Huntington highlights the intersection of nation and culture in *The Clash of Civilizations*, reinforcing his statements with studies of market forces and capitalism shaping cultural trends, echoing Stendhal's concern about industrialism.

Benedict Anderson's *Imagined Communities* interrogates cross-cultural consciousness and a national sense of belonging. The study of 'print media' and 'census, map, and museum' in the process of community creation provides inspiring insights into considering Stendhal's appreciation of the territories, as seen in reviews for the English press and diplomatic reports. Community formation is seen as an interplay between art, culture, administration and politics, tying together members who will never know most of their fellow-members, a fascinating way to conceptualise the rise of national sentiments in the early nineteenth century.⁶⁶

Praising Stendhal for his ability to create complex characters with profound psychological depth, Roger Pearson and Ann Jefferson, along with Michel Crouzet in France, have emphasized Stendhal's role in the development of psychological realism in literature. They have explored how Stendhal delves into the inner lives of his characters, creating complex individuals driven by personal passions and ambitions, revealing their thoughts, feelings, and motivations in a way that was innovative for his time, reflecting the Romantic era's emphasis on individual experience and emotion. In particular, Philippe Berthier has focused on Stendhal's personal experiences, his attitudes towards religion, history, and family dynamics, and how these aspects influenced his literary works, emphasizing the psychological dimensions of the text. Miranda Gill's analysis of *De l'amour* brings Stendhal's views into dialogue with the cultural history of emotion, gender, and contemporary cognitive and behavioural sciences.⁶⁷ The encounters with otherness and the collective unconscious are envisaged through Carl

⁶⁶ Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism* (London: Verso, 1983).

⁶⁷ Miranda Gill, 'Self-Control and Uncontrollable Passion in Stendhal's Theory of Love,' in *French Studies* (October 2015), Vol 69, Issue 4, pp. 462–478.

Jung's concepts in Françoise Lenoir Jamelot's *Stéréotypes et archétypes de l'altérité dans l'œuvre romanesque de Stendhal*, presenting a reinterpretation of the novels with a psychoanalytic approach.⁶⁸

Whether it be in his fictional writings, diplomatic dispatches or critical reviews for the English press, so we argue, Stendhal's success relied on the deep psychological insights into the individuals' motivations and inner lives. National belonging in Stendhal is an extra layer of psychological depth, contributing to his realism. Our attempt is to study national characteristics in Stendhal's characters as a lesser-studied aspect of his detailed psychological analysis, highlighting how deeply ingrained national characteristics can influence individual desires and decisions.

As critics have often leaned towards identifying with Stendhal's male heroes and neglected Stendhal's bold female characters, Jacques Dubois and Maria Scott's studies aim to rebalance this traditionally androcentric perspective by advocating for a female point of view. Our particular focus on Mina de Vanghel can be seen as a continuation of this feminist orientation to relegitimize Stendhal's lesser-known texts and characters.

In her analysis, Scott emphasizes the independence and agency of Stendhal's female characters, specifically highlighting figures like Mina de Vanghel, Vanina Vanini, Mathilde de la Mole, and Lamiel. These characters, according to Scott, navigate the complexities of societal norms and resist societal expectations often centred around marriage, and instead, they craft their own narratives and display a profound autonomy. We will question how this existential liberty intersects with national depictions of character, questioning their radical freedom with a socio-deterministic lens.

⁶⁸ Françoise Lenoir Jamelot, *Stéréotypes et archétypes de l'altérité dans l'œuvre romanesque de Stendhal* (Paris: L'Harmattan, 2009).

PART 1: Stendhal's Portrayal of National Character

‘Raisonner, c’est comparer.’

Napoléon Bonaparte, *Le Discours de Lyon* (1791)¹

‘Und wenn du ganz dich zu verlieren scheinst,
Vergleiche dich! Erkenne was du bist!’

[‘And if you seem to lose yourself completely,
Compare yourself! Recognize what you are!’]

Goethe, *Torquato Tasso* (1790)²

Part One offers a comprehensive review of Stendhal's depiction of national characteristics throughout his œuvre, underscoring the prominence of nations as distinct anthropological entities within Stendhal's realism. Challenging the historically-defined canon, this part centres on less-explored facets of his œuvre, particularly his chronicles, literary critiques for English periodicals, European travel diaries and correspondence. The working hypothesis of Part One is to explore the concept of national character as a novel lens through which Stendhal's work may be envisaged, thereby shedding fresh light on key Stendhalian critical themes, including happiness, individualism, and freedom. By establishing the panorama of character traits that Stendhal has been sensitive to in the broad palette of nations he has been interested in and critiqued, we obtain a reference framework of his opinions and values, which enriches the analytical keys to his works. Since Stendhal did not explicitly write about what he appreciated in others, we can only infer this indirectly. By critically examining each nation as he did, he could not ignore that he was revealing aspects of himself, and ultimately, it is primarily Stendhal himself that the panorama of nationalities will illuminate.

¹ Napoléon Bonaparte, *Le Discours de Lyon*, ‘Préambule’ (Paris: E. Driault, 1929), p. 21.

² Antonio, V, 5.

Chapter 1: National Characteristics in Stendhal: A Synoptic Vision

This chapter takes a holistic approach to Stendhal's method of defining nations and offers a synoptic view of national character across Europe. By analysing his comparative tools and perspectives, we will show how he views nations as dynamic entities shaped by socio-cultural, aesthetic, and adversarial relationships.

Comparatism: Stendhal's Approach to National Character

In 1803, Stendhal advised his sister Pauline: 'Pour acquérir beaucoup d'esprit, il faut beaucoup comparer, c'est-à-dire observer, alternativement et avec attention, l'impression différente que font sur toi des objets quelconques.'³ This section explores how Stendhal conceives nations as fluid, relational constructs shaped by cross-national interactions. We also examine the unique role he assigns to France in this comparative European context.

In his essay 'Of National Characters', Hume elucidates the formation of the national mind, stating, 'The human mind is of a very imitative nature; nor is it possible for any set of men to converse often together, without acquiring a similitude of manners, and communicating to each other their vices as well as virtues.'⁴ This perspective underscores the significance of internal social interactions within the state's boundaries, highlighting how continuous and close-knit communication among individuals fosters a shared set of manners and cultural traits. As Peter Berger explains in *The Social Construction of Reality*, 'the social world is apprehended in a continuum of typifications'. People and groups interacting in a social system create, over time, concepts or mental representations of each other's actions. Information is identified and reacted to using pre-built and pre-asserted knowledge.⁵ Preconceived ideas operate as time and energy savers in everyday life. They allow individuals to save their critical thinking faculties for unexpected situations.

³ Stendhal, *Correspondance*, i, to Pauline Beyle, 30 January 1803, p. 50.

⁴ David Hume, 'Of National Characters', in *Essays: Moral, Political and literary* [1741], ed. by Knud Haakonssen (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), *Political Essays*, Chapter 12, 78–92 (p. 82).

⁵ Peter Berger and Thomas Luckmann, *The Social Construction of Reality* (1966).

However, this internal perspective is only one dimension of national character formation. The other crucial dimension involves interactions with other states. Cross-cultural exchanges, diplomatic relations, and international travel contribute to a nation's identity by contrasting and comparing domestic traits with foreign ones. Jean-René Ladmiral presents national identities as the amalgamation of a collection of independent perceptions and perceptions produced in a 'mirror effect'—termed the interplay between 'hétéro-images' (how one group views another) and 'auto-images' (how a group views itself).⁶ Drawing on these concepts, we argue that in Stendhal, the national mind is shaped both by the internal dynamics among the populace and by the external influences and perceptions arising from interactions with the wider world.

We hypothesize that self-consciousness as a nation is what propels the questioning of habits. In Stendhal, the questioning of habits takes on a national aspect: 'L'habitude couvre tous ces contresens de son complaisant manteau. N'est-elle pas toute-puissante sur des Français? Qui d'entre nous s'avise de *réfléchir l'habitude*?'.⁷ In his commentary on Montaigne in *Voyage dans le Midi de la France*, Stendhal notes that Montaigne 'sut réfléchir l'habitude, chose si rare en France'.⁸ As such, the Romantic wave throughout Europe acts as an incentivizer to challenge national habits: 'Les Romantiques ne se dissimulent point qu'ils proposent aux Parisiens la chose du monde la plus difficile: *réfléchir l'habitude*.'⁹ Maine de Biran's *Influence de l'habitude sur la faculté de penser* strongly influenced Stendhal, who read it in 1805.¹⁰ He notes in *Idées italiennes sur quelques tableaux célèbres*: 'Les Artistes et les Littérateurs auraient besoin d'un Maine-Biran qui les engageât à réfléchir sur leurs habitudes au lieu de les suivre en aveugles.'¹¹ 'Réfléchir l'habitude' serves as the title of Chapter 41 in *Histoire de la peinture en Italie* (1817). The phrase 'Réfléchir l'habitude' is regularly italicised in Stendhal's works, for instance in *Mémoires d'un touriste*.¹² In *Promenades dans Rome*, Stendhal reckons:

⁶ Jean-René Ladmiral and Edmond-Marc Lipiansky, *La communication interculturelle* (Paris: Colin, 1989).

⁷ Stendhal, *Mémoires d'un touriste*, 'Nivernais, le 18 juin 1837', p. 174.

⁸ Stendhal, *Voyages en France*, p. 653.

⁹ *Racine et Shakespeare*, II, 162-3.

¹⁰ Victor Del Litto, *La Vie intellectuelle de Stendhal*, pp. 166–69.

¹¹ Stendhal, *Idées italiennes sur quelques tableaux célèbres* (1840), p. 95, addition de la main de Stendhal.

¹² Stendhal, *Mémoires d'un touriste*, 'Nivernais, le 18 juin 1837', p. 174. Voir V. Del Litto, *La Vie intellectuelle de Stendhal*, pp. 166–69.

‘Les actions de peu d’importance [...] se décident par des motifs analogues et d’après les mêmes habitudes morales que les actions importantes.’¹³

Stendhal’s comparatism implements numerous techniques. Stendhal conceptualizes nations through contrasts: ‘Ce qui est aimable à Paris est indécent à Genève: cela dépend de la prudence.’¹⁴ As the nineteenth century sees the burgeoning science of statistics as a quantitative tool of analysis, Stendhal makes a very personal use of early statistics as a novel method of national comparison: ‘Sur cent-cinquante actions quotidiennes, le Milanais en fait cent-vingt par plaisir, l’Anglais seulement trente, et l’Anglais riche à peine dix.’¹⁵ Nations undergo strategic amalgamation, for instance between Geneva and England: ‘Vivacité, naturel, aperçus nouveaux, laisser-aller, qui font le charme de la société, tout cela est pétrifié à Genève. Je viens de m’apercevoir que c’est la caricature des Anglaises.’¹⁶ In his quest to articulate Europe, Stendhal surveys nations with regard to liaison subjects; for instance, marriage in *De l’Amour*’s chapter ‘Situation de l’Europe à l’égard du mariage’.¹⁷ Love is also considered as culturally inflected, in ‘Des nations par rapport à l’amour’.¹⁸ In *Racine et Shakespeare*, Stendhal examines all European nations to address the pivotal question: ‘Quel est le milieu le plus favorable à la création esthétique? où va naître le beau idéal moderne?’¹⁹

Comparatism between nations also stems from politico-military antagonism. Kant posited that human progress is driven by an oxymoronic movement of ‘unsocial sociability.’²⁰ In his 1832 *Histoire de France*, Jules Michelet exemplifies the prevalent view of England as a contrasting foil to France, suggesting that rivalry with England significantly benefited France by solidifying its national identity. He observes that in resisting England, the French provinces unified into a cohesive nation, discovering their ‘Frenchness’ in opposition to the English:

¹³ *Promenades dans Rome*, 2, 167.

¹⁴ Stendhal, *Rome, Naples et Florence en 1817*, in *Voyages en Italie*, p. 39.

¹⁵ Stendhal, *Rome, Naples et Florence*, i, pp. 179–80, 184 and n; ii, p. 180; *Voyages en Italie*, p. 866; *Courrier anglais*, iv, p. 267; *Mélanges de littérature*, iii, p. 271 (Le Divan).

¹⁶ *Voyages en Italie*, pp. 152–153.

¹⁷ Stendhal, *De l’Amour*, Chapter 58: ‘Situation de l’Europe à l’égard du mariage’.

¹⁸ Stendhal, *De l’Amour*, Part 2, Chapter 41: ‘Des nations par rapport à l’amour–De la France’, Chapter 43: ‘De l’Italie’, Chapter 45: ‘De l’Angleterre’, Chapter 47: ‘De l’Espagne’, Chapter 50: ‘L’amour aux États-Unis’.

¹⁹ Stendhal, *Racine et Shakespeare*, Chapter 131 (Le Divan), p. 268 and sq.

²⁰ Kant, *Idea for a Universal History with a Cosmopolitan Purpose* (1784), Proposition IV.

La lutte contre l'Angleterre a rendu à la France un immense service. Elle a confirmé, précisé sa nationalité. À force de se serrer contre l'ennemi, les provinces se sont trouvées un peuple. C'est en voyant de près l'Anglais qu'elles ont senti qu'elles étaient France. Il en est des nations comme de l'individu, il connaît et distingue sa personnalité par la résistance de ce qui n'est pas elle, il remarque le moi par le non-moi.²¹

This concept emphasizes the role of the 'other' in shaping and clarifying one's identity. Stendhal reinterprets this traditional antagonism as a source of amusement and intellectual engagement. In his view, 'Le monde possède deux foyers de civilisation: Paris et Londres, et ce serait un grand malheur pour l'humanité si ces deux villes étaient semblables; mais il serait plus malheureux encore qu'elles fussent privées du privilège qu'elles ont de se moquer l'une de l'autre: les ravages de l'ennui, ce grand ennemi du bonheur, se feraient alors sentir avec une force accrue.'²² We note the intrinsic bivalence of Stendhal's depiction of national character, neither positive, nor negative. As Michel Crouzet remarks, in Stendhal, 'celui qui ne présente aucun trait blâmable ne présente aucun trait intéressant'.²³ Each nation is at once repudiated, exalted and acclaimed. Stendhal appreciates the cultural rivalry not as a source of conflict but as a vital dynamic that prevents monotony and fosters cultural vibrancy. This perspective shows a nuanced appreciation of the interplay between competition and cultural enrichment.

In this tapestry of national comparison, Stendhal gives pride of place to France. Everything is compared, directly or indirectly, to its French counterpart: 'Paris dirige tout en Europe, le mal comme le bien'²⁴. Stendhal observes: 'L'universalité de la France l'empêche d'avoir une forme de localité, comme les autres nations.'²⁵ These quotations convey an idea of uniformity: they might suggest that everything is French and that there is no other national character, or

²¹ Jules Michelet, *Histoire de France* [1832] (Paris: Robert Laffont, 1981), Livre III, n° 9, 'Tableau de la France', p. 221.

²² Stendhal, 'Esquisses de la société parisienne, de la politique et de la littérature—Esquisse IV', *New Monthly Magazine* (April 1826), in *Stendhal Paris—Londres*, ed. by Renée Dénier (Paris: Stock, 1997), 668–680 (p. 668).

²³ Michel Crouzet, *Stendhal et l'Amérique*, Vol 2, *Stendhal et Le Désenchantement du Monde* (Paris: Classiques Garnier, 2011), p. 634.

²⁴ Stendhal, *Voyages en Italie*, p. 1742, 1015, *Vie de Rossini* (Bibliophile), Vol 1, p. 329.

²⁵ Stendhal, *Voyages en Italie*, p. 899.

conversely, that France lacks a distinct national character. While Stendhal clearly distinguishes the particularities of each nation, he assigns France the role of a universal reference point. As Michel Crouzet comments: 'La France, médiane et 'médiocre' dans tous les sens du mot, est en même temps centrale, dans la mesure où toutes les cultures semblent avoir besoin de son intercession pour parvenir à être elles-mêmes et avoir conscience d'elles-mêmes.' Paris is thus 'capitale de la mise en forme' essential to all other cultures.²⁶

Reconsidering Stendhal's bond to Italy, in his comparative effort, we view France as Stendhal's national inclination. Dominique Maingueneau highlights the 'caractère radicalement problématique' of the writer belonging to both the literary field and society, where he is simultaneously present and absent. This 'paratopie' is unique to an author who must 'tout à la fois conforter et contester la faille qui le rend possible.'²⁷ After Stendhal's death, his lifelong friend, Mérimée remarked about Stendhal: 'Malgré sa prétention à être cosmopolite, il était parfaitement Français, d'esprit comme de cœur.'²⁸ Stendhal's threshold of intelligibility is that he is French. Stendhal is mainly targeting the French audience, who need a frame of reference to understand Italy, England, Spain, and Geneva. France thus serves as the underlying reference point in the comparative movement. Even when Stendhal addresses the English audience in his reviews, he never strays far from engaging the French audience, often speaking to them with subtle irony. Laure Lévêque explains in her article 'Penser la France aux frontières des expériences européennes: allers et retours des idées' that travel promotes an external viewpoint that illuminates the uniqueness of the French experience, 'a France that is both the subject and object of analysis.'²⁹ Paradoxically, we argue that travel fosters Stendhal's Frenchness: in 1812, he looted the Moscow house that sheltered him during the Russian campaign, taking as spoils 'un volume de Voltaire, celui qui est intitulé *Facéties*', Voltaire's works representing the essence

²⁶ Michel Crouzet, 'Stendhal et le romantisme', p. 79.

²⁷ Dominique Maingueneau, *Le Discours littéraire: Paratopie et scène d'énonciation* (Paris: Armand Colin, 2004), p. 92.

²⁸ Mérimée, *Notes et souvenirs*, M, V, 353.

²⁹ Laure Lévêque, 'Penser la France aux frontières des expériences européennes: allers et retours des idées', in Corredor, Marie-Rose, *Stendhal 'romantique'? Stendhal et les romantismes européens* (Grenoble: UGA Éditions, 2016), 241–263.

of French culture and the apex of classical French taste that permeated all of Europe.³⁰ However, it is important to note that the comparison between nations is not always made in direct reference to France. France's implication may be absent—or merely underlying.

The French

Throughout his life, Stendhal repeatedly returned to France, which remained the centre of his interests. His vision of France, we argue, is ambivalent, partly due to his participation in the country: while it is a great intellectual nation, its momentum is dulled by the force of habit. After leaving Grenoble, Stendhal spends part of his youth in Paris. In 1810, he is made an auditor of the Council of State, as such he is attached to the Household of Napoleon, as Inspector of the Buildings and Furniture of the Crown. In 1812, he returns to Paris after the retreat from Moscow. Then, his life is marked by numerous back and forth between France and Italy. He is back again in Paris in 1817 and publishes *Rome, Naples et Florence* and *Histoire de la Peinture en Italie*. In 1821, he returns to Paris and frequents the Restoration society. In 1836, he returns from Italy to Paris on sick leave, 1837 and 1838 see him touring France: Normandy, Brittany, Marseilles, Lyon's gastronomy, Bordeaux and its wines, Tours... followed by the publication of *Mémoires d'un Touriste*. In 1841 he returns to Paris where he dies from an apoplectic fit.³¹

The idea of a 'French Europe' can be traced to the ambitions of Louis XIV. Although the Roi Soleil was never an official candidate for the Holy Roman Emperor, his minister Mazarin proposed the idea and even drafted the *Manifeste des Français aux Princes Électeurs* to persuade German princes to support a French candidacy over the Austrian ambitions. From the eighteenth century onward, France is often pictured by critics as a pivotal 'cultural beacon' within Europe. In his seminal work *Quand l'Europe parlait français*, Marc Fumaroli portrays this era vividly, describing a period 'où les Français sont partout chez eux, où Paris est la seconde patrie de tous les étrangers, et où la France est l'objet de la curiosité générale des Européens.'³² In *Paris, le modèle des nations étrangères ou l'Europe française* (1777), Louis-

³⁰ Stendhal, *Journal*, in *Œuvres intimes*, ed. by Victor Del Litto, Vol 1 (Paris: Gallimard, Bibliothèque de la Pléiade, 1981), p. 832.

³¹ Andrew Archibald Paton, *Henry Beyle: A Critical and Biographical Study* (Geneva: Slatkine Reprints, 1999).

³² Fumaroli, Marc, *Quand l'Europe parlait français* (Paris: Editions de Fallois, 2001), p. 9.

Antoine Caraccioli stated: 'Jadis tout était romain, aujourd'hui tout est français', drawing a parallel between the Roman Empire and French cultural dominance in his time.³³ The long-standing admiration for French culture is evident beyond France's borders. In 1780, King Frederick II of Prussia, a recognized intellectual himself, penned an essay in French—*De la littérature allemande, des défauts qu'on peut lui reprocher, quelles en sont les causes, et par quels moyens on peut les corriger*—which reads as an external acknowledgment of France's pivotal role on the continental stage. In his 2007 publication *L'Europe au temps de Napoléon*, Jean Tulard notes the transformation of France into a politically dominant force beyond the artistic and literary influence: 'On parle de la Grande Nation puis du Grand Empire. Rome, Bruxelles, Hambourg, Cologne, Amsterdam étaient françaises en 1811.'³⁴ French cultural and intellectual dominance within Europe is highlighted by several of Stendhal's contemporaries. Mme de Staël, in *De l'Allemagne*, captures this influence eloquently: 'Comme les Français sont passés maîtres dans l'art de causer, ils se sont rendus souverains de l'opinion européenne, ou plutôt de la mode, qui contrefait si bien l'opinion. Depuis le règne de Louis XIV, toute la bonne compagnie du continent, l'Espagne et l'Italie exceptées, a mis son amour-propre dans l'imitation des Français.'³⁵ She further emphasizes the centrality of Parisian culture: 'Il me semble reconnu que Paris est la ville du monde où l'esprit et le goût de la conversation sont le plus généralement répandus.'³⁶ She also remarks: 'Ce plaisir de causer que les Français ne retrouvent nulle part au même degré que chez eux.'³⁷ Victor Hugo, in *La Légende des siècles*, succinctly asserts the essence of France's role: 'France, France, sans toi le monde serait seul.'³⁸

Stendhal focuses on France's intellectual vibrancy, yet notes a form of corruption in *l'esprit français*. He frequently reports the depiction of France as the 'Grande Nation'.³⁹ This notion of

³³ Louis-Antoine Caraccioli, *Paris, le modèle des nations étrangères ou l'Europe française* (1777), Gallica.

³⁴ Jean Tulard, *L'Europe au temps de Napoléon* (Paris: éditions du Cerf, 2020), Preface.

³⁵ Madame de Staël, *De l'Allemagne*, 5 Vols (Paris: Hachette, 1958), Vol 1, Chapter 9: 'Des étrangers qui veulent imiter l'esprit français', pp. 136–37.

³⁶ Staël, *De l'Allemagne*, Vol 1, Chapter 11: De l'esprit de conversation, pp. 158–159.

³⁷ Madame de Staël, *De l'Allemagne*, Vol 1, Chapter 11: De l'esprit de conversation, p. 159.

³⁸ Victor Hugo, 'L'Élégie des fléaux', *La Légende des siècles* (1859), Le poète.

³⁹ Stendhal, *De l'Amour*, Vol 1, p. 7; *Histoire de la peinture en Italie* (Bibliophile), Vol 2, p. 126, see laudative passage on big cities, in *Rome, Naples et Florence* (Divan), p. 188.

France as 'un modèle inimitable d'esprit et d'élégance'⁴⁰ was widespread, with Paris as a hub: 'Paris, grâce à la supériorité de sa conversation et de sa littérature, est et sera toujours le salon de l'Europe.'⁴¹ It occupies centre stage in Europe for practicing 'esprit', often referred to as 'piquant': 'Pour le naturel il faut une capitale qui ait au moins dix millions de sujets.'⁴² Chateaubriand, in *Génie du Christianisme*, also reflects on the national character traits of the French: 'Le Français a été dans tous les temps, même lorsqu'il était barbare, vain, léger et sociable. Il réfléchit peu sur l'ensemble des objets, mais il observe curieusement les détails, et son coup d'œil est prompt, sûr et délié: il faut toujours qu'il soit en scène.'⁴³ Chateaubriand further notes French pride: 'Il [Le Français] étale son esprit devant le lecteur, et le désir qu'il a de se montrer penseur ingénieux le conduit souvent à bien penser.'⁴⁴

It is in France that the comparative mind took shape, with Montesquieu: 'Toute l'Europe en se cotisant ne pourrait faire un seul de nos bons volumes français, les *Lettres persanes* par exemple.'⁴⁵ Yet Parisian culture is characterized by the prevalence of prefabricated ideas: 'À Paris, on est assailli d'idées toutes faites sur tout; on dirait qu'on veut, bon gré mal gré, nous éviter la peine de penser, et ne nous laisser que le plaisir de bien dire.'⁴⁶ The pressure to conform is recorded in *Mémoires d'un touriste*: 'Il faut une tête bien forte pour ne pas se laisser cacher le fond des choses par la mode, qui en ce pays dispose plus que jamais de toutes les vérités.'⁴⁷ Stendhal denounces the Parisian penchant for paradoxical statements: 'Le Parisien arrivant de la Sibérie doit dire qu'il n'y fait pas trop froid, comme il s'écrierait, en arrivant de Saint-Domingue, qu'en vérité il n'y fait pas trop chaud.'⁴⁸ In 1792, Olympe de Gouges depicts the French spirit as unpredictable and without clear purpose: "Me voilà encore une fois, comme

⁴⁰ Stendhal, *Courrier anglais*, Vol 2, p. 468, *Rome, Naples et Florence* (Le Divan), t. 2, p. 264, *Mémoires d'un Touriste* (Le Divan), t. 1, p. 432, *Rome Naple et Florence*, t. 2, p. 9, *Mélanges de politique et d'Histoire* (Le Divan), t. 1, p. 152, *Courrier anglais*, t. 4, p. 13, *De l'Amour* (Bibliophile), t.2, p. 192.

⁴¹ Stendhal, *De l'Amour*, Chapter 42: 'Suite de la France'.

⁴² Molière (Divan), p. 286.

⁴³ François-René de Chateaubriand, *Génie du Christianisme*, in *Œuvres complètes* [1802] (Paris: Garnier Frères, 1828), Part 3: 'Beaux-Arts et littérature', Livre III: 'Histoire', Chapter 4: 'Pourquoi les Français n'ont que des Mémoires', p. 324.

⁴⁴ Chateaubriand, *Génie du Christianisme*, p. 324.

⁴⁵ Stendhal, *De l'Amour* (Bibliophile), Vol 2, p. 210.

⁴⁶ Stendhal, *Mémoires d'un touriste*, p. 3.

⁴⁷ Stendhal, *Mémoires d'un touriste*, p. 3.

⁴⁸ Stendhal, *Féder*, R II 1287.

l'esprit françois, perchée sur un arbre, voltigeant de branche en branche, tantôt en haut, tantôt en bas.⁴⁹ Stendhal navigates a tension between admiration and critique of France, perceiving the nation to be experiencing an intellectual decline, soon to be reinforced by politics and industrialism:

L'opinion de Paris, c'est-à-dire la France, après s'être si longtemps prosternée devant le savoir, vit le savoir prosterné à son tour devant elle. Tout changea dans la République des lettres et une nouvelle reine, la société, fit la loi. [...] Nous eûmes des hommes du monde, mais non point des hommes de savoir ou de science. [...] Vers 1750, l'opinion publique étant devenue la reine intellectuelle de la France, il ne manquait plus, pour compléter cette forme de gouvernement, que des tribuns du peuple.⁵⁰

Pride is presented as the passion that animates all of France—its achievements, as well as its decline. In Stendhal, French vanity permeates societal behaviour: 'En France, la première nécessité de la vie a toujours été d'être à la mode. C'est l'unique passion de la nation. Je peux apporter des preuves historiques, tirées des *Mémoires* de d'Aubigné, de Montluc, de l'Estoile, montrant que cette passion était déjà despotique en 1600.⁵¹ The French, 'ces monstres d'orgueil'⁵², are portrayed in stark contrast to Italians, as an Italy, there is no such thing as a 'public opinion'.⁵³ Stendhal praises Italians' authenticity and capacity to act: 'Ce peuple est moins éloigné que nous des grandes actions; *il prend quelque chose au sérieux...*'⁵⁴ This vanity has gender implications: 'Les femmes françaises se regardent entre elles, les Italiennes regardent les hommes,' Irony would drain genuine vitality: 'Dès qu'il ose désertier l'habitude, l'homme vaniteux s'expose à l'affreux danger de rester court devant quelque objection. Peut-on s'étonner que de tous les peuples du monde le Français soit celui qui tienne le plus à ses

⁴⁹ Olympe de Gouges, *L'esprit français* (Paris: Veuve Duchesne, 1792), p. 11.

⁵⁰ Stendhal, 'Lettres de Paris, par le petit-neveu de Grimm (3)', *London Magazine* (March 1825), in *Stendhal Paris–Londres*, ed. by Renée Dénier (Paris: Stock, 1997), 328–336 (p. 331).

⁵¹ Stendhal, 'Lettres de Paris, par le petit-neveu de Grimm (3)', *London Magazine* (March 1825), in *Stendhal Paris–Londres*, ed. by Renée Dénier (Paris: Stock, 1997), 328–336 (p. 329).

⁵² Stendhal, *Le Rouge et le Noir*, Chapter 23.

⁵³ Letter from Stendhal to Duc de Broglie, Civitavecchia, 5 April 1835, *Correspondance*, III (Pléiade), p. 40.

⁵⁴ Stendhal, *Voyages en Italie*, 656.

habitudes?'.⁵⁵ Balzac, in *Le Cabinet des Antiques*, identifies 'vanity' as propelling the quest for democracy and political change: 'En France, ce qu'il y a de plus national, est la vanité. La masse des vanités blessées y a donné soif d'égalité.'⁵⁶

It is *piquant* to note that this observation of French arrogance by Stendhal aligns with that of several authors since the Middle Ages. French clerics were the first to comment on the innate pride ('superbia') of the French people. This sentiment was expressed by Eudes de Deuil in his writings on the Second Crusade, describing the pride of the French ('superbia nostri populi'). Additionally, Abbot Walo of Metz criticized the French for their inability to embody the qualities of being peaceful ('pacificus'), humble ('humilis'), or quiet ('quietus').⁵⁷

France, as depicted by Stendhal, thus navigates intellectual excellence alongside the corruption of its national character, due to its exceptional influence in Europe and its political and cultural achievements, ultimately leading to a destructive vanity—according to Stendhal's standards of authenticity and genuineness. Stendhal approaches the character of his own country without chauvinism, highlighting both strengths and weaknesses, just as he does for other nationalities.

The English

By presenting Stendhal's relationship to England, this section gives pride of place to England in Stendhal's depiction of Europe. The Stendhalian critic tends to minimize the interactions between Stendhal and England, a country he visited three times, not to mention the English reviews he regularly contributed to for more than seven years, from 1822 to 1829. Keith Gnith McWatters and René Dénier's work on publishing Stendhal's contributions to the English press took time to come to light, finally being published in 1997.⁵⁸ This body of work, which has been underutilized, demonstrates the importance not only of Stendhal's relationship with

⁵⁵ *Racine et Shakespeare*, II, 162-3.

⁵⁶ Balzac, 'Mademoiselle d'Esgrignon', *Le Cabinet des Antiques*, *La Comédie humaine*, IV (Paris, 1966), 348.

⁵⁷ Eugen Weber, 'Of Stereotypes and of the French', in *Journal of Contemporary History* (Sage Publications, May-June 1990), Vol. 25, n°2/3, 169–203.

⁵⁸ *Stendhal Paris–Londres*, ed. by Renée Dénier (Paris: Stock, 1997)

England but also of his understanding of his English audience, managing this European literary exchange with considerable cross-cultural intelligence.

In Stendhal's system of nations, England is pictured as having strong affinities or antipathies with other nations. Affinity is strong with Geneva, cultural shock is certain with Italy and Spain; the politico-military enmities between France and England lead to a mixture of rejection, fascination, and respect. In the 1760s and particularly during the European conflict of the Seven Years' War, Anglophobia becomes very present in France, as evidenced by works such as Fougeret de Montbron's *Préservatif contre l'anglomanie* (1757) or Lesuir's *Les sauvages de l'Europe* (1760). Between 1777 and 1783, France again entered into war with England by helping the Patriots in America. Despite the Treaty of Amiens, concluded with Great Britain on March 25, 1802, enmity continues throughout the Empire. Napoleon failed to force British submission by strangling its economy with his 'continental system', which aimed to cut off Britain from its continental markets. In November 1806, he prohibits trade with Britain, closing all continental ports to British ships, with the aim that French merchants and manufacturers earn fortunes supplying the captive markets of the continent. France's economic interests are sought in the establishment of a European trade zone from which the British would be excluded...⁵⁹ The Emperor of Austria, Francis I, the Emperor of Russia, Alexander I, and England all resisted Bonaparte's ambitions, as evidenced by the Battle of Austerlitz in 1805, also known as the 'Battle of the Three Emperors'. This could explain the general culture and undertone of rivalry in Stendhal's depiction of the Anglo-French relationship. Nonetheless, in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century, despite the politico-military agenda, the cultural relationship between France and England improves and expands: French Romanticism of the first half of the nineteenth century experiences a wave of Anglomania.

Contrary to a dominant narrative within Stendhalian criticism, we assert that Stendhal's connections with England are both extensive and multifaceted. In Grenoble in 1796, under the tutelage of his teacher Dubois-Fontanelle, Stendhal discovered the main English authors. To read Shakespeare in the original, he began studying English in 1802. English works were imported, particularly those of Byron and Shakespeare. Stendhal read Radcliffe, the Gothic novels, Walter Scott's historical novels, and Richardson's works.⁶⁰ Additionally, he read

⁵⁹ François Crouzet, *L'Economie britannique et le blocus continental* (1806-1813) (Paris: PUF, 1958).

⁶⁰ Keith Gnith McWatters, *Stendhal, Lecteur des romanciers anglais* (Lausanne: éditions du Grand Chêne, 1968).

Madame de Staël's *Corinne*, in which the Scottish character Lord Oswald Nelvil serves as a British stereotype. Stendhal made several trips to England in 1817, 1821, and 1826, allowing him to appreciate English customs, theatres, and landscapes. He remarks: 'Le beau clair de lune avec sa rêverie tendre se trouve sur les bords de Windermere.'⁶¹ In 1825 and 1826, Stendhal revisited England.

Despite there being no Stendhalian work set in England, Stendhal develops a unique way of presenting England and incorporating English elements throughout his writings. England is the country of Sir John Armitage and England is featured in *Le Journal de Sir John Armitage* (York), *Le Coffre et le Revenant*, *Le Rose et le Vert* (eaux de Cheltenham), and *Féder* (Twickenham). England, being the cradle of industry, exports its goods, as illustrated by Madame de Rênal's 'ciseaux anglais'. Stendhal had a taste for mixing foreign languages and *Œuvres intimes* (letters and diary) often read as an idiom marquetry. His work is replete with foreign-language epigraphs. He peppers his texts with words like: 'cant', 'snug', 'king', 'happy few', 'touriste', 'egotiste', 'self', and others. For instance, in a passage from *Mémoires d'un touriste*, he writes: 'Par bonheur, l'auberge est excellente, *snug*.'⁶² In this scene, the tourist stops in a very remote region of France. The word 'snug' appears unexpectedly and in a somewhat pedantic way, possibly serving as a method for Stendhal to subtly connect with his select group of readers, the 'happy few'. Stendhal does not merely switch from one language to another at the level of individual paragraphs; he also mixes languages within the sentences: 'Our eyes se sont dit that they love themselves. I have seen her an instant, embarrassée et n'osant lever les yeux.'⁶³ Examples are numerous: 'J'eus donc l'adresse d'apprendre from him that this very evening, il allait avec this miss to a box qu'il avait louée aux Variétés.'⁶⁴ This mix of English and French expresses a certain esteem for England, even an Anglomania. Dandyism in Stendhal's writing is also a stereotypical reference to England. As A. Bussièrè notes in the *Revue des Deux Mondes*, dandyism is 'le spectre du voisin'.⁶⁵ Stendhal's works are full of dandy characters. While there are fewer dandies and lions in Stendhal's works compared to Balzac's *La Comédie humaine*, the English stereotype is still evident in *Le Rouge et le Noir*:

⁶¹ Stendhal, *Correspondance générale*, Vol 4, 1084.

⁶² Stendhal, *Mémoires d'un touriste*, 'La Charité, le 13 avril 1837', p. 11.

⁶³ Stendhal, 14 March 1810; *Œuvres intimes*, I, 552.

⁶⁴ Stendhal, 10 December 1810; *Correspondance générale*, II, 106.

⁶⁵ A. Bussièrè, *Revue des Deux-Mondes* (January 1843).

'Julien était un dandy maintenant et comprenait l'art de vivre à Paris. Il fut d'une froideur parfaite envers mademoiselle de La Mole.' In *Mémoires d'un touriste*, a dandy character appears in this provincial France: 'Sur ces entrefaites, arrive en fredonnant le commissaire de police, jeune dandy venu de Paris depuis six mois seulement.'⁶⁶ Stendhal pictures dandyism as a cold, disillusioned and eccentric form of affectation. According to Miranda Gill, the term 'excentricité' settles into the French language to describe the perception of Englishness by the French, in the context of both savage caricatures and Anglomania. It only loses its English connotations from the early 1840s—Stendhal died in 1842. In France, the vision of England is influenced by dandyism and a fantasised atmosphere of gentlemen's clubs, horse breeding, and pigeon shooting. As they celebrated idiosyncrasy and uniqueness, the theories of Romantic individuality that were first elaborated in late eighteenth-century Germany created a cultural climate favourable to representations of eccentricity, leading to a positive rise and Frenchification of eccentricity in Stendhal's time.⁶⁷

Throughout his writings, Stendhal crafts a distinctly sharp and clearly defined stereotype of the English, characterized by pronounced and straightforward traits. Highlighting the stark differences in emotional expression and authenticity between the English and the Italians, Stendhal makes use of statistics to report on English's restraint and unnaturalness: 'Pas un Anglais sur cent n'ose être soi-même, pas un Italien sur dix, ne conçoit qu'on puisse être autrement. L'Anglais n'est ému qu'une fois par mois, et l'Italien trois fois par jour.'⁶⁸ While the Italians are portrayed as unified with their emotions, duty acts as a barrier between emotions and self in English culture. As a corollary to this restraint, perhaps, Stendhal often uses the adjective 'fâché' to characterize Englishness: 'Les Anglais, peuple *fâché*, ont des gestes fort différents des nôtres pour exprimer les mêmes mouvements de l'âme.'⁶⁹ This coldness is reported in *Le Rouge et le Noir*. During his journey to England, Julien adopts 'naturellement cette mine froide et à mille lieues de la sensation présente' that is so appropriate in London.

⁶⁶ Stendhal, *Mémoires d'un touriste*, 'Nivernais, le 20 avril 1837', p. 25.

⁶⁷ Miranda Gill, *Eccentricity and the Cultural Imagination in Nineteenth-Century Paris* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009), p. 20, Chapter 1: 'The Rise of Eccentricity', 'The 'Frenchifying' of eccentricity', 33–39 (p. 37).

⁶⁸ *Rome, Naples et Florence*, I, 179–180.

⁶⁹ Stendhal, *Souvenirs d'égotisme*, p. 482.

Emblematically, Philippe Vane, 'le seul homme gai' of England, is in prison.⁷⁰ Julien is asked about his journey by the marquis:

À son retour:—Quelle idée amusante m’apportez-vous d’Angleterre? lui dit M. de La Mole... Il se taisait.—Quelle idée apportez-vous, amusante ou non? reprit le marquis vivement.

—Primo, dit Julien, l’Anglais le plus sage est fou une heure par jour; il est visité par le démon du suicide, qui est le dieu du pays.

2° L’esprit et le génie perdent vingt-cinq pour cent de leur valeur, en débarquant en Angleterre.

3° Rien au monde n’est beau, admirable, attendrissant comme les paysages anglais.⁷¹

In depicting the English character, Stendhal utilizes Julien as his spokesperson. The idea of duty further defines the Englishman, as exemplified in *Armance*: ‘L’idée du devoir paraissait trop dans sa manière d’être, et allait quelquefois jusqu’à lui donner une physionomie anglaise.’⁷² In a letter to Sutton Sharpe on 9 March 1827, Stendhal describes his Englishness: ‘Sans doute vous êtes fort bien suivant les idées anglaises, nous ne prétendons rien vous ôter de ce mérite grave, raisonnable, profond, mais fâché et toujours en présence de l’idée du devoir’⁷³ The idea recurs in *Rome, Naples et Florence*: ‘Falstaff est encore meilleur lorsqu’on le joue devant une nation triste, et qui tremble au seul nom du devoir auquel le gros chevalier manque sans cesse.’⁷⁴ The upper echelons of society are depicted as being more stringently bound to the notion of duty than the average Englishman: ‘En Angleterre, le terrible devoir, sanctionné par la perspective d’expirer de faim dans la rue, apparaît cent vingt fois peut-être sur cent cinquante actions. De là le malheur frappant de ce peuple. [...] Ce qui comble ce malheur, c’est que, parmi les gens les plus riches, le devoir, sanctionné par la peur de l’enfer [...] ou par la peur du mépris si votre habit n’est pas exactement à la mode, paraît cent quarante fois peut-être

⁷⁰ *Le Rouge et le Noir*, Part 2, Chapter 37.

⁷¹ *Le Rouge et le Noir*, II, Chapter 7.

⁷² *Armance*, 242.

⁷³ *Correspondance*, II, pp. 108-109.

⁷⁴ *Rome, Naples et Florence*, II, 207-8.

sur les cent cinquante actions dont se compose la journée.⁷⁵ Stendhal associates Englishness with ‘férocité hébraïque’, stating: ‘L’étude exagérée de la Bible donne au peuple anglais une teinte de férocité hébraïque.’⁷⁶ He further notes: ‘Les puritains s’emportaient contre tout amusement public, comme n’étant pas d’accord avec la foi d’un chrétien. De là la férocité hébraïque et biblique de la nation anglaise.’⁷⁷ He comments on ‘les terreurs de la Bible qui dès leur enfance sont déposées au fond de leur cœur et qui ne sont jamais neutralisées par l’agréable sacrement de la Pénitence.’⁷⁸ He describes ‘cette éducation hébraïque et atroce du caractère anglais.’⁷⁹ Contrasting England and Italy’s religious practices, he claims ‘la religion napolitaine est moins absurde que celle de Londres.’⁸⁰

England is associated with politics and industrialism. The industrial revolution giving England a technical supremacy along with advance in banking system and manufacturing, Stendhal depicts England as ‘nation de vapeurs, de chemins de fer’⁸¹ and a nation ‘victime du travail’ who does not have ‘le temps d’avoir de l’esprit.’⁸² Politics occupies the English, permeating their culture: ‘Les Anglais ont acquis des habitudes de penser et de parler beaucoup plus propres aux débats de la chambre des Communes, ou à raisonner sur les affaires, dans quelque comité, qu’à faire passer une heure agréable dans un salon.’⁸³ As Stendhal fears the spread of industrialism across Europe, Stendhal addresses European ‘anglisation’.⁸⁴ Opportunistically, Stendhal praises the forms of government of France and Italy, where citizens can fully dedicate themselves to art and creativity: ‘You English are all very much occupied, because you attend to your own business yourself, while the peculiarity of our Government is that it affords its subjects an immense deal of leisure-time. In France the Government does everything for the

⁷⁵ *Rome, Naples et Florence*, I, 179.

⁷⁶ *Litt. III*, 265, Lord Byron, 24/08/1829.

⁷⁷ *Molière*, p. 218.

⁷⁸ *Rome, Naples et Florence*.

⁷⁹ *Mémoires d’un Touriste*.

⁸⁰ *Pages d’Italie*, oct-nov. 1818, 160-162.

⁸¹ Stendhal, *Paris-Londres*, p. 542.

⁸² Stendhal, ‘Pages d’Angleterre’, 1826.

⁸³ Stendhal, ‘Les Salons de Paris’, *Rome, Naples et Florence en 1817*, in *Voyages en Italie*.

⁸⁴ Stendhal, *Mémoires d’un touriste* (Bibliophile), Vol 2, p. 511–513, Vol 3, p. 87, *Correspondance* (Pléiade), Vol 2, p. 76.

people; even settles their disputes in the theatres.⁸⁵ Picturing authoritative forms of government as more favourable to an aesthetic life, Stendhal is among the first to denounce modern politics as a time-consuming pastime, detracting from culturally fulfilling activities.

In Stendhal's works, the depiction of England serves as a counter-example to the dichotomy he wishes to establish between the political and cultural spheres in European nations. Stendhal advocates for a clear separation between political engagement and cultural pursuits, ideally maintaining them as parallel and non-intersecting realms. He advocates for the supremacy of culture over politics, as his preference for a political system (non-democratic) is driven by the desire to maximize opportunities for cultural activities. His ideal is more of a cultured individual than an actively engaged citizen.

The Italians

In this research, we challenge the dominant critical focus on Italy in Stendhal studies by reconsidering his engagement with Northern Europe. The traditional view of Stendhal's relationship with Italy is deeply ingrained. As early as 1854, Sainte-Beuve described him as 'l'homme de l'Italie'.⁸⁶ Berthier underscores the 'Franco-Italian axis' as central to Stendhal's intellectual and emotional outlook, observing that 'un tropisme à la fois spontané et cultivé l'a orienté de manière irrépessible vers la lumière du Midi'.⁸⁷ François Vanoosthuysse revisits the significance of Italy in Stendhal's perspective, noting: 'L'Italie est pour Stendhal une terre de tourisme, de villégiature, de rêverie charnelle et de conquête (amoureuse et militaire), mais, si l'on excepte un ou deux artistes de premier ordre et qui font événement, il ne s'y passe plus rien d'important.'⁸⁸

⁸⁵ Stendhal, *Chroniques pour l'Angleterre: Contributions à la presse britannique* [1826], ed. by K.G. McWatters (Grenoble: Publication de l'Université des langues et lettres, 1991), Vol 6, p. 338.

⁸⁶ Sainte-Beuve, *Causeries du Lundi*, Discussion about Stendhal, 9 January 1854.

⁸⁷ Philippe Berthier, 'Stendhal et l'Europe', in *Espaces stendhaliens* (Paris: P.U.F., 1997), 167–185 (p. 167, p. 180).

⁸⁸ François Vanoosthuysse, 'Romantisme et bonapartisme: L'approche stendhalienne de la nation, de la langue et de la littérature italiennes après l'Empire', in *Stendhal 'romantique'? Stendhal et les romantismes européens*, ed. by Marie-Rose Corredor (Grenoble: UGA Éditions, 2016), pp. 81–105, paragraph 4.

Italy is where Stendhal claims to belong. As part of his legacy, 'Stendhal le Milanais' is written on his grave in Paris Montparnasse cemetery, along with 'Visse, Scrisse, Amo.' In his *Journal*, in 1814, he summons: 'Rome, Rome est ma patrie, je brûle de partir.'⁸⁹ In *Rome, Naples, Florence*, he states:

La vraie patrie est celle où l'on rencontre le plus de gens qui vous ressemblent. Je crains bien de trouver toujours en France un fonds de froid dans toutes les sociétés. J'éprouve un charme, dans ce pays-ci, dont je ne puis me rendre compte: c'est comme de l'amour; et cependant je ne suis amoureux de personne. L'ombre des beaux arbres, la beauté du ciel pendant les nuits, l'aspect de la mer, tout a pour moi un charme, une force d'impression qui me rappelle une sensation tout à fait oubliée, ce que je sentais, à seize ans, à ma première campagne. Je vois que je ne puis rendre ma pensée: toutes les circonstances que j'emploie pour la peindre sont faibles.

Toute la nature est ici plus touchante pour moi; elle me semble neuve; je ne vois plus rien de plat et d'insipide. Souvent, à deux heures du matin, en me retirant chez moi, à Bologne, par ces grands portiques, l'âme obsédée de ces beaux yeux que je venais de voir, passant devant ces palais dont, par ses grandes ombres, la lune dessinait les masses, il m'arrivait de m'arrêter, oppressé de bonheur, pour me dire: 'Que c'est beau!'⁹⁰

This passage is not written in the usual style of Stendhal. It reads as a pastiche of Rousseauistic and Romantic writing, with the references to 'la beauté du ciel,' 'l'aspect de la mer,' the emphasis on personal emotion, the detailed and evocative descriptions of nature, and the introspective musings. The vivid descriptions of moonlit palaces and the beauty of the sky and sea, aligns with the Romantic tradition of valuing intense personal experiences and the natural world as sources of aesthetic and emotional inspiration. But the sublime in nature does not come across as Stendhal's way of binding with Italy, at least his writings on Italy mainly focus on

⁸⁹*Journal, Œuvres intimes*, i, 4 July 1814, p. 908.

⁹⁰ Stendhal, *Rome, Naples et Florence en 1817*, in *Voyages en Italie*, p. 98.

cities and cultural assets. The stability of meaning can be questioned between this excerpt and Stendhal's biography and intentions. This play of language is inherently contradicted by Stendhal's attempts to secure a post in Spain in order to leave Italy, as presented in the Appendices.

The question of the Italian unity is omnipresent in Stendhal's time. The second half of the century in Europe sees the creation of Germany and Italy as modern nation states. Italy in 1789 is not a unified entity; rather, it is composed of the Kingdom of Piedmont-Sardinia, the Republic of Genoa, the Duchy of Parma, the Duchy of Milan, the Duchy of Modena, including the Republic of Venice, the Papal States, and the Kingdom of the Two Sicilies. A form of unity emerges in Stendhal's time. As Jean Tulard explains, the victories of Bonaparte's army in 1796 and 1797 thoroughly recomposed Italy. The Cisalpine Republic was created in April 1797, comprising Lombardy, the Venetian mainland states, the Pontifical Emilia, and Valtellina. This unity was gradually reinforced. From 1800 to 1802, Napoleon reconquered Cisalpine, Piedmont, Liguria, and Tuscany. From 1805 to 1806, Napoleon occupied Venetia, the Marches, Lucca, Parma, and the Kingdom of Naples. By 1810, all of continental and peninsular Italy was under the direct or indirect influence of France. Italy was divided into three major parts: the Kingdom of Italy, the Kingdom of Naples, and the Italian departments of the French Empire.⁹¹

Stendhal's biography is closely intertwined with Italy, the country where he falls in love three times: in 1800, with the Pietragrua; in 1818, with Matilde Visconti Dembowski; in 1827, with Giulia Rinieri. In 1800 Stendhal accompanies Pierre and Martial Daru, in Bonaparte's campaign to Italy. He becomes a Supernumerary Clerk in the War Office. Stendhal leaves Paris on 7 May 1800 and crosses the Alps.⁹² In 1811, when Martial Daru was appointed as an administrator in Italy, Stendhal also sought an appointment, albeit unsuccessfully. Undeterred, he requested leave and set out on a journey to Italy. Inspired by his travels, he authored *Histoire de la peinture en Italie*. In 1814, with the crisis and fall of the French Empire, Stendhal loses his employment and emoluments, which in turn became a motive for retiring to Italy and settling in Milan. He returns to Paris in 1817 and publishes *Rome, Naples et Florence*. In 1823-1824, Stendhal returns to Rome and subsequently publishes *Vie de Rossini*.

⁹¹ Jean Tulard, *L'Europe au temps de Napoléon* (Paris: Editions du Cerf, 2020), Part 1: 'La prépondérance française', Chapter 4: 'L'Italie de 1800 à 1809', by Jacques Godechot, p. 190.

⁹² Stendhal, *Œuvres intimes*, II, 950.

Stendhal served as the French Consul in Civita Vecchia from 1831 until 1841, continuing in this role until the end of his life in 1842. His jurisdiction encompassed the entirety of the Papal States. In his correspondence, he notes on 15 April 1835: 'J'ai adoré, et j'adore encore [...] une femme nommée mille ans [Milan]. La passion a été une folie de 1814 à 1821. J'ai obtenu en mariage sa soeur aînée, nommée Rome.'⁹³ The *Chroniques italiennes* were penned over several years, primarily in the 1830s, i.e. Stendhal's years as a diplomat. During this period, the Minister for Foreign Affairs noticed Stendhal's frequent absences from his post. These absences were due to his numerous journeys throughout Italy. On February 8, 1834, Minister Broglie explicitly addressed this issue: 'J'ai appris avec plaisir votre retour à votre poste, d'où vous remarquez d'ailleurs que l'article 39 de la nouvelle ordonnance du 20 août ne vous permet plus de vous éloigner, même momentanément, sans autorisation.'⁹⁴

Throughout his time in Italy, Stendhal has numerous run-ins with the law. In 1811, in Milan, like any Frenchman suspected of liberalism, he feels under threat.⁹⁵ After 1815, it becomes difficult for Stendhal to go to Italy: the Austrian authorities declared him a *persona non grata*. On March 4, 1818, he was introduced to Matilde Visconti Dembowski, also known as Métilde, who had connections with the Carbonari circles. Stendhal, potentially threatened, returned to Paris on June 7, 1821. His writings do not please the Pontifical authority and are placed on the Index of Forbidden Books by Rome in 1828. As a new Consul, he does not comply strictly with Austrian passport and visa rules. At the end of 1827, arriving in Milan, the Austrian police, having knowledge of his political background and writings, expel him from the Austrian States.⁹⁶

In Stendhal's time, a substantial body of literature concerning Italy was produced. Accordingly, his contributions must be contextualized within this extensive discourse. The Stendhalian vision of Italy dialogues with that of Madame de Staël.⁹⁷ Mme de Staël in *Corinne* invokes: 'Italie, empire du Soleil; Italie, maîtresse du monde; Italie, berceau des lettres' highlighting the beauty

⁹³ Stendhal, *Correspondance générale*, III, 58–59.

⁹⁴ Minister Broglie, Letter to Henri Beyle, 8 February 1834.

⁹⁵ MJ Durry, *Stendhal et la police pontificale* (Paris: 1925).

⁹⁶ C. Simon, *Stendhal et la police autrichienne* (Paris: 1923).

⁹⁷ Robert Casillo, *The Empire of Stereotypes: Germaine De Staël and the Idea of Italy* (Palgrave Macmillan, 2006).

of Italy's beaux-arts and sky.⁹⁸ Stendhal read many other travel writings to Italy and mentions them in his *Journal*, like Spon's *Voyages en Italie* (1678)⁹⁹, Misson's *Nouveau Voyage d'Italie fait en l'an 1688*,¹⁰⁰ Duclos's *Voyages en Italie ou considérations sur l'Italie* (1791)¹⁰¹, Lalande's *Voyage d'un Français en Italie* (1768),¹⁰² or Young's *Voyages en Italie pendant les années 1787-1790*.¹⁰³ Interestingly, a few italophobic works did circulate in Stendhal's time, among which Lesser's *Voyages en Italie et en Sicile* (1806),¹⁰⁴ mentioned by Stendhal in his *Journal*.¹⁰⁵ Right from the first page, we encounter this quote by Du Bellay: 'Plus je vis l'étranger, plus j'aime ma patrie.' The preface develops: 'J'avois sans cesse lu et entendu dire que l'Italie étoit le plus beau pays de la nature [...] je n'y allais que très disposé à admirer [...] Quelle fut ma surprise quand en parcourant ce pays célèbre, je fus obligé de rectifier mes idées sur une foule d'objets!' Auguste Creuzé de Lesser highlights the gap that can arise between the reality and the representations. In many ways, early nineteenth century Italy is drowned in its stereotypes.

There is a gap between the reality of Italy and its artistic and cultural representation. The excavations at Herculaneum and Pompeii which began in 1738 and 1748 played a major role in the development of a vision of Italy as a theme-park of the past.¹⁰⁶ In the *New Monthly Magazine* (July 1825), Stendhal portrays Italy as a land 'de feu, de génie, de passion et d'enjouement'.¹⁰⁷ Stendhal associates Italy with sensualism: 'Tout le monde fait l'amour et non pas en cachette comme en France, le mari est le meilleur ami de l'amant.'¹⁰⁸ In Italy, according to Stendhal, 'Les femmes sont très supérieures aux hommes. Les femmes écoutent le génie

⁹⁸ Madame de Staël, *Corinne ou l'Italie* (Paris: Champion, 2000), Livre II: 'Corinne au capitolé', Chapter 3, p. 34.

⁹⁹ Stendhal, *Œuvres intimes*, I, 657.

¹⁰⁰ Stendhal, *Œuvres intimes*, I, 725.

¹⁰¹ Stendhal, *Œuvres intimes*, I, 658.

¹⁰² Stendhal, *Œuvres intimes*, I, 657.

¹⁰³ Stendhal, *Œuvres intimes*, I, 725.

¹⁰⁴ Auguste Creuzé De Lesser, *Voyages en Italie et en Sicile, fait en 1801 et 1802* (Paris: Didot L'ainé, 1806).

¹⁰⁵ Stendhal, *Œuvres intimes*, I, 725.

¹⁰⁶ Göran Blix, *From Paris to Pompeii: French Romanticism and the Cultural Politics of Archaeology* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2009).

¹⁰⁷ Stendhal, 'Lettres de Rome (3), Les Anglais à Rome', *New Monthly Magazine* (July 1825), in *Stendhal Paris–Londres*, ed. by Renée Dénier (Paris: Stock, 1997), 430–439 (p. 435).

¹⁰⁸ Stendhal, *De l'Amour*, p. 179.

naturel du pays.¹⁰⁹ The author's vision of Italy is imbued by Orientalism, as recorded by François Vanoosthuyse in 'Romantisme et bonapartisme: L'approche stendhalienne de la nation, de la langue et de la littérature italiennes après l'Empire': 'Son idée de l'Italie et des Italiens a plus d'un trait commun avec l'orientalisme.' Italy is an extension of the Orient, a stage in the imaginative East.¹¹⁰

The influence of politics on the national character in Italy is described by Stendhal: 'Les pauvres Italiens sont bien loin de songer aux jouissances de vanité; au milieu de l'absence de toute loi et de toute justice (on parle de ce qui existait autrefois), ils cherchent celles de la sûreté. Est-ce leur faute s'ils sont féroces? Si, sous des gouvernements, souvent cruels, parce qu'ils ont toujours peur, et si faibles qu'ils n'ont de force que par l'astuce, ils n'étaient pas féroces, ils seraient détruits, si ce n'est par le pacha, du moins par le sous-pacha, ou par le cadî.¹¹¹ Here the words 'pacha' or 'cadî' refer to Orientalism. The political system in Italy makes the Italian suspicious and self-reliant: 'Au milieu de tous ces changements de gouvernement et de gouverneurs, on voit redoubler la défiance, cette base immuable du caractère italien, et ils ont raison: ici l'on ne saurait trop soupçonner.'¹¹² As described by the historian Eugen Weber, Italy in the early nineteenth century is a country of 'smuggling, brigandage, begging, and domestic service', with a 'largely unproductive urban population', 'decorative nobles' having 'stocked the fires of cultural activity' with Rome as 'the artistic centre of Europe'.¹¹³ Stendhal considers the Church as a threat to the national character in Italy: 'Depuis la prise de Florence par les Médicis, en 1530, jusqu'à nos jours, le despotisme n'a négligé aucun moyen pour avilir et dégrader le noble esprit de cette nation. Les jésuites sont encore plus absolus à Turin qu'à Paris.'¹¹⁴

¹⁰⁹ Stendhal, *L'Italie en 1818*, in *Voyages en Italie*, ed. by Victor Del Litto (Paris: Gallimard, Pléiade, 1973), p. 242.

¹¹⁰ François Vanoosthuyse, 'Romantisme et bonapartisme: L'approche stendhalienne de la nation, de la langue et de la littérature italiennes après l'Empire', in *Stendhal 'romantique'? Stendhal et les romantismes européens*, ed. by Marie-Rose Corredor (Grenoble: UGA Éditions, 2016), pp. 81–105, paragraph 5.

¹¹¹ Stendhal, *Rome, Naples et Florence en 1817*, in *Voyages en Italie*, p. 99.

¹¹² Stendhal, *Rome, Naples et Florence en 1817*, in *Voyages en Italie*, p. 100.

¹¹³ Weber, *A Modern History of Europe* (London: Robert Hale & Company, 1973), pp. 575–576.

¹¹⁴ Stendhal, 'Sur l'état actuel de la littérature italienne (2)', *London Magazine* (January 1826), in *Stendhal Paris–Londres*, ed. by Renée Dénier (Paris: Stock, 1997), 605–615 (p. 609).

Italy is presented as the country of emotional excesses: 'Pour des raisons à moi connues, le naturel simple ne plaît pas dans les livres en Italie; il leur faut toujours de l'enflure et de l'emphase.'¹¹⁵ For Michel Crouzet in *Stendhal et l'italianité*, the Italian is detached from the pursuit of social approval: 'L'Italien ignore le mirage de l'opinion, les préjugés des rangs'.¹¹⁶ Philippe Berthier vividly comments on Stendhal's imagined and dramatized Italy in *Vanina Vanini*:

Rarement la sauvagerie baroque de la passion comme absorption intégrale de l'autre, refus farouche du compromis, du partage et plus encore du sacrifice, triomphe mortifère d'un égoïsme sacré, aura été mieux illustrée que dans ce texte bourré jusqu'à la gueule de poudre narrative, sans une once de graisse, tout muscles et nerfs.¹¹⁷

Giuseppe Tomasi di Lampedusa, author of *The Leopard*, similarly portrays Vanina Vanini as an intense and frantic narrative, 'en un nombre de pages qui aurait à peine suffi à Balzac pour décrire le portier de la maison Vanini'.¹¹⁸

As national character is presented as powering creation and artistic development in Stendhal, even in creativity and art, Italy is depicted in stagnation or decadence, undergoing a stasis in creativity:

Il arriva aux élèves de Giotto ce qui arrive aux élèves de Racine, ce qui arrivera à ceux de tous les grands artistes. Ils n'osent voir dans la nature les choses que le maître n'y a pas prises. Ils se mettent tout simplement devant les effets qu'il a choisis, et prétendent en donner de nouvelles copies, c'est-à-dire qu'ils tentent précisément la chose que, jusqu'à un changement de caractère dans la nation, le grand homme vient de rendre impossible.¹¹⁹

¹¹⁵ Stendhal, *Rome, Naples et Florence en 1817*, in *Voyages en Italie*, p. 54.

¹¹⁶ Michel Crouzet, *Stendhal et l'italianité: Essai de mythologie romantique* (Paris: Slatkine, 2006), Chapter 5: 'Pourquoi l'Italien n'a pas de vanité', p. 149.

¹¹⁷ Stendhal, *Vanina Vanini*, in *Œuvres romanesques complètes*, Vol 1 (Paris: Gallimard, Pléiade, 2005), p. 247–269, Notice et notes, 925–932 (p. 928).

¹¹⁸ Lampedusa, *Leçons sur Stendhal*, pp. 119–120.

¹¹⁹ Stendhal, *Histoire de la peinture en Italie*, Chapter 16, Ecole de Giotto, p. 117.

Historical reverence clashes with the drive for innovation. In Stendhal's Europe, it is evident that while Italy held a central position, it is no longer the driving force of modernity. When it comes to travelling there, Stendhal feels at ease. However, when it concerns work, Stendhal already leans towards Spain, as we present in the Appendices. Thus, the prominence given to Italy in Stendhalian criticism seems to warrant reconsideration, so as not to diminish our understanding of his interest in other European nations.

The Germans and Austrians

The subtlety and depth of Stendhal's depiction of the German character lead to a reconsideration of the conception that Stendhal was exclusively focused on Italy and never interested in Germany.

The German character as depicted in Stendhal raises the question of Germany's unity. Jean-Jacques Labia describes Stendhal's engagement with this region as 'matière d'Allemagne et d'Autriche.'¹²⁰ For thinkers like Goethe and Herder, German cultural and linguistic unity preceded political unification. The Habsburg Empire, with Vienna as its capital, emerged in 1804 following the dissolution of the Holy Roman Empire. It was a remarkable mosaic of diverse peoples, including Germans, Hungarians, Czechs, Slovaks, Poles, Ruthenians, Serbs, and Croats, bound together by a fragile dynastic link that was significantly challenged by the Napoleonic Wars. In the nineteenth century, during the period of German reunification, Tacitus's *Germania* was revisited, reflecting a growing interest in unity.

Germany is an integral part of Stendhal's anthropology of nations. As presented in *De l'Amour*: 'Si l'Italien, toujours agité entre la haine et l'amour, vit de passions, et le Français de vanité, c'est d'imagination que vivent les bons et simples descendants des anciens Germains.'¹²¹ Critics have often downplayed Stendhal's relationship with Germany. In 1977, as Philippe Berthier succinctly puts it, Stendhal never declared 'Ich bin ein Berliner.'¹²² It is often reminded that

¹²⁰ Stendhal, *Le Rose et le Vert* (See note 3), p. 12.

¹²¹ Stendhal, *De l'Amour*, Chapter 48: 'De l'amour allemand'.

¹²² Philippe Berthier, 'L'orange d'Islande: Stendhal et le mythe du Nord', *Romantisme*, vol. 7, n° 17-18, 1977, p. 221.

Stendhal did not speak German and, despite his attempts, abandoned learning the language. His perspective on Germany was significantly influenced by Madame de Staël's *De L'Allemagne*, which played a crucial role in popularizing German culture in France. According to Philippe Berthier, Germany provided Stendhal with 'quelque chose qu'il n'a jamais renié: une certaine poésie douce ou mystérieuse'.¹²³ Suzanne Mildner contends, albeit in a way we find contestable, that Stendhal opposes German Romanticism: 'Stendhal refuse le romantisme allemand, mais il reste toujours fidèle à l'amour werthéen. Le Nord, et en particulier l'Allemagne, exercent sur lui un charme inattendu et inexplicable, malgré tous les sarcasmes et les préjugés nourris à l'égard du caractère allemand.'¹²⁴

We argue that Stendhal's affinity with Germany is stronger than critics initially recognized, as evidenced by numerous passages.¹²⁵ Certain moments in Stendhal's writings challenge the perceived superiority of his love for Italy: 'Les Italiens se moquent beaucoup des Allemands; ils les trouvent stupides, et en font cent contes plaisants. J'offensais le patriotisme d'antichambre et me faisais des ennemis, lorsque je disais: qu'avez-vous produit dans le XVIIIème siècle d'égal à Mozart, à Frédéric le Grand et à Catherine?'.¹²⁶ Stendhal's initial journey into Germany, from 1806 to 1808, was part of his administrative and military service during the Napoleonic campaigns: 'Toutes les armées du monde ne me feront jamais oublier le temps heureux que j'ai passé à Brunswick'.¹²⁷ These experiences provided Stendhal with his first insights into German culture and society. The year 1809 brought Stendhal to Vienna in the aftermath of the Battle of Wagram. Stendhal discovered the German cultural and intellectual circles during the Austrian campaign, and notably heard about Schlegel. In a letter to Pauline in 1809, he recounts assisting to a service in honour of Haydn, marked by the performance of Mozart's Requiem: 'J'y étais, et en uniforme au deuxième banc'.¹²⁸ During his time in Vienna, Stendhal developed a personal

¹²³ Philippe Berthier, 'L'orange d'Islande: Stendhal et le mythe du Nord', p. 223.

¹²⁴ Suzanne Mildner, 'Le mythe romantique de l'amour à la Werther chez Stendhal: Mina, Féder et De l'amour', in Marie-Rose Corredor, *Stendhal 'romantique'? Stendhal et les romantismes européens* (Grenoble: UGA Éditions, 2016), 281–290, paragraph 16.

¹²⁵ Stendhal, *Histoire de la peinture en Italie* (Le Divan), Vol 1, p. 153, 263. Vol 2, p. 56 n, 88 n, *Rome, Naples et Florence en 1817*, pp. 141–143; *Voyages en Italie*, p. 899 and 1698–1699; *Mélanges de littérature* (Le Divan), Vol 3, p. 190.

¹²⁶ Stendhal, Appendice, Notice sur la vie et les ouvrages de Mozart, p. 675.

¹²⁷ Stendhal, Letter to Karl Friedrich von Strombeck, 26, 1813.

¹²⁸ Stendhal, *Correspondance*, Letter to Pauline, Vienna, 25 July 1809.

relationship with Madame Z, also known as Comtesse Palfy. According to André François-Poncet in *Stendhal en Allemagne*: ‘C'est à Vienne et à Brunswick qu'Henri Beyle a vécu en Allemagne assez longtemps pour en recevoir des impressions durables. [...] Vienne a marqué dans son esprit et dans son cœur. Il a pleinement apprécié le charme de cette ville, qui lui parut faite pour le sourire, le plaisir de vivre et la douceur d'aimer. Son penchant pour la musique, dans une ambiance elle-même musicale, s'y est élargi et précisé.’¹²⁹ In 1812, Stendhal travelled across Germany to join the Russian campaign. Taking him through cities such as Königsberg, Berlin, and Erfurt, his return journey provided him with a direct view of the impacts of war, as he recounts to the Countess Pierre Daru: ‘Nos peines physiques de Moscou ont été diaboliques. [...] J'en gèle encore et vous vous en apercevez sans doute à mon griffonnage. [...] Nous avons l'air de nos laquais.’¹³⁰ Stendhal's later travels in Germany included his participation in the Campaigns of Lützen and Bautzen in 1813, and his tenure in Silesia as the Controller of the Emperor's Household. Additionally, he made a brief visit to the Rhineland in 1838. His multiple visits to Germany were significant periods of personal growth.

For Stendhal, Germany stands as nation who ‘meurt d'envie d'avoir un caractère, et qui ne peut en venir à bout.’¹³¹ This characterization of the Germans who have no character and ‘meurent d'envie d'en avoir’ is recurring as a set phrase.¹³² In 1828, Schlegel explains: ‘Germany, despite being not only geographically but also intellectually at the heart of Europe, remains a terra incognita even for its immediate neighbours. [...] The exaggerated adulation of other nations has not made us vain, as has happened to the detriment of our neighbours to the west.’¹³³ Similarly, in *De l'Allemagne*, Mme de Staël notes German lack of self-consciousness:

En littérature, comme en politique, les Allemands ont trop de considération pour les étrangers et pas assez de préjugés nationaux. C'est une qualité dans les individus que l'abnégation de soi-même et l'estime des autres; mais le patriotisme des nations doit être égoïste. La

¹²⁹ André François-Poncet, *Stendhal en Allemagne* (Paris: Hachette, 1967), pp. 9–10.

¹³⁰ Stendhal, *Correspondance*, Vol 1, To Countess Pierre Daru, Smolensk, 10 November 1812.

¹³¹ Stendhal, *Histoire de la peinture en Italie*, Part II, p. 153.

¹³² *Rome, Naples et Florence*, dans *Voyages en Italie*, édition de V. Del Litto, Paris, Gallimard, coll. ‘La Pléiade,’ 1973, p. 24.

¹³³ August Wilhelm Schlegel, *Outline of the European Conditions of German Literature* (1828), in Catriona Seth, *The Idea of Europe: Enlightenment Perspectives* (Cambridge: Open Book Publishers, 2017), 26.

fierté des Anglais sert puissamment à leur existence politique; la bonne opinion que les Français ont d'eux-mêmes a toujours beaucoup contribué à leur ascendant sur l'Europe; le noble orgueil des Espagnols les a rendus jadis les souverains d'une portion du monde. Les Allemands sont Saxons, Prussiens, Bavaois, Autrichiens.¹³⁴

Germany is presented as a nation with a 'bonne foi remarquable', characterized by fidelity and kindness.¹³⁵ As Philippe Berthier remarks, in Stendhal's Germany, the stultifying naivety proves to be a rare secret of inner authenticity and genuineness.¹³⁶ In *Le Rose et le Vert*, Stendhal offers a depiction of life in Königsberg as based on good faith, enthusiasm, candour, orderly living, tender idealism, abstruse but harmless speculation.¹³⁷ Germany is the only country of the North uncorrupted by industrialism, despite the protestant roots: 'Il faut savoir qu'en Allemagne le culte de l'argent n'ossifie pas tout à fait le cœur.'¹³⁸ In Stendhal's works, Germans are described as 'peuple bon, lourd et lent'¹³⁹, 'réellement bon'¹⁴⁰. When Stendhal was 16 years old, his clarinet teacher was 'un bon et bel Allemand, nommé Hermann.'¹⁴¹ Stendhal remarks 'le goût endormi des voyageurs allemands'.¹⁴² This national stereotype is endowed with gender significations: 'Il m'est fort difficile d'être simple, sincère, bon, en un mot parfaitement allemand, avec une femme française.'¹⁴³ This stereotype is shared by contemporaries. For Jules Michelet, in Germany, 'les gens sont bons'.¹⁴⁴ In Balzac, the musician Schmücke from *Le Cousin Pons* is depicted as a dreamer, naive artist, devoid of a sense of humour.

¹³⁴ Madame de Staël, *De l'Allemagne*, 5 Vols (Paris: Hachette, 1958), Vol 1, Part 1: 'De l'Allemagne et des mœurs des Allemands', Chapter 1: 'Des mœurs et du caractère des Allemands', p. 40.

¹³⁵ *Journal*, 20 September 1808, 5 May 1809 (*Œuvres intimes*, p. 860, p. 887).

¹³⁶ Philippe Berthier, 'L'orange d'Islande: Stendhal et le mythe du Nord', *Romantisme*, vol. 7, n° 17-18, 1977, p. 216.

¹³⁷ Philippe Berthier, 'L'orange d'Islande: Stendhal et le mythe du Nord', p. 221.

¹³⁸ *Romans et nouvelles*, p. 1072.

¹³⁹ Stendhal, *Rome, Naples et Florence en 1817*, in *Voyages en Italie*, p. 118.

¹⁴⁰ Stendhal, *Mémoires d'un touriste*, p. 355.

¹⁴¹ Stendhal, *Souvenirs d'égotisme*, p. 493.

¹⁴² *Rome, Naples et Florence*, I, 69.

¹⁴³ Stendhal, *Souvenirs d'égotisme*, p. 488.

¹⁴⁴ Michelet, *Journal, Lettres à Pauline* [1828] (Paris: Gallimard, 1959), Notes p. 711 and 715, Vol 1. See also: Irène Tieder, 'Michelet et la 'bonhomie' allemande'.

Germany is also depicted by Stendhal as the country of philosophy. The author comes across as very critical of German philosophy, describing the nation as ‘empêtrée de principes logiques et métaphysiques.’ He finds their philosophy ‘à mourir de rire’ and believes it ‘exalte’ their enthusiasm instead of calming it, as in other countries.¹⁴⁵ Germany, characterized by its excesses of kindness, naivety, and good faith, is also a land of speculative and imaginative extremes. Stendhal proves skeptical towards the idealism of Kant and instead favours the philosophy of the Ideologues. Adhering to the principles of empiricism and sensationalism, the Ideologues posited that all knowledge is derived from sensory experience. They were critical of metaphysical speculations and rationalism, particularly Kant's ideas, advocating for a more empirical approach to philosophy.

Interestingly, the image of ‘je me fais vif’ for the German is a recurring trope in Stendhal. It is mentioned in the personal writings: ‘Un Allemand se précipitait par la fenêtre: Que faites-vous là, lui dit-on: Je me fais vif. Faure croit que c’est ainsi que je me fais littérateur (passionné).’¹⁴⁶ The image recurs in the English reviews: ‘Vous connaissez l’anecdote de l’Allemand sur le point de se jeter par la fenêtre et qui répondit quand on lui demanda ce que signifiait cette action extraordinaire: Je me fais vif!’¹⁴⁷ The same image can be found in *De l’Amour*: ‘Ces pauvres petites femmes prennent l’inconséquence pour de la gaieté, parce que la gaieté est souvent inconséquente en apparence. C’est comme l’Allemand qui se fait vif en se jetant par la fenêtre.’¹⁴⁸ The *Correspondance* also bears witness to this image: ‘Une femme ne doit compter... sur un adorateur allemand qu’autant qu’elle l’a rendu vif...’¹⁴⁹ In *De l’Allemagne*, Mme de Staël uses the same trope:

Enfin, si les plaisanteries bizarres et vulgaires de quelques ouvrages prétendus comiques manquent de goût [en Allemagne], ce n’est pas à force de naturel, c’est parce que l’affectation de l’énergie est au moins aussi ridicule que celle de la grâce. Je me fais vif, disait un Allemand

¹⁴⁵ *De l’amour*, Vol 4, in *Œuvres complètes*, ed. by V. Del Litto and E. Abravanel, 50 vol, reprint of Geneva: Cercle du bibliophile, 1967-1973, pp. 22, 25 (Genève: Slatkine, 1986), p. 478.

¹⁴⁶ *Pensées*, I, 56.

¹⁴⁷ *New Monthly Magazine*, May 28, *Courrier anglais*, 3, 361.

¹⁴⁸ *De l’Amour* II, 238.

¹⁴⁹ *Correspondance*, IV, 308.

en sautant par la fenêtre: quand on se fait on n'est rien: il faut recourir au bon goût français contre la vigoureuse exagération de quelques Allemands.¹⁵⁰

Mérimée also uses the image about the Queen of the Netherlands: 'Elle se fait vive à la manière des Allemands, qui se jettent par la fenêtre pour avoir l'air dégagé.'¹⁵¹ Other instances can be found: 'Hier, j'ai fait un dîner... avec de grands personnages qui cherchaient à se faire vifs, non point comme les Allemands en se jetant par la fenêtre, mais en faisant beaucoup de bruit.'¹⁵²

German character is often defined in comparison to the French character: 'La vie des Allemands est contemplative et imaginative, celle des Français est tout de vanité et d'activité.'¹⁵³ French légèreté and esprit is often recorded by Stendhal as misunderstood by the neighbour states: 'Les Allemands deviennent fous à la vue de ce qu'ils appellent l'ironie française. Je pousse la prétention anti-ironique jusqu'à être sentimental: *je dis des maximes*, tout cela pour encourager à quelques confidences; vain espoir.'¹⁵⁴ Stendhal's depiction of French and German characteristics echoes previous texts, such as François-Ignace d'Espiard de La Borde's *Esprit des nations*, written in 1752: 'Le Français est léger, inconstant, et brillant. [...] L'Allemand, froid, circonspect, pensif.'¹⁵⁵ The German and Italian characters are also compared in numerous instances. Politically, young Germans 'ont hérité de leur moyen âge, non le républicanisme, la défiance et le coup de poignard, comme les Italiens, mais une forte disposition à l'enthousiasme et à la bonne foi.'¹⁵⁶ In his literary and artistic comparisons across Europe, Stendhal consistently contrasts Germany and Italy on the question of harmonic versus melodic music. Stendhal refers to Austrian composers Haydn and Mozart as German composers, presenting Germany as the land of harmony. He acknowledges their excellence in symphonic music: 'Si je sens le besoin d'entendre de l'harmonie magnifique, je vais à une symphonie de Haydn, de Mozart ou de

¹⁵⁰ Mme de Staël, *De l'Allemagne*, II, Chapter 31.

¹⁵¹ Mérimée, *Lettre à Panizzi*, I, 13 (7-6-58).

¹⁵² Mérimée, *Lettre à une inconnue*, II, 169 (25-7-61). CG, X, 331.

¹⁵³ Stendhal, *Romans et nouvelles*, t.1, p. 703 (projet d'article sur *Le Rouge et le Noir*).

¹⁵⁴ Stendhal, *Mémoires d'un touriste*, 'Tarascon, le 28 juillet 1837', p. 355.

¹⁵⁵ François-Ignace d'Espiard de La Borde, *Esprit des nations* (1752).

¹⁵⁶ *De l'Amour* (Cercle du Bibliophile), Part II, p. 25.

Beethoven.¹⁵⁷ Mme de Staël also makes musical comparisons: 'La musique instrumentale est aussi généralement cultivée en Allemagne que la musique vocale en Italie'¹⁵⁸ Stendhal states: 'J'aimais passionnément non pas la musique, mais uniquement la musique de Cimarosa et de Mozart,'¹⁵⁹ but his passion for Mozart took time to develop, and he initially failed to recognize Mozart's significance, who had actually died in 1791: 'C'était en 1797, Mozart venait de mourir. Mais alors ce grand nom ne me fut point révélé. Une grande passion pour les mathématiques m'entraîna; pendant deux ans, je n'ai pensé qu'à elles.'¹⁶⁰

Stendhal's vision of the German character is thus complex, profound, and detailed throughout his works, shedding doubt on the perception of his exclusive focus on Italy. It will serve as the foundation for our analysis of *Mina de Vanghel*.

The Spanish

Stendhal's attraction to Spain has been strongly overlooked by criticism, overshadowed by the focus on Stendhal's relationship to Italy. However, it is to be remarked that Stendhal, as a diplomat, —more than Italy— requested to be posted in Spain. In 1810, Stendhal writes to the général Dejean: 'J'ai l'honneur de supplier Votre Excellence de vouloir bien m'employer en Espagne.'¹⁶¹ Stendhal's military file contains a letter from Villemanzy, mentioning: 'M. Debeyle, commissaire des guerres adjoint m'ayant manifesté le désir d'être employé en Espagne.'¹⁶² Stendhal writes to Pauline, two years earlier: 'Je désire aller en Espagne. J'ai le projet d'apprendre la langue, et de revenir ensuite en Italie vers trente ans.'¹⁶³ In 1835 Mérimée acknowledges Stendhal's dissatisfaction being a diplomat in Italy and advises him to request the Consulate of Valence rather than Barcelone: 'Si vous ne pouvez pas résider à Civ. il est clair qu'il faut demander votre changement.'¹⁶⁴ Stendhal follows this advice and requests to

¹⁵⁷ *Vie de Rossini, Œuvres complètes*, édition de V. Del Litto et E. Abravanel (Genève: Cercle du bibliophile, 1967-1973), 50 vol., t. XXII, p. 163.

¹⁵⁸ Staël, *De l'Allemagne*, *id.*, p. 48.

¹⁵⁹ Stendhal, *Souvenirs d'égotisme*, Chapter 5, p. 465.

¹⁶⁰ Stendhal, *Souvenirs d'égotisme*, p. 494.

¹⁶¹ *Correspondance*, III, 220-21, au général Dejean, Linz, 2 January 1810.

¹⁶² Dossier militaire de Stendhal, lettre de Villemanzy à Dejean, Linz, 03 January 1810.

¹⁶³ *Correspondance*, III, 152, To Pauline, 29 October 1808.

¹⁶⁴ Letter, 30 April 1835.

leave his post in Italy for a post in Spain, in a letter dated 10 July 1835 reproduced in the Appendices. Stendhal gets to know Spain through his friend Mérimée, who developed a passion for Spain and staged many writings in this country.¹⁶⁵ Stendhal may have spent 24 hours in Barcelona in September 1829, an experience he later incorporated into his 1837 work *Voyage dans le Midi de la France*.¹⁶⁶ He notably remarks: 'J'ai une inclination naturelle pour la nation espagnole; c'est ce qui m'a amené ici.'¹⁶⁷

Spain is the foundational setting for Stendhal's European characters. The author extols the authenticity and ingenuity of the Spanish people: 'J'aime encore l'Espagnol parce qu'il est *type*; il n'est copie de personne. Ce sera le dernier *type* existant en Europe.'¹⁶⁸ We interpret Stendhal's use of the word 'type' as referring to a well-defined, pure and genuine character, largely uncorrupted by external influences from the rest of Europe. The presentation of the Spanish as 'type' is recurring.¹⁶⁹ The Spanish people are referred to as 'peuple neuf': 'Perpignan me plaît infiniment, surtout un certain pont peuplé de marchands catalans; c'est un peuple absolument neuf pour moi.'¹⁷⁰ Spain would be the last nation not yet engaged in a dialogical movement with other nations, and consequently the most authentic, by its a-sociality, its incapacity to feel social penalty. Inspiringly, Clément Rosset defines reality as 'what does not have a double.'¹⁷¹

Stendhal describes Spanish with the honouring expression: 'ce peuple singulier'.¹⁷² In *Histoire d'Espagne*, Stendhal describes 'l'humeur et les manières dures des Espagnols,'¹⁷³ where 'superstition' and 'orgueil' prevail.¹⁷⁴ Fieriness characterizes Spanish people: 'Je vivais

¹⁶⁵ See for instance: *Carmen*, or *Les Âmes du purgatoire*, or *La Perle de Tolède*.

¹⁶⁶ *Voyage dans le Midi de la France*, 563–565. See: Robert Vigneron, 'Stendhal en Espagne', *Modern Philology* (The University of Chicago Press, August 1934), Vol. 32, 1, 55–66 (p. 60).

¹⁶⁷ *Mémoires d'un touriste*, Barcelone, 1837.

¹⁶⁸ Stendhal, *Voyages en France*, 'Barcelone, 1837', p. 566.

¹⁶⁹ Stendhal, *Mémoires d'un touriste*, Vol 1, p. 418; Vol 2, p. 255, Vol 3, p. 293, 305, *Courrier anglais*, Vol 2, p. 37 et 127; *Mélanges de littérature*, Vol 3, p. 385, *Vie de Rossini*, Vol 2, p. 87, *De l'Amour* (Bibliophile), Vol 2, p. 15 and sq, p. 184.

¹⁷⁰ *Mémoires d'un Touriste*, in *Voyages en France* (Pléiade, 1965), p. 503.

¹⁷¹ Clément Rosset, *Le réel et son double* (Paris: Gallimard, 1993).

¹⁷² Stendhal, Review of M.A. Rabbe's *Résumé de l'histoire d'Espagne*, 'Publications étrangères', *New Monthly Magazine* (April 1825), in *Stendhal Paris–Londres*, ed. by Renée Dénier (Paris: Stock, 1997), p. 379.

¹⁷³ Stendhal, *Histoire d'Espagne* (Paris: Kimé, 2007), p. 74.

¹⁷⁴ *Correspondance générale*, Vol 1, To Pauline, 1^{er} oct. 1805, p. 334-335.

solitaire et fou comme un Espagnol, à mille lieues de la vie réelle'.¹⁷⁵ According to Inmaculada Ballano, Stendhal is the inventor of the word 'espagnolisme', which only appeared in Littré in 1877.¹⁷⁶ Francesco Manzini explores the 'mâle énergie', 'espagnolisme' and 'noblesse à l'espagnol' to be found in Stendhal's depiction of the Spanish.¹⁷⁷ Stendhal indeed describes a very haughty, wild, 'farouche' Spanish nobility.¹⁷⁸ Stendhal develops an ideal vision of Spanish as authentic, expressing their feelings and undergoing crises of honour. Stendhal describes the Spanish as never fighting 'pour un salaire, mais pour obtenir un avantage moral.'¹⁷⁹ We understand that they are at the antithesis of the 'hommes à argent du continent'.¹⁸⁰

If *De l'Amour* (1822) only depicted the Spanish chapter around the stereotype of the 'Andalouse,' the more mature texts reflect a deeper and more varied understanding, knowledge, and experience of Spain. In 1804, Stendhal writes to Pauline about Spain: 'j'ai beaucoup aimé ce peuple, c'est l'ouvrage du *Cid* et de *Don Quichotte*', reality merging with literary representations.¹⁸¹ In *De l'Amour* (1823), the chapter dedicated to Spain, mentions the Romantic cliché of 'Andalouse aux yeux noirs'. At that time, Stendhal only knows Spain from books and has no personal knowledge of the country. It is at the occasion of his journey in the Midi of France that Stendhal makes an incursion into Spain (only 24h in Barcelona).¹⁸² In *Le Rouge et le Noir* (1830), Julien Sorel, in contrast to Fabrice del Dongo—the epitome of the Italian in *La Chartreuse de Parme* (1839)—embodies characteristics of 'hispanité'. *Le Rouge et le Noir* stages Besançon, described as a 'vieille ville espagnole', where Julien dreams of 'châteaux en Espagne'. Compared to the bland young men around the Hôtel de la Môle, Mathilde imbues Julien with a mythical lineage, fancying him as the natural son of a 'duc espagnol prisonnier de guerre du temps de Napoléon'.¹⁸³ The fantasized vision of Spain continues to inspire Stendhal up until his last years, permeating and enriching his fiction. In *Le Coffre et le Revenant* (1830),

¹⁷⁵ Stendhal, *Œuvres intimes*, II, 628.

¹⁷⁶ Inmaculada Ballano, *España en Stendhal* (Kassel: Edition Reichenberger, 1997), Part VI: 'Integración de la 'imagen' colectiva en el universo personal del escritor: El 'españolismo' de Henri Beyle', 157–162 (p. 157).

¹⁷⁷ Francesco Manzini, *Stendhal's Parallel Lives* (Oxford: Peter Lang, 2004), pp. 166–168.

¹⁷⁸ Stendhal, *Mémoires d'un touriste*, p. 567.

¹⁷⁹ *Mémoires d'un touriste*, Barcelone, 1837.

¹⁸⁰ *Voyages en France*, 'Genève', p. 446.

¹⁸¹ *Correspondance générale*, Vol 1, To Pauline, 29 oct. - 16 nov. 1804, p. 219.

¹⁸² *Voyage dans le Midi de la France*, in *Mémoires d'un touriste*, in *Voyages en France* (Pléiade, 1965).

¹⁸³ Stendhal, *Romans I*, p. 324.

subtitled 'aventure espagnole', the mythical Andalusia serves as the setting. As 'silence' is praised in Stendhal—especially in *La Chartreuse de Parme* (1839), it is often referred to as a Spanish quality: 'J'aime fort le silence espagnol'¹⁸⁴, this reminding Don Quichotte's enjoyment of 'merveilleux silence' in the home of chevalier au Vert Manteau.¹⁸⁵

In his intimate writings, Stendhal equates the Russian Campaign and the Spanish Wars as trials for the modern individual and experiences of the world as foundational to Romanticism.¹⁸⁶ In *Le Rouge et le Noir* (1830), the 'Guerre d'Espagne'—signifying the resistance to Napoleon—is recalled by both Norbert de la Mole and the comte Altamira. Spain embodies resistance to Napoleon and the sublime war that enshrouded Comte Mosca in *La Chartreuse de Parme* (1839).¹⁸⁷ In 1845, Mérimée's *Carmen* exemplifies how the Spanish character symbolizes rebellion and resistance to oppression for all nations of Europe.

Spain and Italy are combined in Stendhal's mind through the kingdom of Napoli, where their history actually merged.¹⁸⁸ Italy, Spain and Arabia are often blurred in a form of undetermined South.¹⁸⁹ Notably, Barcelone is presented as having the potential to supersede Milan: 'Barcelone est à ce que l'on dit, la plus belle ville d'Espagne après Cadix; elle ressemble à Milan ; mais, au lieu d'être située au milieu d'une plaine parfaitement plate, elle est adossée au Mont-Joui.'¹⁹⁰

The Genevese

Geneva is an example of the intrinsic bivalence of Stendhal's depiction of national character, neither positive, nor negative. His vision of the Genevese is characterized by esteem for their intellectual life and denunciation of their emotional austerity. As Michel Cruzet remarks, in

¹⁸⁴ *Vie de Henry Brulard*.

¹⁸⁵ Miguel de Cervantes, *Don Quixote*, Part 2, Chapter 16.

¹⁸⁶ Stendhal, *Œuvres intimes*, I, 254.

¹⁸⁷ Stendhal, *Romans II*, p. 1218.

¹⁸⁸ Stendhal, *La Duchesse de Paliano* R II, 1412.

¹⁸⁹ Fauriel and Stendhal, Letter of 7 July 1822, *Correspondance générale* III, 375.

¹⁹⁰ *Mémoires d'un Touriste*, Perpignan, 20 September 1837.

Stendhal, 'celui qui ne présente aucun trait blâmable ne présente aucun trait intéressant'.¹⁹¹ Switzerland underwent a revolution in early 1798, and was transformed into the Helvetic Republic in 1799. Stendhal has passed through Geneva many times on his way to Italy. In Stendhal, each nation is at once repudiated, exalted and acclaimed.

Geneva is presented by Stendhal as the realm of science: 'Hélas! c'est bien toujours cette ville que Voltaire a peinte d'un mot: *On y calcule et jamais on n'y rit.*'¹⁹² Geneva is associated with intellectualism: 'Il est possible qu'un savant genevois ne songe qu'à conquérir l'estime d'un autre savant qui habite Upsal ou Edimbourg, et qui est juge compétent.'¹⁹³ Geneva is presented by Jules Janin as having 'toute sorte de prétentions philosophiques et littéraires.'¹⁹⁴ Genovese intellectual life is highly esteemed by Stendhal:

Mais passons sur ce ridicule outré de mine et d'expression, que fait naître l'absence du *rire* à Genève; il faut reconnaître qu'il y a beaucoup de savoir en ce pays. On y lit attentivement les cinq ou six bons ouvrages qui paraissent chaque année en Europe; et comme les Genevois savent les langues, ils lisent le bon livre qui paraît à Londres, avec autant de facilité que celui qui paraît à Berlin ou à Pavie.¹⁹⁵

Stendhal also remarks on the economic prosperity of the Genevese:

Les Genevois sont les premiers *hommes à argent* du continent; ils ont dans ce métier la première des vertus, celle de manger chaque jour moins qu'ils ne gagnent. Leur plus doux plaisir, quand ils sont jeunes, consiste à songer qu'un jour ils se verront riches. Même quand ils font des imprudences et se livrent au plaisir, ils choisissent des plaisirs

¹⁹¹ Michel Crouzet, *Stendhal et l'Amérique*, Vol 2, *Stendhal et Le Désenchantement du Monde* (Paris: Classiques Garnier, 2011), p. 634.

¹⁹² Stendhal, *Voyages en France*, 'Genève', p. 442. *ibid.* *Vie de Henry Brulard*, 621.

¹⁹³ *Voyages en France*, 'Lac de Genève, le 24 juin 1837', p. 462.

¹⁹⁴ Jules Janin, *Journal des Débats*, 20 June 1838.

¹⁹⁵ *Voyages en France*, 'Genève', p. 460.

champêtres et peu coûteux: une promenade à pied, au sommet de quelque montagne où l'on boit du lait.¹⁹⁶

This aspect of their character is presented through vignettes and anecdotes:

Les Genevois ont une manière de traiter les affaires nette, précise, inexorable, qui me convient fort. Vous avez fait une affaire de trente mille francs avec une maison; tout s'est terminé promptement et loyalement. Vous avez de nouveaux rapports après dix ans; cette maison vous fait observer que, lors de la première affaire, vous avez oublié de lui rembourser un port de lettre de sept sous.¹⁹⁷

Stendhal praises the Genevans for their order and method, which he highlights by numbering his observations. Stendhal seeks medical treatment in Geneva and reflects on his experience at Dr. Prévost's office with high regard: 'Les médecins genevois sont meilleurs que les médecins parisiens car: '1° Ils daignent interroger leurs malades; 2° ils étudient leurs maladies; 3° ils ne font pas d'esprit en leur parlant; 4° ils ne mettent pas leur amour-propre à la promptitude des décisions.'¹⁹⁸

Stendhal views the Genevan sense of business and cosmopolitanism with both apprehension and admiration. He fears it may detract from sensibility and warmth, yet he also respects it for the perceived intellectual competence and a taste for sciences it fosters. It is less known that in 1805, Stendhal contemplated a banking career. He noted in his journal on July 27, 1805: 'Je commence la banque.'¹⁹⁹ As he entered a relationship with Mélanie Guilbert, which took him to Marseille, he was employed at the Meunier company in export-import. Joining Fortuné Mante in Marseille, a fellow student from the Ecole Centrale of Grenoble, they discussed commerce opportunities and formed plans to establish the firm 'Mante, Beyle et Cie'. However, Stendhal's romantic and business endeavors in Marseille quickly deteriorated, and he returned to Paris in 1806.

¹⁹⁶ *Voyages en France*, 'Genève', p. 446.

¹⁹⁷ *Voyages en France*, 'Genève', p. 449.

¹⁹⁸ *Voyages en France*, p. 451.

¹⁹⁹ Stendhal, *Œuvres intimes*, I, 335.

Stendhal had a penchant for economics, a domain in which he had an extensive knowledge.²⁰⁰ In 1803, he reads J.B. Say's *Traité d'économie politique*.²⁰¹ He also reads Adam Smith's *Recherches sur la nature et les causes de la richesse des nations*, as well as Ricardo and Malthus.²⁰² In *Complot contre les industriels*, he states: 'Moi aussi j'ai lu Mill, Mac Culoch, Maltus et Ricardo, qui viennent de reculer les bornes de l'économie politique. Plus la France sera imbue des grandes vérités qu'ils ont fait remarquer, moins elle laissera passer de bévues dans la fabrication de son budget, plus elle fera de canaux et surtout de chemins de fer.' In *Vie de Henry Brulard*, Stendhal acknowledges, 'J'aime [...] les mathématiques pour elles-mêmes comme n'admettant pas l'hypocrisie et le vague, mes deux bêtes d'aversion.'²⁰³ As he planned to write an economic treaty in 1810, *Influence de la richesse sur la population et le bonheur*, Stendhal envisaged to study 'le bonheur' under the angle of economics: 'Tous les écrivains d'économie politique ne tendent qu'à faire produire, économiser les produits et jamais consommer. Ils ne font pas entrer en considération le bonheur. Ils oublient que le meilleur encouragement à la production est la jouissance résultant de la consommation. [...] Battre ferme ces messieurs. J'ai trouvé ainsi une manière neuve et d'ailleurs parfaitement raisonnable de considérer mon sujet.'²⁰⁴

It is clear that despite Stendhal's interest in and respect for Geneva, this country does not align with his personal sensibilities. Despite his intellectual esteem, Stendhal deplores the lack of sensibility, notably in gender relations: 'À force d'imiter la Bible, ou ce que les commentateurs disent qu'est la Bible, les rapports des sexes sont devenus fort maussades.'²⁰⁵ 'Il me semble que ce qui distingue Genève, c'est que les deux sexes s'y voient aussi peu que possible.'²⁰⁶

Geneva plays an essential role among the national characters described by Stendhal. It is consistently aligned with England: 'Sous beaucoup de rapports, le caractère genevois se

²⁰⁰ See in particular: Arbelet, *Stendhal épicier* (Paris, 1926).

²⁰¹ Stendhal, *Œuvres intimes*, I, 324.

²⁰² *Journal littéraire*, I, 275.

²⁰³ Stendhal, *Vie de Henry Brulard*.

²⁰⁴ Stendhal, *Mélanges*, 116-117, 120, 127, 277. Victor Del Litto, *En marge des manuscrits de Stendhal: Compléments et fragments inédits* (1803–1820) (Paris: P.U.F., 1955), p. 192.

²⁰⁵ Stendhal, *Voyages en France*, 'Genève', p. 444.

²⁰⁶ Stendhal, *Voyages en France*, 'Genève', p. 444.

rapproche du caractère anglais.²⁰⁷ Conversely, France and Geneva are often contrasted, underscoring their divergent qualities:

La véritable comédie, pour les Anglais et les Genevois, c'est la comédie remplie de grâce de Shakespeare, qui peint les hommes tels qu'il serait tant à désirer qu'ils fussent. [...] Un homme parfaitement calculé pour faire horreur aux Genevois, c'est Voltaire, qui fut si longtemps leur voisin. [...] On voit qu'une grande moitié de la littérature française agit à contresens sur l'esprit genevois. On peut dire que le fond du caractère français, gai, satirique, moqueur, libertin, chevaleresque, étourdi, échappe entièrement à une tête genevoise; au contraire, ce qui est empathique, raisonnable et triste: Nicole, de Bonald, Bossuet, Bourdaloue, Abbadie, va droit à leur cœur.²⁰⁸

Geneva holds a pivotal role in Stendhal's conception of Europe, claiming a central position in the concert of nations. It is particularly the intellectual life of Geneva that captures Stendhal's attention. He views both Paris and Geneva, despite their divergent styles, as central hubs of Europe.

The Otherness of Europe

In *The Clash of Civilizations and the Remaking of World Order*, Samuel Huntington presents a vision where European identity is strongly perceived as a distinctive civilization by those outside of Europe, particularly by individuals from China or America. This perspective underscores the idea that 'being European' resonates more profoundly with external observers, highlighting the unique cultural and intellectual heritage that defines Europe in a global context.²⁰⁹

²⁰⁷ Stendhal, *Voyages en France*, 'Genève', p. 447.

²⁰⁸ Stendhal, *Voyages en France*, 'Genève', pp. 447–48.

²⁰⁹ Samuel Huntington, *The Clash of Civilizations and the Remaking of World Order* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1996).

Stendhal journeyed across Europe, traversing from London to Moscow and from Spain to the Netherlands, as well as staying in cities like Rome and Geneva. However, Stendhal's interest in Europe was selective, focusing primarily on France and its immediate neighbours, thereby establishing a gradient of 'Europeanness' where France and its adjoining countries are foregrounded, whereas Russia, the Orient, and America are cast as 'the Other'. Greece is also a blind corner of Stendhal's Europe, only existing in a form of symbolic geography.²¹⁰

Stendhal explicitly acknowledges his disinterest in regions that present a stark contrast to his experiences in Europe: 'L'aspect sale sous lequel on découvre l'humanité dans les positions difficiles, en un mot ce que j'ai vu en Russie me dégoûte des voyages un peu dangereux. Plus d'Amérique, à peine Constantinople. En Italie, il ne me manque que Ferrare. Je verrai la Suisse, une fois, en allant à Paris. Il ne me manque de considérable que l'Angleterre, mais je ne bande pas pour ce pays de puritains. Ce que j'ai entendu d'eux, et l'histoire des Stuarts par Hume,²¹¹ que je viens de lire à Milan pour me consoler de la bataille du mont Saint-Jean,²¹² m'a dégoûté d'eux'.²¹³ This acknowledgment further illustrates his selective engagement with Europe.

This approach suggests that Stendhal perceives national identities as a constellation of relationships, institutions, and spheres of influence, where stereotypes serve as both a linguistic and political framework. In Stendhal's œuvre, the distinct characteristics of each national identity can only be understood in relation to others, which entails that countries lying beyond his reach are inherently excluded from his European narrative. This perspective underscores the notion that the essence of Europeanness, as constructed by Stendhal, is intrinsically linked to its contrast with 'the Other'.

America

In his article 'Stendhal et l'Europe,' Philippe Berthier examines the moments when several of Stendhal's heroes (Octave de Malivert and Lucien Leuwen) contemplate expatriation as a means to begin anew in America, linking this idea to periods of temporary personal disillusionment or

²¹⁰ G. Kliebenstein, 'Stendhal face au Grec', *Stendhal à Cosmopolis*, p. 25-59.

²¹¹ Hume, *Histoire de la maison de Stuart sur le trône d'Angleterre*.

²¹² The battle of mont Saint-Jean is Waterloo.

²¹³ *Œuvres intimes*, 25 July 1815.

social failures. Berthier incisively and boldly concludes: 'Le rêve américain a ainsi fonction de recours ultime, en cas d'échec ou d'insatisfaction radicale, c'est une sorte de substitut du suicide.'²¹⁴ This analysis, although quite radical, has the merit of providing an insightful entry point into Stendhal's perspective on America.

Fabrice is also among those heroes dreaming of expatriation to America, as depicted in this dialogue from *La Chartreuse de Parme* with the Duchesse Sanseverina. This exchange serves as a microcosm of the broader debates of Stendhal's generation about the new continent:

–Te vois-tu au corso de Florence ou de Naples, disait la duchesse, avec des chevaux anglais de pur sang! Pour le soir, une voiture, un joli appartement, etc.

Elle insistait avec délices sur la description de ce bonheur vulgaire qu'elle voyait Fabrice repousser avec dédain.

[...] Il parlait d'aller à New York, de se faire citoyen et soldat républicain en Amérique.

–Quelle erreur est la tienne! Tu n'auras pas la guerre, et tu retombes dans la vie de café, seulement sans élégance, sans musique, sans amours répliqua la duchesse.²¹⁵

The Duchess Sanseverina describes a conventional European high society's vision of happiness, a vision of material and social opulence. Soon, these superficial pleasures are perceived by both the Sanseverina and Fabrice as the mundane decadence of the aristocracy. Ideals of freedom and democracy are associated with the New World, able to provide a life of purpose rather than one of comfort and appearance. Sanseverina's remark, 'Tu n'auras pas la guerre,' suggests she thinks Fabrice, like all his generation is engaged in a quest for a more authentic and engaged life, while being born after the Napoleonic conquests.

This dialogue is reflective of the true originality of America in Stendhal, as the 'other' of Europe: its politics. Though when it comes to America's democracy, Stendhal is immediately on his guards: 'Le suffrage universel règne en tyran et en tyran aux mains sales [...] Les hommes

²¹⁴ Philippe Berthier, 'Stendhal et l'Europe', in *Espaces stendhaliens* (Paris: P.U.F., 1997), 167–185 (p. 173).

²¹⁵ Stendhal, *La Chartreuse de Parme*, Part 1, Chapter 6.

ne sont pas pesés, mais comptés, et le vote du plus grossier des artisans compte autant que celui de Jefferson, et souvent rencontre plus de sympathies.²¹⁶ 'Nous voici déjà en Amérique, obligés de faire la cour à la partie la plus déraisonnable de la population.'²¹⁷ The omnipotence of universal suffrage is no better than the old forms of political power in Europe: 'Promettre sa voix, en prenant de l'eau-de-vie dans une auberge, ou solliciter la voix de son voisin pour soi ou pour un ami, est le grand amusement et la principale occupation d'un Américain qui a amassé de quoi vivre. Ces électeurs sont jaloux de toute supériorité. Je prie le lecteur de réfléchir aux immenses conséquences de cette courte phrase.'²¹⁸ All in all, Stendhal prefers the corso to republicanism, as expressed in *Lucien Leuwen*: 'Faire la cour aux hommes du peuple, comme il est de nécessité en Amérique, est au-dessus de mes forces. Il me faut les mœurs élégantes, fruits du gouvernement corrompu de Louis XV.'²¹⁹ Stendhal expresses this idea once more in one of his review: 'En France [...] personne n'aime la République. L'idée d'adopter une forme de gouvernement qui répugne tant à nos goûts, et qui est si contraire à nos habitudes nationales, était pure folie [...] Les Français aiment assez avoir un roi qui monte bien à cheval, donne des fêtes brillantes et entretient une maîtresse.'²²⁰

Despite recognizing America as a derivative of European principles, Stendhal does not hold America in high esteem or interest, viewing it rather negatively, as a potential threat to Europe's autonomy. He speculates that the future may see Europe adopting systems and ideologies reflective of those developed in America, fearing a reversal of roles where Europe could become subordinate to America. Stendhal's engagement with America, primarily through the lens of Tocqueville's writings and the zeitgeist of his time—as he never visited the country himself—, presents America in a critical light. The link between Stendhal and America has been studied in depth by Philippe Berthier. For him, America's socio-political organization is based on four pillars: 'la liberté, la Bible, le travail et l'argent'. But in Stendhal's eyes, 'les trois

²¹⁶ Stendhal, *Lucien Leuwen*, R I, 1358.

²¹⁷ Stendhal, *Mémoires d'un touriste*, 'Bourgogne, le 27 avril 1837', p. 30.

²¹⁸ *Mélanges*, t. II, p. 323.

²¹⁹ Stendhal, *Lucien Leuwen*, Chapter 6.

²²⁰ Stendhal, 'Lettres de Paris, par le petit-neveu de Grimm (4)', *London Magazine* (April 1825), in *Stendhal Paris–Londres*, ed. by Renée Dénier (Paris: Stock, 1997), 366–78 (p. 369). Review of Guizot's *Coup d'oeil sur la France et l'Europe en 1825*.

derniers sont pourris; seul le premier vaudrait en soi quelque chose, s'il n'était, aussi, gravement compromis par un vice intrinsèque. En fait, on a affaire à quatre visages de l'aliénation.'²²¹

Arabia and the Mediterranean

This section highlights Stendhal's unique perspective on Europe and its relation to 'the Other', notably the regions of Arabia and the Mediterranean. In *De l'Amour*, in the chapter 'L'Arabie' and 'De l'Amour en Provence,' Stendhal extends his literary and cultural exploration to these areas, offering a distinct perspective on love, gender relations, and geographical identities.²²²

In *Essai sur les mœurs et l'esprit des nations*, specifically the section entitled 'Précis de ce qu'étaient originairement les nations occidentales, et les raisons pour lesquelles on commence cet essai par l'Orient', Voltaire gives pride of place to Oriental tales in the formation of European nations, emphasizing the depth of Oriental culture: 'Gaulois, Allemands, Espagnols, Bretons, Sarmates, nous ne savons rien de nous avant dix-huit siècles, sinon le peu que nos vainqueurs ont pu nous en apprendre; nous n'avions pas même de fables: nous n'avions pas osé imaginer une origine. Ces vaines idées que tout cet Occident fut peuplé par Gomer, fils de Japhet, sont des fables orientales.'²²³ The Western world's fascination with the Orient, a trend emerging in the eighteenth century among orientalists, historians, and travellers, was reinforced in the early nineteenth century with Napoleon's Egyptian campaigns. This interest became a significant inspiration for Romantic travel writers, as C.W. Thompson records.²²⁴

Stendhal's readership is accustomed to exotic descriptions of faraway countries. As Muriel Augry-Merlino explains, 'la littérature française se tourne vers des contrées lointaines et

²²¹ Philippe Berthier, *Stendhal, littérature, politique et religion mêlées* (Paris: Classiques Garnier, 2011), Chapter 13: 'Stendhal et la 'civilisation' américaine', 143–161.

²²² Stendhal, *De l'Amour*, Chapter 53: 'L'Arabie'.

²²³ Voltaire, *Essai sur les mœurs et l'esprit des nations* [Geneva: Cramer, 1756], ed. by René Pomeau (Paris: Garnier, 1990), Vol 1, section: 'Précis de ce qu'étaient originairement les nations occidentales, et les raisons pour lesquelles on commence cet essai par l'Orient', pp. 197–198.

²²⁴ Thompson, C.W., *French Romantic Travel Writing* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012).

exotiques avant d'entreprendre la découverte d'un 'Ailleurs' limitrophe et européen.²²⁵ This is reflected by the numerous travel accounts of the era, broadening the scope of Stendhal's knowledge of distant civilization: *Lettres persanes*, *Lettres d'une péruvienne*, *Lettres iroquoises*, *Lettres tahitiennes*; Denon in Egypt²²⁶, Chateaubriand to *Jérusalem*²²⁷, Lamartine in *Orient*²²⁸, Custine in *Russie*²²⁹, Sand in Majorca²³⁰, Jacquemont in India²³¹, Chateaubriand in America²³², Quinet in Greece²³³, Custine or Mérimée in Spain²³⁴. In particular, Volney's *Voyage en Egypte et en Syrie* and Raynal's *Histoire philosophique et politique des établissements et du commerce des Européens dans les deux Indes* broaden the scope of Stendhal's knowledge of ante-Islamic Bedouin civilization.²³⁵ In the eighteenth century, the explosion of travel becomes a source of a vast scholarly production, whether it be naturalistic, geographic or ethnographic: La Condamine in Peru, de Bougainville and Cook in the Pacific, de Carsten Niebuhr in Arabia, Anquetil-Duperron and more broadly the travels in India after the British conquests in Bengal (1759), James Bruce, Volney and Napoleon in Egypt, the Jesuit missionaries in China, or Alexander von Humboldt through the American continent.²³⁶

During a period when Chateaubriand was writing about Jerusalem and Lamartine about the Orient, Stendhal observes in *Mémoire d'un touriste*: 'Il n'y a presque pas de voyages en France: c'est ce qui me pousse à faire imprimer celui-ci.'²³⁷ In his article 'Stendhal et l'Europe',

²²⁵ Muriel Augry-Merlino, *Le Cosmopolitisme dans les textes courts de Stendhal et Mérimée* (Genève: Slatkine, 1990), p. 3.

²²⁶ Dominique Vivant Denon, *Voyage dans la Basse et la Haute Egypte, pendant les campagnes du général Bonaparte* (Paris: Didot l'Aîné, 1802).

²²⁷ François-René de Chateaubriand, *Itinéraire de Paris à Jérusalem et de Jérusalem à Paris, en allant par la Grèce et revenant par l'Egypte, la Barbarie et l'Espagne* (1811).

²²⁸ Alphonse de Lamartine, *Voyage en Orient* (1835).

²²⁹ Custine, *La Russie en 1839* (1843).

²³⁰ George Sand, *Un hiver à Majorque* (1842).

²³¹ Victor Jacquemont, *Correspondance de Victor Jacquemont avec sa famille et plusieurs de ses amis pendant son voyage dans l'Inde (1828–1832)* (Paris: Fournier, 1833).

²³² François-René de Chateaubriand, *Voyage en Amérique* (1827).

²³³ Edgar Quinet, *De la Grèce moderne et de ses rapports avec l'antiquité* (1830).

²³⁴ Custine, *L'Espagne sous Ferdinand VII* (1838); Mérimée, *Lettres d'Espagne* (1831).

²³⁵ Del Litto, *La vie intellectuelle de Stendhal*.

²³⁶ Pierre-Yves Beaurepaire, *Les Lumières et le monde: Voyager, explorer, collectionner* (Paris: Belin, 2019).

²³⁷ Stendhal, *Mémoire d'un touriste*, beginning, 'Verrières, près Sceaux'.

Philippe Berthier commends Stendhal's ability to 's'immerger dans le pays réel', a pointed comment that raises the question of what 'pays réel' actually means, inviting consideration of how social images and cultural realities are crafted, beyond their literal expressions.²³⁸ Stendhal documents his travel in France as one would write about travels in Italy. His decision to explore the customs of neighbouring countries is intentional, as illustrated in a passage where he satirises the 'juges de bon ton': 'Si vous avez une telle rage de voyager et d'imprimer, imitez M. de Freycinet ou M. de Humboldt, allez à Madagascar, à Tombouctou; décrivez des mœurs de sauvages. S'il y a quelque rapport entre eux et nous, peut-être serons-nous assez bons pour vous pardonner. Jadis les pantalons que portent sous le bras les courtisans du roi de Tonkin ont pu nous faire rire. [...] Mais vous allez décrire les mœurs de l'Italie, d'un pays où l'on va en quatre jours [...] fi l'horreur! Allez Monsieur, vous êtes de mauvais goût'²³⁹ This sentiment was echoed laudatively by A. Dupont in the journal *La Presse* when the book was released: 'La description de la Grande-Chartreuse vaut à elle seule toutes les descriptions qu'on nous a fait des monuments des pays lointains; elle a surtout de plus que celle-ci le mérite d'être exacte et de pouvoir être vérifiée.'²⁴⁰ As Daniel Roche recounts, geographical delimitations of most travel accounts are always of a restrictive and artificial nature: it is always about a stay in a specific country, a stay of a particular nationality in a particular country, or a stay of a particular category of individual who is travelling.²⁴¹ While most travel writings by contemporaries are delimited geographically, as stated right from the title, *De l'Amour* adopts a thematic focus, considering geographical places as regards love.

Stendhal's perception of geographical identities, particularly of Arabia and the Mediterranean, is deeply entrenched in literary and cultural dimensions. Drawing from Gérard Genette's concept of hypotexts and hypertexts in *Palimpsestes*, it could be argued that Stendhal constructs an Arabia that is more a cultural and literary construct than a geographic reality.²⁴² This aligns with Edward Said's notion of the 'Orient' as a Western literary creation.²⁴³ Stendhal forms a hypertextual connection with the region, influenced by the works of Volney, Diderot, and

²³⁸ Philippe Berthier, 'Stendhal et l'Europe', in *Espaces stendhaliens* (Paris: P.U.F., 1997), 167–185 (p. 170).

²³⁹ 'Les juges de bon ton', 24 December 1824.

²⁴⁰ *La Presse*, 25 June 1838.

²⁴¹ Daniel Roche, *Humeurs vagabondes: De la circulation des hommes et de l'utilité des voyages* (Paris: Fayard, 2003).

²⁴² Gérard Genette, *Palimpsestes: La littérature au second degré* (1982).

²⁴³ Edward Saïd, *Orientalism* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1978).

notably *One Thousand and One Nights*. His encounters with erudite figures like Fauriel further deepened his appreciation and understanding of Arabian culture and literature.

For Stendhal, the South of Provence and Arabia, especially in the period leading up to the 12th century, represent ideals in love and gender relations. In *De l'Amour*, he depicts the Arabian era preceding Muhammad as a golden age of noble customs, contrasting it with the affected refinement of contemporary European societies. This view is exemplified in his admiration for the 'mœurs nobles' depicted in *One Thousand and One Nights* and the courtesies of pre-Islamic Arabian culture. On the manuscript of Fauriel's book on Arabic poetry, one can decipher: 'Conditions des femmes—Égalité morale avec les hommes.'²⁴⁴ Vivant Denon reported in his *Voyage en Egypte* that the Bedouins 'obéissaient aux femmes'.²⁴⁵ As love plays a central role in Stendhal's works, his quest for an idealised conception of love in the Orient may indicate a certain alignment with his own understanding of love, which he may not fully recognize in European characters. Similarly, this idea recurs in *De l'Amour*. In the chapter 'De l'Arabie': 'Il fallait pour que l'amour parût tout ce qu'il peut être dans le cœur de l'homme, que l'égalité entre la maîtresse et son amant fût établie autant que possible. Elle n'existe point, cette égalité, dans notre triste Occident'²⁴⁶ In the chapter 'De l'Amour en Provence': 'Nous voyons le sexe le plus faible moins tyrannisé qu'il ne l'est *légalement* aujourd'hui'.²⁴⁷ 'En Provence, ce qu'il peut y avoir de calculé et de soumis à l'empire de la raison était fondé sur la justice et sur l'égalité de droits entre les deux sexes, voilà ce que j'admire surtout comme éloignant le malheur autant qu'il est possible.'²⁴⁸ In *Lamuel*, it is suggested by Sansfin that the secret of love is to be discovered in *One Thousand and One Nights*. Here, a reversal of European and Oriental roles in love can be observed. Ironically, Stendhal positions the northern Europeans as 'barbarians' in matters of love, suggesting that true civilization and inspiration in love should be sought from the South, from the 'Foreign', the 'Autre'. This inversion challenges conventional Eurocentric views and underscores Stendhal's unique perspective. As exposed in *De l'Amour*,

²⁴⁴ Fauriel, *Manuscrits arabes et notes diverses*, Ms 2332, Bibliothèque de l'Institut de France.

²⁴⁵ Vivant Denon, *Voyages dans la Basse et la Haute Egypte pendant les campagnes de Bonaparte* (Londres: Ch. Taylor, 1817), I, p. 49.

²⁴⁶ Stendhal, *De l'Amour*, Chapter 53: 'De l'Arabie'.

²⁴⁷ Stendhal, *De l'Amour*, Chapter 51: 'De l'Amour en Provence jusqu'à la Conquête de Toulouse en 1228, par les Barbares du Nord'.

²⁴⁸ Stendhal, *De l'Amour*, Chapter 51: 'De l'Amour en Provence jusqu'à la Conquête de Toulouse en 1228, par les Barbares du Nord'.

Part II, Chapter 41: 'Des nations par rapport à l'amour', love finds different cultural expression in Europe.²⁴⁹ Stendhal uses Arabia as a benchmark to assess the degradation of love in the West. Stendhal considers Italy and Spain closer to the Arabian ideal due to their passionate nature, critiques French vanity as detrimental to love, and condemns the emotional restraint prevalent in English and Genevan societies. Arabian literature and culture significantly influenced the literary traditions of the south of France and Southern Europe more broadly. Stendhal's perspective on Mediterranean civilization highlights its impact on European culture and challenges the dominant European Christian model. Significantly, *One Thousand and One Nights* profoundly impacted Stendhal, as seen in his own words: '*Les Mille et une nuits* que j'adore occupent plus d'un quart de ma tête.'²⁵⁰

His interactions with contemporary scholars like Fauriel enriched his understanding of Arabian culture, poetry, and their influence on European literary traditions. Stendhal frequents Fauriel from 1821 to 1823 along with Cabanis in the salon of the Englishwoman Mary Clarke.²⁵¹ Fauriel acts a key French–Arabic translator for many intellectuals of that time. He is among the first to highlight the resemblance between Arabic poetry and that of the troubadours, a link he presented in detail in his *Histoire de la poésie provençale* (1846). Mary Clarke expressed reticence for this material to be handed over to 'Monsieur Beyle', as he could make fanciful and inaccurate uses of it:

J'ai reçu une lettre d'Amédée hier qui me dit que M. Beyle va écrire un livre sur les vieilles romances, je vous supplie, mon cher ange, si vous avez le moindre égard pour ce qui me plaît de lire, n'en indiquez, ni dites seulement une ligne ou un refrain, je suis révoltée de l'idée que son odieuse patte puisse toucher un pareil sujet, il a l'art comme les véritables harpies de gâter tout ce qu'il touche [...] vous êtes un homme qu'il aime beaucoup à exploiter, je vous en supplie les larmes aux yeux,

²⁴⁹ Stendhal, *De l'Amour*, Part II, Chapter 41: 'Des nations par rapport à l'amour'.

²⁵⁰ Stendhal, *Souvenirs d'égotisme*, p. 70.

²⁵¹ Marion-Elmina Smith, *Une Anglaise intellectuelle en France sous la Restauration* (Paris: Champion, 1927).

ne le voyez pas jusqu'à mon retour, [...] car pour sûr il tirera toutes sortes de choses de vous.²⁵²

It is a straightforward reference to Stendhal's unfortunate tendency to plagiarize and adulterate his sources. The erudite Fauriel appears not to have followed Mary Clarke's recommendations, as Stendhal thanks Fauriel for the materials relating to the chapters on the Provençal in a letter dated 7 July 1822.²⁵³ Fauriel provided him with translations of pre-Islamic Arabic poems from Caliph Haroun al-Rashid's *Livre des Chansons* and anecdotes of 'amour arabe'.²⁵⁴ Stendhal in *De l'Amour*: 'Il y a un fort grand nombre de manuscrits arabes à Paris'²⁵⁵ may refer to Fauriel's review of an Arabic anthology in the *Revue encyclopédique* in 1820.²⁵⁶ Fauriel is directly acknowledged as a source by Stendhal in *Vie de Henry Brulard*: 'M. Fauriel, qui m'a donné les histoires d'amour arabes'²⁵⁷ 'Je le lui dis [à Fauriel], quand il me donna dix pages pour l'Amour, aventures arabes...'²⁵⁸ In return, Stendhal expressed vivid enthusiasm for Fauriel in a puff piece promoting Fauriel's writings to the English public.²⁵⁹ His exposure to pre-Islamic Arabic poetry and literature, as well as scholarly works on the subject, informed his understanding of love's psychology and the role of women. Stendhal's theories of love and views on gender relationships were significantly shaped by Arabian influences, an aspect which might have been underestimated by critics. His almost naturalistic analysis of love, drawn from manuscript work, translation efforts and scientific sources, lead to a systematic presentation of love with distinct stages. The earliest known origin of this idea traces back to the work of Ibn Dawud of Esfahan. In his book 'Kitâb az-Zahra,' Ibn Dawud delineates eight psychic stages of love: admiration (istihsan), attraction (mawadda), attachment (mahabba), familiarity (khulla), inclination (hawa), desire ('ishq), enslavement (tatyim), and delirium (walah). These stages offer a detailed

²⁵² Letter of Mary Clarke to Fauriel, Edinburgh, Sunday 11 August 1822, *Correspondance de Fauriel et Mary Clarke*, published by Ottmar von Mohl (Paris: Plon, 1911), pp. 33-34.c

²⁵³ Stendhal, *Correspondance générale*, III, 375.

²⁵⁴ Letter of Stendhal to Fauriel, 7 July 1822, *Correspondance* (Pléiade), II, p. 7 [manuscrits disponibles à la Bibliothèque de l'Institut de France].

²⁵⁵ Stendhal, *De l'Amour*, p. 205.

²⁵⁶ Jean Humbert, *Anthologie arabe, ou Choix de poésies arabes inédites traduites en français* (1819).

²⁵⁷ *Vie de Henry Brulard*, I, p. 103.

²⁵⁸ *Vie de Henry Brulard*, I, p. 135.

²⁵⁹ Stendhal, 'Publications étrangères', *New Monthly Magazine* (August 1824), in *Stendhal Paris-Londres*, ed. by Renée Dénier (Paris: Stock, 1997), pp. 180-81.

and nuanced exploration of the emotional journey of love. Centuries later, the concept re-emerged. Stendhal, in *De l'Amour* discusses the process of falling in love through the metaphor of crystallization, outlining four phases: admiration, acknowledgment, hope, and delight. Stendhal's portrayal, while innovative, raises questions about its originality. It is speculated that he may have been influenced by, or even plagiarized, one of his contemporaries, André le Chapelain. Chapelain's *De Amore*, known for its thirty rules of love, was a popular subject in the salons of the early nineteenth century and could have been a source of inspiration for Stendhal. Despite the potential overlap with Chapelain's work, it is Stendhal who is predominantly remembered by posterity. His interpretation and expansion of the concept have overshadowed Chapelain's contribution, making *De l'Amour* a seminal reference in the discourse on love. This historical interplay of ideas, crossing cultural and temporal boundaries, raises Stendhal's particular interest.

Arabia serves as a point of comparison with the south of France in particular, and Southern Europe more broadly. In Stendhal's eyes, France pales in comparison to Arabia, which he sees as untainted by superficiality and refined sentimentality. He urges a comparison between the noble customs of pre-Islamic Arabia and the grim aspects of European history, highlighting the profound influence of Arabian culture on his work. 'Le siècle héroïque des Arabes, celui où ces âmes généreuses brillèrent pures de toute affectation de bel esprit ou de sentiment raffiné, fut celui qui précéda Mohammed et qui correspond au Vème siècle de notre ère, à la fondation de Venise et au règne de Clovis; je supplie notre orgueil de comparer les chants d'amour qui nous restent des Arabes, et les mœurs nobles retracées dans les *Mille et une Nuits* aux horreurs dégoûtantes qui ensanglantent chaque page de Grégoire de Tours, l'historien de Clovis, ou d'Egihard, l'historien de Charlemagne.'²⁶⁰ The Arab world also impacts Southern France and Europe as Stendhal links the courteous and Romantic traditions of these places to Arabian influences. The connection between Provençal love and Arab love, noted by scholars like Sismondi²⁶¹ and influenced by figures like Madame de Staël, underscores the significant cultural exchange between these regions.

Beyond the idealisation, Stendhal's interest in Arabia and Provence reflects a worldview liberated from the confines of the European Christian model. He regards the Mediterranean as

²⁶⁰ Stendhal, *De l'Amour*, Appendix 'Des Cours d'Amour', 'Notice sur André, Le Chapelain'.

²⁶¹ Sismondi, *De la littérature du midi de l'Europe* (Paris: Treuttel et Würtz, 1829).

the cradle of European civilization, shaped by its climate, prosperous inhabitants, and absence of oppressive religion or legislation: 'Il faut considérer la Méditerranée comme le foyer de la civilisation européenne. Les bords heureux de cette belle mer si favorisée par le climat l'étaient encore par l'état prospère des habitants et par l'absence de toute religion ou législation triste. Le génie éminemment gai des Provençaux d'alors avait traversé la religion chrétienne sans en être altéré.'²⁶² This perspective aligns with Montesquieu's criteria for defining the national character and highlights the impact of religion on societal values. In essence, Stendhal's writings on the Arab world demonstrate his European cross-cultural consciousness. They offer further understanding of Stendhal's depiction of national characteristics in Europe through an exploration of the boundaries and the 'Other.'

In his seminal article 'Stendhal et l'Europe', Berthier characterizes Stendhal as 'un enragé de comparatisme anthropologique' and 'ethnologue passionné de l'Europe moderne'.²⁶³ By delving into Stendhal's conceptualization of nations, we have uncovered Stendhal's keen interest and methodological approach to national characteristics. Stendhal's engagement with European states and nations is evidence of an encyclopaedic tendency, the author mapping out the world and its different states. There is an attention to the apparently immutable quality of national identities. Yet borders and identities are also depicted in their flexibility and indetermination, Stendhal revealing a complex connection between the cultural and the political that will be further explored in our next chapter.

Chapter 2: Interrogating the Nation-Scale

Character: The Relevant Geographic Scale

In this section, we will put forward the hypothesis that in Stendhal's work, the nation is not necessarily the only intelligible and most relevant unit to study the sense of belonging. Stendhal discusses several scales (national, regional, local) as degrees of belonging, degrees of existence,

²⁶² Stendhal, *De l'Amour*, Chapter 51: 'De l'Amour en Provence jusqu'à la Conquête de Toulouse en 1228, par les Barbares du Nord'.

²⁶³ Philippe Berthier, 'Stendhal et l'Europe', in *Espaces stendhaliens* (Paris: P.U.F., 1997), 167–185 (pp. 167 and 169).

degrees of poetics. The nation state is called into question by downward structures such as the regions and cities, as well as upward structures such as supranational or federal entities, and older and paranational forms of belonging, all creating additional layers of complexity.

In *Ils apprenaient la France* and *La création des identités nationales: Europe XVIIIe–XXe siècles*, Anne-Marie Thiesse challenges pre-constructed oppositions, between the regional and the national, but above all between the national and the international, insofar as the European identity would have largely contributed to the definition of national identities in eighteenth and nineteenth-century Europe.²⁶⁴ According to Thiesse, the nation is not a well-founded fiction. Its historical foundations are weak. In the nineteenth century, 'les France' became 'la France' at the end of an effort of inculcation. If not the arbitrary, she at least highlights the voluntarism underlying the creation of a French national identity and the difficulty of arousing collective adherence to this fiction, even today.

Stendhal often articulates geographical character regardless of the nation scale. Cities are sometimes pitted against each other: 'A Milan, la principale affaire est de bien dîner; à Florence, de faire croire qu'on a dîné.'²⁶⁵ A Paris l'on pêche par vanité, et à Bologne à cause du soleil.'²⁶⁶ Sense of belonging does not necessarily respects the territorial boundaries of a country: Fabrice's affective life is between two entities, the Lombardo-Venitian kingdom and the Austrian possessions. Different forms of networking are highlighted in Stendhal: local networks within nations, international relations between nation-states, and transnational networks involving global systems. For example, Geneva and England are connected by Protestantism and industrialism, contrasting with the Catholic influence on France, Spain, and Italy. Seeking meaningful comparisons in terms of affective belonging, Stendhal does not even hesitate to draft comparisons where the tenor and the vehicle are not of the same kind. Different scale's types are pitted against one another. For instance, 'Geneva', as a city, is often compared to 'England' as a country. Countries may be pitted against regions: 'Je souhaiterais aux Français la bonhomie de la Lombardie.'²⁶⁷ Descriptions of local and national networks are intertwined. In

²⁶⁴ Anne-Marie Thiesse, *Ils apprenaient la France* (Paris: MSH, 1997). See also: Anne-Marie Thiesse, *La création des identités nationales: Europe XVIIIe–XXe siècles* (Paris: Seuil, 1999).

²⁶⁵ Stendhal, *Rome, Naples et Florence en 1817*, in *Voyages en Italie*, p. 85.

²⁶⁶ Stendhal, *Rome, Naples et Florence en 1817*, in *Voyages en Italie*, p. 81.

²⁶⁷ Stendhal, *Rome, Naples et Florence en 1817*, in *Voyages en Italie*, p. 114.

Nations et nationalisme, Ernst Gellner emphasizes the complex and dynamic nature of cultural and political identities:

C'est un mythe que de considérer les nations comme un moyen naturel, donné par Dieu, de classer les hommes et de considérer les nations comme une destinée politique naturelle. [...] Les nations ne sont pas inscrites dans la nature des choses, et elles ne constituent pas une version politique de la doctrine des espèces naturelles. Pas plus que les Etats-nations n'étaient la destinée manifeste et ultime des groupes ethniques et culturels. Ce qui existe ce sont des cultures, souvent groupées de manière subtile, qui se fondent l'une dans l'autre, qui se chevauchent et s'entremêlent, et il existe, généralement mais pas toujours, des unités politiques de toutes tailles et de toutes formes.²⁶⁸

Nation-states would be one of many possible political arrangements that can arise and encompass a meaningful form of cultural unity.

National networks are mainly characterized by the political sovereignty over the territories; judicial regulation, monopoly of military force, communication and transport infrastructures also characterize national unity. However, in the early nineteenth century, France's unity and national sense of belonging remains a strongly contested issue. According to Eugen Weber, even in the second half of the nineteenth century, 'local patriotism had more meaning than national and national issues no meaning at all'.²⁶⁹ In Stendhal's time, France had long been established, but the forging of a unified French identity was still underway. The unified vision of France was constructed by the Enlightenment philosophers and found its fulfilment in the French Revolution. Abbé Sieyès, in 1789, stated: 'La France ne doit point être un assemblage de petites Nations, qui se gouverneroient séparément en Démocraties; elle n'est point une collection d'États'.²⁷⁰ Similarly, Camille Desmoulins proclaimed in 1789: 'Nous ne sommes plus de Chartres ou de Monthléry, nous ne sommes plus Picards ou Bretons, nous ne sommes

²⁶⁸ Ernst Gellner, *Nations et nationalisme* (Paris: Payot, 1989), p. 76.

²⁶⁹ Eugen Weber, *A Modern History of Europe* (London: Robert Hale & Company, 1973), Chapter 17: 'National counterpoint: internal affairs, 1848–1918', 'Spain', p. 826.

²⁷⁰ Abbé Sieyès, *Dire de l'abbé Sieyès, sur la question du Veto royal, à la séance du 7 September 1789* (Paris: Imprimeur de l'Assemblée nationale, 1789), 1–30, p. 6.

plus d'Aix ou d'Arras, nous sommes tous Français, tous frères'.²⁷¹ This same universalism is present in the dominant Enlightenment narrative of Europe. Rousseau noted in 1772: 'Il n'y a plus aujourd'hui de Français, d'Allemands, d'Espagnols, d'Anglais même quoi qu'on en dise; il n'y a que des Européens. Tous ont les mêmes goûts, les mêmes passions, les mêmes mœurs parce qu'aucun n'a reçu de forme nationale par une institution particulière.'²⁷² As the political and territorial entity of France had already been created, it was followed by the process of cultivating a cohesive national identity among its people.

Yet, this project is not shared by the relativist, anti-rationalist, vitalist counter-Enlightenment movement within Romanticism. Joseph de Maistre remarks in 1796: 'Il n'y a point d'homme dans le monde. J'ai vu dans ma vie des Français, des Italiens, des Russes; je sais même, grâce à Montesquieu, qu'on peut être Persan; mais quant à l'homme je déclare ne l'avoir rencontré de ma vie; s'il existe c'est bien à mon insu.'²⁷³ Inhabitants of different countries organize, perceive and communicate differently. As he denounces the illusory character of rational autonomy and inner individual freedom, emphasizing community belonging, Joseph de Maistre challenges the myth of a globalized man, stemming from a presocial and universal man. This is echoed by Herder, in *Considérations sur la France*, seeing the notion of the 'universal' as morally and emotionally impoverished: 'L'Europe se distingue par la variété de ses nations, de ses coutumes, de ses arts'²⁷⁴

Furthermore, Stendhal wrote during a pre-nation-state period, where national entities were not yet fully formed—and it is a part of the history of nation-states that their boundaries and legitimacy are perennially challenged. One of the most striking events from his time onward in Europe is the creation of Italy and Germany as modern nation-states, a process that began in 1815 and continued until 1871. What Stendhal calls Germany, Italy, Spain or France do not correspond exactly to the nation-states as we know them today. At the beginning of the nineteenth century, Germans are Saxons, Prussians, Bavarians, Austrians. In Goethe's *Faust*,

²⁷¹ Camilles Desmoulins, *Révolutions de France et de Brabant*, 1 (November 1789), 9. See also: Mona Ozouf, 'La Révolution française et la formation de l'homme nouveau', in *L'homme régénéré. Essai sur la Révolution française* (Paris: Gallimard, 1989), 116–157.

²⁷² Jean-Jacques Rousseau, 'Sur le gouvernement de Pologne', in *Œuvres complètes* (Paris: Gallimard, Pléiade, 1966), iii, p. 960.

²⁷³ Joseph de Maistre, *Considérations sur la France* (1796).

²⁷⁴ Johan Gottfried Herder, *Idées sur la philosophie de l'histoire de l'humanité* (Paris: Levrault, 1827).

the carousers sing about the 'Germanies' in plural: 'The dear old Holy Roman Reich: | How does it hold together?'. In *De l'Allemagne* (1810), Mme de Staël acknowledges: 'Quelques traits principaux peuvent seuls convenir également à toute la nation allemande, car les diversités de ce pays sont telles qu'on ne sait comment réunir sous un même point de vue des religions, des gouvernements, des climats, des peuples même si différents.'²⁷⁵ Similarly, Stendhal stresses the diversity of Italian regions: 'Rimini, le 21 mai 1817.—Comme chaque quartier de Naples a une langue, ici chacune de ces petites villes voisines, Ravenne, Imola, Faenza, Forli, Rimini, a des mœurs différentes. Les uns sont prompts, emportés, vindicatifs, libertins; les autres rangés, tranquilles, allemands.'²⁷⁶ Massimo d'Azeglio's famous word 'We have made Italy: now we must make Italians' betrays the contrast between the liberal intention and Italy's regional reality. As Eugen Weber describes, in Stendhal's time Italy was far from having completed unification:

Twenty-odd dialects, a score of cities on every one of which the life of a province turned, no roads worth the name, a congeries of states, and a variety of regimes: royal in Savoy and Naples, republican in Venice, Genoa and Lucca, papal in Rome, ducal in Tuscany and Parma, Austrian in Milan and Lombardy—such was eighteenth-century Italy, the garden of Europe, a mild, wild, sunny, fertile, poverty-stricken land of splendid decaying cities, industrious and miserable populations, lively and irrelevant cultural activity, where political divisions favoured fascinating variety and petty tyranny, but scarcely any sense of Italy as such.²⁷⁷

Stendhal constantly emphasizes Italy and Germany's lack of centralization: 'L'Italie n'est pas comme la France, elle a une vingtaine de capitales; en France, il n'y a que Paris. Les littérateurs de Lyon, de Nantes, de Bordeaux sont des êtres ridicules. L'Italie est, au contraire, dans l'heureuse position de l'Allemagne. On se moque fort bien, à Venise, de ce qui est applaudi à

²⁷⁵ Madame de Staël, *De l'Allemagne*, 5 Vols (Paris: Hachette, 1958), Vol 1, Part 1: 'De l'Allemagne et des mœurs des Allemands', Chapter 1: 'Des mœurs et du caractère des Allemands', p. 36.

²⁷⁶ Stendhal, *Rome, Naples et Florence*, in *Voyages en Italie*, p. 97.

²⁷⁷ Eugen Weber, *A Modern History of Europe* (London: Robert Hale & Company, 1973), Chapter 13: 'The Balance of the Powers', 'Italy', p. 574.

Milan.²⁷⁸ In *Voyages en Italie*, Stendhal develops a national stereotype of Italy, but also plenty of regional stereotypes which do not necessarily interlock. Stendhal highlights the differences in character between Italians of different cities and compare them to Germans and French:

Si on frappe quelqu'un de la basse classe à Florence il s'humiliera d'autant plus devant nous; car Florence depuis le règne de Cosme II est un pays totalement aristocrate. [...] Mais il n'en va pas de même chez le Romain, et c'est pour ce trait de son caractère que j'estime ce peuple. L'abominable despotisme qui pèse sur lui depuis le XV^e siècle (voyez les *Mémoires* de Benvenuto Cellini) ne lui a laissé qu'une vertu: l'énergie. Cette vertu prend souvent la physionomie du crime. [...] En Allemagne ou en France, si un paysan est insulté par un voisin, il lui donne un coup de poing; à Rome, il lui donne un coup de couteau.²⁷⁹

The process of national unification, which began in the nineteenth century, has remained highly problematic up to the present day. The twentieth and twenty-first centuries interrogate the solidity and durability of nation-states. Some disappeared after the First World War, as a consequence of negotiations (Czechoslovakia) or violence (Yugoslavia). In the Near and Middle East, as in Africa, political movements are explicitly calling into question the borders of nation-states inherited from colonization. Some states are undergoing a brutal fragmentation (Iraq, Libya, Syria, Yemen). On the contrary, some countries have been recently created in further regions of the world (Kosovo, Bangladesh in 1971, Papua New Guinea in 1975, East Timor in 2002). Failed states are several in Africa and the Middle East. Iraq, Libya, Syria or Yemen underwent a brutal fragmentation of the national space without the possibility to predict that it would ever reconstitute. European states also undergo fragmentations. Basques or Corsican revendications, the unilateral declaration of independance of Catalonia in 2017, Scotland, the Flemish–Walloon divide, the Italian north-south divide, the Czech–Slovak split, Quebec... These examples of spatial and identity fragmentations actively call into question the nation as a concept.

²⁷⁸ Stendhal, 'Arts et civilisation en Italie', 16 November 1825, in *Stendhal Paris–Londres*, ed. by Renée Dénier (Paris: Stock, 1997), p. 581.

²⁷⁹ Stendhal, 'Lettres de Rome (3), Les Anglais à Rome', *New Monthly Magazine* (July 1825), in *Stendhal Paris–Londres*, ed. by Renée Dénier (Paris: Stock, 1997), 430–439 (p. 432, p. 435).

In Stendhal's geographical vision, the nation-state resulting from the reconfigurations of the nineteenth century is not the unique and most prevalent scale, being challenged 'from below', by the regions, and 'from above', by supranational influences. In particular, the hard geopolitics of inter-state relations does not interest Stendhal so much as the soft-geopolitics between subnational entities. Despite this thesis focusing on national characteristics, this notion should be viewed in relative terms. On the one hand, a nation does not necessarily have a pure identity, especially during Stendhal's time. On the other hand, Stendhal was interested in territorial characteristics at different scales: groups of countries (north-south), regions, and cities. Ultimately, from a literary criticism perspective, the scale of Stendhal's analysis is not crucial. What matters is to note meaningful characteristics associated with the inhabitants of a particular territory, regardless of its extent.

Stendhal's Regionalism

In Stendhal, particular attention is given to the ancient and most ingrained scale, regionalism. In *Mémoires d'un touriste*, Stendhal focuses on regional identities like 'Nivernais', 'Bourgogne', 'Lyonnais', 'Midi', 'Bretagne', 'Normandie' or 'Dauphiné'. Stendhal tries to capture what Désiré Nisard called 'l'orgueil du lieu,' or the pride of a specific place. He is interested in small capitals, regions, dialects, and marginalized peoples. His descriptions strike by their perceptive vivacity, local colour, precision, historical framing. In *Mémoires d'un touriste*, the focus is often hyper-particularistic. Each village and historical region appear to have what Michel Crouzet would call 'un vouloir-vivre particulier' which is 'producteur de beauté'.²⁸⁰ The celebration of the local scale is part of the Romantic mood. The period witnessed picturesque aesthetics, the Gothic Revival and the reinvention of a mythical Middle Ages, which can explain Stendhal's particular interest in traditional regions and their customs on the decline.

This Romantic focus on regional identity is also evident in the works of writers such as Charles Nodier, Baron Isidore Taylor, and Alphonse de Cailleux, whose *Voyages pittoresques et romantiques dans l'ancienne France* (1820–78) reflects a desire to preserve and document the

²⁸⁰ Michel Crouzet, 'Stendhal et les nations', *Commentaire SA*, 2, 98 (2002), pp. 401–07.

uniqueness of regional histories, landscapes, and cultures. Similarly, Alexandre Dumas's *Nouvelles impressions de voyage: Midi de la France* (1841) contributes to the growing fascination with the local and the regional.²⁸¹ Balzac's work provides a key contribution to this period's interest in regional life, small towns, and the rural countryside, a topic that has been extensively studied by Andrew Watts in *Preserving the Provinces*. Watts highlights how Balzac's *La Comédie humaine* integrates regionalism as part of its structural and thematic framework, offering detailed portrayals of provincial life that contrast with the urban dynamism of Paris. Balzac's approach to the provinces is not just descriptive but ideological, portraying the tension between tradition and modernization, as the encroachment of Parisian culture begins to erode local identities. Watts argues that Balzac, in his extensive attention to provincial life, helps to preserve these regional distinctions, thus countering the homogenizing tendencies of modernity.²⁸² George Sand (1804–1876), too, played a pioneering role in rural novels and regionalism in literature, contributing significantly to the development of this genre, which would particularly flourish in the latter part of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Besides, this literary celebration of regionalism was not unique to France; Germany, undergoing a process of unification in the nineteenth century, developed a similar regional consciousness. From a landscape of 396 independent states before 1806, Germany reorganized into 39, and this transformation fostered an increased interest in regional culture and identities as a way of maintaining distinct local traditions amidst political centralization.²⁸³

As explained by François Guillet, Normandy was 'the archetype of the gap between reality and representation', notably based on the oversea's interest in Gothic architecture, whose origins are Norman.²⁸⁴ Stendhal comments on Normandy:

Voici un ouvrage fort intéressant, non seulement par la lumière qu'il jette sur quelques points obscurs de l'histoire de la Normandie à cette époque reculée, mais aussi par la fraîcheur des descriptions et la naïveté

²⁸¹ Alexandre Dumas, *Nouvelles impressions de voyage: Midi de la France* (Paris: Dumont, 1841).

²⁸² Andrew Watts, *Preserving the Provinces: Small Town and Countryside in the Work of Honoré de Balzac* (Oxford: Peter Lang, 2007).

²⁸³ Eugen Weber, *A Modern History of Europe* (London: Robert Hale & Company, 1973), Chapter 13: 'The Balance of the Powers', 'The Germanies', p. 582.

²⁸⁴ François Guillet, *Naissance de la Normandie. Genèse et épanouissement d'une image régionale en France, 1750–1850* (Caen: Annales de Normandie, 2000).

des sentiments qui se dégagent des extraits du vieux poète normand. La publication de cet ouvrage ainsi que celle d'autres ouvrages semblables relatifs aux XII^e et XIII^e siècles est une conséquence de l'immense influence que les œuvres de sir Walter Scott ont exercée sur le goût littéraire des Français. Il y a quelques années seulement, ce genre était négligé par le plus grand nombre et n'était consulté que par quelques pédants ou quelques antiquaires, alors qu'aujourd'hui on le trouve sur la table de l'homme du monde et même dans le boudoir de la *petite maîtresse*.²⁸⁵

In Stendhal's view, 'regionalism' and 'provincialism' are distinct concepts. At the beginning of *Le Rouge et le Noir*, Stendhal stages provincial pettiness in Verrières, an imaginary town that epitomizes all provincial towns. Provincialism is characterized by a narrowing of perspective, a lack of freedom and breadth of vision, and a certain feebleness marked by an incessant orientation towards Paris and a desire to imitate the capital. Regionalism, on the contrary, is a claim to the territory, its beauty, its own values and its customs. *Mémoires d'un touriste* celebrates the diversity of regions: 'J'ai toujours partagé la France, dans ma pensée, en sept ou huit grandes divisions, qui ne se ressemblent pas du tout au fond, et n'ont de commun que les choses qui paraissent à la surface. Je veux parler de ce qui provient de l'action du gouvernement.'²⁸⁶ Stendhal carefully read Helvétius, whose ideal of a federative republic involves dividing France into thirty provinces and creating a supreme council composed of representatives from each.²⁸⁷ Stendhal's interest in the regions arguably influenced his choice of writing topics and the geographical scope of his works: 'Paris, n'est-ce que ça?'.²⁸⁸ Stendhal further states: 'Vous passeriez vingt ans à Paris que vous ne connaîtriez pas la France.'²⁸⁹ *Lucien Leuwen* is staged in Nancy, *La Chartreuse de Parme* in Parma: unlike other major realist authors in the canon—Balzac, Flaubert—, Stendhal does not immerse his works in the typical Parisian setting. The small town is considered a privileged observation post by Stendhal: 'Vous

²⁸⁵ Stendhal, 'Publications étrangères', *New Monthly Magazine* (September 1824), in *Stendhal Paris–Londres*, ed. by Renée Dénier (Paris: Stock, 1997), pp. 185–186.

²⁸⁶ Stendhal, *Mémoires d'un touriste*.

²⁸⁷ Helvétius, *De l'homme*, Vol 2, II, pp. 430–431, pp. 454–455.

²⁸⁸ Stendhal, *Œuvres intimes*, Vol 2, p. 900.

²⁸⁹ Stendhal, *Mémoires d'un touriste*, p. 93.

savez que c'est dans les petites villes qu'il faut aller étudier les gouvernements; là tout se sait, et surtout tout se vérifie.'²⁹⁰

Despite his position as a civil servant, Stendhal proves critical toward the government of Paris on the territory. Stendhal reports, in a thought that may tell about his own position: 'La France et surtout les environs de Paris m'ont toujours déplu, ce qui prouve que je suis un mauvais Français et un méchant, disait plus tard Mlle Sophie (belle-fille de M. Cuvier).'²⁹¹ Economically, he denounces territorial inequality in France: 'Un bon père de famille, qui a un fils d'une faible santé, augmente la dot de ce fils afin qu'il puisse se tirer d'affaires dans le monde. Ce n'est pas ainsi, il faut l'avouer, que le gouvernement en agit avec Toulon et Bordeaux.'²⁹² Administratively, Stendhal displays a very negative vision of 'préfets', representing the political power of the State in the regions: 'Le gouvernement, en province, c'est le préfet; il est à peu près le même partout.' He also denounces the negative cultural effects of French centralization on the province in numerous instances: 'Toute la France copie Paris'.²⁹³ 'En France, il n'y a que Paris; Paris écrème tout.'²⁹⁴ 'L'opinion publique qui, en fin de compte, régit toutes choses en France se fabrique seulement à Paris.'²⁹⁵ 'Les provinces, impuissantes à lancer une mode ont toujours compté pour rien dans les affaires intellectuelles.'²⁹⁶ 'Il est curieux d'observer le souverain mépris avec lequel les Parisiens considèrent les gens de province. Ce sentiment n'est toutefois pas entièrement dépourvu de fondement réel, car, à coup sûr, tout le talent de la France est, à très peu d'exceptions près, réuni dans la capitale.'²⁹⁷ Paris exerts an excessive influence on the French provinces, leading to the 'rancune de la province contre Paris'²⁹⁸. This debate is still topical, as revealed by the successes of Jean-Christophe Bailly's

²⁹⁰ *Mémoires d'un touriste*, p. 211.

²⁹¹ *Souvenirs d'égotisme*, Pléiade, p. 434.

²⁹² Stendhal, *Voyages en France*, 'Bordeaux, 1837', p. 571.

²⁹³ Stendhal, *Romans*, Vol 1, p. 584.

²⁹⁴ Stendhal, *Voyages en Italie*, pp. 112–113.

²⁹⁵ Stendhal, 'Esquisses de la société parisienne, de la politique et de la littérature—Esquisse IX', *New Monthly Magazine* (October 1826), in *Stendhal Paris—Londres*, ed. by Renée Dénier (Paris: Stock, 1997), 738–744 (p. 738).

²⁹⁶ Stendhal, 'Lettres de Paris, par le petit-neveu de Grimm (3)', *London Magazine* (March 1825), in *Stendhal Paris—Londres*, ed. by Renée Dénier (Paris: Stock, 1997), 328–336 (p. 329).

²⁹⁷ Stendhal, 'Esquisses de la société parisienne, de la politique et de la littérature, Esquisse XVI', *New Monthly Magazine* (April 1827), in *Stendhal Paris—Londres*, ed. by Renée Dénier (Paris: Stock, 1997), 817–28 (p. 817).

²⁹⁸ Stendhal, *Voyages en France*, 'Bordeaux, 1837', p. 573.

Le dépaysement: Voyages en France (2012) and Christophe Guilluy's *La France périphérique* (2014). Jean-Christophe Bailly's aim is to write away from the widespread and farfetched national allegories, attempting at visiting French regions away from touristic routes and official patrimony, seeking to present an original, authentic and genuine vision of French geography and national character—one could argue, following the path of Stendhal in *Mémoires d'un touriste*. Two centuries after Stendhal, Guilluy offers an apology to 'la pelote de signes enchevêtrés mais souvent divergents formée par la géographie et l'histoire, par les paysages et les gens' with the goal to describe and record the country's texture. He does not write a canonical history, but a history of traces, of which the present is the outcrop.

Stendhal's judgement on the capital extends in concentric circles, from the French provinces to Europe, mentioning the 'vaste cercle d'égoïsme qui entoure Paris dans tous les sens à quarante lieues de distance'²⁹⁹ Stendhal notes: 'Les villes de province haïssent Paris et l'imitent; il est plaisant de voir ces deux dispositions se succéder tous les quarts d'heure dans l'âme d'un provincial. À Genève on haït Paris, et heureusement on ne l'imite pas, mais on en parle sans cesse.'³⁰⁰ Stendhal extends his regional approach to the whole of Europe. He studies geographical belonging from a liberal point of view where 'rootedness' never means 'confinement'. In that framework, the nation-state is the innovation under scrutiny, mingling of people, forming new open, moving and expanding societies. In *De l'Amour*, Stendhal offers a stereotypical portrait of Andalusia.³⁰¹ In *Mémoires d'un touriste*, he studies Catalonia as a regional peculiarity:

Ces gens-ci sont républicains au fond et grands admirateurs de Jean-Jacques Rousseau et du *Contrat social*; ils prétendent aimer ce qui est utile à tous et détester les injustices profitables au petit nombre, c'est-à-dire qu'ils détestent les privilèges de la noblesse qu'ils n'ont pas, et qu'ils veulent continuer à jouir des privilèges du commerce, que leur turbulence avait extorqués jadis à la monarchie absolue. Les Catalans

²⁹⁹ Stendhal, *Mémoires d'un touriste* (Divan), Vol 1, p. 117.

³⁰⁰ Stendhal, *Voyages en France*, 'Lac de Genève, le 24 juin 1837', p. 461.

³⁰¹ Stendhal, *De l'Amour*, 'De l'Espagne', Chapter 47.

sont libéraux comme le poète Alfieri, qui était comte et détestait les rois, mais regardait comme sacrés les privilèges des comtes.³⁰²

Recent examples of regional breaches in constituted states are numerous. In Spain, the post-Franco democratic movement created the status of 'autonomous communities' in 1978, offering a quasi-federal constitutional model. The government of the Catalan Autonomy organized a first referendum, illegal in the eyes of the Spanish constitution in 2014 to decide on the future of the Catalan 'nation', which ended with more than 80% of the voters voting in favour of independence. This region, still in crisis, unilaterally declared independence in October 2017, underscoring Stendhal's insights on fragmentation are still relevant. In Scotland, the Edinburgh Agreement in 2012, provided for the organization of a referendum on Scottish independence in 2014, narrowly defeated. France, known for its centralization, orchestrated regionalization in the 1980s offering extended powers to the provinces. Some Corsican and Basque nationalists kept campaigning, in favour of an independence or extended autonomy for their region. The 2017 elections in Corsica saw the absolute victory of the autonomists together with the independentists.

In his article 'Stendhal 'bon européen,' romantisme et nations', Michel Crouzet puts forward that Stendhal's perspective on national character provides a unique lens through which to view Europe and nations during a remarkable historical juncture when liberalism and nationalism were not mutually exclusive.³⁰³ What is striking in these regional movements is that 'rootedness' often means 'confinement'. The current demands insists on the 'us alone', a 'Sinn Féin' state, i.e. 'We self,' to use the motto of the Irish independence movement. The idea would be that a positive future for the country or region could only stem from an exclusive and tightened constitution, seeking solutions to crises in a restrained and exclusive political model. Though in another extreme, regionalists can rejoin the defenders of excessive globalization in challenging the nation-state as the dominant regulatory agent and most meaningful social formation. Some regionalist groups today are promoting both the local and the global scale, as opposed to the intermediary scale of the nation-state. This is the case, for example, of Walloon,

³⁰² Stendhal, *Mémoires d'un touriste*, Perpignan, 20 September 1837.

³⁰³ Michel Crouzet, 'Stendhal 'bon européen', romantisme et nations', *Stendhal et le romantisme*, Proceedings of the Fifteenth International Stendhalian Congress, Mayence, 1982 (Aran: Editions du Grand-Chêne, 1984), 59–87 (p. 63).

Flemish and German-speaking Belgians. They see the European Union as a superstructure capable of accommodating all fragmentation. Greater Europe could take the place of a national state which does not satisfy them because it is both not big enough and not close enough. According to them, the regalian functions (defence, currency) would be assumed by the federal structure at reasonable costs and with greater efficiency. Superstructure would be better suited than the classic state to respond to the new contingencies of the globalized world: environment, immigration, taxation, etc.

Studying Stendhal's cultural intelligence provides a key tool to help us navigate the twenty-first-century paradox: on the one hand, the world has never been so global,—on the other hand, the return to national identities has never been so feared. With the rise of populism and the rallying cries against 'the elites,' today all scales and sense of belonging are subject to intense criticism and rejection. When the prejudice is in favour of the so-called 'popular' cultures and the *retro* charms of the regions, the local is often dismissed as folklore or militant delusion, or even devalued as particularistic and retrograde. The globalization of trade and the Internet did not make the need for rooting disappear in favour of a new global culture, in which the individual would be a 'citizen of the world'. Instead, the local scale is the location of a new life and civil action, territories seen as a place of development for creativity and solidarity, yet structurally lacking strength and capacity for action. All scales looking inward lost the strong liberal impetus that characterized the nineteenth century's dialectic of scales.

Field Based Sense of Belonging

In this section, we will make the hypothesis that Stendhal's depiction of nations is strongly imbued with the sensualist philosophy of Condillac and Helvétius. The roots of this influence were extensively studied by Alexandra Pion in *Stendhal et l'érotisme romantique*.³⁰⁴ Our aim

³⁰⁴ Alexandra Pion, *Stendhal et l'érotisme romantique* (Presses Universitaires de Rennes, 2010), Chapter 1: 'Penser, c'est sentir', 'Découverte du sensualisme à l'Ecole centrale', p. 21.

will be to assess the consequences of this philosophy on Stendhal's approach to Europe and the character of nation.

Having a national identity in the first half of the nineteenth century was a new and unobvious sentiment. Despite the Romantic wave of nationalism from the late eighteenth century, Eugen Weber shows in *La Fin des terroirs* how it took until the latter half of nineteenth century for it to filter down to all parts of the social order, even in France, one of the oldest nation-states in Europe. Only educated people could have a sense of their national belonging in Stendhal's time. In the exploration of 'national characters' within this thesis, the term 'nation' is approached with considerable caution. This caution is necessitated by its frequent employment in Stendhal's lexicon to denote the extreme political fervour associated with the Republican Terror and the inherent flaws of democracy:

On peut dire que rien n'est bête comme une nation. C'est que les gens d'esprit ne se chargent pas de plaider ces sortes de causes, ce sont les sots qui, n'ayant rien à dire et s'armant du droit incontestable que leur donne leur immense majorité, se chargent d'ordinaire de ces accusations d'*attentat à l'honneur national, au caractère d'un peuple* et autres balivernes.³⁰⁵

In another passage, Stendhal sums it up bluntly: '*patriote, dans un certain sens, veut dire imbécile et quelquefois méchant*'.³⁰⁶

Stendhal has a clear system of what it means to belong, to neighbour or to be foreign. This is salient in his use of the word 'voisin', which often bears national connotations: 'En fait de *beau*, chaque homme a sa demi-aune: ce qui est beau pour mon voisin est souvent fort plat pour moi; et ce qui est *beau* pour moi, à ses yeux est extravagant.'³⁰⁷ Geographical belonging would shape our aesthetic capacity: 'On se connaît et on ne se change pas, mais il faut se connaître.'³⁰⁸ In 1764, Voltaire notes in his *Dictionnaire philosophique*: 'Demandez à un crapaud ce que c'est

³⁰⁵ Stendhal, *Pages d'Italie* (Paris: Le Divan, 1932), Preface to the second edition, pp. 26–27.

³⁰⁶ Stendhal, *Voyages en France*, Marseille, 11 July 1837, p. 493. Or *Mémoires d'un touriste*, t. 2, p. 368.

³⁰⁷ Stendhal, *Mémoires d'un touriste*, in *Voyages en France*, p. 71.

³⁰⁸ Stendhal, *Journal*, 4 July 1814.

que la beauté, le grand Beau, le *to kalon*. Il vous répondra que c'est sa femelle avec deux gros yeux ronds sortant de sa petite tête, une gueule large et plate, un ventre jaune, un dos brun.³⁰⁹ As such, the notion of 'étranger' in Stendhal mainly refers to an aesthetical estrangement: 'On se moque fort bien, à Venise, de ce qui est applaudi à Milan. Tel poète, sifflé à Florence, s'il est Romain de naissance, peut espérer un grand succès à Rome. À l'égard de Naples, un poète qui imprime à Turin ou à Vérone, y est presque aussi étranger, la langue à part, que s'il eût publié son livre en France ou en Allemagne.'³¹⁰ As two Italians can be 'foreign' to one another, we understand that being 'étranger' for Stendhal is uncorrelated to the nation-scale: 'L'étranger n'est pas celui que sépare de nous le hasard d'une rivière ou d'une montagne. Mais celui dont les principes, les vœux et les sentiments sont en guerre avec vos principes, vos vœux et vos sentiments.'³¹¹

In Stendhal, the sensation of affinity towards a community is cultivated through the principles of sensualism. In his *Journal*, he suggests: 'Ce qui nous attache à la patrie, c'est que nous sommes accoutumés aux mœurs de nos compatriotes et que nous nous y plaisons.'³¹² However, Stendhal notes about his belonging to Italy: 'Je vois nettement l'ensemble des mœurs italiennes: elles me semblent bien plus favorables au bonheur que les nôtres. Je crois que ce qui me touche, c'est la bonhomie générale et le naturel.'³¹³ There is a paradox in Stendhal's thinking. On one hand, he suggests that national belonging renders other cultures unintelligible to the individual. On the other hand, he posits that a sensualist approach, characterized by frequent engagement with different cultures, could enhance understanding. We propose to read that the 'étranger' (stranger) is the one who turns away, whereas the 'voisin' is alien, but facing forward. The first is detached, the other one is engaged.

Sensualism is delineated as the mechanism through which the sense of belonging is forged. As the Latin adage goes, *Ubi bene, ibi patria* (Where it is well with me, there is my country): for Stendhal indeed, 'La vraie patrie est celle où l'on rencontre le plus de gens qui vous

³⁰⁹ Voltaire, *Dictionnaire philosophique* [1764] (Paris: Garnier, 1954), art. 'Beau', p. 50.

³¹⁰ Stendhal, 'Arts et civilisation en Italie', 16 November 1825, in *Stendhal Paris–Londres*, ed. by Renée Dénier (Paris: Stock, 1997), p. 581.

³¹¹ Stendhal, *Pages d'Italie* (Paris: Le Divan, 1932), p. 108. *Voyages en Italie*, 208–209; 1048–1049.

³¹² Stendhal, *Journal, Œuvres intimes*, Vol 1, 3 February 1809, 'retour d'Allemagne en 1809', p. 514.

³¹³ Stendhal, *Rome, Naples et Florence en 1817*, in *Voyages en Italie*, p. 97.

ressemblent'.³¹⁴ As such, Stendhal's national belonging to Italy can be traced as a sensualist process:

Mon but étant d'exposer avec clarté comment chaque civilisation produit ses poètes [...] je vous demande la permission de parler un peu des habitudes sociales de l'Italie. Ce n'est que par ce chemin que l'on peut arriver à comprendre et surtout à *sentir* ses poètes. Tel d'entre eux, il y a trois ans, était inintelligible pour mon âme, quoique je compris parfaitement les mots de chacun de leurs vers. L'habitation dans le pays, la fréquentation constante des hommes les plus fortement empreints de la manière de voir et de sentir italienne, m'ont fait enfin comprendre et sentir tel poète qui, d'abord, me semblait sans mérite, et qui, hors de l'Italie, ne peut être loué que par les pédants qui louent ou blâment *sur parole*, et uniquement pour satisfaire leur propre vanité et se donner l'air de connaître toutes les littératures.³¹⁵

The experience of a country would give access to the understanding of the country. Stendhal indirectly claims to understand Italians more than the Italians themselves: 'Peut-être vivrai-je encore assez pour voir rejouer en Italie *La Mandragore* de Machiavel, les comédies *dell'arte* et les opéras de Pergolèse. Les Italiens sentiront tôt ou tard que ce sont là leurs titres de gloire; ils en seront plus estimés des étrangers.' Stendhal's understanding of the Italian *arte di godere* and *farniente* is the result of a thorough immersion in the Italian culture. As Francis Claudon explains, for instance, 'On ne saisit peut-être pas assez nettement que la fréquentation des théâtres, en France et en Europe, a donné à Stendhal une culture lyrique vivante, variée, cosmopolite. Le fait n'était pas si fréquent à l'époque.'³¹⁶

³¹⁴ Stendhal, *Rome, Naples et Florence*, in *Voyages en Italie*, p. 98. and *L'Italie en 1818*, *Le Divan*, p. 118, p. 295, *Souvenirs d'égotisme*, p. 66.

³¹⁵ Stendhal, 'Arts et civilisation en Italie', 16 November 1825, in *Stendhal Paris–Londres*, ed. by Renée Dénier (Paris: Stock, 1997), p. 581.

³¹⁶ Francis Claudon, *Stendhal et la musique* (Grenoble: UGA éditions, 2019), Chapter 2: 'Dans les théâtres d'Europe', 25-43 (p. 25).

This sensualist approach, so we argue, accounts for the absence of a Continental imagination in Stendhal. The author writes both in his journal and in *Promenades dans Rome*: 'Tous, tant que nous sommes, vulgaires ou grands hommes, nous sommes *emprisonnés dans nos propres sensations*.³¹⁷ The 'grand homme' is not deemed capable of abstracting from the sensualist process of belonging. This being said, the Stendhalian cosmopolitan is capable of developing several national belongings. Mme de Staël remarks in her *Carnets de voyage* in 1805: 'Il n'y a point de nationalité qui ne soit une borne; il en faut plusieurs pour être un homme complet.'³¹⁸ Similarly, Stendhal states in one of his reviews in the English press that the immense privilege of the learned man consists of his ability to appreciate different national creative powers:

Vous voyez clairement, monsieur, combien il est utile pour nos plaisirs qu'il y ait dans ce monde divers degrés de civilisation. [...] Le littérateur qui aura assez d'esprit pour se plier aux manières de voir et de sentir des trois ou quatre nations qui ont de vrais poètes, verra ses efforts récompensés par des jouissances assez vives et qui auront, surtout, le charme de la variété.³¹⁹

This quotation provides the key to understanding Stendhal's stance on national characteristics. Stendhal's Europe is not a monolith. The author does not nourish a globalist vision of Europe. The Stendhalian cosmopolitan is not a soul devoid of national belonging, rather, he multiplies his affective bonds. The influence of the sensualist doctrine has implication on Stendhal's conception of the nation. By 'nation', Stendhal does not mean a modern state, but a living community. In his work, nations stand as vital units, this taking us away from political definitions of nationhood. As such, in a form of bottom-up cosmopolitanism, rather than top down and universal cosmopolitan pretence, developing a cosmopolitan understanding would be possible, through the practice of several national creative forces.

³¹⁷ Stendhal, *Journal, Œuvres intimes*, Vol 2, 31 October 1831, p. 150. The exact same passage was then added to *Promenades dans Rome*, in *Voyages en Italie*, p. 1722.

³¹⁸ Staël, *Carnets de voyage* [1805] (Genève: Droz, 1971), p. 162.

³¹⁹ Stendhal, 'Arts et civilisation en Italie', 16 November 1825, in *Stendhal Paris–Londres*, ed. by Renée Dénier (Paris: Stock, 1997), p. 580.

Cultural Nations

Stendhal's work frequently draws from secondary sources, including literary works, hearsay, and reported anecdotes. The gap between the countries he discusses and those he actually visited raises questions about intertextuality in his writing. Stendhal often mocks other writers and mimics his contemporaries, adding layers of complexity to his narratives.

Examining the influence of Stendhal's actual experiences in Italy versus his reliance on secondary sources reveals a blend of direct and indirect knowledge. As a young man, Stendhal read Dante and Ariosto's *Roland Furieux*.³²⁰ In 1804, he wrote to his sister Pauline Beyle: 'Apprends cette belle langue où il y a Dante, Boccace, Arioste, Tasse, Alfieri, Goldoni, Metastasio, Machiavelli et tant d'autres.'³²¹ Notably, it is through art that Stendhal encounters Italy. In 1800, when crossing the Alps to follow Bonaparte in the campaign to Italy with Pierre and Martial Daru, he discovers in Novara *Il Matrimonio Segreto* by Cimarosa.³²² He reports: 'Vivre en Italie et entendre de cette musique devint la base de tous mes raisonnements.'³²³ The publication of Madame de Staël's *Corinne ou l'Italie* in 1807 significantly influenced Stendhal's engagement with Italy. Scholars like Michel Crouzet and Robert Casillo have illustrated how Stendhal's vision of Italy interacts with Madame de Staël's work.³²⁴ Stendhal's reaction to *Corinne* was enthusiastic yet tinged with jealousy: 'C'est excellent quand ce n'est pas détestable à force d'enflure et de sentiment factice. [...] Ce qu'elle dit de l'absence totale de la vanité en Italie est on ne peut pas plus vrai.'³²⁵

In Stendhalian aesthetics, representation often supersedes reality. This is evident in his description of the Côte d'Or in *Mémoires d'un touriste*. He juxtaposes the fame of the region with his personal disappointment upon seeing it, blending reality with literary perception:

³²⁰ Stendhal, *Œuvres intimes*, Vol 2, p. 619, p. 693.

³²¹ Stendhal, *Correspondance générale*, Vol 1, p. 125.

³²² Stendhal, *Œuvres intimes*, Vol 2, p. 950.

³²³ Stendhal, *Œuvres intimes*, Vol 2, p. 952.

³²⁴ Michel Crouzet, *Stendhal et l'italianité: Essai de mythologie romantique* (Paris: Slatkine, 2006). Robert Casillo, *The Empire of Stereotypes: Germaine De Staël and the Idea of Italy* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2006).

³²⁵ Stendhal, *Correspondance*, Vol 1, p. 358, p. 578.

Dijon petite ville de trente mille âmes, a donné à la France Bossuet, Buffon, Crébillon, Piron, Guyton-Morveau, Rameau, le président de Brosses, auteur des *Lettres sur l'Italie*; et de nos jours Mme Ancelot: tandis que Lyon, ville de cent soixante-dix mille habitants, n'a produit que deux hommes: Ampère et Lemontey.

À la sortie de Dijon, je regarde de tous mes yeux cette fameuse côte d'Or si célèbre en Europe. Il faut se rappeler le vers:

Les personnes d'esprit sont-elles jamais laides?

Sans ses vins admirables, je trouverais que rien au monde n'est plus laid que cette fameuse côte d'Or.³²⁶

This blending of reality and representation is a recurring strategy in Stendhal's characterology of places, creating a form of geographic aestheticism. Stendhal deeply appreciates the culture of each nation, encompassing lifestyles, symbolic representations, customs, and social rules.³²⁷ Literature and stories play a major role in his depictions, reflecting an Enlightenment belief in the significant influence of literature on a place's image. Voltaire, in *Essai sur les mœurs et l'esprit des nations*, emphasizes the role of literature and culture in shaping nations: 'L'histoire de chaque nation ne commence-t-elle pas par des fables?'.³²⁸ Rousseau's *La Nouvelle Héloïse* enhanced the reputation of Lake Geneva, just as Wordsworth's poems made the Lake District famous.

Stendhal's model of nations is not territorially based but rather rooted in linguistic, literary, and cultural sensibilities. Each nation in Stendhal's Europe has its own poetics. France is characterized by conversational art, lightness, and irony; Italy by sensation, love, and art; Germany by imagination, poetry, idealism, and metaphysics; Spain by heroism and action; England by theatre and political debates. Each country produces distinct cultural outputs: France produces spiritual words, Italy produces art, Germany produces philosophical systems, and England produces industrial machines. This cultural causality extends to individuals who

³²⁶ Stendhal, *Mémoires d'un touriste*, 12 May 1837, p. 64.

³²⁷ Pascal Ory, *L'histoire culturelle* (Paris: PUF, 2004), p. 12.

³²⁸ Voltaire, *Essai sur les mœurs et l'esprit des nations* [Geneva: Cramer, 1756], ed. by René Pomeau (Paris: Garnier, 1990), Vol 2, 'Supplément à l'essai sur les mœurs', 'Vingt-et-unième remarque', 'Questions sur l'histoire', p. 948.

embody their nation's spirit: Voltaire and Molière for France; Dante, Raphael, and Rossini for Italy; Werther for Germany; Mozart for Austria; Cervantes for Spain; Shakespeare and Byron for England; and Rousseau for Geneva. Michel Crouzet describes each nation as a 'généralité collective,' akin to a great artist with a unique program of originality.³²⁹ Each nation demonstrates specific strengths or 'énergies': France as spiritual, Italy as artistic, Germany as speculative, Spain as heroic, and England as pragmatic. Nations, therefore, are highly differentiated and often unintelligible to one another: 'Les peuples sont inintelligibles les uns aux autres.'³³⁰ 'Je doute fort que l'habitant de la côte de Guinée admire dans le Titien la vérité du coloris.'³³¹ 'Non, l'action la plus simple ne se fait pas à Rome comme à Paris.'³³²

The cultural definition of nations influences both creativity and receptivity. The place where a cultural work is enjoyed matters to Stendhal. For instance, he expresses disappointment at finding French plays performed in Venice:

Pour moi, j'avoue que j'ai été tout désappointé, entrant un de ces jours au spectacle à Venise, de trouver qu'on donnait *Zaïre*. [...] Quand je veux voir *Zaïre*, je vais à Paris, au Théâtre-Français. [...] c'est en vain que j'ai cherché à Venise la comédie de Gozzi et la comédie dell'arte: au lieu de cela, on donnait presque tous les jours des traductions du théâtre français. Avant-hier, je me suis sauvé de la triste *Femme jalouse*, pour aller un peu rire, sur la place Saint-Marc, devant le théâtre de Polichinelle. C'est, en vérité, ce qui m'a fait le plus de plaisir à Venise, en fait de théâtres non chantants. Je trouve cela tout simple, c'est que Polichinelle et Pantalon sont indigènes en Italie, et que, dans tous les genres, on a beau faire, on n'est grand, si l'on est grand, qu'en étant soi-même.³³³

³²⁹ Michel Crouzet, 'Stendhal et la nation', in *Stendhal, héroïsme, nation, religion* (Paris: Eurédit, 2015), p. 321.

³³⁰ Stendhal, *Voyages en Italie*, p. 711.

³³¹ *Histoire de la peinture en Italie*, Chapter 83, p. 250.

³³² Stendhal, *Promenades dans Rome*, 10 November 1827.

³³³ Stendhal, *Vies de Haydn, de Mozart et de Métastase*, p. 254.

If a nation is a creative constituency, it can suffuse and influence the work of all of its residents, as expressed in this review made by Stendhal on Benjamin Constant's *De la religion*, for the *New Monthly Magazine*:

M. Constant a commencé son ouvrage en Allemagne, ce dont la composition porte des traces fort visibles, car il est copieusement farci de cette métaphysique rêveuse et brumeuse que nos bons voisins allemands se plaisent à parer du nom de philosophie. Pour cette raison, le livre aura sans doute plus de succès dans la patrie de Kant et de Schelling qu'en France où la clarté du raisonnement et le caractère indiscutable des preuves sont jugées indispensables dans un ouvrage de cette nature.³³⁴

Stendhal believes that national belonging shapes the reaction to art. He notes that the same performance can be received differently by culturally distinct audiences: 'Mlle Milière vint danser à Milan, il y a huit ou dix ans, avec son talent de Paris: elle fut sifflée. Elle a mis du feu dans sa danse: aujourd'hui elle est comblée d'applaudissements à la Scala, et serait sifflée de grand cœur dans la rue de Richelieu.'³³⁵ In this instance, Mlle Milière's performance serves as a common denominator, a common departure point to make cultural discrepancies salient between nations.

This illustrates Stendhal's relative approach to aesthetics, highlighting cultural discrepancies between nations. Geographical considerations are central to his exploration of art and cultural practices.

In Search of Local Roots

This section argues that Stendhal's professional endeavors as a civil servant significantly influenced his understanding of national realities. It positions his work within the broader context of a growing interest in cultural heritage. Historically, Stendhalian critics have not

³³⁴ Stendhal, 'Publications étrangères', *New Monthly Magazine* (September 1824), in *Stendhal Paris–Londres*, ed. by Renée Dénier (Paris: Stock, 1997), p. 185.

³³⁵ Stendhal, *Rome, Naples et Florence*, in *Voyages en Italie*, p. 42.

thoroughly examined how Stendhal's role as a civil servant influenced his literary works and philosophical outlook. In 1810, Pierre Daru proposed Stendhal, recently appointed to the Conseil d'Etat, to oversee the auditing of accounts and the inventory of artworks at the Musée Napoléon, leading to correspondence with Denon. Stendhal's role in the Musée Napoléon and the Museum of Versailles, through auditing and inventory tasks, connects him to the larger narrative of cultural preservation and national identity construction. His correspondence with Denon further positions him within the intellectual and cultural movements of his time, reflecting a sophisticated engagement with the concepts of regionalism, patrimony, and the development of a national identity.³³⁶ In his analysis of territorial characteristics, Stendhal acknowledges their historical depth without seeking explanatory keys in the past. He displays a 'bottom-up' cosmopolitanism rather than a 'top-down' cosmopolitanism. Here, 'top-down' cosmopolitanism refers to scientific cosmopolitanism, based on Enlightenment values of objectivity and rationality, expressing a theoretical vision of pan-Europeanism. In contrast, 'bottom-up' cosmopolitanism is an ethical cosmopolitanism that relies on the idea that cultural groups are the main producers of cultural, aesthetic, and affective bonds and meaning.

This approach is particularly evident in Stendhal's relationship with the nascent discipline of archaeology. For instance, Mosca (a figure emblematic of Stendhal's ideals) is depicted commissioning excavations.³³⁷ In the nineteenth century, Stendhal's embrace of a liberal form of regionalism resonated with broader integrative efforts, seeking to embed local customs within the national identity. This era was characterized by a heightened focus on regional characteristics, manifesting through an avid attention to customs and archaeology. These interests found their place in national museums and monuments, signifying a concerted effort, spurred by the burgeoning state apparatus and the development of educational frameworks, to foster a new national consciousness that included regional distinctiveness within France. This period marked a renaissance of local interest, propelled by the nascent discipline of archaeology and the burgeoning concept of patrimony. Early in the century, academic societies and archaeological groups began to form, indicative of a return to local concerns. Stéphane Gerson's analysis posits this local resurgence as a counteraction to the disarray and loss of cultural anchors post-Revolution, celebrating the unique and local through archaeology, cartography,

³³⁶ *Correspondance générale*, pp. 72–73.

³³⁷ *La Chartreuse de Parme*, Part 2, Chapter 18.

and historical monument listings.³³⁸ The influence of German philosopher Herder is notable in this context. Herder advocated for appreciating cultures within their specific historical settings, challenging the Enlightenment's universalist leanings with the idea of *Volksgeist*—each culture's unique ‘spirit.’ This notion underlined the importance of preserving the incommensurable distinctiveness of a culture, even as it contributes to the broader tapestry of humanity.³³⁹

The nineteenth century witnessed debates around national patrimony, especially post-Revolution, regarding the fate of Ancien Régime symbols. The legal framework for this debate shifted from the destructive decree of 14 August 1792 - unleashing iconoclasm and legalising vandalism by authorizing the destruction of the symbols of the Ancien Régime - to Abbé Grégoire's 1794 appeal for the preservation of national monuments:

Que le respect public entoure particulièrement les objets nationaux qui, n'étant à personne, sont la propriété de tous. [...] Tous les monuments de sciences et d'arts sont recommandés à la surveillance de tous les bons citoyens. [...] Aux mesures répressives joignons des moyens moraux; faisons un appel à toutes les sociétés populaires, à tous les bons citoyens; surtout que les représentants du peuple, par leur correspondance dans les départements, s'efforcent d'éveiller, d'éclairer le patriotisme à cet égard.³⁴⁰

This highlights the tension between iconoclasm and cultural preservation. Efforts to catalogue regional France were notably advanced under the Directory and Consulate, driven by ministers François de Neufchâteau and J.A.C. Chaptal, fostering statistical topographies and requesting prefects' diaries about each department.³⁴¹ Their work aimed at defining French identity

³³⁸ Stéphane Gerson, *The Pride of Place: Local Memories and Political Culture in Nineteenth-Century France* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2003), Part 1: 'Le Pays', Chapter 1: 'The Field of Local Memories', p. 34.

³³⁹ Barnard, F.M., *Herder on Nationality, Humanity and History* (Montreal and Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2003).

³⁴⁰ Abbé Grégoire, *Rapport sur les destructions opérées par le vandalisme, et sur les moyens de le réprimer* (Paris: Deloynes, 1794), presented to the Convention on 31 August 1794.

³⁴¹ Stuart Woolf, 'French Civilization and Ethnicity in the Napoleonic Empire', *Past & Present* (Oxford University Press, August 1989), 96–120.

through its territories, an endeavour that melded the collection of folklore with the formation of a national entity. This democratic initiative to shape national identity was later co-opted by Restoration monarchists. The establishment of the Historical Monuments Commission in 1837, with Stendhal's friend Prosper Mérimée playing a key role as Inspector General, signified a continued interest in regional specificity. Mérimée's instructions to prefects and his own travelogues underscored an enduring commitment to local histories and memories.³⁴² Recently, this approach was critically reviewed by historians like Gerson, who argued that the nation-state overshadowed local identities, prioritizing national unity over regional specificities: the nation state would have 'phagocytized' the local.³⁴³ This tension between national integration and the preservation of local identity reflects the complexities of cultural memory and identity formation. The articulation between territorial harmonization and Romantic taste for the 'petites patries' continued over the second half of the nineteenth century, as presented by Jean Jaurès in 'Les petites patries dans la France Républicaine'.³⁴⁴

The transformation of the Louvre—where Stendhal was posted—into a museum in 1791 symbolizes this era's cultural aspirations and controversies. Under the leadership of Dominique-Vivant Denon, the museum expanded through confiscation of art and cultural plunder. In *Lettres à Miranda sur le déplacement des monuments de l'art de l'Italie*, Quatremère de Quincy was first in 1796 to engage this debate and defend the keeping of artistic collections intact within their original contexts. For him, Rome is a 'grand livre' whose pages must be kept together: 'Le pays est lui-même le museum', he writes, making the 'location'—rather than the 'object'—the indivisible unit of art.³⁴⁵ In his discussion of geographical identities, Stendhal is influenced by his work as a civil servant and informed by the emerging debates on heritage protection.

³⁴² Mérimée, *Notes d'un voyage dans le midi de la France* (1835). Mérimée, *Notes d'un voyage dans l'ouest de la France* (1836). Mérimée, *Notes d'un voyage dans l'Auvergne* (Paris: Fournier, 1838). Mérimée, *Notes d'un voyage en Corse* (1840).

³⁴³ Stéphane Gerson, 'L'État français et le culte malaisé des souvenirs locaux, 1830–1870', *Revue d'histoire du XIXe siècle* (2004), 29, Varia, pp. 13–29.

³⁴⁴ Jean Jaurès, 'Les petites patries dans la France Républicaine', *Cahiers trimestriels*, 152 (1999).

³⁴⁵ Quatremère de Quincy, *Lettres à Miranda sur le déplacement des monuments de l'art de l'Italie [1796]* (Paris: Macula, 2017), p. 103.

Tourism and Fieldwork

The aim of this section is to investigate the practice of tourism—so commonly associated with Stendhal—and to envisage the implications for his conception of Europe and the national character.

Bonnaffé's *Dictionnaire étymologique et historique des anglicismes* does not acknowledge Stendhal as the inventor of the word but identifies Stendhal as one of the earliest adopters. The term 'touriste' appears in Simond's *Voyage d'un Français en Angleterre* in 1816, which is before *Mémoires d'un touriste*, published in 1838. Stendhal is often recalled as the father of the word 'égotiste', judged by *Gazette de France* as "franglais" de mauvais aloi,³⁴⁶ meaning 'promeneur', 'flâneur' or 'voyageur' in academic French. Notwithstanding, Stendhal's *Mémoires d'un touriste* (1838) contributes to the creation of a new form of literature. As Gérald Rannaud notes in *Voyager en France au temps du romantisme*, the study of *Mémoires d'un touriste* has too often become biographical and anecdotal, to the detriment of an analysis of what the text offers to the understanding of what it means to travel in France in the first half of the nineteenth century.³⁴⁷ In the seventeenth century, the first literary travel writings were not originally intended as pieces of literature. For instance, Dom Martène and Dom Durand's *Voyage littéraire de deux religieux bénédictins* (1717) is marked by an archival style, functioning more as a catalog of sources than a true 'literary journey'. Their aim was less to entertain readers and more to document and preserve local sources, addressing the issue of poor preservation.³⁴⁸ In a similar style, Abel Hugo publishes in 1835 *France pittoresque, ou Description pittoresque, topographique et statistique des départements et colonies de la France*. In 1838, *Mémoires d'un touriste* stands out by the originality of the outlook. By being a tourist in his own country, Stendhal departs from the trendy oriental travel writings of his time. His writing stance is also

³⁴⁶ *Gazette de France*, Compte rendu, 27 July 1838, pp. 899–910.

³⁴⁷ Gérald Rannaud, 'Du pittoresque à l'égotisme: une poétique de l'ironie dans le récit de voyage', in Alain Guyot and Chantal Massol, *Voyager en France au temps du romantisme* (Grenoble: UGA éditions, 2003), 215-240.

³⁴⁸ Dom Martène et Dom Durand, *Voyage littéraire de deux religieux bénédictins* (1717).

different from that of foreigners on France, for instance Young's *Le Voyage en France pendant les années 1780-1790*, or Lady Morgan's *La France en 1817*, or *La France en 1829*.

In *The Gay Science*, Nietzsche comments on 'Stendhal, who has perhaps had the most penetrating eyes and ears of any Frenchman of this century. Is it because the latter had really too much of the German and the Englishman in his nature for the Parisians to endure him?'.³⁴⁹ The insistence is placed on eyes and ears, that is, on the senses to think. Intellectual inspiration here stems from the sensorial experience. We notice the surprising and original way Nietzsche ties Stendhal to the north of Europe, rather than Italy. Stendhal finds his vocation as a tourist from a very young age:

J'ai vingt ans passés, si je ne me lance pas dans le monde et si je ne cherche pas à connaître les hommes par expérience, je suis perdu. Je ne connais les hommes que par les livres, il y a des passions que je n'ai jamais vues ailleurs. Comment puis-je les peindre, mes tableaux ne seraient que des copies de copies. Toute ma science, ou du moins une grande partie, est de préjugés. Si tous les auteurs que j'ai lus s'étaient accordés à supposer une passion qui n'existe pas, j'y croirais.³⁵⁰

The opposition between book science and fieldwork is rendered by the expression 'copie de copie' which—as we have seen for the Spanish type—serves Stendhal to pinpoint authenticity.

Stendhal's touristic approach applies to his encounter with nations of Europe in the way he relishes surprises and aesthetic experiences along his journey: 'Un voyageur note les différences; entendez que tout ce dont il ne parle pas se fait comme en France.'³⁵¹ This has to do with habits: 'Les yeux ont leurs habitudes, qu'ils prennent de la nature des objets qu'ils voient

³⁴⁹ Nietzsche, *The Gay Science* (Cambridge University Press, 2001), Part Two, 95, p. 92. This is the first mention of Stendhal in Nietzsche's published texts. However, his name was mentioned twice in unpublished fragments. For more on Stendhal, see *Ecce Homo*, paragraph 3, 'Why I Am So Wise'. For Nietzsche's knowledge of Stendhal, see WD Williams, *Nietzsche and the French* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1952).

³⁵⁰ Stendhal, *Pensées* (Paris: Le Divan, 1931), i, p. 78.

³⁵¹ Stendhal, *Promenades dans Rome*, 10 November 1827.

le plus souvent.³⁵² Stendhal's insights on travelling can be read in parallel with Mme de Staël's, who notes in *Corinne*:

Voyager est, quoi qu'on puisse en dire, un des plus tristes plaisirs de la vie. Lorsque vous vous trouvez bien dans quelque ville étrangère, c'est que vous commencez à vous y faire une patrie; mais traverser des pays inconnus, entendre parler un langage que vous comprenez à peine, voir des visages humains sans relation avec votre passé ni avec votre avenir, c'est de la solitude et de l'isolement sans repos et sans dignité.³⁵³

In *Mémoires d'un touriste*, what the tourist finds curious is 'ce qui se passe dans la rue et ne semble curieux à aucun homme du pays.'³⁵⁴ Travelling is about finding new opportunities to feel with all five senses: 'J'ai vu et senti des choses qu'un homme de lettres sédentaire ne devinerait pas en mille ans.'³⁵⁵ Interestingly, in *Lettres sur Métastase*, Stendhal perceives a gender difference in art appreciation: 'Tout le monde comprend, au Musée, le *Martyre de saint Pierre* par le Titien; peu sentent le *Saint Jérôme* du Corrège: ils ont besoin qu'on leur apprenne que cette beauté, si pleine de grâce, est pourtant de la beauté. Dans ce genre, les femmes, moins courbées que les hommes sous le joug habituel des calculs d'intérêt, leur sont bien supérieures.'³⁵⁶ In his *Discours de Lyon* previously mentioned, Napoleon links happiness to a sensualist approach to society:

Puisque, pour être heureux, il faut sentir, puisque le sentiment est ce tressaillement qui nous affecte si délicieusement aux perspectives variées de la nature, puisque le sentiment nous attache au pays, nous inspire l'amour, l'amitié, la reconnaissance; puisque c'est le lien qui unit l'homme à l'intelligence supérieure, l'homme à la société, l'homme à

³⁵² Stendhal, *Rome, Naples et Florence en 1817*, 'Pensées qui me sont restées de Venise' (Paris: Gallimard, Pléiade), p. 128.

³⁵³ Staël, *Corinne*, Chapter 2, p. 6.

³⁵⁴ Stendhal, *Mémoires d'un touriste* (Bibliophile), Vol 2, p. 410.

³⁵⁵ Letter to Félix Faure, from Smolensk, 1812.

³⁵⁶ Stendhal, *Lettres sur Métastase*, Lettre 1, Varèse, 24 October 1812, p. 203.

l'homme; c'est donc principalement par et pour le sentiment que nous vivons.³⁵⁷

Contrasting with our time—marked by the possibility to watch pictures or videos of any touristic sight to previously assess the relevance of visiting, Stendhal's touristic philosophy gives pride of place to 'surprise'. In August 1827, Stendhal writes about Rome: 'Notre projet étant de passer ici plusieurs mois, nous avons perdu quelques jours à courir, comme des enfants, à tout ce qui nous semblait curieux.'³⁵⁸ In the realm of tourism, Stendhal theorizes what Edward Slingerland terms 'trying not to try'.³⁵⁹ In the modern experience of aesthetics, the harder you try, the less you get. Discarding touristic sights, Stendhal pursues the best 'street views': his curiosity is high for Italy where 'tout change toutes les dix lieues.'³⁶⁰ The absence of a touristic goal is presented as the very condition for his satisfaction. In the author's enjoyment of places, the object does not matter so much as 'surprise' does, as revealed by this passage from *Mémoires d'un touriste*: 'Mais avant d'arriver à Tullins j'ai trouvé une surprise délicieuse; par bonheur, personne ne m'avait averti. Je suis arrivé tout à coup à une des plus belles vues du monde.'³⁶¹ Stendhal records the sensation of being overwhelmed, 'tout à coup.' This component of the aesthetic experience is attested in Baumgarten's *Esthétique*: 'Ce en quoi il est possible de percevoir de nombreux éléments, qu'ils soient simultanés ou successifs, est plein de vie'.³⁶² This subjective criterion of aesthetics contrasts with beauty as knowledge in classical academism. The criterion of aesthetic judgement is transferred from object to subject. The aesthetic experience is subjective and solitary: 'par bonheur, personne'. The experience is sensualist, as denoted by the adjective 'délicieuse'. This encounter is not labelled: 'personne ne m'avait averti'. For lack of official acknowledgement, the nature of this beautiful scenery was left undetermined and preserved. The 'avertissement' may have deterred the aesthetic response. Modernity and the *avant-garde* pushed this same aesthetic principle one step further, as denounced by Paul Valéry:

³⁵⁷ Napoléon Bonaparte, *Le Discours de Lyon*, 'Préambule' (Paris: E. Driault, 1929), pp. 53-54.

³⁵⁸ Stendhal, *Promenades dans Rome*, 'Manière de voir Rome en dix jours', p. 51.

³⁵⁹ Edward Slingerland, *Trying Not to Try: The Art and Science of Spontaneity* (New York: Crown Publishing Group, 2014).

³⁶⁰ Stendhal, *Voyages en Italie*, p. 607, 667-668, 755.

³⁶¹ Stendhal, *Mémoires d'un touriste*, in *Voyages en France*, 6 August 1837, p. 373.

³⁶² Baumgarten, *Esthétique*, CXII.

J'observe que l'allure de la modernité est toute celle d'une *intoxication*. Il nous faut *augmenter la dose*, ou *changer de poison*. Telle est la loi. De plus en plus *avancé*, de plus en plus *intense*, de plus en plus *grand*, et toujours plus *neuf*, telles sont ses exigences, qui correspondent nécessairement à quelque endurcissement de la sensibilité. Nous avons besoin, pour nous sentir vivre, d'une intensité croissante des agents physiques et de perpétuelle diversion.³⁶³

A line can be drawn from Stendhal's time to the father of abstraction, Wassily Kandinsky, and the crisis of representation in the early twentieth century. As painting becomes the mirror of 'la nécessité intérieure', no ideal object is accepted as inspiration. The subject's reflection on themselves supersedes the objective value of artwork.³⁶⁴

With regard to national characters, Stendhal's approach to tourism reads as a plea for diversity in aesthetics. In *Vie de Haydn, Mozart et Métastase*, Stendhal remarks: it is 'utile pour nos plaisirs qu'il y ait dans le monde divers degrés de civilisation.'³⁶⁵ An unpublished article by Stendhal, 'La tâche du critique', written for the *New Monthly Magazine*, records the author's capacity for accepting differences and suspending judgement:

Je crains, monsieur, que vous ne trouviez mon ton un peu tranchant; je vous assure que je cherche seulement à être bref et clair. Personne n'est, au fond, plus tolérant que moi. Je vois des raisons pour soutenir toutes les opinions; ce n'est pas que les miennes ne soient fort tranchées; mais je conçois comment un homme qui a vécu dans des circonstances contraires aux miennes a aussi des idées contraires.³⁶⁶

³⁶³ Paul Valéry, *Degas, danse, dessin* (Paris: Gallimard, 1965), pp. 135–36.

³⁶⁴ Wassily Kandinsky, *Du Spirituel dans l'art* [1912] (Paris: Gallimard, 1988).

³⁶⁵ Stendhal, *Vie de Haydn, Mozart et Métastase* (Cercle du Bibliophile), p. 211 and p. 214. *Courrier anglais*, Vol 1, p. 205 and also Vol 1 p. 213.

³⁶⁶ Stendhal, 'La tâche du critique', unpublished article written for the *New Monthly Magazine*, in *Stendhal Paris–Londres*, ed. by Renée Dénier (Paris: Stock, 1997), p. 51.

Today, the international tourism industry remains the guardian of an official localism. Through their brochures, the tourism offices serve as custodians of a certain tradition of regional identities. But the booming touristic industry has something unsatisfactory in its apolitical, neutral and erudite cult of local memories. In contrast, visiting regions and cities through Stendhal's egotist outlook offers a tasteful approach to a diversity of places.

Nation and Politics

In the study of the national character as depicted by Stendhal, we have observed the paramount importance of art and culture, overpowering politico-military aspects. However, politics and political history still play a crucial role in Stendhal's characterization of nations, for England in particular. Therefore, it is necessary to delve into Stendhal's positioning within the political events of his time, as well as his reflections on political theory, however extravagant they may be, to fully address Stendhal's approach to national characters.

Indeed, it first appears that Stendhal's era witnesses the emergence of the principle of the right of peoples to self-determination. This politico-historical evolution is something Stendhal observes firsthand throughout his life, amidst the succession of very different political regimes, some more inclined than others to foster this liberalism of nations.

From Stendhal's often understated observations, a consistent underlying tendency towards liberalism emerges. This takes a classical political form when it becomes a more or less discreet support for the Carbonari or revolutionary movement in Italy. Stendhal's liberalism becomes original when he advocates for the necessity of an enlightened despot for the development of the arts, hoping to see individuals freed from political considerations to devote themselves to art.

Liberalism and the People's Right to Self-Determination

This section hypothesizes that Stendhal likely did not adhere to the pan-European imperial design imposed by Napoleon's force; on the contrary, he supported armed Italian movements for emancipation (such as in Ancona) against the Austrian Empire. The aim of this section is to highlight the coherence between his recognition of the diversity of "nations" on a cultural level

and his support for their self-determination on a political level. In this section, we offer a glimpse of what could strike us as a paradox nowadays, that being a liberal in the nineteenth century meant being a nationalist.

If Stendhal's interrogation on Europe and the character of nations springs from historical events, pinpointing Stendhal's political convictions presents a considerable challenge. Stendhal's liberal sensibility and care for national integrity stem from his first years under the Republic. As Michel Crouzet notes, Stendhal's childhood began during the Revolution, marked by rebellion and the quest for the Republic.³⁶⁷ On August 26, 1789, the French Constituent Assembly adopted the *Déclaration des droits de l'homme et du citoyen*, which implicitly included the right of peoples to self-determination. This text introduced entirely new rules to international law. On May 22, 1790, the Constituent Assembly proclaimed a 'déclaration de paix au monde' included as Title IV of the Constitution: 'La Nation française renonce à entreprendre aucune guerre dans la vue de faire des conquêtes et n'emploiera jamais ses forces contre la liberté d'aucun peuple.' The subsequent uprisings in Europe were presented as wars against tyrants, kings, and counter-revolutionaries.

Stendhal was sensitised to questions of national integrity early on in his life. Interestingly, he is informed on Russian imperialism, its willingness to gain influence on the North of Europe and its danger to the rest of Europe. On 9 December 1802, his librarian and friend Casimir De La Roche offers him a book on Poland and Russia, Józef Wybicki's *Précis des causes de la destruction de la Pologne et des motifs qui nécessitent sa restauration*, highlighting the imposing attitude of Russia towards so many nations.³⁶⁸ Stendhal took a strong interest in this issue, as evidenced by his readings of the diplomat Claude-Carloman de Rulhière's two books, *Histoire ou Anecdotes sur La Révolution de Russie* (1797) and *Histoire de l'anarchie de Pologne et du démembrement de cette République* (1807).

³⁶⁷ Michel Crouzet, *Regards de Stendhal sur le monde moderne* (Paris: Kimé, 2010), Chapter 1: 'Enfance et révolution dans *La Vie de Henry Brulard*', 7–44.

³⁶⁸ Casimir De La Roche, Letter to Stendhal (9 December 1802). See: Georges Dethan, 'Stendhal, La Russie et *Les causes de la destruction de la Pologne*', in *Revue d'Histoire Diplomatique* (1976), 71–79 (p. 72, p. 77).

In 1805, Stendhal considers that the Révolution makes France ‘de bien loin le premier peuple du monde’.³⁶⁹ He notably writes in his 'Esquisses de la société parisienne' for the English press: ‘La Révolution politique de la France, qui peut dans le fait être regardée comme la révolution de l'Europe et du monde entier, a commencé en 1787, a été interrompue par Bonaparte le 9 novembre 1799 et a recommencé en 1815 pour finir Dieu sait quand.’³⁷⁰ From these first years, Stendhal keeps a liberal mindset, favouring the right for a nation’s independence and the right of people for self-determination.

Under Napoleon, the question of national identity is forcefully raised, as the Empire incorporates regions far removed from the cultural identity of France, such as certain German principalities and bishoprics, whose history is anything but French. It is a period of influence and expansion for France, undergoing a ‘vaste diastole spatiale,’ as Philippe Berthier describes.³⁷¹ Napoleon’s project is openly to demonstrate the superiority of France over other nations, as recorded in *Mémorial de Sainte Hélène*: ‘L'empereur disait alors avoir été celui qui le premier avait salué la France du nom de ‘la grande nation’. Napoléon harbored a patriotic goal of expanding the country and diminishing its neighbours: ‘Certes, remarquait-il, je l'ai montrée telle au monde abattu devant elle.’³⁷² Napoleon connects his history to Charlemagne and a tradition that is both French and European. He inherits the grand idea of France and envisions the country's borders extending to the Alps, the Pyrenees, the Rhine, and even beyond.³⁷³ As Jean Tulard explains, in a Europe of 167 million inhabitants, the Napoleonic Empire at its peak encompassed 44 million subjects, in addition to the vassal states of the Grand Empire, which represented 38 million. Thus, half of Europe was united under a single ruler. In the rest of the continent, French influence was very strong: in Sweden (election of Bernadotte) and in Austria (marriage of Napoleon and Marie-Louise). As Jean-Christian Petitfils reports, ‘Napoléon avait le sens de la famille. Il l'avait installée dans les États voisins, entrés en vassalité: Joseph, roi d'Espagne, Jérôme, roi de Westphalie, son beau-frère Murat, roi de Naples, sa sœur Élisabeth, grande-duchesse et gouverneur général de Toscane, Camille Borghèse, mari de

³⁶⁹ Stendhal, *Correspondance* (Divan), Vol 2, p. 43.

³⁷⁰ Stendhal, 'Esquisses de la société parisienne, de la politique et de la littérature—Esquisse XXIV', *New Monthly Magazine* (November 1828), in *Stendhal Paris—Londres*, ed. by Renée Dénier (Paris: Stock, 1997), 894–897 (p. 894).

³⁷¹ Philippe Berthier, ‘Stendhal et l’Europe’, in *Espaces stendhaliens* (Paris: P.U.F., 1997), 167–185 (p. 167).

³⁷² *Mémorial de Sainte Hélène*, II, p. 412.

³⁷³ Vincent Haeghele, *L'Europe des Bonaparte (1789-1815)* (Paris: Passés/Composés, 2021), p. 16.

Pauline, gouverneur général des départements français au-delà des Alpes, sa fille adoptive Stéphanie de Beauharnais, mariée à l'héritier de Bade. La plupart des autres États européens, l'Autriche, la Russie, le Danemark, la Suède étaient ses alliés.³⁷⁴ From an economic standpoint, the Napoleonic Empire is united by the Continental Blockade, which involves closing Europe to English goods.³⁷⁵ The imperial system was supported by three major unifying forces. First, the Grande Armée was an exceptional military tool. Becoming increasingly less French, it included contingents from all the nationalities it had subjugated. Next was the imperial administration. Structured and highly centralized, it benefited from efficient postal relays and the optical telegraph system developed by the Chappe brothers. Finally, the Civil Code spread the rational thought of the Enlightenment throughout Europe. Stendhal witnessed the construction of roads, the development of canals and ports, the introduction of the metric system, a modern taxation system, and the establishment of public education built on a unique model.

The overt intention is to grow the imperialistic influence of France on the rest of the continent, as recorded in the *Mémorial de Sainte-Hélène*: 'Il passait ensuite en revue ce qu'il eût proposé pour la postérité, les intérêts, la jouissance et le bien-être de l'association européenne. Il eût voulu les mêmes principes, le même système partout; un code européen, une cour de cassation européenne [...] Une même monnaie [...] les mêmes poids, les mêmes mesures, les mêmes lois, etc. etc. L'Europe, disait-il, n'eût bientôt fait de la sorte véritablement qu'un même peuple, et chacun en voyageant partout, se fût trouvé toujours, dans la patrie commune.'³⁷⁶

This conception of the Empire ubristically negated the diversity of cultures and underestimated people's sense of belonging. As explained by Miranda Gill in her seminal book *Eccentricity and the Cultural Imagination in Nineteenth-Century Paris*: 'Napoleon's programme of centralization and homogenization was designed to create ideological cohesion, this having repercussions on taste's formation.'³⁷⁷ In his *Histoire de la France*, Jean-Christian Petitfils also retains the artistic and cultural dimensions as the weaknesses of Napoleon's attempt: 'la

³⁷⁴ Jean-Christian Petitfils, *Histoire de la France* (Paris: Fayard, 2018), p. 499.

³⁷⁵ Jean Tulard, *L'Europe au temps de Napoléon* (Paris: Editions du Cerf, 2020), Part 3: 'L'Echec de Tilsit', Chapter 1: 'Europe Unie ou Europe des nations'.

³⁷⁶ Emmanuel de Las Cases, *Mémorial de Sainte-Hélène*, 24 August 1816 (1822–1823) (London: Colburn, 1823).

³⁷⁷ Miranda Gill, *Eccentricity and the Cultural Imagination in Nineteenth-Century Paris* (Oxford University Press, 2009), p. 20, Chapter 1: 'The Rise of Eccentricity', 'The 'Frenchifying' of eccentricity', 33–39 (p. 33).

reconstitution largement artificielle de l'Empire carolingien n'aboutissait en réalité qu'à une dilatation de la France dans un espace trop vaste pour son génie propre. Sans respect pour la diversité des peuples, cette entreprise était contraire aux leçons de l'histoire.³⁷⁸ In *L'Empire des Muses*, edited by Jean-Claude Bonnet, Bonaparte's artistic ambitions and his vast project of cultural recomposition are thoroughly examined, particularly his aspiration for French artists to surpass those of ancient Rome and Athens, as well as his ambition to develop art that glorified himself. Florence Lotterie, in her article included in this volume, analyses Bonaparte's efforts to shape the 'Nouvelle Rome napoléonienne' gave rise to a more liberal 'opposition literature,' notably centered around the Coppet group, a European-scale intellectual circle led by Mme de Staël, which rejected the notion of a subjugated Republic of Letters.³⁷⁹ According to Jean Tulard, the creation of national armies—such as the German Legion, the Italian Legion, and in France during the Revolution—had a significant impact on the development of national consciousness, the movement of nationalities and the push for sovereignty that characterized much of the nineteenth century in Europe.³⁸⁰

Concerning the relationship of Stendhal to the Empire, Prosper Mérimée notes: 'Il était difficile de savoir ce qu'il pensait de Napoléon. Presque toujours il était de l'opinion contraire à celle qu'on mettait en avant.'³⁸¹ Critics are almost unanimous in confirming Stendhal's admiration for Napoleon. Michel Crouzet speaks of the 'lien indestructible entre Stendhal et Napoléon': ils seraient tous deux animés du même désir de gloire, d'immortalité laïque.³⁸² Yet Stendhal evolves from the Consulate to the Empire. He does not justify this allegiance seamlessly, particularly regarding the hubris of the Empire's final years. In that regard, it is crucial to emphasize the formative role of the year 1814, which saw Stendhal fall with Napoleon, creating disillusionment and critical rereading. This passage from Stendhal's lesser-known text *Vie de Napoléon*, written after the Empire, shows Stendhal's ambivalent take on the Emperor: 'Il encouragea parmi ses généraux les pillages les plus scandaleux. Oubliant le désintéressement des armées républicaines, ils furent bientôt aussi rapaces que les commissaires de la

³⁷⁸ Jean-Christian Petitfils, *Histoire de la France* (Paris: Fayard, 2018), p. 509.

³⁷⁹ Florence Lotterie, 'Mme de Staël et l'esprit de Coppet: Une littérature d'opposition ?' in Jean-Claude Bonnet, *L'Empire des Muses: Napoléon, les Arts et les Lettres* (Paris: Belin, 2004), 133–149.

³⁸⁰ Jean Tulard, *L'Europe au temps de Napoléon* (Paris: Cerf, 2020), Section 'Les armées nationales', 40–42.

³⁸¹ Mérimée, *H.B.* (Paris: Éditions Dérives/Solin, 1983), p. 18.

³⁸² Michel Crouzet, *Regards de Stendhal sur le monde moderne* (Paris: Kimé, 2010), Chapter 3: 'Napoléon et Stendhal: Gloire militaire et gloire littéraire', pp. 93–142.

Convention. En cela, Bonaparte fut criminel envers la France.'³⁸³ Stendhal may get enthusiastic about Napoléon, during the First Republic, but then feels betrayed by the Emperor, when Bonaparte moves from the République to the Directoire, Consulat and makes himself Emperor. In a review written in 1822, Stendhal has harsh words about the Napoleonic armies, 'armées françaises qui désolèrent l'Europe pendant si longtemps'.³⁸⁴ During the Empire, Stendhal works as a civil servant for the Grande Armée impériale, and one could think he also keeps his grievances against the Emperor to himself.

Stendhal's relationship with the July Monarchy also necessitates a nuanced understanding. Stendhal repudiated le 'parti du juste-milieu', 'le régime de Juillet', and the values it represented. However, he acknowledged the economic 'prosperity of France' under this centrist approach in *Mémoires d'un touriste*, as well as its entrance into industrial modernity. Personal writings significantly moderate the negative satirical judgement cast by the novel.³⁸⁵ Diplomatic writings demonstrate Stendhal's capacity to work with this Government. The governance under Louis-Philippe aimed to maintain a distance from the extremism of the Republicans on one side and the Legitimists on the other, which corresponds to Stendhal's generally acknowledged stance.

Stendhal's liberalism becomes evident through his frequent travels in Italy. His romantic experiences in Italy during the early decades of the century contributed to his reputation as a liberal in the eyes of the Austrian government in Milan between 1821 and 1826, which later affected his professional opportunities as a diplomat in the 1830s. Both posts offered to Stendhal by the French government prove difficult to maintain. When he is appointed Consul in Trieste on 25 September 1830, the Austrian authority deny exequatur to him, forcing him to vacate his post. In March 1831, Stendhal is granted another consulate, that of Civitavecchia, in the Papal States. In view of his past writings, the Pope's Government reluctantly agreed to Henri Beyle's appointment.

³⁸³ Stendhal, *Vie de Napoléon* (Paris: Stock, 1998), Chapter 6.

³⁸⁴ Stendhal, 'review of *Voyage en Autriche en 1809 avec la Grande Armée* by M. de Gassicourt', 'Publications étrangères', *New Monthly Magazine* (November 1822), in *Stendhal Paris-Londres*, ed. by Renée Dénier (Paris: Stock, 1997), pp. 84–85.

³⁸⁵ Stendhal, *Voyages en France*, p. 153.

His appointment to Italy as Consul gets him to join a highly strategic area of Europe with regard to the question of national legitimacy and people's independence. Italy stages the difficult balance of the Austrian forces, Papal states and the Italian liberal and revolutionary forces. At that time, the equilibrium of powers in the Civitavecchia zone is a subtle diplomatic exercise. It is an active time for the diplomats of Austria and France, two powerful countries with conflicting interests on the Italian peninsula. The July Monarchy prefers to address both Austria and the Papal States with prudent policies, with maintaining balance of power as a main focus.

Stendhal's commitment to liberalism becomes vocal in his diplomatic dispatches to the French government, which reveal his active support for reforms in Italy. His liberalism takes on greater significance in 1831, when Ancona becomes the site of an incident with major international consequences. That year, popular uprisings erupt in Romagna and Marche, up to the Papal States. The insurgents from these regions establish a provisional government for the United Italian Provinces in Ancona, where Stendhal serves as vice-consul. In response, Austrian troops occupy Bologna and the Adriatic coast, including Ancona, to suppress the revolt. This leads Louis-Philippe's government to launch an expedition from Toulon, as studied in depth by Albert Malet.³⁸⁶

Despite Civitavecchia being a major port, from an economic point of view, where the movement of ships is more considerable, the political situation was more strategic for France in Ancona than in Civitavecchia. As consul, Stendhal is settled in Civitavecchia but he is also nominated Consul of Ancona on 6 March 1831. The presence of this French expedition in Ancona presupposes a reinforced administrative infrastructure, for which Stendhal becomes responsible, thus his nomination as consul there as well.

Stendhal deplores the way the July Monarchy does not support the Italian liberal movements of 1831. While the Provisional Government of the United Italian Provinces had retreated to Ancona, Ancona became the theatre of oppositions between seasoned troops of Austria and popular militias. The popular militias were hoping for the help of the contingent of soldiers from France, this being encouraged by Stendhal, but in the end the expedition only aimed at restoring balance to the presence of Austrian soldiers in the Papal States. Despite Stendhal's

³⁸⁶ Albert Malet, *L'expédition d'Ancone*, in *Revue Historique* (1888), p. 112.

position as consul on the foreign policy that he believed France should implement in this strategic zone, his liberal sensibility confronted the geostrategic stakes on the ground.

Stendhal's reluctance towards the imperial or imperialist ambitions of his time is quite consistent with his appreciation—recognition and taste—for the diversity of national characteristics.

A Government Favourable to the Arts

In this section, we demonstrate that Stendhal's primary political idea is to seek the political government most conducive to the aesthetic flourishing of nations, which themselves, more than 'the artist' (a creation of the end of the nineteenth century), are the drivers of artistic creation. We believe Stendhal's political thinking aims at finding the political background the most favourable to the thriving of European nations' artistic talents and happiness.

In a short text addressed by Stendhal to Romain Colomb and probably written in 1821, published by Henri Martineau in a collection of small texts, Stendhal stages a dialogue between an American in Paris and himself. Deploring the decreasing quality of French literature in the early nineteenth century compared to the literature of France in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, the American values the military and political achievements of France at the beginning of the century, to conclude: 'mon cher Européen un peuple n'est jamais grand que dans un genre à la fois.'³⁸⁷

This illustrates Stendhal's idea of the antithetic quality of arts and politics. He fears that democracy would lead to widespread involvement in public affairs, thereby pushing art into the background: 'qui songera à faire des chefs-d'œuvre? *Chacun travaillera*.'³⁸⁸ Stendhal denounces democracy as 'l'art d'en appeler aux passions des gens trop occupés pour avoir une opinion'.³⁸⁹ Stendhal shares Montesquieu's view that democracy is a degenerated form of the Republic. Montesquieu's preference for England's model of moderated government, this 'nation où la

³⁸⁷ Stendhal, *Mélanges de Politique et d'Histoire*, ed. by Henri Martineau (Le Divan, 1933), Vol 1, p. 164.

³⁸⁸ Stendhal, *Racine et Shakespeare II*, in *Œuvres complètes* (Genève: Cercle du Bibliophile, 1971), pp. 117–19, note.

³⁸⁹ Stendhal, *Vie de Rossini* (Paris: Boulland, 1824), ii, p. 381.

république se cache sous la forme de la monarchie,³⁹⁰ is well known. For Montesquieu, there are three types of government: republican, monarchical, and despotic.³⁹¹ The idea of the popular state as the privileged expression of the Republic is far from self-evident in Montesquieu's work.

It is in this light that we interpret Stendhal's negative judgements towards the people, more than a contradiction between his liberal and aristocratic mindset: 'J'aime le peuple, je déteste ses oppresseurs; mais ce serait pour moi un supplice de tous les instants que de vivre avec le peuple.'³⁹² In *Vie de Rossini*, he notes: 'Je désire de tout mon cœur que l'on soit heureux dans toutes les arrière-boutiques de France, mais je ne puis faire ma société des gens qui les habitent; je déplorerais encore plus qu'on ne me déplairait.'³⁹³ Stendhal further explains, in *Vie de Henry Brulard*: 'mes parents m'avaient parfaitement communiqué leurs goûts aristocratiques et réservés [...] J'abhorre la canaille (pour avoir des communications avec) en même temps que sous le nom de peuple je désire passionnément son bonheur' 'Mes amis [...] partent de là pour mettre en doute mon sincère libéralisme. J'ai horreur de ce qui est sale, or le peuple est toujours sale à mes yeux'.³⁹⁴ This brings Stendhal close to Chateaubriand who confessed in *Mémoires d'Outre-Tombe*: 'Démocrate par nature, aristocrate par mœurs, je ferais très volontiers l'abandon de ma fortune et de ma vie au peuple, pourvu que j'eusse peu de rapports avec la foule.'³⁹⁵ For Stendhal, liberalism, which should lead to the right of peoples to self-determination, does not mean putting the people, and their expression, at the forefront of political life.

From this stems Stendhal's strong interest in England's Monarchical Republic, as a potential ideal political model finding a delicate balance between the unity and freedom of the people and the preservation of elegant aristocratic customs. For instance, this admiration is expressed in his review *Coup d'œil sur la situation de l'Europe et de la France*: 'Tous les peuples d'Europe sont en guerre avec leurs rois, à l'exception de l'Angleterre (qui n'en a nul besoin) et de

³⁹⁰ Montesquieu, *Esprit des lois*, Vol 2, *Œuvres complètes*, ed. by Roger Caillois (Paris: Gallimard, Pléiade, 1951), Vol 19, p. 304.

³⁹¹ Montesquieu, *Esprit des lois*, Vol 2, II, 1, p. 239.

³⁹² Stendhal, *Œuvres intimes*, Vol 2, p. 686.

³⁹³ Stendhal, *Vie de Rossini*, II, 7.

³⁹⁴ *Vie de Henry Brulard*, I, 204.

³⁹⁵ Chateaubriand, *Mémoires d'Outre-Tombe*, 5, 419, April 1833.

l'Autriche et de la Russie qui ne sont pas encore parvenues à la conscience de leur propre bonheur.'

Despite this interest in England's political model, Stendhal highlights the failure of the individual's capacity to remain moderate in political engagement. Politics is sidetracking the individual from arts, considered as a more genuine pursuit:

La dernière source de la décadence des arts en France, c'est l'attention anglaise que les gens qui ont le plus d'âme et d'esprit y donnent aux intérêts politiques. [...] À moins d'avoir un orgueil extrêmement irritable, et une sensibilité mal placée pour les intérêts du bonheur, je ne vois pas quel plaisir on peut trouver à s'occuper sans cesse de constitution et de politique. Dans l'état actuel des jouissances et des habitudes d'un homme du monde, le bonheur que nous pouvons tirer de la manière dont le pouvoir est distribué dans le pays où nous vivons n'est pas très grand: cela peut nous nuire, mais non nous faire plaisir. [...] Je compare l'état de ces patriotes qui songent sans cesse aux lois et à la balance des pouvoirs, à celui d'un homme qui prendrait un souci continuel de l'état de solidité de la maison qu'il habite. Je veux bien, une fois pour toutes, choisir mon appartement dans une maison solide et bien bâtie; mais enfin on a bâti cette maison pour y jouir tranquillement de tous les plaisirs de la vie, et il faut être, ce me semble, bien malheureux, quand on est dans un salon, avec de jolies femmes, pour aller s'inquiéter de l'état de la toiture de la maison, *Et propter vitam vivendi perdere causas.*' (Absorbed in the search of the reasons to live, we would be forgetting to live) ³⁹⁶

In *De l'Amour's* chapter on England, this thought recurs:

Toute l'attention semble employée aux arrangements raisonnables de la vie, et à prévenir tous les inconvénients: arrivés enfin au moment de recueillir le fruit de tant de soins et d'un si long esprit d'ordre, il ne se

³⁹⁶ Stendhal, *Vies de Haydn, de Mozart et de Métastase*, p. 246.

trouve plus de vie de reste pour jouir. On dirait que les enfants de Penn n'ont jamais lu ce vers qui semble leur histoire: *Et propter vitam, vivendi perdere causas*.³⁹⁷

Thus Stendhal turns his eyes towards absolutist regimes as the most favourable to arts. In *Rome, Naples et Florence en 1817*, he considers that: 'Les choses qu'il faut aux arts pour prospérer sont souvent contraires à celles qu'il faut aux nations pour être heureuses.'³⁹⁸ Stendhal recognizes the paradox in *Rome, Naples et Florence*: 'Je me sou mets à mon penchant aristocratique, après avoir déclamé dix ans et de bonne foi, contre tout aristocratie.'³⁹⁹ The paradox is made once more salient in the English reviews: 'La tyrannie elle-même peut, ainsi que les tempêtes sur mer, sujets de tant de beaux tableaux, être utile à nos plaisirs intellectuels, quoique l'humanité puisse nous faire désirer sincèrement la non-existence de ces deux fléaux.'⁴⁰⁰ The same idea takes the form of an anecdote in *Mémoires d'un touriste*: 'Au milieu de cette délicatesse noble du quinzième siècle, éclate toute la grossièreté du nôtre. On m'a conduit à la salle d'audience de la cour d'assises. Je m'attendais à quelque chose de semblable à la salle de Lancastre (Angleterre); j'ai trouvé un grand vilain salon carré, tapissé d'un papier gros bleu avec bordure tricolore; sur les enroulements de cette bordure, on lit à tout moment: 27, 28 et 29 juillet. Hélas! le conseil général n'a pas voulu donner d'argent pour faire mieux, et les ministres des finances qui font fortune, de nos jours, ne songent qu'à la bien cacher, et ne bâtissent plus de palais.'⁴⁰¹ The same idea recurs on a more provocative note: 'Le véritable artiste au cœur énergique et agissant est essentiellement non tolérant. Avec la puissance, il serait affreux despote. Moi, qui ne suis pas artiste, si j'avais le pouvoir suprême, je ne sais pas trop si je ne ferais pas brûler la galerie du Luxembourg, qui corrompt le goût de tant de Français. La duchesse de la Ferté disait à madame de Staël: 'Il faut l'avouer, ma chère amie, je ne trouve que moi qui aie toujours raison.' Plus l'on aura de génie naturel et d'originalité, plus sera évidente la profonde justesse de cette saillie.'⁴⁰² With a penchant for contrarian views, Stendhal even goes so far as to praise the authority of the Papal States as a catalyst for artistic creation: 'À

³⁹⁷ *De l'Amour*, Chapter 45: 'De l'Angleterre'.

³⁹⁸ *Rome, Naples et Florence en 1817*, in *Voyages en Italie*, p. 57.

³⁹⁹ *Rome, Naples et Florence*, II, Rome, p. 148-150.

⁴⁰⁰ Stendhal, 'Arts et civilisation en Italie', 16 November 1825, in *Stendhal Paris-Londres*, ed. by Renée Dénier (Paris: Stock, 1997), p. 580.

⁴⁰¹ *Mémoires d'un touriste*.

⁴⁰² Stendhal, *Histoire de la peinture en Italie*, Livre troisième, Chapter 66, p. 233.

Rome, l'opinion publique n'a qu'un seul sujet politique sur quoi s'exercer—l'état de santé du pape. Une fois les questions posées et satisfaites sur ce point, le reste de la conversation tourne sur la peinture et la musique.⁴⁰³

Beyond Stendhal, the interest of political power in controlling the arts is a subject widely studied by critics, offering illuminating insights. In *The Ideology of the Aesthetic*, Terry Eagleton studies the relationship of aesthetics and political power. Political power would need for its own purposes to take account of 'sensible life', for without an understanding of this no dominion can be secure. The world of feelings and sensations can surely not just be surrendered to the 'subjective', to what Kant scornfully termed the 'egoism of taste'. Reason must find some way of penetrating the world of perception. Political power can rely on sentiment as a source of social cohesion, as what bonds could be stronger, more unimpeachable, than those of the senses. Aesthetics is a form of 'instinctive allegiance', 'organic liaisons', 'a more trustworthy form of political rule than the inorganic, oppressive structures of absolutism.'⁴⁰⁴ With art, 'Power is shifting its location from centralized institutions to the silent, invisible depths of the subject itself.'⁴⁰⁵ This is consistent with Stendhal's view of art, as being largely influenced by national identity and the prevailing political regime.

Stendhal's acceptance of a strong political power is contingent on the condition that art and culture are not subject to artificial control or direct censorship. In *Racine et Shakespeare*, Stendhal stresses that the French Revolution changed all aspects of life in Europe. Stendhal calls for a change in literature akin to the break in the political landscape: 'Molière était romantique en 1670.'⁴⁰⁶ 'De mémoire d'historien, jamais peuple n'a éprouvé dans ses mœurs et dans ses plaisirs, de changement plus rapide et plus total que celui de 1780 à 1823; et l'on veut nous donner toujours la même littérature.'⁴⁰⁷

⁴⁰³ Stendhal, 'Lettres de Rome (3), Les Anglais à Rome', *New Monthly Magazine* (July 1825), in *Stendhal Paris–Londres*, ed. by Renée Dénier (Paris: Stock, 1997), 430–439 (p. 434).

⁴⁰⁴ Terry Eagleton, *The Ideology of the Aesthetic* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1990), p. 23–24.

⁴⁰⁵ Terry Eagleton, *The Ideology of the Aesthetic* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1990), p. 27–28.

⁴⁰⁶ *Racine et Shakespeare*, in *Œuvres complètes*, ed. by V. Del Litto and E. Abravanel, 50 vol, reprint of Geneva: Cercle du bibliophile, 1967–1973, p. 92 (Genève: Slatkine, 1986), p. 478.

⁴⁰⁷ *Racine et Shakespeare*, p. 45.

Thus Stendhal articulates a scathing critique of the pernicious effects of Napoleon's censorship: 'Napoléon freina les progrès de la littérature de 1800 à 1814. Il acheta les hommes de lettres par des places et des pensions, parce qu'il en avait peur. [...] Ce fut Napoléon qui ordonna à l'Académie française de nommer M. de Chateaubriand. Son intention était d'avoir des titres à la gratitude de tous les hommes à talent. Le traitement que subit *De l'Allemagne* de Mme de Staël laisse deviner le sort promis à tout écrivain qui eût osé exprimer sincèrement ses opinions.'⁴⁰⁸ Stendhal's works were subjected to censorship during various periods: the First Empire and the Restoration under Louis XVIII and Charles X, followed by the July Monarchy under Louis Philippe d'Orléans. Stendhal remains vehemently critical of this suppression, as evidenced by his directives for posthumous publication: 'à imprimer 10 ans après ma mort'⁴⁰⁹ or 'Si la police rend imprudente la publication, on attendra dix ans.'⁴¹⁰

Stendhal's political viewpoint tends toward the model of the Enlightened despot, that of Frédéric II or Catherine II, which is not antithetical with Stendhal's adherence to the eighteenth-century values. As Antoine Lilti explains, the eighteenth-century philosophy is often too quickly presented as the starting point of the modern democratic tradition, and quickly reduced to a set of assertions like the opposition to absolutism, the affirmation of human rights, the advocacy of tolerance and emancipation, and the endorsement of popular sovereignty. But in another competing vision of the Enlightenment, a certain elitism would combine with a tendency for disdain toward the populace and an easy acceptance of despotism, so long as it is enlightened, i.e. opposed to the priests as much as it is opposed to the people considered as a populist mass.⁴¹¹ This interpretation resonates deeply with Stendhal's nuanced position, which marries a certain disdain for both the populace and clerical authority with a pragmatic acceptance of any political governance that would champion the flourishing of the arts. Art serves as a significant differentiator among European educated populations and holds great importance for Stendhal, who links political systems to the arts. He tends to prioritize the pursuit of aesthetic flourishing, often overlooking the social progress of the 19th century. He portrays

⁴⁰⁸ Stendhal, 'Esquisses de la société parisienne, de la politique et de la littérature—Esquisse XXIV', *New Monthly Magazine* (November 1828), in *Stendhal Paris—Londres*, ed. by Renée Dénier (Paris: Stock, 1997), 894–897 (p. 895).

⁴⁰⁹ Stendhal, *Souvenirs d'égotisme*, beginning.

⁴¹⁰ Stendhal, *Le Chasseur vert*, Second preface, p. 723.

⁴¹¹ Antoine Lilti, *L'Héritage des Lumières, Ambivalences de la modernité* (Paris: EHESS Gallimard Seuil, 2019), Chapter 8: 'Peut-on éclairer le peuple?', p. 269.

the people in a transnational way, reflecting the internationalist character of nineteenth-century proletarian movements.

Stendhal's inquiry on geographical entities and individual belonging is articulated through various themes, mainly centring around an interest in the cultural unity of a nation. Stendhal likens the intrusion of politics into aesthetic life to vinegar souring cream: 'Le vinaigre est en soi une chose excellente, mais mélangé avec une crème il gâte tout.'⁴¹² And Stendhal to add about ministers: 'Non ragioniam di loro, ma guarda e passa' (let us not speak of them, but look and pass on).⁴¹³ From his reflections on ideal governance, we grasp that the political and cultural realms, while parallel, should ideally never intersect.

Rather, beyond politico-military aspects, nations in Stendhal are defined by the shared mores, manners and 'habits', the cultural tastes, their geographical characteristics and territorial identities, the spiritual influence, the sentimental and emotional engagements. Nations are the catalysts of culture, artistic innovation and happiness for the individuals, defined in Stendhal as the well-being derived from a sense of belonging to a community.

Chapter 3: The European Hypothesis

Nietzsche includes Stendhal in a group of 'profound and large-minded men', alongside Napoleon, Goethe, Beethoven, Schopenhauer, and Wagner, who contemplated European unity: 'The real general tendency of the mysterious labour of their souls was to prepare the way for that new synthesis, and tentatively to anticipate the European of the future; only in their simulations, or in their weaker moments, in old age perhaps, did they belong to the 'fatherlands'—they only rested from themselves when they became 'patriots'.⁴¹⁴ In a contestable statement, José Ortega y Gasset names Stendhal as 'représentant de l'idéalisme

⁴¹² Stendhal, *Lucien Leuwen*, Beginning of Part 2, pp. 359–60.

⁴¹³ Virgil's line on detachment in Dante's *Divine Comedy*.

⁴¹⁴ Friedrich Nietzsche, *Beyond Good and Evil*, Chapter 8, 'Peoples and Fatherlands'. See also: Hugo Drochon, *Nietzsche's Great Politics* (Princeton University Press, 2016).

européen'.⁴¹⁵ André Suarès describes him as the first 'Européen de France'⁴¹⁶ and 'premier grand Européen, depuis Montaigne' who 'pense en bon Européen' and 'finit même par être Européen contre la France'.⁴¹⁷ In *Portraits et préférences*, he remarks about the early nineteenth century: 'Chaque pays pourra continuer d'avoir ses bons serviteurs, qu'il appelle ses grands hommes; mais il n'y aura plus, en art ni en poésie, de grand homme qui ne soit européen. Il faut désormais porter l'esprit de l'Europe dans l'œuvre même où triomphe le génie d'un peuple.'⁴¹⁸ Stendhal is presented as a cosmopolitan by Michel Crouzet: 'Son errance morale, son absence de domicile, matériel et moral, font titre'; 'Stendhal n'a pas de domicile fixe, ni matériel, ni moral. Il est dans toute l'Europe.'⁴¹⁹ Nietzsche perceives Stendhal as a European in both an identity and political sense, whereas Crouzet views Stendhal merely as a cosmopolitan—someone who has travelled extensively across Europe and shown interest in a wide range of European regions.

Stendhal repeatedly describes himself as coming from 'Cosmopolis'. In *Promenades dans Rome*, while questioning the Italians about the behavior of the French occupation troops, Stendhal puts them at ease: 'Vous savez que vous pouvez me répondre librement, *vengo adesso di Cosmopoli*'.⁴²⁰ In *Pages d'Italie*, the trope recurs: 'De bonne foi et sans passion, tel que je suis, un vrai cosmopolite.'⁴²¹ Stendhal takes pride in asserting his cosmopolitan background: 'J'ai parcouru l'Europe de Naples à Moscou.'⁴²² Analysis of archives in La Courneuve reveals Stendhal's self-reflective awareness of the international aspect of his curriculum (see Appendices). Furthermore, Stendhal is a member of the Freemasons. Information is scarce, but records show that he is listed on the roll of the Sainte Caroline lodge in 1807.⁴²³ According to Pierre-Yves Beaurepaire in *L'Espace des francs-maçons: Une sociabilité européenne au XVIII^e*

⁴¹⁵ José Ortega y Gasset, *Etudes sur l'amour* (1926).

⁴¹⁶ André Suarès, 'D'après Stendhal', *NRF*, n°65, May-June 1914, p. 1033.

⁴¹⁷ André Suarès, *Voyage du Condottière* [1910-1932], I, Vers Venise, p. 153.

⁴¹⁸ André Suarès, *Portraits et préférences. De Benjamin Constant à Arthur Rimbaud* (Paris: Gallimard, 1991), p. 87.

⁴¹⁹ Michel Crouzet, 'Stendhal et les nations', *Commentaire SA*, 2, 98 (2002), 401–07.

⁴²⁰ Stendhal, *Promenades dans Rome*, quotation from the opera buffa *I Pretendi delusi*, 'Vous voyez en moi un véritable cosmopolite'; voir l'article de Pierre Martino, 'Stendhal à Cosmopolis', in *Nouvelles soirées du Stendhal-Club*. See also: *Voyages en Italie*, p. 346, 1048, 1211, 1217.

⁴²¹ Stendhal, *Pages d'Italie*, 'Mœurs romaines', 'Les fantoccini à Rome'.

⁴²² Stendhal, *Histoire de la peinture en Italie*.

⁴²³ Vermale, François, *Le Dossier maçonnique de M. de Beyle* (Paris: Divan, 1937), 145-153.

siècle, freemasonry appeared in the eighteenth century as a network mainly dedicated to entertainment, with egalitarian and cosmopolitan ideals.⁴²⁴ Michelet defines Freemasonry in the eighteenth century as ‘l’initiation de la tolérance et de l’humanité’.⁴²⁵ Stendhal frequently refers to Europe as a hub of interactions, exemplified by his mention of Mme de Staël and Coppet: ‘Les auteurs écrivaient pour être estimés dans le salon de Coppet. Voltaire n’a jamais eu rien de pareil. Il y avait sur les bords du lac 600 personnes des plus distinguées de l’Europe: l’esprit, les richesses, les plus grands titres, tout cela venait chercher le plaisir dans le salon de la femme illustre.’⁴²⁶

The goal of this part is to hypothesize a notion of European identity in Stendhal’s thinking, beyond the mere mention of Europe as a geographical entity in his oeuvre. We will thus review the European influences on nations, interrogating how broader European tendencies—industrialism, the North–South dichotomy, the Classicist vs Romanticism debate, thoughts on Progress and Modernity—impact, enrich, and complicate the national character and cross-cultural awareness as depicted by Stendhal.

‘Unity in Diversity’: Top-down or Bottom-up Approach to Europe?

Europe is the subject of many undecidable controversies. In a comment not devoid of assumption, Michel Crouzet raises the geographical paradox of Europe: ‘Si l’Europe semble indispensable au développement de la culture, elle est aussi une entité, que l’on rencontre, que l’on parcourt, mais qui n’existe pas.’⁴²⁷ ‘Europe,’ ‘cosmopolitanism’ or ‘civilization’ are, like all significant words, heavily loaded with meaning, making their significance unstable. In *La crise de la conscience européenne, 1680-1715*, Paul Hazard concludes: ‘Qu’est-ce que

⁴²⁴ Pierre-Yves Beaurepaire, *L’Espace des francs-maçons: Une sociabilité européenne au XVIII^e siècle* (Rennes: Presses universitaires de Rennes, 2003). *L’Autre et le frère: L’Étranger et la franc-maçonnerie en France au XVIII^e siècle* (Paris: Honoré Champion, 1998).

⁴²⁵ Letter of Michelet to Alfred Dumesnil, 5 March 1861 in *Revue de Paris*, 1 October 1822, p. 475.

⁴²⁶ Stendhal, *Rome, Naples et Florence en 1817*, p. 187.

⁴²⁷ Michel Crouzet, ‘Stendhal et les nations’, *Commentaire SA* (2002), 2, n°98, pp. 401–407.

l'Europe? Un acharnement de voisins qui se battent. [...] Une forme contradictoire, à la fois stricte et incertaine. [...] Une pensée qui ne se contente jamais.⁴²⁸

According to a certain reading of European history, European countries share major historical events: the Renaissance, the general movement of religious reformation (which spread in Germany, Switzerland, France, and England), the development of major monarchical families (Philippe II, the house of Tudor), absolutism (Louis XIV, the Habsburgs), Enlightenment, the 1789 revolutionary wave followed by Napoleon's ambition for the continent; 1815-1848 as a period of reaction and adjustment, the emergence of the middle class, the Revolution in 1830 and the spread of liberal ideas, the drafting of constitutions, and the increasing power of the legislature over the monarchy.⁴²⁹

As a geographical entity, Europe has existed since Antiquity, particularly in opposition to Asia. In the late seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, Europe was thought about as a Christian civilization, as exemplified in Bossuet's *Discours sur l'histoire universelle* (1672) and Pufendorf's *Introduction à l'histoire des principaux États, tels qu'ils sont aujourd'hui dans l'Europe* (1687). Voltaire's *Siècle de Louis XIV* (1751) and *Essai sur les mœurs et l'esprit des nations* (1756) read as criticisms of the providential, Christian and supposedly universal history by Bossuet. Voltaire describes 'l'Europe chrétienne (à la Russie près) comme une espèce de grande République partagée en plusieurs États' and places culture and art at the centre stage as the utmost political and vertical matter.⁴³⁰ Voltaire notably praises the enlightened actions of sovereigns in favour of the arts and letters, such as Peter the Great and Catherine II.⁴³¹ In *De l'esprit des lois*, Montesquieu first insists on the correlation between trade and mores, making trade the specificity of modern Europe. Montesquieu is echoed by David Hume: 'Rien n'est plus favorable à l'essor de la politesse et du savoir que plusieurs États voisins et indépendants, liés les uns aux autres par le commerce et la politique.' Regarding the rise and progress of the arts

⁴²⁸ Paul Hazard, *La crise de la conscience européenne, 1680-1715* (Paris: Fayard, 1961), Conclusion, p. 409.

⁴²⁹ Michel Rapport, *Nineteenth-Century Europe* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005), Part 1 and 2.

⁴³⁰ Voltaire, *Siècle de Louis XIV*, beginning of chapter 2.

⁴³¹ Voltaire, *Le Siècle de Louis XIV*, Chapter 2: 'Des États de l'Europe avant Louis XIV'.

and sciences, Hume compares modern Europe to Ancient Greece, fragmented into competing and powerful, though interdependent cities.⁴³²

The themes of identity and belonging create a connection between the early nineteenth century and the last 30 years. 'Unity in diversity' was the cornerstone of the school edifice under the Third Republic in France and is now the motto of the EU. This EU motto boldly proclaims the ambiguity of a dialogue between a transcendental vision of European identity and multiple nations. European treaties are short on the issue of cultural identity, promoting both 'common identity' and 'respect for cultures', culture being in turn singular and plural: 'L'Union contribue à l'épanouissement des cultures des États membres dans le respect de leur diversité nationale et régionale, tout en mettant en évidence l'héritage culturel commun.'⁴³³ The European Union is both a 'Europe of the nations' (Council of 28 Ministers sent by the 28 Member States) and a 'federal Europe' in some areas (the euro, the customs union, the common agricultural policy, etc). In 1992, 'common citizenship' was introduced in the EU by the Maastricht Treaty, which promotes 'respect for the history, culture and traditions' of the member states. In 2000, the 'common values' and the European 'spiritual and moral heritage' were highlighted in the Charter of Fundamental Rights. The collective destiny of Europe is poised to surpass the individual destinies of the peoples.

The notion of 'civilization' played a significant role in the transformation of historical discourse at the beginning of the nineteenth century. It expanded the scope of history to include new areas such as customs, ideas, and mentalities, while simultaneously diminishing the focus on the purely event-driven narrative of traditional politico-military history. The concept of European 'civilization' was also employed to expand the study of human communities beyond national boundaries.⁴³⁴ François Guizot, in his 1828 lecture series *Histoire de la civilisation en Europe*, expanded the idea of civilization to a European scale, emphasizing a sense of unity among the diverse states of Europe: 'il est évident qu'il y a une civilisation européenne; qu'une certaine

⁴³² David Hume, 'Of the Rise and Progress of the Arts and Science', in *Essays, moral and political* (Edinburgh: Kincaid, 1742).

⁴³³ *Traité sur le fonctionnement de l'Union européenne* (TFUE), Titre XIII: 'Culture', Article 167, in *Traité des européens après le traité de Lisbonne*, 3rd edition (Paris: La Documentation française, 2013), p. 146.

⁴³⁴ Laurent Franck, 'Penser l'Europe avec l'histoire. La notion de civilisation européenne sous la Restauration et la monarchie de Juillet', *Romantisme*, n° 104, 1999, 53-68, p. 54.

unité éclate dans la civilisation des divers états de l'Europe; que, malgré une grande diversité de temps, de lieux, de circonstances, partout cette civilisation découle de faits à peu près semblables, se rattache aux mêmes principes et tend à amener à peu près partout des résultats analogues. Il y a donc une civilisation européenne.⁴³⁵

In 1849, Victor Hugo spoke of 'Etats-Unis d'Europe'.⁴³⁶ Emile de Girardin in 1848 argued for 'une sainte alliance des peuples, une vaste confédération républicaine, industrielle, commerciale et maritime, qui pourrait s'appeler: les États-Unis d'Europe, qui aurait ses congrès, sa flotte, son armée (armée considérablement réduite, volontairement recrutée, largement soldée, sévèrement choisie), la même monnaie, le même système métrique, les même d'impôt, le même maximum d'heures de travail, le même minimum de salaire, etc., etc., etc.'⁴³⁷ This vision of Europe has persisted up to our time. In the twentieth century, Stefan Zweig advocated for a 'top-down' approach to building Europe, emphasizing the need to transition ideas from intellectual discussions to practical, organizational actions to ensure their broader visibility and impact:

Si notre idée doit avoir des effets réels, nous devons donc la faire sortir de la sphère ésotérique des discussions intellectuelles et consacrer toute notre énergie à la rendre visible et convaincante pour un cercle élargi. À cette fin, la parole, restons-en conscients, ne suffira pas, et nous devons y ajouter toutes les forces de diffusion militante aujourd'hui existantes afin de donner de la visibilité à nos idées pour les masses. [...] Si nous n'arrivons pas à susciter un tel enthousiasme pour notre idée, par le bas, au fond du cœur et du sang des peuples, toutes nos formules resteront vaines, car jamais dans l'histoire le changement n'est venu de la seule sphère intellectuelle et de la simple réflexion. Nous devons donc avant tout donner de la visibilité et de la passion à notre idée, la faire passer de l'état d'idéologie à celui d'une organisation capable de militer pour sa diffusion et lui imprimer un caractère ostensible et non seulement logique. C'est dans ce sens pratique et

⁴³⁵ François Guizot, *Histoire de la civilisation en Europe*, n° 4, p. 56.

⁴³⁶ Congrès de la Paix, 21 August 1849, Preliminary speech.

⁴³⁷ Girardin, *Bon sens, bonne foi* (Paris: Michel Lévy frères, 1848), 'Question et réponse', p. 269.

organisationnel que toutes nos pensées et nos propositions doivent se concentrer.⁴³⁸

Far from advocating a unified concept of Europe, Stendhal immerses himself in its diversity and takes delight in it. As the list established by Paul Léautaud in *Chroniques stendhaliennes* shows, Stendhal's nicknames are rife with foreign inspiration: Gruffo-Papera, Poverino, Fudger Family, Horace Smith, Rowe, Schmit, William Crocodile, Conickphile, Polybe Love-Puff, etc. Noticeably, Stendhal never adopted a nickname with Italian overtones. Henri Beyle's penname 'Stendhal' bears witness to a real fascination for Germany: 'Me croira-t-on? Je porterais un masque avec plaisir, je changerais de nom avec délices. [...] Souvent je pense à l'anneau d'Angélique; mon souverain plaisir serait de me changer en un long Allemand blond et de me promener ainsi dans Paris.'⁴³⁹ While participating in the Prussian campaign in 1806, Stendhal discovered the Hanseatic town of Stendal. One hypothesis is that he chose to bear its name by adding an 'h' to it, perhaps thinking that this would underline its German origin. Stendhal is tempted to belong everywhere in Europe.

For lack of any strong and compelling reference to 'Europe' explicitly envisioned as a conceptual unity in the Stendhalian corpus, even on a cultural level, Stendhal's conception contrasts with the 'top-down' cosmopolitan approach exposed by Zweig. Far from a theoretical and Eurocentric view, Stendhal's conception, based on the diversity of nations and their relationship-building movement, strikes as a 'bottom-up', outward-looking approach to Europe.

'Romanticisme', or Stendhal's Theorization of 'Modernity' in Europe

In this section, we argue that Stendhal's theorization of the relativity of audiences strongly influenced his analysis of the European literary and artistic landscapes. We investigate the impact of the classicist and romanticism debate on his vision of Europe and his cross-cultural consciousness.

As René-Marc Pille explains in his article 'L'émergence de la polarité classicisme-romantisme dans l'espace européen (1820-1830)', it is through the course of the nineteenth century that the

⁴³⁸ Stefan Zweig, *Appels aux Européens* (Paris: Bartillat, 2014), pp. 113–115.

⁴³⁹ Stendhal, *Souvenirs d'égotisme*, p. 70.

concepts of classicism and romanticism gradually morph into antitheses across the European landscape and become a controversy orchestrated in all countries neighbouring France.⁴⁴⁰

The extent to which Stendhal himself is a romantic is a problematic issue that has already been thoroughly addressed by Stendhalian criticism. 'Romanticism' in Stendhal was studied in depth by Victor Del Litto.⁴⁴¹ The study was recently renewed by Marie-Rose Corredor.⁴⁴²

A distinct question is that of Stendhal's theory of 'romanticisme'. In *Racine et Shakespeare*, Stendhal presents three notions: 'classique', 'romantique', 'romanticiste'. The first two are established terms, whereas the last one is borrowed from English to make a specific point. Stendhal coins 'romanticiste' in French as a term of art. Being 'romanticiste' is about being modern. In *Racine et Shakespeare*, Stendhal defines 'romanticisme' as: '[Un] art de présenter aux peuples les œuvres littéraires qui, dans l'état actuel de leurs habitudes et de leurs croyances, sont susceptibles de leur donner le plus de plaisir possible. Le classicisme, au contraire, leur présente la littérature qui donnait le plus grand plaisir possible à leurs arrière-grands-pères.'⁴⁴³

The concept of 'romanticisme' invented by Stendhal is based on the recognition of the character of an audience in a specific time and place, shaped by habits and beliefs, as opposed to classicism and romanticism, which are more coded and fixed in time. Stendhal considers all artistic work should be contextual. For instance, Canova can be described as '*romantique*, c'est-à-dire ayant fait la sculpture qui convenait réellement à ses contemporains (et qui leur faisait le plus de plaisir, puisqu'elle était taillée à leur mesure)⁴⁴⁴ According to him, every artist creates for a specific audience and reflects the trends and aspirations of their time. This is why Stendhal's pamphlet does not assign any specific content to 'romanticisme': it is an attitude,

⁴⁴⁰ René-Marc Pille, 'L'émergence de la polarité classicisme-romantisme dans l'espace européen (1820-1830)', in Denis Boncase, and François Genton (dir.), *Ferments d'ailleurs. Transferts culturels entre Lumières et romantismes* (Grenoble: ELLUG, 2010), 273–282 (p. 273–276).

⁴⁴¹ Victor Del Litto, Kurt Ringger (dir.), *Stendhal et le romantisme* (actes du XV^e Congrès international stendhalien, Mayence, 1982) (Aran: Éditions du Grand-Chêne, 1984).

⁴⁴² Corredor, Marie-Rose, *Stendhal 'romantique'? Stendhal et les romantismes européens* (Grenoble: UGA Éditions, 2016).

⁴⁴³ *Racine et Shakespeare*, preface by H. Martino, in *Œuvres complètes*, ed. by V. Del Litto and E. Abravanel, 50 vol, reprint of Geneva: Cercle du bibliophile, 1967-1973 (Genève: Slatkine, 1986), p. 478, Chapter 3: 'Ce que c'est que le romanticisme', p. 39.

⁴⁴⁴ Stendhal, *Promenades dans Rome*, in *Voyages en Italie*, p. 769.

rather than a set of rules. ‘Romanticisme’ strikes as a new sensibility, contending against the application of French classicist norms and Enlightenment thinking across the whole of Europe during the First Empire and Restoration period.

As Miranda Gill explains, the influence of romanticism was initially slower in France than in other nations because the Restoration, with its association of throne and altar and its desire to reinstate the Ancien Régime, sought to dampen the cultural experiments more widely seen in Germany and England (often self-consciously framed in opposition to French Enlightenment values). The French literary establishment insisted on retaining neoclassical dramatic conventions such as unity of time and place during the Restoration, just as the aristocracy attempted to reinstate a defunct model of sociability widely felt to be oppressive and artificial in a post-Revolutionary climate.⁴⁴⁵

For Stendhal, ‘romanticisme’ comes with an attention to geographical specificities. ‘Romanticist’ authors read as embodiments of the aesthetic life of their country: Dante or Boccaccio for Italy, Calderón for Spain, Shakespeare and Byron for England, Schiller and Goethe for Germany, Corneille, Racine and Molière for France. As a reaction against the predominance of the French model, Schiller and Goethe offered the German public new productions inspired by Shakespeare and Calderón. Based on these works, Herder, Mme de Staël and Schlegel initiated a reflection on the renewal of dramatic forms.⁴⁴⁶

As a consequence, Europe is a place to be studied via aesthetic and literary fieldwork. Michel Crouzet encapsulates this perspective by stating: ‘Toute la pensée de Stendhal repose sur cette idée: ce qui est général est moindre en existence, moindre ontologiquement, moindre en valeur que ce qui est singulier et particulier. L’Europe, c’est la terre des particularités.’⁴⁴⁷ As Stendhal analyses in *Rome, Naples et Florence en 1817*: ‘il y a deux types de gens de lettres: les intéressés à la société et les reclus.’⁴⁴⁸ In his ‘Lettres de Paris, par le petit-neveu de Grimm’ written in July

⁴⁴⁵ Miranda Gill, *Eccentricity and the Cultural Imagination in Nineteenth-Century Paris* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009), p. 20, Chapter 1: ‘The Rise of Eccentricity’, ‘The ‘Frenchifying’ of eccentricity’, pp. 33–39 (p. 34).

⁴⁴⁶ Friedrich Schlegel, *Cours de littérature dramatique* (Paris: J.J. Paschoud, 1814).

⁴⁴⁷ Michel Crouzet, ‘Stendhal et les nations’, *Commentaire SA* (2002), 2, n°98, 401–407.

⁴⁴⁸ Stendhal, *Rome, Naples et Florence en 1817*, in *Voyages en Italie*, p. 109.

1825, Stendhal presents Lamartine as ‘entièrement dépourvu de sens commun’: ‘M. de Lamartine a été élevé dans une famille ultra non moins remarquable par l’étroitesse de ses idées que par sa noblesse. [...] Ainsi, tout conspire à maintenir ce pauvre jeune homme dans l’ignorance perpétuelle des faits élémentaires de la vie réelle. C’est ainsi qu’on peut dire avec vérité qu’il manque de jugement bien qu’il soit homme de génie;’ while Byron, as a ‘pair’, is said to have seen ‘un peu *le monde comme il va*.’⁴⁴⁹ In 1818, Stendhal notes in a letter: ‘Je suis un romantique furieux, c’est-à-dire je suis pour Shak[espeare] contre Racine, et pour Lord Byron contre Boileau.’⁴⁵⁰ In 1823, Stendhal begins his essay *Racine et Shakespeare* with this question: ‘Pour faire des tragédies qui puissent intéresser le public en 1823, faut-il suivre les errements de Racine ou ceux de Shakespeare?’ referring to the opposition between classicism and romanticism. Stendhal takes up the arguments already put forward in the previous century by Giuseppe Baretti, in his *Discours sur Shakespeare et sur Monsieur de Voltaire*.⁴⁵¹ In a review for the English press in 1828, he expands on ‘la grande révolution littéraire qui est sur le point de commencer en France et qui de là gagnera le continent tout entier’: ‘Les noms de Racine et de Shakespeare seront les mots d’ordre du combat, et la question sera de savoir lequel des deux grands poètes servira désormais comme modèle de composition tragique.’⁴⁵² This opposition is heavily discussed throughout Europe: Stendhal stands at the cross-section of all the European romantic debates.⁴⁵³

These cultural concerns underscore Stendhal’s fascination for the relativity of creation and audience in literature and art.

⁴⁴⁹ Stendhal, ‘Lettres de Paris, par le petit-neveu de Grimm (7)’, *London Magazine* (July 1825), in *Stendhal Paris–Londres*, ed. by Renée Dénier (Paris: Stock, 1997), 461–473 (p. 463). See also: Georges M. Rosa, ‘L’initiation de Stendhal au culte de Byron’, in Marie-Rose Corredor, *Stendhal ‘romantique’? Stendhal et les romantismes européens* (Grenoble: UGA Éditions, 2016), 119–143.

⁴⁵⁰ Letter to Adolphe de Maresté, 14 April 1818, Stendhal, *Correspondance*, ed. Henri Martineau and Victor Del Litto (Paris: Gallimard, Pléiade, 1968), Vol 1, p. 909.

⁴⁵¹ Giuseppe Baretti, *Discours sur Shakespeare et sur Monsieur de Voltaire* (Paris: Durand Neveu, 1777).

⁴⁵² Stendhal, ‘Esquisses de la société parisienne, de la politique et de la littérature—Esquisse XXIV’, *New Monthly Magazine* (November 1828), in *Stendhal Paris–Londres*, ed. by Renée Dénier (Paris: Stock, 1997), 894–897 (p. 895).

⁴⁵³ Gaëlle Loisel, ‘Stendhal au carrefour des débats romantiques européens: généalogies de *Racine et Shakespeare*’, in *L’Année Stendhalienne* (Paris: Champion, 2014), n°13, 39–52.

From Beauty to a Plurality of Aesthetics: on the Antique Heritage of Europe

We can read in Flaubert's *Bouvard et Pécuchet*: 'Pécuchet était pour le sentiment et l'idée, Bouvard pour l'image et la couleur; et ils commençaient à ne plus s'entendre, chacun s'étonnant que l'autre fût si borné. La science qu'on nomme esthétique trancherait peut-être leurs différends.'⁴⁵⁴

This section aims to demonstrate how Stendhal's portrayal of national character serves as a plea to contextualize beauty, signalling an emerging skepticism towards the abstract conception of truth. Stendhal engages deeply with various philosophical and cultural European debates, each juxtaposing intellect, academicism, and tradition against sensation, movement, and modernity. The eighteenth century frames the opposition between rationalism—which held that knowledge can be attained by reason alone a priori—and empiricism—which held that knowledge can only be reached through the senses a posteriori, after experience. The debate was later reenacted by Schopenhauer and Hegel, two contemporaries of Stendhal, Schopenhauer defending the 'Platonic Idea' of the perfect form, Hegel putting 'Beauty' aside to give the philosophy of art an 'aesthetic' orientation. This last perspective leads to valuing individual and cultural differences in art.

Indeed, broad debates on the philosophy of art unfold within the context of an opposition between Romantic Europe and Neoclassical Europe. Neoclassical Europe and Romantic Europe represent two conflicting cultural models. The former is hegemonic and French, based on a singular model and a universal concept of beauty, characterized by a tendency toward abstraction and a lack of contextual grounding. Romantic Europe, on the other hand, celebrates the particular, the unique, and the local—emphasizing the contextual. For Stendhal, a sense of beauty is shaped by geographical belonging: 'Où est le beau idéal de la danse? Jusqu'ici il n'y en a pas. Cela tient de trop près à l'influence des climats et à notre organisation physique.'⁴⁵⁵ This statement on the 'ideal beauty' helps us to better situate the philosophical implications of Stendhal's conception of nations. There are philosophers who first questioned beauty, and only secondarily art (Plato, Kant, Hume). They developed an aesthetic that disregards art, to reflect on beauty. These philosophers who consider art superfluous in the realm of beauty have come

⁴⁵⁴ Flaubert, *Bouvard et Pécuchet* [1881] (Paris: Conard, 1910), Chapter 5, p. 183.

⁴⁵⁵ Stendhal, *Rome, Naples et Florence en 1817*, in *Voyages en Italie*, p. 39.

to favour natural beauty over artistic beauty. Contrastingly, some philosophers focus on art without granting beauty any essential privilege (Aristotle, Hegel, Nietzsche). By asserting the absence of 'ideal beauty,' Stendhal aligns with this second group of thinkers. For Stendhal, art is 'artistic': it is always a work from a particular viewpoint, intended for a particular viewpoint.

Stendhal pays tribute to the first doubts on the Enlightenment vision of 'reason' in the early nineteenth century in favour of a more restricted view of human rationality and its scope: culture, history, tradition, customs, or experience are directly influencing the reasoning. Each nation would have a network of self-referential logic and concepts that create a form of contextual 'truth' that, even if not based in the reality of the physical world, is based in the reality of its respective social framework. In one of his *Lettres de Paris*, Stendhal describes 'des disciples de M. Cousin qui sont en faveur du spiritualisme et d'un kantisme modéré', 'partisans fanatiques de la philosophie spiritualiste de Platon'. On the other hand, the *cousinistes* 'méprisent la philosophie que Condillac a fondée sur l'expérience.'⁴⁵⁶ While empiricism is associated with the scientific method, relying on observation and experiment (John Locke, George Berkeley David Hume), sensualism of Condillac stands as a branch or an extreme form of empiricism. Stendhal extensively engages with Du Bos' *Réflexions critiques sur la poésie et la peinture*, a work he frequently references and received as a prize in 1798. This text emphasizes the relativity of beauty, influenced by factors such as climate, temperament, location, time, society, and political regime.⁴⁵⁷ Du Bos notably introduces the concept of a 'sixth sense,' a 'sens sans organe,' which enables us to appreciate the internal sensation that beauty evokes within us.

Gradually—over the nineteenth and twentieth century, literature and art experience a shift from an abstract conception of beauty to an emphasis on a plurality of aesthetics. The assessment of the objective qualities of the artwork itself such as order, composition (the Greek principles of *arche*, *mesos*, and *telos*), harmony, totality, or proportions (*summetria*) are superseded by the subject's experience and perception. The traditional idea that beauty resides in the inherent properties of nature, which should therefore be imitated, is supplanted by a subjective approach rooted in personal experience. This transition marks a move from conceiving beauty as a form

⁴⁵⁶ Stendhal, 'Lettres de Paris, par le petit-neveu de Grimm (1)', *London Magazine* (January 1825), in *Stendhal Paris–Londres*, ed. by Renée Dénier (Paris: Stock, 1997), 241–252 (p. 242).

⁴⁵⁷ Del Litto, *La Vie intellectuelle de Stendhal*, p. 443.

of knowledge to understanding aesthetics as an experience. 'Aesthetics'—which comes from the Greek *'aisthêsis'* or sensation—enters the vocabulary of philosophy with Baumgarten and Schiller.⁴⁵⁸ This form of 'vitalism' is echoed in Stendhal, for instance in this letter to his sister Pauline: 'Il faut secouer la vie, autrement elle nous ronge.'⁴⁵⁹ This echoes Du Bos' 'Il faut remuer les cœur'.⁴⁶⁰ Liveliness, Baumgarten's 'Lebhaftigkeit', become criteria for aesthetic excellence.⁴⁶¹ The idea that scholarly knowledge may corrupt the natural immediacy of the judgement of taste rises in Stendhal's time and leads the role of critics to evolve, as not so much to dictate taste but rather to interpret and articulate the judgements already made by 'naive' minds. This reflects a shift from traditional authorities on art—such as the antiquarian, the erudite, or the connoisseur—to the broader figure of 'l'homme de bon goût' or 'l'esthète', this potentially explaining Stendhal being hired as a critic for the English press.

Stendhal strongly criticises Winckelmann, the author of *Histoire de l'art de l'antiquité*. In his *Journal*, on 27 September 1811, he comments: 'Winckelmann me semble aussi avoir ce défaut: il n'a pas regardé la nature, et puis les Grecs, mais les Grecs, et la nature ensuite, qu'il n'a trouvée admirable que dans les points imités.'⁴⁶² In *Histoire de la peinture en Italie* (1817), he rejects Winckelmann's emphasis on a universal ideal of Beauty rooted in Greco-Roman art and concludes 'Oublions le savant Winckelmann,' the word 'savant' referring to theory and abstraction.⁴⁶³ In *Promenades dans Rome* (1829), he mentions 'C'est du Phébus allemand, le plus plat de tous.'⁴⁶⁴ Stendhal reads again Winckelmann at the end of his life: 'Première lecture de Winckelmann, après celle de 1797, en 1840, le 13 mai. La lecture d'un savant me glace. L'admiration d'un cuistre me dégoûte des revues.'⁴⁶⁵ Winckelmann would fail to appreciate the diversity of beauty and the cultural specificity of artworks.⁴⁶⁶ Similarly, Herder challenges Winckelmann's approach, especially his negative judgement of Egyptian art, which should

⁴⁵⁸ Schiller, *Lettres sur l'éducation esthétique de l'homme* [1795] (Paris: Aubier, 1943).

⁴⁵⁹ Stendhal, *Correspondance*, Vol 1, Letter to Pauline, 4 September 1809, p. 539.

⁴⁶⁰ Abbé Dubos, *Réflexions critiques sur la poésie et la peinture*, Part II, section 1 (Paris: J. Mariette, 1719), p. 2.

⁴⁶¹ Alexander Gottlieb Baumgarten, *Méditations philosophiques*, in *Esthétique* (Paris: éditions de l'Herne, 1988), § CXII, p. 74.

⁴⁶² Stendhal, *Œuvres intimes*, Vol 1, p. 787.

⁴⁶³ Stendhal, *Histoire de la peinture en Italie*, p. 306.

⁴⁶⁴ Stendhal, *Promenades dans Rome*, in *Voyages en Italie*, p. 780.

⁴⁶⁵ Stendhal, *Journal*, 13 May 1840, *Œuvres intimes*, Vol 3, p. 386.

⁴⁶⁶ Catherine Mariette and Chantal Massol, *Stendhal et Winckelmann* (Grenoble: UGA éditions, 2017).

arguably be appreciated on its own terms rather than through a Greek-centric lens.⁴⁶⁷ Stendhal's resistance to upholding the Greek ideals of composition and order as the definitive principles for theatrical writing is further evidenced in his critique for the English press of M. de Marchangy's *La Gaule poétique*, where Stendhal quotes this saying: 'Qui nous délivrera des Grecs et des Romains?'.⁴⁶⁸

Stendhal's depiction of national character foregrounds the individual. In Stendhal's literary progression, artworks initially take centre stage in *Histoire de la peinture en Italie* (1817) and *Rome, Naples et Florence* (1817), but their prominence diminishes over time, evident in works such as *Promenades dans Rome* (1829) and *Mémoires d'un touriste* (1838). This increasing focus on personal taste and emotional response is perceptible right from the titles of his works, reflecting the shift from object to subject in Stendhal's writings. A shift is perceptible from artworks to strolls and landscapes. As noted by Alain Roger in his *Court traité du paysage*, in Stendhal's time, sensibility to scenery evolved. Trivial phenomena such as fogs, vaporous atmospheres, or changes in light are endowed with aesthetic value. Mountainous landscapes—loathed by the Ancients—are being appreciated by Europeans.⁴⁶⁹ Francis Claudon gets interested in the 'physiologie de la musique' in Stendhal and highlights how the author seeks the materiality of experience even in his approach to music, the immaterial art per excellence: 'S'il croit à la supériorité de l'opéra sur la symphonie, ce n'est pas en premier lieu pour des raisons esthétiques mais plutôt pour des raisons physiques; seule le touche la voix humaine [...] la mélodie est le véritable langage du cœur.'⁴⁷⁰

Stendhal's vision of Europe thus diverges from the traditional appreciation of the so-called Antique and Greek common ground, which is frequently cited today as the civilizational foundation of the European Union. Stendhal emphasized the dialogue between diverse European cultures rather than the notion of European cultural unity.

⁴⁶⁷ Herder, *Une autre philosophie de l'histoire* (Paris: Aubier, Domaine allemand bilingue, 1964), p. 145.

⁴⁶⁸ Stendhal, 'Publications étrangères', *New Monthly Magazine* (July 1825), in *Stendhal Paris–Londres*, ed. by Renée Dénier (Paris: Stock, 1997), 474–478 (p. 474).

⁴⁶⁹ Alain Roger, *Court traité du paysage* (Paris, Gallimard, 1997).

⁴⁷⁰ Francis Claudon, *Stendhal et la musique* (Grenoble: UGA éditions, 2019), Chapter 3: 'Physiologie de la musique', 47–65.

A Timeline of Nations

Stendhal writes to Pauline in 1804: ‘Le siècle marche, marchons avec lui.’⁴⁷¹ In this section, we review the major transformative movements that have impacted all of Europe and hypothesize a chronological dimension to Stendhal’s description of nations. We argue that travelling through Europe allows Stendhal to experience different eras. We examine Stendhal's perspective on the progression of history.

In his work *La Crise de la conscience européenne*, Paul Hazard identifies four major psychological shifts that shaped the European mindset during Stendhal's era. Firstly, a transition from stability to movement. While the classical spirit cherished stability, the growing taste for and habit of travel encouraged a shift towards dynamism and change. Secondly, the era marked a shift from ancient to modern perspectives. Distant travels not only broadened horizons but also contributed to the evolution of ideas, leading to a newfound respect for previously marginalized or exotic cultures such as the noble savage, the Muslim Arab, the Persian, and the Chinese. Thirdly, there was a significant geographical shift in intellectual dominance from the South to the North, with Europe recognizing the civilizational power of Northern countries like England, Germany, the Netherlands, and particularly Prussia. Lastly, the religious landscape shifted from Catholic orthodoxy to a landscape shaped by Anglophone and Protestant orthodoxy. This fostered a resistance to dogmatic attitudes and encouraged a rise in skepticism, positioning reason as increasingly critical.⁴⁷²

On Stendhal's timeline of nations, England is ahead: ‘Ce n'est que dans ce qui arrive en Angleterre que nous pouvons puiser des conjectures sur le sort que l'avenir nous réserve.’⁴⁷³ He believes: ‘l'histoire de l'Angleterre [...] sert de miroir pour notre avenir.’⁴⁷⁴ Conversely, Russia is behind: ‘Les Russes copient les mœurs françaises, mais toujours à cinquante ans de distance. Ils en sont maintenant au siècle de Louis XV.’⁴⁷⁵ As the ‘comparatist’ nation, France serves as the zero point on the European nations’ timeline. Spain is strongly associated with the Middle

⁴⁷¹ Letter to Pauline (29 October-16 November 1804), in *Correspondance*, Vol 1, p. 158.

⁴⁷² Paul Hazard, *La Crise de la conscience européenne, 1680-1715 [1934]* (Paris: Fayard, 1961), Part 1, respectively chapter 1, 2, 3 and 4.

⁴⁷³ Stendhal, *Mémoires d'un touriste*.

⁴⁷⁴ *Le Rouge et le Noir*.

⁴⁷⁵ Stendhal, *Le Rouge et le Noir*, Chapter 24.

Age throughout the Stendhalian corpus: 'Je regarde le peuple espagnol comme le représentant vivant du Moyen Âge.'⁴⁷⁶ Herder assimilates the Middle Age to youth and faith, considering modern times as inferior in vitality and freedom, these characteristics corresponding to the Spanish character in Stendhal.⁴⁷⁷ Italy is associated with the Renaissance, as evident throughout the *Chroniques italiennes*.

Nations are conceptualised in their historical anchorage: 'Les nations les plus célèbres ont une époque brillante. L'Italie en a trois. La Grèce vante l'âge de Périclès, la France le siècle de Louis XIV. L'Italie a la gloire de l'antique Étrurie, qui avant la Grèce cultiva les arts et la sagesse, l'âge d'Auguste, et enfin de siècle de Léon X, qui a civilisé l'Europe.'⁴⁷⁸ This is reminiscent of Herder's concept of *Zeitgeist* (the spirit of the present time), arguing that each epoch has its own genius and advocating for the unique value of each cultural epoch and nation.

The passage of time is not synonymous with progress for Stendhal, as delineated for Italy in the *London Magazine*: 'Non seulement l'Italie n'a fait aucun progrès pendant ces deux cent soixante-dix ans, mais on peut dire qu'elle serait véritablement gagnante, si elle pouvait revenir à l'état où elle se trouvait en 1530, avant la restauration des Médicis, infâmes et pernicieux. Elle avait alors une énergie qu'elle a totalement perdue.'⁴⁷⁹ In Stendhal's chronology of nations, the Middle Ages represent a pivotal epoch through which all nations had the opportunity to develop their best selves. Stendhal recalls 'les mœurs si pittoresques du *Moyen Âge*, qui, en France, comme partout, fut l'âge de l'*héroïsme*.'⁴⁸⁰ This nostalgic view of the Middle Ages resonates with Romantic sentiments and the medievalism prevalent in the nineteenth century. In *De la Démocratie en Amérique*, Tocqueville associates the Middle Age with the purity of geographical character: 'Le Moyen Âge était une époque de fractionnement; chaque peuple,

⁴⁷⁶ Stendhal, *De l'Amour*, Chapter 47: 'De l'Espagne'.

⁴⁷⁷ Herder, *Une autre philosophie de l'histoire* (Paris: Aubier, Domaine allemand bilingue, 1964), p. 17–33.

⁴⁷⁸ *Histoire de la peinture en Italie*, Livre Premier: 'Renaissance et Premiers Progrès des Arts vers l'an 1300 (de 450 à 1349)', Chapter 1: 'Des plus anciens monuments de la peinture'.

⁴⁷⁹ Stendhal, 'Sur l'état actuel de la littérature italienne (2)', *London Magazine* (January 1826), in *Stendhal Paris–Londres*, ed. by Renée Dénier (Paris: Stock, 1997), 605–615 (p. 609).

⁴⁸⁰ Stendhal, 'Publications étrangères', *New Monthly Magazine* (February 1823), in *Stendhal Paris–Londres*, ed. by Renée Dénier (Paris: Stock, 1997), p. 112.

chaque province, chaque famille tendaient alors fortement à s'individualiser. De nos jours un mouvement contraire se fait sentir, les peuples semblent marcher vers l'unité.⁴⁸¹

Stendhal perceives the general movement of nations towards secularization. About the Spanish, he notes: 'À la moindre alarme, mes compagnons se mettent en prière; ils appartiennent pourtant, trois du moins, à la haute société. Un Français n'oserait jamais prier, même en croyant à l'efficacité de la prière, de peur qu'on ne se moquât de lui.'⁴⁸² Stendhal describes Paris as the Jesuit city and Geneva as the Jansenist city.⁴⁸³

Depending on the topics, nations are more or less ahead on the European timeline: 'Le *Martin Scriblerus* d'Arbutnot est oublié à Londres. [...] L'Italie est à point pour cette comédie en 1817. J'ai donc raison de dire que, dans tout ce qui n'est pas beaux-arts, l'Italie est à un siècle en arrière de l'Angleterre.'⁴⁸⁴ The cultural, political and economical timelines would not be moving at the same speed. Nations can regroup on the timeline. England is associated with France in numerous occurrences.⁴⁸⁵ England and France are depicted as the two main countries ahead on the ground of self-awareness, seen negatively by Stendhal as a form of national denaturation.⁴⁸⁶

The intellectual development of nations would come with a decline in genuine sensibility. France is pictured as an example of intellectualisation of sensibility: 'Quand Raphaël ou Beethoven sont à la mode, le Parisien les adore, mais il ne les sent pas.'⁴⁸⁷ The art of French conversation is seen as an intellectual and sophisticated veneer masking a deeper disconnection from more authentic and visceral responses, as revealed by the French sense of irony and mockery.

⁴⁸¹ Alexis de Tocqueville, *De la Démocratie en Amérique* [1835–1840], Vol 2 [1840] (Paris: Pagnerre, 1848), p. 412.

⁴⁸² Stendhal, *Voyages en France*, 'Barcelone, 1837', p. 570.

⁴⁸³ Stendhal, *Voyages en France*, 'Lac de Genève, le 24 juin 1837', p. 461.

⁴⁸⁴ Stendhal, *Rome, Naples et Florence en 1817*, in *Voyages en Italie*, p. 57.

⁴⁸⁵ Stendhal, *Histoire de la peinture en Italie*, Vol 1, p. 263 (Bibliophile); *Vies de Haydn, Mozart et Métastase*, p. 130; *De l'Amour*, Vol 1, p. 123, 229, 232, Vol 2, p. 30, 194, *Vie de Rossini*, Vol 1, p. 284, 330, Vol 2, p. 44, 265 and all Chapter 46; *Mémoires d'un touriste* (Divan), Vol 1, p. 263.

⁴⁸⁶ Stendhal, *De l'Amour* (Bibliophile), Vol 2, p. 170; *Voyages en Italie*, p. 885–886 and n; p. 1216; *Correspondance* (Le Divan), Vol 5, p. 145; Vol 6, p. 36–37; *Courrier anglais*, vol 1, p. 169, 111, 158, 186.

⁴⁸⁷ Stendhal, *Voyages en Italie*, p. 647.

Stendhal's depiction of the direction of nations mirrors broader debates of his time. In 1784, Kant's publication, *Idée d'une histoire universelle envisagée d'un point de vue cosmopolitique*, defended the notion of humanity's continuous progress, a journey led by the advancement of reason from ancient Greece and Rome, through the barbarian invasions, to the modern era.⁴⁸⁸ Similarly, Voltaire championed the belief that human history represents a continual advancement of reason—specifically a progression defined by the Enlightenment in France—characterized by the decline of superstition and the unprecedented rise of science and the arts during the eighteenth century.⁴⁸⁹ Herder introduces a profound skepticism towards the Enlightenment's linear narrative of historical progress and the fulfilment of reason. He uses the metaphor of ageing to describe the state of modernity, notably depicting the emotional senility of Europe.⁴⁹⁰ As such, Voltaire would epitomize the loss of emotional vibrancy and would represent the ironic and mocking old age of the mind. Stendhal's interest in the Arab world is reminiscent of Herder's admiration for the unrefined energy and authenticity of the barbarians and societies that are less influenced by the intellectualism of modern Europe.⁴⁹¹ If the link between Herder and Stendhal strikes as intellectually plausible, this perspective finds limited support in Stendhal's explicit statements. In *Histoire de la peinture en Italie*, we get to know that Stendhal has read Herder. He qualifies his work as 'niaiseries'.⁴⁹²

Overall, Stendhal captures a transitional period between ancient and modern conceptions of time and history, as studied by Yves Ansel.⁴⁹³ Peter Fritzsche's *Stranded in the Present: Modern Time and the Melancholy of History* elucidates the shift in historical consciousness and the emergence of 'modern time', a novel temporal awareness distinct from the unidirectional, cyclical and religious conceptions of earlier periods. This modern perception treats the future as a domain of uncertainty rather than a repetition of past events or a fulfilment of a preordained

⁴⁸⁸ Kant, *Idée d'une histoire universelle envisagée d'un point de vue cosmopolitique* (1784), Proposition IX.

⁴⁸⁹ Voltaire, *Philosophie de l'histoire par feu l'abbé Bazin* (1765).

⁴⁹⁰ Herder, *Of the Changes in the Tastes of the Nations Through the Ages* (1766), *This Too a Philosophy of History for the Formation of Humanity* (1774) and *Ideas on the Philosophy of the History of Mankind* (1784-1791).

⁴⁹¹ Herder, *Une autre philosophie de l'histoire* (Paris: Aubier, Domaine allemand bilingue, 1964), p. 17.

⁴⁹² Stendhal, *Histoire de la peinture en Italie*, Livre V: 'Suite du Beau Analytique', Caractères Physiques, Le Flegmatique, note 3.

⁴⁹³ Yves Ansel, *Stendhal et le temps: l'intime, l'histoire, le romanesque* (thesis, 1995); *Stendhal: Le Temps et l'histoire* (Toulouse: Presses Universitaires du Mirail, 2000).

destiny.⁴⁹⁴ This modern perception necessitates vigilant monitoring of the trajectory of each nation, acknowledging the possibility of both progress and decline. Stendhal's narratives, set against the backdrop of this transitional phase, often reflect the uncertainties and dynamic changes characteristic of modern historical consciousness. Stendhal's timeline of nations, although seemingly chronological, subverts the conventional Enlightenment framework of a rational progression of nations. His portrayal of nations rejects the idea of a unified historical trajectory. His perspective aligns more closely with Herder's, viewing history as a progression of mankind but distinctly not of 'Progress.'

The North–South Paradigm: Cultural and Ideological Divides

In this section, we argue that the North-South dichotomy represents a broader paranational influence familiar to Stendhal. This influence is recurrently mentioned in his work, with the 'North' being referenced significantly more often than the 'South,' which is frequently identified by the names of its constituent countries or regions.

Stendhal's work often explores the foundational North–South paradigm as a critical explanatory concept that distinguishes two distinct European traditions, each rooted in its unique cultural heritage. In *De la littérature*, Madame de Staël notes: 'Il existe, ce me semble, deux littératures tout à fait distinctes, celle qui vient du midi et celle qui descend du nord, celle dont Homère est la première source, celle dont Ossian est l'origine.'⁴⁹⁵ As the author of both *Corinne ou l'Italie* and *De l'Allemagne*, Madame de Staël significantly contributed to shaping this dichotomy. In 'The National Habitus, Ways of Feeling French, 1789–1870', Marie-Pierre Le Hir comments: 'The modern reader may find fault with Staël's generalizations on national identity, the North–South dichotomy and the sets of oppositions derived from it: introverted vs. extraverted; domesticity vs. public sphere; rigidity vs. flexibility, etc... But her analysis of the psychological

⁴⁹⁴ Peter Fritzsche, *Stranded in the Present: Modern Time and the Melancholy of History* (Harvard University Press, 2004), p. 54.

⁴⁹⁵ Mme de Staël, *De la littérature considérée dans ses rapports avec les institutions sociales*, 2 Vols (Paris: Maradan, 1800).

hold exercised by the national habitus denotes a great talent of observation and still rings true today.¹⁴⁹⁶

Philippe Berthier describes the North and South as dialectical topoi: 'On a compris que Nord et Midi fonctionnent comme des topoï dialectiques qui se renvoient sans cesse l'un à l'autre, se définissent a contrario comme l'avert et le revers d'un seul mythe *bifrons*. Ce qui est en question ici, c'est moins un problème de latitude qu'une interrogation de civilisation, moins une interrogation de civilisation qu'une enquête sur les véritables soifs de l'âme.'⁴⁹⁷

Stendhal perceives a North–South distinction in art: 'Il y a des peintres naturalistes et des peintres idéals. Rien n'est si aisé à comprendre: la Madone alla seggiola [de Raphaël] est une figure idéale, la première madone venue de Rubens est le portrait d'une grosse bourgeoise d'Amsterdam.'⁴⁹⁸ The difference is also palpable in art reception: 'J'ai vu les gens de Koenigsberg arriver au plaisir, dans les arts, à force de raisonnements.'⁴⁹⁹

According to Stendhal, this is due to a stark difference in North–South sensibility: 'La manière de sentir de l'Italie est absurde pour les habitants du Nord.'⁵⁰⁰ Stendhal's narratives participate in distinguishing the North and South, portraying the socio-economic ambitions of the North as distinct from the South, as reflected in this dialogue between Julien and the Marquis de la Mole in *Le Rouge et le Noir*:

Le marquis parut; Julien se hâta de lui annoncer son départ.
–Pour où? dit M. de La Mole.
–Pour le Languedoc.

⁴⁹⁶ Marie-Pierre Le Hir, *The National Habitus, Ways of Feeling French, 1789–1870* (Berling: Gruyter, 2014), Part 1, Chapter 3: 'Cosmopolitanism and Nationalism in Germaine de Staël's Works', 3.1: 'The national habitus in *Corinne*', 155–161, p. 160.

⁴⁹⁷ Philippe Berthier, 'L'orange d'Islande: Stendhal et le mythe du Nord', *Romantisme*, vol. 7, no 17-18 (1977), 205–227, p. 209.

⁴⁹⁸ Stendhal, *Œuvres intimes*, I, 826, 1812.

⁴⁹⁹ *Rome, Naples et Florence*, in *Voyages en Italie*, p. 321

⁵⁰⁰ Stendhal, *Rome, Naples et Florence*, in *Voyages en Italie*, p. 38.

–Non pas, s'il vous plaît, vous êtes réservé à de plus hautes destinées, si vous partez ce sera pour le Nord...⁵⁰¹

The North, encompassing America, England, Switzerland, and Germany, is unified in Stendhal's mind by Protestantism and Puritanism, which contributes to a shared form of melancholy and restraint: 'Les Genevois ont toute la tristesse des mœurs anglaises.'⁵⁰² In contrast, the Stendhalian South, comprising Spain, Italy, 'le Midi' and 'Arabia', celebrates a more expressive and emotionally vibrant cultural ethos. The initially climatic and geographic dichotomy becomes an industrial and economic distinction. The North is characterized by efficiency and intellectualism. Conversely, the South is characterized by its artistic inclination and emotional depth. We observe the persistence of similar national stereotypes from the era of Stendhal to the present day.

This North–South distinction also facilitates national transfusions and the blurring of national boundaries. Stendhal observes that Southern France shares much with Spain and Italy: 'Le Midi de la France est dans le cas de l'Espagne et de l'Italie. Son *brio* naturel, sa vivacité, l'empêchent de *s'angliser*, comme le Nord de la France.'⁵⁰³ France would partake of both the North and the South in a hybrid fashion. The Piedmontese aligns closer to the Oriental than to their European counterparts: 'Le Piémontais n'est pas plus italien que français: c'est un peuple à part. J'ai reconnu un trait observé sous la tente noire de l'Arabe ou Bédouin: une fois que le Piémontais vous a dit *sem amiz*, vous pouvez tout attendre de lui.'⁵⁰⁴ Stendhal's observations extend even to journalistic expressions, noting 'L'*Ape* (l'abeille), petit journal qui, je crois, paraît encore à Milan, est beaucoup plus français qu'italien dans son genre.'⁵⁰⁵

Stendhal fancies himself as embodying this capacity for neighbouring nations to blend, as he depicts his aunt Elisabeth Gagnon as a mixture of Italian and Spanish origins. In his *Journal*, he relates: 'Avec ce que je sais de l'Italie aujourd'hui, je traduirais ainsi: qu'un M. Guadagni ou

⁵⁰¹ Stendhal, *Le Rouge et le Noir*, in *Œuvres romanesques complètes*, Vol 1, Part II, Chapter 17, p. 662.

⁵⁰² Stendhal, *Voyages en France*, 'Genève', p. 442.

⁵⁰³ Stendhal, *Voyages en France*, p. 571.

⁵⁰⁴ Stendhal, *Rome, Naples et Florence en 1817*, in *Voyages en Italie*, p. 58.

⁵⁰⁵ Stendhal, 'Sur l'état actuel de la littérature italienne (2)', *London Magazine* (January 1826), in *Stendhal Paris–Londres*, ed. by Renée Dénier (Paris: Stock, 1997), 605–615 (p. 610).

Guadaniamo, ayant commis quelque petit assassinat en Italie, était venu à Avignon, vers 1650, à la suite de quelque légat.⁵⁰⁶ Yet, in *Vie de Henry Brulard*, he recounts: 'Les sentiments espagnols communiqués par ma tante Elisabeth me mettaient dans les nues, je ne songeais qu'à l'honneur, qu'à l'héroïsme.'⁵⁰⁷

National traits are presented as transferable throughout Stendhal's work. Foreign traits are attributed to characters and settings, for instance Julien possessing 'des idées espagnoles', Venice being described as French, Mosca having 'l'âme à la française', Neapolitans perceived as Germans, or statements such as 'En France, nous nous *anglisons*.'⁵⁰⁸ Speaking of the prudery of the Sultan of Morocco, Stendhal exclaims: 'Voilà qui est anglais.'⁵⁰⁹ Stendhal's nuanced depiction of the North–South divide allows a reevaluation of the portrayal of national character within his work.

National stereotypes in Stendhal consist of two distinct attributes: the warmth of a nation's people and their perceived competence. His portrayal suggests that while the South may excel in emotional warmth, the North typically demonstrates competence, especially in domains governed by reason and modernity. One could hypothesize that this North–South distinction interests Stendhal because it reflects his own identity, as he uniquely embodies both a 'southern' side (artist, passionate, admirer of heroism) and a 'northern' side (his administrative profession, frequent praise for good management, and appreciation for economy).

As explored by George Lakoff in *Metaphors We Live By*: 'The portions of our lives governed by objectivism and subjectivism vary greatly from person to person and from culture to culture,' linking the influence of reason to geographical belonging.⁵¹⁰ Stendhal is attracted to the warmth and subjective value of the South. As Lakoff notes, science, reason, and technology have alienated man from himself and his natural environment, or so is alleged by the Romantics. The

⁵⁰⁶ Stendhal, *Journal, Œuvres intimes*, Vol 2, p. 603.

⁵⁰⁷ Stendhal, *Vie de Henry Brulard, Œuvres intimes*, Vol 2, Chapter 21, p. 727.

⁵⁰⁸ Stendhal, *Voyages en France*, 'Lac de Genève, le 24 juin 1837', p. 461.

⁵⁰⁹ Stendhal, *Courrier anglais*, Vol 3, p. 132, *Voyages en Italie*, p. 706, *Œuvres intimes* (Martineau), p. 1112, *Mémoires d'un touriste* (Divan), Vol 1, p. 204, Vol 2, p. 157.

⁵¹⁰ George Lakoff, *Metaphors We Live By* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2003), Chapter 25: 'Objectivism and Subjectivism', Section: 'Fear of Metaphor', p. 189.

Romantic movement emphasizes emotion and nature as counters to the rationalism and alienation brought about by science and industrialization.

Stendhal's rich depiction of Europe's North–South cultural landscape challenges and enriches our understanding of national stereotypes. The author highlights both the unique traits and the interconnectedness of European nations, revealing the complexities of defining national identities. His exploration of national stereotypes through the lens of warmth and competence encourages readers to appreciate the interplay of emotional and rational faculties across different societies and provides a textured understanding of European identities.

While critics have suggested that Stendhal was biased in favour of the South and Italy, our thesis reorients this stance towards a more substantial consideration of the North in Stendhal, his writings revealing a balanced appreciation for both Northern and Southern Europe. This North–South distinction made by Stendhal is another indication that he does not hold a unified vision of Europe.

Industrialism, or Stendhal's Threat of Uniformization in Europe

Stendhal's time sees the beginning of a form of global thinking: global economy, global crisis (industrialism), global communication (the academies, the artistic influences and trends), global appreciation of nature—soon to become awareness of global preservation of nature—(landscapes, oceans). This section delves into the European impact of industrialism as reported by Stendhal. We believe the author is deeply interested in this movement and perceives its material benefits, but he also recognizes the resulting damage to the character of nations. With a biographical focus, this section aims at renewing the prevalent critical interpretation of Stendhal's *Nouveau Complot contre les Industriels* (1825).

This text brings Stendhal strikingly close to contemporary times. Michel Crouzet remarked in *Stendhal et le désenchantement du monde, Stendhal et l'Amérique*, 'C'est l'utile qui relie notre

temps à celui de Stendhal.⁵¹¹ In Stendhal's time, Baron Rothschild is made the arbiter of all capabilities, leader of the industrial class in Paris. Over a century later, Georges Pompidou in 1969 and Emmanuel Macron, both former employees of Banque Rothschild, ascend to power in France.

This work dialogues with the Saint-Simonian journal *Le Producteur*, Saint-Simon's *Le Catéchisme des Industriels* and works of liberals of the time, Lafayette and Benjamin Constant. Engaging with debates on power distribution, in the context of the rise of the bourgeoisie and a class of property-owning citizens, Saint Simon defines: 'Un industriel est un homme qui travaille à produire ou à mettre à la portée des différents membres de la société, un ou plusieurs moyens matériels de satisfaire leurs besoins ou leurs goûts physiques.'⁵¹²

Typically, interpretations cast this piece as highly critical of the figure of the industrialist but Stendhal's position is more moderate. Stendhal has reverential words for the industrialists: 'Nous autres, petites gens, nous aimons mieux l'industrie qui nous propose de faire des échanges et qui veut *commercer* avec nous, que le privilège qui prétend de haute lutte nous enlever tous nos droits. La profession des industriels est fort estimable.' This is repeated later on: 'Sans doute la classe des industriels millionnaires est fort estimable. Je l'honore avec tant de sincérité que je voudrais voir tous les ans dans la chambre élective les cent industriels les plus renommés de France.' Stendhal sums up: 'Toutes les professions pratiquées avec probité sont utiles et par conséquent estimables.'

In 1825, the journal *Le Producteur* highlighted an emerging distinction between 'industriel' and 'industrialiste.' The former are seen as mere entrepreneurs, while the latter are viewed as true ideologues. In *D'un complot contre les industriels*, the critique of industrialism underscores a growing skepticism: 'L'industrialisme se déclare *seul estimable*,' yet Stendhal voices 'je cherche en vain *l'admirable* dans leur conduite'. He adds: 'Ces véritables et honnêtes industriels répudient l'industrialisme', suggesting a discord between practical entrepreneurship and ideological excesses.

⁵¹¹ Michel Crouzet, *Stendhal et le désenchantement du monde, Stendhal et l'Amérique*, II (Paris: Classiques Garnier, 2011), 'L'utile', section: 'Digression utile pour comprendre le principe de l'utile', p. 126.

⁵¹² Saint-Simon, *Catéchisme des industriels* (Paris: Sétier, 1823), Premier Cahier.

Stendhal contends for a distinction between the economic, political and cultural spheres: ‘L’industrie, comme tous les grands ressorts de la civilisation, amène à sa suite quelques vertus et plusieurs vices. Le négociant qui prête son vaisseau au Grand-Turc pour effectuer le massacre de Chio est probablement un homme fort économe et très raisonnable. Il sera bon directeur d’hôpital et ministre fort immoral, et par là fort dangereux: donc les industriels ne sont pas propres à toutes les places.’

Stendhal’s moderation and subtlety in his outlook on industrialism is coherent with his early interest in banking and economics. As they don’t represent the ultimate values of altruism and heroism, industrialists are not given the foremost honours by Stendhal: ‘Je veux croire que mille industriels qui, sans manquer à la probité, gagnent cent mille écus chacun, augmentent *la force* de la France; mais ces messieurs ont fait le bien public *à la suite* de leur bien particulier.’ Stendhal introduces several moral distinctions: ‘À Dieu ne plaise que de cette remarque historique je tire la conséquence que les industriels ne sont pas honorables! Je veux dire seulement qu’ils ne sont pas héroïques. Chaque classe de citoyens a droit à l’estime, et là comme ailleurs le ridicule se charge de faire justice des prétentions exagérées.’

Stendhal introduces the notion of ‘classe pensante’: ‘La classe pensante [...] préfère souvent un guerrier, un habile médecin, un savant avocat qui sans espoir de salaire défend l’innocence, au plus riche fabricant qui importe des machines et emploie dix mille ouvriers. Pourquoi? c’est que pour arriver à une haute estime, il faut en général qu’il y ait *sacrifice* de l’intérêt à quelque noble but.’ Stendhal illustrates his thought: ‘La classe pensante a inscrit cette année Santa-Rosa et Lord Byron sur la tablette où elle conserve les noms destinés à devenir immortels. Voilà un soldat, voilà un grand seigneur; pendant ce temps qu’ont fait les industriels? Un honorable citoyen a fait venir des chèvres du Thibet.’⁵¹³

Concerned with national independence, Stendhal champions those who made significant contributions to freedom movements. He celebrates figures like Santa-Rosa and Byron for their commitment to liberating Greece from Ottoman control, highlighting their alignment with the noblest aims of freedom and human dignity. Stendhal views these individuals not just as successful in their own right, but as national champions who leverage their capabilities for altruistic purposes, especially in advancing a nation's struggle for sovereignty and self-

⁵¹³ Stendhal, *D'un nouveau complot contre les industriels* (Paris: Sautet et Cie, Libraires, 1825), p. 23.

determination. In contrast, he reminds the financial lenders who supported legitimist Spain to quash General Riego's republican efforts, the Genoese who traded with the Grand Turk who brutally oppressed the Greeks, the French citizens who built a fleet in Marseille to aid the Pasha of Egypt.

Stendhal praises democratic heroes who took risks to defend American liberty such as Lafayette and Washington. He reminds Carnot, who after raising fourteen armies of 100,000 men each during the Revolution, dies in exile and poverty. He recalls General Bertrand who, after Waterloo, joined the deposed Emperor in his exile on St. Helena. Examples are multiplied to contrast heroism with industrialism: 'Pendant que Bolivar affranchissait l'Amérique, pendant que le capitaine Parry s'approchait du pôle, mon voisin a gagné dix millions à fabriquer du calicot.'⁵¹⁴

Strikingly without taking side, Stendhal introduces at the end of his essay another contrasting figure to the industrialist: the 'rêveur,' drawn to intellectual and imaginative pursuits: 'les gens qui payent deux mille ouvriers à la fin de chaque semaine; leur esprit est toujours tendu à l'utile et au positif [...] Le rêveur dont je parle est l'homme qu'ils haïraient s'ils en avaient le loisir [...] L'industriel millionnaire sent confusément qu'un tel homme place dans son estime une pensée avant un sac de mille francs. [...] Je récuse ce jeune homme studieux qui, dans la même année où l'industriel gagnait cent mille francs, s'est donné la connaissance du grec moderne, ce dont il est si fier, que déjà il aspire à l'arabe. [...] Je prie de ne pas ouvrir ce livre tout homme qui n'a pas été malheureux pour des causes imaginaires étrangères à la vanité'⁵¹⁵

In Stendhal's works, industrialism is treated as coming from Northern countries (America, England, Germany) and perceived as a threat to sensitivity. In *La Chartreuse de Parme*, Stendhal notes: 'peut-être dans cinquante ans ne voudra-t-on plus d'oisifs'⁵¹⁶ He further notes in his correspondence, 'L'industrialisme veut faire travailler tout le monde. Dès qu'il n'y aura plus de *dolce far niente* on ne trouvera plus personne pour goûter l'Orlando de l'Arioste ou les

⁵¹⁴ Stendhal, *D'un nouveau complot contre les industriels*, p. 6.

⁵¹⁵ Stendhal, *Souvenirs d'égotisme*.

⁵¹⁶ Stendhal, *La Chartreuse de Parme*, *Œuvres romanesques complètes*, Chapter 9, Abbé Blanès to Fabrice, p. 292.

statues de Canova.⁵¹⁷ In *Voyages en Italie*, affairism is depicted as a threat that undermines the national character: 'Les italiens, malheureusement pour eux et pour le monde, commencent à perdre leur caractère national.'⁵¹⁸

Cultures may be eroded by the homogenising forces of affairism, industrial progress would foster a pervasive uniformity across Europe. Jacques Chevallier's comparative studies across European countries indicate that the level of individualization is higher in Northern countries with Protestant traditions than in Southern and Eastern countries with Catholic traditions. This hyper-positivity associated with individualism would be linked to a tendency towards emotional and sentimental disengagement, as well as a lack of empathy.⁵¹⁹

The industrialists and financiers are omnipresent in Stendhal's fictions: Grandet in *Lucien Leuwen*, Boissaux in *Féder*, Valenod in *Le Rouge et le Noir*. The narrator of *Mémoires d'un Touriste* is a respectable business man selling iron, a 'marchand de fer'. His work is filled with Cosmopolitan businessmen, for instance in *Le Juif*, probably written during Stendhal's diplomatic years, around 1834: 'Moi je sais vendre en six langues différentes.'⁵²⁰ As an intendant, then as consul, Stendhal dealt with numbers at professional level all his life. Part of him partakes of the 'rêveur,' part of him partakes of the 'industrielle'.

In Part One, we explored Stendhal's nuanced and non-ideological perspective on European unity. Rather than identifying a unified European essence in his portrayal of national characters, Stendhal defines them in contrast to one another. He distances himself from traditional European heritage, including the Greeks, Romans, and Christianity. He recognizes Napoleon not as a unifier of Europe but as a figure who strengthened France. Stendhal contrasts the characteristics of Americans and Arabs not with Europe as a whole, but with specific European subsets. Within Europe, he perceives industrialism as a threat. Thus, while Stendhal's outlook is international, it is not internationalist. He can be considered 'European,' but not 'Europeist.'

⁵¹⁷ Stendhal, Letter to Mira, 9 December 1825, *Correspondance*, Vol 2, p. 76. See also, December 1825, *Correspondance*, Vol 3, p. 546.

⁵¹⁸ Stendhal, *Voyages en Italie*, p. 1049.

⁵¹⁹ Jacques Chevallier, *L'Etat post-moderne* (Paris: LGDJ, 2017), p. 16.

⁵²⁰ Stendhal, *Le Juif*, p. 166.

Although Europe's roots are often associated with the Enlightenment, this does not negate the Enlightened nature of Stendhal and his work. Our findings encourage us to question the dominant conception of the Enlightenment—a staunch universalism embodied by Voltaire—and consider the latest research to position Stendhal within a broader, more pluralistic Enlightenment discourse. Antoine Lilti's 2019 book, *L'Héritage des Lumières, Ambivalences de la modernité*, advocates for a more nuanced approach to the complex interplay of ideas surrounding the Enlightenment. Opposition to Enlightenment thinking is often linked to conservative and reactionary criticism, which uses Christian apologetics to challenge the French Revolution and the principles of liberal modernity in the late eighteenth century. This often overshadows the anti-imperialist strand of the Enlightenment, as evidenced by figures such as Denis Diderot, Guillaume Raynal, and Johann Gottfried Herder, these authors being quoted by Stendhal, as he takes the Catalan cause into consideration: 'Je n'ose dire les réflexions politiques que j'ai faites pendant un séjour de vingt heures [...] Volney, Raynal, Diderot à la mode en France, lors de la prise de la Bastille, sont les oracles de l'Espagne'⁵²¹ These thinkers, as Sankar Muthu notes in *Enlightenment against Empire*, laid the groundwork for cultural anthropology and postcolonialism by recognizing cultural diversity and affirming the equal dignity of various cultures, thereby implicitly critiquing Eurocentrism.⁵²²

Voltaire's *Candide* concludes with the moral 'Cultivons notre jardin,' often interpreted as a call to a minimalist and practical philosophy, favouring the local and particular over Pangloss' metaphysics. Combining an understanding of local distinctiveness—history, tradition, customs, aesthetic experience—with continental awareness, Stendhal navigates the tension between 'cultivating' territorial specificities and projecting a broader sense of belonging. He offers a unique and refined outward-looking perspective on Europe and national character in the early nineteenth century.

⁵²¹ *Mémoires d'un Touriste*, Perpignan, 20 September 1837.

⁵²² Sankar Muthu, *Enlightenment against Empire* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2009).

PART 2: Reading Stendhal through the Lens of Europe and the National Character

In this part, we build upon the foundation established in the first part by applying our newly gained insights to concrete textual analyses of selected excerpts from Stendhal's work.

This section endeavors to reveal the subtle yet significant ways in which the concept of national character, as previously discussed, permeates Stendhal's writings. Through these close readings, we anticipate that the nuances of national character will emerge more vividly for the reader, shedding light on aspects of Stendhal's writing that may have remained obscured without the contextual framework provided in the initial segment of our thesis.

Thus, the ensuing analyses not only reinforce our initial arguments but also exemplify how an awareness of Stendhal's thematic preoccupations can transform our reading and interpretation of his texts, making evident the undercurrents of national characterization that intricately weave through his literary corpus.

Chapter 1: National Character in *Pages d'Italie*: Fueling National Differences Through Anecdotes

The following excerpts, taken from 'Les Anglais à Rome,' were written by Stendhal after his trip to Rome from October 1823 to April 1824. These pages were compiled in 1932 by Henri Martineau, along with other pages, under the title 'Mœurs romaines' in *Pages d'Italie*. Thus, these excerpts can be considered particularly minor within the Stendhalian corpus.

Indeed, it must be noted that these pages do not belong to either of Stendhal's two tourist guides for Italy. They are neither part of the expanded edition of *Rome, Naples et Florence*, published in 1826, nor of *Promenades dans Rome*, published in 1829. They might be part of the pages sacrificed by the publisher, as the manuscripts were often too voluminous. Some of the ideas can be found as substrata in English periodicals and in *Promenades dans Rome*.

However, these pages are particularly interesting for our study of the national characteristics in Stendhal's works for the insightful view of contemporary Roman society and the biting critique of the attitudes of English travellers in Italy. The selected passage, divided into two excerpts, represents a moment of junction in the text: after several anecdotes, Stendhal attempts to make generalizations about national characteristics.

Unveiling the Bear's Fur: Stendhal's Vivid Portrayal of Russian and Italian Encounter

Vous allez croire que je hais les Anglais, loin de là, j'aime les civilisations anglaise et française; ce sont pour moi les deux premiers peuples du monde. L'Italien, si Napoléon eût régné vingt ans de plus, serait devenu au moins l'égal du Français et de l'Anglais. Je n'aime ni ne hais aucune nation plus que les autres. Les Russes desquels Napoléon disait: 'Ouvrez le jabot de ce Russe si bien mis, qui paraît à ma cour, écarter sa chemise et vous apercevrez le poil de l'ours', [...] les Russes, encore si barbares au fond, sont adorés à Florence¹

Stendhal captures the essence of a nation's spirit in a few precise strokes, effectively conveying significant ideas on the European socio-cultural landscape through impactful imagery. This close-up analysis aims at understanding the modalities of Stendhal's wit. Digging into Stendhal's literary craftsmanship, we present how this thought-provoking depiction relies on mastery of contrasts, vivid language, brevity and insight, departing from a tedious or overly scientific approach to the character of nation.

As this passage contains an unexpected view of the interaction, and thus comparison, between Italy and Russia, it reads as the metaphorical confrontation of polar opposites, Russians and Florentines, representing two antagonistic poles, the South and the North of Europe, but also barbarism and civilization. Contrasting elements are exhibited: exterior versus interior settings, nakedness versus clothing, masculinity versus femininity, and nature versus nurture. The image of the bear, representing natural, liberating, and rejuvenating force, juxtaposes the confined and

¹ Stendhal, *Pages d'Italie* (Paris: Le Divan, 1932), 'Les Anglais à Rome', pp. 221-222.

homogeneous atmosphere of a Florentine *salon*. This contrast between animality and humanity evokes César Chesneau du Marsais' first definition of 'spirit' in the *Encyclopédie*: a subtle wind or breath.² In this context, the Russian bear symbolizes a burst of primal energy, introducing freshness and novelty to the refined Florentine society.

The direct speech employed in this passage entertains in a form of *captatio benevolentiae*. Using Napoleon's direct quote, followed by the succinct and impactful conclusion 'the Russians are adored in Florence,' Stendhal varies speech voices to enhance the narrative. The brevity further contributes to the passage's wit. Tedious documentary precision is avoided, quotes and facts are condensed to encapsulate broad ideas about nations. The city of 'Florence' is chosen to represent the whole of Italian culture. His conversational rule, akin to Madeleine de Scudéry's notion of avoiding speaking too much or too little, is evident in the balance and structure of the sentences.³

Subordination is employed in a single, well-structured sentence to juxtapose the crude 'Russian bear' against the sophistication of Florentine society, leading to an unexpected narrative twist, where the Russian spirit is viewed as an advantage in the eyes of the Florentines. This juxtaposition, marked by anaphora 'Les Russes desquels... Les russes sont,' subtly forgoes explicit adversative movement, enhancing the narrative's surprise and dynamism. Stendhal's taste for contrarian viewpoints and irony leads him to present extreme differences as a unifying potential, in a broader European cultural landscape where all countries are defined in relation to each other.

Stendhal's approach shows a deep understanding of high society, evident in his references to Napoleon and Florentine society's views on Russia. This creates a sense of connivance and complicity with his readers, as if the author and his audience were sharing common knowledge and perspectives. Even though the readers likely knew little about Florence, they probably had a general image of it as a major cultural centre, contrasting with the depiction of the Russian barbarian. The abrupt ending of the passage, shifting quickly to another topic and leaving the

² *Encyclopédie ou Dictionnaire raisonné des sciences, des arts et des métiers, par une société de gens de lettres, mis en ordre et publié par Diderot et d'Alembert, 1751-1772, Vol 5, p. 972.*

³ Madeleine de Scudéry, *De l'air galant et autres conversations, 1653-1684*, ed. by Delphine Denis (Paris: Champion, 1998), p. 74.

reason for the Florentines' adoration of Russians unexplained, plays into Stendhal's strategy of appealing to the 'happy few'.

This passage implements Stendhal's definition of humour as presented in the *Paris Monthly Review*: 'Qu'est-ce que le rire? Hobbes répond: *Cette convulsion physique que tout le monde connaît est produite par la vue imprévue de notre supériorité sur autrui.* [...] Autre chose: il faut que j'accorde un certain degré d'estime à la personne aux dépens de laquelle on prétend me faire rire. J'estime beaucoup le talent de M. Picard; cependant, dans plusieurs de ses comédies, les personnages destinés à nous égayer ont des mœurs si basses que je n'admets aucune comparaison d'eux à moi; je les méprise parfaitement aussitôt qu'ils ont dit quatre phrases. On ne peut plus rien m'apprendre de ridicule sur leur compte.'⁴ The sharp and incisive judgements do not detract from Stendhal's esteem for all nations, much like one interprets Chimène's 'va, je ne te hais point.' In particular, this passage helps reconsider the North in Stendhal's framework, adding to his evident esteem for England, Geneva, and here Russia. It hints at Stendhal's conception of Europe's evolution, nations being considered in relation to one another.

We will put this passage in perspective with Stendhal's depiction of other European exchanges. In our analysis of *Mina de Vanghel*, we will shift the focus to Germany and France, discussing Stendhal's portrayal of the challenges of uprooting oneself permanently, as Mina moves to France. The Florentines' fondness for Russian tourists stems from the exoticism they represent, whereas Mina's story involves a deep and prolonged immersion in another country. Between Italians and Russians, the estrangement paradoxically facilitates the success of their cultural encounter. This contrasts with the interaction between the English and Italians, which Stendhal portrays as another form of cultural shock within Europe.

Bewilderment and Cultural Gap: The Dynamics of Anglo-Italian Relations

In *Rome, Naples et Florence*, Stendhal writes in 1817 'J'assiste à la superbe cérémonie de Saint-Pierre [...] Il y avait deux Romaines, cinq Allemandes, et cent quatre-vingt dix Anglaises. Dans

⁴ Stendhal, 'Le rire', *Paris Monthly Review*, in *Stendhal Paris–Londres*, ed. by Renée Dénier (Paris: Stock, 1997), 70–75 (pp. 70–71).

le reste de l'église, personne, excepté une centaine de paysans d'un aspect horrible. Je fais, en Italie, un voyage en Angleterre.⁵ Stendhal studying the English character in Italy is a recurring trope. In a passage of 'Les Anglais à Rome' written in 1825 in the *New Monthly Magazine*, Stendhal takes a stance on the English attitude when visiting Italy: 'On peut supposer d'après les remarques précédentes que je hais les Anglais: loin de là. Les civilisations anglaise et française n'ont pas de plus fervent admirateur que moi. La Grande-Bretagne et la France sont pour moi les deux premiers pays du monde. Mais je ne peut être le patient témoin de leur mépris non déguisé pour l'Italie qui, si Napoléon eût régné vingt ans de plus, serait devenue au moins leur égale.⁶

This puts in perspective our second excerpt from *Pages d'Italie*, closely following the previous one under study. Stendhal uses an anecdote on an intercultural marriage to convey his ideas on the English and Italian cultural gap:

La plus jolie femme de Rome a épousé un Anglais, le savant M. Dodwell. Mais l'Italien est nerveux et sensible, avant tout, et l'Anglais, en Italie, porte toujours la *méfiance* sculptée sur sa figure. Mon but, en écrivant ces pages sévères, est que les jeunes Anglais qui les parcourront, avant de partir pour l'Italie, se guérissent de cette apparence de *méfiance*.⁷

The opening sentence 'La plus jolie femme de Rome a épousé un Anglais, le savant M. Dodwell' vividly sets the scene, juxtaposing the aesthetic Italian ideal against the intellectual English archetype. The unnamed 'jolie femme' symbolizes Italian beauty and emotionality, while 'le savant M. Dodwell' embodies English wisdom and knowledge. The portrayal of these characters as representatives of their respective cultures facilitates a deeper understanding of the resultant cultural shock from their union.

⁵ Stendhal, *Rome, Naples et Florence*, Vol 2, 15 August 1817.

⁶ Stendhal, 'Lettres de Rome (3), Les Anglais à Rome', *New Monthly Magazine* (July 1825), in *Stendhal Paris–Londres*, ed. by Renée Dénier (Paris: Stock, 1997), 430–439 (p. 434).

⁷ Stendhal, *Pages d'Italie* (Paris: Le Divan, 1932), 'Les Anglais à Rome', pp. 221-222.

In the sentence ‘Mais l’Italien est nerveux et sensible, avant tout,’ Stendhal characterizes the Italian as ‘nervous and sensitive,’ emphasizing the stereotypical emotional expressiveness and aesthetic sense of this national character. The phrase ‘avant tout’ suggests that these traits are predominant, overshadowing individuality with national stereotypes. In the segment ‘et l’Anglais, en Italie, porte toujours la méfiance sculptée sur sa figure’, the significant cultural misunderstandings is reported by the Englishman's constant mistrust in Italy, the metaphor of sculpture implying that this observation reflects the Italian perspective on the English demeanor.

Stendhal playfully states: ‘Mon but, en écrivant ces pages sévères, est que les jeunes Anglais qui les parcourront, avant de partir pour l’Italie, se guérissent de cette apparence de méfiance.’ The pretended aim would be to educate young Englishmen, however, in a subtle irony, he advises them to achieve this through more reading, misleadingly suggesting a solemn, intellectual approach to Italian culture, at odds with his own sensualist approach to Italy and the character of nations. The segment ‘ces pages sévères’ may ironically refer to the tone of guidebooks for English youth on their Grand Tours. The objective and scientific point of view of such traditional narratives contrasts with Stendhal’s egotist narrative stance in *Voyages en France* and *Voyages en Italie*, renewing the form of the travel writings.

The passage's structure intentionally omits the end of the anecdote, telling more than it shows and inviting readers or *salon*-goers to ponder and debate the reasons behind such a marriage and its subsequent outcome. This narrative technique serves to engage the audience in a deeper investigation of cultural stereotypes and national characteristics. This vignette cleverly leaves the mystery unsolved, pushing the audience to explore various cultural dimensions and biases in their attempt to understand the union. The term ‘méfiance’ in the passage echoes broader tropes attributed to the English character in Stendhal's works, such as ‘l’idée du devoir’ and ‘la férocité hébraïque’. These traits are part of the recurring motif defining English physiognomy and mindset in his writings, encouraging an investigation within the entire Stendhalian corpus.

This passage unveils Stendhal's profound interest in intercultural dynamics. As an avid traveller and a connoisseur of diverse cultures, he utilizes everyday occurrences and conversations as a lens to scrutinise and depict cultural intricacies. Stendhal frequently employs instances of cultural displacement to deepen the understanding of national character. In this passage, a seemingly trivial anecdote is transformed into significant cultural commentary. National

character appears amplified and exaggerated when placed in a foreign context. In Stendhal, travel exacerbates national characteristics; it provides an opportunity to vividly illustrate homegrown traits.

Chapter 2: National Character in the English Reviews: Stendhal's Critical Perspective?

Stendhal contributed to the *Paris Monthly Review* from 1822 to 1825, the *New Monthly Magazine* from 1822 to 1829, the *London Magazine* from 1824 to 1825, and the *Athenaeum* from 1828 to 1829. Notably, Stendhal inaugurated the 'Foreign Publications' section in the 'Recueil Historique' of the *New Monthly Magazine*. Stendhal's collaboration with English reviews marks a significant shift away from the interest in the South, challenging the commonly held perception of him as an author. This aspect of his work, which highlights his interest in the North, is often underestimated.

From the English review to his work as a diplomat, commenting on the character of nations and cultural life in Europe has become a professional endeavour. Stendhal depicts France to his English readers, which in turn provides us with a hollowed-out picture of England. Stendhal's participation in these reviews can be seen as echoing his earlier, yet unfulfilled, ambition to create a European literary review, *L'Aristarque, ou indicateur universel des livres à lire*, with Mareste.⁸ Stendhal is self-aware about standing at the crossroads of networks, as recorded in the *New Monthly Magazine*: 'Je suppose qu'il y a des personnes en Angleterre qui aiment la littérature française et qui, connaissant déjà tous les anciens auteurs qui ont illustré cette littérature, voudraient faire connaissance avec les écrivains modernes. C'est le besoin que j'éprouve moi-même à l'égard de la littérature anglaise.'⁹ The reviews describes a more or less intense relationship between countries. A significant aspect of the Anglo-French literary dynamics of the time was the *Edinburgh Review*'s campaign against France, which escalated and triggered a series of polemics with the French review *Le Constitutionnel*.¹⁰ This campaign

⁸ *Courrier anglais*, I, 5-9.

⁹ Stendhal, 'La tâche du critique', Article not published for the *New Monthly Magazine*, in *Stendhal Paris-Londres*, ed. by Renée Dénier (Paris: Stock, 1997), p. 51.

¹⁰ *Le Constitutionnel*, 12 August 1821, 23 August 1821, 24 October 1821.

illustrates the intensification of a polarized relational stereotype between England and France. The English reviews strike as a medium for cultural transfers and a place to discuss the national interactions with cross-cultural intelligence.¹¹

Stendhal voices multiple times his admiration for England and Geneva's intellectual life. Interestingly, in a review 'Sur l'état actuel de la littérature italienne', Stendhal comments on a literary journal published in Rome, *l'Arcadio*, denounced as being 'le plus niais de toute l'Europe.'¹² Stendhal also criticizes the quality of the French critical approach: 'Le défaut le plus criant de la critique française est le manque de conscience littéraire... Il existe bien peu d'hommes de talent assez téméraires pour se faire chaque mois une demi-douzaine d'ennemis mortels... La discrétion n'est point la vertu préférée d'un Français, et il serait bien miraculeux de trouver à Paris un directeur qui pût tenir secret les noms de ses collaborateurs...'¹³ In *Souvenirs d'égotisme*, Stendhal remarks, about the *Edinburgh Review*, 'Il est impossible pour les Français habitant Paris de dire la vérité sur les ouvrages d'autres Français habitant Paris... Un journal littéraire et consciencieux comme le fut *l'Edinburgh Review* n'est possible [en France] qu'autant qu'il sera imprimé à Genève, et dirigé là-bas.'¹⁴ In *Rome, Naples et Florence*, Stendhal recounts Davide Bertolotti's statement, 'Donnez-moi une forteresse et j'oserai dire la vérité aux auteurs,' and remarks, about the magazine *La Bibliothèque britannique*, edited in Geneva: 'Jamais il ne tombait dans la camaraderie, cette plaie mortelle de la littérature et des journaux de Paris.'¹⁵

The European Republic of Letters, stripped of its idealization, is also 'camaraderie.' Stendhal often denounces the underlying culture of collusion in literary criticism and the prevalent culture of 'camaraderie,' where personal connections often trumped merit. Stendhal critiques this 'basse littérature', the system of mutual praise and complimentary articles, the self-serving friendships, the tactical complicity of 'camarades interposés', the literary cliques, 'coteries littéraires' facilitating control of advancement strategies. He denounces the orchestrated

¹¹ Bertrand, Guyot, *Des 'passeurs' entre science, histoire et littérature: Contribution à l'étude de la construction des savoirs (1750-1840)* (Grenoble: ELLUG, 2011).

¹² Stendhal, 'Sur l'état actuel de la littérature italienne (2)', *London Magazine* (January 1826), in *Stendhal Paris–Londres*, ed. by Renée Dénier (Paris: Stock, 1997), 605–615 (p. 609).

¹³ *Courrier anglais*, II, 362 (Divan).

¹⁴ Stendhal, *Souvenirs d'égotisme*, p. 134.

¹⁵ *Rome, Naples et Florence*, II, 206 (éditions Divan).

trafficking of success. Similarly, Latouche, in a pamphlet written in 1829, condemns 'un acte d'encensement mutuel'. Scribe wrote *La Camaraderie* in 1837. Stendhal acknowledges the presence of this collusion culture in Italy.

Stendhal's approach in these reviews is marked by a quest for authenticity and a blend of opportunism and identity play. Under a pseudonym, as customary, participation in the English reviews allows Stendhal to critique French literature from the perspective of an outsider, effectively uprooting himself from the French literary scene. The expatriation in foreign reviews enables more transparent literary criticism. Reviewing for the English press provides Stendhal with a fortress, a safe space to express without backlash from French peers. Opportunistically, writing under a pseudonym also allows Stendhal to boldly praise his own works through self-promotional articles. For instance, it can be read in a review of *Histoire de la peinture en Italie* by 'M. Beyle, auditeur au Conseil d'État', signed 'S': 'Voici un livre qui, malgré tout ce qu'on a écrit sur la peinture et sur les peintres, répond à un besoin dans ce domaine de la littérature. [...] Nous ne pouvons nous empêcher de citer les excellentes remarques suivantes sur l'expression en peinture: [...] Nous donnerions volontiers un extrait du chapitre XXX. [...] Cette partie de l'ouvrage est de loin la plus intéressante et elle a évidemment été écrite *con amore*.' The self-promotional article continues: 'Nous sommes heureux d'apprendre, par le prospectus, que l'auteur a trois autres volumes de l'ouvrage prêts pour l'impression.'¹⁶ Stendhal—reader of himself—also critically evaluated his own works, as noted in his *Journal* about the same book a year and a half later: 'Je ne l'avais pas lu depuis longtemps. Je le trouve presque inintelligible. En 1814 et 1817, j'écrivais en pensant que tout le monde pensait comme moi.'¹⁷

As coherent with his 'aesthetical' approach to literature and art, Stendhal is both writer and reader of reviews. As studied by Hélène de Jacquelot, Stendhal frequents *cabinets littéraires*, or reading rooms, like those of M. Vieusseux or Giuseppe Molini. At that time, individual subscriptions were rare (issues of transport and high shipping costs) and these were the places

¹⁶ Stendhal, 'Histoire de la peinture en Italie', *Galignani's Magazine and Paris Monthly Review* (May 1823), in *Stendhal Paris-Londres*, ed. by Renée Dénier (Paris: Stock, 1997), 137–146 (pp. 137, 139, 140, 145).

¹⁷ Stendhal, 2 November 1824, *Œuvres intimes*, Vol 2, p. 77.

to find the highest concentration of European newspapers.¹⁸ George Steiner once asserted that cafés served as quintessential symbols of Europe, as reflected in Stendhal's Milan, Casanova's Venice, and Baudelaire's Paris.¹⁹ Studying Stendhal's cosmopolitanism in his *Essai de Psychologie Contemporaine*, Paul Bourget notes how Stendhal's cosmopolitanism intertwined with his dilettantism.²⁰ Marie-Rose Corredor describes Stendhal as a 'Passeur d'idées familier des voies de transmissions comme le cabinet Vieusseux à Florence'.²¹ In his Florentine reading room, Vieusseux had about 130 magazines and gazettes at the disposal of members, during the decade 1820-1830.²² These journals—'têtes chercheuses du siècle'—played a major role in launching the book industry.

Nineteenth-century English literary reviews serve as a significant medium for observing the evolution of stereotypical relations between European countries, highlighting the existence and development of specific, polarized, and stereotypical perspectives. They are a prime venue for examining cultural transfers and broader European influences on culture and art during Stendhal's time. Additionally, these reviews reveal the extent of Stendhal's self-reflection on his own cross-cultural awareness when discussing the different national characters in Europe.

The English Through Foreign Eyes: Stendhal's Praise of Montesquieu's *Lettres Persanes* Approach

In his review of *Voyage historique et littéraire en Angleterre et en Écosse* by Amédée Pichot, Stendhal recommends cross-cultural reflection to the English and exploring the self through the other: 'Cet ouvrage semble avoir été écrit dans le but d'initier la haute société de France à tous les mystères de l'aristocratie anglaise. C'est un modèle qu'on leur propose d'imiter, un miroir

¹⁸ Hélène de Jacquolot, 'Constantin, Stendhal, Vieusseux: une relation triangulaire (documents inédits)', in Martine Reid, and Elaine Williamson (dir.), *Lire la correspondance de Stendhal* (Paris: Champion, 2007), 179–194.

¹⁹ George Steiner, *Une certaine idée de l'Europe* (Paris: Actes Sud, 2005), pp. 23–24.

²⁰ Paul Bourget, *Essai de Psychologie Contemporaine*, I, 309, chapter 'Le cosmopolitisme de Beyle'.

²¹ Corredor, Marie-Rose, *Stendhal 'romantique'? Stendhal et les romantismes européens* (Grenoble: UGA Éditions, 2016), Presentation.

²² Sara Mori, 'Les voies de transmission des périodiques dans l'Europe romantique: Le réseau de Vieusseux', in *Stendhal 'romantique'? Stendhal et les romantismes européens*, ed. by Marie-Rose Corredor (Grenoble: UGA Éditions, 2016), pp. 265–278, paragraph 14.

devant lequel ils peuvent s'habiller. On devrait également le lire en Angleterre: il offrira à ses habitants l'occasion d'un petit examen de conscience, exercice parfois aussi nécessaire aux nations qu'aux individus.²³ This recommendation to his English readers—a travel book on England written by a foreigner—betrays Stendhal's fascination for the previously mentioned method promoted by Montesquieu.

In his review of Adolphe Blanqui's *Voyage d'un jeune Français en Angleterre et en Écosse* for his English readership, Stendhal once again praises the 'Lettres persanes' system and encourages English readers to play the game with the openness of being commented on by a foreigner:

Le voyage de M. Blanqui est fait pour intéresser les lecteurs anglais aussi bien que français, car il offre le spectacle d'un assaut bien soutenu entre les préjugés anglais et français. Par préjugés, nous entendons seulement ceux des hautes classes; car la vulgaire haine nationale contre les Anglais ne se rencontre pas, en général, chez les gens bien élevés.

[...] Les seuls traits des Anglais contre lesquels la bonne société en France exerce sa moquerie, ce sont leur expression triste et hautaine, leurs manières réservées, leur manie de se faire sauter la cervelle et leur attachement, même dans la bourgeoisie, au droit d'aînesse.

Il y a, au cours d'une année, beaucoup plus de suicides à Paris qu'à Londres, mais ils ne se produisent pas dans la même classe. Jamais on n'entend parler d'un Français du rang de lord Castlereagh ou possédant les talents et les qualités de sir Samuel Romilly ou de M. Whitbread quittant la vie de la même façon.

Quant à laisser la majeure partie des biens d'une famille au fils aîné, rien ne répugne davantage à l'idée que se font les Français du sentiment ou du bon sens.

²³ Stendhal, 'Publications étrangères', *New Monthly Magazine* (September 1825), in *Stendhal Paris–Londres*, ed. by Renée Dénier (Paris: Stock, 1997), p. 502.

Ces points faibles sont vigoureusement attaqués dans le livre que nous avons sous les yeux, aussi le lecteur anglais fera-t-il bien de faire appel à toute sa patience et à tout son flegme avant de l'ouvrir: M. Blanqui, ainsi que l'orgueil anglais le constatera, se montre assez rude joueur.

L'auteur exige également de ses lecteurs un exercice mental très utile, mais très laborieux: à savoir, *réfléchir l'habitude*, s'il nous est permis de nous exprimer ainsi. Réfléchir profondément sur les objets ou les actions que nous avons constamment sous les yeux, s'étonner de ce qui nous est habituel, c'est là, selon nous, l'un des résultats les plus utiles des longs voyages.

Cet avantage peut profiter en partie à un Anglais qui lit l'ouvrage de M. Blanqui; car, s'il peut trouver assez de philosophie pour ne pas jeter le livre au feu en envoyant l'auteur au diable, il apprendra, pour étudier la physionomie d'un pays étranger, une méthode dont il n'avait pas la moindre idée jusque-là.

Ce *Voyage* est rédigé sous la forme d'un journal. Le style est naturel et sans prétention; l'auteur exprime ses sensations avec justesse et même avec une certaine dose d'*esprit piquant*, qualité, qui, selon notre humble opinion, fait horriblement défaut même aux publications anglaises les plus vantées aujourd'hui.²⁴

This review captivates through its playfulness with readerly perspectives. Stendhal, as a French critic, reviews the journey of a French traveller in England, encouraging his English readership to self-explore and 'travel their own country' through the outlook of a foreigner. This echoes Mme de Staël's thoughts on translations as a method of gaining a renewed perspective on domestic realities. Stendhal's thinking on the character of nation functions in a relational and

²⁴ Stendhal, 'Publications étrangères', *New Monthly Magazine* (December 1824), in *Stendhal Paris–Londres*, ed. by Renée Dénier (Paris: Stock, 1997), p. 232.

systemic logic: English 'patience', 'flegme' and 'orgueil' are contrasted with the 'rude joueur' French character, or the typically French '*esprit piquant*'.

Stendhal offers a subtle distinction between what he terms 'préjugé' and 'vulgaire haine.' A 'préjugé' would be a cultural misconception formed by a learned and educated European on a neighbouring nation, despite deep efforts at cultivating cross-cultural awareness. The 'vulgaire haine,' with its violence and lack of intellectual self-control, is discarded. This is reminiscent of Hume's explanation in his essay 'Of National Characters': 'The vulgar are apt to carry all *national characters* to extremes; and having once established it as a principle, that any people are knavish, or cowardly, or ignorant, they will admit of no exception, but comprehend every individual under the same censure. Men of sense condemn these undistinguishing judgements: Though at the same time, they allow that each nation has a peculiar set of manners, and that some particular qualities are more frequently to be met with among one people than among their neighbours.'²⁵

This can be linked to Stendhal's thoughts on 'le peuple,' which is not the centre of his interest and has to be distinguished from the character of nation. What Stendhal calls 'hautes classes' refers to 'les gens bien élevées' and 'la bonne société', potentially Stendhal's 'happy few'. Beyond the aristocracy, it hints at the learned and mundane civil society, gaining European consciousness in the early nineteenth century. 'Moquerie' is contrasted with 'haine' and defined as a constrained and engaging circumspection. The delineated comments ('les seuls traits') contrast with the 'vulgaire' violence of uneducated judgements.

From what Stendhal values in this review, we gain a deeper insight into the author's awareness of his own writings. By recommending to his English and Scottish readership a 'long voyage' with the French Adolphe Blanqui in their own country (England and Scotland), Stendhal promotes his own practice of fieldwork and travelling in France, for instance in *Mémoires d'un touriste*, targeting a French audience. M. Blanqui's style is described with the most praiseworthy terms in Stendhal's system: 'naturel', 'sans prétention', 'justesse'. Factual aspects displayed in the text ('expression triste et hautaine', 'attachement au droit d'aïnesse', etc) constitute an eclectic array of details of differing natures with varied levels of significance,

²⁵ Hume, David, 'Of National Characters', in *Essays: Moral, Political and literary* [1741], ed. by Knud Haakonssen (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), Political Essays, Chapter 12, 78–92 (p. 78).

adding to the wittiness of the enumeration and making cultural life vibrant and palpable across the Channel. Stendhal's commentary on these reported facts ('Jamais on n'entend parler d'un Français [...] Quand à laisser la majeure partie [...] l'idée que se font les Français du sentiment ou du bon sens') reads as free indirect speech recorded directly from Parisian *salons*. All this contributes to the liveliness of the review. M. Blanqui, and indirectly Stendhal as a critic, praise the intellectual exercise of 'réfléchir l'habitude,' which is reminiscent of Mme de Staël's writings on translation. This review presents 's'étonner' as 'une méthode' that yields 'résultats' and alludes to Stendhal's approach of 'étudier la physionomie d'un pays étranger'. This groundbreaking method, though not always accepted—only understood by the 'happy few'?—has the potential to provoke strong reactions, even to the point of 'jeter le livre au feu en envoyant l'auteur au diable'.

Classicism and Romanticism: A Sustained Debate in the *Respublica Literaria*

According to Marc Fumaroli, the 'Respublica literaria' is the 'European literary common good,' or the assembly of classical texts from Greek and Latin antiquity, including philosophical, poetic, and scientific texts: 'Cette communauté d'érudits et de philologues fonctionnait déjà à l'échelle européenne dès la fin du XV^{ème} siècle. [...] Elle va résister à l'épreuve des guerres de religion du XVI^{ème} siècle, puis à celle de la guerre de Trente ans et des guerres de Louis XIV au XVII^{ème} siècle, et elle va prendre un essor exceptionnel au 'siècle des Lumières'.²⁶ In the XVIIIth century, this civil life is invested with a new political significance: it strikes as the basis for the development of a new public sphere. What distinguishes Voltaire and Rousseau from Erasmus or Gassendi is that they write not only for their very numerous correspondents or for a restricted community of scholars, but also for an audience, for an anonymous readership. Stendhal's reviews draw from all this tradition.

When he writes for the *London Magazine*, Stendhal writes under a pseudonym and often calls himself by the periphrase: 'le petit-neveu de Grimm'. He assimilates himself to Frédéric Melchior, baron de Grimm, a German writer and one of the most famous critics of the eighteenth century. Baron de Grimm developed a literary correspondence which intended to

²⁶ Fumaroli, Marc, *Les premiers siècles de la République européenne des Lettres*, Actes du Colloque international de Paris, December 2001 (Paris: Alain Baudry, 2005), p. xi.

inform several northern foreign princes on Parisian life. The Duchess of Saxe-Gotha, the Empress Catherine, the Queen of Sweden, the King of Poland received this news from Grimm. These letters were published in 1812-1813 in sixteen volumes, under the title *Correspondance littéraire, philosophique et critique*. According to René Denier, Stendhal was among the first readers.²⁷

In this review for his English readers of the book edited by the publisher Ladvocat, *Chefs-d'œuvre des théâtres étrangers traduits en français*, taken from the *Paris Monthly Review*, Stendhal presents the landscape of European intellectual life:

Un seul homme a suffi pour jeter toute la république des lettres, en France, dans la plus grande confusion. Les frontières sacrées du territoire de ce qu'on appelle le pur goût classique ont été violées. La cohorte des vieilles unités commence à céder dans ses derniers retranchements; les partisans d'Aristote sont en émoi. C'est en vain qu'ils invoquent jour et nuit l'ombre vénérable du vieux Sagirite. M. Ladvocat ne se laisse ni effrayer ni attendrir, mais continue (comme le comte Julien de la littérature) à ouvrir un passage à ces envahisseurs étrangers et à favoriser leur irruption sur sa terre natale. [...] Quelle qu'en soit l'issue, que la pureté du goût français soit gâtée par une trop forte empreinte de romantisme ou améliorée par un retour aux sentiments frais et énergiques de la nature et de la vraie passion, c'est dans un cas comme dans l'autre, à M. Ladvocat qu'en revient le mérite ou le blâme. Cette tentative hardie commença par une bonne traduction des principales œuvres dramatiques de Schiller. Elle fut rapidement suivie par une édition révisée, corrigée et considérablement remaniée de la traduction de Shakespeare par Letourneur.²⁸

²⁷ Stendhal, 'Lettres de Paris, par le petit-neveu de Grimm (1)', *London Magazine* (January 1825), in *Stendhal Paris-Londres*, ed. by Renée Dénier (Paris: Stock, 1997), 241–252 (p. 241).

²⁸ Stendhal, 'Chefs-d'œuvre des théâtres étrangers traduits en français', *Paris Monthly Review* (April 1822), in *Stendhal Paris-Londres*, ed. by Renée Dénier (Paris: Stock, 1997), 20–25 (p. 20).

This passage offers a depiction of the major ongoing debate between the aesthetical influences of classicism and romanticism. It confirms our geographical interpretation of classicism as assimilated to French territory in Stendhal. Authors are presented as the plain embodiment of their nations, and their best ambassadors abroad, like Schiller for Germany and Shakespeare for England. The use of the lexical field of war shows how the literary quarrel is fancied as a quasi-geopolitical issue. As expressed in another review, for Stendhal, 'La révolution entre en littérature'.²⁹ Cultural and aesthetical aspects would have replaced the politico-military focus in the post-napoleonic period.

This book is a translation of several foreign masterpieces. Translation played a key role on a European level to disseminate ideas and reviews played an essential function in the identification and dissemination of 'books to read'.³⁰ In *De la littérature*, Staël argues, 'Il n'y a pas de plus éminent service à rendre à la littérature, que de transporter d'une langue à l'autre les chefs-d'œuvre de l'esprit humain. Il existe si peu de productions de premier rang; le génie, dans quelque genre que ce soit, est un phénomène tellement rare, que si chaque nation moderne en était réduite à ses propres trésors, elle serait toujours pauvre. D'ailleurs, la circulation des idées est, de tous les genres de commerce, celui dont les avantages sont les plus certains.'³¹ After Staël, Stendhal emphasizes the transformative power of translations, a mirror for self-reflection, favouring cultural introspection and cross-pollination of ideas.

Incidentally, as suggested by the analyses of Herriot and Hazard on Stendhal's plagiarism of Carpani, Stendhal himself had a loose conception of the rules of translation. In *Vie de Haydn, Mozart et Métastase*, Stendhal copied entire passages from Carpani's *Letters on Haydn*. The Milanese author Carpani found his own book widely plagiarized by Stendhal, from facts to anecdotes. When Carpani reported recovering from a fever at a mass by Haydn, Stendhal did the same. In response to the complaints, Stendhal decided to counter his opponent with the same accusation of plagiarism.³² This example shows the more questionable side of Stendhal's

²⁹ Stendhal, 'Racine ou Shakespeare?', *Paris-Londres, chroniques* (Paris: Stock, 1997), p. 61-69.

³⁰ M. Bossi and R. P. Coppini, 'Les revues: têtes chercheuses du siècle (1820-1830)', in *L'Invention du XIXème siècle*, ed. by Alain Corbin, Vol 1 (Paris: Klincksieck, 1999).

³¹ Germaine de Staël, *De l'esprit des traductions [1816]*, in *Œuvres complètes de Mme la baronne de Staël-Holstein* (Paris: Firmin-Didot, 1871), 294–297 (p. 294).

³² Émile Herriot, *Stendhaliana*, p. 161; and Paul Hazard, *Les plagiats de Stendhal*.

participation in extensive cultural exchanges, as the European scale gave the false impression of anonymity.

Stendhal's Awareness: Reviewing Other's Approaches to Geographical Character

Stendhal's review of Charles-Victor de Bonnstetten's *L'Homme du Midi et l'Homme du Nord, ou l'influence du climat* (1824) in the *New Monthly Magazine* (1825) offers further insights into his approach to the geographical character:

M. Bonstetten répand les fleurs de son imagination sur l'importante question de l'influence du climat, traitée par Hippocrate et mise à la mode par Montesquieu il y a environ quatre-vingts ans. Plus tard, Volney et Cabanis jetèrent de nouvelles lumières sur la théorie du climat, dont une connaissance exacte serait si utile au bonheur de l'humanité. [...] Il y a quelques années, M. Bonstetten a publié un livre médiocre intitulé *Théorie de l'imagination*. Le présent ouvrage est à maints égards supérieur au premier. Négligeant les théories vagues et générales, M. Bonstetten se borne à décrire ce qu'il a vu et il le décrit bien. [...] Bien que nous trouvions à redire au style de ce livre, le contenu a tant de prix et d'intérêt que nous n'hésitons pas à dire qu'il mérite d'être traduit en anglais.³³

This review further strengthens the argument for Stendhal as a realist pioneer. Read as a promotion of realism, it records Bonnstetten's shift from 'vague and general theories' to empirical descriptions. Stendhal promotes a detailed, unvarnished portrayal of everyday life, underscoring the importance of clarity and precision in the approach to national character. In order to objectively understand the North–South dichotomy, Stendhal advocates for fieldwork and first-hand observation. The linguistic choice 'les fleurs de son imagination' denounces superficiality and abstract theorizing in favour of descriptive methodology. The possessive form 'son' enhances the overall tone of disapproval of Bonnstetten's abstract and personal

³³ Stendhal, 'Publications étrangères', *New Monthly Magazine* (June 1825), in *Stendhal Paris–Londres*, ed. by Renée Dénier (Paris: Stock, 1997), p. 401–402.

speculations. This can be connected to the realist commitment to straightforward, unadorned prose that avoids poetic extravagance.

This review demonstrates Stendhal's awareness of the progression of collective consciousness beyond climatic determinism. Stendhal adopts a tone of playful skepticism in addressing Bonnstetten's contribution 'à la mode par Montesquieu il y a environ quatre-vingts ans'. By adhering to the influence of climate on human character, Bonnstetten's work would provide nothing foundational on the North–South dichotomy. This review highlights Stendhal's admiration for figures like Volney and Cabanis and their enlightening contributions to the development of geographical identities, a knowledge 'utile au bonheur de l'humanité', the term 'utile' revealing a pragmatic approach to such notions as happiness. Stendhal sees practical applications of these theories in enhancing human well-being. This confirms Stendhal's integrative and interdisciplinary approach to the character of nation, mixing geography and psychology in an almost sociodeterministic focus. Interestingly, this review sheds light on the role of 'style' to support 'contenu', Stendhal emphasizing both substance and presentation in the study of geographical identities. Implicitly, we believe Stendhal promotes his own touristic writings, artfully combining 'style' and 'contenu'.

Chapter 3: National Character in Fiction: *Mina de Vanghel*, a Narrative of National Stereotypes?

The idea of Stendhal as an Italian writer is a simplistic notion that limits our understanding of his work. Instead, it is valuable to explore the period just before his appointment as a diplomat in Italy. Between December 1829 and January 1830, Stendhal utilized material he had gathered in Germany and Austria from 1806 to 1809 to create his novella *Mina de Vanghel*.³⁴ This lesser-known work is significant for understanding Stendhal's Northern European influences and his conception of national character.

³⁴ Stendhal, *Mina de Vanghel, Œuvres romanesques complètes*, ed. by Philippe Berthier and Yves Ansel (Paris: Gallimard, 2006–2014), Vol 1 (2006), 297–330.

The ‘Narrative of National Stereotypes’: A Working Hypothesis

In this section, we envisage national identity and personal destiny as intersecting paths. Ancient societies were characterized by their 'holism', as termed by Louis Dumont, meaning an internal logic in which the whole determined the place of each element according to a certain hierarchical structure. In 'holistic' societies, the individual does not exist as the central value of existence.³⁵ Contrastingly, according to Jacques Chevallier in *L'Etat post-moderne*, post-modernity is about the rejection of social determinisms: each individual intends to construct oneself freely.³⁶

As the unbridled pursuit of happiness nowadays goes hand in hand with the widespread belief in the ability to shape oneself, the individual is reflected on as an autonomous being, who can decide for himself on the basis of representations and norms emanating from his critical thinking. The individual is not anymore guided by frames of pre-established references, but rather by a logic of personal arbitration. In societies dominated by overarching norms, individuals frequently grapple with frustration. Conversely, when societies constantly demand that individuals contribute to norm creation, depression can ensue.

In interpreting character autonomy within Stendhal's narratives, the critics often leaned heavily towards an emphasized valuation of existential freedom. With an underlying postulate that the autonomy of modern personhood substantially exists, Stendhal was regarded as a ‘modern’ or a ‘psychologist’, and his heroes as freedom and happiness seekers, possessing the ability to be governed by whimsy, carelessness, and impulses of the moment. In particular, Michel Crouzet depicted Stendhal as Mister Self.³⁷ Maria Scott's existential reading presents Stendhal's main heroines as ‘self-determining’ and free existential individuals.³⁸ In his article 'La Prusse de Stendhal,' François Genton discusses the heroines Mina de Vanghel and Tamira Wanghen from *Le Rose et le Vert*. He presents both characters as possessing a feverish imagination but

³⁵ Louis Dumont, *Essais sur l'individualisme. Une perspective anthropologique sur l'idéologie moderne* (Paris: Seuil, 1983).

³⁶ Jacques Chevallier, *L'Etat post-moderne* (Paris: LGDJ, 2017).

³⁷ Michel Crouzet, *Stendhal ou Monsieur moi-même* (Paris: Flammarion, 1990).

³⁸ Maria Scott, *Stendhal's Less-Loved Heroines: Fiction, Freedom, and the Female* (Oxford: Legenda, 2013).

overlooks the coherent national character within the narratives by portraying their intentions as beyond all social logic and verisimilitude.³⁹

In a balanced analysis of the agency of Stendhal's characters, Prendergast distinguishes 'types', who align with societal expectations, and complex characters, who possess a semblance of dynamic autonomy: 'Julien merely plays a part, whereas Madame de Fervacques *is* the part.'⁴⁰ Julien would be endowed with the capacity to disrupt and evade the 'internalised probability system' of other characters as a 'singulier' character—strange and unplaceable, thus significantly more intricate and enigmatic than the simple stereotype of the ambitious upstart.⁴¹

Modern individualism is losing its subversive vitality and paradoxically criticised as a new conformism, leaving space to reconsider critically the relationship between the individual and the corporate body in Stendhal, along with themes like love, happiness or freedom. Our analysis aims to offer a different perspective on the commonly held view that Stendhal's characters would represent existential freedom and embody modern liberty. Since the Stendhalian hero seldom sees himself free from obligations, duties, habits, and fears, we chose to question this association of Stendhal's heroes with the modern Self as essentially problematic. Rather, we focus on how they are inflected by their social roles and historical circumstances, having limited capacity for free will or genuine individuality. Despite their framework of apparent autonomy, Stendhal's main characters remain profoundly affected by their social determinants.

In *Pragmatisme et Sociologie*, Durkheim posits that each culture possesses its own network of self-referential logic and concepts, a relativism approach legitimising contextual truths that, although not substantiated in the physical world's reality, are anchored in the reality of their specific social frameworks.⁴² A society would be 'avant tout un ensemble d'idées, de croyances, de sentiments de toutes sortes, qui se réalisent par les individus.'⁴³ This reality would be

³⁹ François Genton, 'La Prusse de Stendhal', in *Revue de littérature comparée* (Klincksieck, 2014), 1, n°349, pp. 3–14.

⁴⁰ Christopher Prendergast, *The Order of Mimesis: Balzac, Stendhal, Nerval, Flaubert* (Cambridge University Press, 1986), Chapter 4: 'Stendhal: The Ethics of Verisimilitude', 119–147 (p. 136).

⁴¹ Christopher Prendergast, *The Order of Mimesis: Balzac, Stendhal, Nerval, Flaubert* (Cambridge University Press, 1986), Chapter 4: 'Stendhal: The Ethics of Verisimilitude', 119–147 (p. 124).

⁴² Émile Durkheim, *Pragmatisme et Sociologie*, Leçon XVIII.

⁴³ Émile Durkheim, *Sociologie et philosophie* (Paris: P.U.F., 1974), p. 79.

irreducible to its component parts. It would be more than the sum of its parts. Durkheim invents the concept of 'fait social' as an expression of the collective consciousness of a society: 'Ils consistent en des manières d'agir, de penser et de sentir, extérieures à l'individu, et qui sont douées d'un pouvoir de coercition en vertu duquel ils s'imposent à lui.'⁴⁴

This analysis adopts social determinism as a lens to explore the theme of self-liberation in *Mina de Vanghel*, focusing specifically on how national determinism shapes the lives of Stendhal's characters. Mina de Vanghel's narrative unfolds as she strives to extricate herself from the deep-seated German social hierarchies that bind her. Her commitment to a French man and commitment to her German ideals can read as an experiment to transcend national boundaries. We thus argue that *Mina de Vanghel* can be read as a formal repertoire of national types and a privileged site for observing social dynamics.

We employ Émile Durkheim's concept of 'anomie' from his seminal work, *Le Suicide* (1897), to elucidate the underlying social dynamics and Mina de Vanghel's subsequent suicide. As society is viewed as regulating the feelings and activities of individuals, 'anomie' is defined as a state of normlessness that can lead to social alienation and potentially suicide.⁴⁵ While this study primarily draws on Durkheim's work on collective consciousness, socialization, and suicide, Pierre Bourdieu's concept of *habitus*—the internalized dispositions that shape individual behavior—also proves useful for understanding how Mina's actions are influenced by her specific position within social structures, such as her class and education.⁴⁶ Both approaches are essential for a dynamic interpretation of her individual agency.

Our analysis engages critically with Jacques Dubois' *Stendhal, une sociologie romanesque*, which applies various sociological tools to analyze the complex trajectories of Stendhal characters—particularly Bernard Lahire's concept of the 'plural man' with a heterogeneous *habitus*.⁴⁷ Lahire's concept of the 'plural man,' reminiscent of Bourdieu's *habitus*, accounts for individuals possessing not a single, unified *habitus*, but multiple—sometimes conflicting—

⁴⁴ Émile Durkheim, *Les Règles de la méthode sociologique* [1895] (Paris: Félix Alcan, 1919), Chapter 1: 'Qu'est-ce qu'un fait social?', p. 8.

⁴⁵ Emile Durkheim, *Le Suicide* (Paris: Félix Alcan, 1897), Chapter 5: 'Le suicide anémique', pp. 264-311.

⁴⁶ Pierre Bourdieu, *Esquisse d'une théorie de la pratique* (Geneva: Droz, 1972).

⁴⁷ Jacques Dubois, *Stendhal, une sociologie romanesque* (Paris: La Découverte, 2007).

dispositions, shaped by the different social contexts they encounter throughout their lives.⁴⁸ Lahire's analyses of 'ultra-differentiated' societies, which expose individuals to contradictory socialization processes, provide actionable insight into studying the end of *Mina de Vanghel*. While we align with Dubois in recognizing the power of literary discourse to explore the reactivation of multiple *habitus* within action schemes, we contend that *Mina de Vanghel* reveals the limitations of an individual's ability to fully reconcile divergent national dispositions.

Along with these critical tools, we interrogate the social influence on individual autonomy and how it serves Stendhal's narrative. Peter Brooks, in *Reading for the Plot: Design and Intention in Narrative*, discusses the function of stereotypes in narrative logic, highlighting how predefined molds guide the readers' understanding and expectations. Stereotypes would streamline the narrative and direct the reader's journey through a structured path that leaves little room for divergent character evolution.⁴⁹

Discussing his writing methodology in his *Journal*, in the context of his early theatrical attempts, Stendhal suggests that his characters are confined within an 'étendue': 'Pour éviter le genre pauvre d'action [...], avant de peindre un caractère, faire son étendue, c'est-à-dire la liste de toutes les actions qu'il peut faire.'⁵⁰ Balzac too defines 'le type', in the preface of *Une ténébreuse affaire*, as a 'personnage qui résume en lui-même les traits caractéristiques de tous ceux qui lui ressemblent plus ou moins', serving as a 'modèle du genre.'⁵¹ In *Stendhal littéral*, Yves Ansel uses the term 'Personnages à thèse, mannequins' to describe how some of Stendhal's characters strongly resemble 'automatons' illustrating 'deux ou trois idées fixes' that completely exhaust their character.⁵² Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari use the term 'personnages conceptuels.'⁵³

⁴⁸ Bernard Lahire, *L'Homme pluriel: Les ressorts de l'action* (Paris: Nathan, 1998).

⁴⁹ Peter Brooks, *Reading for the Plot: Design and Intention in Narrative* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1984).

⁵⁰ Stendhal, *Journal*, 14 November 1804, in *Œuvres intimes*, I, p. 145.

⁵¹ Honoré de Balzac, *Une ténébreuse affaire* (Paris: Gallimard, Pléiade), Vol 8, p. 492–493.

⁵² Yves Ansel, *Stendhal littéral, Lamiel*, VI.I. 'Personnages à thèse, mannequins', p. 134.

⁵³ Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari, *Qu'est-ce que la philosophie?* (Paris: éditions de Minuit, 1991), Chapter 3: 'Les personnages conceptuels', pp. 63–86.

In *Mina de Vanghel*, we argue that Stendhal personifies national traits through fictional characters, which actively influence and propel the dynamics of his fiction. In particular, Mina stands as the embodiment of the German character. Her move to France, freeing herself from her national framework, is ongoingly portrayed, so we analyse, as the root cause of her despair and subsequent suicide, interpreted as an eventual capitulation to the French social forces arrayed against her.

Linear Cross-Reading of Stendhal's *Mina de Vanghel* and Durkheim's *Le Suicide*

In notes related to his text *Mina de Vanghel*, Stendhal remarks: 'Décrire les mœurs est froid dans un roman. C'est presque moraliser. Tournez la description en étonnement, mettez une étrangère qui s'étonne, la description devient un sentiment. Le lecteur a quelqu'un avec qui il peut sympathiser.'⁵⁴ This can be summed up as Stendhal's operative rule: 'Raconter cela en action, ne pas le dire.'⁵⁵

Focusing on the titular character, Mina, and her French love, Alfred de Larçay, this close-reading of *Mina de Vanghel* examines how national identity shapes characters and narrative in Stendhal. We believe Stendhal activates fiction to further his systemic vision of national characteristics.

We see our analysis as innovative in the way it shifts from a focus on individual pathology to the influence of societal structures on personal agency. In that regard, we implement Durkheim's writings on suicide as a critical tool to illuminate the complex interplay between individual actions and societal constraints in Mina's tragic trajectory.

Residing in France, Mina finds herself alienated due to her adherence to German cultural values and perceptions, leading to a profound disorientation amid the ambiguous, opaque, altogether foreign social and emotional French norms. In the absence of familial or social anchorage, the French social *milieu* being incapable of offering consistent frameworks of norms and objectives

⁵⁴ Stendhal, *Mina de Vanghel*, *Œuvres romanesques complètes*, ed. by Philippe Berthier and Yves Ansel (Paris: Gallimard, 2006–2014), Vol 1 (2006), Notes marginales, p. 489.

⁵⁵ Stendhal, *A-imagination*, in *Œuvres romanesques complètes*, Vol 3 (Paris: Gallimard, Pléiade, 2014), 1–10 (p. 6).

to navigate her life, the erosion of her traditional German norms and values, both eroded by the French *milieu* and through her own actions, without being replaced by new ones, culminates in a state of normlessness, a pervasive feeling of directionlessness, leaving her passions free and propelling her towards suicide.

At the very beginning of *Mina de Vanghel*, Germany is not referred to literally, rather, via its stereotype: 'Mina de Vanghel naquit dans le pays de la philosophie et de l'imagination, à Koenigsberg.' Stereotypical representation of countries is exacerbated. As an embodiment of the German character, Mina has 'une âme ardente'⁵⁶ and une 'flamme secrète d'honneur et d'héroïsme'.⁵⁷

The story begins with a depiction of Mina's father facing a dilemma: 'le général prussien comte de Vanghel quitta brusquement la cour et l'armée. Un soir, c'était à Craonne, en Champagne, après un combat meurtrier où les troupes sous ses ordres avaient arraché la victoire, un doute assaillit son esprit: un peuple a-t-il le droit de changer la manière intime et rationnelle suivant laquelle un autre peuple veut régler son existence matérielle et morale?'⁵⁸ This reflects the era's grappling with the rights of nations and the legitimacy of imposing cultural norms, a theme central to Stendhal's time.

The brutal end of life of Mina at the close of the novel is propedeutically referred to at the beginning via the attitude of her father, confronting French troops: 'Préoccupé de cette grande question, le général résolu de ne plus tirer l'épée avant de l'avoir résolue; il se retira dans ses terres de Kœnigsberg.' It could be argued that the point of *Mina de Vanghel* as a fiction is for Mina to take action, where her father retreated. Mina's attitude will differ from that of her father: she will 'tirer l'épée', by committing suicide, which could be construed as an answer to the initial question of the novel.

This liberal theme of people's right to self-determination recurs in the first conversation between Mina and Monsieur de Larçay, triggering her love and passion: 'Il parla à Mina fort

⁵⁶ Stendhal, *Mina de Vanghel*, p. 329.

⁵⁷ Stendhal, *Mina de Vanghel*, p. 306.

⁵⁸ Stendhal, *Mina de Vanghel*, p. 297.

bien et fort simplement de la Grèce, où il venait de passer une ou deux années, se battant pour les Grecs,' this hinting at the countries' right for self-determination.

After the retreat, 'le comte de Vanghel ne s'occupa que de ses méditations philosophiques et de sa fille unique, Mina'. It can be inferred that Mina becomes the embodiment of her father's intellectual quest. The proximity of Mina with her father is further reinforced by the protagonist's description: 'tes yeux me rappellent ton pauvre père'. Mina is characterized by 'l'imagination allemande qu'elle tenait de son père' The action starts after the death of her father, further reinforcing the vision of Mina as a continuation of her father.

Love is expected for Mina by her mother within the boundaries of her country, in the 'états du grand-duc de C...': 'Que je voudrais, lui disait-elle, vous voir mariée dans ce pays!' Mina qualifies this national love as potentially 'vulgaire' and 'plat,' seeking a form of 'bonheur' through love which could be uprooted from the national belonging. Regularly, throughout the fiction, Mina is reminded to come back and seek happiness and love in her homeland.

In France, as both Mina and her mother are facing the lack of compatibility between the French character and their German self, Mina's mother Mme de Vanghel proposes the same answer as the one of Mina's father, i.e. retreat: '—À quoi bon ces critiques? répondait la sage madame de Vanghel. Si la France te déplaît, retournons à Kœnigsberg.' After the death of her mother, retreat to the homeland is once more suggested to Mina by her closest friend Mme de Cély: '— Il faut lui disait cette amie, jeune femme de trente ans, il faut retourner en Prusse, c'est le parti le plus sage'. The loss of her mother in France, the only remnant of a bond to German sociability, leads Mina to utmost existential degradation: 'Mina passa l'année la plus malheureuse de sa vie; sa santé s'altéra, et sa beauté disparut 'presque entièrement.'

The action is triggered by Mina's foolish project of uprooting herself from her national bonds. By doing so, she breaks free from the socially determined path assigned to her by birth: 'Maman, dit-elle un jour à sa mère, je veux quitter ce pays et m'expatrier.' In the mother's answer: 'Eh bien! je serai neutre, je n'emploierai point mon autorité', we would argue that the term 'neutre' ominously points at the upcoming suicide by anomia.

Mina cannot obtain 'la permission' 'nécessaire pour voyager en pays étranger', which makes her projet essentially transgressive. As she attempts to break free from the court of her

country—aristocratic circles representing in Stendhal the epitome of the national character, as previously demonstrated,—this leads to Mina being doomed: ‘Mina fut très malheureuse. Les succès que lui avaient valu ses grands yeux bleus si doux et son air si distingué diminuèrent rapidement quand on apprit à la cour qu’elle avait des idées qui contrariaient celles de son altesse sérénissime.’

The annihilation of her social self is followed by the alteration of her very individual self, as Stendhal details in length how Mina alters two major components of her identity, gender and ethnicity: ‘Elle forma le projet de se déguiser en homme [...] Madame de Vanghel s’aperçut avec une sorte de terreur que Mina se livrait à de singuliers essais pour altérer la couleur de sa peau.’ The strength of the word ‘terreur’ mirror the extent of the alienation and ominously hint towards the comte Ruppert’s ‘votre petit projet est atroce’ and Alfred’s judgement at the end ‘ce trait est infâme’, followed by Mina’s anomie-driven suicide, based on the absence of social limits. Mina undergoes a double alienation, social and existential, presenting the monstrous traits of those who would comply to any ‘nomos’.

As Mina undertakes a ‘romanesque’ escape to Paris, Stendhal deploys his national characteristics within the fiction: ‘En Allemagne, on croit encore que les jeunes gens de Paris s’occupent des femmes.’ French men are described with the set of adjectives and expressions used by Stendhal to describe the French character throughout his œuvre: ‘aimables’, ‘esprit piquant’, ‘esprit brillant’, ‘ironie’, ‘finesse’, but also incapable of being ‘touchés’, ‘émus’. ‘Esprit piquant’ refers to the tradition of Voltairianas and mundane *salon* conversation. French ‘vanité’ and self-consciousness are indirectly referred to in Mina’s rhetorical questions: ‘Ne les trouvez-vous pas empruntés et ridicules dès qu’ils essaient de paraître émus? Est-ce que jamais leur émotion s’ignore elle-même?’. The French character is perceived as ‘sec’, ‘ironique’, ‘méchant’ and corrupted, especially in the capital, ‘Paris, cette *nouvelle Babylone*’.⁵⁹ The French comte de Ruppert epitomises this French type, described as ‘beau’, ‘élégant’ but also ‘dur’ and ‘vulgaire’, demonstrating particular vanity. Albert as an embodiment of French character of nations has ‘un caractère inflexible, froid, positif, assez enjoué, mais dénué d’imagination.’⁶⁰

⁵⁹ *Mina de Vanghel*, p. 301.

⁶⁰ *Mina de Vanghel*, p. 303.

As Stendhal stages 'la différence des manières entre l'Allemagne et la France' throughout the novel, the pervasive presence of national stereotypes within the narrative can become overly tedious and contrived. The impossibility to merge between nations is expressed by strong terms by Stendhal like 'choquer', 'odieux': '[...] les fortes pensées qui faisaient l'essence de son caractère. Sa manière de chercher le bonheur, non seulement devait paraître singulière à une âme vulgaire, mais encore la choquer. Elle avait eu soin jusque-là de ménager dans M. de Larçay ce qu'elle appelait les préjugés français; elle avait besoin de s'expliquer par la différence de nation ce qu'elle était obligée de ne pas admirer en lui: ici Mina sentit le désavantage de l'éducation forte que lui avait donnée son père; cette éducation pouvait facilement la rendre odieuse.' The influence of national belonging on Stendhal's character is strong to the point of sounding artificial in the novel, especially when Stendhal uses this as the single cause for consequences in the plot.

Compared to the French 'naturel' and 'simplicité', Mina is described as having 'la vraie séduction', i.e. the capacity to love: 'les Allemandes, même les filles riches, croient qu'on ne peut épouser qu'un homme qu'on adore.' French women are described as 'aimables' in numerous occurrences, but the superficiality of the French female character is also referred to by recurring terms such as 'commun' and 'prosaïque'. Mina acknowledges French quality but in the mode of surprise and amusement, which implies lack of deep understanding: 'J'admire leur esprit brillant, chaque jour leur ironie si fine me surprend et m'amuse'. Mina's lack of understanding facing the French character is rendered by the verb 'étonner': 'Mina fut étonnée'. The suffering of Mina when frequenting this superficiality is once more interpreted by the narrator in national terms: 'le désappointement du beau est une douleur pour les cœurs allemands'.

As Stendhal phrased 'les peuples sont inintelligibles les uns aux autres', this is acknowledged by Mina: 'Les Français l'amusaient, mais ils ne la touchaient pas.'. Mina 'remarqua qu'elle ne pouvait parvenir à se lier avec aucune femme française'. It is said that Mina's character 'paralysait l'urbanité française'. In the incapacity of Mina to be valued rightly in the French mundane context ('Jamais avec autant de supériorité réelle on ne vit tant de modestie'), Stendhal activates his stereotype of Germany as 'nation qui meurt d'envie d'avoir un caractère mais qui ne parvient pas à en avoir.' The German 'énergie' and 'soudaineté' are combined with the 'naïveté' and 'charme de l'enfance', which prevent Mina from asserting her character, as opposed to French capacity to reason and compare.

The lack of genuine relational bonds for Mina, as a German woman in a French context, further stages a situation of anomia. In Paris, Mina is depicted as 'ce caractère singulier'. Mina frequents Parisian society without authentic connection, this reinforcing the atmosphere of anomia: 'Dans l'absence des douceurs de cette société intime que le cœur un peu trop allemand de Mina regrettait encore, elle voyait que tous les soirs on peut trouver à Paris un bal ou un spectacle amusant.' 'le cœur un peu trop allemand de Mina', suggests that her capacity for love is determined by her national belonging. None of her emotions are presented as personal. France character of nation and Germany character of nation are pitted against each other on the question of love: the French heart is corrupted by vanity, impeding true and honest love: 'Mina s'accoutuma à l'idée qu'Alfred était destiné par sa nature à aimer moins passionnément qu'elle.'

By getting to live in the house that her father inhabited in Paris, Mina tries to reconstitute the German 'nomos' that she is seeking. Mina's attempt at reconstructing the country within the foreign land is ironically presented by the narrator as a trivial attempt to set up a feeling of belonging and recognition: 'Une fois établie dans cette maison [...], Paris ne fut plus pour elle une ville étrangère, mademoiselle Vanghel reconnaissait les plus petites pièces de cette habitation.'

As coherent with her national belonging, Mina's romantic predicaments finds relief in landscapes, the peculiar and the particular in several occurrences, in Pierrefonds, bearing archeological interest, terroir sites such as 'sites célèbres de la forêt de Compiègne', the lake of Aix or at Les Charmettes, Rousseau's house in Savoie. The ruins are presented as 'touchantes' as they allow Mina to come to grasp the French character and culture in a sensualist approach. In Pierrefonds, the sensuality of the moment is reinforced by the rain and the focus on the landscape, Stendhal activating many romantic tropes. Mina's aesthetical sense is German: 'Depuis la mort de mes parents, mes seuls instants de bonheur ont été ceux où, sans avoir de voisins ennuyeux, j'écoutais de la musique de Mozart.' In a form of materiality or physicality of national belonging, the purchase of land in France by Mina, le Petit-Verberie, participates to make her more 'intime' to France. The 'pittoresque' journey plan of M. de Larcay to Aix with his wife nourishes Mina's 'douce folie' and 'vif désir de voyager,' referring to the omnipresent trope 'je me fais vif' that characterizes German character in Stendhal.

Despite the progressive knowledge gained by Mina via the frequentation of the French character, the narrator continues to pepper the text with reminders of the radicality of national differences: 'Toutefois Mina ne prit point les façons d'une jeune Française. Tout en admirant leurs grâces séduisantes, elle conserva le naturel et la liberté des façons allemandes.'⁶¹ Even in friendships, the alienation is reminded: 'Madame de Cély, la plus intime de ses nouvelles amies, disait de Mina qu'elle était *différente*.' At the height of Alfred and Mina's love affair, his French character is reminded: 'Dieu sait ce qu'on dit de moi à la *Redoute*! Ces propos de tout le monde me perdront dans l'âme d'Alfred. Comment s'y prendrait un Français pour ne pas penser comme *tout le monde*?'

Albert as a French character is presented comically as unable to reach the German level of philosophical thinking, despite serious attempts: 'Cette façon de penser était trop haute pour Alfred mais le ton de la voix de Mina lui donnait de la force.'⁶² 'le génie de Mina faisait peur au sien.'⁶³ Alfred is depicted as unable to reach the heights of Mina's philosophical thinking: 'Alfred ne comprenait pas trop ce qu'elle voulait dire'.⁶⁴

As nations are not understandable to each other, the narrator introduces the hypothesis of Mr. de Larçay's potential comprehensibility to Mina by attributing to him transferable aspects of the German character, such as naivety: 'les manières pleines de naturel et même naïves de M. de Larçay' are contrasted with 'Les airs élégants du comte de Ruppert.' This disparity from the French character by M. de Larçay is observed by Mina with a national lens: 'Mina fut étonnée qu'un Français pût être aussi simple.' Mina is once described as answering for the first time to Madame de Larçay 'd'une façon fine et piquante'.

The proximity between M de Larçay and Mina is not a case of similarity, rather, the understanding is described as a kind of diplomatic agreement: 'La crainte de la petite ironie française ne l'avait point obligée, à chaque instant, à jeter un voile sur sa pensée allemande si pleine de franchise.' Mina aspires to have discovered in Alfred 'un cœur franc et sincère, qui ne cherchât pas toujours le motif d'une plaisanterie dans la remarque la plus simple; elle fut

⁶¹ *Mina de Vanghel*, p. 302.

⁶² *Mina de Vanghel*, p. 323.

⁶³ *Mina de Vanghel*, p. 327.

⁶⁴ *Mina de Vanghel*, p. 327.

rêveuse toute la journée’, where ‘plaisanterie’ and ‘ironie’ refers to wit, which is identified in Stendhal as a distinctively French attribute. Alfred never grows apart from his national belonging, as suggested by the expression: ‘ce petit retour au caractère français’. Mina's articulation of resentment also serves as a moment to illustrate Stendhal's association of the excesses of the French character with 'ridicule': ‘Ô nation de gens grossiers! ô nation de vaudevillistes! Oh! que la bonhomie grave de mes braves Allemands me plairait davantage’

In Aix, the vision of ‘Aniken les larmes aux yeux’, directly coming from Frankfurt as the ‘femme de chambre’ of Madame Cramer—Mina in disguise—, evokes the purity of the German type, untouched by exposure to the French. Notably, in *La Chartreuse de Parme*, Fabrice del Dongo, wounded at Waterloo, finds refuge and falls in love with the 'petite Aniken', 'la cadette et la plus naïve' in Zonders (an imaginary Dutch or Flemish town), Fabrice saying to himself at the end of the passage: 'Dans le fait je n'ai connu un peu cette préoccupation tendre qu'on appelle, je crois, l'amour, que pour cette jeune Aniken de l'auberge de Zonders, près de la frontière de Belgique.'⁶⁵ This character of a naïve Aniken thus recurs in Stendhal, to embody the purity of Northern feelings of love.

As a narrative echo of Mina's story within the novel, Aniken is depicted as being socially predisposed to squander her naive potential in Paris, the ‘petite Babylone’. This is all the more significant that Aniken's parents in Frankfurt are ‘les premiers tailleurs de la ville et travaille absolument à l'instar de Paris’, recalling Stendhal's description of Paris as the city which ‘écrème tout’ in Europe, afore studied. Disguised as Aniken, Mina, in her adoration of Mr. de Larca, perpetuates the precise stereotype of the German character: ‘Oserons- nous le dire?... Pourquoi pas, puisque nous peignons un cœur allemand? Il y eut des moments de bonheur et d'exaltation où elle alla jusqu'à se figurer que c'était un être surnaturel.’ She continues to display a character ‘sincère et vif.’

Infused with her German ideals yet liberated from the constraints of her native society, Mina harbors projects that gravely risk leading to anomie-driven suicide. Her plans involve transforming Alfred's spiritual beliefs, disrupting his personal relationships, and uprooting him from his homeland: ‘Comment cet homme si sage se décidera-t-il à changer de religion, à se

⁶⁵ Stendhal, *La Chartreuse de Parme*, Chapter 5.

séparer de sa femme par le divorce, et à venir vivre comme mon mari dans mes belles terres de la Prusse Orientale?’.

As Emile Durkheim elucidates, ‘poursuivre une fin inaccessible par hypothèse, c’est se condamner à un perpétuel état de mécontentement.’⁶⁶ ‘Il faut avant tout que les passions soient limitées [...] mais puisqu’il n’y a rien dans l’individu qui puisse leur fixer une limite, celle-ci doit nécessairement leur venir de quelque force extérieure à l’individu. [...] Seule, la société [...] est en état de jouer ce rôle modérateur’⁶⁷ According to Durkheim, the restraint to which humans are subjected is not physical, but moral, that is, social.⁶⁸ Only with societal pressure can a person understand the limits of their ambitions and not aim beyond them. This, however, is unattainable for the uprooted Mina.

Anomie-driven suicide arises from the fact that ‘society is not sufficiently present for individuals.’⁶⁹ As Mina explains to French catholic Alfred: ‘je suis protestante, et ma religion, que je serais heureuse de vous voir suivre, me permet le divorce.’ Interestingly, Durkheim describes ‘domestic/conjugal anomie’ resulting from the institution of divorce or separation and the consequent change in moral and material conditions.⁷⁰

According to Durkheim, money exacerbates the risk of anomie-driven suicide. ‘Si la pauvreté protège contre le suicide, c’est que, par elle-même, elle est un frein.’⁷¹ Contrastingly, by going to France with a significant amount of money, Mina, as a German, liberates herself from all restraints.

Stendhal presents Mina's boundless spirit in a novelistic manner: ‘Mina fut moins malheureuse. Se venger, c’est agir; agir, c’est espérer.—Si Alfred meurt, se dit-elle, je mourrai!—Et elle sourit. Le bonheur qu’elle ressentit en ce moment la sépara pour toujours de la vertu. L’épreuve de cette nuit avait été trop forte pour son caractère [...] Désormais elle pourra prononcer encore

⁶⁶ *Le Suicide*, p. 274.

⁶⁷ *Le Suicide*, p. 275.

⁶⁸ *Le Suicide*, p. 279.

⁶⁹ *Le Suicide*, p. 288.

⁷⁰ *Le Suicide*, pp. 290-294.

⁷¹ *Le Suicide*, p. 282.

le mot de vertu, mais elle se fera illusion; la vengeance et l'amour se sont emparés de tout son cœur.' Mina exhibits insatiability, viewed as a sign of morbidity by Durkheim.⁷²

The underlying principle of anomie-driven suicide is that the less one feels limited, the more any limitation seems unbearable.⁷³ In the end, Mina had already accomplished the unthinkable: convincing Alfred to leave the income from all his assets to Madame de Larçay, converting to Protestantism, contemplating marriage with Mina, and planning to depart for Königsberg. Yet, unsatisfied, Mina seals her fate by deciding to reveal to Alfred her final plot to compromise his wife, adding up to her unfeasible plans: 'Lui cacher la funeste intrigue qui avait amené les événements de la nuit d'Aix était déjà depuis longtemps pour elle un effort presque au-dessus de ses facultés. [...] L'amour qu'il lui inspirait se porta bientôt au dernier degré de folie'

Anomie-driven suicide occurs when society fails to regulate individual passions, leaving them unchecked. Similarly, Mina is unable to appreciate her accomplishments without constantly seeking to substitute them for new ones. This behaviour is indicative of the path to anomie-driven suicide, as described by Durkheim.⁷⁴

When Alfred reaches his breaking point, Mina is led to suicide: 'Voilà à quoi les grandes âmes sont exposées, mais elles ont leur ressource', se dit Mina en se mettant à la fenêtre et suivant des yeux son amant jusqu'au bout de la rue. Quand il eut disparu, elle alla dans la chambre d'Alfred et se tua d'un coup de pistolet dans le cœur. Sa vie fut-elle un faux calcul? Son bonheur avait duré huit mois. C'était une âme trop ardente pour se contenter du réel de la vie.' This radical solution of suicide is to be tied to the characteristics mainly attributed to the German character by Stendhal. As Durkheim elucidates, 'Le réel paraît sans valeur au prix de ce qu'entrevoient comme possible les imaginations enfiévrées; on s'en détache donc, mais pour se détacher ensuite du possible, quand, à son tour, il devient réel.'⁷⁵

Anomie is defined by Durkheim as 'ce mal de l'infini [...] Au-delà des plaisirs dont on a fait l'expérience, on en imagine et on en veut d'autres; s'il arrive qu'on ait à peu près parcouru tout

⁷² *Le Suicide*, p. 273-274.

⁷³ *Le Suicide*, p. 282.

⁷⁴ *Le Suicide*, p. 285.

⁷⁵ *Le Suicide*, p. 285.

le cercle du possible, on rêve à l'impossible, on a soif de ce qui n'est pas. Comment la sensibilité ne s'exaspérerait-elle pas dans cette poursuite qui ne peut pas aboutir? Pour qu'elle en vienne à ce point, il n'est même pas nécessaire qu'on ait multiplié à l'infini les expériences amoureuses [...] Ce sont sans cesse des espérances nouvelles qui s'éveillent et qui sont déçues, laissant derrière elles une impression de fatigue et de désenchantement.⁷⁶

All along, Stendhal implacably outlined his vision of the German and French character. Our analysis emphasized the deeper, often overlooked, national dynamics influencing Mina's path, thus proposing a framework to reassess Mina's existential freedom.

The author concludes his short novel in a notably dramatic and 'operatic' manner.⁷⁷ This literary technique is not unique to Stendhal. A parallel could be drawn with his friend Mérimée, particularly in his play *Les Espagnols en Danemark* from *Théâtre de Clara Gazul*, which Stendhal praised highly in his review for the English press.⁷⁸

'Narratives of National Stereotypes': Beyond Mina

This analysis on the importance of national characteristics in Stendhal's fiction could be extended to several of Stendhal's short novels. Characters are defined by their very nationality in many of them. Léonor in *Le Philtre*, Iñes in *Le Coffre et le Revenant* could serve as examples of the Spanish character. As instances of the Italian character, we could look closer at tailleur Badaschi in *Les Souvenirs d'un gentilhomme italien*, the seigneur Ariberti in *Anecdote italienne*, the cardinal Girolamo della Gherardesca in *Une position sociale*, or the comtesse Bianca in *Roman de Métilde*. In *Le Roman de Métilde*, set in Italy, a Pole is the guest of the Italian Duchess of Empoli. Our study of the German character could be further elucidated via a closer look at characters of *Le Rose et le Vert*, 'Mina de Vanghel', the général major 'comte von Landek', the advisor 'Eberhart', the lawyer 'Willibad' and the banker 'Isaac Wentig'.

⁷⁶ *Le Suicide*, p. 304.

⁷⁷ Ann Jefferson, *id.*, Part 5, Chapter 9: 'Forgery, plagiarism and the operatic text', 201–29.

⁷⁸ Stendhal, *Théâtre de Clara Gazul, Comédienne espagnole*, 'Publications étrangères', *New Monthly Magazine* (August 1825), in *Stendhal Paris–Londres*, ed. by Renée Dénier (Paris: Stock, 1997), p. 479.

In *Une position sociale*, the plot unfolds in Rome, specifically within the *salons* of the French embassy, providing a vivid operatic staging for the interactions among characters of Italian, French, and German nationalities. Notably, the Italian contingent includes prominent figures such as Cardinals Girolamo della Gherardesca and Serponi, while the German presence is epitomized by Mr. de Meermann. This setting serves as a dynamic backdrop for the nuanced interplay of cultural and social dynamics among the characters, highlighting the diversity and complexity of European diplomatic and social relations during the period.

PART 3: Stendhal Beyond the Novel: Reassessing the Critical Importance of Stendhal's Engagement in Diplomacy

Tu l'as vu, cet antique port,
Où dans son grand langage mort,
Le flot murmure,
Où Stendhal, cet esprit charmant,
Remplissait si dévotement
Sa sinécure.¹
Alfred de Musset

Introduction

Our hypothesis emerged from the following paradox. Stendhal's diplomatic career, spanning from 1830 to 1840, included postings in Trieste from 1830 to 1831 and in Civitavecchia from April 1831 to October 1841, representing France across the Papal States. Remarkably, his final years as a diplomat coincided with some of his most prolific years as a writer. During this period, he published *Le Rouge et le Noir* in 1830, *Mémoires d'un touriste* in 1838, *La Chartreuse de Parme* in 1839. Additionally, he wrote *Souvenirs d'égotisme* in 1832, *Vie de Henry Brulard* between 1835 and 1838, *Lucien Leuwen* between 1834 and 1836, and the *Chroniques italiennes* between 1836 and 1839.

This part examines Stendhal's work as a diplomat, making the case for the strong influence of his career on his literary output. It proposes an exclusive analysis of Stendhal's stance as an author-diplomat, analysing the interplay between his novelistic and diplomatic writing styles—an aspect hitherto neglected in scholarly discourse. The central hypothesis of Part Three is that his diplomatic activities should not be viewed as merely coincidental but rather as deeply integrated with his pre-existing intellectual framework and imaginative sensibility, even prior to his first diplomatic appointment. The intersection of both writing styles is demonstrated through close analysis, underscoring the consistency between his diplomatic engagements and his broader creative and conceptual outlook.

While Stendhal's diplomatic work has been documented by curators of the French Ministry of Foreign Affairs as well as taken into account by Stendhal's biographers, it has been neglected by Stendhal's critics. The French Ministry of Europe and Foreign Affairs in La Courneuvre has kept Stendhal's diplomatic correspondence from his time as Consul in Italy. So far, these documents remain little explored by Stendhal's Anglophone and French literary critics, providing a rich and unique subject-matter for study.

These documents support and clarify our understanding of Stendhal's sense of national character, as we believe Stendhal's literary vision of Europe is deeply inspired by his work as a diplomat. These documents will allow us to reveal the influence of Stendhal's diplomatic work on his fiction, and vice versa: the influence of Stendhal's literary work on his approach to diplomacy. As we will see, Stendhal's spontaneity clashes with the canons of diplomatic style. In turn, his fictional works are sometimes influenced by the precise style, the dry tone and the fast pace that characterizes most of his administrative correspondence.

Critical Assessments

Stendhal's diplomatic papers have been studied by several researchers with a strong biographical focus. François Michel worked on Stendhal's relationship with the central Government.² René Dollot, former Consul in Trieste, studied Stendhal's experience in diplomacy and his experience at the consulate of Trieste.³ Georges Dethan, curator at the French Ministry of Foreign Affairs, completed archival work on Stendhal's correspondence and researched Stendhal's daily activities at the consulate and relationships with other agents of the

¹ Alfred de Musset, 'À mon frère revenant d'Italie', in *Poésies nouvelles* (March 1844).

² François Michel, 'Deux ministres et un consul: Le comte Molé, le duc de Broglie et Stendhal', in *Revue d'histoire diplomatique* (Paris, Pédone, 1954), 28–45.

³ René Dollot, 'Stendhal et les prestiges de la diplomatie', in *Revue d'histoire diplomatique* (Paris, Pédone, 1954), 7–27. René Dollot, 'Stendhal consul de France à Trieste', Extract from *La Revue de Paris* (1st April 1927), in *Stendhal-Club*, n°23 (1927).

consulate.⁴ These scholarly works have proven invaluable for analyzing Stendhal's diplomatic writings.

Scholarly interest in Stendhal's conception of diplomatic style is limited. Christof Weiland has examined the phenomenon of acceleration in Stendhal's letters, particularly highlighting the rapidity and brevity characteristic of some of his personal correspondence.⁵ Globally, there has been no analysis of a mirror reading between Stendhal's diplomatic and fictional works.

The period when Stendhal was consul suffers from persistent prejudices in Stendhalian criticism. Among French critics, there is unease about Stendhal's failure to rise to the highest rank of diplomacy. Chateaubriand was ambassador three times, plenipotentiary at the Congrès de Vérone and Minister of Foreign Affairs. Lamartine was secrétaire d'ambassade under the Restoration and directed the Second Republic's foreign policy. Henri Beyle did not rise above a second rank consulate. Embassies and Legations were often the prerogative of a noble lineage, to which he did not belong.

The primary characteristic of criticism regarding this aspect of Stendhal's life is the tendency to minimize his responsibilities. Very recently, François Vanoosthuyse reminds us of the importance of Stendhal's missions: 'Civitavecchia était un poste plus important qu'on ne pourrait croire, car c'était le seul grand port des Etats du Pape sur la rive occidentale de l'Italie. Tout ce qui se destinait à Rome, voyageurs ou marchandises, y débarquait; tout ce qui quittait Rome par voie de mer y embarquait.'⁶ Indeed, in 1818, the consul's residence gets transferred from Rome to Civitavecchia, the port of Rome. Stendhal's diplomatic jurisdiction is significant, extending over all the Papal States, from the borders of Tuscany in the north to the Kingdom of Naples in the south, from the shores of the Tyrrhenian Sea to the Adriatic. Stendhal has six

⁴ Georges Dethan, 'La correspondance diplomatique de Henri Beyle (1830-1841)' and 'Un consul et un vice-consul: Stendhal et son agent à Ancône Frédéric Quilliet, correspondance inédite', in *Revue d'Histoire Diplomatique* (1955), 159–169 and 293–312. Georges Dethan, 'Un rapport inédit de Stendhal consul, le Tableau du commerce de Rome et de Civita Vecchia (1841)', in *Stendhal-Club* (15 January 1962), 131-147.

⁵ Christof Weiland, 'Phénomènes d'accélération dans les lettres de Stendhal', in Martine Reid, and Elaine Williamson (dir.), *Lire la correspondance de Stendhal* (Paris: Champion, 2007), 115–128.

⁶ François Vanoosthuyse, 'Le consul de France et la politique italienne (1831-1835)', in Martine Reid, and Elaine Williamson (dir.), *Lire la correspondance de Stendhal* (Paris: Champion, 2007), 155–178 (pp. 155-156). See also: Silvio Serangeli, *Il console Stendhal e la 'petite ville' di Civitavecchia* (Moncalieri: C.I.R.V.I, 2014).

vice-consuls and seven consular agents under his direct authority, notably in Rimini, Ancona, Pesaro, Ravenna, Loreto, Fermo, Porto d'Anzo, Terracina and Corneto. His consulate took particular importance during the course of the decade, as recorded for instance in a letter that Stendhal sent to Guizot where he shows how the current affairs of his consulate have more than doubled.⁷ This historical evolution of the port of Civitavecchia is attested by Georges Dethan, who highlighted the historic value of Stendhal's diplomatic correspondence when studying the thriving of relations in the Mediterranean sea (development of shipping lines and steamboat service in particular).⁸

Critics have also tended to suggest that Stendhal would have turned towards diplomacy for material and pecuniary reasons. For instance, in his influential article 'Stendhal et l'Europe,' Philippe Berthier explores the economic constraints that influenced Stendhal's decision to pursue a diplomatic career, attributing it to a 'déficit de moyens économiques,' which he suggests limited the scope of Stendhal's aspirations.⁹

Similarly, René Dollot approached Stendhal's work as a diplomat from the material and pragmatic angle. Stendhal writes himself on the manuscript of *Henry Brulard*: 'Travail à Civitavecchia: trois ou quatre heures seulement du 24 février au 19 mars 1836, le reste au métier (gagne-pain).'¹⁰ This comment was interpreted by René Dollot as denigration of his work: 'Si Stendhal sollicite un poste, c'est qu'il est sans fortune. Stendhal devient consul pour satisfaire à ses besoins d'argent sans trop heurter ses goûts.'¹¹ A similar approach to Stendhal's work as a diplomat is adopted by Henri Martineau in *Le Cœur de Stendhal*.¹² Recent studies of old accounting registers of the French Foreign Affairs administration prove that Stendhal earned a reasonably good living as consul. George Dethan shows that Stendhal received 7,000 francs of viaticum (travel expenses and set-up costs in Italy) and his salary then amounted to approximately 2,500 francs per quarter. Interestingly enough, Georges Dethan compares this to

⁷ *Correspondance*, ed. by Martineau, Vol 10, 366, to Guizot (23 July 1841).

⁸ George Dethan, 'De la valeur pour l'historien de la correspondance consulaire de Stendhal', in *Etudes d'histoire des relations internationales, Mélanges Pierre Renouvin* (Paris: PUF, 1966), 107–116 (p. 112).

⁹ Philippe Berthier, 'Stendhal et l'Europe', in *Espaces stendhaliens* (Paris: P.U.F., 1997), 167–185 (p. 167).

¹⁰ Manuscript of *Vie de Henry Brulard*, verso, folio n° 807.

¹¹ René Dollot, 'Stendhal, Consul de France à Trieste', Editions du Stendhal-Club, n°23 (1927), pp. 1–43, in éditions du Stendhal Club (1922–1935), 1–35 (Geneva: Slatkine Reprints, 1998).

¹² Henri Martineau, *Le Cœur de Stendhal*, Vol 2, p. 197.

the manuscript of *Le Rouge et le Noir*, for which Stendhal only received 1500 francs in April 1830.¹³

Critics often highlighted that Stendhal may not have committed to his administrative tasks due to his dilettantism. His numerous absences from the consulate are often highlighted by biographers and critics.¹⁴ Alfred de Musset famously described in his verse Stendhal's diplomatic residency as a 'sinecure'. René Dollot insists on Stendhal's repeated absences. During the winter of 1830-1831, Stendhal, who had just been appointed consul in Trieste, would have left his post very quickly to go to Venice, a place he had already visited several times, notably in October 1813, 1815 and September 1825.¹⁵ Stendhal's tasks as consul are many, varied and technical: publicising public contracts, collecting invoices and receipts, ordering, certifying and clearing expenses, dealing with cases relating to customs, attending to the requirements of French ships in transit, discussing exchange rates with banks, etc. Through the numerous tables and calculations kept in the files relating to Stendhal, especially in the series *Mémoires et documents* and *Correspondance consulaire et commerciale*, one can appreciate Stendhal's skills as a public administrator. Stendhal was trained in the rules of public management as part of his previous missions as a military intendant during the Empire. A study of the archives of the French Ministry of Foreign Affairs highlights the assiduity, professionalism and seriousness with which Stendhal was carrying out his task. He engages responsibly in his work, as shown by his tight management of his consulate's accounts, recorded by his exchanges with Lysimaque Tavernier.¹⁶ He furthers the scope of his profession when collecting and sending statistics and information to the French government in Paris.

Besides, critics have often overlooked Stendhal's demonstrations of interest in his job. Stendhal wrote to baron de Marest, on 24 December 1830: 'La besogne de consul toute paternelle me plaît infiniment'. Three weeks later, on 17 January 1831, he writes: 'Je m'occupe beaucoup de mon métier; il est bon, honnête, agréable en soi, tout paternel.'¹⁷ The consul Stendhal had two

¹³ Georges Dethan, 'Le traitement du consul Beyle', in *Stendhal-Club* (15 April 1963), 197–207 (p. 198).

¹⁴ See for instance, François Michel, 'Deux ministres et un consul: Le comte Molé, le duc de Broglie et Stendhal', in *Revue d'histoire diplomatique* (Paris, Pédone, 1954), 28–45.

¹⁵ Dollot, René, *Les journées adriatiques de Stendhal* (Paris: Argot, 1929), p. 132.

¹⁶ Archives of the French Ministry of Foreign Affairs, *Mémoires et documents*, Rome, 129 (1814–1842).

¹⁷ *Correspondance* (Paris: Divan), Vol 7, p. 20 and p. 44.

collaborators: Etienne-Louis Chevalier, in Trieste, and Lysimaque Tavernier, in Civitavecchia. He praised the first one, Etienne-Louis, while his quarrels with the second one are well documented.¹⁸ In this quote, the word 'paternal' probably refers to his relationship with Etienne-Louis Chevalier. While it appears that Civitavecchia is not the prison for Stendhal so often described by his critics, it is also true that Stendhal seeks the advantages of this place for life and enjoyment: 'l'essentiel est que Régime [the nickname of Comte de Sainte-Aulaire, ambassador in Rome] me permette de passer à Rome le carnaval et quinze jours par mois pendant le reste de l'année, excepté dans les grandes chaleurs.'¹⁹ F. Barbaranelli also noticed the existence of a theatre in Civitavecchia, which plays a minor role for enjoyment, intellectual and artistic life.²⁰

Lastly, critics overestimated Stendhal's wish to be posted in Italy, overlooking Stendhal's efforts to leave Italy and secure a consul position in Spain. This document of particular importance is reproduced in the Appendices.

Classification at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs

The Stendhalian documents are mainly to be found in three series of the Archives of the French Ministry of Foreign Affairs: *Mémoires et documents*, *Correspondance politique des consuls* and *Correspondance consulaire et commerciale*.

The series *Mémoires et documents* has been supplemented for several years at the Quai d'Orsay by meticulous research of scattered items, notably in the archives of the French embassies in Italy and archives in the vicinity of Civitavecchia (Palais Colonna, Palais Farnèse, Villa Bonaparte, collections of the consulates of Florence, Trieste, Valletta, Genoa, Marseille, etc).²¹ Recently, this series has also contained Stendhal's personal folder.²² This subfolder is the opportune and convenient result of a combination of Stendhalian documents taken from two

¹⁸ Archives of the French Ministry of Foreign Affairs, La Courneuve, *Mémoires et documents*, Rome, 129–141.

¹⁹ Lettre from Stendhal to Adolphe de Mareste, Trieste, 17 March 1831, *Correspondance*, II (Pléiade), p. 250.

²⁰ F. Barbaranelli, 'Le théâtre de Civitavecchia au temps de Stendhal', in *Stendhal-Club*, n°27 (April 1965).

²¹ This is for instance the origin of the folder *Mémoires et documents*, Rome, 128 (1830–1841).

²² Archives des Affaires étrangères, *Mémoires et documents*, Rome, 129 (1814–1842).

other series of the Archives of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, *Dossiers du Personnel* and *Affaires diverses*, which were particularly difficult to access and browse in full.

The second series is *Correspondance politique des consuls*. It consists of registers of correspondence on mainly political matters with French consulates abroad. It contains the correspondence addressed by consuls from their post of residence to the political division of the Ministry. From 1793 to 1825, the *Correspondance consulaire* stands at the Archives of Quai d'Orsay as a unique series where all the diplomatic dispatches were gathered. After 1825, the Ministry was reorganized and the political and commercial affairs got separated, thus the correspondence got split into two series, the political and the commercial one, *Correspondance politique des consuls* and *Correspondance consulaire et commerciale*.

From 1826 to 1870, the classification method of the political correspondence varied. First, from 1826 to 1830, it was attached to that of the diplomatic post (Embassy or Legation) to which the Consulate was tied, either mixed in all together with the correspondence of that post, or classified separately in subfolders. After 1830, it seemed preferable to form a separate series, following the correspondence of the Embassy or Legation, the dispatches of the various consular posts being sometimes merged together chronologically, or sometimes separated and classified by post.

For the period before 1861 that concerns Stendhal, given the geopolitics of the time in the peninsula, it proved pertinent to not only look at the inventory 'Italy', but also at the inventories 'Austria' and 'Rome (Saint-Siège)'. As it happens, nothing concerning Stendhal is kept in the 'Italy' inventory. The most important volumes for Stendhal in the *Correspondance politique des consuls* are 'Autriche' (Volume 4) and 'Etats Romains' (Volume 1).

The third relevant series is *Correspondance consulaire et commerciale* (1793-1901), which consists of registers of correspondences on mainly economic matters with French consulates abroad. It is divided into sub-series by consulate. The ones concerning Ancona, Rome, Trieste and Civitavecchia contain Stendhal's papers, the most important volumes being Trieste Volume 16 and 17, and Civitavecchia Volume 6 to 8.

These three main series are of interest to Stendhalian researchers at the Archives of the French Ministry of Foreign Affairs, beyond which some other Stendhalian papers may be kept in these

other following series, even though we did not have the possibility to investigate in depth given the limited scale of this work: *Négociations commerciales*²³ and *Affaires diverses politiques*.²⁴ Two other series may also contain references to Stendhal and remain to be explored: *Correspondance avec le corps diplomatique étranger à Paris* and *Correspondance politique, Rome Saint-Siège*.²⁵

Diplomatic Archives' Publication

The archival work on Stendhal's diplomatic correspondence remains incomplete and uncertain. The official letters that Stendhal had to sign as consul in Trieste and Civitavecchia were published together with the entire Correspondence by Henri Martineau in 1934, in Volumes 6 to 10. Then, some further editorial work was carried out. First, by Del Litto for his Pléiade edition of the *Correspondance*, in three volumes, published in 1963–1969. Second, by Elaine Williamson along with Victor Del Litto, who worked on a new release of the correspondence, in 1997–1999, published by Honoré Champion.

Some original letters once quoted by former Stendhalian researchers remain missing to this day. The originals of 17 letters cited by Louis Farges in *Stendhal diplomate* (1892) remain to this day untraceable for Stendhalian scholars, whether Henri Martineau or Georges Dethan. The same applies to two letters published by Ferdinand Boyer in *Le gagne-pain de Stendhal* (1924). The same applies to eight letters that Marie-Jeanne Durry found in the archives of the French Embassy in Rome-Saint-Siège and reproduced in two brochures, *Un ennemi de Stendhal* (1928) and *Stendhal et son travail consulaire* (1925). Eight administrative letters, published in the edition of Chéramy in 1908, have left no trace in the archives of the Ministry of Europe and

²³ *Négociations commerciales*, Italie, 1811-1906, cote Mnesys: 25NCOM, Vol 2: Négociations avec la France (1838-1860), cote Mnesys: 25NCOM/2. *Négociations commerciales*, Autriche-Hongrie, cote Mnesys: 3NCOM, Vol 1: Correspondance (1828-1850) cote Mnesys: 3NCOM/1 and Vol 10: Documentation (1826-1866) cote Mnesys: 3NCOM/10.

²⁴ *Affaires diverses politiques*, Rome Saint-Siège, 1815-1896, cote Mnesys: 61ADP, notably Vol 7, containing documents on the Ancona blockade in face of the cholera in 1836, code Mnesys: 61ADP/7, and Vol 8, cote Mnesys: 61ADP/8.

²⁵ *Correspondance avec le corps diplomatique étranger à Paris*, 1814-1902, cote Mnesys: 423QO. *Correspondance politique*, Rome Saint-Siège, Origine à 1896, cote Mnesys: 109CP.

Foreign Affairs according to Georges Dethan.²⁶ Given the difficulties in finding the originals, it is necessary to consult old works of researchers on Stendhal,²⁷ and to engage with the different editions of the *Correspondance*, along with the originals.

Furthermore, the collections at the Quai d'Orsay on Stendhal continue to expand. In 1934, papers related to Stendhal kept at Rome-Saint-Siège have been included in the collections of the Quai d'Orsay. Georges Dethan inventoried 540 letters from Consul Beyle, compared with 422 in Martineau's incomplete edition. Since 1934, the Quai d'Orsay has been enriched by numerous acquisitions from the archives of various consulates. Georges Dethan drew up an account of these acquisitions and new additions.²⁸

Some questions remain about certain dispatches that were left out of the correspondence editions. Can they be attributed to Stendhal? Has he dictated them? Or just signed them? Most of these documents are prosaically administrative and related to commerce, with Stendhal's style being less perceptible. Sometimes, Stendhal textually copies what was sent to him by one of the vice-consuls or consular agents under his authority. These questions were carefully debated in the preparation of the various editions of the correspondence.

²⁶ Georges Dethan, 'La correspondance diplomatique de Henri Beyle (1830-1841)', in *Revue d'Histoire Diplomatique* (1955), 159–169 (p. 159).

²⁷ Boppe, Du Parc.

²⁸ Georges Dethan, 'La correspondance diplomatique de Henri Beyle (1830-1841)', pp. 160–161.

Chapter 1: The Novelist-Diplomat: Exploring Stendhal's Dual Identity

From Warfare to Diplomacy: Stendhal's Practice of the National Character

As the topic of Stendhal and warfare has largely been neglected by critics, and his diplomatic career has also been predominantly overlooked, exploring Stendhal's diplomatic persona, along with his military career, is essential for a comprehensive interpretation of his writings.

Stendhal served as a military administrator during the Revolutionary and Napoleonic Wars. He started as a secretary in the Ministry of War and later became General Commissioner of the Grande Armée. In 1800, he became a Second Lieutenant in the 6th Dragoon Regiment. In 1806, he attended the Battle of Jena as an Apprentice War Commissioner and became an Assistant War Commissioner in Brunswick in 1807. In 1809, he was appointed an auditor to the Conseil d'Etat and obtained the position of inspector of the crown's furniture. In 1812, during the Moscow campaign, he was a courier for the Emperor and later in charge of supplies. The first Restoration ended his military career, and his literary career began to flourish in 1821.

Stendhal's military career is marked by hindsight and detachment. He portrays himself as an observer, recounting his youthful ascent of the Grand Saint Bernard: 'Je me regardais comme un curieux détaché à l'armée pour voir, mais destiné à faire des comédies comme Molière... Je ne demandais qu'à voir de grandes choses.'²⁹ The Russian campaign, a period of immense suffering and intense effort for the Grande Armée, becomes a provocative opportunity for Stendhal the thinker to observe the diversity of nations that compose the Napoleonic army and to recognize similarities in personalities beyond national differences: 'J'avais encore un volume de Cabanis, et, devinant ses idées à travers ses phrases, je cherchais des exemples dans les figures de tant de soldats qui passaient auprès de moi'.³⁰ In unexpected contexts, Stendhal investigates how certain temperaments prevail within specific nations: 'Ce tempérament [sanguin] est évidemment plus commun en France. C'est la réflexion que je faisais sur les bords du Niémen, le 6 juin 1812, en voyant passer le fleuve à cette armée innombrable, composée de

²⁹ Henry Brulard, II, p. 175.

³⁰ Stendhal, *Id.*, Chapter 93: 'Du tempérament sanguin'.

tant de nations.³¹ Despite his share of the suffering, Stendhal's profound curiosity about war is unaltered and characterized by an absence of patriotic fervour, reminiscent of Fabrice's disorientation and tourist-like presence at Waterloo in *La Chartreuse de Parme*. This led us to think that Stendhal approached his professional career as an opportunity to enrich his intellectual and literary perspective.

By his dates of birth and death (1783-1842), Stendhal is an 'enfant du siècle'³² Dreams of greatness are said to be thwarted in this period as lackluster as the Restoration and the July Monarchy (1815-1848). Stendhal considered giving in to a form of romantic engagement when he contemplated the idea of 'tuer Louis XVIII' or 'tuer Louis XVIII'.³³ More consistently, Stendhal voices distance from 'la maladie des jeunes gens du siècle', 'la comédie de la mélancolie'.³⁴ In *Le Rouge et le Noir*, Stendhal denounces the 'sottise' of 'mourir de douleur'.³⁵ In his fictional works, Stendhal experimented with the depiction of the Romantic hero (such as Octave and Fédér), but as noted by Xavier Bourdenet, this portrayal represents a romanticism that has become 'conventionalized' and reduced to a collection of clichés, words, and postures.³⁶ In *Regards de Stendhal sur le monde moderne*, Michel Crouzet remarks, 'Sans doute l'un des traits qui isolent Stendhal dans son temps, c'est sa volonté de se garder du *mal du siècle*'.³⁷

The theme of anachronistic warfare is metaphorically explored in Stendhal's novels through the *ennui* experienced by soldiers, particularly evident in *Lucien Leuwen* where Lucien is 'au comble de l'ennui' in the Nancy barracks.³⁸ These barracks are further described in *Mémoire d'un touriste*: 'Forteresse singulière, garnison où l'on s'ennuie'.³⁹ An exception was noted among the naval officers in Marseille in 1837: 'Ces messieurs n'ont pas l'ennui des garnisons. En temps

³¹ Stendhal, *Id.*, Chapter 93: 'Du tempérament sanguin'.

³² Musset, *La confession d'un enfant du siècle*.

³³ Stendhal, *Souvenirs d'égotisme*.

³⁴ Stendhal, Letter, 22 August 1805, in *Correspondance* (Paris: Pléiade), Vol 1, p. 219.

³⁵ Stendhal, *Le Rouge et le Noir*, I, 23.

³⁶ Stendhal, *Fédér*, in *Œuvres romanesques complètes*, Vol 3 (Paris: Gallimard, Pléiade, 2014), 747–833, Notice et Notes sur le texte par Xavier Bourdenet, 1363–1394, pp. 1369–1370.

³⁷ Michel Crouzet, *Regards de Stendhal sur le monde moderne* (Paris: Kimé, 2010), Chapter 2: 'Stendhal ou l'anti-René', 45–92 (p. 45).

³⁸ *Lucien Leuwen* (Livre de Poche, 1973), p. 108.

³⁹ *Mémoires d'un touriste*, Besançon, August 1837.

de paix, leurs ennemis principaux, les vents et les tempêtes, les attaquent sans cesse.¹⁴⁰ The idle frustration of the soldiers in these dreary garrisons is humorously captured: 'Les canonniers me regardaient de travers; j'ai vu le moment où ils me signifiaient qu'il est défendu de regarder *les fortifications du roi*. Ces pauvres gens doivent s'ennuyer si mortellement dans cette triste garnison, qu'il faut bien leur pardonner de montrer leur pouvoir.'¹⁴¹ The colonels of the July Monarchy, 'bien gros pour faire la guerre', 'plein de vanité, d'afféterie, de fatuité'¹⁴², 'mous, timides, ennemis du mouvement'¹⁴³ epitomises an era averse to conflict, marked by vanity and inertia. The Stendhalian heroes are entertained by recounting tales of the revolutionary and Napoleonic wars, reflecting a bygone era. The soldiers no longer have enemies: 'Tout au plus, se dit à lui-même Lucien dans les casernes de Nancy, je serai tué comme Pyrrhus, par un pot de chambre (une tuile), lancé de la fenêtre d'un cinquième étage, par une vieille femme édentée! Quelle gloire! Mon âme sera bien attrapée lorsque je serai présenté à Napoléon dans l'autre monde.'¹⁴⁴

Stendhal's economic approach to Europe, from his early interest in economics up to his position as Consul, has to be envisaged in relation to warfare. In his correspondence and essays, Stendhal observes that wars between European states have become economically untenable: 'Les négociants de Trieste ont la terreur de la guerre'.¹⁴⁵ 'Les chemins de fer rendent les guerres impossibles'¹⁴⁶, as they would adversely impact too many national interests.¹⁴⁷ Stendhal recurrently pictures a world that no longer desires or affords such conflicts: 'Les rois ne voulant plus la guerre, les peuples du moins, voudront-ils la faire ou la payer? Il n'y a plus à espérer de ce côté pour les jeunes ouvriers chapeliers qui veulent devenir maréchaux; les peuples désirent conquérir une constitution et non pas des provinces.'¹⁴⁸

¹⁴⁰ *Voyages en France* (Pléiade, 1992), p. 544.

¹⁴¹ *Voyages en France* (Pléiade, 1992), Fort de l'Ecluse, Lyon, 1837, p. 471.

¹⁴² *Mémoires d'un touriste*, Toulon, May 1838.

¹⁴³ *Mémoires d'un touriste*, Montpellier, May 1838.

¹⁴⁴ *Lucien Leuwen* (Livre de Poche, 1973), p. 16.

¹⁴⁵ *Correspondance*, II, p. 197.

¹⁴⁶ *Voyages en France en 1837*.

¹⁴⁷ *Voyages en France* (Pléiade, 1992), p. 138.

¹⁴⁸ *Voyages en France* (Pléiade, 1992), pp. 470–471. *Lucien Leuwen* (Livre de Poche, 1973), p. 467.

Both warfare and diplomacy are intricately woven. In a chapter that seems likely to have been written by Stendhal in *Le Globe* in 1828, diplomacy is presented as the continuation of war by other means: 'Les bons vieux temps de la diplomatie sont revenus; la solennité officielle, la science des délais dignes et rusés, valent encore une fois la peine d'être étudiés en Europe.'⁴⁹ Thus, we view diplomacy as a major source of inspiration for Stendhal and a coherent professional path aligned with his thoughts on Europe.

Politics Rather Than Administration and Economics

The extent of Stendhal's relationships with the Ministers and Ambassadors in Rome varied significantly. The different Ministers under whom he served as a diplomat had differing degrees of sensitivity to his character and talent. Comte Molé initiated Stendhal's diplomatic career in 1830. Duc Victor de Broglie was particularly favourable and accessible to him, allowing him to take numerous trips away from his consulate—an indulgence not typically permitted to consuls. In contrast, Amiral de Rigny, Thiers, and Maréchal Soult were distant and indifferent toward Stendhal. Finally, Guizot proved especially supportive of Stendhal, notably securing for him the French Légion d'honneur as a man of letters. Similarly, Stendhal serves under several ambassadors in Rome and not all of them were favourable to him to the same degree. Stendhal is close to Comte Louis de Beaupoil de Sainte-Aulaire, then replaced by the two brothers Florimond and then Septime de La Tour-Maubourg, who are more distant with him.

His position as consul did not necessarily legitimize a direct epistolary relationship with the Minister of Foreign Affairs in Paris, but records show that Stendhal engaged in direct communication, and obtained some direct responses in return, overriding the hierarchical authority of the ambassador in Rome, who typically serves as the intermediary between consuls and the centralized government. Political correspondence falls outside the purview of consular duties, which Stendhal acknowledges: 'J'ai peut-être tort de prendre la parole sur des objets étrangers au commerce.'⁵⁰ Responsibilities are clearly defined by the central Government: 'Si les consuls peuvent devenir dans certains cas des observateurs politiques très utiles, c'est surtout

⁴⁹ *Voyages en Italie* (Pléiade, 1992), *Promenades dans Rome*, Supplement VIII: 'Les ambassadeurs', p. 1251. Chapter published in *Le Globe* with the note 'Traduit du *New Monthly Magazine*', initially gathered by Henri Martineau in *Pages d'Italie* (Divan, 1932), p. 291.

⁵⁰ Letter from Stendhal to the Comte Sébastiani, Rome, 28 April 1831, in *Correspondance*, II (Pléiade), p. 284.

à la protection du commerce qu'ils sont préposés.⁵¹ Nonetheless, Stendhal persists in transferring to the Minister: 'vérités qui sont pénibles à dire' or 'choses grossières'. He compares his letters with 'un article de *La Tribune*' or 'un article de scandale'.⁵² Once again, Julien reads as Stendhal's spokesperson in *Le Rouge et le Noir*:

On ne sait comment faire en parlant à nos grands diplomates, dit Julien. Ils ont la manie d'ouvrir des discussions sérieuses. Si l'on s'en tient aux lieux communs des journaux, on passe pour un sot. Si l'on se permet quelque chose de vrai et de neuf, ils sont étonnés, ne savent que répondre, et le lendemain à sept heures, ils vous font dire par le premier secrétaire d'ambassade qu'on a été inconvenant.⁵³

Written before his tenure in Italy, this excerpt from *Le Rouge et le Noir* serves as a precursor to Stendhal's own experiences in the diplomatic realm, showcasing his critical stance towards the conventional boundaries of diplomatic correspondence and his inclination towards expressing unvarnished truths, despite the potential for controversy or rebuke.

Occasionally, Stendhal's unorthodox approach to diplomatic correspondence was met with appreciation. René Dollot notes that Stendhal's principal advocates—Broglie, Molé, and Sainte-Aulaire—were distinguished members of the Académie Française. This affiliation suggests they might have possessed a particular receptiveness to Stendhal's literary acumen, recognizing the quality of his insights as a man of letters.⁵⁴ In 1841, Guizot dispatched a personal missive to Stendhal requesting a report from his consulate, which underscores the government's keen interest in Stendhal's contributions:

L'année dernière, deux dépêches que vous avez adressées au Département [...] ont fourni d'utiles informations au Ministère du

⁵¹ Archives des affaires étrangères, Correspondance commerciale, Rome Vol 17, folio 142 verso (30 December 1831).

⁵² Letter from Stendhal to Duc de Broglie, Civitavecchia, 5 April 1835, *Correspondance*, III (Pléiade), p. 38–39.

⁵³ *Le Rouge et le Noir*, II, Chapter 7.

⁵⁴ René Dollot, 'Stendhal et les prestiges de la diplomatie', in *Revue d'histoire diplomatique* (Paris, Pédone, 1954), 7–27.

Commerce et à celui de la Guerre. De semblables recherches sur les diverses branches de l'industrie et du commerce de votre arrondissement consulaire, auxquelles vous joindriez vos aperçus sur les ressources qu'elles peuvent nous présenter, auraient pour nous un véritable intérêt et je vous invite à traiter ces divers sujets avec tout le développement qu'ils méritent.⁵⁵

Stendhal authored just one formal report adhering to these guidelines, *Tableau du commerce de Rome et de Civitavecchia* (1841).⁵⁶ In a more impersonal way, Duc Victor de Broglie had requested annual reports from consular districts in 1833, examining 'les rapports de la production, de la consommation et des échanges [...] l'agriculture, le commerce et la navigation du pays ou de la province [...] ses finances, sa législation commerciale, ses douanes, ses tarifs' and most of all 'l'état actuel de ses relations avec chacune des nations étrangères.'⁵⁷ This illuminates what might be seen as Stendhal's presumptive freedom in directly conveying his 'aperçus' and 'développements' to the highest echelons of political authority. It also highlights how the role of a consul during his time may have been less specialized than it is today, not confined solely to economic and accounting duties but also encompassing political dimensions.

Interrelation Between the Diplomatic and the Literary Persona

This section investigates how Stendhal's identity as a novelist-diplomat transcends the mere coincidence of his dual engagements. Our exploration seeks to elucidate the intricate interplay and mutual influence between his literary pursuits and diplomatic endeavors.

Strikingly, a notable disregard for cultivating distinct personas is evident in sources related to Stendhal's diplomatic career. His diplomatic correspondences and descriptions of his

⁵⁵ Letter, 30 April 1841, Archives des Affaires étrangères, Correspondance Commerciale, *Civitavecchia*, 8, fol. 192.

⁵⁶ Archives des Affaires étrangères, Correspondance Commerciale, *Civitavecchia*, 8, folios 211–225 (Part 1), 226–248 (Part 2) an 272–283 (Part 3). See: Georges Dethan, 'Un rapport inédit de Stendhal consul, le *Tableau du commerce de Rome et de Civita Vecchia* (1841)', in *Stendhal-Club* (15 January 1962), 131-147.

⁵⁷ Circulaire du 3 Septembre 1833, Archives du Ministère des Affaires étrangères, *Consulats, Edits, Lois, Ordonnances, Instructions et Circulaires* (1830–1839), Vol. 5, fol. 503–504.

professional behaviour underscore his preference for directness, as seen in his interactions with colleagues. Stendhal did not hesitate to openly criticize the inefficiency of employees at his consulates: 'Vous m'arrêtez par vos lenteurs. Or, je vous le demande, qu'avez-vous à faire? Ce retard est fort désagréable. Tâchez donc d'apprendre un peu le métier que vous faites.'⁵⁸ This impatience with procedural delays is a recurring theme in his diplomatic dispatches and his literary works. Stendhal's fraught interactions with his secretaries betrays his propensity to eschew the nuanced tact typically associated with diplomatic relations.

Stendhal's leadership style infuses a sense of intrigue within the consulate, as evidenced by archival materials that record stories of suspicion and perceived persecution:

Monsieur, je consens avec peine à vous renvoyer les pièces de comptabilité de la Marine qui ne sont pas en règle. Dieu sait quand vous me les renverrez. Je vous engage à ne pas les garder plus de 5 jours. Ainsi les comptes que je devais adresser au Ministère le 2 avril ne partiront que le 2 mai. Je vous le demande, Monsieur, quel plaisir avez-vous trouvé à occasionner un retard si long et qui peut-être me vaudra des reproches mérités? M. l'ambassadeur a envoyé ses frais de service le 5 avril.⁵⁹

Stendhal's maneuverings and concealment were often associated with his political leanings, republicanism. Louis Spach, who served as the secretary to Ambassador Sainte-Aulaire and the tutor to his children, provided insightful testimonies into Stendhal's persona within the embassy, recording his incongruence within the polished realms of foreign affairs:

Henri Beyle—Pourquoi le cacherai-je? n'était guère aimé à l'Hôtel de l'ambassade. Sa nature démoniaque, qu'il laissait trop voir, déplaisait. Ce républicain déguisé ne s'accommodait qu'à contre-cœur de la Monarchie de Juillet qu'il croyait passagère et il lui arrivait de déposer

⁵⁸ Letter from Stendhal to Frédéric Quilliet, Civitavecchia, 23 April 1832, *Correspondance*, Vol 2 (Pléiade), p. 423.

⁵⁹ Letter from Stendhal to Frédéric Quilliet, Civitavecchia, 26 April 1832, *Correspondance*, Vol 2 (Pléiade), p. 424.

le masque de façon très amusante. ‘Combien de temps encore croyez-vous pouvoir arrêter le torrent?’ , disait-il un jour devant plusieurs membres de l'ambassade, ‘vous laissez imprudemment se développer l'instruction supérieure; une jeunesse turbulente vous criera, tôt ou tard: donnez-nous du pain, de l'or, de l'influence.’⁶⁰

Mérimée's correspondence further attests to Stendhal's political indiscretions and his dissonance with the expected diplomatic ethos: ‘Beyle m'écrit aujourd'hui d'une manière bien dolente. On le hait aux Affaires étrangères, et il a un chancelier qui le dénonce lorsqu'il s'absente de Civitavecchia. Il voit la tempête qui se grossit au-dessus de sa tête et il croit impossible de l'éviter, ou du moins il n'a pas assez de résignation pour l'éviter’⁶¹

Chapter 2: Diplomatic Influence on Stendhal's Fiction

Diplomacy as Thematic Inspiration in Stendhal's Later Years

Stendhal's diplomatic experiences and observations provide a rich backdrop for his literary creations, enriching the depth and authenticity of his characters and plots. In this section, we review several of Stendhal's canonical works to highlight the pervasive presence of diplomatic themes. Stendhal frequently integrates diplomat characters into his narratives, particularly those written during his diplomatic service in Italy.

As *Le Rouge et le Noir* was published in 1830—before Stendhal diplomatic endeavours—his fascination with diplomacy predates his official engagement in the field. Indeed, the narrative showcases various diplomatic personas and situations. It features the character prince d'Araceli as 'ambassadeur de ***'.⁶² M. le chevalier de Beauvaisis is presented as the 'attaché à

⁶⁰ René Dollot, 'Stendhal et les prestiges de la diplomatie', in *Revue d'histoire diplomatique* (Paris: Pédone, 1954), 7–27 (p. 18).

⁶¹ *Correspondance générale de Mérimée*, Vol 1, p. 416. Letter from Mérimée to Mme Ducrest de Villeneuve (Sophie Duvaucel), 17 April 1835.

⁶² *Le Rouge et le Noir*, II, 9.

l'ambassade de Naples'⁶³ and demonstrates the characteristic traits of the diplomat: 'Il était évidemment fort curieux, mais l'importance diplomatique ne lui permettait pas de marquer plus d'intérêt.' His personality is marked by 'sang-froid légèrement badin qui ne doit jamais quitter une figure de diplomate.'⁶⁴ When Julien arrives in Besançon, he goes in front of 'l'hôtel des Ambassadeurs' and leaves his bourgeois clothes to the hostess.⁶⁵ With the prince Korasoff, Julien behaves in a way that is 'encore citée parmi les jeunes secrétaires d'ambassade à Londres'.⁶⁶ When Julien is sent to London by the marquis de la Mole, he goes to have dinner 'une fois la semaine chez l'ambassadeur du roi, qui est le plus poli des hommes'.⁶⁷ M. de Rênal looks at his wife 'd'un air diplomatique'.⁶⁸ In front of him, Mme de Rênal 's'en tire comme un diplomate'.⁶⁹ Diplomacy plays a role in all relationships, from domestic ones to sentimental ones. In front of Mathilde, Julien 'semblait abandonner pour un instant les formes prudentes de la diplomatie'.⁷⁰ The day before his execution, Julien dreams that he could have become 'secrétaire de légation' and later 'ambassadeur'.⁷¹

In *Une position sociale*, a less familiar and unfinished work drafted in 1832, Stendhal further explores diplomatic themes. The novel reads as a first attempt at the numerous autobiographical projects that Stendhal will undertake in the 1830s to record his diplomatic experience. The work's unpublished status may be due to its close ties with Stendhal's contemporary diplomatic experiences. The hero, Roizand, is slightly younger than Stendhal, and he is a diplomat in Rome rather than in Civitavecchia, which is likely more flattering. Under the names of the duc and duchesse de Vaussay are the portraits of the ambassador and Countess de Sainte-Aulaire, ambassador in Rome. The fiction transcribes Stendhal's thankfulness toward Saint-Aulaire for his esteem and interest in him: 'Le duc de Vaussay l'avait reçu [Roizand] avec cette admirable

⁶³ *Le Rouge et le Noir*, I, Chapter 23.

⁶⁴ *Le Rouge et le Noir*, II, Chapter 6.

⁶⁵ *Le Rouge et le Noir*, I, Chapter 24.

⁶⁶ *Le Rouge et le Noir*, II, Chapter 7.

⁶⁷ *Le Rouge et le Noir*, II, 7.

⁶⁸ *Le Rouge et le Noir*, I, 3.

⁶⁹ *Le Rouge et le Noir*, I, 22.

⁷⁰ *Le Rouge et le Noir*, II, 30.

⁷¹ *Le Rouge et le Noir* (Gallimard, Folio, 1992), p. 477.

politesse qui, même à la Cour, en faisait un homme à part.⁷² The Palais Colonna's reception strikes as an occasion for a laudative and idealised depiction of the ambassador in Rome:

Il le trouva si convenable, si poli, l'oeil si spirituel, et toute la tournure si bien d'accord avec ce que l'imagination nous présente comme devant être l'idéal d'un grand seigneur. [...] Le duc de Vaussay lui inspirait [to Roizand] à peu près le sentiment qu'on trouve devant une belle statue. Il voyait l'Apollon du Belvédère de la société du XIXème siècle. [...] Cet homme aimable qui avait l'air si supérieur à tous les habits brodés qui l'entouraient et même au rôle qu'il consentait à jouer...⁷³

In Stendhal, the figure of a diplomat represents an archetype, embodying the ideal of politeness and elegance. This archetype is transnational, as its qualities are not confined to any specific nationality. The diplomatic profession is presented as requiring understanding and mastery of cross-cultural intelligence. Stendhal presents the diplomats as a unique category of the elite, transcending the national characteristics previously studied, and excelling in the art of international psychology.

It is inspiring to compare Stendhal's fictional vision of Sainte-Aulaire with the depictions made of him in the personal writings and in the English reviews. In the personal correspondence, diplomacy is presented by Stendhal as the world of 'ultras', Saint-Aulaire being nicknamed 'Régime'. In a personal letter written in 1831, Stendhal reflects: 'Si le hasard m'avait fait aide de camp d'un tel homme à dix-huit ans, au lieu du général Michaud, je serais bien plus poli.'⁷⁴ As Stendhal announces to the English readership the upcoming release of *Histoire de la Fronde* by Sainte-Aulaire, he is described as 'un homme de beaucoup d'esprit [...] cité aussi comme un modèle parfait des manières élégantes.'⁷⁵ Mentioning Count de Sainte-Aulaire in the English reviews several times, Stendhal draws a parallel between the diplomatic character and the

⁷² Stendhal, *Une position sociale*, in *Œuvres romanesques complètes*, ed. by. Yves Ansel and Philippe Berthier, 3 Vols (Paris: Gallimard, Pléiade, 2005–14), Vol 2, 43–78 (p. 47).

⁷³ Stendhal, *Une position sociale*, p. 49.

⁷⁴ *Correspondance*, Vol 7, p. 336, letter from Trieste to Comte d'Argout dated 17 March 1831.

⁷⁵ *Courrier anglais*, Vol 3, p. 272.

English national characteristics: he is 'parmi les personnes éclairées de haut rang'⁷⁶ who 'voulait faire de leur classe une aristocratie exactement semblable à celle des *milords anglais* de Londres'.⁷⁷

The profound influence of diplomacy on narrative strategies and thematic concerns can be further appreciated in *La Chartreuse de Parme* (1839). Arguably, references to diplomacy read as more detailed, subtle and refined than in *Le Rouge et le Noir* (1830). Mosca is described as 'un homme qui passait pour le premier diplomate de l'Italie'.⁷⁸ The novel concludes with Fabrice assuming control over the internal and external policies of the Archbishopric of Parma.⁷⁹ In *La Chartreuse de Parme*, the influence of diplomacy is manifested through the proclivity for cryptic communication, which echoes the exigencies of diplomatic discretion, as exemplified by the enigmatic exchanges between Clélia and Fabrice in Tour Farnèse. Similarly, in a letter to Stendhal from the French Minister of Foreign Affairs, Duc de Broglie, dated 17 April 1835, the minister imparts a cipher exclusively for Stendhal's use, urging meticulousness and prudence: 'J'ai fait préparer immédiatement un chiffre, timbré F. N° 20—, que vous trouverez ci-joint et qui devra servir uniquement à votre correspondance avec mon Ministère [...] Je vous recommande de ne faire de cette table qu'un usage très circonspect et d'environner ce genre de travail de toute la prudence qu'il réclame impérieusement.'⁸⁰ Stendhal's correspondence as Consul underscores his meticulous approach to maintaining discretion. In a letter to Frédéric Quilliet, dated 20 July 1831 and sent from Civitavecchia, constant vigilance against espionage is reminded:

Monsieur, vous n'avez pas saisi la prière que je vous ai adressée relativement à l'apparence extérieure des lettres que vous me faites l'honneur de m'adresser. Les lettres de pure comptabilité peuvent être sur du grand papier et adressées en français à mon nom. Les lettres qui portent des nouvelles doivent toujours être sur du petit papier à lettres

⁷⁶ *Courrier anglais*, Vol 4, p. 102.

⁷⁷ *Courrier anglais*, Aristocratie parisienne, December 1824.

⁷⁸ *La Chartreuse de Parme*, I, Chapter 16.

⁷⁹ *La Chartreuse de Parme* (Gallimard Folio 1992), p. 466.

⁸⁰ From Duc de Broglie, Ministre des Affaires étrangères, to Henri Beyle, Paris, 17 April 1835, Archives in La Courneuve.

avec l'adresse en italien et la mine vulgaire. Vous devez comprendre pourquoi.⁸¹

We present instances of this practice in the Appendices. 'Ecrire sur du petit papier' is a recurring mention at the end of Stendhal's letters, reflecting concerns for discretion. Letters are also doubly folded, first with the name and address in Italian, second in French, this highlighting Stendhal's mastery of practices of concealment and inconspicuous communication. Stendhal's diplomatic tenure also fostered an acute sensitivity towards linguistic plurality, weaving foreign lexicons into his literary fabric, thereby enriching his narratives with a cosmopolitan texture. Diplomacy may have fostered Stendhal's linguistic versatility and the creation of personal lexicon—the corpus being filled with terms such as 'onesp' for 'espion' (spy) and 'licepe' for 'police'—demonstrating a playful encryption of politically and religiously sensitive concepts. This linguistic strategy underscores Stendhal's engagement with themes of surveillance, power, and identity.

The recurring mention of passports in Stendhal's fictions also reads as an influence of Stendhal's work as a diplomat. In *La Chartreuse de Parme*, 'tout le monde parle passeport'.⁸² Borders threaten Fabrice, for instance at Waterloo, when he goes near the 'barrières jaunes rayées de noir qui annoncent les possessions autrichiennes'.⁸³ Stendhal's novels often set the explorations against the backdrop of specific geographical and metaphorical sites such as borders, crossroads, and vast plains. These places, more than merely settings, are laden with symbolic meaning and ripe for comparative cultural analysis. When it comes to passport, duchesse Sanseverina 'en avait de toutes les sortes, pour elle et pour Fabrice'.⁸⁴ Fabrice is provided with three identities by his friend Ludovic.⁸⁵ As studied by Fabienne Bercegol, passports are omnipresent in the plot.⁸⁶ As consular services are responsible for issuing, renewing, and managing passports for their nationals living or travelling abroad, Stendhal—in

⁸¹ Archives des Affaires étrangères, original autographs. Autograph address on the back: All' ornatissimo signore, il signore Frederic Quilliet, v. console di France in Ancona. Cachets: Roma. Luglio 26, Ancona.

⁸² Stendhal, *Romans*, Vol 2, p. 210.

⁸³ Stendhal, *Chartreuse de Parme*, Chapter 11, *Œuvres romanesques complètes*, iii, p. 311.

⁸⁴ Stendhal, *Romans*, Vol 2, p. 385.

⁸⁵ Stendhal, *Romans*, Vol 2, p. 214.

⁸⁶ Fabienne Bercegol, 'L'Ambassadeur, le fugitif et le douanier: Passages de frontières dans 'La Chartreuse de Parme' et dans 'Les Mémoires d'outre-tombe'', *Eidolon* (2004), n°67, pp. 235–49.

his capacity as consul—embodies the vested authority responsible for the distribution of passports. Passports, particularly as depicted in the narrative of *La Chartreuse de Parme*, are not merely bureaucratic formalities. They are imbued with significant socio-political implications, reflecting the restrictions on free movement prevalent during that era. Even Gina Del Dongo cannot travel freely: 'Les membres de sa famille, quoique nobles et dévots, quoique appartenant au parti vainqueur, avaient été vexés plus de vingt fois à l'occasion de leurs passeports.'⁸⁷ As Jesper Guddal explains, by 1820, one of the cornerstones of the Austrian passport system was its universality. Passport requirements were 'imposed on all travellers irrespective of social standing'. 'The result was a fine-meshed and highly restrictive movement control regime.'⁸⁸ Stendhal's characters, such as Fabrice Del Dongo, navigate these constraints with a mix of cunning and defiance, acquiring false passports and assuming multiple identities to elude the pervasive control mechanisms of Restoration Europe. Stendhal himself, upon his appointment to Trieste in 1830, notably eschewed the formal process of acquiring a visa from the Austrian embassy, a decision that precipitated bureaucratic complications. In his *Voyages en France*, Stendhal articulates 'l'horreur qu'inspire le renégat vendu au pouvoir, qui examine votre passeport d'un œil louche.'⁸⁹ Passports thus emerge both in Stendhal's fiction and daily activities as symbols of the oppressive regulatory frameworks that sought to curtail the fluidity of individual and intellectual freedom. They served for liberals across Europe as an emblem of the repressive political culture of the Restoration. The need to go beyond their limitations also testifies to the changes of scale and perceptions occurring in the life of individuals in nineteenth-century Europe. After the Napoleonic period, the former Italian divisions are reestablished. 'Passports' become an instrument of power for the absolutist monarchies on the European continent. In the English reviews, Stendhal reports how these limitations are also reflected in the circulation of literature, art and ideas: 'La censure autrichienne à Milan est terrible et d'autant plus clairvoyante qu'elle est aux mains de renégats italiens, prêtres pour la plupart, et vendus à la police autrichienne.'⁹⁰ This reveals Stendhal's ongoing autobiographical engagement with this theme throughout the last two decades of his life.

⁸⁷ Stendhal, *Romans*, Vol 2, p. 78, pp. 180–181.

⁸⁸ Jesper Guddal, 'The Austrian Passport System in Stendhal's *La Chartreuse de Parme*', 49, 1, *Arcadia* (2014), 58–73.

⁸⁹ Stendhal, *Voyages en France*, 295.

⁹⁰ Stendhal, 'Sur l'état actuel de la littérature italienne (2)', *London Magazine* (January 1826), in *Stendhal Paris–Londres*, ed. by Renée Dénier (Paris: Stock, 1997), 605–615 (p. 610).

Similarly, *Le Rose et le Vert*—a novel that Stendhal starts drafting in 1837—introduces Général Major Comte von Landek as 'employé dans la diplomatie prussienne'.⁹¹ In *Lucien Leuwen*, a novel started by Stendhal in 1834, the protagonist ascends to the position of 'second secrétaire d'ambassade à Capel', a fictional representation of Madrid, by the story's end.⁹²

These examples illustrate how Stendhal skillfully incorporates his diplomatic insights into the fabric of his narratives, offering a fresh perspective and opening up a new field of study for re-envisioning his canonical works. The intersection between personal experience and literary expression showcases diplomacy as a significant source of creative inspiration, confirming our hypothesis of diplomacy as being more than a 'gagne-pain' for Stendhal.

Stendhal's Three-Column System: Tracking the 'Petits Faits Vrais'

This section interrogates Stendhal's relationship to facts and reality, both for his fictions and his diplomatic work, questioning degrees of fictionality in his written production. Several documents found in the archives presenting a 'three-column method' and reproduced in the Appendices provide further details on Stendhal's philosophy as regard to information, facts and hearsays. In this section, we argue that Stendhal as a diplomat cultivated an appreciation for seemingly trivial details that ultimately validate and influence the stylistic approach of his literary compositions, especially evident in his travel narratives, but also in his prose fiction: the observational skills honed during his diplomatic tenure manifest themselves in his nuanced portrayal of characters and settings.

As consul, Stendhal displayed a deep interest in his constituency, extending his curiosity to the condition, morals, and opinions of the inhabitants. He sought to receive information in abundant quantities, organized by its degree of probability—a quasi-scientific approach that reflects his mathematical background, his taste for economics and his rigor. He instructed his subordinates to categorize information into three levels: 'les choses sûres et vues par moi' (things certain and seen by me), 'événements regardés comme certains par les gens sages' (events considered

⁹¹ *Le Rose et le Vert*, Chapter 1.

⁹² *Lucien Leuwen*, II, Chapter 68 (end of the novel).

certain by wise people), and 'simples on-dit' (mere rumors). We reproduce in the Appendices the letters where Stendhal uses a board to express his idea, a visual presentation which was never reproduced in the publication of his *Correspondance*. In a letter to Frédéric Quilliet in July 1831, Stendhal adds this comment: 'En classant ainsi les nouvelles la personne qui écrit pense mûrement au degré de probabilité.'⁹³

This three-column method proves applied to all news in Stendhal's consulate, for instance in this passage, revealing Stendhal's careful and meticulous handling of facts, concerning with not sending fake news to the central Government in Paris:

Je n'ai pas osé transmettre à Son Excellence le fait suivant que vous me donnez comme certain: [...] Quel magistrat? ecclésiastique ou du gouvernement de Venise? Je vous recommande la plus grande clarté dans l'énoncé de votre pensée. Dans un moment où le gouvernement reçoit tant de nouvelles fausses ou du moins exagérées, je désire vivement que ma correspondance ait le mérite d'être nette, précise, claire. [...] P.S.: Ecrivez-moi sur du petit papier et avec une adresse italienne.⁹⁴

Stendhal does not know in which column the facts would fall. The documents reproduced in the Appendices—visually revealing Stendhal's three-column method—show how Stendhal's assessment of facts relies on clear distinctions. Stendhal promotes a mixture of social networking and scientific approach to reality. In his correspondence, Stendhal reproaches career diplomats for living far from the reality on which they are supposed to report: 'Le malheur de nos agents est de vivre isolés. Ils ne voient que des gens de très bonne compagnie, par conséquent étioyés.'⁹⁵ This thought recurs: 'On ne vit qu'avec les ultras d'un pays qui [...] pour vous faire la cour vous cachent ou s'abstiennent de parler devant vous de tout ce qui peut vous choquer. Dominique en sait plus au bout de deux jours en parlant à ses négociants que ces beaux

⁹³ Letter from Stendhal to his subordinate in Ancône Frédéric Quilliet (8 July 1831).

⁹⁴ Archives des Affaires étrangères, original autographe. Adresse autographe au verso: All'ornatissimo signore, il signore F. Quilliet. Cachets: Civitavecchia, Settembre 22, Ancona.

⁹⁵ Letter from Henri Beyle to Adolphe de Mareste, Rome, 26 April 1831, *Correspondance*, Vol 2 (Pléiade), p. 279.

messieurs qui sont ici depuis deux ans [les diplomates de carrière].⁹⁶ Comparing himself to the ambassador Comte de Sainte-Aulaire, Stendhal offers himself congratulations:

En lisant *my letters* au bout de deux ou trois ans et en les comparant à celles de Régime, on verra. [...] J'ai donc fabriqué 3 ou 4 dissertations pleines de faits, c'est du jus de faits. Je m'attends à quelque phrase désobligeante. [...] J'ai entrevu une ou deux lettres de Régime. Chaque page se réduisait à 6 lignes, et encore quelles lignes! Ces gens-là *s'isolent*. Tout est là. Ce qui est public dans un pays, ils le savent 15 jours après.⁹⁷

This idea is further stressed and articulated in a letter dated April 1831:

J'ai passé cinq jours à Florence [...] J'ai voulu faire le métier en conscience, et sans compromettre les nombreuses convenances du métier.

[...] Voilà ce que m'a dit un homme du peuple plein de bon sens.

Je veux faire le métier en conscience. Malheureusement il me semble qu'il faut le faire *autrement*.

Nos agents *s'isolent* et ne voient rien.

[...] Ces messieurs ne voient que l'excellentissime compagnie. Moi, j'ai appris mille choses en voiturin. Je viens de voyager avec un homme sage, prudent, qui s'éloigne avec ses fils. Les deux premiers jours ont été à la méfiance. Ensuite sont venues les meilleures anecdotes.⁹⁸

With greater humility, he articulates the same thought directly in a letter to the Minister in Paris, Duc de Broglie: 'Tous les faits suivants sont sans doute exposés avec bien plus de clarté et de profondeur par le négociateur sage et habile chargé des affaires du Roi à Rome. Mais le

⁹⁶ Letter to Domenico Fiore, 14 January 1832.

⁹⁷ Letter from Henri Beyle to Adolphe de Mareste, Civitavecchia, 17-21 May 1831, *Correspondance*, Vol 2 (Pléiade), pp. 294-295.

⁹⁸ Letter from Henri Beyle to Adolphe de Mareste, Civitavecchia, 18 April 1831, *Correspondance*, II (Pléiade), 277-279 (p. 278).

soussigné n'étant éloigné d'aucune société par son rang, voit peut-être de plus près les faits dont il s'agit.⁹⁹ In a letter dated May 4, 1831, addressed to both the vice-consuls and consular agents, Stendhal elucidates their role as observers:

J'ai l'honneur de vous annoncer que S. M. le Roi des Français a daigné me nommer consul de France dans les États Romains. [...]

Je vous engage à séparer vos nouvelles en trois classes distinctes:

1° Ce que vous avez vu.

2° Ce qui est un bruit accrédité parmi les gens sages.

3° Ce qui se réduit à un simple bruit de ville, à un simple on-dit.

Nous avons vu, dans les derniers troubles, combien les nouvelles se dénaturent en passant de bouche en bouche. Il est essentiel que S.E.M. le Ministre des Affaires Étrangères reçoive, pour chaque événement, le rapport original de l'agent français le plus rapproché du lieu où il s'est passé.

Il ne faut pas craindre d'être trop long. Il convient de donner beaucoup de détails. Souvent un détail, qui semble insignifiant à celui qui l'écrit, prend un caractère important quand il est réuni à tous ceux que reçoit l'autorité supérieure.

[...] Civitavecchia doit au Ministère des Affaires Étrangères des nouvelles détaillées de toute l'Italie.

Je vous engage, Monsieur, à me mettre à même de rendre compte à S.E. le Ministre de ce qui se passe dans votre arrondissement. Les mensonges des gazettes ont pris une telle extension depuis les troubles que souvent c'est donner une nouvelle rassurante que de dire qu'il n'y a rien de nouveau.¹⁰⁰

⁹⁹ Letter from Stendhal to Duc de Broglie, Civitavecchia, 5 April 1835, *Correspondance*, III (Pléiade), p. 39.

¹⁰⁰ Letter from Stendhal 'Aux Vice-Consuls et Agents consulaires', Civitavecchia, 4 May 1831, *Correspondance*, II (Pléiade), p. 286.

Stendhal constantly reiterates this idea to his vice-consuls and agents: 'Cherchez à tout savoir!'¹⁰¹ Stendhal expects proper fieldwork from his agents: 'Civitavecchia, le 29 février 1832. Je reçois Monsieur votre lettre du 25. Vous auriez dû me faire parvenir un récit de ce qui s'est passé sous vos yeux. [...] Faites-moi connaître ce qui se passe sous vos yeux.'¹⁰² These quotes highlight the close relationship between Stendhal's diplomatic and literary work. It is not entirely far-fetched to suggest that the vice-consuls and consular agents may have helped gather the necessary facts that informed much of Stendhal's later fictional and literary works. In a letter dated 15 May 1831, Stendhal writes to Leoni:

J'ai lieu de croire que Ancône a été évacué par les troupes de Sa Majesté Impériale et Royale. Je suis étonné de ne pas apprendre par vous, Monsieur, une nouvelle si bien faite pour accroître notre confiance dans le maintien d'une heureuse paix. [...] Les vice-consuls me doivent des rapports détaillés. J'ai eu l'honneur de vous écrire à ce sujet. Je vous renouvelle la prière, Monsieur, de me donner et *avec détail* le récit de tout ce qui se passe dans Ancône. Vous me devez également le récit des nouvelles qui vous parviennent. Je vous demande des *détails clairs* et positifs, des noms propres. Au milieu des exagérations de toute espèce qui m'entourent, les détails seuls peuvent amener à la vérité. [...] Vos nouvelles doivent se diviser en trois classes: 1) Ce que vous avez vu. 2) Ce qui se passe pour très probable parmi les gens sages du pays. 3) Les simples *on-dit*. Ancône est un point intéressant depuis plus d'un mois, et cependant vous ne m'avez envoyé aucune nouvelle *claire et précise*. Je vous engage à plus d'exactitude.¹⁰³

Similarly, in *La Chartreuse de Parme*, Mosca draws his conclusions from numerous reported details: 'Il sembla au comte Mosca revenir des portes du tombeau, quand ses observateurs lui

¹⁰¹ Archives des Affaires étrangères, originaux autographes, Letter from Stendhal to Frédéric Quilliet, Civitavecchia, 30 June 1831, in *Mémoires et documents*, Rome, 1814-1842, 129, folio 38, verso.

¹⁰² Archives des Affaires étrangères, original autographe. A Monsieur Frédéric Quilliet, vice-consul de France, Ancône. Cachets: Civitavecchia, affrancata. Marzo 4, Ancona.

¹⁰³ *Correspondance* (Pléiade), Vol 2, pp. 293-294.

donnèrent la certitude de tous ces détails'.¹⁰⁴ The general idea emerges from details: 'Les bourgeois reconnaissaient bien à ces détails le cœur sec d'une grande dame de la cour', referring to the Duchess Sanseverina.¹⁰⁵ Several characters in *La Chartreuse de Parme* demonstrate a certain passion for details, for instance the Archbishop of Parma: 'Le bon archevêque entrait dans des détails infinis.'¹⁰⁶ 'En entendant prononcer ce nom de Fabrice, la duchesse fut saisie d'une légère convulsion.—Pardonnez, mon ami, dit-elle au comte dès qu'elle put parler; ces détails m'intéressent fort, donnez-les-moi tous, faites-moi bien comprendre les plus petites circonstances.'¹⁰⁷ There is also a concern for thoroughly analyzing and carefully verifying the details: 'Clélia se fit répéter jusqu'à trois fois tous ces détails singuliers.'¹⁰⁸

Having demonstrated the profound influence of diplomacy on Stendhal's fiction, it is intriguing to consider the converse: namely, the impact of his literary perspective on his diplomatic dispatches.

Chapter 3: Literary Gaze in Diplomatic Dispatches

This section explores the symbiotic relationship between Stendhal's literary endeavors and his diplomatic duties, underscoring how his literary gaze influenced his diplomatic dispatches. Through close reading of the diplomatic writings, we focus on its formal elements like imagery, structure and language, in order to decipher how Stendhal departs from the academic diplomatic style, leaving space for the novelistic language within his diplomatic work.

¹⁰⁴ Part 1, Chapter 6.

¹⁰⁵ Part 2, Chapter 17.

¹⁰⁶ Part 1, Chapter 9.

¹⁰⁷ Part 1, Chapter 10.

¹⁰⁸ Part 2, Chapter 19.

Stendhal was very aware of a particularly diplomatic form of writing. In *Courrier anglais*, Stendhal notes that Baron Bignon—a nickname he gives to himself—writes ‘du ton d’une note diplomatique [...] il n’est ‘ni piquant, ni amusant.’¹⁰⁹ In a personal letter to Moore in 1826, Stendhal complains about one of his articles for the *New Monthly Magazine* being translated, stating: ‘on a traduit la lettre en style diplomatique’.¹¹⁰ This suggests that Stendhal recognized that diplomatic style involves avoiding excessive prose stylization. Stendhal recommends the style of H. Walpole: ‘avec la même liberté, la même absence de gravité diplomatique’. Similarly, on 12 March 1826, Stendhal reflects on his style: ‘me mettre en style simple, naturel, non diplomatique’.¹¹¹ These occurrences offer a first understanding of ‘diplomatic style’ for Stendhal. It would be characterized by the following attributes: blandness, seriousness, solemnity, restraint, complexity and artificiality. Throughout our research, we have identified several stylistic traits common to both Stendhal's literary corpus and his diplomatic writings. Each of these traits will be examined in detail.

Observational Acuity

The observational acumen Stendhal demonstrates not only enhances the calibre of his literary creations but also the efficacy of his diplomatic engagements. Stendhal's diplomatic writings, notably his reports and letters, bear a striking resemblance to his travel narratives and essays in terms of style, tone, and observational acuity. His descriptions of local commerce, culture, and politics are imbued with the same vivid imagery, casual tone, and keen eye for detail. In many ways, the *Mémoires d'un touriste* reads like a diplomatic report on France. Stendhal's *Tableau du commerce de Rome et de Civitavecchia*, consisting of one hundred pages, can also be read as an interesting supplement to *Promenades dans Rome*, as it provides a rich, multifaceted view of Roman life.¹¹²

¹⁰⁹ *Courrier anglais*, Vol 1, 60, L. à S. (1822).

¹¹⁰ Letter to Moore, 8 January (1826).

¹¹¹ 12 March 1826.

¹¹² Archives des Affaires étrangères, Correspondance Commerciale, Civitavecchia, 8, folios 211–225 (Part 1), 226–248 (Part 2) and 272–283 (Part 3). See: Georges Dethan, 'Un rapport inédit de Stendhal consul, le Tableau du commerce de Rome et de Civita Vecchia (1841)', in *Stendhal-Club* (15 January 1962), 131-147.

Use Of Shortcuts and Stereotypes

In *Tableau du commerce de Rome et de Civita Vecchia*, submitted to the Government in Paris, Stendhal is keen on shortcuts: 'Aussitôt qu'un négociant romain a amassé une fortune de 20 mille francs, il en consomme la plus grande partie dans les plaisirs.'¹¹³ His diplomatic dispatches are written with the familiar tone of his personal correspondence and the casual tone of his travel writings. Countries are pitted against each other in a fashion reminiscent of Stendhal's essayistic and travel writings: 'En France, la végétation est interrompue pendant trois mois d'hiver, novembre, décembre et janvier. Dans les Etats romains la végétation est interrompue pendant trois mois d'été, juin, juillet et août. Elle ne recommence qu'avec les pluies de la fin d'août.'¹¹⁴ Reporting facts on small regions or cities is an exercise to which Stendhal is well acquainted, whether it be via his practice of essayistic writing or his previous professional duties.

Exaggerations, Provocations, Judgements

Stendhal allows himself many simplified assertions and make an extensive use of aphorisms that may appear reductive or stereotypical, if not judgemental. In a letter to Duc de Broglie, he states: 'Dans Rome la moindre injure se venge, rien ne s'oublie; on cite contre un homme un propos échappé il y a vingt ans.'¹¹⁵ In another letter to the Minister, he notes: 'Le Pape est un philosophe à la vénitienne, vivant absolument au jour le jour et n'ayant aucune répugnance à laisser faire, par qui veut bien en prendre la peine, les affaires qui n'intéressent pas son bien-être physique.'¹¹⁶ Stendhal often blends high (elevated, literary) and low (everyday, colloquial) styles in his writing, a stylistic feature Auerbach presents as a significant characteristic of the

¹¹³ *Tableau du commerce de Rome et de Civitavecchia*, Archives des Affaires étrangères, Correspondance Commerciale, Civitavecchia, 8, folios 211–225 (Part 1), 226–248 (Part 2) and 272–283 (Part 3).

¹¹⁴ 'L'agriculture dans la campagne romaine', section 'Céréales', *Tableau du commerce de Rome et de Civitavecchia*, Archives des Affaires étrangères, Correspondance Commerciale, Civitavecchia, 8, folios 211–225 (Part 1), 226–248 (Part 2) et 272–283 (Part 3).

¹¹⁵ Letter from Stendhal to Duc de Broglie, Civitavecchia, 8 April 1835, *Correspondance*, Vol 3 (Pléiade), p. 47.

¹¹⁶ Letter from Stendhal to Duc de Broglie, Civitavecchia, 5 April 1835, *Correspondance*, Vol 3 (Pléiade), p. 39.

realistic approach in literature. Stendhal harbors a deep longing for the esteem of the Minister, aiming more to attract attention than to adhere to the appropriate diplomatic style.

Scheming and Conspiracy

Stendhal's literary prowess enabled him to craft, within just a few lines to his agent Frédéric Quilliet, a scenario distinguished by its novelistic qualities:

Monsieur, Dans votre intérêt, je trouve qu'il n'est pas régulier que vous gardiez chez vous une somme de 15.000 fr. sans avoir aucun des moyens de sûreté que les payeurs ne négligent jamais: par exemple, une caisse et une sentinelle, la nuit du moins. Si par malheur on vous volait, ce serait une vilaine affaire. Jamais nous ne pourrions convaincre le ministre de la réalité du vol.¹¹⁷

The same literary skills are activated in this other letter to Frédéric Quilliet, the following month: 'Dans les affaires d'argent il faut se donner le plus de témoins possible.'¹¹⁸ In the course of his administrative duties as a diplomat, one occasionally encounters perspectives that reveal a literary delight in addressing provocative or even scandalous subjects: 'Au risque de me répéter je dirai que M. de Metternich a admirablement compris que l'on ne peut mener la Cour de Rome qu'en la payant ou en lui faisant peur.'¹¹⁹ Here Stendhal strongly departs from the economic responsibilities of a consul. In his 'notice sur la Cour de Sa Sainteté', Stendhal incentivizes the French Minister to bribe the Pope: 'La conclusion d'une aussi longue lettre c'est que dans toute chose qui ne serait pas hors de saison, une somme qui serait offerte à Gaetanino déciderait du succès. Dans toutes les affaires ordinaires une somme offerte aux valets de chambre des cardinaux ferait pencher la balance en faveur du payant.'¹²⁰ This incentive recurs: 'À Rome, pour 5 pauls (52 sous) on voit toujours un cardinal ou un prêtre influent. Un habitant de Rome peut donc toujours éclairer la personne de laquelle dépend son affaire.'¹²¹

¹¹⁷ Letter from Stendhal to Frédéric Quilliet, Ancône, 19 March 1832, *Correspondance*, Vol 2 (Pléiade), p. 411.

¹¹⁸ Letter from Stendhal to Frédéric Quilliet, Rome, 3 April 1832, *Correspondance*, Vol 2 (Pléiade), p. 418.

¹¹⁹ Letter from Stendhal to Duc de Broglie, Civitavecchia, 19 May 1835, *Correspondance*, Vol 3 (Pléiade), p. 86.

¹²⁰ Letter from Stendhal to Duc de Broglie, Civitavecchia, 5 April 1835, *Correspondance*, Vol 3 (Pléiade), p. 43.

¹²¹ Letter from Stendhal to Duc de Broglie, Civitavecchia, 8 April 1835, *Correspondance*, Vol 3 (Pléiade), p. 45.

Case-Study: Pope Grégoire XVI and the New *Code civil et de Procédure*

To further delineate the characteristic traits of Stendhal's diplomatic writings, this section examines a dispatch by Stendhal, which is reproduced in the Appendices and was written in the context of Pope Gregory XVI's publication of a *Code civil et de procédure*. As this dispatch is issued by 'Direction politique', this illustrates the political work that Stendhal was sending, reconsidering the assumed limited scope of his role of consul as strictly economical and accounting. In Stendhal's diplomatic correspondence, the passages where he adopts a political stance exhibit the most similarities with his literary writings.

Use of Direct Speech and Shortcuts

Stendhal introduces the direct style in his administrative notes, he reports conversations in a fashion reminiscent of dialogues in a novel. This livens up his reports, making them read more like paintings of the time or acts of literary daring rather than simple administrative summaries, with the aim of capturing the minister's interest and attention. Stendhal makes extensive use of short, sharp, imaginative and pictorial sentences in direct speech reminiscent of dialogues of his main novels: 'Innovez le moins possible'; 'Cela vaut mieux que rien'; 'Faites-moi un procès'. These strikes as licenses from the administrative tone, though making Italian reality palpable to the French minister. The novelist-diplomat frequently utilizes stereotypes and generalizations as a means to succinctly convey complex social and political observations. These shortcuts, while potentially oversimplifying, allow Stendhal to effectively communicate the essence of his observations to a French audience unfamiliar with the intricacies of Italian politics.

Fieldwork

Stendhal implements innovative narrative techniques to report phrasings and details of ordinary life to the French Government: 'On a toujours repoussé les savants Jurisconsultes avec cette réponse: 'Innovez le moins possible'' The use of the undetermined pronoun 'on' makes the interlocutor privy to realities of the ground, with Stendhal indirectly boasting about his network and ability to stay informed. This letter is packed with generalisations: 'on' becomes 'le public'

and then 'les riches'. Street rumors are reported in other dispatches of April 1835 on the situation of Rome under the Pope Gregory XVI. In his letter to Duc de Broglie containing a 'notice sur la Cour de Sa Sainteté'¹²², dated 5 April 1835, he notes: 'Dans un dialogue bien connu ici que le Pape eut avec un négociant éclairé nommé Jacobelli, [...]'.¹²³ One could wonder what is exactly 'un dialogue bien connu', if not gossip. Stendhal relays rumors and the popular chatter of the time to the Minister, showing that Stendhal is equally—if not more—interested in the content of the third column in the collection of facts.

Short Sentence Stereotypes

Stendhal often defines social groups with a succinct sentence that encapsulates one of their most characteristic actions. The chosen sentence is concise and impactful in order to encapsulate a reality. For instance, he writes, 'Les riches manquent aux engagements les plus clairs et disent fièrement = Faites-moi un Procès.'¹²⁴ This observation is echoed in a letter from Stendhal to Duc de Broglie dated April 8, 1835, where he notes, 'Un homme riche et qui a des relations étendues dans Rome dit fort bien à qui réclame de lui l'exécution d'un contrat: "Plaidez contre moi."'

Strategic Use of Calligraphy and Layout

The explicit use of the sign 'equal' instead of a colon to introduce these shortcut sentences can be observed on the original of this letter in the Appendices. This purposeful calligraphic variation is not rendered through the edition of the *Correspondance*.¹²⁵ Normal semi-colons are also present in this same letter—for instance, after the word 'Code'—suggesting meaning in the alternation between both typographic signs. This is reminding of Stendhal's penchant for mathematics and comes to reinforce his intention to summarise in a nutshell, in a clear and efficient way.

¹²² *Correspondance*, Vol 3 (Pléiade), p. 45.

¹²³ Letter from Stendhal to Duc de Broglie, Civitavecchia, 5 April 1835, *Correspondance*, Vol 3 (Pléiade), p. 40.

¹²⁴ *Correspondance*, Vol 3 (Pléiade), p. 45.

¹²⁵ *Mémoires et documents*, Rome, 1830–1836, Archives des Affaires étrangères, 102, folio 287–290, Letter from Henri Beyle to Comte de Rigny, 20 November 1834. *Correspondance*, Vol 2, 745–749.

Stendhal's dispatches from his tenure as consul in Italy showcase his penchant for using literary techniques to convey political and social realities. His diplomatic reports are replete with dialogues, vivid imagery, and scenarios reminiscent of his novels, as thoroughly explored through his commentary on Pope Gregory XVI's judicial conservatism.

We highlighted how Stendhal employs literary devices to enhance the clarity and impact of his diplomatic communications. These techniques not only make his reports more engaging but also allow him to capture the essence of Italian society and politics in a manner that resonates deeply with his diplomatic superiors—readers of Stendhal, like us.

The integration of literary artistry into Stendhal's diplomatic work blurs traditional boundaries between literature and political reporting. Beyond just a genetic interest in archives related to Stendhal, it is crucial to recognize how significantly his diplomatic career impacted his literary output. In Part Three, we demonstrated that his diplomatic tenure was not merely a backdrop but a rich source of inspiration for his writing.

Conclusion

Discussing Stendhal among other writers, André Suarès articulates a nuanced view of European identity in *Portraits et préférences: De Benjamin Constant à Arthur Rimbaud*: 'Être européen, ce n'est pas lire et parler cinq langues [...] Ni passer la vie à errer de pays en pays [...] Ni paraître enfin sujet de toutes les nations, plus que le citoyen de sa propre patrie. [...] Je ne sais qu'une façon d'être bon européen: avoir puissamment l'âme de sa nation, et la nourrir avec puissance de tout ce qu'il y a d'unique dans l'âme des autres nations'¹²⁶ This perspective seamlessly transcribes Stendhal's profound cross-cultural awareness and nuanced approach to Europe and national character.

In university courses on early nineteenth-century literature, Stendhal is frequently passed over in favour of Balzac and Flaubert. This oversight might stem from the perception of Stendhal as an awkward third wheel in discussions of social realism. Rehabilitating Stendhal in the academic curriculum could be facilitated by highlighting his international-mindedness and unique cultural intelligence. Stendhal's works transcend the national scope typically associated with social realism, approaching a form of 'national realism.'

This thesis has been dedicated to elucidating the significance of the national character framework as a means to illuminate Stendhal's œuvre. In the initial segment of the study, we reconstructed national vignettes as crafted by Stendhal through repeated allusions across his corpus. We highlighted the characterizations of the French, English, Spanish, Germans, Italians...and even Americans. Surprisingly, for an author known for paradoxes and contradictions, we discovered consistency in Stendhal's portrayal of national characters. This portrayal also bears similarities to those of some of Stendhal's predecessors and contemporaries.

Stendhal's work, both as an author and a diplomat, serves as a *vade mecum* on what defines personality across different European countries: the reception of plays in theatres, expressions of joy, attitudes toward God, approach to work, gender role conditioning, love-making, and

¹²⁶ André Suarès, *Portraits et préférences. De Benjamin Constant à Arthur Rimbaud* (Paris: Gallimard, 1991), p. 88.

wealth. Stendhal also differentiates nations based on their sense of heroism, their imagination, their intellectualism, and many other themes. Stendhal analyses these topics through the prism of national belonging, addressing aesthetic sensibilities, passions, institutions, government, traditions, and moral values. As Italo Calvino puts it, 'Dans tout livre, si une part relève de l'auteur, une autre part est œuvre anonyme et collective.'¹²⁷ Stendhal's lexicon is frequently imbued with national undertones, with terms like 'piquant,' 'héroïque,' and 'féroce' consistently carrying national connotations. In *Rome, Naples et Florence*, language is envisaged by Stendhal as a system of 'signes convenus pour représenter les idées.'¹²⁸ Developed from language, literature constitutes a 'secondary work' that reproduces or confronts, and thereby rewrites these ideological representations.

As Philippe Berthier remarks in his article on 'Stendhal et l'Europe', 'Le cosmopolitisme stendhalien n'est pas le fruit d'un raisonnement, il n'est nullement volontariste et ne s'étaie sur aucun prêchi-prêcha œcuménique.'¹²⁹ Indeed, when addressing nations, Stendhal shuns providing comforting, neatly packaged, and definitive perspectives. His commitment to disseminating knowledge eschews a universal or orderly methodology. Stendhal's work exhibits a whimsical character, lacking a rigid systematic framework in both structure and enunciation. It is only through aggregating instances of national depictions that we have deciphered a form of subjective encyclopedism in his work. The author's conception of different European nations has to be traced throughout the corpus, in order to reveal an underlying coherence despite the apparent lightness and detachment.

Far from merely describing modern political states, Stendhal portrays living communities within Europe. Drawing inspiration from Condillac's sensualist philosophy, he depicts national creative forces as sources of 'aesthetic experience' and 'happiness' for individuals. This deterministic approach revitalizes analyses conducted by Stendhalian critics over the past decade. By engaging critically—rather than merely celebrating—the existence and autonomy of modern personhood as embodied by Stendhal's character, our approach complements Michel Crouzet's emphasis on Stendhal's romanticism in his critical analyses of Europe and nations, as well as Maria Scott's existentialist interpretation of Stendhal's texts. The international

¹²⁷ Italo Calvino, *La Machine littérature* (Paris: Seuil, 1984), p. 92.

¹²⁸ Stendhal, *Rome, Naples et Florence en 1817* (Divan, 1956), p. 89n, p. 224.

¹²⁹ Philippe Berthier, 'Stendhal et l'Europe', in *Espaces stendhaliens* (Paris: P.U.F., 1997), 167–185 (p. 183).

mindedness of Stendhal's narrative voice enriches critical perspectives on his ironic and relativist narrative stance, as extensively studied by Anglophone critics, notably Ann Jefferson, Christopher Prendergast, and Roger Pearson.

In Part Two of our analysis, we argued that Stendhal's search for national character pervades his writings. We conducted a series of case studies to unveil the relevance of national character in analysing both his essayistic writings and his fictional works. Specifically, we delved into the role of national character in framing the fiction of *Mina de Vanghel*, conducting a close textual reading to hypothesize the relevance of such a novel concept as a 'narrative of national stereotypes'. We contend that this method of interpreting Stendhal's texts could be effectively extended to other works to further explore his engagement with national identities and sense of belonging, as well as to refine the understanding of his realism.

Adopting a socio-historical and biographical approach in Part Three, we posited that Stendhal's extensive travels and his exceptionally original career—including his service for the French state in the Napoleonic Wars and as a diplomat—strongly influenced his European vision and his interest in the nations of Europe. We further investigated Stendhal's role as a civil servant throughout his life, an aspect often minimized and relegated to the background by Stendhalian critique. More specifically, we hypothesized that his diplomatic engagements, which consistently involved the balance of power in Europe, are mirrored in his comparative analysis of nations within his literary works. Delving deeper, we conducted stylistic analyses to investigate the mutual influences of diplomatic and fictional prose. In close readings of his diplomatic dispatches, we highlighted how Stendhal places greater emphasis on the dynamics of interpersonal relationships rather than on political and military considerations. This converges with the overall presentation of European nations as 'cultural nations'—rather than political ones—an aspect we previously made salient in Part One.

Part Three thus advocates for the recognition of Stendhal not only as a novelist but also as a diplomat, presenting him as a quintessential voice of the early nineteenth century in delineating Europe and its rapidly developing nations. Despite the nascent 'top-down', theoretical, and ideological approaches to understanding Europe during his time, the value of Stendhal's vision of Europe lies in its grounding in experience and fieldwork. Stendhal's critique of 'industrialism' as a threat to culture and the arts in Europe foreshadows the analysis of capitalism as a global system. During Stendhal's time, the emerging 'internationalism' was

closely tied to the history of the left and to nascent values of solidarity and cooperation at the dawn of the nineteenth century. Yet despite the deep humanism in Stendhal's approach to national character, what is striking is the ideological undertone in his approach to Europe. Stendhal's concept of the 'international' differs significantly from ideological 'internationalism'; it is uniquely empirical, pragmatic and fact-based, grounded in his travels, readings, encounters and diplomatic practice.

The divide that separates Stendhal's era from our own necessitates a critical distance in our thinking, yet Stendhal's insights remain acutely relevant to contemporary discussions on national identity, which are often charged with tension and lacking in nuance. In his book *The Road to Somewhere*, David Goodhart introduces the dichotomy between 'Somewhere' and 'Anywhere'—the 'Somewheres' being those rooted in specific locales, while the 'Anywheres' are cosmopolitan and mobile.¹³⁰ This polarization plays out in UK politics and broader European debates, reflecting a profound societal split over identity and belonging. This distinction is not only evident but is also perpetually rehearsed on our contemporary political stage, with a primary focus on politics, economics, and finance in relation to these notions of belonging and identity. It manifests in the recurring labels of English 'Little Englanders' and French 'souverainistes identitaires', derogatory terms used to describe inward-looking nationalists who distrust the European Union, international cooperation, and foreigners in general. This contemporary context makes Stendhal's nuanced views on national character and international interactions particularly pertinent.

Indeed, the intensity of international exchange in which we currently live would have been unimaginable to those in the early nineteenth century. However, the debates surrounding national identities and a sense of belonging that originated during that era continue to persist today, shaping the lens through which we read authors like Stendhal. The nineteenth century provides a starkly different context for exploring these ideas, making it all the more intriguing to delve into this period, especially given our contemporary climate of highly schematic and polarizing conversations about nationhood and belonging. This historical perspective can offer valuable insights and perhaps a richer understanding of our current discussions and dilemmas.

¹³⁰ David Goodhart, *The Road to Somewhere* (London: Hurst & Company, 2017).

Stendhal's work presents a paradox often overlooked in modern times: the notion that education and culture do not inevitably lead to uniformity and a globalized culture. He illustrates this by differentiating nations based on their high culture while depicting the poor as a homogeneous and undifferentiated mass. Stendhal champions the diversity of contrasts, customs, sensibilities, aesthetic appreciation, values, and mores among European nations, which he sees as distinctly varied rather than homogenized. His approach to European anthropology is rooted in refined distinctions, challenging the contemporary notion of cultural homogeneity within Europe.

National character in Stendhal often read as an erudite game. Stendhal frequents *le beau monde*, as he self-describes, not without a sense of derision: 'Le mardi chez Madame Ancelot, le mercredi chez Gérard, le samedi chez M. Cuvier, trois soupers par semaine au café Anglais [...] J'ai aussi les salons de M. Joseph Bernard, l'ami de Béranger, ceux de madame Curial, etc.; avec cela, pour parler comme M. Hugo, j'ai une *fenêtre ouverte* sur la vie.'¹³¹ Possessing a national identity was largely the preserve of the elite. Stendhal often equates a European nation with its high culture. Those groups who best embody this culturally and historically located vision of the character of nations that Stendhal articulates are the aristocracy and the upper classes. The more travelled and educated Stendhal's characters are, the more representative of their nation they become. In Stendhal, the learned aristocracy is highly differentiated within Europe. This goes in stark contrast to the prevailing discourse nowadays, where the educated elite is denounced as being global.

Numerous famous jokes highlight how cross-cultural awareness can lead to greater national differentiation: 'I speak Spanish to God, Italian to women, French to men, and German to my horse,' famously said Charles V, Holy Roman Emperor. Stendhal notes in *Histoire de la peinture en Italie*: 'Les arts à l'Italie, l'esprit comique à la France, la science à l'Allemagne, la raison à l'Angleterre, tel a été l'arrêt du destin'.¹³² 'Un homme ne peut être poète que dans la langue qu'il parle à sa maîtresse et à ses rivaux', he remarks in the *London Magazine*.¹³³ Today, famous anonymous contemporary jokes circulate on European nations: 'A gentleman speaks to his wife in English, his lover in French, his banker in Dutch, his tailor in Italian, his saddlemaker

¹³¹ Stendhal, Letter to Domenico Fiore, 1st November 1834, *Correspondance*, Vol 2, p. 719.

¹³² *Histoire de la peinture en Italie* (Bibliophile, 1969), Part 2, p. 101, note a.

¹³³ Stendhal, 'Sur l'état actuel de la littérature italienne (2)', *London Magazine* (January 1826), in *Stendhal Paris–Londres*, ed. by Renée Dénier (Paris: Stock, 1997), 605–615 (p. 614).

in Spanish, and his horse in German.’ ‘What is European Heaven? English policemen, French chefs, Italian lovers, German engineers, all run by the Swiss. What is European Hell? The German are the policemen, the English are the cooks, the French are the mechanics, the Swiss are the lovers, and the Italians organize everything.’ They highlight how Stendhal’s national prejudices resemble those prevalent today. There is a potential area of inquiry into the construction and evolution of such national prejudices over time.

In Stendhal’s culturally and historically located vision of the character of nations, the anywheres are not from anywhere: contrary to the idea that they would belong everywhere, they are deeply connected to a specific place and a set of cultural tropes. In Stendhal’s view, extensive travel can actually enhance one’s representation of their home nation and its distinguishing features; one can become more emblematic of France, for instance, through broad travel experiences. Although Stendhal himself was educated, mobile, and autonomous, akin to an ‘Anywhere’, he did not adopt a neutral worldview. Paradoxically, even though Stendhal is particularly uncharitable in his evaluation of the French national character, his approach—his analyses of other neighboring countries and his habitual comparativism, intensified by his travels—corresponds to a French perspective. This underscores a deeper, often overlooked insight: that exposure to travel can deepen one’s connection to and understanding of one’s origins, rather than fostering rootlessness.

Engaging with Stendhal invites us to reflect on what it means—in our current time—to charge someone as being a ‘citizen of nowhere’. As Stendhal’s work reveals that cultural nations, or the regions of the ‘Somewheres’, are often constructed images, these images may not necessarily reflect the true nature of a place and are frequently crafted from above, as evidenced by the concerted efforts in the nineteenth century to create national and regional discourses. As studied, Stendhal often delves into the local level to nuance national characteristics. Such constructions challenge the notion that cultural identities are inherently fixed or geographically bound, highlighting instead how they are shaped and reshaped by broader societal, political, and cultural forces. Stendhal’s nuanced depiction of national character underscores the complexity and constructed nature of identities, reminding us of the fluidity and contested meanings of belonging and identity.

As attitudes surrounding rootedness and uprootedness have evolved and become exacerbated from Stendhal’s era to our present day, revisiting Stendhal’s works offers us a chance to

contemplate belonging in a non-divisive and non-polarizing way. Stendhal's writings encourage intercultural dialogue, a practice crucial for our increasingly interconnected world. In the nineteenth century, where being a liberal meant being a nationalist—a paradox for our time—being rooted did not impede an outward-looking perspective on otherness. Stendhal's appreciation for cultural distinctions does not lead to confinement or insularity.

The goal is not to position Stendhal as an ally or a piece of evidence in contemporary arguments, nor to make him an interlocutor in modern debates. However, Stendhal was himself destined to be better appreciated by future generations than by those of his own time. Indeed, beyond his contributions as a novelist, Stendhal has been identified as a significant thinker on the concepts of national identities and the sense of belonging within the history of ideas. If Stendhal's depiction of Europe is interpreted as a defence of diversity, he skillfully meets the challenge of representing Europe and the nature of national identity in a way that is notably free from nationalist prejudices. His portrayal of Europe as a vibrant hub offers a compelling pre-World War perspective on identity and belonging, providing valuable insights into cultural perceptions in the early nineteenth century.

Stendhal's style uniquely combines acute openness to others with a blend of radicality, wit, and subtlety. Perhaps what Stendhal offers the modern reader is a pathway out of our current, overly-politicized and simplistic categorizations. This would reinforce the—often underscored yet undiminished—unique ability of literature to transcend conventional political discourse, offering—hopefully—deeper and more nuanced, or at least offbeat, reflections on identity and belonging. As such, regularly engaging with Stendhal's work—or '*fréquenter un auteur*,' as it is poetically put in French—may offer a form of gymnastics for developing the cross-cultural awareness so essential for contemporary navigation.

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Correspondance Politique des Consuls, 1826–1870: Rome (Saint-Siège); Vol 1 (1841–1848), Ancône, Civitavecchia; Vol 3, Ancône

Mémoires et documents, Rome, 102 (1830–1836): Lettres d'Henri Beyle, consul à Civitavecchia

Mémoires et documents, Rome, 128 (1830–1841): Documents stendhaliens: lettres adressées à Henri Beyle, consul à Trieste, puis à Civitavecchia, par le ministre des Affaires étrangères, par l'ambassadeur de France à Naples et par divers personnages. Notes et lettres diverses d'Henri Beyle.

Mémoires et documents, Rome, 129 (1814–1842): Documents stendhaliens: Dossier personnel de Henri Beyle. Lettres de Beyle à Frédéric Quilliet et Tellier de Blanriez

Mémoires et documents, Rome, 130–132: Correspondance de Lysimaque Tavernier, chancelier du consulat de France à Civitavecchia, avec l'ambassade de Naples, l'agent français à Marseille et divers postes consulaires italiens (NB les pièces de cette correspondance faisant mention de Stendhal ont été gardées pour le volume 129)

Mémoires et documents, Rome, 133 (1832–1845): Correspondance reçue par Lysimaque Tavernier, notamment un billet de Stendhal

Mémoires et documents, Rome, 134 (1816–1843): Six registres du consulat de France à Civitavecchia

Mémoires et documents, Rome, 135 (1821–1834): Quatre registres du vice-consulat de France à Ancône qui dépendait de Civitavecchia. Les titulaires envoyaient régulièrement à Stendhal les nouvelles des rivages adriatiques des Etats romains

Mémoires et documents, Rome, 136 (1822–1834) Deux registres du consulat de France à Trieste

Mémoires et documents, Rome, 141 (1834–1842): Dossier sur des affaires diverses du consulat

Les Archives du Ministère des Relations Extérieures depuis les origines, Histoire et guide (Paris: Imprimerie Nationale, 1985)

Revue d'Histoire Diplomatique, three tables:

Table générale et méthodique de la revue d'histoire diplomatique depuis son origine (1887-1963) (Paris: Pédone, 1965)

Numéro du Centenaire, Supplément de la RHD (1987), comprising the tables from 1962 to 1986

Table méthodique des articles et comptes-rendus des années 1987 à 2007 et Table alphabétique des auteurs des années 1987 à 2007 (Paris: Pédone, 2009)

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830 15

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AOUT
1850

MINISTÈRE DES AFFAIRES ÉTRANGÈRES
ARCHIVES

Beyle
mention particulière
avec le feuillet 830, à un
e Gwarkhy. y

M. Beyle a 14 ans de services. Il a été à
Moscou, Vienne, Berlin. Il était Auditeur au Conseil
d'Etat et Inspecteur général des Mobilier et des
Bâtimens de la Couronne.

En 1813 il fut Intendant à Sagan en
Silésie. A Vienne, à Berlin il avait été chargé
par M. le C^{te} Daru son parent de sa correspondance
diplomatique. A Vienne en 1809, M. Beyle
tient la plume dans toute l'affaire de la Hongrie
la plus singulière de l'époque: il négociait de
donner la Hongrie à un Archiduc.

Pendant un séjour de dix ans en
Italie, M. Beyle a connu le plus grand de hommes
qui soit avoir une importance politique, M. Gio. Capponi
Soave, Manigani Marini etc.

M. Beyle peut écrire des dépêches en
anglais et en italien. Il a fait plusieurs voyages en
Angleterre et connaît le mécanisme de son gouvernement
actuel. Il serait bienvenu d'être employé sous
les ordres de M. le Comte Molé.

Mémoires et documents, Rome, 1814-1842, Mélanges stendhaliens, Archives des Affaires étrangères, 129, Folio 14-15.

Page 1:

Monsieur le Comte,

Monsieur Beyle pénétré des reconnaissances qu'on le trouve encore bon à quelque chose malgré ses 47 ans et ses 14 ans de service, expose qu'il est absolument sans fortune. Son père s'est ruiné à 73 ans.

M. Beyle désirerait une place de consul général à Naples, Gênes, Livourne, si quelqu'un de messieurs les consuls quitte l'Italie. Si le Consulat est trop au-dessus de ce qu'on paraît avoir la bonté de vouloir faire pour lui, il demanderait la place de premier secrétaire à Naples ou à Rome. Turin n'est pas encore l'Italie et le secrétaire à Florence doit être bien peu payé.

J'ai l'honneur d'être avec respect

Monsieur le Comte

Votre très humble et très obéissant serviteur.

Beyle

Page 2 (annotations):

M. Beyle a 14 ans de services. Il a été à Moscou, Vienne, Berlin. Il était auditeur au Conseil d'État et Inspecteur général du mobilier et des bâtiments de la Couronne.

En 1813, il fut intendant à Sagan en Silésie. A Vienne, à Berlin, il avait été chargé par M. le comte Daru, son parent, de sa correspondance diplomatique. A Vienne, en 1809, M. Beyle tint la plume dans tout l'affaire de la Hongrie, la plus singulière de l'époque. Il s'agissait de donner la Hongrie à un Archiduc.

Pendant un séjour de dix ans en Italie, M. Beyle a connu la plupart des hommes qui vont avoir une importance politique, MM. Gino Capponi Poerio, Monsignor Marini etc.

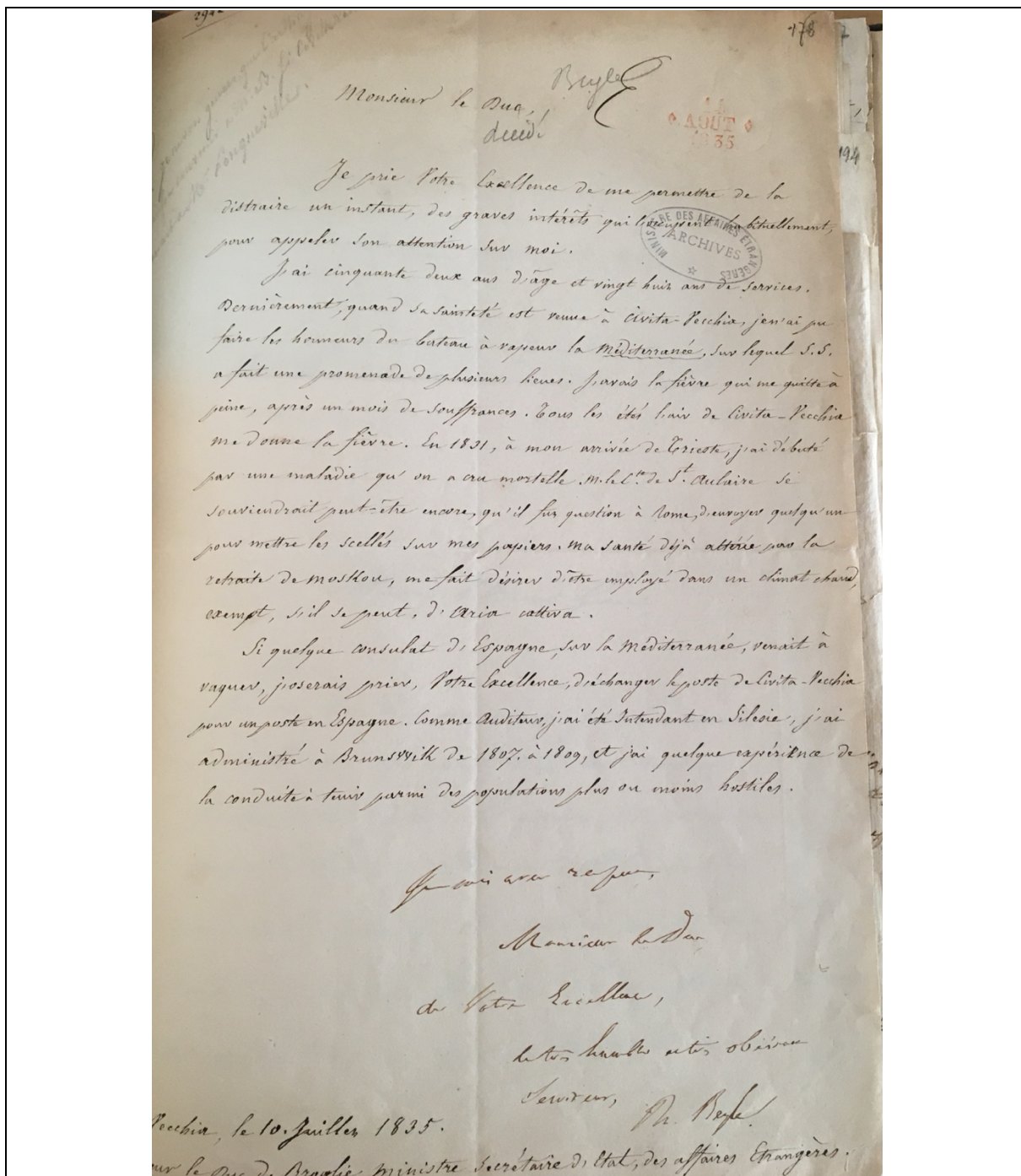
M. Beyle peut écrire des dépêches en anglais et en italien. Il a fait plusieurs voyages en Angleterre et connaît le mécanisme de son gouvernement actuel. Il serait heureux d'être employé sous les ordres de M. le comte Molé.

From: Henri Beyle

To: Monsieur le Comte Molé, Ministre des Affaires étrangères

Date: Paris, 25 August 1830

Stendhal's Objective in 1835: Leaving Italy for Spain



Mémoires et documents, Rome, 1814-1842, Mélanges stendhaliens, Archives des Affaires étrangères, 129, folio 178.

Extract 1:

Monsieur le Duc,

Je prie Votre Excellence de me permettre de la distraire un instant des graves intérêts qui l'occupent habituellement, pour appeler son attention sur moi.

J'ai cinquante-deux ans d'âge et vingt-huit ans de services. [...]

Extract 2:

Ma santé, déjà altérée par la retraite de Moscou, me fait désirer d'être employé dans un climat chaud, exempt, s'il se peut, d'aria cattiva.

Si quelque consulat d'Espagne, sur la Méditerranée, venait à vaquer, j'oserais prier Votre Excellence d'échanger le poste de Civitavecchia pour un poste en Espagne. Comme auditeur, j'ai été intendant en Silésie; j'ai administré, à Brunswick, de 1807 à 1809, et j'ai quelque expérience de la conduite à tenir parmi des populations plus ou moins hostiles.

With a pencil, on the upper left side of the letter:

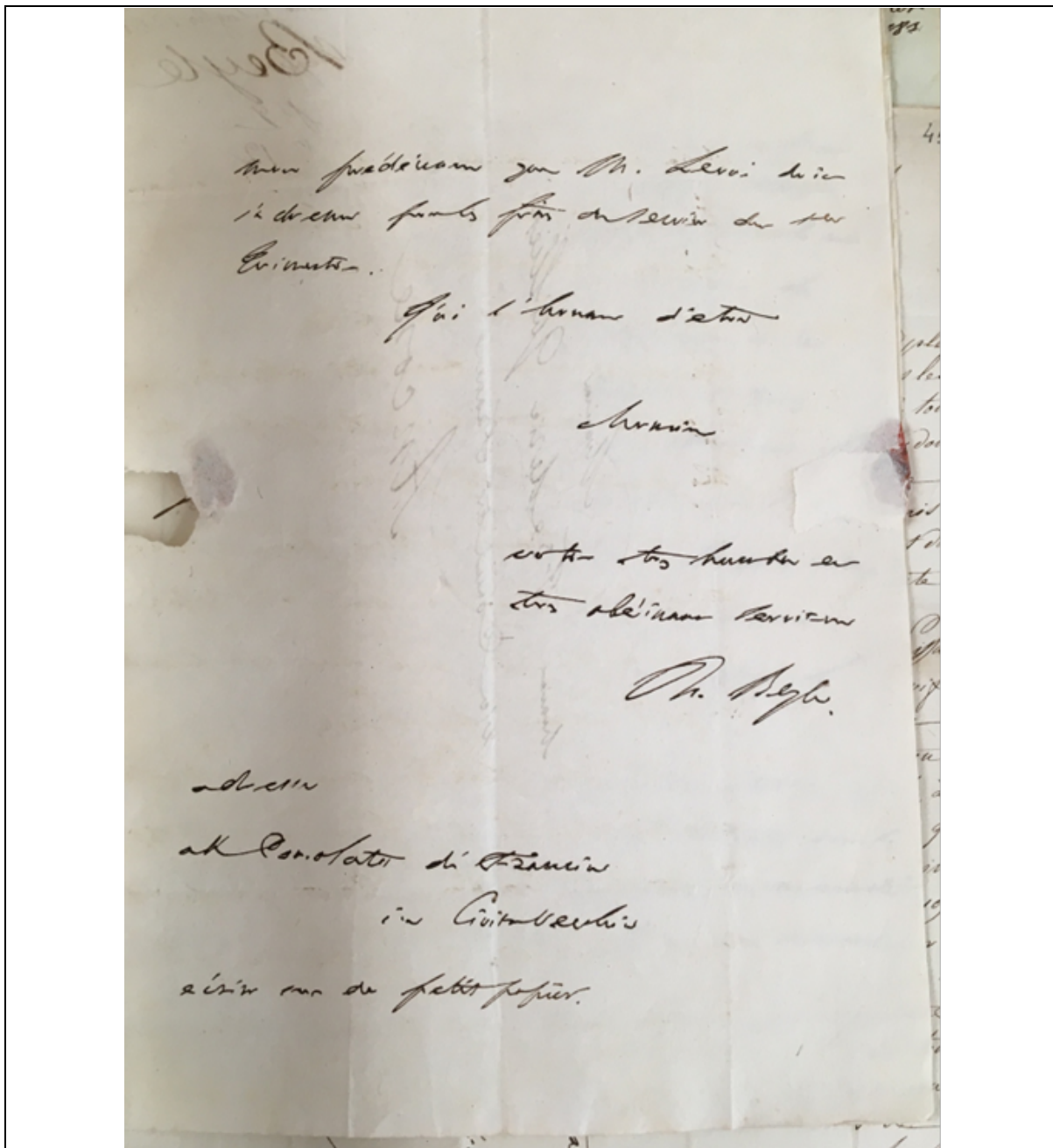
Je ne vois guère que Carthagène qui puisse convenir à M.B. si Civitavecchia convenait à M. Pouqueville.

From: Henri Beyle

To: Duc de Broglie, Ministre des Affaires étrangères

Date: 10 July 1835

Stendhal's Diplomatic Discretion: Concealment Practice



Mémoires et documents, Rome, 1814-1842, Mélanges stendhaliens, Archives des Affaires étrangères, 129, folio 41.

Extract (at the very bottom): écrire sur du petit papier

From: Henri Beyle

44
 del Sig. de Calabrese
 Civita vecchia 8 Jul 1831
 Beyle
 12
 ANCONA
 12
 OTTOBRE
 all' onorevole Signore
 il Signor Frederic Quilliet
 vice-consule di Francia in
 Ancona.

ANCONA
 A Monsieur
 Frederic Quilliet
 Vice-Consul Honorable de France
 Ancone
 Beyle
 12
 Honoré Quilliet 1831



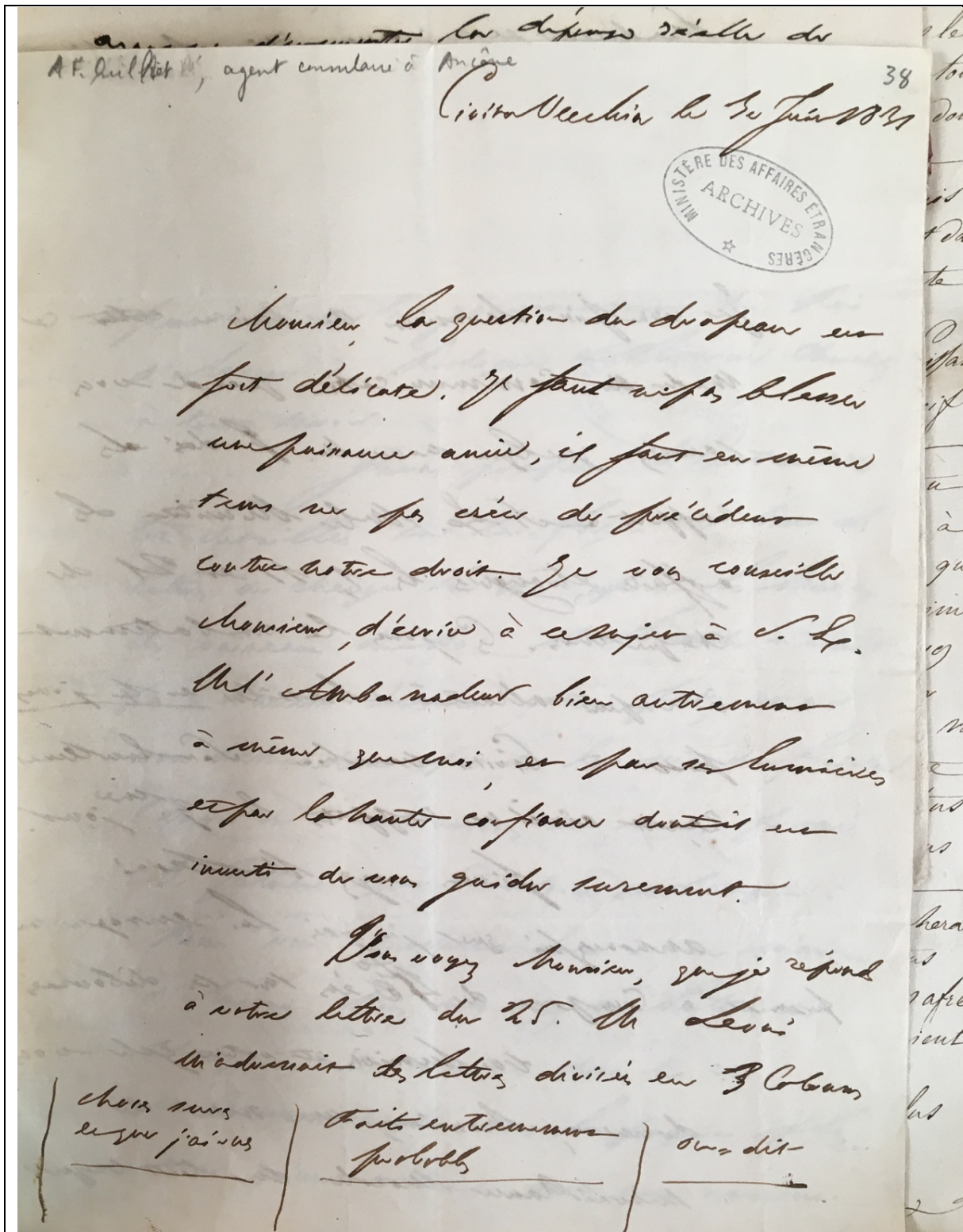
From: Henri Beyle

To: Frederic Quilliet, vice-consule de France à Ancône

Date: Civitavecchia, 8 Juillet 1831

Two envelopes in Italian and French for the same letter

Stendhal's Relationship to Facts and Truth: The Three-Column System



Mémoires et documents, Rome, 1814-1842, Mélanges stendhaliens, Archives des Affaires étrangères, 129, folio 38.

Extract:

Vous voyez, Monsieur, que je réponds à votre lettre du 25. M. Leoni m'adressait des lettres divisées en 3 colonnes:

Choses sûres et que j'ai vues

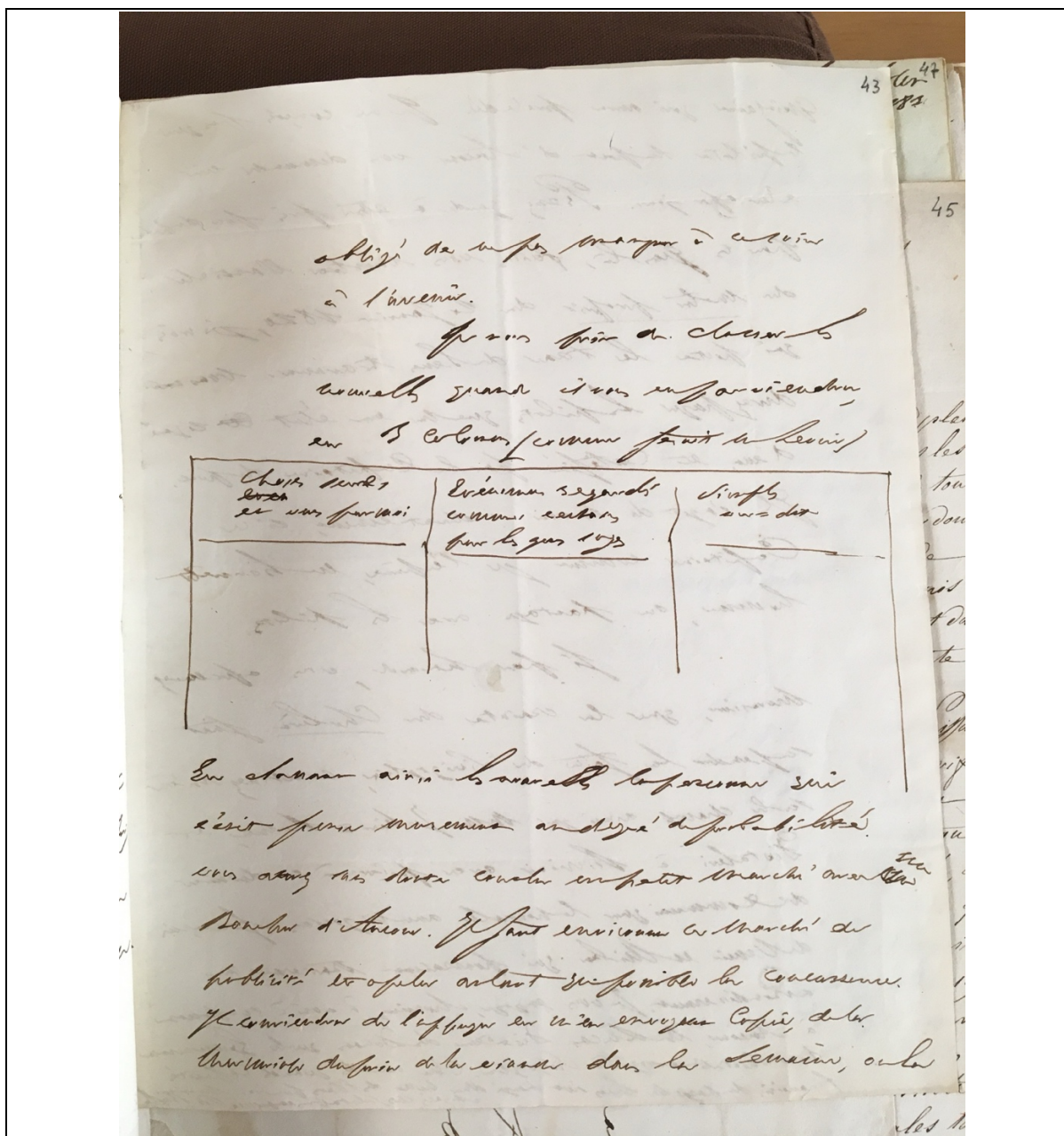
Faits entièrement probables

On-dit

From: Henri Beyle

To: Frédéric Quilliet

Date: Civitavecchia, 30 June 1831



Mémoires et documents, Rome, 1814-1842, Mélanges stendhaliens, Archives des Affaires étrangères, 129, folio 43.

Je vous prie de classer les nouvelles quand il vous en parviendra en 3 colonnes (comme faisait M. Leoni)

Choses sensées et vues par vous

Evénements regardés comme certains par les gens sages

Simples on-dit

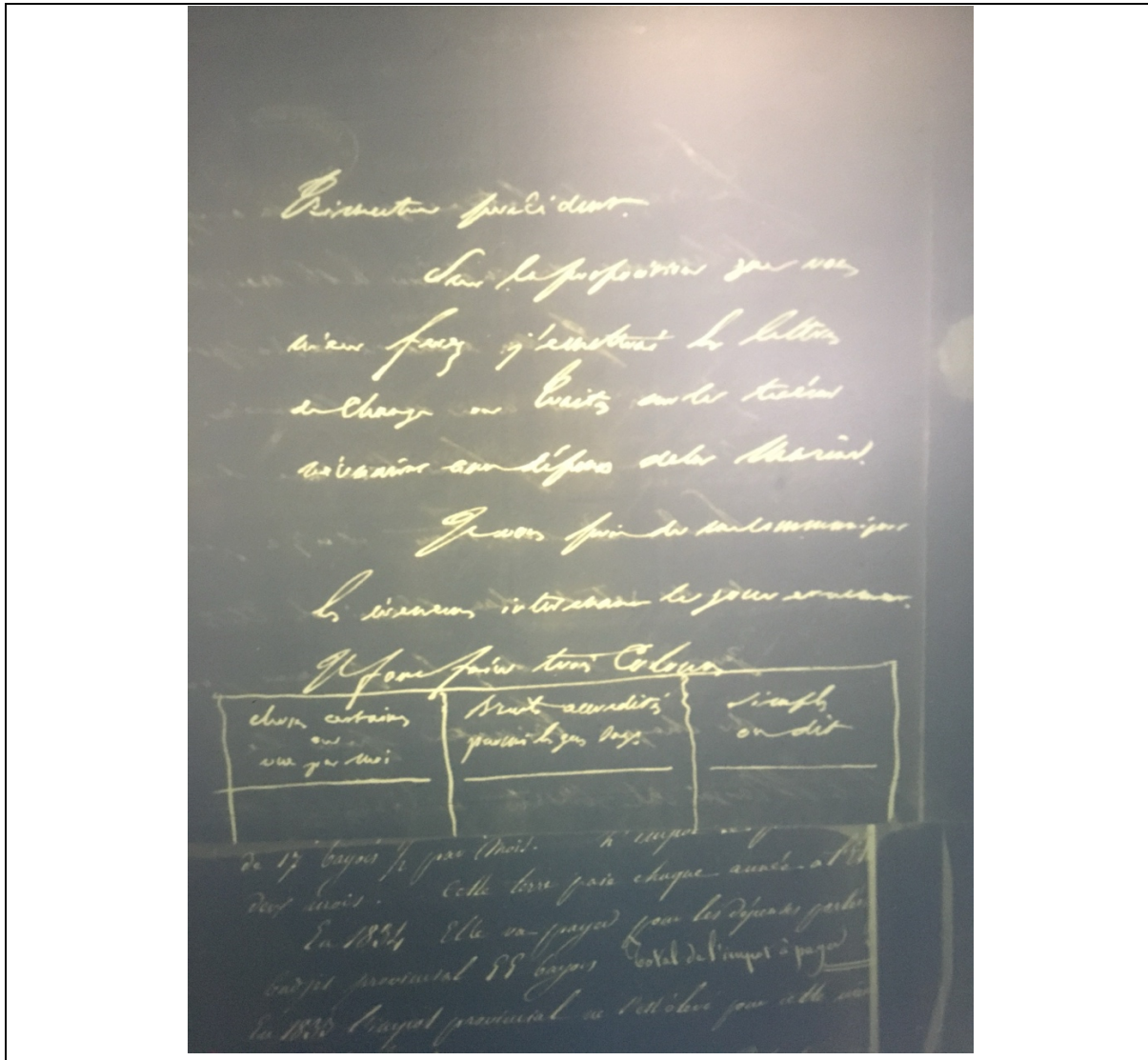
En classant ainsi les nouvelles la personne qui écrit pense mûrement au degré de probabilité.

Vous avez sans doute conclu un petit marché avec M. Bourbon d'Ancône. Il faut environner ce marché de publicité et appeler autant que possible la concurrence.

From: Henri Beyle

To: Frederic Quilliet, vice-consule de France à Ancône

Date: Civitavecchia, 8 July 1831



Microfilms, MD Rome, Vol 128, P31.

Extract:

Il faut faire trois colonnes:

Choses certaines ou vues par moi

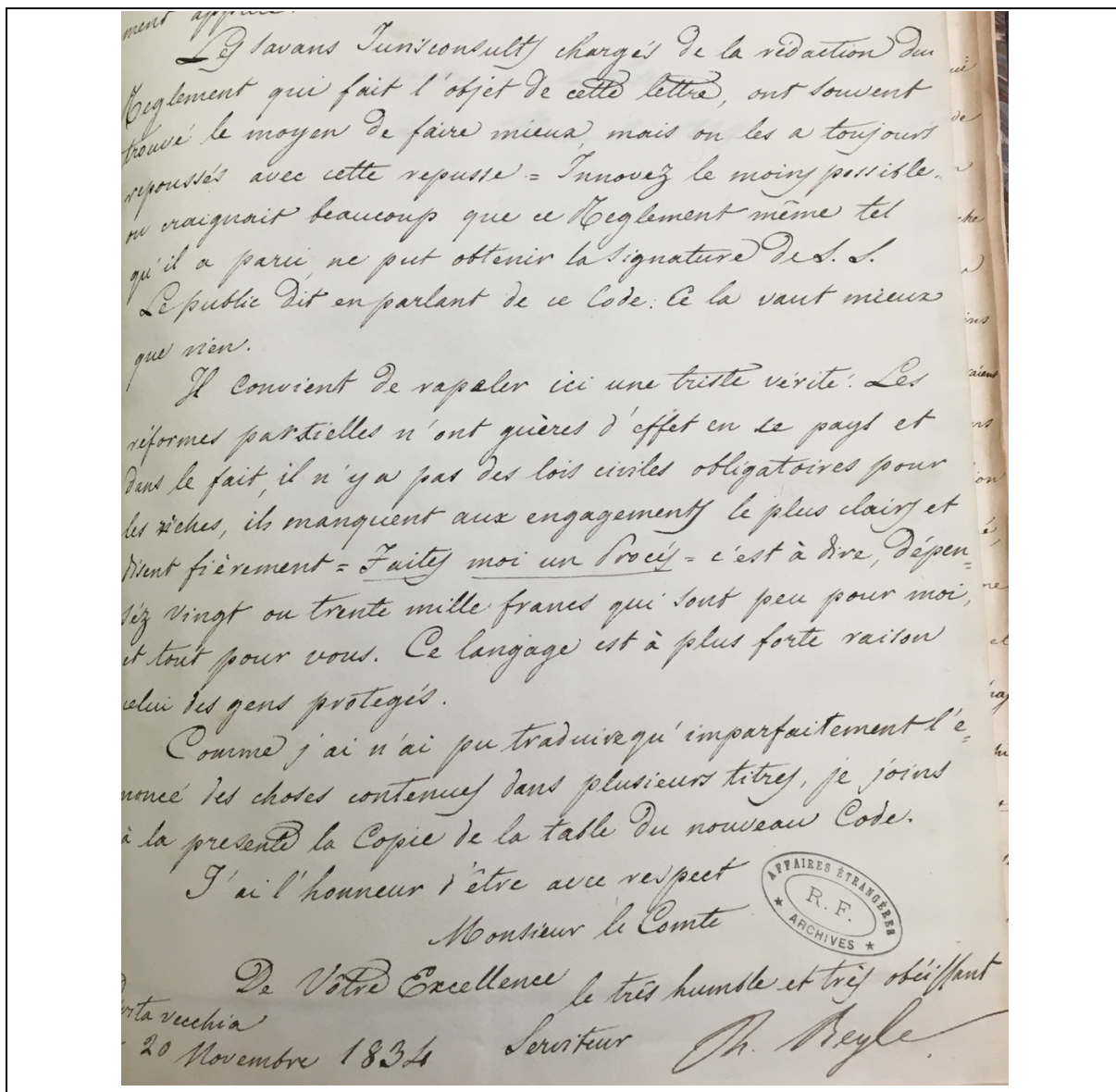
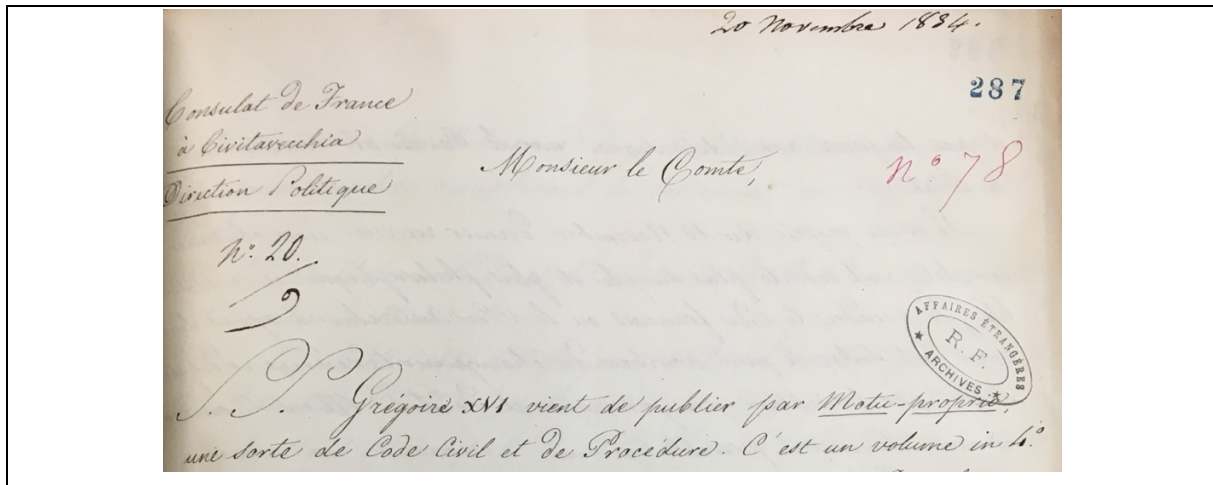
Bruits accrédités parmi les gens sages

Simple on-dit

From: Henri Beyle

To: A civil servant of his Consulate

Comparing Literary and Diplomatic Prose: Report on the New Code *civil et de Procédure*



Mémoires et documents, Rome, 1830–1836, Archives des Affaires étrangères, 102, folio 287–290.

Extract 1: Consulat de France à Civitavecchia

Direction politique

Extract 2: Les savants Jurisconsultes chargés de la rédaction du Règlement qui fait l'objet de cette lettre, ont souvent trouvé le moyen de faire mieux mais on les a toujours repoussés avec cette réponse = Innovez le moins possible. On craignait beaucoup que ce Règlement même tel qu'il a paru ne put obtenir la signature des S. Le public dit en parlant de ce Code: Cela vaut mieux que rien.

Il convient de rappeler ici une triste vérité: les réformes partielles n'ont guères d'effet en ce pays et dans le fait il n'y a pas de lois civiles obligatoires pour les riches, ils manquent aux engagements les plus clairs et disent fièrement = Faites-moi un Procès = c'est-à-dire, dépensez vingt ou trente mille francs qui sont peu pour moi et tout pour vous. Ce langage est à plus forte raison celui des gens protégés.

Comme je n'ai pu traduire qu'imparfaitement l'énoncé des choses contenues dans plusieurs titres, je joins à la présente la Copie de la table du nouveau Code.

J'ai l'honneur d'être avec respect

Monsieur le Comte

De votre Excellence

le très humble et très obéissant Serviteur

From: Henri Beyle

To: Comte de Rigny

Date: 20 November 1834