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## Local Color in Post-Enlightenment Culture

### *I. The Legacy of the Enlightenment*

The eighteenth-century Enlightenment has sparked unending debate through the Western world, but the clash of views has been particularly strident in France, where Enlightened thought developed exceptional strength early on and seemed to produce the tumultuous events known as the French Revolution. Over the last two centuries, many in France have worried and argued about the Enlightenment and its implications—about using reason as a touchstone for evaluating ways of life and thought, for example. This essay is about the contentious yet fruitful French experience of dealing with that eighteenth-century legacy in the wake of the Revolution— and, briefly, in more recent times. It is about post-Enlightenment understandings of France's own cultural history and the cultures of peoples to the East.

Two central strands of Enlightenment thought merit highlighting here as a background to my topic—two sets of ideas about basic processes of historical change. First, there was the rationalism, which is so well known. Partisans of the Enlightenment understood well that an individualist, critical reason was a powerful instrument for making fundamental changes in society. When taking a historical perspective, they looked forward to a time when reason would triumph over ignorance and superstition. Rational education would be available to everyone. Inequalities would be flattened out—inequalities between the sexes, between social groups, and between nations. Attitudes and mores would become similar everywhere—civilized, clearly ordered and moral. Condorcet gave classic expression to these views in his *Sketch for a Historical Picture of the Progress of the Human Mind*, written as a defiant Enlightened response to the darkness of the Terror in 1793-1794. For more than a century before, advocates of that universalizing rationalism

had engaged in a struggle against what they saw as errors and prejudices, and they had criticized the government and church that perpetuated benighted thinking and practices. They took the role of a combative avant-garde.

Many of the Enlightened also looked hopefully to another civilizing process that was taking place in social exchanges—that is, in a growing “sociability”, occurring quietly outside the sphere of political or governmental life<sup>1</sup>. Through such “cooperative exchange” as conversation and commerce, they maintained, refined manners and morals were gaining currency and spreading from the advanced center, raising the level of civilization in the backwaters of France and Europe. The Enlightened expected the ideas and ways of the more advanced, therefore superior, city people to spread to the country— especially from Paris to the provinces.

When thinking of Europe as a whole, French writers of the eighteenth century viewed Western Europe as the vanguard of history and “invented” the idea of Eastern Europe as a contrasting area of backwardness, more specifically defined as an intermediate zone between the civilized and the barbaric (as Larry Wolff’s recent book shows)<sup>2</sup>. French writers also invented the very word *civilisation* in the mid-eighteenth century with France in mind as an exemplar of the highest stage of development. They believed that not only were French ideas the most advanced and manners the most polished, but also the French language was the most beautiful and refined (rich in precise and abstract words), therefore supremely suited to be universal. Altogether these universalizing processes of rationalism and sociability appeared to be producing what was called “Progress”, which the Enlightened judged to be overwhelmingly good.

Viewed in a large historical context, the Enlightenment was one of several forces working for hegemonic uniformity of one sort or another. France’s monarchical state, the most centralized of early modern Europe, was long seeking to extend its sway over the diverse provinces.

1. Daniel Gordon, *Citizens Without Sovereignty: Equality and Sociability in French Thought, 1670-1789*, Princeton 1994, p. 30. See also the pioneering work by Norbert Elias, *The History of Manners*, Vol. I of *The Civilizing Process*, New York 1978.

2. Larry Wolff, *Inventing Eastern Europe: The Map of Civilization on the Mind of the Enlightenment*, Stanford 1994.

The Church, too, had long campaigned to establish uniformity, its orthodoxy, crusading against local popular beliefs for centuries. Still another homogenizing force in the eighteenth century was Paris's growing economic and cultural power making itself felt in the provinces. Toward the end of the century the French Revolution took over the monarchy's work of rationalizing and centralizing government and added a militant nationalism combined with a leveling egalitarianism. Beginning as an idealistic effort to forge a new rational yet fraternal unity, the Revolution became a violent crusade against difference under the "République une et indivisible". No other country nurtured such an insistence on formal order and unity as France —home of "Cartesian absolutism" (Raymond Schwab's phrase), pretensions of absolutist monarchy left by a self-styled "Sun King", and a massive revolution that attempted a rational reordering of society.

For several years beginning in 1792, the Revolution sent its armies outside France on a new civilizing offensive that carried the new truths of liberty and equality to oppressed peoples. The "liberating" armies went eastward into parts of Europe that French writers of the eighteenth century had characterized as backward. Categorizing an area in that way, Larry Wolff has argued, was the West's intellectual preparation for conquest and domination. The precise link between such thinking and military intervention is debatable, but the succession of events is clear: revolutionary and Napoleonic armies followed the Enlightenment's shaping of a mental map of Eastern Europe<sup>3</sup>.

## II. Counter-currents

French responses to the Enlightenment have taken a variety of forms that have permuted radically over the last two centuries. The first post-revolutionary response is well known: opponents of the Enlightenment articulated forceful critiques of reason and intellectuals. Thinkers such as Joseph de Maistre rejected critical reason, especially an individual's reason, as a faculty for knowing truth and as a guide for making changes. Other post-revolutionaries, now less well known, worked to preserve what the *philosophes* had devalued and scorned. In

3. Wolff, *Inventing Eastern Europe*, p. 8.

Parisian libraries and in the provinces, they searched out folk and regional traditions, rejecting the Enlightened cultural standards that made Paris and elite creations “superior”. They valued those local traditions as antidotes to national centralization on the one hand and to rationalist individualism on the other. Nostalgic for vanishing or bygone cultures, they looked backward through the civilizing process for a world full of diversity, less rational, and less civilized. As collectors of folklore and champions of regional life, they struck back at the homogenizing forces bequeathed by the Enlightenment and Paris<sup>4</sup>.

Dreading the prospect of a monochromatic world, a variety of writers whom we call Romantics proclaimed a love of “local color”—the “picturesque” details of specific places and times, particular landscapes and people’s language, literature, dress, and other traditions<sup>5</sup>. That fondness for colorful detail informed the work of Romantic poets, novelists, playwrights, folklorists, and historians. Across the genres, they rejected the classicist and Enlightenment esteem for the universal—along with rules requiring, for example, that the action of a play should be confined to one day and a single location (the “unities” of time and place).

In 1820, twenty-five year old historian Augustin Thierry (like Romantic *littérateurs* generally) advocated local color as an essential ingredient of good style in the writing of history, to give accounts of the past a piquant flavor of the times. In 1827, still casting himself as a programmatic reformer of historical writing, Thierry called for a “struggle against abstraction”. General views, present-minded moral judgments, and abstract ideas that the eighteenth century had so revered were now judged responsible for dull, flat writing. Thierry went on to portray local color as the key to truth as well as to style. (Ironically, this lover of color lost almost all his sight by the mid-twenties). Truth exists in the details—that was the Romantic view underlying histo-

4. See Charles Rearick, *Beyond the Enlightenment: Historians and Folklore in Nineteenth-Century France*, Bloomington 1974, chapter I.

5. The first to use the term “local color” seems to have been a French-born romantic poet of Italy, Giovanni Berchet (1783-1851), who launched the phrase “tinte locale” “like a war cry” in 1818. See Miodrag Ibrovac, *Claude Fauriel et la fortune européenne des poésies populaires grecque et serbe*, Paris 1966, p. 56, citing V. Waille, *Le Romantisme de Manzoni*, Alger 1890, p. 59.

ricism. Historians of France, Thierry urged, should try to capture the distinctive character of the individual regions and diverse peoples as well as the distinctiveness of different periods for each people in the long sweep of time. "Our provinces, our cities, all that each of us understands in our affections, under the name of fatherland, should be present again to us [re-presented] in each century of its existence"<sup>6</sup>. This characteristic post-Enlightenment position was a variant of Herder's idea of precious national cultures —and a sharp break with the eighteenth-century notion of a universal process of *civilisation*.

For the student of society and history as for the novelist, it took imagination to grasp the meaning that the details had for people in the past, and it took imagination to convey in words the picturesque particulars that constituted the historical truth. For Thierry and his contemporaries, the novels of Walter Scott served as exciting models for such portrayals. Rejecting the eighteenth-century focus on philosophical ideas and moral lessons, the Romantics called not only for a new kind of writing, but also for a new appreciation of the close textures of social life and history in all their diversity<sup>7</sup>.

Claude Fauriel (1772-1844) was one of the most important of the Romantic literary scholars and historians, altogether a seminal figure in France of the 1820s and 1830s. Although he is now relatively unknown, a number of articles and books long ago spelled out his contributions to literary history<sup>8</sup>. His post-Enlightenment thinking about the individual and society, however, has not been examined and clarified, and that is my subject here.

A first step toward understanding his thought is to note that he grew up in an area remote from the Parisian intellectual elite spearheading the Enlightenment. Fauriel was born and raised in a small provincial town,

6. Augustin Thierry, *Lettres sur l'histoire de France*, Paris 1827, (the first letter, originally published in 1820), pp. 4-5. He also became attached to the idea of the importance of diverse races in history.

7. Réizov, *L'Historiographie romantique française*, p. 161, n. 1, p. 166.

8. A standard biography is J.-B. Galley, *Claude Fauriel, membre de l'Institut 1772-1843*, Saint-Etienne 1909. Galley provides references to the nineteenth-century works on Fauriel (esp. noteworthy are appreciations by Ernest Renan, C. A. Sainte-Beuve, and Frédéric Ozanam). For later scholarship, see the notes and provided by Ibrovac's *Claude Fauriel et la fortune européenne des poésies populaires grecque et serbe*.

Saint Etienne (pop. 16,000), about 500 kilometers south of Paris<sup>9</sup>. It was a gritty industrial town, a manufacturing center for iron, hardware, arms, and ribbons. Beyond the outskirts, however, were mountain peaks of the Cevennes, dark old pine forests, and crystal-clear streams — a picturesque nature that Fauriel loved all his life.

His family was as lacking in cultural resources as his home town. Both his parents came from peasant families. His father earned a modest living as a carpenter (*menuisier*). His mother was a pious woman he never knew: she died a few weeks after giving birth to him (perhaps a source of his melancholic temperament, his biographer has suggested). His father and his great uncle, a priest, instilled in him a respect for religion, but not a deep devotion; he never became attached to Roman Catholic practice or dogma. After some primary schooling in his home town, he pursued an education at two *collèges* (at Tournon and Lyons) staffed by Oratorian monks in the last years of the Old Regime and the first year of the French Revolution. His attitude toward the Church through his entire life was a moderate Enlightened one: a detached tolerance and an interest in religion only for its contributions to morality, never the passionate anticlericalism or skepticism characteristic of Voltaire and other combative Enlightenment writers. His clerical teachers did succeed in nurturing in him several interests that became life-long passionate commitments: an interest in ancient literatures and languages along with a knowledge of such living languages as English, German, and Italian.

When Fauriel was about twenty years old and ready to begin adult life, he saw his home town and his region forcibly colonized by Parisian revolutionaries, imposing their view of a liberating modernity on the provinces. After the new revolutionary nation went to war with hostile monarchies and transformed itself into a militant republic in 1792, his own life was at risk of being commandeered by the politically intolerant outsiders. In late 1793 the prisons of his home town filled with political prisoners, and in nearby towns the guillotines were busy. Young Fauriel stoically endured that violent intrusion into his world. During the worst of the stormy revolutionary years, 1793-1794, he managed to avoid both combat in the army and partisan politics. He performed his

9. On Fauriel's family background and youth, see Galley, *Claude Fauriel*, pp. 3-12.

military service as a secretary to a general and then went back to his home town to work as a municipal administrator. In January 1794 he was a member of a Saint Etienne delegation that went to Paris seeking relief from food shortages, forced loans, and overly zealous revolutionaries. He stayed there three months —through tumultuous times in which the Hébertists and Danton went to the guillotine. Fauriel kept his opinions to himself (wisely). Historical records do not tell us whether he succeeded in his dealings with the Parisian leaders, but he did succeed in maintaining his position as a town officer through the most politically unstable and dangerous times of the Revolution.

When he returned to Saint-Etienne in late April 1794, executions in the region had ceased, and domestic peace had returned. Serving as a chief town administrator for several months, he worked to organize the bureaucracy in a more orderly fashion. As a local leader of some intellectual distinction, he gave the principal speech at the local Fête of the Supreme Being. In the ceremony held in the cathedral, he expounded the common Enlightenment view that the basic idea of God was essential to morality and the civilizing of humanity through the ages. He spoke as a deist in the manner of Rousseau and Robespierre, advocating a simple religion of the heart. In sum, young Fauriel was a man of the mainstream Enlightenment. He believed in efficient and orderly government, liberty, toleration and reason, a plain republican virtue, and patriotism without persecution or fanaticism<sup>10</sup>.

Through the decade of revolution his deepest interests were literature and science, not Enlightenment political thought or revolutionary programs. Seeking “consolation” amid the turmoil during the worst months of the Terror, he immersed himself in the poetry of Homer and Ossian, supposedly an ancient Scottish bard (really James Macpherson). He also read the ancient Stoics and a life of William Penn, finding there clarification and reinforcement of his own needs for equanimity. Although he supported the Republic and served as a municipal officer under it, his general reaction to the Revolution was a mood of melancholy and a desire to withdraw from the fray. He never shared the optimism of the reforming philosophes or the political zealotry of the revolutionaries. Intellectually he moved ahead along his own self-

10. Galley, *Claude Fauriel*, pp. 35, 39-40.

directed course in search of a distant past and literature remote from the Enlightenment and the Revolution.

After the Terror he went to Paris to study at the *École normale*, but his studies there were cut short by political reaction that closed the school in May 1795. During the next several years, when royalist reactionaries were ascendant and bent on persecuting the Jacobin revolutionaries, he lived quietly in a kind of exile in an Alpine mountain village. At the end of the revolutionary decade he went back to Paris and this time stayed for three years. There he learned about the latest German, Italian, and French Romantic theories being developed by the best minds of his time. He met leading French and German thinkers in the salon of the *philosophe* Helvétius's widow and that of Madame de Staël. He preferred the German theorists, finding that they had more "originality of mind and simplicity of character" than the French<sup>11</sup>. In 1799, a month and a half before the bold young general named Napoleon seized power, Fauriel found a job working in the offices of the Ministry of Police while he pursued his literary interests and socialized with writers in his spare time. He quit that post in 1802 partly because of his distaste for the emergent Napoleonic dictatorship and partly because of a desire to pursue his cultural studies full-time. Earlier that year, he fell in love with the widow of the *philosophe* Condorcet and began a long-term liaison with her, which provided him with material and personal support through two decades of concentrated independent studies.

His youthful tastes reinforced by the latest theories, Fauriel plunged into the study of foreign literatures and languages ranging from Sanskrit and Arabic to Manchu and Greek, both classical and modern. He particularly relished reading poetry, epics, and songs that had emerged in "primitive" ages. He found there a freshness, directness, and imaginative force that was lacking in later, more refined and rule-governed works. Before the advent of writing and prose, he held, poetic meter and vigorous figurative language were natural and necessary aids to the memory of singers, and they were the literary forms most apt to hold the attention of uneducated audiences. Decades before Fauriel adopted these views, some leading Enlightenment figures, such as Turgot and Suard, had also appreciated that "primitive poetry" so rich in imagery, but they had

11. Galley, *Claude Fauriel*, p. 82.



viewed it as a product of an early stage of mankind's mental development and had valued more the later stages<sup>12</sup>. Fauriel, in contrast, did not adopt their Enlightenment belief in progress and perfectibility over time; he did not hold that the early achievements and the early mental stage were surpassed by the later ones.

Following Herder, he also took an interest in the earliest literature as an expression of the "genius" of a people, an expression of its distinctiveness, its voice, its way of experiencing life and passing on its experience. To Fauriel, that collective identity was particularly marked in ancient poems because, he believed, they were created "spontaneously" by a close-knit community—in contrast to the later works of individuals following rules or models taken from others somewhere else. Such cultural autonomy assured an abundance of local color, the precious hallmark of small-scale diverse cultures. Works stemming from the people, further, were untainted by the vainglorious ambition and posturing of individual writers competing for attention and applause. Fauriel witnessed that kind of scramble for fame in Paris, and he had no taste for it<sup>13</sup>. He did not share in the Romantic adulation of volcanically creative individual "genius" any more than the neo-classical reverence for polished genius.

In the early 1820s Fauriel happily discovered some fresh collective literature thriving even in modern times in less sophisticated places than France. From Greek friends he delighted in learning of the living songs and poetry of contemporary Greeks. Inspired by recent German anthologies of folk songs and encouraged by his friends, he was eager to publish the Greek songs for several reasons. First of all, he believed that they would make the educated world appreciate the modern Greeks' "ways of life and morals [*moeurs*], character, and genius". Unfortunately, he noted, educated Western Europeans considered modern Greeks to be pitiful, ignorant, uncultured, "abject" remains of the glorious ancients—a "profane accident thrown into sacred ruins"<sup>14</sup>. Secondly, he wanted

12. Gordon, *Citizens Without Sovereignty*.

13. Galley, *Claude Fauriel*, p. 83, quoting a letter that Fauriel wrote to a friend in 1801. Fauriel worked quietly without seeking fame and was slow to publish much for decades.

14. Claude Fauriel, *Chants populaires de la Grèce moderne*, I, Paris 1824, viii-ix. A similar description of the modern Greeks appeared in Chateaubriand's *Itinéraire de Paris à Jérusalem*, 1811; see Fani-Maria Tsigakou, *The Rediscovery of Greece: Travelers and*

to make known the popular language that grew out of classical Greek. The poetry expressed in that language, he discovered, showed a vigor and beauty that Europeans outside Greece barely suspected.

Fauriel gathered, translated and edited modern Greek songs from 1822 well into 1824. He obtained most of them from some Greeks who were studying or working in Paris and from others who were living as exiles in Italy<sup>15</sup>. His publisher Ambroise Firmin Didot added some songs that he had collected himself during a trip to Greece in 1817. A first volume of Fauriel's anthology —his *Chants populaires de la Grèce moderne*— was published in June 1824 (only several weeks after the death of Byron at Missolonghi) and a second volume the following year. They were the first such collection in all of Europe, and they were France's first books of any contemporary popular songs (not even an anthology of *French* songs had yet been published).

In opposition to Enlightenment and neo-classicist literary judgment, Fauriel admired the "naïveté" in such works —the unsophisticated direct expression of strong emotions ranging from bravery to sorrow that accompanied accounts of spontaneous action. He was especially moved by works originating with the unlettered common people, but he also included some works by the well educated that the people took to heart.

*Painters of the Romantic Era*, New Rochelle, New York 1981, p. 44. See also Galley, *Claude Fauriel*, p. 287, quoting Mérimée's assessment (1846) of Fauriel's anthology: "Many people who regarded the Greeks as a people of *rusés intriguants* recognized them after M. Fauriel as heroes [and] successors of their ancestors".

15. Ibrovac, *Claude Fauriel*, ch. 4. On scholars of Greek songs before Fauriel, see (in addition to Ibrovac's *Claude Fauriel*) the more recent study published in Greek, Alexis Polites's *The Discovery of Greek Folk Songs* (Athens: Center for Modern Greek Research, 1984). See also D. A. Petropoulos, "La Contribution française pour le développement de la science du folklore en Grèce", *Bulletin de l'Association Guillaume Budé* (June 1951), pp. 85-98. I thank Professor Ioannis K. Hassiotis for referring me to these works.

Some of the precursors of Fauriel, such as Pierre-Augustin Guys and F. C. H. L. Pouqueville, wrote travel accounts which gave some limited attention to songs. Other scholarly figures collected Greek songs but never published a full collection. The Germans Werner von Haxthausen and Goethe gave only samples of the songs to Western Europeans. Such Greek scholars as Adamantios Coray (or Korai) and Andréas Moustoxidi, the Slovene philologue Jernej (Bartholomé) Kopitar, and Jakob Grimm, among others, helped direct European attention to modern Greek civilization and collected songs, but did not publish anything like Fauriel's two volumes. Fauriel's collection (with a 140-page "discours préliminaire" and commentary on each song) was fuller, more systematic, more scholarly than any earlier work.

One particularly important one, written by a Greek professor named Rigas teaching in Bucharest, was a patriotic “hymn of war against the Turks” that became a kind of national anthem during the revolt, a Greek counterpart to “La Marseillaise”. The songs of Rigas touched “very sensitive chords in the heart and imagination of his compatriots”, Fauriel stressed. He illustrated the point by telling of a Greek friend’s experience on a trip through a Macedonian village in 1817. There the friend encountered an illiterate butcher boy who immediately asked the traveler to read the songs of Rigas. “The listening boy’s face became inflamed, and all his features [*traits*] expressed exaltation, his opened lips trembled, two torrents of tears fell from his eyes, and all the hair of his chest stood out, moved and tensed excitedly in all directions”. Later the boy said that he asked all visitors to read the songs and that he reacted every time with “the same emotion”<sup>16</sup>. The songs were not of obvious “poetic merit”, Fauriel conceded, but the point of the story was not to glorify the genius of the lyricist. Rather it was to show the depth and power of common people’s emotions, their love of country and keen moral sensibility, and their responsiveness to national poetry.

To Fauriel, popular works like the Greek songs expressed a youthful energy and imagination and a sense of active heroism that was lacking in the “old” peoples of modern Europe. They provided solace and refreshment for world-weary sophisticates in highly developed societies like France. After centuries of effort to refine French literature, after the social and political struggles of the revolutionary period, and after the grand military struggles of the Napoleonic period, unpretentious stories from the untutored were welcome relief to many.

Yet there was clearly more than just an aesthetic interest in literature at work. The cultural was tied to the political. Fauriel brought to his studies a love of liberty for the individual and commitment to independence for a nationality —along with sympathy for the underdog. He was a liberal and a republican who had unhappily endured more than a decade of heavy-handed Napoleonic rule and was now chafing under a reactionary Restoration monarchy. Like most educated Western Europeans in the 1820s, he admired and idealized the Greeks fighting against their Turkish oppressors. In his prospectus dated March 1823, Fauriel

16. Fauriel, *Chants populaires de la Grèce moderne*, II, 15-18.

chided Europeans for having long forgotten the Greek people, “this population still imprinted, despite its servitude, with the stamp [*cachet*] of moral vigor with which nature has marked its ancestors”. He described the Greek struggle as a “gloriously sustained” war of independence<sup>17</sup>. In his “preliminary discourse” to the anthology, he wrote admiringly of the modern Greeks’ “passionate taste for liberty”, in which he saw the ancients living on through their descendants.

In the 1820s, the topics of conquest and popular struggle were at the forefront of much French scholarship. Fauriel’s friend Augustin Thierry was at work on a history of the Norman conquest of England; he and fellow historian François Guizot were also going back into French history to recount the conquests of Gauls and Franks. The theme of popular national struggle for independence and liberty was a favorite of historians critical of the Restoration with its narrow Old-Regime elite back in power, the latest conquerors of the French people. Tied to the contemporary political subtext was a more basic belief in the importance of conflict and conquest in the making of history. Whereas eighteenth-century classical historians recounted the deeds of kings and painted static period tableaux highlighting elites, the Romantic historians (and two decades later, Marx) chose to put the common people and the struggle for liberty at the center of history<sup>18</sup>. That story of struggle had been a common theme of early epics, which grew out of popular songs, according to literary historians since the late-eighteenth-century work of Friedrich August Wolf. In the modern Greek songs about historical events, Fauriel found the makings of new epics, the literary genre that he most admired, enshrining the acts of national history that he considered most important.

The most heroic of the rebels in Fauriel’s account were the *klephtes*—freedom fighters in the mountains, exemplifying a superior power of action. These warriors excelled in fighting thanks to their well-honed combat skills, agility, and courage. Like the ancients, they exercised to develop their physical prowess to the maximum, and they had extraordinary stamina, which permitted them to fight relentlessly through as many as three days and nights. Although the Turks regarded them as cruel

17. Ibrovac, *Claude Fauriel*, pp. 129-130.

18. Réizov, *L’Historiographie romantique française*, pp. 115, 127-130, 754.

brigands, the klephtes had a “noble” set of “morals and feelings”, which included piety, a generous spirit, a staunch loyalty to friends, and a high respect for women, even women of the enemy. As Fauriel described them, they resembled chivalric knights. Their exploits, which formed the lyrics of many popular songs, made them the vanguard of the Greek people in what Fauriel called a “revolution” against a foreign oppressor<sup>19</sup>. “A complete collection of klephtic songs ... would be the veritable history of Greece since the conquest”, Fauriel declared, and it “would be the veritable *Iliad* of modern Greece”<sup>20</sup>.

This Romantic view of the common people as freedom-loving heroes became common under the aristocratically dominated Restoration and the bourgeois-dominated July Monarchy that followed. Fauriel’s penchant for such idealizing populism, however, had definite limits. It did not apply to his countrymen, the contemporary French. He had no warm attachment to the common people of his own home town in particular, the metallurgical workers of smoky Saint-Etienne. In fact, he felt a revulsion toward them that stemmed from the revolutionary period when they unleashed ugly political and social “passions” and internecine hatreds. “*Sad pays*” —that is how he referred to his home area and its inhabitants for the rest of his life<sup>21</sup>.

Fauriel never went to Greece itself to collect songs, but he did search out some from Greeks living in Venice and Trieste during his trip to Italy in the spring of 1823. There he found that educated people, businessmen in particular, had nothing to offer him, but domestics, women, and children did. His main difficulty was in arranging meeting times and overcoming his informants’ fear of being judged inferior by a social superior. His Romantic idealizing of the people ran up against the harsh realities of their poverty as refugees, their weariness from overwork, and their distrust of outsiders<sup>22</sup>. This remained his only attempt at collecting folklore directly from the people.

While expressing admiration for the Greeks’ heroic vision, Fauriel’s

19. Fauriel, *Chants populaires de la Grèce moderne*, I, xliii-lxiii.

20. Fauriel, *Chants populaires de la Grèce moderne*, I, cxxxix.

21. Galley, *Claude Fauriel*, p. 195.

22. Fauriel described these difficulties in letters written in May and June 1824, letters reproduced in Ibrovac, *Claude Fauriel*, pp. 133-134.

commentary made no disparaging remarks about the businessmen. Nor did he fall into the common French stereotyping of the Greeks as the shrewd, even guileful merchants. Romantics —(especially the British) from Burke, Coleridge, Wordsworth, and Carlyle to William Morris—commonly deplored the calculating merchant mentality, which reduces life to the quantifiable and utilitarian. Fauriel represented the Greeks as people with not only a flourishing imagination, but also a heroic energy that manifested itself in business activity as well as in national revolt. Scholars throughout Europe, he chided, have done injustice to the modern Greeks by not recognizing that the admirable “industriousness and enterprising spirit” of the ancients lived on “even under the yoke of the Turks”. Even “under an oppressive and despoiling government” “the Greeks of our days” maintained “an admirable aptitude for navigation and commerce”, another trait connecting them with the revered ancients<sup>23</sup>.

Fauriel, the post-Enlightenment lover of local color, abandoned the condescension of the philosophes toward the less “civilized”, but he nonetheless perpetuated the Enlightenment view of areas beyond Western Europe as “backward”, ultimately destined to move ahead on the Western historical path. The Greeks would become more educated, more like the advanced Western Europeans, and the popular song tradition would die, Fauriel had no doubt. Politically, he expected that they would win their independence and carry out a “national political and moral restoration”. Clearly detesting oppression by foreigners, he did not reveal any more specific expectation about the Greeks’ future. He did not attempt to promote an ideological commitment to any form of government or social structure. He was a classical liberal, a friend of the liberal philosopher Benjamin Constant and the liberal historians Augustin Thierry, Auguste Mignet, Adolphe Thiers, and François Guizot. At the home of Mme Condorcet in Meulan from early 1802 to her death in 1822, he mixed regularly with intellectuals who continued to believe in Enlightenment social and political ideas while they embraced literary ideas and tastes that were Romantic. Fauriel clearly cherished liberty and admired people fighting for their freedom, but he had no sympathy for social revolution. The political and social ideals he favored for others

23. Fauriel, *Chants populaires de la Grèce moderne*, I, viii-ix.

were those that he wanted for his own country: political liberty for the individual and the nation combined with a flourishing cultural life at the local level.

Fauriel belonged to a Romantic movement that was marked by historicist, nostalgic efforts to save pieces of the cultural past and present from oblivion, preserving them like objects for a museum. He was one of a host of historians, literary scholars, and folklorists in France who prized the particular in its specific context rather than the abstract and the universal so dear to the Enlightened. His pioneering work on Greek songs highlighted “local color” found in another time and place, just as his friend Augustin Thierry’s programmatic historical writing had advocated. Like Thierry, Fauriel treasured unaltered primary documents full of telling details that encapsulated changes over time. The “national songs” that filled the first part of his anthology “composed the entire history of the country”, Fauriel maintained. A second part contained fictional pieces that documented the popular imagination of the Greeks. He found the heterogeneous specificity that he savored in both the historical and the imaginary.

Romantics of the 1820s commonly shared what has been called a “tamed Romanticism”<sup>24</sup>, characteristic of the larger period from about 1815 through 1848. That is, they were in retreat from the grand global and even cosmic unifying aspirations of an earlier generation of writers—such mystics, poets, and philosophers as William Blake, young Wordsworth, Friedrich Schlegel, and Novalis. Some of those first-wave Romantics had dreamed of creating a “universal mythology”, a modern synthesis of the best imaginative products of the East and West. That kind of all-embracing high-energy effort burnt itself out by the end of the Napoleonic period and gave way to a more modest hope of treasuring the legacy of a limited area, such as a region. In the forefront of the French regionalists were the admirers of Provençal and Breton literature and folklore. Fauriel himself prized Provençal poetry above all, but he was not wholly “tamed”. He was a transitional figure, a far-ranging researcher who retained some of the cosmopolitan interests of the En-

24. Virgil Nemoianu, *The Taming of Romanticism: European Literature and the Age of Biedermeier*, Cambridge 1984. See also Michael Löwy and Robert Sayre, *Révolution et mélancolie: Le romantisme à contre-courant de la modernité*, Paris 1992, pp. 51-53.

lightenment and of the early Romantics. In studying diverse epics and myths, he wanted to find an underlying unity to them, due to the common origins of all the literatures of medieval Europe, and after his long years of study he maintained that he had discovered at least some of that primordial unity.

The project that he saw as his life work was a comprehensive study of medieval poetry. From the first decade of the century on, he researched the beginnings of new literatures and new civilization in Southern Gaul after the glory days of the Romans and the Latin language. This long work finally came to fruition in the 1830s and 1840s, the last part of his life, the only time in which he held an academic post. Several months after the 1830 Revolution brought in a liberal monarchy with some of his old friends now in power (notably, François Guizot as a cabinet minister), Fauriel was named to a newly created Sorbonne chair of foreign literature. From late 1830 through 1832 he taught a course on Provençal epic poetry and published some of his lecture material in five articles in the *Revue des Deux Mondes*. In 1836 he published four volumes of historical background to his studies of Provençal poetry. Those volumes entitled *Histoire de la Gaule méridionale sous la domination des conquérants germains* were only a third of the large work that he envisaged (but did not live long enough to finish). They treated the early Middle Ages and not his favorite part, which was the flowering of literary culture from 1000 to 1200.

Fauriel's work was part of the general Romantic rehabilitation of the Middle Ages, a response to the Enlightened and the neo-classicists who had scorned the "Dark Ages" and had seen only barbarism and chaos there. He did not, however, share the idealizing views of the Restoration reactionaries, who glorified the medieval era for its religious faith and its putative social harmony rooted in deep-seated deference shown down the ranks of society. To Joseph de Maistre and Louis de Bonald and such German conservatives as Adam Müller, the Middle Ages were a time happily devoid of the critical individualistic and anti-religious spirit that (to their mind) had caused so much trouble for society in the age of the Enlightenment and Revolution. Fauriel's work, in contrast, concentrated on not-yet-well-known glories of medieval secular culture, literature above all. His interest, like the *philosophe* Condorcet's, was in the "progress of the human mind" —the advance of ideas, literature, manners and



morals. One of his original and central theses was that Provençal culture had given rise to full-fledged epics—and not just the famed lyric poems of the troubadours—in the centuries from about 750 to 1080. He prized, for example, the epics of Southern France's leaders fighting against the Saracens and against Carolingian kings. Conceding that most of the epics were lost, he noted surviving specimens and allusions to others. Another and more controversial thesis was that Provençal epics were the source of other French epics in the North and still others developing elsewhere in Europe. Fauriel went so far as to maintain that Carolingian romances and the legends of the Round Table, generally viewed as Breton and Norman, originated in the Midi<sup>25</sup>. Provençal material underwent modification in different places under the influences of "climate, soil, social situation, commercial relations, the results of wars and conquests, and a thousand other circumstances", that give each area's literature "a local physiognomy, an individual character, its own beauties and defects"<sup>26</sup>.

Although Fauriel still attached great importance to struggles against conquerors and literature about those struggles, he now gave more attention to the general theme of civilizing, which had so interested eighteenth-century writers. Unlike the Enlightened thinkers, however, he located the beginnings of modern Europe's civilizing process back in the Middle Ages—and in Provençal poetry specifically. Instead of casting reason and conversation or commerce as the primary agent of change and hallmark of civilization, he attributed the largest role to literature. Above all he strived to show how Provençal poetry, building on classical legacies and influences from the Arabs in Spain, had become infused with more and more refined moral sentiments and had worked to curb the rough manners and brutality of chaotic times. A desire for renown moved poets to refine their works, and a desire for the glory bestowed by poets spurred knights to vie for status by displaying more civilized behavior. From the twelfth century on, he argued, Provençal poetry had spread the new values of chivalry throughout Europe—the gentler noble sentiments and practices of courtly love, honor, and delicate manners.

25. Galley, *Claude Fauriel*, pp. 336-337. This part of Fauriel's argument immediately stirred much controversy and has not been generally accepted. See *idem.*, pp. 355-363.

26. Galley, *Claude Fauriel*, p. 330, quoting lines from Fauriel's inaugural lecture at the Sorbonne in 1830.

In that later medieval era, poets still showed a “savage vigor of imagination”, but they gave love a greater part in the stories. While still performing earlier epics of Carolingian dukes and counts, for example, poets did the civilizing work of “idealizing” and “elevating” them, highlighting not only models of heroic action in battle, but also models of generosity and gallantry. Meanwhile other Provençal literature —ironic and parodic stories— helped civilize by satirizing vices and violence<sup>27</sup>.

Poetry that originated with the common people became a refined repertory of professional singers, the troubadours, and won the favor of elites. This vision of civilizing, in contrast to Norbert Elias’ views a century later, was not so simply one of elite influence exerting itself downward on the rest of society. In Fauriel’s view, it was not the social elites or clergy, but rather the poets and singers who were the shapers of ideals and models for others, and their work drew its vitality from contact with the common people. Poetry —not reason or Christianity— moved humanity forward on the path of “progress” and civilization, and “progress” was not primarily the evolution of political life or individualism, contrary to Sismondi’s and Guizot’s histories. Under the “bourgeois” monarchy of Louis Philippe when Fauriel presented these views, France’s business and professional bourgeoisie was more prominent and more vocal than ever about its vision of the civilizing process —progress seen as the result of hard work, discipline, and a rigorous education. Fauriel’s long-nurtured response gave the honors instead to precapitalist values of refined leisure, the shared enjoyment of poetry and song, and the noble virtues of honor, generosity, and idealized love outside marriage and family.

In his view of society there was no inevitable or logical progress. His history of Southern France concluded with catastrophes. The beautifully civilizing poetry and its Midi homeland fell tragically to the forces of powerful invading armies in the thirteenth century. The conquest entailed widespread slaughter. The warring powers of the North violently imposed their rule and their version of the French language on the South. Fauriel, who understood such ruptures in history all too well from his

27. Claude Fauriel, *Histoire de la poésie provençale*, Paris 1846, 3 vols. The ideas summed up here are set out in the first volume. An English translation by G. J. Adler, *History of Provençal Poetry* by C. C. Fauriel (original, 1860), has been reprinted by Haskell House Publishers, 1966.

own experience during the French Revolution, harbored no optimism about history and no belief in any uniform evolutionary course.

His was a melancholic outlook, so characteristic of the Romantics, and his literary interests and tastes were also Romantic, yet he held many ideas that came from the Enlightenment. Scholars have long tried to find a consistency in what they call Romanticism —“a significative structure” or “coherent totality”<sup>28</sup> or even simply a set of themes. One recent attempt is Michael Löwy and Robert Sayre’s book *Révolte et mélancholie* (1992), which identifies Romanticism with a fundamental criticism of modernity. The case of Fauriel reminds us how difficult it is to move from such a general construction to individual human beings. Politically Fauriel sided with the Enlightened cause of a small liberty-respecting state run by an efficient bureaucracy, yet at the same time he shared the Romantic dream of an “organic” society, a vibrant and integrated cultural and social whole, all strata from the common people to the upper echelons sharing literature and moral values. Such a view of society seems implicitly to be a reaction against the middle-class ideal of individual autonomy —or reaction against feared atomization and social alienation following the demise of old corporate structures. Yet Fauriel did not express such fear or evidently feel it. He loved solitude and filled it with his studies and reverie. He also made a place in his life for sociability in the eighteenth-century tradition, participating in salons and engaging in correspondence with scholarly friends in France and abroad.

His view of history and thought, as presented above, does fit the common understanding of “Romantic” in many ways; clearly he felt regret about a “disenchantment of the world” (Max Weber’s famous phrase) and looked back fondly to ages when poetry and imagination flourished, when a luxuriant mind for the marvelous was common. Yet he had an Enlightenment or proto-postivist view of his own research and writing. Carefully amassing information, he prided himself on linguistic precision and clarity and scrupulous documentation; he made no effort to write with an emotionally stirring or elegant style; he put a premium on straightforward presentation of argument and evidence in a scientific spirit (he had a youthful love of botany), and he believed in the “progress” of scholarship, to which he considered himself a contributor

28. Löwy and Sayre, *Révolte et mélancholie*, pp. 30-31.

with his own discoveries of “truth” about the past.

Unlike most folklorists and literary scholars after him, Fauriel remained interested in great diversity and did not fixate on one area or nation. The home of Provençal literature was not just a French region or even exclusively France; it was the entire South of France and Catalonia. From there, Fauriel demonstrated, Provençal poetry spread to the royal courts of Aragon and Castile, to the German Emperors’ courts in Sicily, and courts in the North of Italy. His interest was in a supra-national Mediterranean culture similar to what Fernand Braudel chose to study more than a century later. And in his course in the winter of 1831-1832, when he returned to Greek popular songs for his Sorbonne lectures, he added treatment of Serb songs, comparing the two (though he did not know Serbian and depended on German translations). Most French folklorists of the nineteenth century, in contrast, remained emotionally attached to their own region or *pays*. They felt nostalgic for a local flowering of popular traditions, and they were melancholic about the destructive advance of modernity. Fauriel’s vision was larger geographically (extending to many cultures), and his interest in the past less exclusive. As the *Chants populaires de la Grèce moderne* made clear, he appreciated contemporary creation as well as cultures remote in time and space. As he explained to a friend who was fascinated with legends and sorcerers and sprites, “I love life everywhere; and that of eras of ignorance and barbarism offers things that please and charm me as much as anyone perhaps. But I would not want you to have an exclusive and absolute enthusiasm for these things; ... we must understand the past and love it, but not at the expense of either the present or the future”<sup>29</sup>.

Across Europe, other universities followed the example of the Sorbonne and created chairs of modern foreign and comparative literature<sup>30</sup>. Fauriel had the greatest influence in those scholarly fields. Like Fauriel, many writers, painters, philosophers, and literary scholars through the nineteenth century sought a colorful exoticism of thought and image to the East—an East far beyond Serbia and Greece (in the European mind, the East or the Orient went from the Mediterranean to China, Edward

29. Letter to Mary Clarke, 15 August 1822; Alfred Galpin, *Fauriel in Italy: Unpublished Correspondence (1822-1825)*, Rome 1962, pp. 43-44.

30. Ibrovac, *Claude Fauriel*, pp. 304-305.

Said tells us). At the Sorbonne in 1833 and 1834 Fauriel himself spent much time lecturing on Sanskrit literature and language after his course on Greek and Serbian songs. Orientalist studies, as Raymond Schwab and Edward Said have shown, provided a rich source of alternatives to the European Enlightenment. In the literature and religious thought of ancient India (to take a prime example), European scholars found deeply philosophical and poetic world views that affirmed not the autonomous individual in a universe of clear boundaries, but rather souls forever mutating, fragments “of a multivalent whole”. They delighted in discovering cultures in which rationalist thinking was not held to be a key to reality; they found “an Orient where one did not have to choose between yes and no”. The “Orient”, Swab has asserted, brought out in European minds the “supreme Romanticism”<sup>31</sup>.

After Fauriel’s time, French seekers of local color also looked more and more closely within their own national territory and collected their own people’s “primitive” or “natural” poetry, songs, and legends. Most of those rescuers of local color worked without the scholarly aid of a Fauriel and did not invoke a grand literary and historical tradition. As independent scholars or amateurs, they carried on their researches in their home *pays* and in Paris libraries without recognition in the universities. Unlike Fauriel, they did not look back for civilizing contributions through the centuries, but rather for a quaint wholesome way of local life and imaginative lore, frozen in some virtually sacred tradition.

One major exception was one case of regionalism on which Fauriel did have strong influence: a Provençal movement, championing the language and literature that the Northerners had trampled back in the thirteenth century. Through the second half of the nineteenth century, the leader of that movement was the poet Frédéric Mistral, who founded his association of Provençal poets, the *Félibres* (“men of free spirit”), in 1854. Mistral adopted Fauriel’s ideas about the beauties of the language and literature and the importance of the *troubadours* as civilizers of a large international sphere of Provençal influence. And like Fauriel, he attached greatest importance to the region’s culture and made no

31. Raymond Schwab, *The Oriental Renaissance: Europe’s Rediscovery of India and the East 1680-1880*, trans. Gene Patterson-Bleck and Victor Reinking, New York 1984, pp. 410, 482-485; Edward Said, *Orientalism*, New York 1979.

attempt to develop a political movement, even though he was more hostile to the national state —particularly to the egalitarian and anti-clerical Third Republic— than Fauriel had been<sup>32</sup>.

### *Local-Color Activists*

For some, the work of rescuing endangered cultures was not just an academic or antiquarian effort. Some Romantics intended their work to bring changes in society and culture. Hopes for reversing Enlightenment and Paris influences waxed strong in the first half of the nineteenth century and in the last third of the century. Amateur scholars of folklore and local literature worked independently to do justice to their beloved *pays* —and to strengthen its sense of identity, its self-esteem vis-à-vis Paris. Some, like Mistral, worked to revive a language or *patois* or traditional costumes and fêtes.

In the decades after 1870, while the strongest historical forces of the time were bringing about a fuller national unification under the young third Republic (as Eugen Weber has shown), collectors of folklore gathered momentum in many parts of France. Although those folklorists now tried to be “scientific” —more exacting and thorough than their Romantic predecessors, they still remained adversaries of the rationalist forces of the state, bureaucracy, and new nationalizing laic school system.

A more directly and openly political opposition to centralization also developed in the *fin de siècle* —an opposition that promoted regionalism. Indictments of Paris and of central government centered on the harmful effects for the rest of the country. Over-centralization in Paris turned France into the “French desert”, as one book provocatively put it later (1947)<sup>33</sup>. Above all, provincial resistance movements took aim at Parisian cultural hegemony and governmental concentration. Reaction against commercial and religious centralizers was less evident. While many regionalists (like Mistral) put their hopes in cultivating local literature and getting it proper recognition, others agitated for reform measures to decentralize state administration. Some even called for a new system of federalism to replace the unitary state —or even

32. Robert Gildea, *The Past in French History*, New Haven and London 1994, pp. 208-290.

33. Jean-François Gravier, *Paris et le désert français*, Paris 1947.

autonomy for the region.

France has thus experienced long-term conflict between its Enlightenment tradition and Romantic counter-movements, between rationalist nationalizing and regionalist opposition. Neither side, however, has clung to a pure program. The decentralizers have sometimes advanced their cause by appropriating the work of the rationalist centralizers. The Third Republic's system of free primary schools, for example, laid the basis for a homogenizing national culture based on print, but mass literacy also spurred an outpouring of regional and local-color literature. A literary movement of hundreds of regionalist writers developed from the turn of the century to the Second World War<sup>34</sup>. Many of them, especially the young, saw themselves as an avant-garde struggling for literary decentralization, struggling against the entrenched powers of politics and literature concentrated in the capital. So the apparently "progressive" forces of Paris-led "civilizing" and democratization produced not only a more nationally unified culture, but also facilitated a burgeoning cultural regionalism.

### *Twentieth-Century Variations*

In the 1930s and 1940s, regionalists gained a surprising new ally: the French state, which had hitherto identified itself with a nationalizing and egalitarian mission. Leaders of the late Third Republic backed efforts to collect and preserve folklore and to make it more visible in the modern nation. Why that shift of positions? Leaders began to lose confidence in the old vision of France as a prime carrier of modernity when the Depression hit. At the same time they backed away from the belief in a unitary forward thrust toward the future. The provinces and the diversity of local production looked increasingly like saving alternatives to the downward drag of the industrialized world economy. Since the thirties, regionalists have lent particular importance to economic issues —especially efforts to encourage tourism and to aid locally controlled industries and agriculture— but without separating the economic from the social and cultural. In the Vichy era, anti-Paris champions of the provinces and local-color traditions also put a high value on revivifying

34. Anne-Marie Thiesse, "Le Mouvement littéraire régionaliste (1900-1945)", *Ethnologie Française* XVIII (1988, 3) 220-231.

rural communitarian life, rejecting industrialism.

But the most distinctive new twist in this century has been a radical shift in thinking about the locus of local color. After the First World War, standardization and other mass production techniques became the quintessential forms of a universalizing modernity, and they were identified with the United States. Standardization showed up not only in mass-production techniques and consumer goods, but also in American-produced culture—notably jazz and movies. A tidal wave of American mechanically-reproduced cultural products hit France in the form of jazz recordings and films—and films with sound after 1927. American standardization became the *bête noire* threatening imaginative, diversified human life and culture. A homogenizing modernity from abroad seemed to endanger France's national culture. French civilization as a whole was now regarded as a preserve of non-standardized local color, to be defended against American ways.

Following the Second World War, particularly in the 1950s and 1960s, again defenders of local color directed their primary attacks at pernicious American influences. Writer Alain de Benoist, for example, argued that American culture, marked by a stultifying uniformity of food and life-styles, both thrived on and promoted universalism and cosmopolitanism together with an egalitarian individualism that threatened to destroy "peoples" and "cultures" worldwide. In this view, the United States was the principal danger not only to France, but to Western Civilization<sup>35</sup>. French writers working these anti-American themes saw themselves as defenders of difference. Ironically, they cared most about French difference, believed in the superiority of French *civilisation*, and clung to a sense of its universal mission.

In the course of the 1960s another current of anti-Enlightenment thought and feeling waxed strong in reaction to the rigid paternalist government of the aging Charles de Gaulle and the drive toward a technocratic society oriented to productivity and profit. Through years of economic boom and the rapid expansion of the university system, youth and intellectuals grew increasingly critical of a self-satisfied bourgeois utilitarianism and materialism. The open revolt that broke out

35. Richard Kuisel, *Seducing the French: The Dilemma of Americanization*, Berkeley 1993, pp. 217-218.



in May 1968 pitted passion and imagination against technology and rational calculation. The “almost revolution” came to an end within a month, but it left in its wake a longer-lived fascination with “primitive” or archaic alternative cultures, a strengthening of regionalism (especially Occitan, Breton, Basque and Corsican) and an ecological movement — a “new Rousseauism”, as some observers have written<sup>36</sup>. Responding to those movements of public opinion, the French Ministry of Culture in the 1970s gave new attention and support to folklore studies as efforts to safeguard a precious “patrimony”. In the 1970s and 1980s the state also adopted new administrative regionalist structures, but they did not lend support to the regionalism of traditional regions or provinces. Instead, the reforms were in the Old-Regime monarchical and Enlightenment tradition, serving the economic and political interests of the state and its central planning<sup>37</sup>.

Through the last two centuries, then, the interacting Enlightenment and Romantic legacies in France have produced persistent tensions: centralizing rationalist forces and centrifugal counterforces have collided and evolved together from one unstable arrangement to another. Enlightenment-inspired efforts have been countered by successive revivals of tradition and “inventions of tradition”. Those revivals have been limited in effect but inextinguishable expressions of enduring interests. In this long view, Romantic folklorists were not just backward-looking articulators of melancholy and regret for the dying and disappearing. They were also precursors of a strong line of successors defending cultural diversity. Concern about conformity, cultural flatness, and sameness has been strong in France for most of this century, and it has become a concern for the larger world as well. What once looked like nostalgia and sympathy for lost causes is now an up-to-date post-modernist love of pluralism.

In this closing period of the century and the millennium, when mass-

36. Löwy and Sayre, *Révolte et mélancholie*. See also Claude Karnoouh, “The Lost Paradise of Regionalism: The Crisis of Post-Modernity in France”, *Telos* 67 (Spring 1986) 11-26.

37. See Maurice Agulhon, “Conscience nationale et conscience régionale en France de 1815 à nos jours”, in his *Histoire vagabonde*, vol. II: *Idéologies et politique dans la France du XIXe siècle*, Paris 1988, and Jean-Marc Ohnet, *Histoire de la décentralisation française*, Paris 1996.

culture media seem to be omnipresent and dominant, what have champions of local color been doing for their cause in the heartland of the Enlightenment? Both individual liberty and local cultures have obviously been at risk, but opponents of a hegemonic culture have worried less about a crushed individualism than about the loss of regional and French national culture. They still have much to worry about, and they still revel in glimpses of a bygone local life, but they do not so strongly idealize that past as nineteenth-century Romantics did. Today the French seek to satisfy their Romantic taste for life of distant times by going to local historical festivals and by taking in such other recreations of history as novels, memoirs, and films. Yet, these same people, the many who can be described as cultural romantics, want (as Fauriel did) to enjoy the benefits of efficient, rational government and individual rights that are one legacy of the Enlightenment.

The case of the French may serve to remind us that the present, so often identified as postmodern, is neither simply a decentered world of diversity nor one of globalization. Culturally hegemonic forces appropriate elements from diverse smaller cultures and make a new mix —global currents coexisting with persistent local color. New regional cultures are emerging (Catalan, Lombard, Bavarian, for example), transcending national boundaries. Old and new ways combine kaleidoscopically. “No matter how powerful or abstract the networks of global exchange or how remote their nodes of control, each transaction needs articulation in some particular place, in some meaningful idiom, under specific circumstances”, two historians of world history have recently observed. “Processes of globalization must come to ground in concrete social, cultural, and political contexts that move people to purposive ends and thus allow them in some fashion to represent themselves”<sup>38</sup>. A main source of those idioms and representations is, of course, the history of the particular localities, history both written and remembered. Amid the globalizing changes, it is clear today, multiple pasts are continuously being recovered by writers, filmmakers, and scholars, who add the colors of other times to an all-too-familiar present, as Claude Fauriel and many Romantics did for their era.

38. Michael Geyer and Charles Bright, “World History in a Global Age”, *The American Historical Review* (Oct. 1995) 1057.