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# The Anglo-American synecdoche? Thomas Jefferson's British legacy 1800–1865

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This article is focused on one of the behemoths of American history, Thomas Jefferson. Unlike most studies, however, it removes the Virginian statesman from his familiar American context in order to illustrate his significance as a British icon. It considers the use of his image in British discourse between 1800 and 1865 to demonstrate the resonance of his name for British people of the period. In doing so it examines the uses of Jefferson's image with reference to democracy and slavery to illustrate how the ambiguity and seeming contradictions in the deployment of his image are indicative of a broader debate in nineteenth century Britain about the meaning of the USA. Furthermore it demonstrates, through the use of Jefferson's image, the steady but uneven process of disillusion with American politics and society among British reformers.

**Keywords:** Thomas Jefferson; democracy; slavery; Anglo-American; Britain; USA

In 1860, as the American political system teetered on the brink of collapse, an article in the popular British magazine, the *Saturday Review*, pointedly described the current New York Senator, William H. Seward, as 'truly the creator of the Republican party'. This observation had obvious contemporary resonance for British readers who peered anxiously across the Atlantic as relations between North and South broke down with the election of Abraham Lincoln. More surprisingly, however, this same article informed readers that it had been Thomas Jefferson who had forged the great rival of the Republicans, the Democrats – this despite Jefferson's death 34 years earlier. The legacy which the so-called 'Sage of Monticello' had in Britain is encapsulated by this statement which was made so many years after his death, yet this legacy has received little attention from scholars. The importance of Jefferson to the study of the USA domestically is attested to, at a very basic level, by the number of biographies written about his life as well as the multiple attempts made by historians to establish the roots of his political thought and his effectiveness in government. Even today Jefferson continues to possess a remarkably strong hold on the imagination of the American people.[1]

In 1998 the scholars Peter Onuf and Jan Lewis distilled Jefferson's importance to the USA down describing him as an 'American synecdoche'. In doing so they contended that even while 'Jefferson scholars have not dissolved themselves into their subject … they do generally assume, either explicitly or implicitly, that Jefferson is in some sense a proxy for the nation'. The concept of the American

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synecdoche is an intriguing one encompassing what Onuf and Lewis describe as 'the powerful cultural imperative to make Thomas Jefferson represent America in order that we may judge the country right or wrong'.[2]

The significance of Jefferson to the story of the USA, and the continued preoccupation with him as the personification of the nation has, however, come at the expense of considering his international resonance. In fact despite Conor Cruise O'Brien's informative *The Long Affair: Thomas Jefferson and the French Revolution* the perceived importance of Jefferson as a transatlantic figure even today is still best summed up in Robert Kelley's 1967 work *The Transatlantic Persuasion: The Liberal Democratic Mind in the Age of Gladstone*. Kelley's work outlined the contours of mid- and late-Victorian liberalism in both Britain and the USA, and placed Jefferson alongside Adam Smith and Edmund Burke as the progenitors of this ideology. Even while doing this, however, Kelley dismissed the influence of Jefferson in Britain stating that 'the British paid little attention to Jefferson', and suggesting that the intellectual position which he held in the USA was fulfilled by Burke in a British context.[3] This article contends that despite the dearth of scholarly attention Jefferson *was* a significant figure in nineteenth century British political thought. In doing this it emphasises the powerful associations that the image of Jefferson evoked when used by the British during political discussions. The study also aims to demonstrate that the American synecdoche concept (which posits Jefferson as a personification of the nation) provides a valuable lens through which to view British engagements with the USA. This value stems from the fact that the British recognised his significance to the nation something the liberal activist and early feminist Harriet Martineau summed up in 1837: 'his influence was greater than that of any other President, except Washington'.[4] Before proceeding to examine his legacy it is necessary to provide an overview of the personal connections Jefferson had with Britain.

During the spring of 1786 Jefferson spent a short time in Britain with his fellow revolutionary John Adams. The visit they made was particularly notable for one key incident. This was a levee during which King George III turned his back on the two American statesmen in a very public snub. Jefferson noted in his diary after this event that 'the nation hates us, their ministers hate us, and their king more than all other men'. Jefferson's private statement here effectively encapsulated his post-revolutionary belief in an intensely anti-American Britain. It was this belief that mainstream Britons were aggressively anti-American that led him to infuse his own political discourse with various Anglophobic sentiments. Yet for all the Anglophobic rhetoric popularly associated with him it is impossible to understand Jefferson without an acknowledgement of his indebtedness to a particularly British political heritage. Nowhere was this inheritance clearer than in his use of 'Norman Yoke' imagery. The theory of the 'Norman Yoke' was well entrenched in Britain, and involved the construction of a historical narrative which claimed that the Norman conquest had imposed various constraints on the English people and eroded traditional Anglo-Saxon freedoms. Jefferson frequently claimed for himself the role of a crusader fighting for these traditional rights both before and after the American Revolution.[5] Consequently, as much as he may have wanted to portray himself as an American through his Anglophobic rhetoric, Jefferson spoke the same political language as many British reformers.

In addition to his intellectual kinship with progressive politics Jefferson maintained personal connections with radical political figures for many years after the War of Independence. He developed relationships with Richard Price, Frances Wright and the utopian socialist Robert Owen who described Jefferson, on one occasion, as 'my warm friend and disciple'. The veteran British reformer Major John Cartwright corresponded frequently with both Jefferson and Adams, even sending both men copies of his 1825 book *The English Constitution Produced and Illustrated*. Interestingly, parts of the correspondence between Cartwright and Jefferson attest to the fact that despite his apparent Anglophobia the Virginian statesman explicitly tied himself to the political and cultural 'Saxon' diaspora. He even congratulated Cartwright on one occasion for having 'deduced the Constitution of the English nation from its rightful root, the Anglo-Saxon'. It was not simply political radicals in Britain who were acquainted with Jefferson. He had mainstream Whig contacts and engaged in an intermittent correspondence with the father of British Whiggery, Charles James Fox.[6] Long after the revolution and his two terms as president (1801–1809) therefore Jefferson was an active participant in a flourishing Anglo-American political dialogue.

## Jefferson as a political radical

The lack of attention paid to Jefferson in an international context generally and a British one more specifically seems all the more remarkable given his authorship of the Declaration of Independence, a document that the historian Alexander Boulton claimed 'has been recited by downtrodden groups throughout the world as they struggled against political oppression'. This was certainly true in the British case as the declaration provided an inspiration for British reformers during the 1770s and 1780s. Even though the French Revolution and the wave of popular loyalism that swept Britain during the Napoleonic Wars led to American ideas being tarred with the brush of Jacobinism it is remarkable how the USA endured as a political reference point for British radicals into the next century. Early nineteenth century reformers such as T.J. Wooler, Robert Owen, Allen Davenport, Francis Place, John Cartwright and Jeremy Bentham all expressed admiration for aspects of the American system in their journalism and speeches. Similarly parliamentarian Whigs, at least before the 1832 Reform Act, waxed lyrical about the perceived cheapness and accountability of government in the USA. A later generation of liberals in the 1840 and 1850s including John Bright and Richard Cobden also responded positively to the USA as the embodiment of 'progress'. While it would be misleading to assume that America always fulfilled the role of reforming icon it is clear that the USA had a reputation as the 'asylum of liberty'. This was an image that was indebted to the Declaration of Independence, the early republican leaders and Thomas Jefferson in particular.[7]

The British did not neglect the emphasis on Jefferson in the American national narrative, and rather than being subsumed by the iconic status of the USA he was frequently utilised as a proxy for it. The radical *Poor Man's Guardian* newspaper, for example, quoted at length from a letter sent by Jefferson to Colonel Humphreys in 1787 in which the American had offered a detailed critique of monarchy. Similarly another radical publication, *Cleave's Penny Gazette of Variety*, offered readers an anecdote about Jefferson in an 1839 edition in which an American inn-keeper

refused Jefferson accommodation believing he was a farmer because of the muddy boots he was wearing. After finding that his guest was, in fact, the Vice-President, the landlord promised he could find a room to which Jefferson responded 'I appreciate[d] his kind intentions; but if he had no room for the muddy farmer he shall have none for the Vice-President'. Another issue of the same newspaper made the Jefferson that many British political radicals wanted to embrace even more clear by describing him in unmistakable terms as 'the most democratic of the revolutionary leaders'.[8]

Long after his death the ex-President retained symbolic power in Britain particularly for the Chartists who dominated popular reform in the 1830s and 1840s. Jefferson was even included in a group engraving of early American presidents offered to readers of the wildly successful Chartist newspaper the *Northern Star* in November 1850. This engraving is worthy of note as it was part of a series of 34 prints offered by the newspaper. By their presence in this series the US Presidents (Jefferson included) were placed within the canon of radical British leaders which incorporated William Cobbett, Henry 'Orator' Hunt, Joseph Rayner Stephens and key Chartists such as Feargus O'Connor and James 'Bronterre' O'Brien.[9] Although this was a group image and not Jefferson alone it located him firmly within the tradition of the American Presidents as images of reform in Britain and, more broadly, as part of an international iconography of radicalism along with contemporary revolutionaries like Louis Blanc, John Mitchel and Lajos Kossuth. In both the visual depictions and written accounts noted Jefferson was utilised explicitly by British radicals as a symbol of American politics in its most positive form. He was, to these authors, a figure who embodied the American political system that they idealised.

## Jefferson, the mob and despotism

While for some Thomas Jefferson, as a primary architect of the USA, represented the positive aspects of political reform others used his name as a byword for everything that was wrong with America. Jefferson developed a particularly intimate and damaging association with the British narrative that claimed a democracy would inevitably end in a dictator supported by the 'mob'. Events in France, a nation that had gone from a revolutionary democracy through to an empire increased these fears to fever pitch as many Britons felt the republican system itself had been discredited. In an American context the narrative of a descent into despotism was utilised particularly aggressively during the 1807–1809 trade embargo. This was an attempt by Jefferson (then President) to conduct transatlantic commercial warfare in response to British breaches of neutrality. The policy itself was far from unanimously popular in the USA, and was implemented against a backdrop of opposition using what Forrest McDonald has described as 'a fifteen-month reign of oppression and repression that was unprecedented in American history'.[10]

Crucially Jefferson's seemingly despotic desire to force the policy on an unwilling populace was picked up on in Britain by one of his most vocal critics, the Tory-radical William Cobbett, who saw it as indicative of the Virginian's dictatorial tendencies. Cobbett's unique relationship with both Jefferson and the USA provides a fascinating insight into the complex nature of British interactions with American ideals. Born in Surrey in 1763 Cobbett slalomed between radicalism and Toryism throughout his life

with his only consistent cause being that of 'English liberty'. After moving to Philadelphia (Pennsylvania) he began printing under the pseudonym Peter Porcupine in July 1796 with the express purpose encouraging Americans to reject the French Revolution and embrace Anglophile policies. Upon returning to Britain Cobbett quickly set about discouraging the British people from embracing American republicanism through his journalism. According to the scholar David A. Wilson Cobbett's 1803–1809 work is striking for the 'sheer intensity of [his] anti-Americanism'. Even though in 1810 Cobbett underwent something of a conversion in Newgate prison that made him more sympathetic to the American system his critiques of Jefferson printed in Britain remained a powerful indictment of the statesman. Essentially Jefferson seemed to fit into Cobbett's political framework as an Anglophobe despot undermining the 'English liberty' that he had hoped the American Revolution would allow to flourish. Nowhere was this Jeffersonian despotism clearer from Cobbett's perspective than with the embargo.[11] A similarly effective illustration of British views of the embargo was provided by the political caricaturist George Cruikshank. In a satirical cartoon produced in 1808 (Figure 1) Cruikshank showed Jefferson pursuing his 'philosophical' scheme despite the resistance of the American population. In doing so he criticised the president for enacting the anti-British embargo, and suggested that he ignored the wishes of his own people in doing so.

The idea of Jefferson as a despot or the dictator of the USA invoked by Cruikshank was frequently extended beyond the embargo dispute into more general discussions of his political personality and mode of conducting government. In his


Figure 1. George Cruikshank 'the happy effects of that grand system of shutting ports against the English!!' 1808 (Courtesy of the Library of Congress, Prints & Photographs Division LC-USZC4-6235).

popular *Weekly Political Register* Cobbett commented in April 1808 that Jefferson, while president, had actually taken on the aspect of a European potentate. He claimed that the president had encouraged Americans to think of him as 'Thomas' to reflect his status as a monarch. Similarly Cobbett criticised the attempts of Jefferson's party to control government with their threat 'to publish the names of all those members of Congress, who speak, or vote against the measures of the President'. Speaking more broadly Cobbett described the case of an American arrested in Virginia who had been left to die in jail while awaiting trial for libel against Jefferson. Cobbett may have been unusually stark in his criticisms of the president as a despot but he was not alone in claiming the image of him, not for the iconography of radical progress, but as an example of radicalism gone badly awry.[12] Cobbett, with his adherence to a form of radicalism which looked back to an imagined past, provides a useful illustration of the ideas which underpinned criticisms of Jefferson as a despot and mob orator. To British observers who drew on the same political ideals as Cobbett it appeared that Jefferson had betrayed the radical heritage he had received from Britain.

As the nineteenth century progressed America's status as a symbol for British radicals and reformers was steadily eroded. The historian Frank Thistlethwaite maintained that many in Britain saw Jacksonian America as an 'incandescent example', and certainly some such as the Chartist leader Peter Murray McDouall vocally advocated the Jacksonian system in Britain. Yet McDouall's viewpoint was far from unanimous even among radicals. His fellow Chartists Feargus O'Connor and William Aitken actually cited the USA as an example of a political system that had failed to fulfil its potential. Mainstream reformers were similarly divided in their view of the USA. So while Cobden and Bright continued to hold the nation up as a glowing example through to the 1860s, Charles Dickens became disillusioned with American politics during the 1840s. Dickens's fellow liberal Frances Trollope drew on the tradition of Jefferson as a dictator who harnessed mob power to criticise American politics in her 1837 novel *The Life and Adventures of Jonathan Jefferson Whitlaw*. The title character's name was clearly intended to be significant as it fused Jefferson with Jonathan (i.e. Brother Jonathan, the caricatured personification of the USA). Her text itself included a particularly telling scene in which the title character encouraged a southern pro-slavery mob with a rabble rousing stump speech. In this scene Trollope invoked slavery and the mob to her readers in one powerful passage that saw a form of politics (the popular mob) which few in Britain would countenance being actively encouraged by a character who symbolised both the nation and its most iconic statesman.[13]

In an article in the periodical *Age and Argus* in 1843 that discussed the early American President Jefferson was unique as being the only one given the preface 'his excellency' in inverted commas. From the context of the article this is clearly intended in a satirical sense to suggest that he took the role of potentate upon himself during his two terms in office. The *Age and Argus* rendering of Jefferson moved him towards the position of a royal despot manipulating the populace rather than implementing their will much as Cobbett and Cruikshank had suggested 40 years earlier. In a review of a critical biography of Jefferson written in France the *Morning Post* described how, under his watch, 'this reign of universal suffrage was first introduced, and every barrier to the impetuosity of popular passion was thrown down'. The work which the *Post* had reviewed was aggressively anti-Jefferson and

emphasised in particular 'the influence exercised by Jefferson on the institutions of the United States'. This was a sentiment that the reviewer made clear he heartily agreed with.[14] The range of contradictions at work between Jefferson as an icon of democracy and as a despotic statesman are indicative of the potential power he had as a proxy for the USA among the British populace. His image was so malleable that some radicals, such as Martineau, embraced him as an icon of democracy (even after the trade embargo) while others including Trollope and Cobbett saw him as the embodiment of the worst of the American political system as it declined into a dictatorship.

By the 1850s few British liberals and radicals held up the US democratic system as a model to be emulated. The form of politics they saw in America was intimately associated with the person of Jefferson and debates about the nation frequently saw his name deployed. In an exchange of letters in 1856 between himself and the American Jefferson biographer Henry S. Randall the liberal politician T.B. Macaulay made clear the size of the chasm he felt existed between English Whiggery and Jeffersonian democracy. He confidently claimed that the latter of these systems would lead to the destruction of liberty and civilization. Jefferson here represented not structured liberal reform but was instead he was the harbinger of anarchy.[15] The close association between the image of Jefferson and the most negative aspects of the American political system is illustrative of the divisive nature of the USA from a British perspective. The reputation of the nation as a model polity for British reformers was steadily eroded between 1800 and 1850 to be replaced by cynicism over the mob rule and party control that appeared to characterise the nation. Crucially, however, the use of Jefferson's image illustrates that this decline was not a coherent one. Radicals, Chartists and liberals actively debated the meaning of the USA since, even if it was no longer a reform icon that could be uncritically embraced, its founding principles were still those which reform minded British observers could idealise. Debating the meaning of Jefferson, at least until he could be replaced by a new proxy for the USA in British discourse, was key to these discussions as the British attempted either to explain the decline of nation from the status of a model polity or to reinvigorate the USA as a reforming symbol.

## Jefferson the Francophile

Integral to the use of Jefferson as an illustration of the negative aspects of the USA was his apparently intimate association with France. The relationship appeared frequently in discussions of him, and it seemed to some in Britain that Jefferson presented an analogue with either the leaders of the French terror or Napoleon. William Cobbett was particularly vocal about this connection reprinting a number of his Peter Porcupine publications in pamphlet form in Britain which emphasised the Franco-Jeffersonian relationship. He claimed, for instance, that Jefferson possessed a 'partiality for the destructive system of the upstart rulers of France', and even suggested that Jefferson's successful election campaign in 1800 had been a product of a French diplomatic conspiracy to undermine Britain. The connection was thrown into particular sharp relief during the aforementioned trade embargo. Cobbett deployed the Francophile image of Jefferson with enthusiasm in the period telling readers of *Cobbett's Weekly Political Register* in 1807 that:

> it would seem that Mr. Thomas Jefferson has some very large views respecting the exercise of our naval power; and that, in short, it is his wish to co-operate with Napoleon, in the great undertaking of securing '*the freedom of the seas*'.

Or, in other words, the annihilation of that part of our power, which is the only means of preserving our independence as a nation'. The connection to Napoleon is worthy of comment here as it indicates a certain geopolitical resonance in the deployment of Jefferson's image. The Napoleonic Wars stimulated an outburst of loyalism in Britain and the association between the Francophile Jefferson and Napoleonic France, in addition to his explicitly pro-French policies, suggested a close connection between the USA and Britain's major international rival.[16]

Similarly both the *Morning Post* and another edition of *Cobbett's Weekly Political Register* described Jefferson as a 'Frenchified' president, who, in the *Morning Post* account was an avowed Napoleonic sympathiser. An anonymous correspondent wrote to *The Times* in 1808 with the same emphasis claiming that Jefferson had constructed the embargo as an attack on the British. The writer also alleged that the president had told French Ambassador Turreau that 'the Embargo which appears to hit France and Britain equally … is for a fact more prejudicial to the latter than the other'. George Cruikshank's 1808 cartoon also provides evidence of the apparent Francophilia of the policy (see Figure 1). Not only was Jefferson shown as pursuing the policy against the will of the majority of the American people but also Napoleon was illustrated as the power behind the throne. Cruikshank's work also picked up on Jefferson's perceived desire to be an autocrat with Napoleon tempting him with the promise that 'you shall be king hereafter' in reference to the witches in William Shakespeare's *MacBeth*'.[17]

For the British Jefferson's perceived Francophilia continued to be a valuable point of reference long after the end of the Napoleonic Wars and the former presidents death in 1826. This was particularly true during diplomatically tense moments such as the negotiations over the Webster–Ashburton Treaty in 1842 which was drafted to solve problems on the American-Canadian border. The periodical *John Bull* tied the tensions of these negotiations back to Jefferson and his policies in its 11 February 1843 edition. Speaking broadly the author described Jefferson as 'one of the bitterest enemies of England', and claimed that the original solution to the American-Canadian border had been purposefully scuppered by him in 1803. This same article also made explicit connections to the French revolutionary legacy describing Jefferson as a 'man who uttered the doctrine at which Robespierre would have blushed'. Jefferson's infamous 1787 letter to William Smith within which he claimed that 'the tree of liberty must be refreshed from time to time with the blood of tyrants and patriots' would seem to suggest that these criticisms were at least partially grounded in reality. Posthumously, therefore, Jefferson had considerable power as a symbol of Jacobinism, a political tag that was as distasteful to liberals as Tories. It was with the idea of Jacobin violence in mind that Charles Dickens, in his 1844 novel *The Life and Adventures of Martin Chuzzlewit*, appeared to invoke the tree of liberty letter directly in a discussion of the US political system. Dickens had an American named Jefferson Brick announce at one point that 'the libation of freedom … must be quaffed in blood'.[18] It is impossible not to be struck by the similarity here between the imagery used by Dickens and Jefferson's letter to Smith.

The novelist here used Jefferson as a symbol of violent revolutionary upheaval, a mode of political action that was eschewed as vehemently by the liberal Dickens as it was by the Tory writers of *John Bull*.

Jefferson's relationship to France and violent revolution was further reinforced in the work of another liberal, John Robert Godley, who travelled around the USA and noted in 1844 how 'Jeffersonian democracy grew up under the auspices of French Jacobinism'. Similarly in the same year the geologist and traveller George Featherstonhaugh (who also produced a commentary on the Webster–Ashburton Treaty) described in detail how 'during his residence in France, Mr. Jefferson was intimately connected with the leaders that were pre-paring [sic] the French revolution'.[19] The formation of this Franco-Jeffersonian connection in British discourse was extremely significant to the use of his image. The founding of the USA and the political principles that it seemed to embody were invariably perceived by the British as developing out of their own reforming traditions. For this reason when America pursued a policy which the British did not approve of it became imperative to dissociate the USA from its British heritage. It is no coincidence that his name was deployed during periods when the Anglo-American relationship was particularly strained. The writers during the first half of the 1840s were publishing against the backdrop of American westward expansion which brought the USA into conflict with Britain over the borders of Oregon territory. Jefferson, with his apparent sympathy for the extremism of the French Revolution, acted as a point of contact between America and France, and a valuable touchstone for the negative aspects of the USA when British sympathy for America was at a low. Jeffersonian America could viably be cast as a child of the French Revolution rather than a manifestation of British radical or Whiggish ideas, and consequently a rejection of American policy did not imply the breakdown of the relationship between 'natural' international allies.[20]

## Jefferson and the hypocrisy of slavery

While from the point of view of many British reformers Jefferson, and the nation he had forged, acted as a beacon of progressive politics others rejected the USA as a model for emulation on the basis that it was tainted by slavery. As the nineteenth century proceeded and British national identity became increasingly tied to anti-slavery the institution's existence in the USA consistently subverted its image as a model polity. For many in Britain Jefferson's individual example as a slaveholder seemed particularly significant as it was suggestive of the basic hypocrisy undermining America. Furthermore the fact that he was publically known to have engaged in sexual relationships with slaves provided additional ammunition to his personal critics as well as British abolitionists. The prominent Irish poet Thomas Moore, who visited the USA in 1803, wrote a couplet which contained a less than veiled suggestion of these sexual relationships:

> The weary statesmen for repose hath fled
> From halls of council to his negro's shed,
> Where blest he woos some black Aspasia's grace
> And dreams of freedom in his slave's embrace.

The juxtaposition between freedom and slavery in the final line of this short poem provides one of the most concise allusions to Jeffersonian hypocrisy in all of British literature. The author of a document so heavily associated with liberty (the Declaration of Independence) literally embracing slavery was indicative of a broader British recognition of the incompatibility of slaveholding and democracy in the USA. Moore's poem marks the first time a British observer had made such an allusion to Jefferson's relationship with his slaves and even though his British friend, Fanny Wright, attempted to diffuse these accusations in her 1821 travel narrative, the image of Jefferson as sexually exploitative quickly became entrenched.[21]

This relationship between Jefferson and slavery as both a labour system and as something which facilitated immorality was further reinforced at a crucial juncture in Anglo-American relations; the British abolition of slavery in 1833. In the wake of abolition the British populace increasingly came to regard the cause as an integral part of their national heritage, and as late as 1862 official representatives of the Confederate States of America noted the 'universal' power of anti-slavery in Britain. Just prior to the passage of the Slavery Abolition Act in 1833 one of the seminal texts of the Anglo-American connection had been published. The work in question was Frances Trollope's *Domestic Manners of the Americans*, a best seller that first appeared in 1832 and was already in its fourth edition by 1837. Within *Domestic Manners* Trollope reasserted the connection between Jefferson and slavery that Moore had described in 1803, and was explicitly critical of the statesman describing him as a hypocrite who lacked personal integrity. This lack of integrity was something she saw as most clearly demonstrated by his slaveholding and the relationships he engaged in with slaves. She emphasised the same connection once again in her 1836 novel *The Life and Adventures of Jonathan Jefferson Whitlaw*. This work drew heavily on her own experiences travelling in America and followed a title character who moved from a brutal slave holder, through the rape of a slave girl and on to a prominent position in American society. The critiques of both Jefferson and the USA implied in the text were unlikely to have been lost on her readers who were once again presented with a reassertion of the close connection between Jefferson, the USA and slavery.[22]

The tales of miscegenation that Trollope attached to Jefferson's name in her 1836 novel were echoed and given a further layer of immorality by another traveller, Thomas Hamilton, in 1833. Hamilton returned from his time in the USA and gave shocked readers the first account in Britain of Jefferson's slave-born children being sold. Reports such as these that claimed that the former president's slave children were liable to be auctioned off as slaves appeared intermittently throughout the 1830s; however, a real explosion of interest in the subject occurred in 1838. This increased exposure came about primarily as a result of the publication of a newspaper story in the USA that claimed that one of Jefferson's daughters was, at that time, being sold in New Orleans. Newspapers from across Britain picked up and reprinted the story, and in doing so heightening awareness further of the connection between Jefferson and slavery in its most immoral form.[23]

The naval Captain, novelist and traveller Frederick Marryat returned from the USA with similar tales to those already circulating in the press and added an element of political commentary. In his work Marryat emphasised the hypocrisy of Jefferson, the man who wrote the Declaration of Independence, and claimed 'that the slavery of the negro was a violation of the most sacred rights of life and liberty' permitting

'his slaves and his children, the issue of his own loins, to be sold at auction after his demise, not even emancipating them, as he might have done, before his death'. The hypocrisy of the USA as a slaveholding democracy was noted more broadly in Britain, and even though it was often Tories who leapt on the image to undermine the reform credentials of the USA mainstream liberals and even Chartists such as Feargus O'Connor discussed the phenomenon in frank terms.[24] Central to the criticism of Jefferson offered by figures from Moore to Marryat was his apparent hypocrisy. He was seen as both a committed democrat and a slaveholder, and while the juxtaposition between the two may not have always been as evident as in the last line of Thomas Moore's poem it was frequently noted. This tension between slavery and democracy which was characteristic of discussions of Jefferson in Britain was indicative of a broader debate about the existence of the system in the USA and how far it compromised the republican image of the nation.

## Jefferson as an anti-slavery icon

A certain irony existed for British observers attempting to understand Jefferson's position relative to American slavery. With his public pronouncements in favour of equality he possessed the potential to act as a symbol of American anti-slavery for British observers. The apparent tension between slavery and anti-slavery with reference to Jefferson was neatly summed up in an article that appeared in the *British Mother's Magazine* in 1854. The author of this piece noted that 'he wrote eloquently in defense of freedom: he declaimed earnestly against slavery. But Thomas Jefferson was a slaveholder and many of his slaves were his own children'. The contradictions that are conveyed so clearly in this magazine hint at the potential Jefferson had as an icon for those in Britain who were explicitly critical of slavery in the USA. As a consequence of this ambiguity and Jefferson's strong association with democratic politics his legacy was utilised in some surprising quarters.[25]

One of the most vocal abolitionists and political reformers of the mid-nineteenth century, Harriet Martineau, commended Jefferson (predictably enough) for his 'true democratic principle'. She also claimed, however, that he had 'actually done something against slavery'. Similar observations to these can be found in the travelogue of another political reform activist, John Robert Godley, who drew his readers' attention in 1844 to Jefferson's famous maxim that 'nothing is more clearly written in the book of destiny than the emancipation of the blacks'.[26] Here we have the image of Jefferson sanitised by political liberals keen to secure his place in the history of an idealised democratic polity by presenting him as a gradual and pragmatic abolitionist.

Placing a similar emphasis on Jefferson's apparent aversion to slavery was a letter by the Irish reformer James Houghton that was printed by the Dublin *Freeman's Journal and Daily Commercial Advertiser* in 1851. In his letter Houghton reminded the newspaper's readers that Jefferson, despite being a slaveholder, had made his attitude towards slavery clear: 'I tremble for my country when I consider that God is just, and that his justice cannot sleep for ever. He has no attribute that can take part in slavery'. What grabs the attention in Houghton's letter was his attempt to add a coda to the traditional idea of Jefferson as a slaveholder. His emphasis was not on Jefferson supporting slavery but as a reluctant slaveholder who had a pragmatic viewpoint on a temporary institution. Of particular note was

Houghton's use of Jefferson's slave ownership, not as a point of departure for a critique of the American statesman, but to validate Jefferson's anti-slavery pronouncements on the basis that he had been intimately involved with the system. This first-hand knowledge of slavery meant his views needed to be taken particularly seriously and made his criticisms especially valid.[27]

Other commentators placed a similar emphasis on Jefferson's belief that slavery was a temporary evil rather than something inherently good. An article in the national newspaper the *Morning Chronicle*, which discussed the Wilmot Proviso of 1849, saw a journalist refer to the Missouri Senator Thomas Hart Benton's invocation of Jefferson as a figure who had resisted the extension of slavery to new territories. Apparently echoing this was the British economist and abolitionist William Nassau Senior who noted, in a review of the American abolitionist novel *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, that 'Jefferson proposed, that by the Constitution slavery should be excluded from any territory to be subsequently acquired by the Union'. In all of these instances Jefferson was characterised as a somewhat reluctant slaveholder maintaining the institution but attempting to limit it and, significantly, refusing to endorse it as inherently good.[28] The distinction here is crucial. Post-1833 few in Britain would be prepared publically to defend slavery as a desirable system. This does not mean, however, that the majority of the population advocated immediate abolition. British observers tended to see American slavery as something that needed to be gradually phased out, and Jefferson's rhetoric allowed him to be appropriated into the iconography of gradual abolition.

The same emphasis on Jefferson as a figure who refused to endorse slavery was noted in an article in the *Morning Post* during 1858. This article drew attention to him as an 'anti-slavery slaveholder', while a similar piece in the *Leicester Chronicle* in 1861 echoed the views about the eventual abolition of slavery that Jefferson had discussed in his autobiography. The *Leicester Chronicle* article is especially telling as it indicates that Jefferson's position on slavery as it was understood in Britain was so malleable that he could be placed alongside 'such Southern men as Washington … Madison, Randolph, Monroe, Patrick Henry, Wirt, Charles Pinckney of South Carolina and a host of others' as one of 'the leading men of the South [who] regarded slavery as a moral, religious, and political evil, to be endured as the infliction of British misrule only so long as might be necessary for its peaceful and humane abolition'. The novelist Anthony Trollope (the son of Frances Trollope), who travelled to the USA at the beginning of the Civil War, echoed the claim of these journalists in his published account *North America*. He noted that:

> Washington, and Jefferson from whom Madison received his inspiration, were opposed to slavery. I do not know that Washington ever took much action in the matter, but his expressed opinion is on record. But Jefferson did so throughout his life. Before the Declaration of Independence he endeavored to make slavery illegal in Virginia.[29]

The accuracy of the remark is irrelevant. What is significant is the acceptance of the idea that Jefferson had ultimately desired the ending of slavery in America. The debates over slavery provide another illustration of Jefferson representing a microcosm of a much broader discussion. Southern slavery and how the British understood it was crucial to how they engaged with the USA. If the USA was seen as committed to the gradual abolition of the institution it could retain power as a

reforming symbol. If, however, slavery was an integral feature of the nation it lost its status as a progressive icon. The debate over Jefferson's relationship to slavery was therefore a debate between those who saw continued symbolic political potential in the USA and those who felt it was a nation defined by immorality and hypocrisy.

## Jefferson, Britain and the American Civil War

While it would be an exaggeration to claim that Jefferson was the single most significant individual for Britons looking at the USA in the period 1800–1861 he undoubtedly provided a lens through which British observers could examine all the aspects of the nation. It was natural, therefore, that during the American Civil War the British would draw on Jefferson when engaging with the conflict. The pro-Confederate Civil War propagandist, MP and businessman A.J.B. Beresford-Hope, writing in 1862, for example, described the idea of universal suffrage as a 'philosophic absurdity, bred of Jefferson and the French Revolution'. Here the lines of thought connecting Jefferson, the USA, democracy and the French Revolution are clear and were utilised to undermine the cause of the Union. How far Jefferson approved of the course of events in France is, in itself, a significant historical question. In a sense, however, Jefferson's real relationship with France was not as significant as that which some in Britain suggested he had. The Liverpool businessman and pro-Southern advocate James Spence presented one of the most concise and clear illustrations of the idea of Jefferson having perverted the US constitution by adopting a French model:

> Jefferson took no part in framing the Constitution. He expressed strong, though guarded, disapproval of it. He was in Paris, studying and imbibing the principles then coming into play, associating with members of the future Jacobin club, cultivating the acquaintance of Thomas Paine, and filling his mind with theories, many of them springing from just emotions, but fatal in their effects, their tendency to excess, and from ignoring human nature. He studied them, when the temple of infidelity was about to open its portals- in the purlieus of brooding socialism, in the coming shadow of the guillotine.[30]

Hyperbole notwithstanding both Spence and Beresford-Hope obviously saw Jefferson as a Francophile and a democrat with Spence describing his principles as that 'of despotism vested in the populace', and Beresford-Hope noting his 'ultra-democratic bias'. Descriptions that utilised Jefferson in the context of the Civil War were not the sole preserve of pro-southerners and were actually echoed in the mainstream media. The *Morning Post,* for example, contained a book review that recounted the accusations from a French biographer who claimed that 'Jefferson secretly abetted all the intrigues of Genet, the French Ambassador, to involve the United States into an alliance with the National Convention and war against Great Britain'. This *Morning Post* review suggested not only that Jefferson sympathised with the aims of the revolution but also that, for him, anyone who failed to support the uprising could be seen as holding anti-Republican feelings. The writer of this piece drew the readers' attention to Jefferson's 'quite indefensible' conduct towards Alexander Hamilton and suggested that the reason for this treatment was Hamilton's stance on the French Revolution.[31]

In the light of the *Morning Post* article a word needs to be said about the relationship between Jefferson, Hamilton and France as its use here was not an anomaly. As early as the 1830s after travelling around the USA the British soldier Thomas Hamilton had been enamoured with Alexander Hamilton and his vision of the USA while he criticised Jefferson's influence on the nation at every opportunity. In a similar vein, but against the more explosive backdrop of the Civil War, Anthony Trollope informed readers of his 1862 work *North America* that for 'many in America, the French theory of democracy has not unnaturally endeared itself, and foremost among these was Thomas Jefferson'. He then went on to explain that 'James Madison, who succeeded Jefferson as President, was a pupil in this school, as indeed have been most of the Presidents of the United States'. Trollope also noted that 'at the head of the other party, from which through various denominations have sprung those who now call themselves republicans, was Alexander Hamilton'. According to Trollope, Hamilton:

> was one of those men to whom the world owes much … of Jefferson, Franklin, and Madison, we have all heard; our children speak of them and they are household words in the nursery of history. Of Hamilton however it may, I believe, be said, that he was greater than any of those.[32]

British accounts that invoked Jefferson during the American Civil War tended to draw on the negative associations his name brought with it, and in some cases assigned him culpability in the breakdown of the nation. In a very meaningful way the Civil War seemed to represent the outcome of Jeffersonian America. The attempt made by the committed liberal Anthony Trollope to offer up the Anglophile Alexander Hamilton as a new symbol for Anglo-American reform demonstrates a bid to repackage and rehabilitate the USA by reducing the significance of Jefferson in the national narrative. Considering the explicit attempts made by Trollope to dissociate himself from Jefferson, a man who had corresponded with the father of British Whiggery, Charles James Fox, it is evident how far both Jefferson and the USA had fallen in the estimation of British reformers.[33] It was apparently clear to mainstream British liberals that America was no longer the 'asylum for liberty' it had been during the days of Price, Cartwright or Thomas Paine. Furthermore many believed that America's shortcomings could be blamed, rightly or wrongly, on Thomas Jefferson. For Trollope at least the nation had failed to fulfil its potential by adopting the Jeffersonian as opposed to the Hamiltonian course, and it was reaping the consequences of this in the form of the Civil War.

## Thomas Jefferson: the Anglo-American synecdoche?

As the American political system developed from the 1770s to the surrender of Robert E. Lee at Appomattox the significance of Thomas Jefferson to the USA from a British point of view was an ever present, if malleable, feature. His ideological coherence with any British group might be hard to pin down but all agreed that his influence had been profound when it came to the formation and development of the USA. A *Times* article written in 1852 gave probably the nearest thing to a concise and acceptable conclusion about how the British viewed Thomas Jefferson:

> The boldness, the originality, and even the Radicalism of Thomas Jefferson, swept away the opposition of a whole army of rivals, and he left his mark so deep upon the Republic, that men have almost ceased even in political works, to question the wisdom of his measures of the sagacity of his political course.

This was clearly no endorsement of the career of Jefferson and his ideas yet it is telling. Jefferson and the USA were almost interchangeable from a British perspective. Consequently examining those who used Jefferson's image and to what end offers a lens through which to view British ideas about its former colony.

Despite this potential few scholars have even paused to consider the symbolic power of the Jefferson in Britain. In one of the few statements which has been made about his image David Paul Crook claimed that:

> Jefferson was portrayed by the Radical and Benthamite press more or less as he is portrayed to this day in popular American legend- that is a social rebel wedded to extreme democratic principles. But the English Whigs pictured Jefferson as a very Whiggish democrat who repudiated revolution and discouraged social conflict, who was not optimistic about mankind outside America, and who believed in checking the rule of people where people were not to be trusted.[34]

Although not wholly incorrect, Crook's conclusions are painted with a brush which is considerably too broad. The outline of Jefferson's public image in Britain given in this article makes it clear that one political group or another could not claim him. He was a political icon for the British and this iconic status combined with his malleability allowed everybody from the Tory press, to radical reformers like John Cartwright and Robert Owen to recognise his importance over a 65-year span and to both appropriate and desecrate his image. When Onuf and Lewis described Jefferson as the American synecdoche they provided a perceptive short-hand term which encapsulated his significance to the USA. Jefferson was, however, more than a domestic figure. His quality as a proxy for the USA could transcend borders and oceans. The collections of contradictions that he brought together were those that any British person looking at the USA had to navigate, at least before 1865. This it was a world of democracy and slaveholding, of mob power and all-powerful presidents, and it was against the backdrop of these competing claims that Jefferson's image was deployed. Furthermore changing British mainstream opinion about Jefferson shadows the gradual disillusion with the USA in nineteenth century Britain. The world of Fox and the Declaration of Independence had been replaced by that of Macaulay and Anthony Trollope who eschewed any association with Jefferson. The Civil War leads to a widespread abandonment of the USA as a model polity while lingering ambiguity over abolition was wiped away with the Emancipation Proclamation. After 1865 America as represented by the person of Thomas Jefferson no longer existed. For better or for worse Jeffersonian America had gone and consequently his name lost the resonance which it had once possessed in Britain.

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## Notes

1. *Glasgow Herald,* [Article taken from *Saturday Review*] June 13, 1860. Modern additions to the cannon of Jefferson studies include Joseph J. Ellis, *American Sphinx: The Character of Thomas Jefferson* (New York, NY: Alfred Knopf, 1997); Kevin J. Hayes, *The Road to Monticello: The Life and Mind of Thomas Jefferson* (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2008); Forrest McDonald, *The Presidency of Thomas Jefferson* (Lawrence: University of Kansas Press, 1976); Conor Cruise O'Brien, *The Long Affair: Thomas Jefferson and the French Revolution* (London: Pimlico 1996); and Peter S. Onuf, *Jefferson's Empire: The Language of American Nationhood* (Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 2000). The scholar Paul Finkelman's article 'The Monster of Monticello' sums up the passion responses which Jefferson's name still elicits in the USA see *New York Times*, November 30, 2012.
2. Jan Lewis and Peter S. Onuf, 'American Synecdoche: Thomas Jefferson as Image, Icon, Character and Self', *American Historical Review* 103, no. 1 (1998): 125–36, 128.
3. O'Brien, *The Long Affair*; Robert Kelley, *The Transatlantic Persuasion: The Liberal Democratic Mind in the Age of Gladstone* (London: Alfred K. Knopf, 1969), 55. More recently Jamie L. Bronstein has touched on the influence of Jeffersonian ideas on British agrarian reform, however, his discussion of the connection is limited see Jamie L. Bronstein, *Land Reform and Working-class Experience in Britain and the United States, 1800–1862* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1999).
4. Harriet Martineau, *Society in America Volume One* (London: Saunders and Otley, 1837), 76.
5. Quoted in Jack Rakove, *Revolutionaries: Inventing an American Nation* (London: William Heinemann, 2010), 327–8. For Jefferson's Anglophobia in both an international and domestic context see Burton Spivak, *Jefferson's English Crisis: Commerce, Embargo and the Republican Revolution* (Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 1979); Ellis, *American Sphinx*, 126; McDonald, *The Presidency of Thomas Jefferson*, 34, 96; and Onuf, *Jefferson's Empire*, 100. For work on Jefferson's relationship to British intellectual traditions and Anglo-Saxon identity see John Ashworth, 'The Jeffersonians: Classical Republicans or Liberal Capitalists?', *Journal of American Studies* 18, no. 3 (1984): 425–35; Dorothy Ross, '"Are we a Nation?": The Conjuncture of Nationhood and Race in the United States, 1850–1876', *Modern Intellectual History* 2, no. 3 (2005): 327–60; Alexander O. Boulton, 'The American Paradox: Jeffersonian Equality and Racial Science', *American Quarterly* 47, no. 3 (1995): 467–92, 483; Merrill D. Peterson, *Thomas Jefferson and the New Nation* (London: Oxford University Press, 1975), 98; McDonald, *The Presidency of Thomas Jefferson*, 33; Robert Gravil, *Romantic Dialogues: Anglo-American Continuities, 1776–1862* (London: MacMillan, 2000), 16–17; Christopher Hill, 'The Norman Yoke', in *Democracy and the Labour Movement: Essays in Honour of Donna Torr*, ed. John Saville (London: Lawrence & Wishart, 1954), 11–66; Billie Melman, 1991. 'Claiming the Nation's Past: The Invention of an Anglo-Saxon Tradition', *Journal of Contemporary History* 26, no. 3 & 4: 575–95; E.P. Thompson, *The Making of the English Working Class* (London: Victor Gollancz, 1963), 94–5, 254; Patrick Joyce, *Visions of the People: Industrial England and the Question of Class, 1848–1914* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991); and James Vernon, *Politics and the People: A Study in English Political Culture, c. 1815–1867* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993), 306–7, 321.
6. Colin Bonwick, *English Radicals and the American Revolution* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1977), 153; Lucia Stanton, 'Looking for Liberty: Thomas Jefferson and the British Lions', *Eighteenth Century Studies* 26, no. 4 (1993): 649–68, 660–1; and Trevor Colbourn, *The Lamp of Experience: Whig History and the Intellectual Origins of the American Revolution* (Indianapolis, IN: Liberty Fund, 1965). In one of the most bizarre twists in the connection between Owen and Jefferson it was widely reported in 1853 that Owen's son Robert Dale had claimed to have contacted Jefferson for advice during a séance see *Derby Mercury*, September 14, 1853; *Berrow's Worcester Journal*, September 17, 1853; *The Lady's Newspaper*, September 17, 1853. The Owenite movement was active in both Britain and America see J.F.C. Harrison, *Robert Owen and the Owenites in Britain and America* (London: Routledge, 1968). For a printed extract of a letter from Jefferson to Cartwright see *The Satirist, or the Censor of the Times*, August 7,

1831; Rachel Eckersley, 'Of Radical Design: John Cartwright and the Redesign of the Reform Campaign, c.1800–1811', *History* 89, no. 296 (2004): 560–80; Frank Thistlethwaite, *The Anglo-American Connection in the Early Nineteenth Century* (Philadelphia: University of Philadelphia Press, 1959), 73–4; and Sam W. Haynes, *Unfinished Revolution: The Early American Republic in a British World* (Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 2010).

7. Boulton, 'The American Paradox'. Adams quoted in David Paul Crook, *American Democracy in English Politics 1815–1850* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1965), 1, 73–7. The most valuable recent works on the use of the American example include Gregory Claeys, 'The Example of America Warning to England? The Transformation of America in British Radicalism and Socialism, 1790–1850', in *Living and Learning: Essays in Honour of J.F.C. Harrison*, ed. Malcolm Chase and Ian Dyck (Aldershot: Scolar Press, 1996); Jamie L. Bronstein, 'From the Land of Liberty to Land Monopoly: The United States in a Chartist Context', in *The Chartist Legacy*, ed. Owen Ashton, Robert Fyson, and Stephen Roberts (Woodbridge: Merlin Press, 1999), 147–171; David Worrall, *Radical Culture: Discourse, Resistance and Surveillance, 1790–1820* (Hemel Hempstead: Harvester Wheatsheaf, 1992), 85; J.R. Dinwiddy, *Radicalism and Reform in Britain 1780–1850* (London: Hambledon Press, 1992), 171–5, 210; Vernon, *Politics and the People*, 321; and Bonwick, *English Radicals and the American Revolution*. Bonwick notes the respect which the religiously dissenting radicals of the 1780s and 90s had for Thomas Jefferson's 1786 Statute for Establishing Religious Freedoms, see 203–4. Margaret C. Jacob and James R. Jacob, eds., *The Origins of Anglo-American Radicalism* (London: Allen & Unwin, 1984); John Sainsbury, *Disaffected Patriots: London Supporters of Revolutionary America 1769–1782* (Kingston: McGill-Queens University Press, 1987); and Richard Twomey, *Jacobins and Jeffersonians: Anglo-American Radicalism in the United States 1790–1820* (London: Garland, 1989). For an introduction to British politics in this period with an emphasis on the development of political ideas see Goodwin, *The Friends of Liberty*; Edward Royle and James Walvin, *English Radicals and Reformers 1760–1848* (Brighton: Harvester Press, 1982); and Dror Wahrman, *Imagining the Middle Class: The Political Representation of Class in Britain, c.1780–1840* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995).
8. *Poor Man's Guardian*, June 9, 1832; and *Cleaves Penny Gazette of Variety and Amusement*, December 7, 1839, September 1, 1838.
9. *Northern Star and National Trades Journal*, June 22, 1850, September 7, 1850, October 5, 1850, November 2, 1850; For more on this series of engravings see Malcolm Chase, 'Building Identity, Building Circulation: Engraved Portraiture and the *Northern Star*', in *Papers for the People: A Study of the Chartist Press*, ed. Joan Allen and Owen R. Ashton (London: Merlin Press, 2005), 25–53; Claeys, 'The Example of America Warning to England?', 73; and Matthew Roberts, 'Chartism, Commeration, and the Cult of the Radical Hero c.1770–1840', *Labour History Review* 78, no. 1 (2013): 3–32.
10. The key point of reference for this transition tended to be Edmund Burke, *Reflections on the Revolution in France and on the Proceedings in Certain Societies in London in Relation to that Event* (1790; repr., London: Penguin, 1986); Dinwiddy, *Radicalism and Reform in Britain*, 207–8; Michael Durey, *Transatlantic Radicals and the Early American Republic* (Lawrence: University of Kansas Press, 1997); McDonald, *The Presidency of Thomas Jefferson*, 139; and Spivak, *Jefferson's English Crisis*. For British accounts of American reaction to the embargo see *The Hull Packet and Original Weekly Commercial, Literary and General Advertiser*, June 28, 1808; *Morning Chronicle*, October 22, 1808; *and Caledonian Mercury*, December 29, 1808. Jefferson's fellow Virginian John Randolph memorably described government enforcement of the embargo as an attempt 'to cure corns by cutting of the toes'. Donald A. Hickey, *The War of 1812: A Forgotten Conflict* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1989), 20–1; Leonard W. Levy, *Jefferson and Civil Liberties: The Darker Side* (Chicago: I.R Dee 1989). For the embargo and debates over its effectiveness in Britain see Lawrence S. Kaplan, 'Jefferson, the Napoleonic Wars, and the Balance of Power', *The William and Mary Quarterly* 14, no. 2 (1957): 196–217; and Jeffrey A. Frankel, 'The 1807–1809 Embargo Against Great Britain', *Journal of Economic History* 42, no. 2 (1982): 291–308.

11. Cobbett was one of the most significant figures of British political radicalism during the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries see Ian Dyck, *William Cobbett and Rural Popular Culture* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992); Daniel Green, *Great Cobbett: The Noblest Agitator* (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1983); Leonora Nattrass, *William Cobbett: The Politics of Style* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995); John W. Osborne, *William Cobbett: His Thought and Times* (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 1966); George Spater, *William Cobbett: The Poor Man's Friend* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1982); and David A. Wilson, *Paine and Cobbett: The Transatlantic Connection* (Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1988). For political cartoons of the era see H.T. Dickinson, *Caricatures and the Constitution 1760–1832* (Cambridge: Chadwyck-Healey, 1986); and M. Dorothy George, *English Political Caricature 1793–1832: A Study of Opinion and Propaganda* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1959). For a discussion of Cruikshank's Jefferson cartoon and the relationship it had to Cobbett's thought see George, *English Political Caricature*, 115.
12. *Cobbett's Weekly Political Register*, April 9, 1808, March 19, 1808.
13. Claeys, 'The Example of America Warning to England?'; Bronstein, 'From the Land of Liberty to Land Monopoly'; Thistlethwaite, *The Anglo-American Connection in the Early Nineteenth Century*, 40; Michael J. Turner, *The Age of Unease Government and Reform in Britain, 1782–1832* (Stroud: Sutton, 2000); Brent E. Kinser, *The American Civil War in the Shaping of British Democracy* (Farnham: Ashgate, 2011); and Frances Trollope, *The Life and Adventures of Jonathan Jefferson Whitlaw, or Scenes on the Mississippi* (Paris: Baudry's European Library, 1836), 333.
14. *Age and Argus*, December 23, 1843; *Morning Post,* August 19, 1862.
15. Merrill D. Peterson*, The Jefferson Image in the American Mind* (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 1960), 161. For a biography of Macaulay see Owen Dudley Edwards, *Macaulay* (London: Weidenfeld & Nicholson, 1988).
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17. *Morning Post*, May 3, 1808; *Cobbett's Weekly Political Register*, March 19, 1808; *The Times*, August 17, 1808; Jon Latimer, *1812: War with America* (Cambridge, MA:

Belknap, 2007), 20–5; and William Shakespeare, *Macbeth*, ed. Kenneth Muir (1966; repr., Cambridge, MA: The Arden Shakespeare, 1606), 15.

18. *John Bull*, February 11, 1843. This quote was taken from the so-called 'Tree of Liberty Letter' sent by Jefferson to William Stephens Smith on November 13, 1787. Charles Dickens, *The Life and Adventures of Martin Chuzzlewit* (1997; repr., London: Wordsworth Classics, 1844), 256–7. For an account of Dickens's time in the USA see *American Notes for General Circulation* (1842; repr., London: Oxford University Press, 1966).
19. John Robert Godley, *Letters from America Volume One* (London: John Murray, 1844), 55–7; and G.W. Featherstonhaugh, *Excursion Through the Slave States, from Washington on the Potomac to the Frontier of Mexico; With Sketches of Popular Manners and Geological Notices Volume Two* (London: John Murray, 1844), 389.
20. Richard S. Cramer, 'British Magazines and the Oregon Question', *Pacific Historical Review* 32, no. 4 (1963): 369–82; and David M. Pletcher, *The Diplomacy of Annexation: Texas, Oregon and the Mexican War* (Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 1973).
21. For more on Jefferson and slavery see Robert E. Shalhope, 'Thomas Jefferson's Republicanism and Antebellum Southern Thought', *The Journal of Southern History* 42, no. 4 (1976): 529–56, 531; Paul Finkelman, 'Jefferson and Slavery "Treason Against the Hopes of the World"', in *Jeffersonian Legacies*, ed. Peter S. Onuf (Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 1993), 206–12; William W. Freehling, 'The Founding Fathers and Slavery', *American Historical Review* 77, no. 1 (1972): 81–93, 91; and Wilson, *Paine and Cobbett*, 123. The key point of reference when it came to these tales of interracial relationships in Jefferson's household was, of course, his long term connection with the slave Sally Hemmings see Annette Gordon-Reed, *The Hemingses of Monticello: An American Family* (New York, NY: Norton, 2008). This controversy had domestic political ramifications after it was publicised by James T. Callender in 1802 see John Kyle Day, 'The Federalist Press and Slavery in the Age of Jefferson', *The Historian* 65, no. 6 (2003): 1303–29. For British abolitionism see R.J.M. Blackett, *Building an Anti-Slavery Wall: Black Americans and the Atlantic Abolitionist Movement 1830–1860* (Ithica, NY: Cornell University Press, 1983); Marcus Cunliffe, *Chattel Slavery and Wage Slavery: The Anglo American Context 1830–1860* (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1979); Philip D. Curtin, *The Image of Africa: British Ideas and Action, 1780–1850* (London: University of Wisconsin Press, 1964); Betty Fladeland, *Men and Brothers: Anglo-American Anti-Slavery Co-operation* (Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1972); James Walvin, *Questioning Slavery* (London: Routledge, 1996); Christine Bolt and Seymour Drescher, eds., *Anti-slavery, Religion and Reform: Essays in Memory of Roger Antsey* (Folkestone: Dawson, 1980); Alan J. Rice and Martin Crawford, ed., *Liberating Sojourn: Frederick Douglass and Transatlantic Reform* (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1999); James Walvin, ed., *Slavery and British Society, 1776–1846* (London: MacMillan, 1982); Shearer West, ed., *The Victorians and Race* (Aldershot: Scolar Press, 1996); Richard Huzzey, *Freedom Burning: Anti-slavery and Empire in Victorian Britain* (Ithica, NY: Cornell University Press, 2012), 78–81; and Duncan Andrew Campbell, *Unlikely Allies: Britain, America and the Victorian Origins of the Special Relationship* (London: Hambledon, 2007), 88–114.
22. Thomas Jefferson, 'Autobiography, 1743–1790 with the Declaration of Independence, 6th January, 1821', in *Thomas Jefferson: Writings*, ed. Merrill D. Peterson (New York, NY: Library of America, 1984), 1–103; Sidney P. Moss and Carolyn J. Moss, *Dickens, Trollope, Jefferson: Three Anglo-American Encounters* (Albany, NY: Whitston, 2000), 56–83; and Frances Trollope, *Domestic Manners of the Americans* (London: Whittaker, Treacher, 1832), 58–9. Trollope's work actually lead to the adoption of the term 'Trollopism' into the Anglo-American vocabulary to denote the social conventions she had been critical of. For further examples of the influence of *Domestic Manners* see Charles Daubeny, *Journal of a Tour Through the United States and Canada, 1837–1838* (Oxford: T. Combe, 1843); and George Augustus Sala, *My Diary in America in the Midst of War* (London: Tinsley Brothers, 1865); see also *Examiner*, March 4, 1832, June 29, 1832, August 21, 1841; *Morning Chronicle*, March 6, 1832; *Caledonian Mercury*, June 10, 1833; *Morning Post*, October 2, 1833, September 26, 1844, Febuary 16, 1853; *Essex Standard, and Colchester and County Advertiser*, March 31, 1832; *Hampshire Telegraph and Sussex Chronicle etc*, April 9, 1832; *Derby Mercury*, May 2, 1832; *Leicester Chronicle:*

*or, Commercial and Agricultural Advertiser*, June 1, 1839; *Poor Man's Guardian*, June 16, 1832; Trollope, *Jonathan Jefferson Whitlaw*; for the reviews and responses to this work see *Standard*, April 30, 1846, September 2, 1836, August 23, 1838, July 25, 1836; *Morning Post*, May 3, 1836, September 6, 1836, July 5, 1836; *Caledonian Mercury*, May 30, 1836, September 15, 1836, January 26, 1837; *Morning Chronicle*, June 22, 1836, January 10, 1837; and *London Dispatch and People's Political and Social Reformer*, October 8, 1836.

23. Moss and Moss, *Dickens, Trollope, Jefferson; Liverpool Mercury*, December 14, 1838; *The Essex Standard & General Advertiser for the Eastern Counties*, December 21, 1838; *The Champion and Weekly Herald*, December 23, 1838; *The Examiner*, December 23, 1838; and *Bradford Observer*, December 27, 1838.
24. Frederick Marryat, *Diary in America, with Remarks on its Institutions* (Paris: Baudry's European Library, 1839), 251–2. For a recent biography of Marryat see Tom Pocock, *Captain Marryat, Seaman, Writer and Adventurer* (London: Chatham, 2000); Claeys, 'The Example of America', 73–4; and Bronstein, 'From Land of Liberty', 147.
25. Martineau, *Society in America Vol One*, 80. For a useful biography of Martineau see R.K. Webb, *Harriet Martineau: A Radical Victorian* (London: Heinemann, 1960); and Godley, *Letters from America Vol One,* 216.
26. Jefferson's position on slavery appears inconsistent from a contemporary perspective. In his *Autobiography* Jefferson contended that slavery would not be a permanent feature of the American republic, yet he failed to emancipate his own slaves. *British Mother's Magazine*, January 1, 1854, 20.
27. *Freeman's Journal and Daily Commercial Advertiser*, June 11, 1851.
28. *Morning Chronicle*, June 19, 1849. For more on the Wilmot Proviso itself see William W. Freehling, *The Road to Disunion Volume One: Secessionists at Bay, 1776–1854* (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 1990), 472–9; David M. Pletcher, *The Diplomacy of Annexation: Texas, Oregon and the Mexican War* (Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 1973); and Nassau William Senior, *American Slavery: A Reprint of an Article on "Uncle Tom's Cabin" of Which a Portion was Inserted in the 206th Number of the "Edinburgh Review;" and of Mr. Sumner's Speech of the 19th and 20th of May, 1856, with a Notice of the Events which Followed that Speech* (London: Longman, Brown, Green, Longmans & Roberts), 7–8. The distinction for the British between being a gradual abolitionist or anti-slavery advocate and adopting a perspective which wholeheartedly endorsed the slave system as something positive was crucial in establishing British sympathy for an American individual or cause see Peter O'Connor, '"The Inextinguishable Struggle Between North and South": American Sectionalism in the British Mind, 1832–1863' (PhD thesis, Northumbria University, 2014).
29. *Morning Post,* May 28, 1858; *Leicester Chronicle, or Commercial & Agricultural Advertiser*, August 3, 1861; Anthony Trollope, *North America Volume Two* (1987; repr., Gloucester: Alan Sutton, 1862), 78–9, 297–8. Anthony Trollope himself discussed the division between the statesmanship of the founding fathers and that 'of Polk, of Pierce, and of Buchanan'. See *North America Volume Two*, 297–8. For biographical information on Trollope see Graham Handley, *Anthony Trollope* (Stroud: Sutton, 1999); and James Pope-Hennessy, *Anthony Trollope* (London: Phoenix, 2001).
30. A.J.B. Beresford-Hope, *The Social and Political Bearings of the American Disruption* (London: James Ridgway, 1863), 28. For Jefferson and the French Revolution see O'Brien, *The Long Affair.* For the Anglophobia of American political discourse which was ratcheted up by the French Revolution see Onuf, *Jefferson's Empire*, 57. James Spence, *The American Union; Its Effect on National Character and Policy, with an Enquiry into Secession as a Constitutional Right, and the Causes of the Disruption* (London: Richard Bentley, 1861), 39–41.
31. Spence, *The American Union*, 64; A.J.B. Beresford-Hope, *England, the North and the South: Being a Popular View of the American Civil War* (London: William Ridgway, 1862), 56, 14; and *Morning Post*, August 19, 1862.
32. Crook, *English Democracy*, 128 A. Trollope, *North America Vol Two*, 251–3.
33. The role of Fox as the father of Whiggery is well attested to, in fact it was one of the most prominent Whig/Liberals of the mid-Victorian era, Lord John Russell who collected and published four volumes of *The Memories and Correspondence of Charles James Fox*

between 1854 and 1857 which combined his letters, and memories with a detailed biography of Fox's life see *Memorials and Correspondence of Charles James Fox,* ed., Lord John Russell, 4 vols. (London: Richard Bentley, 1853); and Robert Kagan, *Dangerous Nation: America and the World 1600–1898* (London: Atlantic, 2006), 104–7. For the development of British ideas about the American political system during the Victorian period see Frank Prochaska, *Eminent Victorians on America Democracy: The View from Albion* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012); and Jon Roper, *Democracy and its Critics: Anglo-American Democratic Thought in the Nineteenth Century* (London: Unwin Hyman, 1989).

34. *The Times,* August 28, 1852; and Crook, *American Democracy*, 200.

## Notes on contributor

Peter O'Connor has recently completed his Ph.D. at Northumbria University with a thesis entitled 'The Inextinguishable Struggle Between North and South': American Sectionalism in the British Mind, 1832–1863. His research explores the meaning of the USA in nineteenth century Britain with an emphasis on the use of America in political discourse. He also has an interest in the American presidency and is the author of a book chapter on the political legacy of John Quincy Adams. He was recently awarded an Eccles Centre Visting Postgraduate Fellowship to begin a project examining the effects of the 1812 Anglo-American war on British perceptions of US democracy.