

‘Vrais Jërriais nès, et Normands d’race’: Press representations of transnational Norman identity in Jersey and France¹

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Introduction

Norman regionalism, from its origins in the nineteenth century through its expansion in the early 1900s and interwar period, saw features and trends common to a range of similar movements throughout France and Europe, with culture and heritage inventorised, produced, and promoted within a framework of regional identity. The reach of this process was initially focused around nineteenth-century learned societies, such as the Société des antiquaires de Normandie, founded in 1824, but later encompassed broader participation. The Société régionaliste normande Alfred Rossel, named after a prominent dialect poet, offered popular activities such as theatre evenings and country excursions around 1930s Cherbourg; and events celebrating Normandy could draw huge crowds and popular interest, such as those in Rouen in 1904 and 1911, and in Bayeux and Coutances in the interwar period.²

Yet beyond following international trends of European regionalism, Normandy also demonstrated another dimension to ‘transnational’ regionalism. The cultivation of the regionally framed past involved the celebration of historical Norman ties to areas from Norway to North America and from Hastings to the Holy Land, which in turn led to the development of contemporary connections with many of these places and efforts to develop ideas

1 Augustus Asplet Le Gros, “Notre Vier Lingo” (1874), *The Toad and the Donkey: An Anthology of Norman Literature from the Channel Islands*, ed. Geraint Jennings and Yan Marquis (London: Francis Boutle, 2011), 196–97. All translations in this chapter are my own.

2 Jean Pierre Chaline, “Les fêtes du Millénaire de la Normandie: Rouen 1911,” *Etudes normandes*, 38, no. 3 (1989): 49–68; Nadine-Josette Chaline, “Rouen 1911: l’autre visage du Millénaire,” *Etudes normandes*, 50, no. 2 (2011): 25–40; François Guillet, “L’image de la Normandie: réflexions sur la construction d’une identité territoriale au XIXe siècle,” *Etudes normandes*, 56, no. 2 (2007): 7–20; Albert Nicolet, “La construction d’une identité de la Normandie dans la première moitié du XXe siècle,” *Etudes normandes*, 52, no. 1 (2003): 10–24; Guy Nondier, “Images littéraires de la Normandie à la ‘Belle Epoque’: Tradition ou renaissance?,” *Annales de Normandie*, 29, no. 3 (1979): 331–50; Eric Storm, *The Culture of Regionalism: Art, Architecture and International Exhibitions in France, Germany and Spain, 1890–1939* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2010) 126–36, 149–53; “Une Semaine de Grandes Fêtes,” *Cherbourg Éclair* [Éclair], Jul. 25, 1914; “Bulletin de la Société normande Alfred Rossel,” *Éclair*, Jul. 15, 1933.

of a greater Norman family. Closer to home, Normandy was also a transnational region in a more obvious way, split between the five Norman departments of the French Republic and the British Crown dependencies of Jersey and Guernsey. Though divided in 1204 after King John's loss of Rouen to Philip Augustus, contacts between the islands and the continent remained close, and historic links and cultural similarities fed claims of shared Norman identity during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries.

This chapter explores these interlinked aspects of Normandy as a transnational region, primarily through the lens of the popular and active local press of Jersey and mainland Normandy in the period from the late nineteenth century to the outbreak of the Second World War. The role of the provincial press in fostering identities, and in particular in the emergence of French regionalism, has been noted by historians, and its close integration with local society provides indications of how aspects of Norman identity, from regional dialects to the Viking past, were presented and celebrated in a range of contexts both in Jersey and on the continent.³ Drawing on French historiography of Norman regional identity on the mainland, this chapter will discuss how the cultivation of this in France foregrounded a transnational past and sought international connections in the present. It will then examine the less-studied but significant links between Jersey and Normandy in this period, exploring perceptions of a shared Norman identity between island and continent relating to claims around shared history, the similarity of Jèrriais to mainland Norman dialects, and the practice of Norman law. As will be shown below, such ideas were also often mobilised in concrete exchanges between Normandy and the island. In comparing the role of Norman identity in both areas examined, it will be argued that it remained for both a regional identity: though its transnationality played a large part in making it distinctive, it retained a subordinate relationship with a national identity, though the nation in question differed.

3 Marc Martin, *La Presse régionale: Des Affiches aux grands quotidiens* (Paris: Fayard, 2002), 157-61, 236; Jean Quélien and Christophe Mauboussin, *Journaux de 1786 à 1944: L'aventure de la presse écrite en Basse-Normandie* (Caen: Cahiers du Temps, 1998), 149; Anne-Marie Thiesse, *Écrire la France: Le mouvement littéraire régionaliste de langue française entre la Belle Époque et la Libération* (Paris: PUF, 1991) 176. C.f. Andrew Hobbs, *A Fleet Street in Every Town: The Provincial Press in England 1850-1900*, (Cambridge: Open Book, 2018) 263-99.

'Nos ancêtres les Vikings': Transnational understandings of the past in mainland Normandy

Turning first to the French context, the idea of Normandy as a transnational region represented a major theme in the construction of the Norman regional past, with emphasis on the duchy's Viking origins and the Norman conquests of Sicily and England. In line with wider French and European trends for the study of the provincial past, and partly inspired by Augustin Thierry's 1825 *Histoire de la Conquête de l'Angleterre*, interest in Normandy's Scandinavian heritage and medieval conquests grew in the context of learned societies in the nineteenth century. Studies claimed to find Viking traces in the character and appearance of the people, in popular traditions, in mythology, and even in the dress of fishermen, and academic attention to the Viking past increased later in the century.⁴ By the early twentieth century, this transnational past had become a banal element of regional framing. The ancestral Vikings and their ubiquitous longships had become established figures in Norman regionalist literature.⁵ The Viking "drakkar of the Normans", which appeared as early as 1902 in a cavalcade at Cherbourg, featured in the imagery of the 1904 Fêtes Normandes in Rouen, as well as appearing in the 1911 celebrations of the 'Millennium of Normandy', not only in Rouen, but also at smaller communal festivities covered in the *Journal de la Manche*.⁶ This continued at events big and small during the interwar period, most notably the additional Millennium festivals held in Bayeux in 1924 and Coutances in 1933.⁷ In these festivities, the Vikings, supported by a cast of Norman conquerors and crusaders of England, Italy and the Holy Land, appeared not only in speeches and commemorative volumes but also took physical form in the enormous historic costume parade of 1911 and the display of a replica longship in 1933.⁸

4 Guillet, 'L'Image de la Normandie', 18-19; François Guillet, "Le Nord mythique de la Normandie: Des Normands aux Vikings de la fin du XVIII^e siècle jusqu'à la Grande Guerre," *Revue du Nord*, 2 (2005): 459-71.

5 *Ibid.*, 468.

6 "drakkar des Normands". "La Cavalcade de Cherbourg," *Journal de l'arrondissement de Valognes*, Aug. 15, 1902; "Les Préparatifs de la Fête," *L'Avranchin*, Jul. 22, 1911; "Rouen : La Grande Semaine des Fêtes du Millénaire Normand," *Journal de Rouen [JdR]*, Dec. 6, 1911; "Grande Cavalcade," *Journal de la Manche [JdM]*, Aug. 12, 1911; "Saint-Hilaire-du-Harcouët," *JdM*, Aug. 19, 1911; "Roncey," *JdM*, Sep. 23, 1911.

7 "Briquebec," *JdM*, Jul. 31, 1920; "Lendemain de Fête," *Journal de la Ferté-Macé*, Sep. 2, 1923; M.-A. Macé, "Autour du Millénaire normand," *JdR*, Jun. 4-5, 1933.

8 Chaline, "Les Fêtes du Millénaire," 61; "Le Drakkar aux Fêtes du Millénaire Normand," *Moniteur du Calvados [MdC]*, May 3, 1933; *Notre Millénaire : Coutances 933-1933*, (Coutances: Comité coutançais des fêtes du millénaire, 1933).

The local and regional press not only publicised these events and encouraged public involvement, but also reproduced the transnational historic themes which developed around them.⁹ Newspapers printed speeches and reviewed books on these themes, reminding readers of the Norman genius of William the Conqueror or the Sicilian conquests of the Hauteville family, and encouraging them to take an interest in “our Viking ancestors” not only for their seafaring, exploration and piracy, but also for their settled existence and lawgiving in the “beautiful and rich” land of Normandy.¹⁰ Contemporary news could also evoke Viking connections, with French president Armand Fallières’ viewing of a longship in Norway in 1908 included in the *Journal de la Manche*’s ‘Chronique Régional’ under the heading ‘The Ships of the Old Normans’, and the same paper wondering whether the Danish king, en route to Paris via Cherbourg in 1907, knew that of the Danish origins of local placenames or the “Danish blood” of the Cotentin peasants.¹¹ In this press coverage, Normandy was situated within the French national context, but it was its transnational heritage which gave it regional distinctiveness. In some cases, Viking themes could become part of a chauvinistic discourse. The Norman poet Louis Beuve thus celebrated transnational Viking connections whilst showing a hostile attitude to people from outside Normandy who did not share in these supposed ancestral links. In the press, Achille Burnouf’s play *La Terre des Hautemanière*, partly written in Norman dialect, was serialised in the *Journal de l’arrondissement de Valognes* and referenced Viking ancestry as part of a fixed Barrèsian world of inescapable ties to land or sea.¹² Overall however, Viking references were so frequently

9 “Les Fêtes normandes,” *JdR*, Jun. 5, 1904; “Fêtes du Millénaire normand,” *Reveil Fertois*, Mar. 9, 1911; “Chemin de Fer de l’État,” *Éclair*, Jun. 21, 1933.

10 “nos ancêtres les Vikings,” “belle et riche”. Georges Dubosc, “Le Millénaire normand et l’Italie,” *JdR*, Jan. 10, 1911; Emile Enault, “Rollon,” *JdlM*, May 27, 1911; “Les Fêtes Religieuses du Millénaire Normand,” *Indicateur de Bayeux*, May 30, 1911; “Rouen : La Grande Semaine du millénaire normand,” *JdR*, Jun. 7, 1911; H. Cotentin, “Choses de la Semaine,” *JdlM*, Jul. 5, 1911; Louis Madelin, “À Propos du Millénaire,” *JdlM*, Jun. 21, 1911; Jules Delafosse, “Le Genie Normand,” *MdC*, Jun. 21, 1911; “Les Normands dans l’Italie du sud au XIe siècle,” *Éclair*, Feb. 6, 1923; “La Vierge au Bouclier,” *JdlM*, Jul. 26, 1924; “Faire-Part Original,” *Éclair*, May 1, 1933; R.S. Pagueiez de Johannes, ‘Coutances à Travers les Ages’, *Courrier de la Manche*, 21 May 1933; Ch. Birette, “Le Millénaire Normand du Cotentin,” *Éclair*, May 2, 1933; “Les Conférences,” *JdR*, Jan. 6, 1938.

11 “sang danois”. “Les Navires des vieux Normands,” in *JdlM*, Aug. 8, 1908; “Un Cherbourgeois,” “Un Roi de Danemarck à Cherbourg à Xe siècle,” *JdlM*, Jun. 19, 1907.

12 Albert Nicolet, *Louis Beuve: Une Passion normande* (Fontaine-le-Bourg: Le Puchoux, 2013), 111–112; Achille Burnouf, “La Terre des Hautemanière,” *Journal de l’arrondissement de Valognes*, Sep. 18, 1926–Jan. 22, 1927. Chauvinistic claims regarding transnational Viking-Norman identity also appeared in the writings of New England writer and proponent of Norman connections Sarah Orne Jewett. See Patrick Gleason, “Sarah Orne Jewett’s “The Foreigner” and the Transamerican Roots of New England Regionalism,” *Legacy* 28, no. 1 (2011): 25–27.

featured in the press as to become simply a stock trope available whenever Norman identity was celebrated or evoked, with a 1922 report on a demand by the Ligue de Normandie that football clubs in the Manche department be allowed to “sail with us in the old Norman drakkar” and play with them instead of in the Ligue de l’Ouest showing just how recognisable a commonplace the Viking theme had become.¹³

‘Pour la plus Grande Normandie’: Cultivating transnationality in the present

The emphasis placed by regionalist actors on the transnationalism of the Norman past was further developed through contemporary ties. A key organisation in these was the Souvenir Normand, a group led by aristocrats Jehan Soudan de Pierrefitte and the Marquis de la Rochethulon et Grente.¹⁴ Based on claims of Viking affinities, medieval Norman conquests, and colonial migrations, the Souvenir worked to awaken the consciousness of ‘Greater Normandy’, and found elements of this almost wherever its promoters looked, with its magazine in 1909 listing as part of the Norman world not only Scandinavia, but America, Canada, Italy and Russia too, as well as demonstrating the Norman descent of the crowned heads of Europe.¹⁵ As Brian Golding has discussed in his chapter on the Souvenir’s activities in the run-up to the 1904 signing of the Entente cordiale, it leveraged these ideas to organise reciprocal visits between the ‘sister Normandies’ of France and England, unveiling monuments to King Harald and William the Conqueror, bringing the mayor of Hastings to Rouen in 1904, and seeking ties with British and other European royalty.¹⁶ The Souvenir’s internationalist efforts received local press coverage, and it had a hand in the millennium events held at Rouen in 1911, but the use of Norman heritage to frame international meetings went beyond the Souvenir’s initiatives.¹⁷

In 1911, on top of the return of 1904’s ‘Normans of Hastings’, representatives from Norway, Sweden, Denmark, Iceland, Italy, the UK, Canada and

13 “vogueant avec nous sur le vieux drakkar normand”, “Foot-Ball Association,” *JdIM*, Aug. 5, 1922.

14 Brian Golding, “Remembering the Battle of Hastings: Memorialization, Le Souvenir Normand, and the Entente Cordiale,” in *Anglo-Norman Studies xxxix: Proceedings of the Battle Conference*, ed. Elisabeth Van Houts (Woodbridge: Boydell, 2017), 69–70.

15 “Les Normandies oubliées et ignorées,” *Le Souvenir normand*, 1 (May 1909): 9–11; “Herlève et Guillaume le Conquerant: Ancêtres des Souverains d’Europe,” *Les Gars normands*, Jul. 22, 1907.

16 Golding, “Remembering the Battle of Hastings,” 75; Guillet, “Nord Mythique,” 468–69; “Diex Aie,” *Les Gars normands*, Sep. 7, 1907.

17 “Le Souvenir Normand à Cherbourg,” *JdR*, Jan. 28, 1908; Arnould Galopin and Schalck de la Faverie, eds, *Le Livre du Millénaire de la Normandie: 911-1911* (Paris: Ficker, 1911) np.

the United States took part. Both Sweden and Norway sent naval ships to Rouen for the festivities, whilst the latter's delegation also included a choir and even a group of students who rowed non-stop from Ålesund in a replica longship, and Norway and Denmark bestowed Viking-themed gifts on the host town.¹⁸ At events in both Rouen and Paris, foreign diplomats, academics, and politicians gathered to dine and make congratulatory speeches or academic presentations, whilst the French state took overall control of events and endorsed them through the presence of President Fallières.¹⁹ The visits of these illustrious 'external Normans' received lavish coverage, not only in the *Journal de Rouen* but in papers across Normandy, and found echoes in the presence of Scandinavian and Canadian diplomats at the interwar events of Bayeux and Coutances.²⁰ In turn, these 'cousins' embraced their Norman ancestry, with Edward Clarke of the British branch of the Souvenir Normand asking in 1904: "Where can one be better than amongst one's family, Normans from across the Channel and Normans of the Seine."²¹ Through their participation in Norman celebrations, these actors from far-flung countries thus not only confirmed the claims made for Normandy's transnational past but also contributed to its construction as a region with unique transnational ties in the present.

'Grande Normandie' as a 'petite patrie': A transnational region's place in the nation

Overall, however, discourse around Norman identity in this period remained within a European regionalist mode in its subordination to a broader French national identity, with any contestation of this from figures such as Louis Beuve remaining marginal and with little public echo.²²

18 Chaline, "Les Fêtes du Millénaire," 56; "Rouen : La Semaine des Fêtes Normandes," *JdR*, Jun. 9, 1904; "Rouen : La Grande Semaine des Fêtes du Millénaire," *JdR*, Jun. 6-9, 1911.

19 "Les Fêtes du Millénaire Normand," *Excelsior*, Jun. 11, 1911; "Les Fêtes du Millénaire," *Le Figaro*, Jun. 11, 1911.

20 "Le Millénaire de la Normandie," *JdlM*, Jun. 17, 1911; Delafosse, "Le Genie Normand"; [Carl] Goos, "Normands et Danois," *Journal de Flers*, Jun. 28, 1911; "Les Fêtes du Millénaire à Bayeux," *MdC*, Jun. 11, 1924; César Séverie, "L'Inauguration officielle des fêtes," in *Notre Millénaire* 15.

21 "Où peut-on être mieux qu'au sein de sa famille, Normands d'outre-manche et les Normands de la Seine." "La Semaine des Fêtes normandes," *JdR*, Jun. 14, 1904; "Echos des Fêtes normandes," *JdR*, Jun. 15, 1904; "La Grande semaine des Fêtes du Millénaire normand," *JdR*, Jun. 7, 1911; "La Reception de Roald Amundsen à Rouen," *JdR*, Dec. 18, 1912.

22 An anonymous letter in the *Journal de l'arrondissement de Valognes* denouncing the planned presence of French kings in the historical parade at Coutances in 1933 matches views expressed in Beuve's correspondence and was likely from him, whilst comments on the 'national' character of Normandy in the *Courrier de la Manche* were likely written by Beuve as the paper's editor. The 1933 celebrations overall continued to show Normandy's contribution to a broader French narrative, and no complaints regarding this appeared elsewhere in the

Here, the Norman *petite patrie* was a familiar object of affection, the love for which naturally translated into support for the *grande patrie* of France.²³ Such ideas can be seen in the discussions regarding Norman authors such as Corneille and Flaubert, celebrated as part of the Norman contribution to the glory of France, and also permeated the 1911 Millennium celebrations in Rouen, where festivities were attended by the President of the Republic. Historical discourse covered in the press around these celebrations stressed how Normandy's history had brought it into unity with France and contributed to the prestige of the French nation. Thus an account of the treaty of Saint-Clair-sur-Epte (between Viking leader Rollo and West Frankish King Charles the Simple, which had established the duchy) printed in the *Journal de la Manche* described it as the beginning of "French Normandy" and coverage in the *Moniteur du Calvados* described "Norman heroes" as "glories of France", merging medieval conquests into French exploration and colonisation, a theme also present in the official *Livre du Millénaire de la Normandie*.²⁴ President Fallières was informed at Rouen that he was the "legitimate and direct successor [...] of Rollo, first duke of Normandy," and schoolgirls meeting him were dressed half in Norman costume, half as Marianne.²⁵ The president himself responded by emphasising the inseparability of Normandy and France and, speaking during subsequent celebrations in Caen, highlighted the unity of the *petite* and *grande patries*, stating that "Today, if one remains Norman, one is first and foremost a Frenchman and a good Frenchman."²⁶ As such, devotion to the region of Normandy was inescapably a form of devotion to France, the nation of which it was part.

This context is particularly important in understanding the role of the contemporary international connections developed around Normandy's historical origins and entanglements. Golding has argued that the Souve-

press. Nicolet, *Louis Beuve*, 82-84, 105-108; Un Normand du Cotentin, "Le Millénaire normand ne doit être que normand," *Journal de l'arrondissement de Valognes*, Jan. 28, 1933; À Propos du Millénaire', *Courrier de la Manche*, 28 May, 1933, 4 June, 1933; Macé, "Autour du Millénaire".

23 Anne-Marie Thiesse, *Ils Apprenaient la France: L'exaltation des régions dans le discours patriotique* (Paris : Maison des Sciences de l'homme, 1997), 17-29.

24 "Normandie française", "héros normands" "gloires de la France". "Le Millénaire de la Normandie"; Delafosse, "Le Genie Normand"; Aug. Chevalier, "Les Normands au Continent Noir," in *Le Livre du Millénaire* 82-93. Historical emphasis on Normandy's union with France and a continuity between medieval conquest and modern colonialism was also evident in 1933. M.-A. Macé, "Autour du Millénaire normand", *JdR*, Jun. 4, 1933; Henry Bérenger, "Préface," in *Notre Millénaire* 7-8.

25 "successeur légitime et direct [...] de Rollon, premier duc de Normandie". "Rouen : Les Fêtes du millénaire normand," *JdR*, Jun. 25, 1911.

26 "Aujourd'hui, si l'on reste Normand, on est avant tout Français et bon Français." "Rouen : Les Fêtes du millénaire normand"; "Les Fêtes de Caen," *JdIM*, Jul. 19, 1911.

nir Normand's aim of building connections between "sister Normandies", though connected to a regionalist discourse of traditional Norman culture and developing in particular around the Entente cordiale, "cut across national frontiers" and offered a space in which "national rivalries might dissolve, and tensions resolve."²⁷ The breadth of the connections the Souvenir sought to weave, and its founders' commitment to ideas of universal peace in a period of competing European alliances, were certainly radical and, as Golding argues, set it apart from other organisations which sought to incorporate cultural ties into the building of European alliance blocs.

Yet it is clear that both within and beyond the purview of the Souvenir, Norman internationalism acted as a channel for connections favourable to France, with Souvenir-allied paper *Les Gars normands* claiming in 1907 that the "reawakening" of a greater Normandy facilitated contacts with "Cousins of Peace" and would help "make a 'Greater France' bloom again in the modern world."²⁸ In 1904, at the Souvenir's festivities in Rouen, the mayor of Hastings trod not only in the footsteps of William the Conqueror, but also Joan of Arc, with the press covering his gift of two decorative iron lilies to ornament her monument as an English homage to France's national heroine.²⁹ For the foreign delegations who attended the millennium celebrations in 1911, these provided an occasion not only to emphasise ties with Normandy, but to demonstrate peaceful and prosperous relations with contemporary France before an audience that included the president himself. The entanglement of Normandy and France was evident among the speeches of host and guests throughout events, including an assembly in Paris where "The mayor of Christiania [Oslo], the president of the Norwegian Storting, [and] the mayor of Hastings [said] how sympathetic their homelands are towards Normandy, France, and her radiant capital."³⁰ Golding argues that the pan-Latinism of the southern French Félibrige may have been one of the inspirations for the Souvenir Normand, and it seems that the concept of a 'regionalist foreign policy', developed by Nicholas Berjoan to describe Félibrige activities which sought cultural links with other Latin countries

27 Golding, "Remembering the Battle of Hastings," 76-77.

28 "réveil", "les Cousins de la Paix", "faire reflleurir dans le monde moderne une 'Plus Grande France'". Ibid., 65, 70, 76; Guillet, "Nord Mythique," 468; Jehan Soudan de Pierrefitte, "Le Réveil des Provinces de France : Réponse à une question," *Les Gars normands*, Aug. 5, 1907 (original emphasis).

29 "Rouen : La Semaine des Fêtes Normandes," *JdR*, Jun. 7, 1904.

30 "Le bourgmestre de Christiania [Oslo], le président du Storting de Norvège, le maire de Hastings dissent combien leurs patries ont des sympathies pour la Normandie, la France et sa radieuse capitale." "Le Millénaire de la Normandie".

whilst at the same time positioning the Midi as a bridge between France and these potential allies, is applicable to both the Provençal and Norman cases.³¹ As a French region, Normandy's transnational connections thus acted as a channel through which international actors could emphasise their *particular* connections to France. Even when it appeared on the international stage, the qualities of the *petite patrie* were thus still leveraged in support of the *grande*.

'Cette petite Normandie': The region beyond the nation

If this Norman internationalism on the mainland was integrated into support for France, then what of those areas of the former duchy that found themselves outside of the Republic, the islands of Jersey and Guernsey? Whilst Ernest Renan claimed that Channel Islanders and mainland Normans had nothing in common, many clearly disagreed.³² In 1907 *Les Gars Normands* depicted the Channel Islands as "this little France, this little Normandy," where patois-speaking judges upheld the medieval *Coutumier normand*, and where "Edward [VII] is duke, but it is still old Rollo who reigns."³³ Such views were not confined to the *Souvenir* but appear throughout the provincial press of Normandy. This was in part thanks to the influence of Victor Hugo and his son François Victor, who sought refuge from the Second Empire first in Jersey and then in Guernsey, writing books which reinforced perceptions of the islands' *Normanness*.³⁴ The Channel Islands were seen as Norman, inhabited by descendants of the conquerors of England, and visits to them by British kings were referred to as trips by the "duke of Normandy" to his duchy. Two areas were particularly important in this discourse, namely language in the form of the "Norman patois", and law in the legal system's basis that went back to the old *coutumier* of Normandy.³⁵ An article from 1904 in the *Journal de la Manche* claimed that the islands featured "all that is most Norman, in Normandy. It is there that one

31 Golding, "Remembering the Battle of Hastings," 74; Nicolas Berjoan, "L'idée latine du Félibrige: Enjeux, boires et déboires d'une politique étrangère régionaliste (1870-1890)," *Revue d'histoire du XIXe siècle* 42 (2011): 121-36.

32 Ernest Renan, *Qu'est-ce que qu'une nation?*, (Paris : Calmann Lévy, 1882), 17-18.

33 "cette petite France, cette petite Normandie", "Edouard [VII] est duc, mais c'est toujours le vieux Rollon qui règne". "Toutes les Normandies: Les Îles de la Manche," *Les Gars normands*, Jul. 8, 1907.

34 Auguste Luchet, "Jersey," *JdR*, Sep. 24-28, 1842; "L'Archipel de la Manche," *JdR*, Oct. 1, 1883; "Le Cinquantenaire de Victor Hugo à Guernesey," *Éclair*, May 26, 1935; "La Normandie inconnue," *Éclair*, Aug. 12, 1935.

35 "duc de Normandie", "patois normand". Henry Houssaye, "Jersey," *JdR*, Sep. 18, 1885; "Aux Îles Anglo-Normandes," *Éclair*, Aug. 21, 1912; "Caen," *MdC*, May 31, 1923; Jacques Bonhomme, "Bonhommes," *Bonhomme normand*, Dec. 14, 1923; "Visite Royale aux Îles Anglo-normandes," *Éclair*, Jul. 23, 1935; "La Semaine de droit normand à Guernesey," *JdR*, Jul. 23, 1938.

must seek the true Norman language, which elsewhere is denatured, and the Norman customs which have not been lost".³⁶ Such ideas show how the islands were often viewed as a relic area, "the only relic of the Old Duchy of William the Conqueror".³⁷ The Jersiais were perceived by the rector of the University of Caen in 1923 as "Normans like us, more Norman as it were" in their adherence to the old Norman legal *coutumier*, and not only the Hugos but a host of journalists and guidebook writers were fascinated by Jersey's exotic feudal aspects from seigneurial rights to the Clameur de Haro (a customary procedure against land infringement) and its inhabitant's speaking "the archaic language of Robert Wace".³⁸ Such was the strength of these ideas that the *Cherbourg Éclair* could claim that "Even in the 20th century, in 1935, our cousins of Jersey and Guernsey think themselves rich and happy to have remained Normans from the year 1200."³⁹ As such, many differences could be explained within a shared identity: Channel Islanders were fellow Normans, but their Normanness was from a different time.

As with the manifestations of transnational Normanness discussed above, these ideas were not just abstract discourse but took concrete form. Within sight of the French coast, Jersey maintained close relations with France. Regular steamship services connected the islands to the mainland, bringing numerous tourists and excursion groups.⁴⁰ Newspapers in Jersey and neighbouring areas of France covered events in each other's circulation areas and cited each other as sources for articles.⁴¹ The economic importance of trade between them, particularly in agriculture, was highlighted in local newspapers, and though increased restrictions saw this drop off after the

36 "tout ce qu'il y a de plus normand, en Normandie. C'est là qu'il faut chercher le vrai langage normand, qui ailleurs se dénature, et les coutumes normandes qui ne sont pas perdus".

H. Cotentin, "Revouvelé d'Ulysse," *JdlM*, Nov. 30, 1904.

37 "la seule survivance de l'Ancien Duché de Guillaume le Conquerant". "Accompagnons Edouard Heriot chez Nos Cousins Jersiais et Guernesiais," *Éclair*, Aug. 28, 1932; David Hopkin, "Regionalism and Folklore," in Xosé M. Núñez Seixas and Eric Storm, eds., *Regionalism and Modern Europe: Identity Construction and Movements from 1890 to the Present Day* (London: Bloomsbury, 2019), 48-50.

38 "Normands comme nous, plus Normands pour ainsi dire", "l'archaïque langue de Robert Wace". "Jersey et Guernesey: La dernière citadelle du régime féodal," *MdC*, Sep. 6, 1908; "Rouen : La Grande Semaine des Fêtes du Millénaire normand," *JdR*, Jun. 10, 1911; "Aux Îles Anglo-normandes"; A.L. "Le Banquet universitaire," *MdC*, Feb. 13, 1923; Henri Boland, *Les Îles de la Manche* (Paris: Hachette, 1904).

39 "Même au Xxe siècle, en 1935, nos cousins de Jersey et de Guernesey s'estiment riches et heureux d'être restés des Normands de l'an 1200.". "La Normandie inconnue," *Éclair*.

40 "Grande excursion à Jersey," *JdlM*, Aug. 2, 1911; "Nos Amis jersiais nous rendent visite," *Éclair*, Jul. 16, 1928.

41 "Ré-élection du maire de Carteret," *Nouvelle Chronique de Jersey [Nouvelle]*, May 23, 1900; "L'Exportation des Cailloux," *Éclair*, Jan. 14, 1929.

First World War, other connections remained important. From the Revolution onward, French exiles had come to Jersey for political reasons, with the religious restrictions of the Third Republic seeing several French orders establish themselves in the island. The later nineteenth century also saw substantial migration to Jersey from neighbouring French departments, particularly the Côtes-du-Nord, so that by the early twentieth century, over ten percent of the population had been born in France, while thousands of agricultural labourers also came to Jersey during each potato season.⁴²

Cultural connections were also strong: in the wake of the Entente cordiale, a series of musical competitions were organised in Jersey and the Manche department where many municipal bands competed, bringing with them numerous excursionists.⁴³ Events were organised and attended by the authorities of Jersey and the towns and departments of the French coast, as well as by academic, business, and cultural organisations, including the Souvenir Normand. The latter brought the bailiff of Jersey (the highest official in Jersey's self-governing institutions), Sir William Venables Vernon, to Caen in 1905, and introduced its pan-Norman anthem "Diex Aie" to the dinners of the Jersey Society in London, an influential expatriate group.⁴⁴ The diffusion of dialect literature from Jersey and Guernsey played a role in its emergence on the mainland in the later nineteenth century, and major Jërriais writer Edwin Luce read the works of his mainland contemporary Louis Beuve.⁴⁵ In 1938 the "Bouans Viers Jërriais" theatre troupe performed dialect plays to a packed audience in Cherbourg alongside the town's own Société Alfred Rossel, whilst as late as 1940 the *Bonhomme normand* and the *Chroniques de Jersey* were still reprinting dialect content from each other, presenting it to their readers as evidence of cultural affinity.⁴⁶

42 Michel Monteil, *French Immigration to Jersey 1850-1950*, trans. Glynn S. Burgess and Rory A.D. Hill, (St. Helier: Société Jersiaise, 2015), 26-36, 57, 68.

43 Trouve à r'dire, "Lendemain de fête," *Chronique de Jersey* [*Chronique*], May 22, 1907; "Saint-Lô en Fête," *JdlM*, Jun. 2, 1909; "Les Visites internationales," *Nouvelle*, Aug. 18, 1909; "Le Concours Musical," *Nouvelle*, Jun. 7, 1911; "Les Grandes Fêtes Musicales," *MdC*, Sep. 5, 1930.

44 "La Société Jersiaise," *Nouvelle*, Aug. 12, 1903; "La Société des Jersiais à Londres," *Chronique*, Oct. 17 1903; "Les fêtes à Caen," *Nouvelle*, Aug 12 1905; "L'Entente cordiale," *Nouvelle*, Aug 16, 1905; "Les Nouvelles," *JdlM*, Apr. 24, 1907; "Salut à nos Amis de France," *Morning News*, June 5, 1911; "Le Concours musical"; "The Jubilee of the Société Jersiaise," *Evening Post*, May 23, 1923; "La Bienvenue," *Chroniques de Jersey*, May 23, 1923; "Le Banquet universitaire"; "Les Fêtes du Millénaire de Bayeux," *JdR*, Jun. 11, 1924; Caouain [George W. de Carteret], *Chroniques de Jersey*, Apr. 16, 1938.

45 Catherine Bougy, "La Littérature dialectale en Normandie au XIXe siècle : un renouveau venu des îles", *Bibliothèque de l'École des chartes* 159.1 (2001) 129-152; Elie [Ediwn Luce], "Notre Séthée", *Nouvelle*, Nov. 22, 1913.

46 "Cherbourg: Nos cousins jersiais ont donné une soirée au Grand Théâtre," *Éclair*, Apr. 19, 1938; "Echos de la Semaine," *Bonhomme normand*, Mar. 1, 1940; *Almanach des Chroniques de Jersey pour l'année bissextile 1940* (Jersey: Chroniques de Jersey, 1939), 119.

These exchanges and contacts provided an occasion for discussions of shared Norman identity in the press of both Jersey and mainland Normandy. In letters to the *Chronique de Jersey* in 1907 (one of which also appeared in *Les Gars normands*), Jerseyman Philippe Ahier referenced the identity of “we Normans, either English or French”, the Conquest, and the Scandinavian “drakkars” of “our fearsome ancestors”, all centred on his current efforts (in correspondence with the Norman-born André de Boisandré, editor of the anti-Semitic Parisian *Libre parole* newspaper) to organise a celebration of Norman author Jules Barbey d’Aureville in Coutances.⁴⁷ Ahier’s rhetoric was particularly striking, but claims to Normanness were also widespread in mainstream press features and reporting on official events. In 1911, the *Morning News* welcomed visitors to a musical competition in Jersey with a special French article referencing the island’s Norman roots.⁴⁸ More strongly, in relation to that year’s Millennium events in Rouen, the *Nouvelle Chronique de Jersey* reported on a speech by the Lieutenant Bailiff, given before French representatives assembled in the St. Helier, which stressed the importance of Jersey’s representation at these celebrations as “descendants of the Normans” and “remnants of this old Duchy.” The paper and its competitor, the *Chronique*, took up the theme themselves with long articles on the history of Vikings in Normandy and the importance of this to Jersey.⁴⁹ Similar rhetoric continued to appear in the 1920s in both English and French-language newspapers. In 1923 the merged *Chroniques de Jersey* welcomed French academics and lawyers arriving for a conference on Norman legal history “On behalf of the people of Jersey, of this old Norman race,” and reprinted a speech by Vernon in which he proclaimed Jersey’s loyalty to “the old Norman laws, which are essentially Scandinavian laws.” These themes surfaced again in 1924 when Vernon and other Jersey representatives were given places of honour at the millennium festivities in Bayeux, and at the 1927 Semaine de droit normand in Guernsey. In the press of Jersey, events both there and on the mainland could thus be viewed through a lens of intra-Norman exchange.⁵⁰

47 “nous Normands, soit Français ou Anglais”, “nos ancêtres terribles”, Philippe Ahier, “Correspondance,” *Chronique*, March 30, Jul. 13 and 20, 1907; Philippe Ahier, “Les Normands de Jersey,” *Les Gars Normands*, Jul. 29, 1907.

48 “Salut à nos Amis de France,” *Morning News*, Jun. 5, 1911.

49 “descendants des Normands”, “restes de ce vieux Duché”. “Le Banquet au Grand Hotel,” *Nouvelle*, Jul. 7, 1911; J.L.B. “Notice sur les Incursions des Vikings en Normandie,” *Nouvelle*, Jun. 14, 1911; J.L.B. “911-1911: Notice sur les Incursions des Vikings en Normandie,” *Chronique*, Jun. 14, 1911.

50 “Au nom du peuple Jersiaise, de cette vieille race normande”, “la vieille législation normande, qui est en somme la législation scandinave”. “La Bienvenue”; “La Semaine normande”, *Chro-*

On the mainland, the *Journal de la Manche*, *Moniteur du Calvados* and *Bonhomme normand* similarly emphasised the Norman nature of Jersey in coverage of the 1923 Semaine du droit normand in Jersey and the subsequent granting of an honorary doctorate to Bailiff Vernon during a visit to the University of Caen, with the *Journal de Rouen* echoing such coverage during further visits to Guernsey and Jersey for the Semaine du droit normand of 1938.⁵¹ Even comparatively minor exchanges could be framed in this way, with the *Moniteur du Calvados* taking the opportunity during a 1929 visit of the St. Helier fire brigade to Caen to welcome “the “cousins” from the Channel Islands” by quoting Norman regionalist poet Charles Théophile-Féret’s description of Jersey as a “piece of Normandy which fell into the sea.”⁵² In the context of these contacts and their representation in the press of both Jersey and the mainland, ideas of a transnational Norman identity appear to have been reciprocated and reinforced. That these exchanges crossed a national border was clearly understood, but Normanness provided a framework in which both sides could draw on the same terms to describe claims of a shared heritage in the past and shared identity in the present. However, as will be discussed below, Jersey’s liminal position and differing national status meant that the precise connotations of this identity were not the same on island and mainland.

‘Not French but Norman’: Same region, different nation?

The valorisation of Norman heritage and identity in Jersey was not limited to the context of exchanges with the Norman mainland. The States of Jersey called on Norman heritage in a 1907 dispute over heraldry, and a 1913 talk given to the Société Jersiaise in St. Helier discussed the life and deeds of Duke Rollo.⁵³ At the early-twentieth-century dinners of the Jersey Society in London, songs with Norman and Viking themes were sung, and the Norwegian ambassador attended as a supposed fellow Viking descendant. In the interwar period, talks given to the Society included topics related to

niques de Jersey, May 26, 1923; “Les Fêtes du Millénaire,” *Chroniques de Jersey*, Jun. 18, 1924. C.f. “Compatriotes Normands,” *Chronique*, May 11, 1907; “The Jubilee of the Société Jersiaise,” “The Norman Week,” *Evening Post*, May 24, 1923; “À Guernesey,” *Chroniques de Jersey*, Jun. 1, 1927.

51 “Caen: La Semaine du Droit Normand,” *MdC*, May 20, 1923; Paul Le Cacheux, “Les Fêtes du Cinquantenaire de la Société Jersiaise,” *JdlM*, Jun. 09, 1923; “Le Banquet universitaire”; *Bonhomme*, “Bonhommades”; “La Semaine du droit normand de Guernesey”.

52 “les “cousins” des Îles Anglo-Normandes”, “morceau de Normandie qui tomba dans la mer”. “Des Pompiers jersiais à Caen,” *MdC*, Sep. 11, 1929.

53 *Actes et Correspondance au sujet de l'emploi par le vapeur “Duke of Normandy” de pavillons distinctifs*, (Jersey: States of Jersey, 1907); G.B. Renouf, *Rollo: Duke of Normandy*, (Jersey: Labey, 1914).

Normandy and Jersey's links with it.⁵⁴ In 1938, the committee for the Norman-French section of the Jersey Eisteddfod, an annual festival of literature and drama, wrote to Jersey headmasters to encourage "Jersey dialect-speaking pupils" to keep alive "the speech alike of *trouvère* & *Chronicler*, & the tongue in which William the Norman asserted his claim to sovereignty."⁵⁵ Ideas of the island's Norman identity and heritage thus remained a feature of Jersey life throughout the period.

These themes were evident in the press. *La Normandie inconnue* was serialised in the *Nouvelle Chronique* in 1904, giving front-page coverage to François Victor Hugo's comments on the Norman nature of Jersey, and it was quoted in articles and readers' letters.⁵⁶ Newspapers' reporting, opinion articles, and readers' letters referenced Jersey's Norman identity.⁵⁷ The Norman Conquest of England, and the supposed Norman origins of the British royal family, were particularly favoured topics. References to the latter's ruling Jersey as Dukes of Normandy abounded, as in a toast for Queen Victoria's 1897 jubilee which wished "Good health, all happiness and long life / To the Duchess of Normandy", and were still present in 1936 coverage of Edward VIII.⁵⁸ Reports on Jersey Society dinners in London in the early twentieth century were full of such themes, with Bailiff Vernon in 1906 not only toasting "the health of the King, Duke of Normandy, *our* Dukel," but also claiming that Jerseymen "are descended from the same old Scandinavian races as our gracious queen", Alexandra of Denmark, wife of Edward VII.⁵⁹

The prominence of these themes, however, also hints at the particular nature of Norman identity in Jersey in this period, differing from the French departments with which it was supposedly shared and shaped by the island's

54 "List of titles of talks given to the Society with dates and who delivered them," Jersey Archive L/D/05/C/30; "La Société des Jersiais à Londres,"; "La Société Jersiaise à Londres," *Chronique*, Mar. 11, 1905; "La Société Jersiaise à Londres," *Nouvelle*, Nov. 23, 1907; Brian Ahier Read, *Jersey in London: A History of the Jersey Society in London 1896-1989* (St Helier: Seaflower, 1994), 25-26.

55 "Minute book of the Norman French Section of the Jersey Eisteddfod," Jersey Archive L/D/52/A4/1.

56 "Conservons Notre Langue et nous conserverons notre nationalité," *Chronique*, Aug. 8, 1857; A.B. Mourant, "La Normandie inconnue," *Chronique*, Aug. 26, 1857; Arthur Mourant, "Correspondance," *Chronique*, April 25, 1874; François Victor Hugo, "La Normandie inconnue," *Nouvelle*, Jan. 27 and Mar. 2, 1904; Un Tout Vi, "Correspondance," *Nouvelle*, May 24, 1905.

57 "Arguments frappants," *Chronique*, Aug. 2, 1893; "Ver non semper viret sed Vernon semper viret," *Chronique*, May 20, 1899; E.P. Falle, "Wace – And His Times," *Morning News*, Jun. 25, 1923; "Le Vier Patois," *Chroniques de Jersey*, Nov. 5, 1930; "Banquet d'honneur," *Chroniques de Jersey*, Oct. 5, 1932; Un St. Ouonnaï, "Correspondence," *Chroniques de Jersey*, Feb. 2, 1935.

58 "Santêh, tout bonheur êth longue vie / A la Duchesse de Normandie." "La Duchesse de Normandie," *Chronique*, Jun. 30, 1897; "Edouard VIII," *Chroniques de Jersey*, Jan. 25, 1936.

59 "la santé du Roi, Duc de Normandie, notre Ducl", "sont descendus des mêmes vieilles races scandinaves de notre gracieuse reine". "La Société Jersiaise à Londres," *Nouvelle*, Mar. 10, 1906.

liminal position as a British possession separate from the United Kingdom and positioned between the latter and France. Over the nineteenth century, Jersey saw a large influx of migrants from both the United Kingdom and France. Jersey's French-born population grew to one in nine of the island's inhabitants by the first decade of the twentieth century, a figure which did not include the thousands of seasonal workers who arrived each year for the potato harvest, or those born in Jersey who retained French citizenship.⁶⁰ This was met with a moral panic, at times producing overt and violent hostility. Newspaper columns opined on the "contamination of evil-disposed immigrants", and in 1900, the relief of Mafeking by British forces was met with an anti-French riot in St. Helier, where troops were called to disperse a mob destroying French-owned businesses.⁶¹ Fears over supposed immigrant criminality, land ownership, and threats to Jersey's political ties with Britain culminated in the establishment of a States Committee on Immigration in 1905, with the *Jersey Times* and *Nouvelle Chronique* calling for restrictions. The *Chronique* was alone in maintaining a pro-immigrant stance that it acknowledged was likely to be unpopular with readers.⁶²

Newspapers in France often framed the island's cultural familiarity in terms of French identity, even claiming that the islands would become part of France. Yet against a backdrop of hostility towards French immigrants, such discourse on the Frenchness of Jersey was, the occasional Hugo quotation aside, unlikely to go down well in Jersey's own press.⁶³ One 1904 letter to the *Nouvelle Chronique* even portrayed a French Jersey as literally the stuff of nightmares: its writer satires Jersey's new conscription law through a dream account in which he realises that "oh woe! we were French" due to its seemingly tyrannical obligations.⁶⁴ In this context, perhaps strengthened by the fact that the vast majority of the French immigrants were not Norman but Breton, a Norman identity represented a way to acknowledge Jersey's culture and affinities with the mainland without directly evoking Frenchness.⁶⁵ This is made explicit in a 1923 review of Jersey-set novel *Rose*

60 Monteil, *French Immigration* 60-69

61 Monteil, *French Immigration* 100-126; "The States," *Jersey Times*, Feb. 10, 1905; "The Relief of Mafeking," *Evening Post*, May 22, 1900; "Le Secours de Mafeking," *Nouvelle*, May 23, 1900; Elie Mahy, "Correspondance," *Nouvelle*, Feb. 18, 1905.

62 Monteil, *French Immigration* 117; "Etats," *Nouvelle*, Jan. 28, 1905; "L'Immigration," *Nouvelle*, Feb. 1, 1905; "The States," *Jersey Times*, Feb. 9, 1905; Trouve à R'dire, "Le Superficiel et le fond de la question," *Chronique*, Feb. 4-Mar. 8, 1905.

63 Contentin, "Renouvelé d'Ulysse"; A. Marvand, "Les Îles Anglo-Normandes," *JdlM*, Sep. 6, 1913; François-Victor Hugo, "La Normandie inconnue," *Nouvelle*, Jan. 27, 1904.

64 "malheur! nous étions des Français", 'Ruisseau', "Correspondance," *Nouvelle*, Mar. 26, 1904.

65 Monteil, *French Immigration* 69.

and *Laurel* by the local *Evening Post*, which stated: "[I]t is well to remember that the origin of the islands is not French but Norman. The language of Paris is despised by the proud descendants of the Normans, as evidenced by the patois of this work. [...] It would not be amiss for the modern English politician to study the work with a view to glean some knowledge of the Island and its inhabitants when anticipating taxation or infringing their Constitutional rights."⁶⁶

Despite the claim of this review, one context where Norman identity was mobilised as a way of negotiating the island's relationship with Britain was the defence of French as Jersey's administrative language. In the later nineteenth century, as British immigration and English education increased the Anglophone population, efforts were made to introduce English to Jersey's courts and parliament.⁶⁷ In 1900, the year when the use of English was finally permitted in the States, proponents of the change capitalised on anti-French feeling related to the Boer War, claiming that the use of French created "the impression, erroneous and dangerous to the welfare of the Island, that they were of French race, had French traditions, and French aspirations." An editorial in the *Evening Post* argued that "Language should follow the Flag" and that the use of English would draw Jersey "into closer union with the mother country."⁶⁸

Jersey's French-language newspapers, however, resisted these connotations in their opposition to language changes in the 1890s and 1900s. Instead, they claimed that the use of French was a cornerstone of Jersey's autonomous constitution, that it was a natural outgrowth of Jersey's indigenous linguistic heritage in the form of Jèrriais, and invoked the Norman Conquest as justification for it, allowing the French language to be seen as part of Jersey's ties with Britain.⁶⁹ A *Chronique* editorial in 1900 claimed

66 "Review of *Rose and Laurel* by Hilda Balleine," *Evening Post*, May 23, 1923.

67 Monteil, *French Immigration* 140-47.

68 G. Torre Picot and Ed. Toulmin Nicolle, "Correspondence," *Evening Post*, Jan. 6, 1900; "English in the States," *Jersey Times*, Jan. 19, 1900; "The Optional Use of English in the States," *Evening Post*, Feb. 8, 1900; A Member of the States of Guernsey, "Correspondence," *Jersey Times*, Feb. 10, 1900; "Victory," *Jersey Times*, Feb. 10, 1900. Similar arguments had appeared before, see "Et qu'eroit jamaï creu d'itali," *Jersey Independent*, Oct. 12, 1858.

69 "Anglomanie – Suicide," *Chronique*, Jan. 28, 1891; "Notre Langue maternelle. Qu'en fait-on?," *Chronique*, Dec. 1, 1897; "Un Grand Vieillard," *Nouvelle*, 13 Jan. 1900; Pierre Fendre, "Pour l'amour du Vièr Jèrriais," *Chronique*, Jan. 27, 1900; "Notre Langue maternelle," *Chronique*, Jan. 27, 1900; "La Question linguistique," *Nouvelle*, Feb. 3, 1900; "Le Très Reverend Doyen et la décadence jersiaise," *Nouvelle*, Dec. 15, 1900; A.M., "Nos Jeunes Gens dans l's'Etats," *Nouvelle*, Dec. 11, 1901; Pro Patria, "Correspondance," *Nouvelle*, Oct. 17, 1906. Rhetoric around Jersey's "Norman" ties to Britain was usually based on the idea of loyalty to the British monarch as successor to the Duchy of Normandy. However, ideas regarding the role of the Conquest in

that “Our official language, in effect, is the elder daughter of the old Norman, which was, in any case, the official language of England for 400 years. Let us remind ourselves that William the Conqueror and all his successors, for 330 years, all spoke French, and not English.” The editorial continued satirically: “Our national arms are stained with Norman mottos. Well, let us be *thorough*, and inform His Majesty in Council that it will henceforth be impossible for us to say: ‘*Honi soit qui mal y pense*’ or ‘*Dieu et mon droit*’; but that we wish to use an optional English translation, so as to show our loyalty!”⁷⁰ In this context, the transnational nature of Norman identity allowed differing interpretations depending on the national context in which it was invoked. In Jersey it was thus useful not only in avoiding connotations of Frenchness, but also in negotiating the complex and at times contested relationship between a distinctive Jersey identity, linked to particular cultural and political attributes and at times referred to in the press as a ‘nationality’, and wider loyalties of Britishness or Englishness.⁷¹

Conclusion

In conclusion, an examination of the press of Jersey and mainland Normandy in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries reveals a Norman identity that can be viewed as both transnational and regional. The framing of history in Normandy saw the Viking raids and settlement of the coast of northern France become incorporated into a regional past, the legacy of which was supposedly still evident in the regional character of modern Normans. Medieval figures whose exploits had taken them far beyond the old duchy, such as William the Conqueror or the de Hauteville family, were celebrated as exemplars of Normanness. These connections served as pretexts for developing modern international links. Exchanges and visits

the relationship between Jersey and Britain could be more forthright, as seen in a letter of 1909 on the growing use of English in churches which complained of how Jersey people were “singant le parler et les manières d’un peuple que nos ancêtres Normands avaient jadis conquis” Joseph de Jersey, “Correspondance,” *Nouvelle*, Jan. 2, 1909.

70 “Notre langue officielle, en effet, est la fille aînée du vieux Normand qui fut, d’ailleurs, la langue officielle de l’Angleterre pour 400 ans. Ressouvenons-nous que Guillaume le Conquerant et tous ses successeurs, pendant 330 ans, ont tous parlé français, et non anglais [...] Nos armoires nationales sont ternies de devises normandes. Or, soyons *thorough*, et représentons à sa Majesté en Conseil qu’il nous sera impossible de dire désormais: “Honi soit qui mal y pense” ou “Dieu et mon droit”; mais que nous désirons l’usage facultatif d’une traduction anglaise, afin de monter notre loyauté !” “Notre Langue maternelle en danger,” *Chronique*, Jan. 24, 1900.

71 Arthur Mourant, “Correspondance”; “Ni Anglais, ni Français, mais Jersiais,” *Chronique*, Feb. 4, 1891; “Notre Langue maternelle. Qu’en fait-on ?”; “English in the States”; “The Optional Use of English in the States”; “La Société Jersiaise à Londres,” *Nouvelle*, Mar. 10, 1906.

involving the Normans' supposed lands of origin or countries they had conquered or settled, stretching to include Scandinavia, England, Greece, Italy, Canada, and the US, both underlined Normandy's claims to a transnational past and allowed the projection of global connections as a part of its regional distinctiveness. The transnational nature of Norman identity was deepened by British sovereignty over Jersey and Guernsey. Perceptions of the islands as Norman were common in the press of the mainland, as well as featuring in identity discourse in the press of Jersey, with meetings between the inhabitants of 'Normandie insulaire' and 'Normandie continentale' often serving to reaffirm this shared identity. Similarities such as those in language were framed as part of this identity, whilst references to a common Norman past allowed the negotiation of difference.

But if this shows an identity that appeared to be shared across a national border, it also demonstrates the ways in which Norman identity could be shaped by contexts that highlight its *regional* nature. Jersey appears to have remained something of a frontier zone in the period, where flexible identities could be leveraged in different circumstances.⁷² Here, French, English and Norman identities could all be variously claimed and denied, combined and emphasised, ignored and forgotten. This could depend on whether the writer or speaker was from Jersey or looking at the island from the outside; whether they were writing in English or French; whether the context of writing was fishing disputes, language legislation, or the Entente cordiale; and whether they were writing earlier in the period, when ties to France were stronger, or later, when insular papers made fewer references to Normanhood and French papers (and some insular observers) saw the island as anglicising and losing its Norman character.⁷³ Norman identity in Jersey was mobilised in ways that helped to navigate this complex situation, with a clear example being supplied by Bailiff Vernon in 1906 when he acknowl-

72 For a discussion of this in an earlier period, see Renaud Morieux, *The Channel: England, France and the Construction of a Maritime Border in the Eighteenth Century* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2016), 251-259.

73 Luchet, "Jersey"; "Et qu'eroit jamaï creu d'ital!"; "Qui vive ? – Normandie," *Chronique*, Apr. 21, 1866; Houssaye, "Jersey"; "Ni Anglais, ni Français, mais Jersiais," *Chronique*, Feb. 4, 1891; "Notre Langue maternelle. Qu'en fait-on?," *Chronique*, Dec. 1, 1897; "Un Grand Vieillard," *Nouvelle*, Jan. 20, 1900; "English in the States"; "The Optional Use of English in the States"; Samuel [Philippe Le Sueur Mourant], "Ip, Ip, 'orée," *Chronique*, Feb. 17, 1900; "Les Anglais dans la Manche," *L'Avranchin*, Jul. 1, 1900; H. Cotentin, "Renouvelé d'Ulysse"; "Saint-Lô en Fête"; "A Nos Visiteurs," *Chronique*, Jun. 7, 1911; "Excursion à Jersey," *JdlM*, May 29, 1912; A. Marvand, "Îles Anglo-Normandes"; "La Saint Clair," *Éclair*, Jul. 6, 1927; Paul Desiles, "Les Îles Anglo-Normandes," *MdC*, Jul. 14, 1927; "La Haye du Puits: Rencontre Anglo-Normand," *Éclair*, Oct. 13, 1928; "Toutes les Cloches," *Éclair*, Jan. 18, 1932; "Cherbourg: Nos Cousins jersiais ont donné une soirée au grand théâtre"; Un St. Ouonnais, "Correspondence".

edged that a toast to “The Mother Country” could lead Jersey men to hesitate between Jersey and England, before encouraging them to opt for the latter as “the seat of the monarchy which originated in the Duchy of Normandy.”⁷⁴

But if Jersey’s Normanness could serve to integrate local identity with loyalty to the United Kingdom, and often to a particularly imperial sense of Britishness, in France it was a model of *petite patrie* discourse. Local history and dialects were identified as elements of Norman cultural heritage, but such dialects were prized as the foundations of the French language; the history of Normandy was presented as contributing to the broader history of France. The conquering feats of Normans in the past now contributed to the glory of French history, and the international connections that were developed in the present allowed Normandy to channel additional ties for France on the world stage in a period of shifting international alliances. Normandy’s transnationalism was thus a regional particularity, something which made it special within the French whole. If we see regional identities as phenomena which gravitate (and often mediate) between the local sphere of experience and the wider loyalty of the nation, then it is clear that Norman identity in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries could function in such a way both on the continent and in Jersey.⁷⁵ Overall, Norman identity thus not only demonstrates the multiple ways that regional identities could cross national boundaries, be this through far-flung historic connections or the division of the region itself, but also reaffirms how ideas of regional distinctiveness were positioned within a national framework, though as a cross-border region, the nation to which Norman identity related was not the same for all involved.

74 “la Mère-Patrie”, “le siège de la monarchie sortie du Duché de Normandie”. “La Société Jersiaise à Londres”, *Nouvelle*, Mar. 10, 1906.

75 Xosé M. Núñez Seixas and Eric Storm, “Introduction: Region, Nation and History,” in Núñez Seixas and Storm, eds. *Regionalism and Modern Europe* 6.

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