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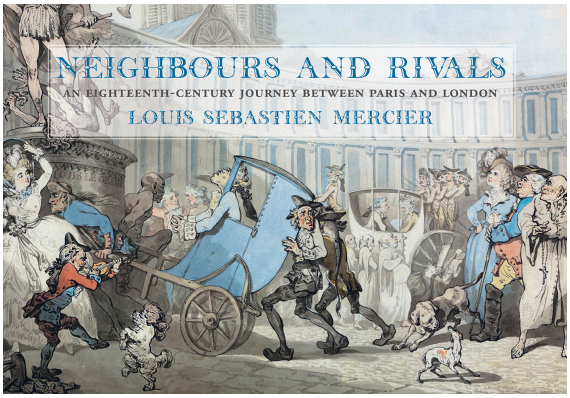

Neighbours and Rivals

An Eighteenth-Century Journey Between Paris and London

Louis-Sébastian Mercier

ISBN	9781843682707
Publisher	Pallas Athene
Binding	Hardback
Territory	World
Size	135 mm x 195 mm
Pages	284 Pages
Illustrations	113 color
Price	£24.99

- The first publication in English of a seminal work of travel writing
- Profusely illustrated with contemporary images

"Neighbours and Rivals, more than a travelogue, is a tract: one that calls for more pragmatism in the running of a modern city and out of which our policymakers would do well to take a leaf." — **Country Life**

The first work of great French journalist Louis-Sébastien Mercier, this seminal work of travel writing remained unpublished for over 200 years.
Mercier first travelled to London, and began recording his impressions, in 1780. An exemplar of a new form of journalistic, reflective literature, he presented emotive representations of the city as collections of experiences, habits and personalities. And differently from Dickens's London or Baudelaire's Paris, with their contrasts of opulence and misery, Mercier describes a less familiar urban environment – more optimistic, perhaps even utopian. His version of London is, in fact, a projection of his philosophical imagination – not simply a rounded portrait but also a reflection of what he hoped Paris could become.

For this first publication in English, Laurent Turcot and Jonathan Conlin's translation preserves the life and humour of Mercier's text. It is illustrated with contemporary images, with an emphasis on Thomas Rowlandson and Gabriel-Jacques de Saint-Aubin, the first Parisian flâneur-artist.

Laurent Turcot is a professor of history at l'Université du Québec à Trois-Rivières, and specialises in the 16th to the 19th century, and in urban culture and leisure. **Jonathan Conlin**, a professor of modern history at the University of Southampton, specialises in modern British cultural history from the 18th century to the present, with a focus on urban history. His previous books include*The Nation's Mantelpiece* (Pallas Athene), *Evolution and the Victorians* (Bloomsbury) and *Civilisation* (BFI). He has just completed histories of the National Gallery and the Metropolitan Museum, as well as an acclaimed biography of Calouste Gulbenkian.

NEIGHBOURS AND RIVALS

London is situated to the north of the Thames, all along its banks; and this city extends the same distance to the rear, on ground that rises as one travels away from the river. Throughout its full, ever widening extent, which ranges from one to more than two leagues they are building new neighbourhoods, each more immense than the last, so that if this keeps up the city will double in size.

London extends a distance along the Thames double that of Paris and the Seine. Paris has four bridges, three of which are a disgrace. London has three, of great magnificence and utility. The strong tides, which carry the largest sea-going vessels right up to London make her a maritime city, and rob her banks of that gentle breeze and climate one finds in Paris.

London is situated in a large fertile island that

Samuel Scott, Tower of London, c.1771. Working in the style of Canaletto, Scott shows international shipping in the Pool of London, just downstream of London Bridge. The Monument and St Paul's can be seen in the distance

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