

**REVOLUTIONARY INSURGENCY
AND
REVOLUTIONARY REPUBLICANISM:
ASPECTS OF THE FRENCH
REVOLUTIONARY TRADITION
FROM THE ADVENT OF THE JULY MONARCHY
THROUGH THE REPRESSION OF THE PARIS COMMUNE**

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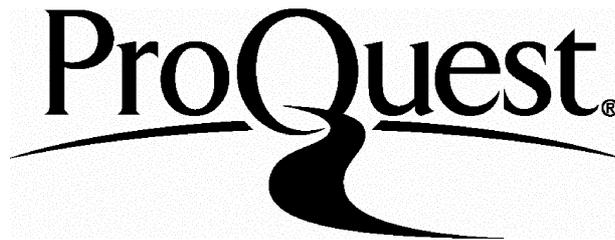
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ABSTRACT

During the greater part of the nineteenth century the French political, social and cultural landscapes continued to reverberate from the echoes of the French Revolution. On one level, the Revolution framed the parameters of political debate. However, on another level the Revolution represented the first time in French history when political activism appeared to open up boundless opportunities for effecting change. In large measure, this was due to the prominence of popular protest in the Revolution and its transformation after 1789. Popular protest was nothing new to France. In fact, it was ingrained in the popular *mentalité* as a response to grievances. That said, the scope of popular protest during the *ancien régime* tended to be quite limited and rarely transcended the immediate source of the dispute. However, it was clear that the combination of increased centralisation of the French state and a growing tendency to associate traditional grievances with political institutions or social relationships indicated a burgeoning political consciousness that was bound to alter the dimensions of protest. The French Revolution accelerated and expanded this process by infusing manifestations of popular protest with larger implications. Consequently, in so far as France's transformation from a kingdom to a nation was accomplished by outbreaks of popular protest, insurgency assumed revolutionary proportions. For some, it was legitimised as the purest expression of a sovereign people. Beginning with the overthrow of the Bourbon Restoration in 1830, a revolutionary tradition grounded

on the referents of the French Revolution was established. Over the course of the next forty-one years, a strain of the republican movement premised its rhetoric and ideals on the revolutionary origins of France's first experiment with a republic. To these nineteenth century revolutionary republicans, republicanism was inextricably linked with revolution and their discourse remained riveted to the experience of 1793-4.

This study examines the anthro-historical rôle of tradition in society. Next, it traces the etymological transformation of 'revolution' in producing a definition that distinguishes it from other forms of popular protest. Finally, the concept of a revolutionary republican tradition is applied to three contentious periods of the nineteenth century: the nine years following Louis-Philippe's revolutionary path to authority in 1830; the violent first four months of the Second Republic; and, the period which led up to and witnessed the competing republican visions of 1871. To the protagonists of revolution in the nineteenth century, each period reflected different stages of the Revolution and, consequently, the latter's example remained viable in spite of a different context and a changed society.

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INTRODUCTION

In the wake of the Napoleonic Empire and the Bourbon Restoration, the legacy of the French Revolution became one of the ideological battlegrounds of nineteenth century French politics and society. If the ideals and ultimate importance of the French Revolution have continued to divide historians 200 years after the events, imagine its impact on an era characterised by divisions between various hues of monarchists, imperialists and republicans. Over time, though, the once-controversial liberal ideals of the Revolution have gained almost universal acceptance and debate over the Revolution has limited itself to the intellectual and scholarly arenas. In short, the Revolution has, for all intents and purposes, become yet another historical corpse whose life is assessed through retrospection. Yet throughout much of the nineteenth-century the Revolution was still a living, breathing, viable entity; the shattered and fragmented tiles of the Revolution were variously selected and rejected in the rush of competing visions of a national mosaic.

In large measure, the Revolution's enduring importance during the first three-quarters of the nineteenth-century had much to do with its temporal immediacy. The experience of the Revolution was still relatively fresh. For most of the period, witnesses to, and participants in, the major events were still alive. Beyond this, there was the Revolution's real or perceived rôle in transforming France from the *ancien régime* and its introduction of such nebulous concepts as

sovereignty, equality, liberty, fraternity and nation. After all, these principles had recently been written into the French nomenclature and the Revolution also provided them with their definitions. The tempestuous political and social climate during the middle third of the nineteenth-century resulted, at least partially, from competing conceptualisations of the Revolution's principles.

This study is devoted to one of those conceptualisations, perhaps its most radical and militant manifestation - the revolutionary republicans. It must be noted from the outset that the revolutionary republicans did not have a monopoly over the Revolution's traditions (although they might have thought they did). Instead, they represented one of many strands of opinion in France whose referents were premised on the French Revolution. As republicans, they shared a rather general goal with the numerous other individuals who desired a republican form of government. However, as revolutionaries, their specific brand of republicanism was inextricably connected to revolutionary change. As such, they were a rather stark departure from those who sought a parliamentary path to the republic.

Although their agenda consisted of a socialist restructuring of society, the significance of the French Revolution for revolutionary republicans was not specifically tied to dialectical materialism and social class conflict. Rather, the French Revolution was perceived as an expression of alienation and detachment from society. Certainly, social class was a factor likely to generate a sense of alienation. However, as we know, not all revolutionaries were victims of economic exploitation; others would feel their dissociation from society to be a function of political impotence or cultural estrangement.

In as much as the Revolution's principles were pronounced against the backcloth of anticipations regarding social regeneration, expectations of the advent of a Golden Era were engendered. However, this Golden Era failed to materialise. None the less, all was not lost. The Revolution was salvaged as having initiated France on a secular process of millenarianism. It was to this objective that the revolutionary republicans in the succeeding century directed their efforts. Although they were conscious of social class dynamics, and while these framed the content of much of their discourse, to them, the French Revolution had more to do with national regeneration than bourgeois supremacy. By consequence, their own revolutionary designs had less to do with the rise of the proletariat than with the advent of *le bonheur public*. In other words, as products of the era of romanticism, revolutionary republicans perceived the French Revolution as a romantic inspiration, a harbinger of a utopia.

It was not only the ideals of the French Revolution that inspired revolutionaries in the nineteenth-century. They were also encouraged by the diversity of participation in the Revolution between 1792-4. If the French Revolution signified France's transition from kingdom to nation, nothing symbolised the unifying spirit behind nationalism more than the Revolution's temporary integration of society's most disengaged elements. In fact, from the perspective of the nineteenth-century revolutionary republicans, the years 1792 to 1794 represented the Revolution's apotheosis. While 'revisionist' historians have referred to this as the *dérapiage* of the liberal revolution, the succeeding generations viewed the initial years of the Republic as reflecting the higher ideals

of the Revolution. In point of fact, in weaving a few more strands of the French populace into the emerging fabric of the French nation, the collective experience of 1792-4, eliminated much of the alienation that was characteristic of the *ancien régime*.

However, if they thought about it, revolutionary republicans would have situated the Revolution's *dérápage* in either 1793 or 1794 when France's road to a revolutionised nirvana took a detour onto the path of bourgeois liberalism. Through a combination of repression and fear of a royalist revival, bourgeois liberals neutralised the remaining spasmodic outbursts of revolutionary activity. For the next thirty-five years, efforts at reviving the revolutionary impulse were, at best, sporadic. While a Marxist interpretation would acknowledge the development of bourgeois hegemony as the inevitable result of historical processes, nineteenth-century revolutionary republicans had a different perspective. In their view, the French Revolution was neither the exclusive province of a particular social class nor was it necessarily a response to economic transformations. Rather, for them, the Revolution was less a stage in larger historical processes than a revolutionary work in progress set in motion in 1789 and abandoned in 1794. The first five years of the French Revolution assumed an ethereal quality that permeated the deepest recesses of their ideals on social regeneration. It was, for them, the quintessential revolutionary experience.

CHAPTER ONE

TRADITION: MAINTAINING THE PAST IN THE PRESENT

From the perspective of the nineteenth century, the modern French nation was forged by the French Revolution. In many critical aspects the France which emerged in the nineteenth century after more than a decade of revolutionary challenges bore no resemblance to what had preceded it. For example, henceforward, political institutions would be premised on some form of representative government; society would no longer be composed of legally-defined social orders and privileges; and, the economy would be rationalised through the liberalisation of commerce and production. It is not the purpose of this study to assess whether the foregoing transformations took place during the Revolution or whether a process had been put in motion before the Revolution (thus rendering the Revolution an unnecessary accelerating process); instead, what is important to bear in mind is that throughout the period under study here, the French Revolution was alternately revered and condemned for having created the modern French state. Rarely, if ever, was it dismissed as irrelevant to this issue.

As the seminal event in the creation of the modern French nation and the destruction of the *ancien régime*, the Revolution was bound to become a benchmark against which the events, transformations and ideas of the succeeding century would be measured. In short, though of relatively recent vintage, the Revolution was such a cataclysmic force that it became a national legacy obliging

future definitions of French nationalism to pay homage to its referents.

However, the actual Revolution was an event which, during the decade or so of its life, went through a variety of stages. There was no singular tradition but rather a multiplicity of traditions. Instead of becoming a national treasure whose breadth and limitations were universally understood, the French Revolution was an abstract concept. It defied those who considered themselves to be its children to find any unanimity as to its purpose. Nonetheless, confusion over the Revolution's meaning did nothing to stop political actors in the nineteenth century from grounding their actions and ideas in a legitimacy provided by the Revolution's traditions. On the contrary, it was the malleability of the Revolution which encouraged this. Thus, adherents to such diverse traditions as Bonapartism, Orléanism, republicanism and social republicanism could all claim, with some sense of righteousness, that their ideals represented the most sincere affirmation of the Revolution's traditions.

This chapter will explore the concept of tradition and, specifically, the pertinence of tradition to the revolutionary social-republicans who form the focus of this study. Initially, it is important to establish the process of how and why an event of such recent vintage as the Revolution is able to leave such a lasting imprint. In other words, given the dramatic transformations occurring in France during the nineteenth century, why did the Revolution assume such an enduring and timeless quality for the succeeding generation of revolutionaries? Further, why did it form the framework around which they posed questions and adopted courses of action?

What is a Tradition?

Tradition works on a multiplicity of different levels. In the introductory chapter to a series of articles dedicated to the creation of tradition in both eastern and western societies, Eric Hobsbawm discussed the endeavor of modern societies to legitimize present day actions through reference to an uninterrupted continuity with the past.¹ If nothing else the validating properties of the past are premised simply on the fact of its occurrence. The past forms our cultural legacy, providing it with both continuity and the referents necessary for making sense of new phenomena. The unpredictable and unforeseeable potential inherent in all change can appear less foreboding if a connection is developed between novelty and the past.

Essentially, the past gives us a frame of reference around which to order and "give meaning to the otherwise confusing content of immediate experience".² In this regard, the commonality between past and present found in tradition allows for easier acceptance of innovation by rendering it more familiar and less intimidating. 'To the extent that they make "progress" possible by giving the individual and society the basic ideas and ideals to guide their development', traditions are analogous to propellers.³

It is through the use of symbols, icons and rituals that traditions assume

¹ Hobsbawm, Eric. 'Introduction: Inventing Traditions'. *The Invention of Tradition*. (Hobsbawm, Eric & Ranger, Terence, eds.) (Cambridge, 1983), p. 2.

² Allan, George. *The Importances of the Past. a meditation on The Authority of Tradition*. (SUNY Press, Albany, 1986), p. 79.

³ Gopalan, S. *Tradition: a social analysis*. (Madras: 1973), p. 17.

their most visible and meaningful manifestations. Visual representations, whether symbolic or iconographic, provide society with readily recognizable images. Symbols remove a tradition from the realm of abstraction and allow further a tradition's perpetuation through reference to something tangible. This is not to say that symbols are always attended by a universally agreed-upon meaning. Symbols are capable of both synthesizing a rich diversity of ideas into a new meaning (condensation of meaning) and allowing a variety of interpretations to attach to the same symbol (multivocality).⁴ None the less, symbols and icons facilitate the process of identifying and processing unfamiliar phenomena.

Rituals serve a different purpose. As forms of behavior that are both socially standardized and repetitive, rituals are an interactive means of sharing in the past. Rituals are primarily participatory and, in some respects, they define and reinforce the acceptable boundaries of social norms. It is imperative that symbols accompany ritual in order to endow it with the cognitive qualities that differentiates a ritual from a habit.⁵ For those who revive rituals, there need not be any larger purpose beyond maintaining some connection with the past. However, for others, rituals contain a deeper meaning, one which unites its adherents around shared values and experiences.

However, as Arnold Toynbee once noted, the past can also confine us in a mimetic prison.⁶ In his incisive survey of contemporary fixations with the past,

⁴ Kertzer, David I. *Ritual, Politics and Power*. (Yale U. Press, New Haven: 1988), p. 11.

⁵ *Ibid.* at 9-10.

⁶ *Ibid.* at 84-5.

David Lowenthal noted a duality attending the survival of traditions. On the one hand, Lowenthal observed that 'to cope amidst change we also need considerable continuity with the past. The cultural legacy, too, is conservative *and* innovative: survival requires an inheritable culture, but it must be malleable as well as stable'.⁷ However, one must also be cognizant of the flip side to tradition's utility: its propensity to bridle progress. Lest society stagnate into an anachronism, the legacy of the past cannot simply be grafted onto the present but must be assimilated to meet the realities of an increasingly incompatible present.⁸

Implicit within this is a recognition that society has progressed beyond the point where tradition should guide, rather than simply provides referents for, the present. In other words, to retain a semblance of significance a tradition cannot be 'a mechanical continuity of ideas of the past [I]ts significance can be grasped only by deeply reflecting about the rational elements which have gone into its making'.⁹ For traditions to remain vital after the passage of time (as opposed to merely enduring as historical curiosities) they must appear pertinent or necessary to the contemporary context.

Hobsbawm reconciled the dichotomy attending the relevance of the past's legacy by distinguishing ritual from precedent. Identifying tradition with ceremony and ritual, Hobsbawm distinguished it from 'custom' which simply sets a precedent capable of keeping pace with a metamorphosing society. Whereas tradition is

⁷ Lowenthal, David. *The Past is a Foreign Country*. (Cambridge, 1985), p. 69 (emphasis original).

⁸ *Ibid.* at 72.

⁹ Gopalan, S. *op. cit.* at p. 24.

limited by its own fixed invariance, custom, according to Hobsbawm, is constricted only by 'the requirement that it must appear compatible or even identical with precedent'.¹⁰

That said, traditions are not entirely static; they cannot be. Instead, they must serve some contemporary purpose.

Consequently, those elements of a tradition which are no longer viable may survive as historical curiosity but will have lost their emotive or inspirational significance.

Because traditions are generated within a specific historical context, it is neither possible nor feasible to fully replicate the traditum upon which the tradition is premised. Ideas must modify along with changes in the situational context which nourishes them. As a result, for succeeding generations, the constituent elements of the tradition will be far different than if the tradition were to be handed down unaltered by the passage of time. Traditions thus entail a fair degree of selectivity.

The tradition - the thing presented - as it appears at the moment of presentation is a telescoped, foreshortened picture from which the history of its past career has been washed away [...]. The picture at the moment is a precipitate or composite made up of many successive presentations and receptions and re-presentations over many points in time. The individual who acquires the idea takes his place in the sequence of those whose minds were taken into possession by

¹⁰ Hobsbawm, *op. cit.* at 2.

what they saw before him.¹²

Sometimes the process of selectivity is conducted in the subconscious. This is particularly true when the tradition being considered is ideological as opposed to ritualistic. Traditions are also part of the history of *mentalités* - the 'attitudes, forms of behaviour and unconscious collective representations' that are at the root of a society's cultural development.¹³

Some studies highlight *mentalité's* reflexive, unconscious properties in endeavoring to distinguish it from ideology. Whereas ideologies imply a conscious response to a specific situation, *mentalités* are usually autonomous from any formulaic context. However, this is not to imply that *mentalité* is devoid of cognitive properties. Instead, as 'the repository of a preserved identity, of intangible and deeply rooted structures, the most authentic expression of collective temperaments - in all, of everything which is most valuable' *mentalité* is the ideological component of tradition.¹⁴ On one level it exists as the part of our psyche which determines our most basic assumptions. However, on another level, *mentalité* provides the cultural referents which assist in formulating responses to phenomenon. While the specific circumstance that originally engendered the response might change, the ideas underpinning *mentalité* are severable from their original milieu.

¹² Shils, Edward. *Tradition*. (London: 1981), pp. 42-3.

¹³ Vovelle, Michel. 'Ideologies and Mentalities - a Necessary Clarification'. *Ideologies and Mentalities*. (translated by Eamon O'Flaherty) (University of Chicago Press, Chicago: 1990), p. 5.

¹⁴ *Ibid.* at 8-9.

In the case of popular ideologies, George Rudé's models of 'inherent' and 'derived' ideas illustrate how previously novel ideologies are assimilated into the cultural consciousness and become part of society's *mentalité*.¹⁵ For Rudé the 'inherent' element is the traditional aspect of popular ideology - 'a sort of "mother's milk" ideology based on direct experience, oral tradition or folk-memory and not learned by listening to sermons or reading books.'¹⁶ The 'derived' element, on the other hand, is rooted in 'the political, philosophical or religious ideas that, at various levels of sophistication, become absorbed in the more specifically popular culture.'¹⁷ However, Rudé also emphasized that there is not an impenetrable barrier separating 'inherent' from 'derived' ideas; in point of fact, Rudé suggests that the survival of 'derived' ideas into successive generations permits them to mutate into the set of 'inherent' beliefs of a people.¹⁸

Tradition and the Changing Nature of Protest.

The French Revolution forever altered a number of conceptions relative to French social and political relationships. In an oversimplified way, its impact was fairly readily understood: a society whose ideals, systems of authority and social relationships had been shaped by powerful families and monarchs was effectively

¹⁵ Although the late Professor Rudé expounded upon this theme in a number of works, I will be referring to his essay 'Ideology and Popular Protest' in *The Face in the Crowd. Studies in Revolution, Ideology and Popular Protest. Selected Essays of George Rudé*. (Edited and Introduced by Harvey J. Kaye) (Humanities Press International, Inc., Atlantic Highlands: 1988), pp. 197-204.

¹⁶ *Ibid.* at 197-8.

¹⁷ *Ibid.* at 199 (emphasis original).

¹⁸ *Ibid.* at 204. '[W]ith each generation a new set of derived ideas becomes superimposed on those of the generation before.'

shattered in a relatively short period of time. In an era when France was the centre of critical thought and rationality, the survival of the *ancien régime* was both a cruel anachronism and a hypocrisy. The vast majority of the nation was either deferential to the superior status of the nobility or, resources permitting, aspired to its privileges. In political affairs, the nation, as an aggregate of its population, was far from sovereign. The stability and authority of the monarchy and its bureaucracy had steadily expanded over the course of the 17th and 18th centuries over the fractious rule and excessive regionalism of the nobility. Although the idea of a French nation and its geo-political expression had been expanding with the growth of centralised monarchical authority, prior to the French Revolution it seemed somewhat unlikely that this would transcend the bounds of theory.

The French Revolution changed all of this. In the process, it set the course for French nationalism by fashioning a state on the rudiments of economic, political and social liberalism. In many respects England had undergone the same process during the 17th century. However, while England's transition into a modern state developed stable institutions, unlike France, the upheaval of the seventeenth century failed to spawn a revolutionary tradition for future political actors.

The chief difference between the French and English revolutionary experiences has to do with the nature and level of participation. Neither the English Civil War nor the Glorious Revolution entailed a particularly high level of involvement or participation by the English populace. By contrast, the French Revolution passed from one stage to another as a result of participation by an increasingly diverse cross-section of society. This had two rather important

implications for the nineteenth century. First, to the extent that diversity is often corrosive of unanimity, the breadth of the Revolution's sweep was never settled; with the exception of legitimists, all shades of political opinion in nineteenth century could trace their roots to some phase of the revolutionary period and claim to represent its spirit. Secondly, the impulsion for revolutionary change was often popular protest by countless nameless, faceless actors engaged in a struggle for their nation's destiny against the forces of oppression. By virtue of the ambiguity and fluidity of the Revolution's direction during its first five years insurgency had played a critical rôle during this formative period of French history. In short, insurgency was the stuff of a modern heroic myth, susceptible of comprising the Parisian populace and, at least vicariously, its descendants. In short, insurgency was the first visible manifestation of popular sovereignty.

For centuries prior to the French Revolution, grievances were registered through popular protest. However, these protests rarely, if ever, entailed a challenge to the existing social or political order. Instead, popular protest was overwhelmingly concerned with ephemeral (although recurring) problems - food shortages, billeting of soldiers, tax collection.¹⁹ Although such protests ultimately entailed a challenge to royal policy - particularly the intrusion of an increasingly centralised state over local autonomies - neither the person of the monarch nor the institution of monarchy was called into question. However, beneath the surface of these uprisings one can discern the rudiments of political conflict. As the

¹⁹ For a fuller discussion of *ancien régime* revolts than this paper is able to provide, see, e.g., Bercé, Yves-Marie. *History of Peasant Revolts*, translated by Amanda Whitmore (Ithaca, 1990), Chapter 4.

monarchical state gradually encroached on local liberties, the underlying object of protest likewise became more focussed on preserving local liberties and customs.

This was particularly true in the *pays d'états*. The example of Burgundy in the 17th and 18th centuries underscores this point. The coincidence of Burgundy's relatively recent incorporation into France, expansion of the crown's authority and state support of capitalist interests at the expense of traditional practises led to repeated outbursts of popular protest.²⁰ There were two layers at the root of these protests: the immediate hardship engendered by royal policies and a general belief that the community's collective traditional rights and values were being disregarded. In point of fact, the emergence of the centralised French state forced it to view policy in largely national terms. As a result, the dictates of defence, the national market and economic expansion increasingly put the crown at odds with a local populace apprehensive of both present and future.²¹

Towards the end of Louis XIV's personal reign, incidents of popular protest against governmental policy and personnel were rising at a fairly rapid rate. Repeated incursions by the crown on local communities generated a consistent and rhythmic response; the erosion of local traditional practises and customs by the state propagated a new tradition of resistance to the state.²² However, while the changing nature of the state was the focus of popular protest, the legitimacy of

²⁰ Tilly, Charles. *The Contentious French*. (Cambridge, 1986), pp. 13-24.

²¹ Tilly, Louise, 'The Food Riot as a Form of Political Conflict in France', *Journal of Interdisciplinary History*, vol. II, no. 1 (summer, 1971), pp. 23-57. Tilly's study affirms the perception developing in rural areas during the 17th century that governmental policy threatened communities with starvation.

²² Bercé, *op. cit.* at 192.

royal authority was not targeted;

assertions of popular sovereignty never extended beyond the specific issue under contention and ideological challenges to the principle of monarchy were rare.²³

Consequently, according to definitional distinctions between forms of popular protest which will be formulated in the next chapter, there was a tradition of riot but not of revolution.

When the philosophies associated with the Enlightenment were propounded during the 18th century, the institution of monarchy was ripe for attack. Although French monarchs since the Wars of Religion had witnessed protests over the aforementioned policies during their reigns, popular protests did not assail the person of the monarch. More fundamental were the challenges to royal authority posed by regional élites who feared their own impending impotence. Noble defiance of the monarchy was limited to the reach of royal authority - in other words, its jurisdiction. Even during the Fronde, the rebels must have realised that the *ancien régime* was a symbiosis of monarchy and aristocracy. Yet once Louis XIV had consolidated his vision of a centralised monarchical state, the form and scope of resistance altered.

Rebellion, however, did not disappear. It became less frequent, and less dangerous to the government's survival. It changed character, becoming more plebeian, creating its own leaders, relying more heavily on existing community structure, aiming even more directly at the oppressors and oppression endured by ordinary people. Class

²³ Charles Tilly notes that a protest by Burgundian wine producers during Louis XIII's reign produced an acclamation in favour of the Holy Roman emperor. However, as should be apparent, the crowd's displeasure with the French king did not translate into a demand for its own sovereignty. Tilly, *The Contentious French*, *op. cit.* at 14.

war was on its way.²⁴

The evolving character of protest no longer required deference to *ancien régime* institutions; correspondingly, it was no longer necessary to detach the monarch from a criticism of his policies. We can trace this change to early in the 18th century when Louis XV seemingly lost the immunity enjoyed by his predecessors. Whereas the dawning of his personal reign was initially greeted with enthusiasm this was only because the last war-punctuated, oppressive years of his great-grandfather's rule generated such contempt. If Louis XV's early popularity was due to an expectation that he would reverse policy and again turn the monarchy into a paternalistic institution, the new king couldn't help but disappoint. Whereas Louis XIV was able to overcome opposition by the sheer strength of his personality and determination, Louis XV was temperamentally ill-suited to restore public confidence in the monarchy. His popularity may have reached its nadir in 1750 when he was held accountable and responsible for the disappearance of children from Paris streets.²⁵

The authors of the study of the revolt attending the child abductions aver, however, that 1750 was not a dress rehearsal for 1789. Instead, it is argued that 1750 was one of the last spasms against 'the state's ever increasing grip on people's daily lives'. Where the monarchy was concerned, Farge and Revel, state, '[i]t was not the institution of the monarchy that was threatened by the crowd's anger against

²⁴ *Ibid.* at 161.

²⁵ Farge, Arlette & Revel, Jacques. *The Vanishing Children of Paris*, translated by Claudia Miéville (Cambridge, MA, 1991), Chapter 5.

the child abductors, but the person of Louis himself and his warped interpretation of traditionally sovereign qualities'.²⁶ Although the uprising of 1750 would not produce the same repercussions as 1789, it was, nonetheless, a progenitor of the protests during the Revolution and it added a new dimension to the scope of popular protest. While it was one thing to vent anger at the monarch's policies, it was quite another to hold him personally to count. In some respects this was symptomatic of and consistent with the political *zeitgeist* of the eighteenth century in demystifying the monarch.

Beyond that, the 1750 uprising geographically extended popular protest beyond regions accustomed to their autonomy to the strategically sensitive capital. When protest was confined within the parameters of the *ancien régime* (i.e., without questioning its bases), it mattered little whether the uprising occurred at Paris or the provinces. While the location might have been closer to the seat of authority, what difference did it make if the actions of protestors had yet to advance beyond the sacking of bakers' shops? As the intrusiveness of the expanding monarchy increasingly came under pressure during the eighteenth century, the prospects for protest assuming revolutionary implications likewise escalated. The threat of a major upheaval originating in the provinces was geographically remote since the institutions underpinning the *ancien régime* were too distant to be imperiled and there was little chance that regional disputes could generate the momentum necessary for a coördinated and sustained movement.

The foundation of the *ancien régime* was at Paris; for its edifice to crumble,

²⁶ *Ibid.* at pp. 127 & 131.

it was necessary that there be a confluence between Paris as a theatre of protest and a challenge to the legitimacy of the system. At the end of the 17th century, parisian crowds rioted over bread shortages; in large measure, the bread shortage was due to monarchical policies in encouraging free trade and filling the requirements of the military. Nonetheless, the focus of the riot was bakers, not governmental officials.²⁷ However, as monarchical institutions became more vulnerable, the probability that any manifestation of traditional grievances at Paris could transcend the limits of the original dispute likewise increased. Parisians were becoming more sophisticated about the links between politics and how society functions.

Over the course of the eighteenth century the regressive nature of popular insurgency did not change; what was altered was the perception insurgents had of their relationship to the French state. As the monarchy pursued two conflicting and contradictory aims - fulfilling the needs of a modernising state while propping up an antiquated social and political system - it managed to implicate the entire structure of the *ancien régime* in the assault on traditional sensibilities. In response to this popular protest underwent a metamorphosis. Increasingly, insurgents distinguished the institutions of the *ancien régime* from the customs, practises and expectations it had engendered; preservation of the latter implied challenges to the former.

We can speculate on the reasons behind this inextricable correlation between the goal and the means utilized to attain that goal. On the level of practicality, it

²⁷ Tilly, *The Contentious French*, *op. cit.* at 157.

is imperative to remember that the Revolution ushered in a rather intense eighty years of political instability. If violence was not an officially accepted form of political expression, it was both a conspicuous sign of political alienation and a portentous threat to the constituted authority. While considerations of pragmatism in a democracy might require the delegation of authority, the populace retained and manifested its sovereignty through the actuality or threat of popular protest. So strongly did the Convention feel about this that it was enshrined in the Declaration of Rights of Man and Citizen of 1793. The example of the initial fifteen months of the First Republic witnessed the satisfaction of a number of popular demands, not limited to those made by the parisian *sans-culottes*.²⁸

At a minimum, insurgency was a reminder that ultimate sovereignty resided in the people. Previous delegations of authority in monarchs and legislatures had not constituted a relinquishment of popular sovereignty. The monarch's authority as derivative from the people's sovereignty had, all along, been premised on the unstated existence of a Lockean contract protective of fundamental rights.²⁹ Once the monarch reneged on the implied obligation to respect regional liberties and act paternalistically, a crisis of authority was fostered. Abuse of authority constituted an invitation for the reassertion of popular sovereignty and this would be thrown into relief during the French Revolution.

The point here is that popular protest was a traditional means of expressing

²⁸ Legislation produced between June 1793 and January 1794 was designed to destroy the last vestiges of feudalism and to ensure equity in the countryside.

²⁹ Fundamental rights are akin to the 'inherent ideas' previously discussed. What rights were considered fundamental would be altered by the French Revolution.

discontent. In this manner, popular protest fits squarely in the history of the *longue durée*. However, just as Braudel acknowledged the possibility of being imprisoned or constrained by the structures of the *longue durée*, we must be aware of the manner by which *l'histoire événementielle* modifies these structures.³⁰ In the case of the Revolution, popular protest was transmogrified by the experience of the Revolution. In other words, the limitations which characterised the goals of previous outbursts of popular protest were enlarged during the 1790s. Henceforward, popular protest would be a means towards achieving empowerment.

Beginning with the eighteenth century, the justification for popular protest was undergoing a redefinition reflective of the philosophical undercurrents of the time. This is not to say that pre-Revolutionary protesters were specifically conscious of their sovereignty; none the less, once this concept was articulated it wouldn't be difficult to make connections. In other words, at the time, protestors may not have realised they were asserting their natural sovereign rights but this would not be long in coming. During the French Revolution, countless journalists, pamphleteers and orators vindicated the correspondence of violence and revolutionary acts as expressions of popular sovereignty against perceptions of injustice.³¹ From both the

³⁰ Braudel, Fernand. *On History*. (translated by Sarah Matthews); (University of Chicago Press: 1980), p. 30.

³¹ See, e.g., the collection of articles written by J.P. Marat for *L'Ami du Peuple* contained in *Marat. Textes Choisis*. (edited by Michele Vovelle), (Paris: 1975), pp. 175-99. For example, in April, 1792 Marat wrote, '[à] chacun de leurs attentats, le sentiment de la défense naturelle soulève d'indignation le sein des hommes honnêtes, pousse les hommes de coeur à résister à l'oppression [...]', *Ibid.* at 176.

perspective of the authorities and the insurgents, the experience of the French Revolution substantially altered the dynamics of popular protest.

In her study of the political culture of the Revolution, Lynn Hunt stated that 'the radically new character of their experience made possible a continuing tradition of revolutionary politics.'³² Henceforward, perceptions of popular protest by authorities and insurgents no longer limited themselves to a view of protest as a traditional method for expressing discontent. Now it was indistinguishable from the potential for revolutionary upheaval that might follow.

The lesson carried into the nineteenth century from the French Revolution was that force is not only a means for registering protest but also for making a final irrevocable break with the past. It is the purpose of this study to demonstrate that not only had the nature of French politics been changed by the French Revolution but so, too, had the parameters around the established tradition of popular protest.

As part of the process of establishing a tradition, the Revolution also produced a new set of cultural referents in the form of rituals, terminology and heroes. When these vestiges of the Revolution resurfaced in the nineteenth century, it was both for purposes of reviving a revolutionary legacy and for 'showing one's colours'. The Revolution established a means for structuring political debate in the nineteenth century.

One of the remarkable aspects of the middle third of the nineteenth century

³² Hunt, Lynn. *Politics, Culture, and Class in the French Revolution*. (Berkeley and Los Angeles: 1984), p. 50.

was the propensity to conflate a precedent with the rituals attending its previous manifestation. Recognizing and honouring France's revolutionary antecedents was not simply limited to commemorating its martyrs and anniversaries - it also entailed a revival of its rituals. Consequently, for many 19th century activists the goal of popular sovereignty, as originally articulated during the Revolution, was indistinguishable from popular struggle. And popular struggle in the nineteenth century came complete with its own revolutionary icons, rituals and lexicon. While some have opined that the ambiguity and fanaticism of the 1790s ensured that symbols and rituals associated with the Revolution would not survive the event, quite the contrary appears to have occurred. In fact, as we will see, the Revolution was the equivalent of showing one's colours. Nineteenth century political attitudes were largely determined by support for, or opposition to, the Revolution; the adulation of specific individuals; and, the expression of political opinion through reference to the Revolution's symbols and rituals. As Lynn Hunt has noted,

The legitimacy of political authority depends on its resonance with more global, even cosmic cultural presuppositions, for political life is 'englobed' in general conceptions of how reality is put together. Many anthropologists and sociologists insist, in addition, that every cultural frame has a 'center', which has sacred status. The sacred center makes possible a kind of social and political mapping; it gives the members of a society their sense of place. It is the heart of things, the place where culture, society, and politics come together.³³

For nineteenth century revolutionaries, the French Revolution was the 'sacred center' of their political experience.

In order for the revolutionary legacy to transgress the archaic limits of

³³ Hunt, *op. cit.* at 87.

tradition, nineteenth century revolutionaries engaged in self-conscious displays of historical empathy. Although much was to change in France between the Revolution and the Paris Commune of 1871, revolutionaries, none the less, were prone to characterize earlier struggles as nearly indistinguishable from their own efforts. For revolutionaries in the nineteenth century the issues raised by the Revolution were fundamental and timeless; what's more, they argued, the challenges posed by the Revolution had yet to be fully realized. Reviving the rituals, symbols and personalities of the French Revolution was a way of reifying the revolutionary experience in France. And, suffice it to say, the Revolution was the one moment in French history when the prospect of a regenerated society was more than just an abstract concept.

The forty-one years covered by the present study was marked by an unusual frequency of revolutionary activity and political instability. This combination provided conditions conducive for the fermentation of traditions premised on the Revolution. After all, the various political transitions from 1830 to 1871 appeared to mirror (with the exception of the Second Empire's intrusion) the successively radical stages of the French Revolution. Consequently, on the most superficial of levels - the appearance of history repeating itself - the Revolution appeared to have created a blueprint for France's political evolution.

The Revolution's endurance was largely self-perpetuating. At the time of *les trois glorieuses* it was still possible to have personal contact with participants in, and other assorted survivors of, the Revolution. As the nineteenth century progressed a new generation of individuals took their spot in the pantheon of

revolutionary martyrdom. Thus, revolutionary movements in the nineteenth century allowed the revolutionary tradition to assume a self-sustaining quality. At various times, France seemingly played host to a phantasmagoria of Montagnards, Girondins, *enragés* and Babouvistes.

Ritual and the Revolutionary Tradition.

As early as 20 February 1831, not even seven months after *les trois glorieuses*, the *Procureur Générale* at Montpellier sent a letter to the Minister of War expressing concern over the planting of a Tree of Liberty at Perpignan.³⁴ Not withstanding Louis Philippe's claims to revolutionary credentials, the July Monarchy was keenly aware of the potency of certain symbols of the Revolution. In particular, it was the prospect that such symbols carried for invigorating popular protest that most worried the newly instituted régime. Consequently, along with celebrations of 14 July, planting of Trees of Liberty was forbidden. Etienne Cabet, in a document entitled 'Péril de la situation présente' called the government's action 'une hostilité contre nos deux révolutions'. Implicit to Cabet's concerns was the question whether prohibiting a seemingly innocuous tradition will actually have the effect of making it more vibrant.³⁵ The régime's anxiety over Trees of Liberty and Cabet's warning might have been heightened had it been aware of a pamphlet produced one month later. The author of this piece spoke of the need to plant trees of liberty and wear *bonnets rouges* as a display of disappointment with the end-result of *les trois*

³⁴ BB¹⁸ 1319.

³⁵ Cabet, Etienne. 'Péril de la situation présente. 14 octobre 1831. Compte à mes commettans'. [1831] *Les Révolutions du XIXe Siècle, op. cit.* (1:VIII).

glorieuses: 'Trompés, persécutés par ceux qui ont usurpé notre victoire des trois jours, n'en conservons pas moins notre écusson populaire, comme une protestation en faveur de nos droits, comme un fanal consolateur vers un plus pur avenir'.³⁶

Whatever the reasons which first motivated the planting of liberty trees and the donning of liberty caps and cockades³⁷, in the nineteenth century they were to be associated with popular politics and the persistent challenges to authority during the first years of the 1790s.³⁸ In spite of the fact that 'liberty' had been the watchword that brought down two Bourbon monarchies, it was both highly charged and highly ambiguous. As a consequence, for those who hoped for more than just a minor political change in 1830 the struggle for liberty was not yet over.

³⁶ 'Le Défenseur de l'Égalité. 12^e Brochure Publiée par la Société des Amis du Peuple. Novembre 1831. *Les Révolutions du XIXe Siècle* (Première série, 1830-4, tom. II) (EDHIS, Paris: 1974).

³⁷ Ozouf, Mona. *Festivals and the French Revolution*. (translated by Alan Sheridan) (Harvard University Press, Cambridge: 1988), pp. 232-61. Ozouf traces the origins of the Liberty Tree to antiquity and extensively discusses why this particular symbol was of significance during the Revolution.

³⁸ Ozouf notes that in 1848 orators of the fledgling Second Republic heralded the Liberty Tree as a symbol of republicanism. *Ibid.* at 247. At least one revolutionary career was initiated around a Tree of Liberty. In 1832, Pierre Joseph Bravard (dit Auguste) was found guilty of disturbing the peace for leading 'une manifestation' around a Tree of Liberty. 'Procès des citoyens A. Bravard et A. Devergès, à l'occasion de la plantation d'un arbre de la liberté. Extrait des minutes du greffe du Tribunal de première instance de l'arrondissement d'Issoire, département du Puy-de-Dôme [29 juillet 1832]', *Les Révolutions du XIXe Siècle, op. cit.* (1:XI). In his *Dictionnaire biographique du mouvement ouvrier*, Jean Maitron referred to Bravard as one of the first socialist propagandists of the Puy-de-Dôme. Bravard was notable for having been at the head of a manifestation of National Guardsmen of Issoire who, on 19 November 1848, refused to participate in a ceremony honouring the newly produced Constitution of the Second Republic. Within days Bravard was sent to jail after being implicated in the placarding of Issoire with 'À bas les bourgeois!' flyers. Trained as a geologist, he emigrated to Argentina after the 1851 *coup d'état* (Bravard had earlier met Charles Darwin). He was killed in an earthquake there in 1861.

In point of fact, liberty was not just about freedom from political oppression but had also come to encompass expressions of social class antagonism and opposition to bourgeois liberalism.³⁹

July Monarchy republicans also displayed sensitivity towards linguistic deconstructionism as they considered proper forms of address. At least one document urged republicans to abandon 'monsieur' and to adopt the more egalitarian and revolutionary moniker 'citoyen'. According to the anonymous author, 'monsieur' was a term of servility. Having originated from 'sieur', the holder of seigneurial lands, it evoked images of aristocracy and social injustice. Nineteenth century revolutionaries imagined they were completing the work commenced by the French Revolution. As such, they viewed their mission as including a regenerative imperative which was not limited to transforming social and political institutions. In other words to complete the Revolution, the nineteenth century would have to fully remake interpersonal relationships. 'Assez long-temps des habitudes, des préjugés ont tenu les hommes éloignés les uns des autres'.⁴⁰

Perhaps because it was so irritating to the régime, opponents of the July Monarchy increasingly expressed their dissent by way of reference to symbols and

³⁹ Newman, Edgar Leon, 'What the Crowd Wanted in the French Revolution of 1830'; Merriman, John M., 'The *Demoiselles* of the Ariège, 1829-1831' in *1830 in France*. (edited and introduced by John M. Merriman) (New Viewpoints, New York: 1975). See also: Aminzade, Ronald. *Ballots and Barricades. Class Formation and Republican Politics in France, 1830-1871*. (Princeton University Press, Princeton: 1993), p. 44.

⁴⁰ 'Association lyonnaise des Droits de l'Homme et du citoyen. De la civilité et de la fraternité, par un membre de l'Association'. *Les Révolutions du XIXe Siècle, op. cit.* (1:III).

rituals of the Revolution. In the eyes of the régime's opponents and proponents, anything associated with the Revolution was tantamount to an appeal to republicanism. In response to more restrictive laws and insurrections in Lyon and Paris, the republican opposition to Louis-Philippe intensified in 1834. Governmental reports frequently cited the correspondence between shouts of 'Vive la République!', the singing of the 'Chant du départ' and dancing *la carmagnole*. In Mans (Sarthe), a report complained that '[c]ette danse et ces chants ont occasioné une agitation de quelques instants'. At Strasbourg (Bas-Rhin), the Prefect opined that 'c'est, dès le début, une véritable provocation, une incitation à adopter ce genre de gouvernement. La suite sa plan loin encore, car elle excite le français à vivre ou à mourir pour la république'.⁴¹

Republicans under the July Monarchy commemorated persons, places and dates from the Revolution. Part and parcel of all this veneration was the recognition that martyrdom packed a solid emotional punch which, if properly done, would offset the more unsavoury aspects of their choices.⁴² Their selections were noteworthy for a few reasons. In the first place, they were outside what the official, governmental channels deemed appropriate and acceptable subjects. Second, the choices amounted to an ideological declaration and led many revolutionaries to cast contemporary affairs in the mould of the Revolution. Finally, and related to the preceding point, they used the Revolution to justify their own activities. Testaments

⁴¹ BB¹⁸1219-1226, 1231.

⁴² Louis Blanc. *Organisation du Travail*. (Paris: 1840), pp. 101-2. Blanc noted that any doctrine, whether political, religious or social, requires martyrs before it can attract a following.

of revolutionary faith produced during the 1830s dignified the memory of leading *Montagnards* for having sacrificed themselves and their reputations in the struggle against tyranny.⁴³

What made the reverence of Robespierre, Saint-Just, *et. al.* so remarkable was its timing. In as much as there had been no dispassionate rehabilitation of the *Montagnards*, any defence of them constituted a declaration of the defender's unrepentant radicalism and republicanism. In fact, in the estimation of early July Monarchy republicans, the Jacobins represented the most sincere expression of progressive opinion. For example, Charles François Chevé, an accused would-be regicide quoted Saint-Just at his trial: 'il n'est pas possible d'être républicain sans avoir sans cesse sous les yeux ces paroles de Saint-Just: «Celui qui veut faire des révolutions dans ce monde, celui qui veut faire le bien, ne doit dormir que dans le tombeau»'.⁴⁴ Another republican, Auguste Caunes, paid tribute to his son who was killed while fighting for the Belgian republicans in the 1831 revolution by identifying him with Robespierre, Marat, Saint-Just as 'd'hommes remarquables qui sont persécutés pendant leur vie, calomniés après leur mort et qui ne peuvent être appréciés et connus de leur vivant que par un choix de patriotes éclairés et purs

⁴³ Allier, Pierre-François. 'Lettre d'un étudiant, homme du peuple, aux aristocrates doctrinaires'. [mars, 1831]. *Les Révolutions du XIXe Siècle, op. cit.* (1:II).

⁴⁴ 'Procès des vingt-sept [...] [1834]. *Les Révolutions du XIXe Siècle.* (1:III). In his *Dictionnaire Biographique*, Maitron noted that Chevé was an admirer of Saint-Just and a republican spiritualist in the mould of Robespierre. Chevé's political evolution would take him from follower of Buchez to Proudhonian to social Catholic supporter of Thiers against the Commune. Maitron, *op. cit.*

[...]⁴⁵

It wasn't only individual personalities from the Revolution who attracted a following. Revolutionary republican political clubs under the July Monarchy adopted such names as *la Société des droits de l'Homme et du Citoyen*, *Société des amis du peuple*, *Société des Amis de l'Égalité*. We can't be certain whether these names are reflective of an extraordinary lack of originality or whether there was something more symbolic about the selections. Either way, it was more than mere coincidence. This is particularly true when we consider the names of the ephemeral republican newspapers under the July Monarchy. While *le National* and, later, *la Réforme* were the dominant republican papers, a whole slew of papers, beginning with the neo-Babouvist *le Tribun du Peuple*, came and went during the first half of the régime. At times, this reverence for the past assumed comical proportions. For instance, against the backcloth of an increasingly oppressive domestic situation in 1833, there appeared a pamphlet entitled 'le Montagnard'. The pamphlet's purpose was a replay of the republican battles of 1793-4.⁴⁶ However, more threatening to the stability of the régime was the reprinting of excerpts from *le Moniteur* for the expressed purpose of tarnishing Louis-Philippe's revolutionary credentials by

⁴⁵ Caunes père, 'Notice historique sur Auguste Caunes fils, étudiant en droit, mort pour la liberté au combat d'Ostbourg (Hollande), le 31 octobre 1831'. (Paris: 1831). *Les Révolutions du XIXe Siècle*. (1:IX).

⁴⁶ 'Le Montagnard par le citoyen Rogeau [1833]'. *Les Révolutions du XIXe Siècle*, *op. cit.* (1:I). Rogeau launched a defence of the Montagnard legacy by resurrecting the claim that Hébert and the Paris Commune was in the pay of the English to throw the Revolution in disrepute by making calls for civil war, anarchy, atheism and immorality.

implicating him in Dumoriez's treason.⁴⁷

There was also a cross-generational element to martyrdom. Given that a fair number of participants in the Revolution's events might still be alive during the 1830s, revolutionaries sought to legitimise their efforts through direct contact with the Revolution. A leading member of the *société des Droits de l'homme*, Jean-Jacques Vignerte, pointed out that one of the features of his society's meeting was 'le vieillard de 93 est assis à côté du jeune homme de 1830 [...]'⁴⁸ Several revolutionaries were related to participants in the Revolution. When this fact was noted it appeared to be an effort at implying an almost genealogical aspect to the revolutionary tradition. For instance, at the 1845 funeral of Godefroi Cavaignac, Louis Blanc eulogised the deceased by referring to the convictions he shared with his father, a member of the Convention.⁴⁹

Revolutionaries were also cognizant of the importance of anniversaries. In particular, it was the 14 July which many revolutionaries fully expected the July Monarchy to honour. Despite Louis-Philippe's selective manipulation of the Revolution, one aspect he couldn't countenance was a glorification of the insurgent struggle. To have indiscriminately allowed a celebration of the insurgent tradition might have been tantamount to legitimising all outbursts of rebellion. Clearly this

⁴⁷ 'Procès à l'Histoire. Tribun du jeudi 12 avril 1832'. *Les Révolutions du XIXe Siècle, op. cit.* (1:X). In his summation before the jury, the public prosecutor urged a ban on any reprinting of issues of *le Moniteur* between 1793-4.

⁴⁸ Jean-Jacques Vignerte, 'Au rédacteur en chef du *National*' (4 Août 1833). *Les Révolutions du XIXe Siècle* (1:III).

⁴⁹ 'Obseques de Godefroy Cavaignac' (Paris: 1845). *Les Révolutions du XIXe Siècle* (2:IV).

was not in the interests of the newly instituted government.

Perhaps because of its own insurrectionary origins, the July Monarchy's hypocrisy relative to celebrating 14 July attracted attention. In early July, 1831, *la Société des Amis de l'Égalité* compared *les trois glorieuses* with the storming of the Bastille: 'Si nous eûmes un 29 juillet, c'est que quarante et un ans auparavant il y avait eu un 14. Nous reconquêmes la liberté; mais avant nous nos pères l'avaient conquise'.⁵⁰ After the cholera epidemic of 1832 led to the first revolutionary aftershock to *les trois glorieuses* at Paris, it was revealed at the trial of the insurgents that the plan was to proclaim a republic at the *Place de la Bastille*.⁵¹ The third anniversary of *les trois glorieuses* was marked by a ceremony at the cenotaph. A plaque which came courtesy of public subscription was produced to honour the combatants of June 1832; after a commotion, a few republicans were arrested. At their trial, one of the accused defended the plaque by urging that respect should be given to all those whose political convictions lead them to the barricades. 'Comme leurs frère de juillet [1830], ils ont combattu pour le triomphe de leurs principes politiques [...] Les uns ont des couronnes, les autres à peine un tombeau. Pourquoi? c'est qu'ils ne sont pas morts martyrs de la victoire'.⁵²

⁵⁰ 'Celebration de l'anniversaire du 14 Juillet' [6 juillet 1831]. *Les Révolutions du XIXe Siècle, op. cit.* (1:1). See also: 'Lettres Patriotiques du Père Duchêne de 1831', *ibid.*

⁵¹ 'Procès des Vingt-deux accusés du Cloître Saint-Méry, événemens des 5 et 6 juin 1832, suivi des pièces justificatives'. [Paris: 1832]. *Les Révolutions du XIXe Siècle, op. cit.* (1:IX).

⁵² 'Procès des républicains d'Aurillac et du journal *le Patriote du Puy-de-Dôme*, devant la Cour d'Assises de St-Flour. 25, 26 et 28 Novembre 1833'. [Clermont-Ferrand: s.d.]. *Les Révolutions du XIXe Siècle, op. cit.* (1:X).

The process of establishing a revolutionary republican tradition during the July Monarchy was accelerated by the events of 1848. As we will see in later chapters, France's second attempt at republican government raised similar issues as its first effort. Specifically, French republicans were forced to consider a couple of fundamental concepts. For instance to what extent does republicanism also entail an implied social welfare agenda? Was it necessary to maintain a revolutionary dictatorship from Paris until the provinces could be sufficiently 'republicanised'? The point is that the different conceptions of republicanism formulated during the Revolution were recommenced with the declaration of the Second Republic.

However, the fragile unity republicans located in that brief moment at the end of February 1848 was, by mid-May, shattered. The social question had yet to be resolved, liberation movements in other countries were not being assisted and recent elections had produced a moderate-to-conservative majority in the Constituent Assembly. Increasingly, battle lines were being drawn with the various republican contestants being labeled Jacobin or Girondin.⁵³ Beginning in April, 1848, two new journals with familiar names were launched - *le Père Duchêne* and *l'Ami du Peuple en 1848*. Neither paper had apprehensions or equivocations about its antecedents; beginning with the first issue of *le Père Duchêne*, the editor showed his colours. 'Je suis le tribun dont la colère éclatait autrefois dans Paris agité, de même que le tonnerre au milieu de la tempête'. However, recognising the

⁵³ We can also recall Marx's characterisation of Louis Blanc and Ledru-Rollin filling the rôles of Robespierre and Danton, respectively, in a reënactment of the First Republic. *Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Napoleon*

very real possibility that *le Père Duchêne* and the spectre of Hébert was just the sort of name to inspire fear and reaction, the editor distinguished the two republican eras. '[L]e siècle a marché; les moeurs se sont adoucies; les circonstances ne sont plus les mêmes. Je ne viens pas faire entendre le langage d'une époque que nous avons laissée bien loin derrière nous [...]'⁵⁴

As the split between different shades of republicanism became more pronounced by May, Raspail, the editor of *l'Ami du Peuple en 1848* reveled in an analogy, disparagingly made in another newspaper, between himself and Marat. Both, Raspail contended, were committed to saving the republic at all costs against the intrigues of moderates. According to Raspail, negative impressions of Marat were the result of the demise of oral tradition and misrepresentations of Marat by 'les jouisseurs et les forbans de la littérature'. In defending Marat, Raspail appeared to appoint himself as a repository of a revolutionary tradition which, in previous generations, might have been passed on through folk culture.⁵⁵

However it wasn't only a new generation of revolutionaries who kept alive France's revolutionary past with repeated references. In a letter to *le Père Duchêne*, a near octogenarian, self-described 'vainqueur de la Bastille, Secrétaire-général de Bailly à la Commune de Paris; fondateur de la République et quatre départements des provinces rhénanes; l'un de plus distingués d'entre les combattants dans la grande journée du 24 février 1848' chastised Interior Minister Ledru-Rollin for

⁵⁴ *Le Père Duchêne*. (no. 1) 10 avril 1848.

⁵⁵ 'Marat et les modérés du Corsaire'. *L'Ami du Peuple en 1848* (no, 20) 11 Mai 1848.

failing to give a rôle at the *fête de la fraternité* to the 100 surviving insurgents who stormed the Bastille. The author suggested that the 100 survivors could precede and offer civic crowns to the injured of February 1848.⁵⁶ Something quite powerful is at work in this suggestion: the public recognition and veneration of an insurgent tradition formalised by the passing of the revolutionary torch between generations.

Just as the expectations of revolutionary republicans in the First Republic were dashed by the bourgeois reaction after Thermidor, revolutionary republicans were disappointed by the Second Republic's moderation. The progression of both republican experiments and their unglorious ends at the hands of a Bonaparte invited comparisons about their parallel paths; if nothing else, this delivered a sense of *déjà vu* to the revolutionary experience.

When Napoleon III relaxed many of the laws he ushered in that were restrictive of civil rights, he reanimated a republican movement that had nearly ossified during its subterranean existence. As republicanism witnessed its second rebirth of the nineteenth century, it again needed to present its historical credentials. Much, though, had changed in France over the course of the nineteenth century. Politically, republicanism had failed again. Socially and economically, France was rapidly entering the industrial era. Realistically speaking, the *sans-culotte* ideal of a republic of independent producers was of decreasing relevance to the experience of republicanism's traditional rank-and-file constituency. While Oscar Testut wrote that protesters at the Le Creusot strike of 1870 ran

⁵⁶ *Le Père Duchêne* (no. 12) 14 mai 1848. In the next issue of the paper it was reported that the letter had its effect and 'les vieux de la Bastille ont leur place assignée dans la fête du 21'. *Ibid.* (no.13) 16-17 mai 1848.

through the streets shouting, 'Vive la Révolution! Vive la république rouge! Vive la guerre civile! [...] La lutte à outrance! Vive Robespierre! Vive 93! [...]', Benoît Malon noted that it was more likely these were *agents provocateurs*.⁵⁷

That said, the common threads of social vulnerability and political impotence stitched the *sans-culottes* and the emerging nineteenth century proletariat into the same historical fabric. When Haussmannisation threatened to demolish the Place de la Bastille, Charles Delescluze, a former official during the Second Republic and soon-to-be martyred *communard*, wrote:

C'est rudes travailleurs qui, ont tant de mal à gagner le pain de la journée, se permettant d'avoir un culte pour les souvenirs de la Révolution. C'est de la dernière inconvenance, en vérité, et que M. Haussmann a bien raison de ne pas s'en émouvoir [...]

En présence de tant et de si notables avantages, peut-on s'arrêter aux criaileries de quelques milliers de prolétaires, assez mal avisés pour se ressouvenir, eux les déshérités. Silence au faubourg ou gare à Mazas, qui vaut bien la Bastille.⁵⁸

However, we are left wondering whether a Jacobin *quarante-huitard* like Delescluze was really reflective of the changed realities that had transpired during the twenty years since 1848. In other words, given the disappointing experiences suffered by workers in two republics and the emergence of specific working-class ideologies that eschewed political questions, did Jacobinism still have any meaning? To maintain the interest of workers in republicanism, it was necessary to

⁵⁷ Testut, Oscar. *L'Internationale*. (tom. II), p. 196 (Paris: 1872); Malon, Benoît. *La Troisième Défaite du Proletariat Français* (Neuchatel: 1871).

⁵⁸ *Le Réveil* (no. 15) 8 Octobre 1868. Delescluze further emphasized the social class angle by predicting that the demolition of the Place de la Bastille was being carried out for the benefit of *rentiers*.

locate a tradition that was more relevant to their situation; an aspect of the Revolution which, at least symbolically, gave workers a sense of empowerment, even if this impression was only transitory. The *sans culottes* of 1780-94 and workers of 1848 played critical rôles in their respective revolutions. Both were temporally indispensable to the liberal bourgeoisie who benefitted from both republics, yet in neither case was much reaped in terms of benefits. Consequently, revolutionary republicans at the end of the Second Empire increasingly abandoned Jacobinism and instead opted to emphasize and define their tradition as emanating out of 1793 and the spirit of *sans culottism*.⁵⁹

In the pages of *le Réveil* Delescluze sought to stimulate in his large working class audience a sense of historical destiny by serialising the republican struggle. According to 'Les Grands Jours de la République', establishment of a democratic and social republic had been the goal of workers since 1793. Because a republic premised on democratic ideals threatened to break bourgeois hegemony and its domination over the majority of the nation, this goal could only be accomplished by resorting to revolution. The struggle of the *sans-culottes* in 1793 was presented as indistinguishable from that of the workers in the nineteenth century. A reading of the serial makes it quite evident that the intention was to counter the Proudhonian influence on French workers by emphasizing the inextricable links binding socialism and republicanism. However, it was initially necessary to counter

⁵⁹ For example, in March 1870, a revolutionary newspaper entitled *le Sans-Culotte* was started. Workers playing the card game *piquet* would say, '« Tu as la Révolution dans ton jeu »' if another player had the chance to make 93. Duveau, Georges. *La Vie Ouvrière [...]*, p. 468 (Paris: 1946)

the understandable cynicism experience had given French workers towards abstract political solutions to pressing social questions.

'Les Grands Jours de la République' took its readers on a whirlwind tour of the various *journées* during the nineteenth century. Each part contained the mixing of individuals and symbols from the Revolution and the contemporary event; usually the hero of the piece had one foot in the Revolution and the other squarely planted in the nineteenth century. For example, in the excerpt on the uprising of 5-6 June 1832, Lafayette is contrasted with an individual dressed in black, coiffed with a *bonnet phrygien* and carrying a red flag. This individual's popularity caused a schism between bourgeois and working-class republicans.

C'est que ce qui plaisait aux uns épouvantait les autres. Le souvenir de 93 devait plaire au peuple, à qui il rappelait sa puissance de quelques jours et devait effrayer des bourgeois mécontents, bonapartistes mâtinés de libéralisme, qui ne voulaient pas entendre parler de République'.⁶⁰

Although it would become the universally-recognised symbol of revolutionary socialism, by most accounts, the June 1832 uprising marked the first appearance of the red flag in France as a political symbol.⁶¹ Consequently, writing in 1869, Razoua was conflating two revolutionary symbols - the *bonnet phrygien* and the red flag - in the same revolutionary, class-based tradition.

For those who thought the 1831 insurrection at Lyon was strictly over

⁶⁰ 'Les Grands Jours de la République' *Le Réveil* (no. 34) 20 février 1869.

⁶¹ Razoua wrote that the people saw in the red flag 'le signe visible de la réparation, du triomphe; et si par contre, le bourgeoisie le hait, c'est qu'ils signifie en même temps pour elle la chute, l'expiation'. *Ibid.* On the history of the red flag, see: Dommanget, Maurice. *Histoire du Drapeau Rouge*. (Paris: 1967).

economic matters, *le Réveil* had presented another view. The protagonist of this piece was a *canut*, a devoted republican who, previously, had served the Revolution at Lyon along with Fouché, Collot d'Herbois and Couthon before joining Babeuf's conspiracy. In spite of his clearly superior position within the hierarchy of *canuts* (he was a *chef d'atelier*), 'Jean Just' firmly followed the social welfare messages in Robespierre's Declaration of Rights of Man and Citizen. This caused him to maintain 'la sentiment de la justice et [...] amour ardent pour les travailleurs [...]'⁶² This passage clearly submerged whatever differences might have characterised master-journeyman relations into unanimity over their mutual devotion to a conception of republicanism rooted in the experience of 1793-4.⁶³

Revolutionary republicans under the Second Empire maintained the tradition of drawing inspiration by honouring its deceased. While there were no survivors of the French Revolution still alive at the end of the 1860s, the nineteenth century had produced its own crop of revolutionary martyrs.⁶⁴ As with the recollections of

⁶² 'Les Grands Jours de la République' *Le Réveil* (no. 37) 13 mars 1869.

⁶³ In apparent emulation of *le Réveil*, the inaugural issue of a commუნard newspaper, *Paris Libre*, was launched along with the first installment of 34-part history of Louis-Bonaparte's *coup d'état*. The lead character of the story encounters a 90-year old man, a *volontaire* during the Revolution, who wants to defend the Second Republic with his 'vieux sabre d'abordage'. What we have at work here is a man who has obviously defied all mortality tables who maintains an overwhelming devotion to republicanism. The timing of this serial is more than coincidental since the Commune claimed to represent the true spirit of republicanism against the government at Versailles. Vesinier, P. 'Les Proscrits du Dix-Neuvième Siècle' *Paris Libre* (no. 1) 12 avril 1871/23 Germinal an 79. The author and editor of *Paris Libre*, Pierre Vesinier was a member of the Commune from the 1st arrondissement.

⁶⁴ That said, Victor Noir, himself destined for martyrdom, noted in *La Marseillaise* the passing of Danton's nephew. 'Boulevards et Faubourgs'. *La Marseillaise* (no. 4) 22 Décembre 1869.

Robespierre, Marat, etc. under the July Monarchy, commemoration of the deceased was not simply a means of bestowing posthumous accolades. When last seen alive in December 1851, Jean-Baptiste Baudin was standing on a barricade exhorting *faubouriens* to defend the republic against President Bonaparte's *coup d'état*. In 1868 a large number of republicans gathered at the Montmartre cemetery to start a subscription for a monument to honour Baudin. Delescluze captured what he referred to as the parisiens penchant for 'le culte des morts'. '[D]ans ce jour consacré à la religion des souvenirs, la démocratie parisienne avait un double devoir à remplir, et la démocratie parisienne s'appelle légion, il ne faut pas l'oublier [....] Mais n'oublions pas que la meilleure manière d'honorer nos grands morts, c'est d'imiter leurs vertus'.⁶⁵

The revolutionary tradition functioned best as an oral tradition passed on by one generation of nameless, faceless individuals to another, equally anonymous younger generation. Rather than celebrating the rôles played by individuals distinguished by their prominence, this was a more accessible tradition and one which invited empathy. For example, Eugène Varlin, bookbinder, Internationalist and martyred communard, received his revolutionary tutelage from a grandfather, a *volontaire*, who vividly described the events of 1789 and 1793 to his progeny.⁶⁶

⁶⁵ *La Réveil* (no. 19) 5 Novembre 1868. The death of Armand Barbès in 1870 was also an occasion for monument building subscriptions and posterior inspirations. 'Oui Barbès nous laisse un grand exemple, celui du non-nement et du courage, et la génération présente ferait bien de s'inspirer de ce modèle'. 'Mort de Barbès' *Le Réveil* (2e série, no. 395) 28 Juin 1870; 'Discours du Citoyen Quigniot' *Ibid.* (2e Série, no. 399) 2 Juillet 1870.

⁶⁶ Foulon, Maurice. *Eugène Varlin [...]*, (Paris: 19), p. 10; *Eugène Varlin. Pratique militante & écrits d'un ouvrier communard.* (présenté par Paule Lejeune)

With each revolution of the nineteenth century, the revolutionary tradition added another layer of communicators. On the twenty-second anniversary of the Second Republic, those who founded and defended the republic on the barricades of 1848 and 1851 related their experiences to the younger generation. An account of the meeting related that the meeting closed with those in attendance saluting 'la statue de la liberté qui, drapée de rouge, la main gauche appuyé sur un fusil, la main droite tenant des Immortelles recueillies sur la tombe de Victor Noir, nous indiquait notre devoir, le but à atteindre, le moyen d'y arriver'.⁶⁷ Similarly, Félix Pyat transformed Halloween in 1870 from a Catholic fête into a republican one by commemorating and honouring the memories of Godefroy Cavaignac and Baudin. 'Les honorer même à les imiter'. Pyat asserted the potency of festivals that honour martyrs.

Il a le pouvoir de tout transformer: religion en science, monarchie en république, fidèles en citoyens, sujets en républicains et bouffons en hommes d'État. Il peut même, cet alchimiste, tout-puissant, ressusciter les morts, les reproduire, les évoquer, les réanimer de nouveau, en les incarnant dans les vivants.

Pyat urged contemporary revolutionaries that the best way to honour the memories and actions of martyrs was to imitate them.

Vivants, imitez les morts! S'ils revenaient, trouveraient-ils que nous sommes aussi dévoués qu'eux? que nous faisons tout ce que nous devons, tout ce que nous pouvons? Danton trouverait-il Favre assez audacieux? Hoche, Trochu assez hardi? Desmoulin, Veillot assez ardent? Nos pères nous trouveraient-ils tous levés en masse devant et derrière nos grands barricades, les murs de Paris? Imitons nos morts, non pas seulement les martyrs, les victimes de [sic] 52, mais les héros

(Paris: 1977), p. 7.

⁶⁷ 'Le 24 février' *Les Gueux* (no.1) 28 février 1870.

de plus grandes époques, les vainqueurs de 92, ceux de 1830 comme de 48! Combattons comme eux: nous vaincrons [...]⁶⁸

The Commune: the limitations of tradition as a guide.

The circumstances attending the fall of the Second Empire invited comparisons to the situation which ushered in the First Republic. Specifically, the attention of republicans was attracted by their belief that oppressive régimes like monarchies and empires are not worth defending. This had been proven during the Revolution and, again, in 1870. A little more than a week after Napoleon III's surrender at Sedan, future communard Auguste Vermorel wrote encouragingly of 'le sublime audace de l'enthousiasme révolutionnaire' which, in 1793, reversed France's military defeats. 'La France de 1870 a, pour l'encourager et la soutenir, l'exemple de ses pères de 1793 [...]. C'est le moment de rappeler la grande tradition de 1793 [...]'.

Consequently, recalling a more glorious past served an inspirational purpose to a people at the depths of despair. According to Vermorel, it was now time to answer the misrepresentations and calomnies lodged against 1793 by demonstrating how the revolutionary spirit had saved France when it was most at risk.⁶⁹

As the military situation became even more perilous over the autumn, revolutionary republicans increasingly called for the replacement of its provisional republican government with a revolutionary dictatorship at Paris. The

⁶⁸ *Le Combat* (no. 47) 1 Novembre 1870/11 Brumaire an 79.

⁶⁹ Vermorel, Auguste, '1870-1793. La Patrie en Danger'. *Le Courrier Français* (no. 3) 12 Septembre 1870.

announcement of the fall of Metz on 31 October reduced Paris to a level of vulnerability not witnessed since 1793. When news of the surrender was announced, a revolutionary *journée* at Paris momentarily led to the seizure of the *Hôtel de Ville* and declaration of an alternative government. For some, this action coupled the highest expression of sovereignty with the egalitarian undertones of nationalism into a struggle for national redemption. More than just an insurrection, it exemplified national salvation. As such, it was reminiscent of such *journées* as 10 August 1792 and 31 May-2 June 1793.⁷⁰ '[L]et Paris regain possession of herself', Lissagaray wrote, 'let the Commune of 1792 be revived to again save the city and France'.⁷¹

Although it may have been appropriate to develop situational analogies between 1870-1 and 1792-3, a farcical element soon presented itself. Many revolutionaries seemed unable to extricate themselves from the historical rôles they assumed to be their destiny. This was particularly true of the *quarante-huitard* generation. Their entry into the world of revolutionary politics was largely the result of being consumed by republicanism and, specifically, the Jacobin brand of republicanism. This proved to be the hearth which forged their seminal political experiences and provided the referents which both guided and justified their actions. Beyond this, and perhaps most importantly, references to particular individuals was almost an early form of political parties. Just as political parties

⁷⁰ *Le Combat* (no. 98) 21 Décembre 1870/1 Nivôse an 79.

⁷¹ P.O. Lissagaray. *History of the Paris Commune*. (Brussels: 1876) (translated by Eleanor Marx) (London: 1976), p. 21.

serve to classify an individual's general ideological slant, so too, politics in 1871 was made more comprehensible by associating contemporaries with familiar names. Consequently, in his fact-based, yet fictional, account of the Commune, Léon Cladel characterised followers of the Jacobin legacy of Robespierre and Saint-Just as being inclined to vote in the February, 1871 elections for *quarante-huitard* Jacobins like Delescluze, Ledru-Rollin, Shoelcher, Pyat and Gambon; disciples of Danton and Mirabeau voted for Gambetta, Victor Hugo and Garibaldi; the most moderate wing of republicanism was represented by Sieyès and it selected Jules Favre; 'faubouriens' saw a budding Marat in Arthur Ranc; the spirit of the Commune of 1793 was represented by the *blanquistes* while Benoît Malon exemplified the *queue de Babeuf*.⁷²

Sometimes this obsession with the past was harmless. Examples from the past were often cited for purposes of legitimising the author's point. For example, Auguste Vermorel alluded to the expository nature of Mirabeau's *le Courrier de Provence*, Robespierre's *Lettres à mes commettants* and Marat's *l'Ami du Peuple* in launching his own *l'Ami du Peuple*.⁷³ After Charles Delescluze threatened to resign as mayor of the 19th arrondissement, Félix Pyat urged him to reconsider, citing the resignations of Robespierre in 1794 and the Montagnards in 1849 as leading to the collapse of the First and Second Republics.⁷⁴ However, when, in early January 1871, Pyat began alluding to Robespierre in calling for a Committee of Public Safety, he

⁷² Cladel, Léon. *I.N.R.I.* (Paris: 1887), pp. 139-40.

⁷³ *l'Ami du Peuple* (no. 3) 28 avril 1871. By his own admission, Vermorel's paper would be '[m]oins un journal, qu'un discours quotidien au peuple [...].'

⁷⁴ *Le Combat* (no. 101) 24 Décembre 1870/4 Nivôse an 79.

was sowing seeds of divisiveness that ultimately stagnated the Commune.⁷⁵

The desire to recede into the past and to comprehend the present exclusively through historical referents distracted the Commune from its mission and opened it up to the charge of being an anachronism.⁷⁶ Some warned of the need to make an irrevocable break with the past.⁷⁷ Moderate republicans charged the Commune with a slavish devotion to and imitation of a revolutionary model forged out of the exigencies of the French Revolution. To them this model was inextricably tied to a particular set of circumstances and a specific structure of society that is no longer applicable. Typical is the following from a Bordeaux newspaper:

Pour eux [the communards], cela [1793] est sacramental, obligatoire; c'est la formule, c'est «le rite» de la révolution; ils s'efforcent, s'étudient, se contraignent à le suivre; mais il manque à cette imitation précisément ce qui en était l'âme [...] Ce sont les situations qui gouvernent les hommes; et ce n'est pas uniquement en les décrétant qu'on crée les situations [...] Aujourd'hui, ces faits et ces causes manquent absolument. C'est pourquoi nous avons l'apparence de 93, la physionomie extérieure de la Terreur; mais les ressorts de 93 n'y sont pas; c'est une image, une Terreur «de surface», vide, sans force [...] La raison vraie de cette dissemblance, la voici, 93 était motivé: il avait ses causes, son origine: dix-sept siècles d'oppression, la société politique à refaire, la féodalité à tuer, l'invasion étrangère à repousser. La Commune n'a pas cette tâche formidable.⁷⁸

⁷⁵ *Le Combat* (no. 115) 7 Janvier 1871/18 Nivôse an 79; see also: (no. 119) 11 Janvier/22 Nivôse.

⁷⁶ Typical was the following satirical verse: 'Il y en a dans le nombre, qui n'ont pas attendu la sénilité pour avoir le culte du passé/Et qui absorbés par l'étude des premières années de la Révolution/Veulent revenir en arrière de quatre-vingt ans'. *La Grande Colère de Jacques Bonhomme* (no. 5) Mai(?) 1871.

⁷⁷ Duchêne, Georges, 'Réminiscences' *La Commune* (no. 37) 26 Avril 1871/7 Floréal an 79: 'Il faut briser avec les usages, et surtout avec les idoles'.

⁷⁸ *La Gironde* 23 mai 1871, quoted in: Girault, Jacques. *La Commune et Bordeaux 1870-1871*. (Paris: 1971), pp. 259-64.

Comparisons between the 1793 and 1871 were also generated by the backcloth of civil war. It was during the Revolution that the gulf in opinion separating Paris from the rest of France became most apparent. When 'terror' became an official policy of government, counterrevolutionaries in the provinces were finally controlled. None the less, the Terror came to symbolise the excesses of the Revolution and the dangers inherent in all revolutions. However violent the language employed by revolutionary republicans towards their political enemies, when it came to the relationship between revolutionary Paris and the provinces, it was almost implicit that the differences in this relationship not be accentuated.

This changed in 1871. On one level this may have had to do with Paris' sense of abandonment during the siege of the previous autumn/winter. On another level, though, it was the provinces which represented the greatest threat to the realisation of a democratic and social republic. Increasingly, revolutionaries at Paris abandoned any chance of reconciling their vision of the republic with the conservatism and moderation of the provinces. Implicit within this aggressive and divisive posture was a recognition that their conception entailed nothing short of revolutionary change. And, they recalled, the magnitude of revolutionary change was inconsistent with the principle of consensus. Because of the severity of this position, revolutionaries, again, felt compelled to search for legitimacy in a more glorious past. Despite having been associated with the Revolution's most violent tendencies, Marat was elevated to an almost cult-like status. Whether assuming the name of his paper, *l'Ami du Peuple*, or quoting his calls for decisive and merciless action against the Revolution's enemies, referring to Marat was like a lightning

rod. More than anything, it defined the delimitations of the particular revolutionary tradition followed by the Commune.⁷⁹

The communards were highly conscious of the importance of symbolism in revolution. In discussing the importance of the revolutionary festival, Mona Ozouf has noted, '[N]othing can really begin if the break with what has ended is not made manifest'.⁸⁰ The Commune, in characterising its mission as revolutionary, recognised the necessity of public displaying its attenuation with the past. At the end of April, the Commune decreed that a church named for Bréa, the general responsible for repressing the June 1848 insurrection, would be destroyed and renamed 'Place de Juin'. A church named after someone like Bréa 'est une insulte permanente aux vaincus de Juin et aux hommes qui sont tombés pour la cause du peuple.' In making this name change, the Commune was simply following in the tradition established by the Revolution of changing geographic place names to reflect new political and social realities.

Of all the symbolic acts undertaken by the Commune, though, the most notable was the destruction of the Vendôme column. Although the primary reason behind the column's destruction was to efface one of the more prominent monuments of Bonapartism, one of the first calls for the column's destruction also linked it to Robespierre. This is important for two reasons. First, it echoed the increasing anti-Jacobinism of many communards; the author asserted that

⁷⁹ See: *Le Faubourg* (2e Année, no. 1) 26 mars 1871; *l'Ami du Peuple de Marat* mars (?) 1871.

⁸⁰ Ozouf, *op. cit.* at 33.

Robespierre and Bonaparte had been equally responsible for destroying 'le parti révolutionnaire'⁸¹ Secondly, as the Revolution proved, the unveiling of a 'colossal column' can form a dramatic visual centrepiece of public festivals.⁸² However, the reverse process of destroying the monument, is equally, if not more, dramatic. Destroying the monument reveals the power of society to reshape and redefine itself by manifestly laying them to waste. If monuments 'add to the landscape a new medley of funerary and hortatory symbols' that 'not only remind us about the past but impress us with its significance and our loss'⁸³, destroying them is an invalidation of their cultural significance.

Communards believed themselves to be embarking on a project of revolutionary proportions. As we will see, despite specific differences, their general conceptions of the political and social spheres differed markedly from what was in existence. These conceptions were largely rooted in their interpretation of a historical imperative to complete the work commenced by the French Revolution. On one level, this was presented as extending the general principles of the Revolution to their logical conclusion in a regeneration of society. In this manner the traditions generated by the French Revolution were capable of adapting to any situation or context. It had developed its own set of rules and ideas which were absorbed by the body politic's circulatory system.

On another level, however, the revolutionary tradition acted as a prism.

⁸¹ Verlet, Henri, 'La Colonne Vendôme' *Le Cri du Peuple* (no. 34) 4 avril 1871.

⁸² Ozouf, *op. cit.* at 133.

⁸³ Lowenthal, *op. cit.* at 324.

Through this prism's refractive and chromatic qualities, contemporary events assumed a shape and colour dictated by the Revolution. This provided nineteenth century revolutionaries with a method for making their unsavoury, violent answers to social and political relationships seem more digestible. However, for some republicans, this fixation with tradition blurred the distinction separating historical fantasy from political reality. In the case of the Commune, it became bogged down in rivalries predicated on distinctions between (amongst others) Jacobins and Hébertists. This proved to be just the type of counterproductive activity that led to malaise while inhibiting the decisive action required at the time.

Tradition is a kind of epoxy which binds society to certain perceived truths. These truths have developed their legitimacy simply by virtue of having occurred at some time in the past. The revolutionary tradition in France was not simply a mechanistic acknowledgement of the past; nor was it simply confined to meaningless observations of anniversaries and repetitions of rituals. On one level, the French Revolution established the traditions that guided French republicanism. However, within French republicanism there were several traditions, each one reflective of a different stage of the First Republic. Revolutionary republicans believed that for a brief shining moment, the Revolution reflected the highest ideals, expression and aspirations of the French nation. It doesn't matter whether this interpretation was at all legitimate; the fact is, tradition packed a potent emotional punch. The revolutionary tradition was an umbilical cord connecting an embryonic regenerative society with the historical experience that nourished and sustained it. This position was summed up by the *Journal Officiel de la Commune*:

Les révolutions bourgeoises ont été, jusqu'à ce jour, frappées d'incapacité. Elles ont généreusement annoncé les meilleurs principes et les idées les plus révolutionnaires; elles n'ont pas su, elles n'ont pas pu, ou elles n'ont pas voulu les réaliser [...]

[¶] Fouillons donc notre histoire dans tous les sens et dans toutes les profondeurs. Cherchons notre traditions vraiment populaire, vraiment nationale, dans ces longs siècles d'épreuves et de martyrs qui, depuis les épaisses ténèbres de notre origine, s'étendent jusqu'à cette nouvelle épreuve décisive où nous voici entrés. Ramassons toutes nos forces pour l'accomplissement de la tâche suprême qui nous est échue. L'histoire appelée en témoignage, précisera et affermira dans nos âmes la conscience de cette solidarité indestructible qui nous unit à toutes ces générations de précurseurs qui se sont sacrifiés patiemment à l'idée qui nous soulève aujourd'hui. Quand nous connaîtrons ce que nous sommes; quand nous saurons l'expérience qu'ont placée sur nous tant de siècles laborieux; quand nous sentirons vivre en nous toutes ces âmes généreuses qui ont tenté de nous léguer une meilleure destinée, nous nous acharnerons à l'oeuvre plus résolu et plus confiants. Nous serons moins prompts à désespérer de l'avenir, et nous nous laisserons pousser en avant par cette impulsion mystérieuse, qui, venue du fond de notre histoire, s'est accrue à travers les siècles, des forces accumulées de toutes les générations.⁸⁴

Most of the time traditions are relatively innocuous observances of a decreasingly relevant past. The revolutionary tradition in France, though, was like a dynamo, an electrical force constantly recharged through successive manifestations and ritualistic observations. Yes, this begs the fundamental question of its impertinence to a radically altered France. However, revolutionary republicans were on the margins of nineteenth century republicanism. Their search for legitimacy, recognition and support increasingly drew them to ground their positions in conceptions of the French nation forged during the Revolution.

Much of the foregoing begs an essential question regarding the French

⁸⁴ L-X De Richard, 'Une Révolution Populaire'. *Journal Officiel de la Commune* 7 Avril 1871.

revolutionary tradition. Specifically, what is meant by the term revolution? What is a revolution and how does it differ from other manifestations of popular protest?

CHAPTER TWO

COMPREHENDING REVOLUTION

The preceding chapter concluded by asking what is meant by the term 'revolution'. This was no rhetorical question. The association of 'revolution' with forces beyond the physical sciences was relatively recent by the 1780s. The scope and magnitude of the French Revolution comprehensively altered the definitive parameters of revolution. As recipients of a refined application of revolution to social and political behaviour, nineteenth century revolutionaries employed these new referents to define and legitimise their own actions. Just as the previous chapter established guidelines for understanding 'tradition', the present chapter is concerned with specifying the meaning of 'revolution'.

This chapter is thematically divided into five sections. First, a brief survey of etymological transformations of 'revolution' from its origins in characterising physical phenomena to its application in the social sciences will be provided. From here, 'revolution' will be differentiated from other forms of popular protest, namely riot and revolt. The inextricable link between revolution and violence, and why the latter is a vital component of the former, will be the penultimate section of this chapter. Finally, revolution as a regenerative process will be considered. Integrated within each of these sections will be the manner by which nineteenth century revolutionaries understood revolution, together with their ideas on, and

conceptions of, the subject.

Etymology of revolution

Prior to the seventeenth century, 'revolution' either had a meaning relative to planetary motion around the sun or marked the end of a passage of time. The common thread between these two conceptions is that 'revolution' referred to phenomena tied 'à une loi naturelle et comme fixé par les mouvements célestes'.¹ In other words, 'revolution' did not refer to experiences within the realm of human control. Even the initial uses of revolution to describe political change did so in the context of a reversion to a more idealised state of affairs. Even though the sixteenth century was marked by the monumental change of the Reformation, revolution was not applied to describe what was occurring. Rather, contemporaries described it as 'a mutation'.² Simply explained, the Reformation represented an irrevocable break with the past. As such it neither conformed to the common understanding nor standard utilisation of revolution as a providential return.

Over the course of the seventeenth century, revolution had not completely lost its association with astronomical forces. One key difference, however, was that it no longer exclusively signified *le retournement fait* as much as the process by which the return is made. Consequently, revolution assumed more dynamic qualities and had finally entered the domain of human volition. Although 'revolution' was not applied to the Reformation, clearly the redefinition of

¹ Rey, Alain, '«Révolution» *Histoire d'un mot*. (Paris: 1988), pp. 33-4.

² *Ibid.* at 36.

revolution reflected a growing recognition that, underneath it all, both physical and social processes represented mutations. That said, human revolutions were lumbered with inglorious significations. 'Si les révolutions des cieux, témoignant de la «sagesse souverain», rendent le monde juste et constant, malgré ses changements incessants, celles de la Terre et des hommes sont apparemment privées de ces qualités d'essence divine'.³

Transformations in the lexicon of 'revolution' coincided with the age of enlightened thought. New approaches to understanding the physical principles and, later, political institutions and social relationships⁴, were unified by the growing belief in human comprehension and determination. Just as revolutions were necessary to restore the balance in the physical world, so too, revolutions filled in the political sphere. Consequently, skepticism over the impact of a deity in both universal and earthly affairs gradually reshaped the meaning of revolution. In the second half of the seventeenth century, political events would further demarcate the bounds of revolution. Specifically, the Fronde and the Stuart restoration were frequently referred to as revolutions. This indicated that revolution had finally been 'suffisamment dégagé de son passé pour fournir un substitut plus compréhensif de «guerre civile», ou de «révolte» [...]'.⁵ The result of this was a

³ *Ibid.* at 40-1.

⁴ Both Voltaire and Diderot analogised political mutations and planetary change. '[C]hez Diderot, *révolution* juxtapose et parfois mêle l'idée d'un changement cyclique, d'une suite progressive de degrés (là où l'on dit déjà, en anglais, *evolution*), et celle d'un changement brutal et d'une décadence'. *Ibid.* at 57.

⁵ *Ibid.* at 46-7, 59. As should be evident, however, revolution was still tied to the notion of a return to a past state of affairs. The Fronde reflected an effort at halting the centralising tendencies of the monarchy. It might strike us as odd that the

relative proliferation of usage of the term 'revolution' in printed texts from the seventeenth to the eighteenth century.⁶

The experiences of the English in the seventeenth century gave them a pretty good idea of what constituted a revolution. After all, since 1649, the English, first, chopped off the head of one king, then restored the authority of that King's dynasty before finally replacing the restored monarchy with a constitutional one. Political instability caused the English to understand revolution as any sudden and dramatic political change. The overly generic ring to this definition didn't do much to assist in a precise understanding of what political-social events constitute a revolution. Consequently, at least one contemporary historian called the rapprochement between King Gustavus Vasa and the Swedish nobility against King Christian II of Denmark, a revolution.⁷ The French, on the other hand, having been distracted from the Fronde by Louis XIV's activities, were still reticent about applying the term to their national history.⁸

Significantly, as 'revolution' rolled off countless writers pens, it also began to lose its identification with a return to the past. Although to eighteenth century treatises on the anatomical body's physiological revolutions the word seemed

Restoration, rather than the civil war, would be characterised as a revolution. However, consistent with the idea that revolution signals a return, the reinstatement of the Stuarts' authority did symbolise a reversion back to strong monarchy.

⁶ *Ibid.* at 62.

⁷ *Ibid.* at 60. For a short summary, see: Doyle, William, 'Revolution and Counter-Revolution in France'. *Revolution and Counter-Revolution*. (edited by E.E. Rice) (Oxford: 1991), pp. 95-108, 95-6.

⁸ Rey, *op. cit.* at 59.

inconsistent with any regression, in its application to the body politic, revolution still represented a return to a previous state of affairs.⁹ In many respects this explains the general indifference or hostility of many *philosophes* towards the application of 'revolution' to political change.¹⁰ They associated revolutions with negative circumstances but saw nothing positive in their work; perhaps the most charitable view was Diderot's notion that, having plunged society into an abyss, revolutions inevitably spawn progressive ideas.¹¹ Increasingly, though, as philosophic thought concerned itself with the superiority of constitutionalism over absolutism in the political domain, revolution began to be associated with the fall of monarchical rule.¹² However, revolution was still characterised as a destructive force rather than as part of a larger process that included construction of a new society.

During the second half of the eighteenth century, one begins to sense the recognition of a larger dynamic of revolution. Specifically, for some, revolution is part of a dialectical process which predicates the success of a political revolution on a revolution of morals and customs.

Cette dialectique, où la place centrale est occupée par les moeurs,

⁹ *Ibid.* at 62-4.

¹⁰ *Ibid.* at 64-76. 'La notion de «révolution», assumant à la fois les bouleversements positifs du progrès et les déclin ou les effondrements, sera bien commode'. *Ibid.* at 67.

¹¹ *Ibid.* at 67-8. 'Le grand ouvrage profite des périodes creuses où la marche de l'esprit est véritablement suspendue [...]'

¹² *Ibid.* at 70.

c'est-à-dire par les habitudes et les comportements sociaux, replace dans le circuit causal les éléments moins apparents que sont les coutumes, la vie matérielle et donc l'économie - même si cette place est informulée -, les institutions n'étant affectées que si les moeurs bougent.¹³

Reflecting the spirit of the Enlightenment, revolutions in political affairs were within the ambit of human potential - a point made clear by the expanding amount of literature (of which the above quote is an example) directed to the preparation of a revolutionary spirit.

The crises in seventeenth century England having progressed the range of 'revolution' beyond religious and celestial matters, also imbued it with a fair dose of ambiguity. What, precisely, was a revolution in the political sphere? In other words, was it possible to characterise the civil war, Restoration and Glorious Revolution as 'revolutions'? As a unifying noun to identify all sudden, dramatic changes in political institutions, was going to be fraught with too many internal inconsistencies. 'Tout événement politique violent, le changement d'un souverain autant que sa chute, une insurrection réprimée autant qu'une succession de troubles aboutissant à une restauration, peut dans les dernières décennies du XVIIIe siècle être dite *révolution*.'¹⁴ In the years prior to the French Revolution, indiscriminate designations of 'revolution' to such phenomena as *coups d'état* and Maupeou's judicial reforms (as well as his dismissal by Louis XVI) were threatening to destroy it as a genus of social and political change. Although the ideological and

¹³ *Ibid.* at 84.

¹⁴ *Ibid.* at 92.

intellectual linch pins of the American War of Independence did refine the definition of revolution, it was increasingly being paired with a qualifying adjective - 'heureuse'. In other words, there was something in a revolution for everybody from parliamentary supremacy to social reform to the struggle against poverty. 'Au moment où tout va basculer, le mot *révolution*, tout en se rapprochant du réel, en arrive à véhiculer une requête respectueuse!'¹⁵

On the eve of the Revolution, the French habitually used 'revolution' to describe any sort of change, banal or profound.¹⁶ However, beginning in 1789, definite parameters were going to be established in delimiting the constituent elements of revolution. In the process, a neologization of revolution naturally grew out of the Revolution's course. In its initial stages, the Revolution was conceptualised as 'l'heureuse révolution', a revolution which responded to the needs of all elements in French society. While this might have been conjecturally conceivable in 1789, it should have been apparent that the structure and circumstances of French society dictated otherwise.

Reflecting the reality that the achievement of 'l'heureuse révolution' was a canard, the Revolution moved through successive stages. It was through these transitions that the essence of 'revolution' became more precise. Prior to May 1789 it might have been possible to still refer to 'l'heureuse révolution'. After all, the King appeared to be interested in using the *cahiers* as a means for taking the nation's

¹⁵ *Ibid.* at 93-5.

¹⁶ As an example of the former, Rey provided the following excerpt of a letter from Diderot to Sophie Volland: '«Il me restera toujours assez de fortune, quelles que soient les révolutions de mes finances»'. *Ibid.* at 101.

pulse and all three estates looked forward to the meeting of the Estates General. However, this was the last time that anything even approaching a consensus occurred. From May 1789 forward, the Revolution would distinguish revolutionaries from counterrevolutionaries.

Two relatively simple and straightforward concepts - revolutionaries and counterrevolutionaries. Not quite. After all, how could individuals defined as revolutionaries suddenly be stained with the taint of opposition to the Revolution? While it may appear to be rather axiomatic that the enemies of the Revolution were those whose views hadn't kept pace with the metamorphoses of the Revolution, there is another way to consider this issue. Specifically, could it be that the genuine revolutionaries were those who hadn't deviated from the principles of constitutional monarchy, civil equality and liberalism announced in 1789?

Having considered this possibility we can now readily dismiss it. The French Revolution was unlike any previous revolution. Motivated by both the intransigence of those hostile to the universality of its principles and a sense of its own expanse, the Revolution constantly improvised responses to reach the goals announced in 1789. The interpretation given these vaguely articulated goals would forever alter the meaning of 'revolution'¹⁷. Perhaps subconsciously, Robespierre, Saint-Just, Marat and Babeuf, appeared to premise their ideas by reference on the earlier scientifically-based view of 'revolution' as a natural force. In other words, whether celestial, anatomical or social, revolutions have a dynamic of their own in achieving

¹⁷ On the eve of his expulsion from the Convention, Condorcet, on 1 June 1793 wrote: '«le mot *révolutionnaire* ne s'applique qu'aux révolutions qui ont la liberté pour objet [...]»' *Ibid.* at 125.

certain ends. The dynamic of the French Revolution was the *bouleversement* of the institutions, structure and values of *le ancien régime*, itself a term first coined by the revolutionaries¹⁸ to thoroughly express their view of the comprehensiveness of their enterprise. Thus conceived the Revolution was less a mutation of the existent society than an irrevocable break with it.

The word *révolutionnaire* (yet another addition to the French lexicon by way of the Revolution) 'ne semble pas entièrement établi avant l'instauration de la *république*'.¹⁹ By consequence, there could not have been revolutionaries before the advent of the First Republic. However, as the initial months of the Republic revealed, apparently not all republicans were revolutionaries. The liberalism that marked the initial period of the Revolution soon gave way to a competing conceptualization. Accordingly, the Revolution assumed a social class dimension - the end of oppression, whether political or social. The revolutionaries did not believe they were promoting class warfare; on the contrary, they saw themselves as realising the primary objective of the Revolution - the creation of a nation of citizens and the end of a period during which '«les citoyens aisés, les opulents recueilleront seuls tous les fruits du nouvel ordre des choses [...]»'²⁰

Variouly, and conflictingly, referred to as *la période ascendante* or *le dérapage* of the Revolution, 1793-4 came to authoritatively define revolutionaries and counterrevolutionaries. The actors of the period harboured no illusions on this

¹⁸ *Ibid.* at 143.

¹⁹ *Ibid.* at 120.

²⁰ *Ibid.* at 147-8, quoting Marat (*L'Ami du Peuple* (no. 263) 27 octobre 1790).

point. Robespierre, Saint-Just, Marat, Hébert and their *sans-culottes* allies self-consciously used the word 'revolution', together with grammatical variations on it, to define themselves and their actions. Beyond this, the noun *révolutionnaire* was conflated with *patriot* and national loyalty became predicated on support for the Revolution and the ideals being announced in 1793.²¹ Defining the word 'revolution' according to whether or not one accepted the principles of 1793 produced interesting effects on future characterisations. Babeuf celebrated the fall of Robespierre, Saint-Just *et. al.* who, in the immediate aftermath of Thermidor, he referred to as counterrevolutionaries. With a distinct lack of clairvoyance, Babeuf heralded Thermidor as a revolution restorative of *liberté* and *bonheur* as the mantras of the Revolution.²² However, Babeuf was soon to be disappointed with the Thermidorian régime. Not only did the Thermidorians represent a return to bourgeois hegemony but they were equally self-conscious in eschewing references to themselves or their enterprise as being 'revolutionary'. In fact, at the Convention on 24 prairial Year III, Sévestre declared that '«[i]l est temps de réformer le langage comme les institutions que créèrent nos derniers tyrans»' and that, accordingly, the Committee of General Security had proscribed the word *révolutionnaire*.²³

Was this a final indignity heaped on the *soi-disant* Jacobin republic by the triumphant Thermidorians? Yes and no. In one sense the Thermidorians were compelled to draw as many distinctions between themselves and their republican

²¹ *Ibid.* at 120.

²² *Ibid.* at 149-50.

²³ *Ibid.* at 124-5, quoting Brunhot, F. *Histoire de la langue française*, (tom. IX, 2), p. 656.

adversaries. Continued bourgeois support for the Revolution probably required this. However, on another level, the Thermidorians and their allies were endeavouring to close the era of the Revolution and to consolidate the definitive triumph of liberal bourgeois ideals. Just as they strove to maintain bourgeois backing for the Revolution, they also sought to dampen any hopes of the *sans-culottes* of a return to revolutionary government.

Beginning with *les trois glorieuses* of 1830 - the first successful revolutionary manifestation since the 1790s - revolutionaries contemplated how the revolutionary process is set in motion. Less than a year after the revolution, an adherent to Robespierre's ideas, Auguste Caunes, wrote that revolutions are not a function of advances in the arts, letters and sciences but of a stagnant and oppressive society. Having reached its breaking point,

'le peuple [...] est devenu lui-même le grand levier, le moteur puissant des changemens commandés par ces impérieuses circonstances; alors seulement les révolutions éclatent; l'esprit public endormi ou éteint jusque là se rallume et se réveille dans toutes les ames, l'opinion s'accroît et s'éclaire, la pensée de chaque citoyen se fortifie et se dirige vers un but commun, qui est la régénération entière de la société et l'accomplissement des droits politiques de tous les citoyens.'²⁴

Just as revolution was once viewed strictly in a religious sense, so too, just prior to the unsuccessful workers' revolution of June 1848 was revolution compared with divine powers. 'Il n'est au pouvoir de personne d'arrêter la révolution, et de lui

²⁴ 'Procès politique et républicain du citoyen Auguste Caunes [18 juillet 1831, pour sa brochure intitulée: «Des moyen d'instituer le gouvernement de tous....»] (Sceaux: 1831)', p. 29. *Les Révolutions du XIXe Siècle* (Première série, 1830-1834, tom. XI) (Paris: 1974).

dire comme Dieu dit à le mer: «Tu n'iras pas plus loin, tes flots s'arrêteront au rivage que je t'ai assiné.» [...] La révolution est un acte providentiel'.²⁵

During the third revolutionary period covered in this study - the 1871 Paris Commune - revolutionary journalist Jean-Baptiste Millière noted that revolutions are never produced by exactly the same circumstances. And, Millière added, it's just as well since governments would take precautions to guard against those circumstances that had produced 'une nouvelle explosion de la conscience publique' against their predecessors. However, while the circumstances may differ, all revolutions represent the same phenomena: 'des évolutions successives de l'humanité. Chacune d'elles forme une phase nouvelle de progrès [...]'²⁶

Clearly, revolutionaries in the nineteenth century still believed in the inevitability of revolutions as necessary for the perfectibility of society. Similar to the astronomical equilibrium maintained by celestial revolutions, political and social revolutions were necessary to progress society from a state of subjugation and tyranny. The revolutionary force is not the work of an individual or a group, it contains a rhythm and a dynamic that can be conformed to but never precisely mastered. In many respects revolution is as natural and unavoidable an occurrence as is the shifting of the earth along its tectonic fault lines.

Although revolution is a process that liberates societies from oppression, the particular state of development of a given society determines the scope of its

²⁵ Thomassin, D.M., 'La littérature royaliste', *L'Accusateur Public* (no. 4) 21-25 Juin 1848.

²⁶ Millière, J-B 'La Révolution en 1871'. *La Combat* (no. 15) 14 Germinal an 79/3 Avril 1871.

revolution. Underlying this, however, was a recognition that a revolution is a specifically national experience designed to progress a nation through its assorted stages of development. In the first half of the nineteenth century revolutionaries in various parts of Europe were motivated by nationalist concerns - either the consolidation of various states and principalities into a unified country or the liberation of their country from domination by another nation. Louis-Joseph-Antoine de Potter, a Belgian revolutionary nationalist living in France, none the less noted that the satisfaction of political ends does not constitute the definitive achievement of the revolutionary dynamic and, ultimately, the fulfilment of political demands leads to the next stage of revolutionary demands - social liberty, in general, and 'l'amélioration du sort du peuple', in particular.²⁷

Amongst French revolutionaries, their revolutionary dynamic assumed social class dimensions that was subsumed under the rubric of a national ideal forged by revolution. Lamennais rhetorically asked, 'Quest-ce que la révolution, si ce n'est notre existence même comme nation?'²⁸ As we will see in Chapter 5, the defence of Paris against the Prussian siege regularly conflated patriotism with vaguely socialist directives. References by 1848's rendition of *le Père Duchêne*, noted that *le bonheur*, one of the objectives listed by Babeuf, could only be achieved through

²⁷ Potter, L-J-A de, 'De la Révolution à faire, d'après l'expérience des révolutions avortées. (Paris: décembre 1831)', pp. 19-21. *Les Révolutions du XIXe Siècle, op. cit.* (tom. VII).

²⁸ Lamennais, Félicité de, 'Le Pays et le gouvernement. (Paris: 1840). *Les Révolutions du XIXe Siècle, op. cit.* (tom. III).

the process of revolution.²⁹ Having been written after the repression of Parisian workers in June, the foregoing article had implicitly associated the concept of *bonheur* with the material satisfaction of workers. Twenty-two years later, Armand Lèvy concluded that the social harmony at the root of all revolutions can only be produced 'quand une couche sociale monte'.³⁰

To the extent that this study is concerned with the development of a revolutionary tradition in the nineteenth century, the foregoing etymological survey of 'revolution' was necessary to reveal the relationship between its progression and its ultimate refinement. Nineteenth century revolutionaries clearly evinced an understanding of the significance of their revolutionary assertions. To them, the French Revolution was the incarnate representation of an emergent society heralding a new set of ideals. However, a process in gestation since 1789 emerged stillborn in 1794. Obligated by natural forces beyond human control, the revolutionary mission required *un effondrement*, as opposed to *une mutation*, of the old society.

Riot, Revolt, Revolution

On 15 July 1789, Louis XVI was informed by the liberal Duc de La Rochefoucauld-Liancourt that insurgents had seized control of the Bastille prison fortress. '«Est-ce donc une émeute?», queried the King. '«Non, Sire, c'est une

²⁹ 'Les Brigands et les Scélérats. Cours complet de Politique en Quelques Lignes'. *Le Père Duchêne* (no. 31) 13-15 Août 1848.

³⁰ Lèvy, Armand, 'Concorde sociale'. *Le Patriot* (1ère année, mo. 17) 23 septembre 1870.

révolution!», responded La Rochefoucauld-Liancourt.³¹ Typically this anecdote is retold as an example of Louis XVI's detachment from the severe turns the Estates General crisis had made between May and July 1789. However, for our purposes, this account of monarchical disengagement highlights another point: the semantical differences between various forms of popular protest.

In the 200 or so years before 1789 France had experienced the assassination of Henri IV, Damiens' attempt on Louis XV's life, monarchical succession crises after the deaths of Henri IV and Louis XIII, the Fronde and the manifestations of popular protest previously discussed. In Louis XVI's frame of reference (and given the definitional parameters of revolution operating before 1789), popular protest was not a revolutionary act. A display of discontent, yes. A revolution, no. Up until then, the closest France had come to a 'revolution' was the Fronde and even that was not characterised as such. Consequently, in the context of the times, Louis XVI's confusion and understatement of what occurred on 14 July is somewhat understandable. In an effort at clarifying the distinction between Louis XVI's terminology and La Rochefoucauld-Liancourt's correction, the present section will distinguish three common manifestations of popular protest: riot, revolt and revolution.

Social scientists in a number of disciplines have grappled with the problem of defining a revolution. It is not only the distinctions between forms of popular protest that creates confusion but also whether any extra-legal political change

³¹ Rey, *op. cit.* at 109. As Rey notes, accounts by Thomas Paine and a few others substitute 'révolte' for 'émeute'.

constitutes a revolution and whether characterisation as a 'revolution' is incumbent upon success.

By anyone's estimation, nineteenth-century France was a period marked by an extraordinary level of political violence.³² However, was all of it revolutionary? This is a critical question since the entire premise on a revolutionary tradition in the nineteenth century is dependent upon it.

For many scholars, the distinction between riots, revolts and revolutions often boils down to the aims of the protest.

[T]he basic criterion is that a revolution always aims at an overthrow of the existing social order and of the prevalent power structure; whereas all other types of disorder, however they may be called, lack this aspiration to fundamental change and simply aim to deal a blow at those in authority, or even to depose or physically eliminate them.³³

Typically, to be characterised as a revolution, the protest must direct itself at the 'fundamental institutions' of society.³⁴ What, however, are the 'fundamental institutions' of society? According to Karl Marx, '[r]evolution in general - the overthrow of the existing power and dissolution of previous relationships - is a

³² Jacques Godechot listed twenty-four incidents occurring in France between 1820-1900 labeled as 'troubles', 'agitation', 'manifestations populaires', 'journées révolutionnaires', 'émeute', 'attentat', 'mouvement populaire', 'coup d'état', 'aventure politique [Boulangier]'. Omitted from his list were at least four assassination attempts against Louis-Philippe as well as numerous provincial *émeutes* during the first half of the 19th century. *Les Révolutions de 1848*. (Paris: 1971), pp. 11-30.

³³ Wertheim, W.F. *Evolution and Revolution*. (London: 1974), p. 125.

³⁴ Hagopian, Mark N., *The Phenomenon of Revolution*. (New York: 1974), p. 11.

political act'.³⁵ For Marx, it would be impossible to accomplish a social revolution without first having achieved a revolution in the political realm. Political change, however, does not limit itself strictly to a change in political leadership; there must also be an alteration of the structure of the political régime, itself.³⁶ Implicit within such an alteration is 'the mobilization of new groups into politics, the redefinition of political community, the acceptance of new political values and new concepts of political legitimacy, the conquest of power by a new, more dynamic political elite, and the creation of new and stronger political institutions'.³⁷ The legitimacy of the new institutions is not reliant on the consent of the governed but on their 'habit of obedience'.³⁸ However, because the same social structure and *moeurs* may remain constant, a simple political revolution is, perhaps, the most limited species in the genus 'revolution'. By contrast, total revolution is achieved when there is a corresponding transformation of society's social structure and cultural referents.³⁹

What of coups d'état? While coups d'état do alter the power structure, they

³⁵ Marx, Karl, 'Critical Marginal Notes on the Article "The King of Prussia and Social Reform. By a Prussian."', *Marx and Engels: Collected Works*. (vol. III), p. 206 (London: 1975).

³⁶ Kramnick, Isaac, 'Reflections on Revolution: Definition and explanation in recent scholarship'. *History and Theory* (1972, vol. XI, no. 1), pp. 26-63, 30-2.

³⁷ Huntington, Samuel. *Political Order in Changing Societies*. (New Haven: 1968), p. 308.

³⁸ Amann, Peter, 'Revolution: A Redefinition', *Political Science Quarterly* (March 1962, vol. lxxvii, no. 1), pp. 36-53, 40.

³⁹ Zagorin, Perez, 'Prolegomena to the Comparative History of Revolution in Early Modern Europe', *Comparative Studies in Society and History* (1976, vol. 18), pp. 151-74, 167.

are also emblematic of 'palace revolutions'.⁴⁰ At its core a coup d'état differs from a revolution in terms of the origins of its perpetrators. For the most part, coups d'état are power struggles within the existent spheres of authority. Rarely do they entail the fundamental impact of a revolution. Consequently, Louis Bonaparte's 1851 coup d'état did not dramatically alter the structure of French society nor, for that matter, was there even a change in personnel. By contrast, however, General Nasser's 1952 coup d'état was, perhaps, revolutionary to the extent that his seizure of power led to sweeping social change in Egypt.

If, in the broadest sense, revolutions are challenges to the constituted authority, what are riots and revolts? As the previous chapter pointed out, protests in *ancien régime* France relative to state centralisation and encroachments on areas of private life were designed to recall 'rulers to their "duty" while having no intention to overthrow the socio-political order'.⁴¹ Because they didn't challenge the legitimacy of political authorities and institutions, these protests did not assume revolutionary dimensions. Furthermore, riots are sometimes conceptualised as 'spontaneous outbursts', 'of very brief duration' whose targets are 'picked for their immediate visibility, and their aims, if any, are often non-political as well as of the most present and restricted kind'. At their essence, riots see 'their expressive function predominate over any instrumental purpose'.⁴² By contrast to the ephemeral nature of issues underlying riots, revolutions are concerned with larger

⁴⁰ Johnson, Chalmers. *Revolutionary Change*. (2d Edition, Stanford: 1982), p. 136.

⁴¹ Hagopian, *op. cit.* at 20.

⁴² Zagorin, *op. cit.* at 168.

principles, capable of transcending the temporal.⁴³

Auguste Caunes also had something to say on this topic. According to Caunes, in a revolt, 'on n'agit que dans un but particulier et dans le sentiment étroit de l'individualité; il n'y a dans cette action ni générosité, ni patriotisme, ni honneur'. By contrast, revolution is effected only in view of 'le bien public [...] réclamer énergiquement leurs droits méconnus , redresser des abus, renverser des institutions funestes au bonheur public'.⁴⁴

While the foregoing establishes general guidelines for demarcating revolution, there are more precise nuances distinguishing the properties and forms of popular protest. Riots do, in fact, concern very fleeting issues. They are a reactive response to a transitory grievance and their energy is focussed exclusively on the immediate source of despair. Neither protestors nor authorities view any larger concern as being behind the protest. On the other hand, in revolts, the immediate source of concern is underscored by larger questions relative to social relationships or political institutions. By contrast, only revolutions raise questions fundamental to the structure of society. Whereas revolts simply direct themselves to an alteration within society's existing institutions and relationships, nothing short of a complete overhauling of society will satisfy the issues raised by a revolution.

The example of the storming of the Bastille will suffice. By all accounts, in the

⁴³ Decouflé, Andre. *Sociologie des Révolutions* (Paris: 1968), p. 13. Decouflé referred to revolutions as having a 'transhistorique' quality.

⁴⁴ 'Caunes, père (Auguste) "Lettre d'un faubourien adressé au nom de ses camarades des faubourgs à la Garde nationale. (Paris: 1831), *Les Révolutions du XIXe Siècle*, op. cit. at (tom. IX).

run up to the second week of July 1789 Parisians were agitated by two immediate circumstances: (i) Louis XVI's dismissal of Jacques Necker and (ii) the mobilisation of the King's troops and artillery around Paris. We could properly characterise 14 July as a riot if these immediate grievances were the only issues of concern. However, we cannot look at them in a vacuum. Rather, it is necessary to consider the larger circumstances of the summer of 1789 - the Estates General crisis, disintegration of unity between the Second and Third Estates and the unmistakable signs of royal intransigence. Had the crisis been defused by allowing the Estates General to meet on the terms desired by the Third Estate and its allies, the *ancien régime* may have been able to survive (i.e., the Estates General would have had limited authority vis-à-vis the King and society may have remained divided into estates), The conquest of the Bastille would thus have constituted a revolt. However, as was the case, circumstances had forced all the protagonists to conclude that the social and political structure of the *ancien régime* could not withstand the challenges that underlay the issues raised by the Third Estate. In other words, the fundamental structure of society was at stake.

Revolutions do, occasionally, emerge out of revolts and riots. For example, the Great Fear of 1789 and the rural revolts of 1846-7 acted independently of events at Paris. Considered in isolation these rural revolts were not revolutionary movements. However, when set against the backcloth of events elsewhere and a general national crisis, they certainly facilitated revolution in 1789 and 1848.⁴⁵

Beyond this, revolts can transmogrify into revolution. Decouflé noted that

⁴⁵ Decouflé, *op. cit.* at 72.

a revolution 'est exclusive de la révolte à partir du moment où elle se reconnaît elle-même comme révolution'.⁴⁶ Étienne Cabet characterised each day of *les trois glorieuses* as a process of building a revolution: '26 Juillet: 'l'émeute'/27 Juillet: 'l'émeute devient insurrection/28 Juillet: 'l'insurrection triomphante est une révolution'.⁴⁷ Analyzing the 1832 revolution that he immortalised in *Les Misérables*, Victor Hugo determined that riots and insurrections are species of the genus 'revolt'. 'Au commencement, l'insurrection est émeute, de même que le fleuve est torrent. Ordinairement elle aboutit à cet océan: Révolution. Quelque-fois pourtant [...], l'insurrection se perd tout à coup dans quelque fondrière bourgeoise, comme le Rhin dans un marais'.⁴⁸

Another clear distinction between revolutions and other forms of protest is the situational context which provides a more hospitable, more fertile terrain for the former to develop. In a society where internal conflict and tension is long standing, a short term crisis can often produce a revolutionary situation.⁴⁹ This, however, is not the same thing as saying that a revolution is simply a successful revolt.⁵⁰ Although it may be too much of an exaggeration to say that, in the context

⁴⁶ *Ibid.* at 100.

⁴⁷ Cabet, Étienne, 'Péril de la situation présente. 14 octobre 1831. Compte à mes commettans'. [1831], p. 9. *Les Révolutions du XIXe Siècle, op. cit.* (tom. VIII).

⁴⁸ Rey, *op. cit.* at 218, quoting Hugo, Victor *Le 5 juin 1832*.

⁴⁹ Hobsbawm, E.J., 'Revolution'. *Reports of the XIVth International Congress of the Historical Sciences* (San Francisco, August, 1975, vol. 1), pp. 264-302, 274 & 279.

⁵⁰ Weber, Eugen, 'Revolution? Counterrevolution? What Revolution?' *Journal of Contemporary History* (April 1974, vol. 9, no. 2), pp. 3-47, 35. Professor Weber contends that distinctions between 'revolution' and 'counterrevolution' are

of post-Revolution France, protest was inescapably revolutionary⁵¹, the present study asserts that the Revolution did effect an irretrievable transformation of French political culture.

The situational context is also dependent on the cultural disposition of the people under consideration. While the relationship between revolution and violence will be examined later, for present purposes, it is important to remember that violence can be an inextricable element of a society's culture without that society being revolutionary.⁵² On the other hand, violence can be so entangled in a political culture that virtually all instances of protest assume revolutionary proportions. For example, there was the impact of the Revolution on the July Monarchy, a subject that will be more thoroughly considered in the next chapter. After *les trois*

glorieuses, France entered a nine-year period of relative political instability. The July

redundant, especially their association with radical and reactionary movements, respectively. For substantiation, Weber cites the tendency to refer to the Weimar Republic as a revolutionary government and, by contrast, to characterise the Nazis as counterrevolutionary. In his definition of revolution as a reaction, Weber believes both to be revolutionary in so far as Weimar was a reaction against Imperial authoritarianism and the Nazis were a reaction against Weimar modernism. This is logical, however, only if one accepts Weber's view that revolutions are reactions as opposed to the more accepted view that they are responses to fundamental, long-term dysfunctions.

⁵¹ Zagorin, *op. cit.* at 172. Zagorin's conception of 1789 as a turning point in the evolution of protest is contradicted by Charles Tilly's work on nineteenth century protests in France. See: Tilly, Charles, 'The Changing Place of Collective Violence'. *Essays in Social and Political History* (edited by Melvin Richter) (Cambridge, MA: 1970), pp. 139-64. Tilly disputes the idea that there is a distinctive line separating 'industrial' from 'preindustrial' disturbances. *Ibid.* at 145.

⁵² Zagorin, Perez, 'Theories of Revolution in Contemporary Historiography'. *Political Science Quarterly* (1973, vol. 88), pp. 23-52, 46. Zagorin cites Americans as an example of a non-revolutionary, violence-prone people.

Monarchy arrived via the auspices of revolution and many of the revolutionaries weren't particularly pleased with the result of their efforts. Consequently, during the 1830s, France was a nation with a not-too-distant revolutionary past and collective discontent in the present. The result was that protests, assassination attempts, even the existence of a republican opposition, were considered potentially revolutionary.⁵³

Because revolutions are generally propelled by a corresponding ideology, they represent an intellectual form of protest. Revolutions are based on ideas propounded before the outbreak of insurgency whereas revolts and riots are devoid of such ideological roots and their 'paralysis of will' is a function of being incapable of conceiving of an alternative structure for society.⁵⁴ Ideology is also a function of the existence of a revolutionary élite or vanguard capable of articulating the aims of the insurrection as well as filling the functions of the state.⁵⁵ In other words, riots and revolts are usually devoid of direction; as such, if successful, they can only force a response within the existing parameters of society. The insurrections of nineteenth century France characterised as revolutions had an ideological component predicated on the idea that the French Revolution had been subverted before reaching its objectives. In terms of a revolutionary vanguard, there were

⁵³ Zagorin also recognises that the situational context of a revolution depends upon the 'social structures, economies, political institutions, cultures, belief systems [...] of a given society. Consequently, because societies are not homogeneous, the situational context will rarely be the same between any given societies. *Op. cit.* at 172.

⁵⁴ Hagopian, *op. cit.* at 12.

⁵⁵ Decouflé, *op. cit.* at 23-4; Amann, *op. cit.* at 42-7.

clubs, newspapers, leaders who, while generally disconnected from each other, reified similar revolutionary ideals.

There is a tendency in determining whether to characterise an insurrection as a revolution to overemphasize the result at the expense of the ends being pursued. More specifically, must an uprising be successful in order for it to be classified as a revolution? While some scholars accept it as a given that a revolution, by definition, implies a successful insurrection, more incisive approaches have questioned this predisposition.⁵⁶ More specifically, it has been recognised that whether or not they succeed, revolutions invariably produce 'profound effects on the societies in which they occur'.⁵⁷ This point was made by Auguste Blanqui a few months prior to the revolutions of 1834. Characterising previous disturbances against the July Monarchy as 'd'émeutes' because they didn't challenge the authority or legitimacy of Louis Philippe, Blanqui wrote, ' Il n'y a plus d'émeutes, mais ce silence de la rue est sinistre, car il presage une révolution'.⁵⁸

More importantly, though, to premise revolution on its success is to open up a number of questions. How is 'success' defined? On whose terms is 'success' defined? Is 'success' a function of endurance? If so, for how long must a revolutionary régime endure? This all becomes a tricky proposition if we consider

⁵⁶ See: Johnson, *op. cit.* at 1: 'Revolutions are social changes. Sometimes they succeed; often they fail'.

⁵⁷ Bell, David V.J. *Resistance and Revolution*. (Boston: 1973), p. 117, fn. 7. In this study, Bell accepts Ted Gurr's classification of revolutions as 'internal wars'. See: Gurr, Ted Robert, *Why Men Rebel*. (Princeton: 1970). Hagopian also accepts that 'even abortive or unsuccessful revolutions have a more or less permanent impact on society'. Hagopian, *op. cit.* at 1.

⁵⁸ *Le Libérateur* (no. 1) 2 février 1834.

les trois glorieuses. Was it a success? If success is measured by the dethronement of Charles X, yes, it was a success. However, if we consider whether it realised many of the aspirations expressed on the barricades or whether it produced a fundamental alteration of French society, no, it probably was not a success. George Rudé once wrote of 'the revolution within the revolution'. What Rudé was describing was the propensity for insurrections to create 'strange bedfellows'.⁵⁹ At the point where these contradictory forces must define the revolutionary *leitmotif*, their fragile coalition shatters into fragments from which competing camps endeavour to reconstruct the revolution. The point is that revolution is a process. Its success or failure in one instance does not condemn the entire enterprise. The articulated goals, means employed and reasonable possibility of achieving its objectives are, in a nutshell, more important in defining an insurrection as a revolution than is the fact of its 'success'.

Revolutionary Violence

Perhaps the aspect of revolution that is most sobering is its association with violence. As this section will demonstrate, violence is not only indistinguishable from, but also vital to, the revolutionary enterprise. It is the height of sophism to believe that the type of change engendered by a revolution is capable of being

⁵⁹ Rudé, George, 'Revolution and Popular Ideology'. *France and North America. The Revolutionary Experience*. (Proceedings of the Second Symposium of French American Studies) (Allain, Marthé and Conrad, Glenn R., eds) (1974).

achieved without the resort to violence.⁶⁰ Because of the magnitude of change implied by revolutions, violence is an indispensable element. Revolutionary violence, however, does not refer exclusively to bodily harm or property damage. In fact, revolutionary violence can be symbolic. Violence of a symbolic nature is exemplified by 'blasphemies in gesture, speech and writing which, in deliberate transgression and reversal of prevailing social norms are intended to destroy the sanctity of prestige of ruling persons or institutions and to proclaim the equity or superiority of subjects, the inferior, or the oppressed'.⁶¹ While symbolic violence can be made manifest through iconography or parody of the ruling élite, it must be 'coupled with the reality or imminent threat of force and compulsion'.⁶² This section will address revolutionary violence from four different angles: (i) the connection between revolution and millenarianism; (ii) as a responsive gesture; (iii) as required by the nature of the revolutionary project; and (iv) from the viewpoint of the revolutionaries.

Strictly speaking, **millenarianism** refers to the Second Coming of Christ which, in turn, would herald the thousand-year reign of God on Earth.⁶³ Intense

⁶⁰ For those who subscribe to the view that 'revolution' is but one more form of 'internal war' whereby power and personalities predominate over ideas and historical processes, violence is superfluous. See: Eckstein, Harry, 'On the Etiology of Internal Wars'. *History and Theory*, (1964-5, vol. IV, no. 2), pp. 133-63. However, as has already been stated, this is not only a superficial view of the dynamics of popular protest but is not particularly sophisticated either.

⁶¹ Zagorin, 'Prolegomena [...]', *op. cit.* at 166. See also: Poitrineau, Abel. *Les Mythologies Révolutionnaires. L'utopie et la mort*. (Paris: 1987), p. 54.

⁶² Zagorin, 'Prolegomena [...]', *op. cit.* at 166-7.

⁶³ Taylor, Barbara. *Eve and the New Jerusalem*. (London: 1983), p. 157.

suffering on Earth would foretell the approach of the millennium and the Second Coming. Beginning with the French Revolution, Christ, the humble carpenter was identified with the virtue and purity of the *sans-culottes*; the message behind his evangel was their struggle. Later, during the July Monarchy, several revolutionary republicans availed themselves of the foregoing concept and integrated Christ into their revolutionary designs as both symbol and prophet.⁶⁴

The nexus between revolutionary republicanism and the evangel ultimately served as a justification for the devastation caused by revolutionary violence. The revolutionary purge of oppression, domination, subjugation from human affairs would be the sign that the path had been cleared for the millennium. As with all millenarian ideas, suffering was an essential sacrifice for the advent of a golden age. Millenarianism and revolution were both been depicted as regenerative processes beyond human control. Consequently, whether characterised as divine or natural intervention in earthly affairs, violence is an integral aspect of both and cannot be separated from the utopia they presage.⁶⁵

Revolutionary violence was also frequently presented as a response to the violence of the old society and its persistence in seeking to undermine the revolutionary impulse.⁶⁶ If a revolution represents a collision between two diametrically opposed systems, it is inconceivable that a rapprochement can

⁶⁴ Bowman, Frank Paul. *Le Christ des barricades 1789-1848*. (Paris: 1987).

⁶⁵ Poitrineau, *op. cit.* at 81.

⁶⁶ 'Toutes les violences se situent comme des réponses, des effets de contamination successifs; chaque violence a pour responsable l'auteur de l'injustice qui a rendu intolérable une situation dont la seule issue était l'emploi de la force'. *Ibid.* at 79.

establish a balance. The aim of any revolution is

ruiner l'adhésion tacite minimale de la population à l'ordre établi [...] et déstructurer [sic] les rapports sociaux en place, la subversion présentera les valeurs, les principes d'autorités, les rites ou les tabous reçus, les normes admises, à l'occasion la culture dominante en bloc, comme autant de mythes aliénants, de manifestations d'oppression, de mystifications; tout un effort qui tend à une soustraction d'obédience culturelle, en ce sens qu'il prépare un transfert des alliances intellectuelles ou éthiques des groupes dominants aux contestataires.⁶⁷

In seeking to undermine the authority and legitimacy of society's institutions, revolutions discourage old habits of allegiance. This, in turn, produces reactive responses from the existent régime which seeks, through repression, to compel respect for its authority. If one accepts a Machiavellian view of authority, 'il faut bien reconnaître que la violence révolutionnaire et la violence d'État se valent, aussi légitimes ou aussi peu légitimes qu'elles sont l'une et l'autre'.⁶⁸

Revolutionary violence is also characterised by a decided lack of indulgence towards the vanquished. It is the instinct for survival which causes revolutions to continue a period of retributive violence after a successful insurrection. This stage of violence is still characteristic of the revolutionary period which seeks to efface all remnants of the fallen régime as well as the portent for its resuscitation.⁶⁹ In 1870, revolutionary republicans had the experiences of 1830 and 1848 to guide them in determining what action should be taken in the wake of the fall of the Empire.

⁶⁷ *Ibid.* at 43-4.

⁶⁸ *Ibid.* at 59.

⁶⁹ *Ibid.* at 75-80.

UNE RÉVOLUTION S'ESCAMOTE par l'appel perfide jeté à la sentimentalité ouvrière pour protéger efficacement les hautes malfaiteurs qui en ont grand besoin. Une Révolution qui oublie de venger ses martyrs dépouillés, emprisonnés, fusillés et déportés sans miséricorde, et de châtier leurs bourreaux, est une Révolution perdue.⁷⁰

Similarly, in 1870, Auguste Blanqui, after years of service at the disposal of the revolutionary ideal, observed that all revolutions must irrevocably and thoroughly break with the fallen régime or else be 'tuée en avance' by the same 'boutique de Louis Philippe et de Bonaparte' that had subverted the objectives of previous revolutions.⁷¹

The revolutionary objective is not ambiguous. Both the revolutionaries and their opponents understand that questions fundamental to the structure and organisation of society are raised by a revolution. On one level, the revolutionary struggle, as 'la prise de pouvoir ou la tentative de prise du pouvoir est d'abord conquête, et toute conquête implique un recours à la force, en dernier ressort'.⁷² On another level, however, as we will see in the next section, the revolutionary struggle is directed at the regeneration of society. This not only implies political reorganisation, but also new social relationships, different cultural references and a transformation of *moeurs*.

The comprehensiveness of the revolutionary programme presupposes an

⁷⁰ 'Comment on escamote une révolution'. *Gnafron. Journal de la Révolution*. (Lyon) (2e année, no. 8) 30 Octobre 1870.

⁷¹ Blanqui, Auguste, 'Le Droit Divin'. *La Patrie en Danger* (no. 30) 19 Vendémiaire an 79/10 Octobre 1870.

⁷² Poitrineau, *op. cit.* at 56.

abrupt rupture with the past.⁷³ '[P]our régénérer ce qui a dégénéré, pour exorciser les forces du Mal par un holocauste presque sacré et faire enfin triompher le Bien sous la forme du projet de changement de société sans cesse agité et creusé', violence is endemic to the revolutionary project.⁷⁴ In other words, it is necessary to completely remove the decaying corpse of oppression, domination, privilege, represented by the fallen régime, in order to allow for the power of creative forces to operate. Thus presented, revolutionary violence reflected the energy of creation struggling against '«l'entropie»' of authoritarianism.⁷⁵ This was a view held by the revolutionary republicans of this study who believed that 'pour passer à un état pressenti meilleur', there was no alternative to a sudden, sharp break with past habits of obedience.⁷⁶

On yet another level, revolutionary violence isn't that much different from the violence ingrained throughout culture as a means for expressing protest over specific, quantifiable concerns. As we saw in the previous chapter, hunger, taxation and the intrusion of the state have traditionally led to violent manifestations. No, these protests were neither millenarian nor regenerative in design or potential. However, the employment of violence to express dissent did have a precedent. The

⁷³ In 1869, an ephemeral newspaper in Lyon noted that even though France had experienced intellectual and material advances, 'l'évolution matérielle, la marche de faits, le progrès des institutions sociales' will only be realised by 'une secousse brusque et violente [qui] les pousse en avant'. Malon, Benoît, *L'Internationale. Son Histoire et ses Principes* (Paris:), quoting *La République Républicaine de Lyon*.

⁷⁴ *Ibid.* at 81.

⁷⁵ *Ibid.* at 59.

⁷⁶ L'Héritier, Eugène, 'Histoire populaire de la Révolution française [1834]'. *Les Révolutions du XIXe Siècle, op. cit.* (tom. VII).

scope and objectives of protest may have been enlarged, but there was nothing new about the expressing hostility through violence.

The revolutionary ideology produces an intoxicating effect on its devotees. This ideology of a reconstructed world is designed to appeal to those alienated by the old society. The diffusion and internalisation of an ambiguously articulated promise of a utopia ('un monde meilleur, voire du meilleur des mondes') through revolution renders 'les partisans ou les adeptes fervents, inconditionnels - en un mot fanatiques'.⁷⁷ Their passions inflamed by the revolutionary moment, insurgents are confronted with the repressive forces of the contested authority: 'de ce fait les foules sont capables de meurtres, d'incendies, de destructions avec cette circonstance atténuante qu'ils ne sont jamais vraiment commis de sang-froid, et aussi de grands sacrifices et de grands dévouements dont elles peuvent faire les frais héroïquement'.⁷⁸

In other words, the insurgent confrontation, and the prospects of its success, produces an energising rush on its participants which renders them susceptible of acts that, in ordinary circumstances, they might find repugnant.

How do we characterise this violence? Gustave Le Bon adopted a decidedly uncharitable view of the crowd. Labouring under social class and national-racial prejudices, Le Bon alleged that certain 'types' of individuals were more prone than others to involvement in crowd behaviour. Once in the crowd, Le Bon averred, these individuals act in accordance with the traits and characteristics of their social

⁷⁷ Poitrineau, *op. cit.* at 47,

⁷⁸ *Ibid.* at 56.

class or nationality. According to Le Bon it isn't so much that ideology inflames passions as much as it is the predilection of social misfits for mob violence and their inability to conform to rational standards of behaviour that accounts for revolutionary violence.⁷⁹ Consequently, for Le Bon, the only distinction between revolutionary and criminal violence was the opportunity for barbarous actions presented by the former.

However, since Le Bon, the study of crowd behaviour has witnessed exponential advances. Nearly a century since Le Bon's work first appeared many scholars have dismissed an over-reliance on psychological factors in explaining crowd motivations and, instead, have insisted on more quantifiable factors (e.g., hunger, fear, oppression).⁸⁰ This is not to say that crowd behaviour is entirely cold, calculating and rational. What is made manifest is that, at least in the case of France, revolutionary crowds were motivated, in the first instance, by the confluence of material grievances, a tradition of violent expressions of protest and a revolutionary ideology. As the previous chapter noted, the French Revolution was the referent for a new revolutionary *mentalité* which expanded the ideological parameters of protest. Whatever psychological factors enter into an explanation of crowd actions is a function of the adrenal rush produced through contact with other like-minded individuals. In the words of Lynn Hunt, 'The revolution in politics was an explosive interaction between ideas and reality, between intention and

⁷⁹ Le Bon, Gustave. *The Crowd. A Study of the Popular Mind*. (London: 1909), pp. 25-88.

⁸⁰ Rudé, George. *The Crowd in History*. (London: 1964).

circumstance, between collective practices and social context'.⁸¹ The participation of others in the same struggle endows the revolutionary moment with a quasi-legitimacy and lends a sense of righteousness and purpose to the violence.

Revolutionary Regeneration

As the foregoing has indicated, revolutions differ from other forms of protest by the magnitude of issues at stake. On one level this could mean alterations in specific social and/or political relationships. However, on another level, revolution implies something much larger. Specifically, what is being referred to is the regeneration of society - a comprehensive project which not only encompasses changes in the political and social sphere but also consists of a recasting of culture, *moeurs* and values.⁸² If 'revolution' represents a return, it presents the opportunity for regenerating society. Return does not necessarily imply a reversion to a previous period.⁸³ On the contrary, the return is made possible by a deconstruction of the old world and the arrival at society's source. Having returned to the source, it is

⁸¹ Hunt, Lynn. *Politics, Culture, and Class in the French Revolution* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: 1984), p. 13.

⁸² Drawing upon Clifford Geertz's work, Lynn Hunt has written, 'The legitimacy of political authority depends on its resonance with more global, even cosmic cultural presuppositions, for political life is "enfolded" in general conceptions of how reality is put together'. Utilising Edward Shils' notion of the "sacred center", Hunt adds that this is 'the heart of things, the place where culture, society, and politics come together'. Hunt, *Politics, Culture, and Class in the French Revolution, op. cit.* at 87.

⁸³ However, some revolutions claim to be motivated by 'la restauration de droits et de libertés anciennes, abrogés par un pouvoir «despotique» [...]. Poitrineau, *op. cit.* at 64. In other words, revolutionaries sometimes refer back to a golden period, whether real or imagined.

possible to remake the world. In some respects, this is reflected by Rousseau's idea of a return to a state of nature since this offers opportunities for reorganising society.

Nineteenth century revolutionaries recognised the regenerative mission inherent within revolutions. On one level, revolutions are the product of tension between antiquated, archaic values, institutions and relationships and a new set of ideals. At one of the first trials alleging a republican conspiracy under the July Monarchy, Marie, a defence lawyer, stated, 'Une révolution n'éclate que lorsqu'il ya contradiction flagrante entre les institutions et les moeurs.'⁸⁴ On another level, however, the revolutionary republicans of this study also recognised the breadth implied by the revolutionary undertaking. In explaining why the change of government on 4 September 1870 was only one step in the revolutionary process that would be completed by the Commune, a communard newspaper declared, 'Nous disons alors que la Révolution commencée le 4 septembre, devait être toute morale. En effet, toute amélioration, tout changement de la condition morales et matérielles de la vie d'un peuple est une Révolution'.⁸⁵

⁸⁴ 'Procès des dix-neuf citoyens accusés de complot tendant à remplacer le gouvernement royal par la République, contenant leurs défenses et celles de leurs avocats. (Paris: 1831)', *Les Révolutions du XIXe Siècle, op. cit.* (tom. XI). See also: 'Reponse aux Ennemis du Peuple avec des commentaires, par le Citoyen Ch. Pimpaneau, Prolétaire. [1833]'. *Ibid.* (tom. IV): 'Révolution signifie changement subit dans les opinions, dans les choses, dans les affaires publiques'.

⁸⁵ 'La Révolution', *La Révolution. Journal politique quotidien.* (no. 2) 22 germinal an 79/11 avril 1871. A more limited view was presented by a similarly named paper, *la Révolution politique et sociale.* Edited by members of the Parisian contingent to the International Association of Workers, this paper characterised the Commune as follows: 'Le vieux monde s'écroule L'aube apparaît [...]' and then proceeded to limit its discussion the amelioration of the material concerns of the working

Transformations in the etymology of 'regeneration' nearly paralleled the etymological progression of 'revolution'. Until the eighteenth century, 'regeneration' had been a term associated exclusively with theology and, in particular, perfectibility through baptism. However, the emerging revolution in the sciences expanded the application of 'regeneration' to biological functions. Finally, during the final two decades of the eighteenth century, 'regeneration' was extended to political discussion. Its first political use applied to the optimism attending Louis XVI's ascension to the throne and the hope that he would regenerate a degenerate society. However, after 1789, regeneration referred specifically to the prospects for creating *un nouveau homme* and *la cité idéale*.⁸⁶ Again, the influence of the Enlightenment in effecting a semantical modification is most striking. However, also at work here was the Enlightenment's undermining of spiritual divination. In particular, the requisite faith required of the theological view of regeneration was a stark contrast to the Enlightenment's accent on human potential. In other words, there was no need to wait for a second coming of Christ to regenerate a morally bankrupt and stagnant society; humankind could produce its own social renaissance.

Revolutionary regeneration can take many forms. On the one hand, it can reflect an effort at eliminating archaic, anachronistic institutions and customs. For

class. Nostag, Jules, 'L'Aube' (no. 2) 9 avril 1871.

⁸⁶ Antoine de Baecque, 'La Révolution accueille la régénération naissance, éducation et prétention d'un nouvel homme' *La Révolution Française et l'homme moderne* (Colloque International de Rouen, 13, 14, 15 Octobre 1988) (rapports introductifs par Claude Mazauric) (Paris: 1989), pp. 661-8.

example, in a national revolution, the introduction of uniformity (in weights and measures, idiom, laws) is germane to the central goal. On the other hand, some aspects of revolutionary regeneration have a more symbolic purpose. On 5 October 1793 the Convention adopted the revolutionary calendar. Hereafter, the passage of time would be a reflection of the distance between the present and 22 September 1792. Thus, France's regeneration would be fixed at the foundation of the First Republic and, henceforward, republicanism had a distinctly regenerative ring to it.

The abandonment of the Gregorian calendar was a mixture of the rational and the symbolic. Not only was the reference point changed, but also the measurement of time was reorganised to reflect the rationality of the metric system adopted in March 1791. On a purely symbolic level, however, the revolutionary calendar substantiated the process of dechristianisation and the reorientation of the French citizenry towards (what was considered at the time to be) the pinnacle of the Revolution. On a daily basis the French would confirm the advent of the republic and their adhesion to the principle that it created the French nation. Beginning with the July Monarchy, accelerating during the Second Republic and reaching its crescendo during the Commune, revolutionary republicans in the nineteenth century revived the revolutionary calendar. As we will see in Chapter 5, references to the revolutionary month and the 'Year 79' punctuated both revolutionary newspapers in 1871 as well as the official documents and correspondence of the Commune.

In the previous section, violence in the revolutionary process was

emphasized. Regeneration, the act of revolutionary reconstruction, is the corollary of violence. Deconstruction and reconstruction. The latter is integral to the former. The positive, regenerative side to revolution is yet another distinction between it and revolt.⁸⁷ Because a revolt directs itself at change within the existing structure of society, it need not address itself to a fundamental overhauling of society; protest is registered and, if successful, alterations are made. Revolutionary change is not so simple. For example, how else does one effectuate allegiances to a new political system without first destroying the social structure underpinning the old system as well as its public space and cultural supports?

There is perhaps no better example of the revolutionary regenerative process at work than the French Revolution. The transference of sovereignty from monarch to nation was quite an esoteric concept. However, to give it a bit of force, and to seriously instil the idea of 'nation', it was necessary to dismantle the *ancien régime's* social structure. How could you seriously speak of 'nation' when rights and responsibilities were still a function of 'estate'? However, the revolutionaries also had to find a way of conceptualising new allegiances, new systems of authority and what, precisely, they meant by citizenship.

Lynn Hunt has recently grappled with this issue in a most erudite and fascinating fashion.⁸⁸ For Hunt, Sigmund Freud's theory of the 'family romance' - originally applied to explain the individual psyche's efforts at redefining an

⁸⁷ *Ibid.* at 63.

⁸⁸ Hunt, Lynn. *The Family Romance and the French Revolution*. (Berkeley and Los Angeles: 1992).

individual's place in the social order - has applications in the political sphere, as well. Specifically, in a patriarchally-structured society, the French developed a correlation between a young male's desire to break free of his father's control and the necessity of the fledgling nation to abandon its past deference to its symbolic father - the King.

Pictorial allegories abounded for the expressed purpose of conditioning the French citizens to establish new ground rules for authority and allegiance. In the early years of the Revolution, these allegories amounted to little more than crude representations of the King, often depicting his sexual impotence and the Queen's infidelity. These pictures were designed to render the King a cuckold and, therefore, unworthy of his paternalistic rôle and the corresponding deference this commanded. Later, after the King's attempted flight to Varennes, allegories emphasized the new bonds that defined political relationships - fraternity. By his flight, the 'father' had abandoned his children. Allegories now referred to the brotherhood of citizens who no longer recognised any relationship with their father. It would be a short step from this to the recognition that the father was expendable.⁸⁹ This was most visibly represented by the highly symbolic severance of the ties of authority on 21 January.

The revolutionaries had to define the extent and limits of citizenship. Although *citoyenne* may have been a form of address, rights to citizenship were not extended to women. In the traditional view of gender, women, by nature, were not suited to political rights. On one level, women were deemed evil and

⁸⁹ *Ibid.* at 49-52.

corrupting. On another level, they were viewed as intellectually ill-suited for the hurly-burly of the public sphere; instead, it was in their interests to remain cloistered in the private sphere of child-bearing and domesticity.

While these beliefs might have pre-dated the Revolution, the fluidity of the revolutionary situation obliged revolutionaries to once again establish ground rules for the new society. Consequently, again, allegory was employed against the integration of women in the public sphere. If nothing else, the most public of public women, the Queen, was reason enough not to incorporate women into public life. Various depicted as sexually lascivious and perverted, satirical images of Marie Antoinette either epitomised the extent to which women in the public sphere are a corrupting influence or the extent to which public life corrupts women.⁹⁰

However, the feminine allegory was also used to represent the new symbols of the nation - Liberty, Reason, Wisdom, Victory, sometimes Fraternity. Even though revolutionaries did not believe that women possessed any of these attributes, there were reasons relative to regeneration why a female allegory was employed.

According to Hunt

The founding of the republic required not only the destruction of every institution associated with monarchy but also a system of signs that was as distant as possible from monarchy. Since only men could rule directly in France - Salic law prevented women from succeeding to the throne - there was an obvious virtue in representing the republic by a female allegory; she could not be confused with the father/king. Moreover, French democracy operated in a manner which made any symbolic investment in individual political leaders quite problematic. If the brothers were determined to maintain what Freud

⁹⁰ *Ibid.* at Chapter 4.

called 'the original democratic equality' of each member of the tribe and they refused to venerate any particular individual, then the singling out of individual male political figures as representations of the people, the nation, or the general qualities of citizenship would be unacceptable. No individual politicians appeared on French coins or paper money. Female allegories could not be associated with particular political leaders, if only because all officials were male by definition.⁹¹

Regeneration during the French Revolution also included a redefinition of public space. A number of revolutionaries, including Saint-Just and Babeuf, connected their political ideals to 'l'élaboration d'une cité idéale dont le modèle avait été esquissé déjà sur le papier'.⁹² During the initial two years of the First Republic, artists, sculptors and architects were set to work to visually represent the ideals of the Revolution. In particular, architects were asked to design monuments and buildings 'to serve a public purpose'. Architecture and public space clearly had a regenerative purpose. Some of the buildings and monuments were meant to reaffirm 'the ideals and achievements of the Republic on the minds of the citizenry'. Others were intended for republican ceremonies and meetings. Public administration buildings were designed in such a way that, through their 'decor and "character", they were highly symbolic of a new era. Finally, designs for lavatories, toilets and fountains were intended to display that the regenerated society's concern with public health and hygiene. In virtually every case, the intended building or monument would bear an inscription reflective of the Republic's ideals

⁹¹ *Ibid.* at 83.

⁹² Poitrineau, *op. cit.* at 84.

and were often included allegories of Liberty, Equality and Fraternity.⁹³

Other revolutionary periods have witnessed the involvement of artists, sculptors and architects in the process of regenerating a society with new ideals. During the Paris Commune of 1871, a Federation of Artists headed by Gustave Courbet was created. Although the Federation defended artistic freedom, one of the mandates it attributed to itself was '[l]a régénération de l'avenir par l'enseignement'.⁹⁴ After the First World War, a large number of German architects sought to take advantage of the seemingly large opportunities for transforming post-Wilhelmine Germany. What developed was a cross between the functional and the utopian. The former was reflected in designs for public housing and other ambitious public works programmes undertaken by the Weimar government.⁹⁵ On the other hand, a number of young architects in 1920s Germany experimented with anthropomorphic and crystalline forms in a series of whimsical, if not impractical plans, designed to elevate the human spirit through a utopian redefinition of the constructed human space.⁹⁶

The reconstruction of public space in revolution is designed to facilitate the

⁹³ Leith, James A. *Space and Revolution. Projects for Monuments, Squares, and Public Buildings in France, 1789-1799*. (Montreal: 1991), pp. 153 & 203.

⁹⁴ *Journal Officiel de la Commune* 15 Avril 1871.

⁹⁵ Collins, Christine, 'Concerned Planning and Design: The Urban Experiment of Germany in the 1920s'. *Germany in the Twenties. The Artist as Social Critic*. (Minneapolis: 1980), pp. 30-47.

⁹⁶ Benson, Timothy O., *et al.*, *Expressionist Utopias. Paradise, Metropolis, Architectural Fantasy*. (Los Angeles: 1994). This was the catalogue to an exhibition of the same name at the Los Angeles County Museum of Art, 21 October 1993-16 January 1994.

creation of 'l'homme nouveau'.⁹⁷ This is not an exclusively revolutionary process since religious rituals such as baptisms are intended for the same purpose. Tocqueville discussed the concept of 'l'homme nouveau' as follows: '«c'est à lui [l'État] de former l'esprit des citoyens suivant un certain modèle qu'il s'est proposé à l'avance; son devoir est de le remplir de certaines idées et de fournir à leur coeur certains sentiments qu'il juge nécessaires»'.⁹⁸

Revolutionaries recognise that we are all prisoners of our cultural referents. Deeply engrained in us, they are part of our collective subconscious and operate as a barrier to new ideas and references. Depending upon the degree of change anticipated by a revolution, society may have to be reoriented and socialised to the acceptance of radically different social relationships and political institutions. To paraphrase Levasseur de la Sarthe, a Montagnard, revolutionaries dream of an enchanted world only to find themselves confronted with the real world. Thus, regenerating our spiritual and mental states is no less vital to the success of a revolution than are the visible manifestations of revolutionary change.

The making of 'l'homme nouveau', on one level, has meant the education, some might say, indoctrination, of small children with a set of ideals and values consistent with the institutional goals of the revolution.⁹⁹ Reflecting pedagogical and moral concerns, the instruction of young children is consistent with the ideas expressed by Rousseau in *Émile* regarding the most efficacious way of moulding a

⁹⁷ In the literature, rarely, if ever, is the designation 'la femme nouvelle' or a gender neutral designation utilised.

⁹⁸ Poitrineau, *op. cit.* at 70, quoting Tocqueville (source not identified).

⁹⁹ *Ibid.* at 71-2.

new social corps. However, it is not only through the instructional process that the new ideals are communicated and mortised into the national psyche. Revolutionary festivals and other public manifestations are all part of the same process of engaging passions and generating open, possibly ostentatious, displays of effervescence for the new society. Often the framework for the revolutionary festival was popular festival or carnival. This reflected an acknowledgment by revolutionaries that, however much they wanted to restructure values, the novelty of the revolutionary message suggests its absorption will be more efficacious within a familiar context.¹⁰⁰

After centuries of metamorphosis, the characteristics of revolution appeared to have been settled by the French Revolution. No longer reflecting rather innocuous transfers of power from one individual to another, revolution in the nineteenth century took on a more precise meaning, implying a more compelling and extensive transformation of society. However, in the case of nineteenth century France little remained of the idealism generated by the period of the French Revolution which had gone the furthest in providing revolution with its defining features. In fact, the First Republic's initial years were anathema to a nation which had not only resurrected authoritarianism but had failed to entirely eradicate the alienation that typified France before the Revolution. Consequently, having failed to realise the *bouleversement* of society it had set out to accomplish, the French

¹⁰⁰ Ozouf, Mona. *Festivals and the French Revolution*. (Cambridge MA: 1988), pp. 231-2.

Revolution was a task to be completed. At least this was the perspective of the revolutionary republicans of this study. As we will see, many of their projects didn't stand a chance of success. However, as we have already seen, a revolution is not a function of its success or failure but, rather, is a reflection of higher ideals and a particular method - insurgency - which is best able to effectuate the attainment of those ideals.

CHAPTER THREE

INSURGENCY AND TRADITION: 1830-1840

Introduction

As a consequence of three days of insurgency during the last week of July 1830 (hereafter referred to as *les trois glorieuses*), Louis Philippe duc d'Orléans was made king. In rising to this office, Louis Philippe replaced his third cousin, the Bourbon Charles X^{who} had assumed the throne in 1824 upon the death of his brother, Louis XVIII. The latter had been conferred the monarchical reins as a result of the military defeat of Napoleon. For those who were disappointed after *les trois glorieuses*, the Orleanist dynasty was never legitimate.

This scenario by which authority was bestowed in post-Napoleonic France created difficulties for Louis Philippe from the start. His Bourbon predecessors owed their positions to the spoils of war. Since 1792 revolutionary, and then Imperial, France had been an irritant to its monarchical neighbours. The end of Bonaparte allowed^{ly} the European monarchies to redress their grievances and select a more compliant ruler for France.

This all seemed to change during 27-29 July 1830 when fifteen years of uninterrupted Bourbon rule was broken by a rebellious cross-section of Paris, cognizant of its own superior strength *vis-à-vis* an unpopular, autocratic authority. The right to rebellion was enshrined in both the method of inception, and the form,

of the new régime. Yet the selection of Louis-Philippe hardly solved the problem that led to the revolution. He was not the first choice of the revolutionaries but, apart from Lafayette, there was no outstanding figure or ideal around which the uprising could coalesce.

Consequently, whoever took control of France after *les trois glorieuses* would be plagued by the realisation that having gone to the effort of toppling the Bourbon monarchy, the rebels never considered what to put in its place. Although he didn't owe his office to foreign intervention, Louis Philippe was hardly a popular choice. A plutocracy, which had nothing to do with the dissent that fomented during the Bourbon Restoration, had determined France's post-Bourbon future. This fact made the selection of Louis Philippe even more egregious than that arising from the Treaty of Vienna.

For many of the revolutionaries who had sown the seeds of dissent at the end of the 1820s or who participated on the barricades of July, Louis Philippe was simply a caretaker until France had finally reckoned with, and defined, its revolution. In some respects the July Monarchy's revolutionary opposition was assisted by the régime itself and, specifically, Louis Philippe's frequent representations of himself as the embodiment of the July revolution. On one level, he had participated in the French Revolution. On another level, he owed his position to the fruits of popular protest. In the process, Louis Philippe may have unwittingly unleashed the revolutionary tradition, a force added a perspective to the events of July 1830.

This chapter will investigate the political ideas and activities of those who

claimed to be the heirs to the insurgent revolutionary tradition. As these individuals searched for answers to how three days of revolution could produce such paltry results, they increasingly focused their attention on the previous generation of revolutionaries. Because of the enormity of the issue of a burgeoning revolutionary tradition, this chapter will not explore the socio-economic issues that were of concern to artisans during the period. Furthermore, it will not delve into the specific ideas of French republicanism as they developed during the 1830s.

Putting *les trois glorieuses* into perspective.

At the fall of the Restoration monarchy on 29 July, Parisian insurgents had, for the first time since Prairial Year IV confronted the established national authority in a *prise de pouvoir*. Emerging victorious for the first time since the expulsion of the Girondins during the insurrection of 31 May - 2 June 1793, a new generation of French political combatants had personally experienced the sensation of empowerment which revolutionary protest had previously given their forbearers. Through participation their romantic impressions of the Revolution's *journées*, derived through familial recollections and popular lore, transcended from mythical heroism into the realm of experience. Because Charles X's demise, more unexpected than unforeseeable, occurred at time when it was still possible to record oral histories of the Revolution, a crucial link between past and present was established. This facilitated a certain continuity between revolutionary generations and furthered the development of an insurgent tradition.

However, if a tradition is a conscious return to a past practise, it is nearly

impossible to situate *les trois glorieuses* in the queue stretching from 14 July 1789 through 10 August 1792, 31 May - 2 June 1793, 12 - 13 Germinal Year IV and 1 - 4 Prairial Year IV. The fifteen years of the Restoration were hardly conducive to histories celebratory of the Revolution. Specifically taboo would be any study or recollection that fêted the efficacy of popular protest or any other violent challenges to authority during the Revolution.

While quite controversial during its time, Thiers' *Histoire de la Révolution*, written between 1823 and 1828, was inspired less by the actions of the Parisian *sans-culottes* than by the perceived resolution of the Jacobin state to consolidate its position.¹ Beyond liberal and conservative monopolisation of the historiography of the Revolution, there were other reasons why the Restoration was not conducive to the growth of a revolutionary tradition.

The absence of any viable republican movement in Restoration France foreclosed the emergence of a club or secret society movement. Given the fact that the proliferation of such societies in the 1830s would be a thorn in the side of the July Monarchy, the absence of an organisation capable of, or at least willing to, lend a sense of historical legitimacy to a popular uprising would prolong the relative peace of the Bourbon's tenure.

Beyond this, the non-parliamentary opposition to the *frères Bourbon* was

¹ Aubry, Dominique. *Quatre-vingt-treize et les Jacobins. Regards du 19e Siècle*. (Lyon: 1988), pp. 38-9. '*L'Histoire de la Révolution* de Thiers n'est nullement un plaidoyer pour la cause montagnarde ou jacobine. Elle répond à la volonté de privilégier la raison d'État en toute circonstance'. *Ibid.* at 39. Although he did not praise the activities of the *sans-culottes*, Thiers did recognise that it was a necessary response to the *ancien régime's* resistance to change. Bury, J.P.T. and Tombs, Robert. *Thiers. 1797-1877. A Political Life*. (London: 1986), pp. 145-6.

composed of a precarious alliance of differing agendas united only in their opposition to the Restoration monarchy. If the republicans did not, within themselves, constitute a cohesive ideological group, they shared in an even smaller community of interests with their liberal monarchy and bonapartist allies in July. Therefore, *les trois glorieuses*, as a spontaneous uprising of opposition, assured itself of an existence as tenuous as the constitutional monarchy of 1789-92. For those who fought, yet perceived few or no tangible benefits, participation on the barricades would serve as both an apprenticeship and a justification for further action.

In the revolutionary conscience, *les trois glorieuses* decided more issues than simply the question of political form and the limits of authority. In the immediate aftermath, Louis Philippe's régime, having been conceived through combat, was vulnerable to those very same forces. While shouting, 'Liberté!', the *petite bourgeoisie* and nascent proletariat who served as the insurgents of 27-29 July had only developed a rather rudimentary class-oriented understanding of their *cri de ralliement* on the barricades.² However, the inability to articulate their demands should not be confused with the Parisian populace's appreciation of their potential as the ultimate arbiters in political struggles.

The consolidation of power in a *régime* conceived of by the doyens of French banking, Laffitte and Casimir-Périer, did little to generate a belief that victory on the streets of Paris had been anything more than fleeting. Clearly, to insurgents, 'liberté'

² See: Newman, Edgar Leon, 'What the Crowd Wanted in the French Revolution of 1830', *1830 in France*. (Merriman, John, ed.) (New York: 1975), pp. 17-40.

did not connote promotion of economic liberalism. As early as August 1830, the new *régime* was warned of a 'troisième édition' of popular violence if the only result of the revolution was a personnel displacement.³ Nevertheless, though, the July Monarchy embarked upon a course of action which, rather than solidifying any legitimate claim to direct the post-revolutionary course of events simply identified it with the cadre against whom the insurrection had been directed. Beginning with the acquittal of Charles X's ministers in December 1830, two republican-led detachments of the Parisian National Guard waited and hoped to take advantage of an aborted popular uprising. Though the insurrection never materialised, the renegade Guardsmen still spent several days in the dock.⁴

Revolutionary Aftershocks: 1831 and the *canuts*

The July revolution spawned a number of violent responses. In some cases, provincial towns and cities became microcosms of Paris with prefects of the fallen régime battling against self-appointed local governments.⁵ In other cases, disputes under the Restoration endured and intensified in the highly charged and fluid revolutionary atmosphere.⁶ However, in some regions, disappointment over specific

³ [Anonymous] 'La Révolution de 89 et 93, seconde édition, revue et corrigée par le peuple en 1830 [Août 1830]' *Les Révolutions du XIXe Siècle* (Première série, 1830-4, tom. I) (Paris: 1974).

⁴ Weill, Georges. *Histoire du parti républicain en France, 1814-1870*. (Paris: 1928; reprinted, Genève: 1980), p. 64.

⁵ Pilbeam, Pamela, *The 1830 Revolution in France* (New York: 1991), pp. 66-79.

⁶ See: Merriman, John M., 'The *Demoiselles* of the Ariège, 1829-1831', *1830 in France, op. cit.*, pp. 87-118.

policies either being pursued or ignored by the new régime led to waves of protest.⁷ For revolutionary republicans, the seminal event which refocused their attention on the insurgent struggle was the uprising of Lyonnais silk workers (the *canuts*) between 21-23 November 1831. Although the roots of this conflict were largely economic (the dispute between *canuts* and merchants over piece rate), there was a particularly strong socio-political undercurrent at Lyon which caused distrust amongst the *canuts* towards liberalism and the July Monarchy.⁸ Because the establishment of a *tarif* was so germane to the *canuts'* protest, one may never be able to definitively characterise the surprise victory of the military well-organised *canuts* over the municipal authorities as either a revolution or a revolt (according to the definitions delineated in the previous chapter). On the other hand, the entire experience of having successfully taken control over the second largest city in France would shroud this event in a sanctity far different from that accorded *les*

⁷ At Toulouse, the issues underlying protests before November 1831 included the July Monarchy's failure to assist the besieged Poles, the government's refusal to act decisively against legitimists and the continuing economic crisis. Aminzade, Ronald, *Ballots and Barricades. Class Formation and Republican Politics in France, 1830-1871* (Princeton: 1993), p. 107. The formation of provincial affiliates to Parisian republican societies in the early days of the July Monarchy is discussed in: Pilbeam, *op. cit.* at Chapter 8.

⁸ As regards relations with the bourgeoisie, the experience of the *canuts* during the French Revolution had not been particularly positive. See: Edmonds, W.D. *Jacobinism and the Revolt of Lyon, 1789-1793*. (Oxford: 1990). Of course, the self-conscious effort of the July Monarchy to associate itself with the French Revolution was not bound to endear it to the *canuts*. Beyond this, at least a third of the journeymen *canuts* were Italians. Amongst the broken promises of the early July Monarchy was the failure to launch an expeditionary liberation of Savoy. Moissonier, Maurice. *Les Canuts*. (Paris: 1988), p. 57. Finally, in spring 1831, several Saint-Simonian critiques of the monarchy arrived at Lyon and held well-attended public meetings for the *canuts*. Rude, Fernand. *Le Mouvement Ouvrier à Lyon de 1827 à 1832*. (Paris: 1944), pp. 271-3.

trois glorieuses.

After having seized control of Lyon, the *canuts* threw their lot in 'avec les républicains sociaux et sont laissé entraîner par eux dans la voie révolutionnaire'.⁹ This, together with the original motivation for the protest - the establishment of a piece rate for silk products - implied a positive side to the Lyon uprising which was largely missing from the revolution which Parisian stumbled into against Charles X.¹⁰ Most crucially, despite having succumbed to deception in surrendering authority back to Louis-Philippe's prefect, the *canuts* confirmed what *les trois glorieuses* had evidenced at Paris - power was for the taking in the streets. In June 1834 Orleanist editor J.B. Monfalcon ruefully predicted

L'influence morale de l'insurrection de Novembre sur les ouvriers sera immense: leur victoire, ce singulier résultat d'une succession de hasards et de l'impéritie de l'autorité, les rendra plus exigeants, et élèvera jusqu'à l'insolence l'orgueil de beaucoup d'entre eux. Pendant cent années peut-être le merveilleux récit de la défaite de la garde nationale et de la garnison de Lyon par des ouvriers sans armes charmera les loisirs de l'atelier; cette tradition passera d'âge en âge; les fils dira avec orgueil, dans un temps reculé: «Mon aïeul fut l'un des

⁹ Rude, *op. cit.* at 540; See also: Rude, Fernand. *C'est nous les canuts*. (Paris: 1977), p. 156.

¹⁰ In writing about the revolution of 1830 in a work such as the present which spans the most politically and socially volatile 40 years of French history, one is reminded of a comparison made between 1830 and the Commune of 1871. 'La «révolution» de 1830 est une insurrection qui «dure» dix-huit années, dans le temps. L'insurrection du 18 mars 1871 se prolonge en révolution, dans la durée et non point dans le temps'. Decouflé, Andre. *La Commune de Paris (1871). Révolution Populaire et Pouvoir Révolutionnaire*. (Paris: 1969), pp. 16-7, fn. 22. More recently, Pamela Pilbeam has written, 'The July Days were more the product of artisan unrest and the misjudgements of the Polignac government than the machinations of either republicans or liberals'. Pilbeam, *op. cit.* at 150.

vainqueurs de Lyon»'.¹¹

Of course, by the time Monfalcon had written the foregoing words, Lyon had again experienced a revolutionary movement in April 1834. In the interim, however, articles appearing in various publications did not limit their praise to the resolve of the *canuts* in fighting for the establishment of a binding *tarif*. On the contrary, plaudits were also extended to the perceived significance of the uprising in the larger context of expressing the disappointed aspirations of those who had participated on the barricades of July 1830.¹² By 1832 the insurrection prompted by unjust remuneration for master silk weavers and, correspondingly, their journeymen employees, had entered the realm of revolutionary martyrology. It reserved for itself a sacred place whose resonance would continue to reverberate throughout the entire period under consideration in this study.¹³

¹¹ Monfalcon, J.B. *La Révolte des Canuts. Histoire des Insurrections de Lyon en 1831 et en 1834 d'après des documents authentiques précédé d'un Essai sur les Ouvriers en soie et sur les Soyeux et l'organisation de la Fabrique*. (Lyon: 1834; réédition, Toulouse: 1979), pp. 98-9.

¹² [Anonymous] 'Kaléidoscope politique et littéraire. Jeudi, 26 Avril 1832. (Lyon).' *Les Révolutions du XIXe Siècle, op. cit.* (tom. XII). On this theme, one should also consult Rude, *C'est nous les canuts, op. cit.* at 221-51. This is essentially an essay on the impact that the insurrection had on its contemporaries such as Lamartine, Stendahl and Armand Carrel.

¹³ For example, on 18 May 1871, as the final assault on the Paris Commune was about to be launched, le Comité central républicain socialiste de la France méridionale placarded Lyon with a call to arms. Referring to the troops employed by Versailles as '«chouans»', the notice urged the Lyonnais to rise '«comme se sont levés vos pères de 32 [sic] et de 34 et renversez d'un souffle la petit Thiers et tous ses suppôts»'. Testut, Oscar. *L'Internationale et le Jacobinisme au Ban de l'Europe*. (Paris: 1872), tom. II, p. 165. An even greater salience may have inadvertently been bestowed on the Lyon revolution by Jules Favre who 'vit [...] dans cette insurrection de 1831 «une sorte de 18 mars» et dans le gouvernement qui s'établit à l'hôtel de ville «une Commune»'. Rude, *C'est nous les canuts, op. cit.* at 259.

Most importantly, and related to the foregoing, the revolution of 1831 was the first in a succession of revolutionary 'aftershocks' to threaten the July Monarchy. In some respects, acts of collective violence after the initial transfer of power have been seen as the result of two processes: (i) the reimposition of control over a revolutionary populace and (ii) the inevitability of a schism in the revolutionary coalition.¹⁴ Beginning with the path originally blazed by the *prise de la Bastille*, and continuing through the expulsion of the Girondins in the aftermath of the *journée* of 31 May-2 June 1793, the revolutionary aftershock had been a prominent feature of the Revolution. As such, from the perspective of revolutionaries, the aftershock was a legitimate use of force to defend the Revolution's ideals while its violence was simply indistinguishable from the larger revolutionary context.

Many of the participants in the Parisian aftershocks between 1832-9 had been decorated for their participation on the barricades of July 1830. The cycle of insurrectionary violence was, at least in part, a function of each preceding instance of change through popular protest. Consequently, the Lyon revolution of 1831, being the first major aftershock of July 1830, implanted the idea of a continuous, perpetual insurgent revolutionary tradition. Stated another way, *les trois glorieuses* occurred, more or less, in a vacuum. The sole historical precedent for the July revolution - the French Revolution - had yet to positively transmigrate from the bounds of general inaccessibility into the realm of the popular imagination. This is not to imply that the *canuts* necessarily drew their inspiration from the Revolution.

¹⁴ Rule, James & Tilly, Charles, 'Political Process in Revolutionary France, 1830-1832', *1830 in France, op. cit.*, pp. 41-85, 81.

Never the less, the fact that three days of street battles had sufficed to topple the Restoration monarchy rendered the July Monarchy vulnerable *ab initio* to future outbreaks of popular protest. Beyond this, the destruction associated with revolution was being promoted for its power at producing a better society.¹⁵

Père Buonarroti and the Historical Imperative of Revolution

For a small cadre of insurgents of July 1830 contact with politically-active figures from the Revolution, exiled in Belgium after the Empire, lent a special purpose to their participation on the barricades. For example, a future revolutionary and secret society *habitué* during the July Monarchy, Charles Teste, had become a disciple of the Babouvist conspirator and chronicler exiled at Brussels during the Restoration, Philippe Buonarroti. Distinguished by his activity during *les trois glorieuses*, Teste had previously maintained a steady contact with Buonarroti between 1829-30. This was a period when Buonarroti's patience with unchallenged reign of Charles X was at its lowest ebb and only a short time after the publication

¹⁵ Regarding the Lyon insurrection, Louis Blanc wrote:

Encore tout pleins des souvenirs de 1830, ils mettaient en usage contre les libéraux les leçons que les libéraux leur avaient données. On avait dit aux soldats en 1830 que verser le sang des citoyens était le plus grand crimes; on avait battu des mains à la défection du 50e de ligne, le 29 juillet. Les soldats en 1831 pouvaient-ils avoir oublié tout cela? Ils pensèrent que si le peuple parisien avait eu raison de se soulever en 1830 pour le maintien d'une Charte qui ne le regardait pas, le peuple lyonnais avait bien plus raison encore de se soulever en 1831 pour le maintien d'un tarif qui l'empêchait de mourir de faim.

Histoire de Dix Ans, 1830-1840. (Paris: 1844), tom. III, p. 72.

of his *Conspiration pour l'égalité dite de Babeuf*.¹⁶ Prior to the July revolution, Teste was unique in his internalisation of Buonarroti's theory of the revolutionary dynamic and its specific application to France. However, Buonarroti's return to France would be a major factor in the development of a network of republican clubs. After 1834, these clubs transformed into the secret societies which so plagued the July Monarchy. Individuals like Teste formed the leadership of those societies and subscribed to the Buonarroti-inspired ideal that the insurgent was the loyal *fils de la Révolution*.

In point of fact, slightly more than one week after 29 July 1830, Buonarroti, still in exile, invoked the memory of Robespierre in questioning the sacrilege of the House of Orleans benefitting from a popular revolution.¹⁷ Arriving in France during the third week of August 1830, Buonarroti personally kept a relatively low profile until his death in 1837. Never the less, he exercised a powerful influence over a new generation of revolutionary republicans. The political tutelage of this young generation was a function of their own experiences on barricades in 1827 and 1830 and a somewhat romanticised pride in a revolutionary heritage of which, at that point, they knew relatively little.¹⁸

¹⁶ Teste's contact with Buonarroti in Belgium and his participation on the barricades of July 1830 is featured in Galante Garrone, Alessandro. *Philippe Buonarroti et les révolutionnaires du XIXe siècle*. (traduction par Anne et Claude Manceron) (Torino: 1951; traduction, Paris: 1975), pp. 54-65.

¹⁷ *Ibid.* at 65.

¹⁸ *Ibid.* at 129-76. According to Galante-Garrone, Buonarroti's influence reached into both the substantive and procedural realms of revolutionary republicanism. In terms of substance, Buonarroti strongly contributed to the development of French republican socialism, complementing, in some respects, yet diverging on the key question of republicanism from his contemporaries Saint-Simon and Fourier. In

Efforts were made to redress the imbalance between knowledge of the Revolution and interest in the subject.¹⁹ In November 1831, Albert Laponneraye, one of the young men who looked at Buonarroti as a sort of revolutionary guru, instructed workers on French history between 1789 and 1830.²⁰ His exaltation of Robespierre was too much for authorities who sent him off to Sainte-Pélagie for having incited class hatred.²¹

The relaxation of restrictions on opposition organisations and the dissemination of their literature during the early years of the July Monarchy allowed revolutionary republicans to indulge their revolutionary fantasies by casting themselves in the moulds of their rehabilitated forefathers. Participation in the toppling of one monarchy led to the determination to carry the revolutionary movement through to the founding of the republic. Hence, Cavaignac, Teste,

return, while some 'buonarrotiens' paid lip-service to Saint-Simon and Fourier, their penchant for premising socialism upon the foundation of the republic was an unmistakable reflection of their mentor's influence. As far as the procedural aspect is concerned, Buonarroti drew upon his experience in the Conspiracy of the Equals to promote the growth of a conspiratorial network within republican societies. It was here that Buonarroti's impact left a decisive mark on proponents of insurrection, most notably Godefroy Cavaignac, who did not entirely agree with Buonarroti's philosophy of societal equality. *Ibid.* at 164-5.

¹⁹ Amongst the generation of intellectuals born during the Revolution there was a strong interest in rehabilitating the Revolution during the Restoration. In large measure, individuals like Victor Hugo, Thiers, Rémusat, Paul-François Dubois compared the languor of the post-Napoleonic era with the vibrancy of the Revolutionary era. Spitzer, Alan. *The Generation of 1820*. (Princeton: 1987).

²⁰ Galante-Garrone, *op. cit.* at 149-53.

²¹ Police spy Lucien de la Hodde noted that Laponneraye lauded not only Robespierre but Marat, Couthon and Babeuf as heroes of the Revolution worthy of adulation. De la Hodde, *Histoire des sociétés secrètes*. (Paris: 1850), p. 180.

Laponneraye, Voyer d'Argenson²², Auguste Blanqui, Napoléon Lebon²³ and countless others had, at least in their own minds, accepted the revolutionary torch from the previous generation. As a result they were steadfast in defending the frequent attempts and calls for violence against Louis Philippe.

A portent of what the new régime could expect from the dissatisfied republican insurgents of July 1830 could be glimpsed from the words of socialist republican Auguste Caunes, père, spoken less than a year after the revolution. 'Mais nos langues, miraculeusement déliées par la révolution de juillet, ne cesseront jusques là d'appeler sur la tête des traîtres la vengeance de la hache populaires et la foudre du ciel. Vous êtes mus par des passions, nous sommes mus par des vertus aussi fortes que vos passions'.²⁴ In evoking the spectre of further violence, Caunes' rhetoric was quite typical of the self-righteousness revolutionary republicans believed their fidelity to the Revolution bestowed upon them. Caunes, whose son's life came to a premature end while fighting alongside Belgian republicans in 1831,

²² Grandson of Louis XV's Secretary of State of War, Marc Voyer d'Argenson was actually a contemporary of Buonarroti. He underwent a fascinating political evolution. Because of his lineage he was able to serve as a prefect under Napoleon, in the Chamber of Deputies during the Restoration. Around 1818 he became acquainted with Saint-Simon and it is from this point that we can date his social and political transformation. In the 1830s he was affiliated with *la Société des Droits de l'Homme et du citoyen* and allied with Buonarroti. *Dictionnaire Biographique du Mouvement Ouvrier* (publié sous la direction de Jean Maitron) (première partie: tom. III); (Paris: 1966).

²³ A conspirator in republican societies during the 1830s, Lebon, in 1848, was elected as Democratic-Socialist to the Constituent Assembly. *Ibid.* (tom. II).

²⁴ 'Procès politique et républicain du citoyen Auguste Caunes. [18 juillet 1831, pour sa brochure intitulée: «Des moyens d'instituer le gouvernement de tous»] (Sceaux: 1831) *Les Révolutions du XIXe Siècle, op. cit.* (tom. XI).

has been described as a 'Jacobin farouche, sectateur de Robespierre'.²⁵ In all probability, Caunes, *père*, imbibed his republican sentiments through contact with Buonarroti or, at least, familiarity with his work. His son's dedication to the cause of Belgian republicanism was also, in all likelihood, a function of Buonarroti's emphasis of international republican solidarity.²⁶

The officials of the July Monarchy were convinced that republican societies were the crux of insurrections in 1832, 1834 and 1839 as well as in the assassination attempts against the King which so punctuated the July Monarchy. In general, though, with the glaring exception of the uprising of 1839, actual calls 'aux armes' made on behalf of the republican societies were not forthcoming. The fact is that so high a degree of visibility would have been suicidal to the revolutionary republican movement. This was made particularly clear by the leadership vacuum following the condemnation of Blanqui, Barbès and Martin-Bernard after the 1839 revolution. Instead, revolutionary republicans were more subtle. Rather than counsel violent confrontation with the authorities, they chose to defend, in a variety of fashions, the right to revolt. Beyond this, they instilled their supporters with a sense of reverence for those whose political passion had led them to the barricades. In other words, the insurgent struggle was not undertaken out of a whim but required commitment to ideals.

²⁵ Morange, Georges. *Les Idées Communistes dans les Sociétés secrètes et dans la Presse sous la Monarchie de Juillet*. (Thèse pour le doctorat) (Paris: 1905), pp. 16-7.

²⁶ Galante-Garrone, *op. cit.* at 133. Galante-Garrone's otherwise incisive work is flawed by his apparent confusion of Caunes, *père*, with Caunes, *fils*.

The French Revolution and, more specifically outstanding figures such as Robespierre and, to a lesser extent, Marat, Danton, and Babeuf, were epiphanies to the revolutionary republicans and demons to the authorities. As far as the régime was concerned, veneration of Revolutionary martyrs directly encouraged insurgency.²⁷ By contrast, revolutionary republicans roused these ghosts from the past for the purpose of lending historical immediacy and justification to their methods.

At times this consumption with the past could assume ridiculous proportions. At the previously mentioned trial of National Guardsmen for disturbing the peace after the acquittal of Charles X's former ministers, one of the accused, Jean-François Danton, defended himself on the grounds that his inclusion in the dock was due strictly to the connotations deriving from his surname. While Danton may have been justified, the prosecution did produce a witness who contradicted the defendant's protestations of innocence. The witness, a tenant at the same lodgers' hostel as Danton, testified to having heard the latter remark, '«Robespierre et Marat étaient des francs patriotes; le Christ lui-même était un excellent patriote, puisque le premier il a prêché l'égalité [...] Il ne faut plus de Bourbons; il faut la république; je suis un franc républicain; je suis parent de

²⁷ 'Procès du *Corsaire*, prévenu d'excitation à la haine et au mépris du gouvernement. (Paris: 1832)', p. 31. *Les Révolutions du XIXe Siècle* (tom. X). The public prosecutor unsuccessfully sought to establish the complicity of *le Corsaire* and *le National* in the insurrection of 5-6 June 1832 and specifically referred to the former's allusions to various Revolutionary figures.

Danton.»²⁸ From this rather minor example we can conclude that, no less than the revolutionaries, the July Monarchy was sensitive to any resurrections of the past. Assuming Danton's innocence (after all, he was acquitted), this trial provided a preview of other republican trials where the phantasmagoria of the French Revolution was manifested in replays of battles between Feuillants and Jacobins, Girondins and Montagnards.

Whether romanticised or mandated as a pragmatic option, insurgency provided revolutionary republicans with an indispensable tool in their goal of creating a nation of sovereign citizens. As they saw it, this was the goal of their revolutionary forefathers and was one of the least ambiguous messages of the Revolution. Appearing before the Cour d'assises de la Seine on 13 December 1832, Godefroi Cavaignac, the son of a former Conventionnel, conveyed his appreciation of France's recent history. Drawing upon lessons learned from his father and other exiles in Brussels, including Levasseur, Vadier, Cambon and David, Cavaignac averred that France's destiny is inextricably tied to its past. According to Cavaignac

l'histoire prouve que l'homme peut améliorer sa destinée, et s'il y a déjà réussi, faible et inexpérimenté qu'il était, n'est-il pas logique d'affirmer qu'il peut la rendre encore moins funeste, aujourd'hui qu'il est moins désarmé et moins ignorant? Il a commencé, il achèvera.²⁹

²⁸ 'Procès des dix-neuf citoyens accusés de complot tendant à remplacer le gouvernement royal par la République, contenant leur défenses et celles de leurs avocats. (Paris: 1831)', pp. 44-5 and 115-6. *Ibid.* (tom. XI). It should strike us as curious that a relative of Danton would praise Robespierre. Time heals all wounds?

²⁹ Ambert. 'Godefroy Cavaignac'. *Portraits Républicains*. (Paris: 1870), p. 104.

Within one year, Cavaignac had expanded upon this oral defence in an introductory piece to *Paris Révolutionnaire*, a four volume work published in 1833-4 which included pieces by Armand Marrast, Ulysse Trélat and François-Vincent Raspail. However, it was Cavaignac's 'La Force Révolutionnaire' which most clearly established the nexus between past and present, theory and practice. According to Cavaignac, words, ideas and principles are insufficient tools in the struggle against a tyranny which can readily adapt itself to circumstances. On the contrary, nothing short of a leveling by the destructive 'force révolutionnaire' had been, and remains, necessary to lend a sense of permanence to an enterprise of such extraordinary proportions. It was not only necessary to destroy in order to clear the terrain but also to instil in the people a sense of its position as both catalyst for, and beneficiary of, revolutionary change. This was made patently clear by the French Revolution's progress after the razing of the Bastille and the storming of the Tuileries. Until the great principles that underlay the French Revolution transcend from mere verbiage to universal application, society will continue to be locked in a symbiotic relationship with insurgency.³⁰

The concept Cavaignac was introducing was that of revolutionary regeneration. Unlike the protests of the pre-Revolutionary era, protest at Paris had been transformed and invariably assumed revolutionary proportions. Only drastic and violent means could effectuate the magnitude of change required by revolution. Consequently, revolutionaries, by definition, could not expect the

³⁰ Cavaignac, Godefroy, 'La Force Révolutionnaire'. *Paris Révolutionnaire* (1838) (tom. I), pp. vii-lxxxiv.

regeneration they advocated to be achieved by gradual processes. Consequently, revolutionary republicans quickly sensed that the very nature of their project, more exactly its breadth, required exceptional measures. On one level, this entailed violence in removing the existing order. On another level, it might require a resumption of the Terror.³¹

Revolutionary republicans likened Louis Philippe's authority to that of a stewardship over the nation's interest. The legitimacy and longevity of his rule would thus depend entirely upon his fidelity to the welfare of that fiction known as 'the people'. As the *de jure* sovereign, 'the people' were always the rightful arbiters of national concern; it never relinquished its ultimate authority but simply delegated it. Consequently, the idea that through insurrection the legal authority was being challenged was turned on its head. Instead, a people in armed revolution were portrayed as exercising its sovereign rights in defending the nation's liberty.

The nexus between popular sovereignty and the legitimacy of insurrection was a frequent component of republican discourse - even amongst those who eschewed the violent tendencies of revolutionaries. In addressing those circumstances where force was an appropriate response, most republican

³¹ Inasmuch as the Terror was then, as it is today, a highly controversial topic, even the most unrepentant 'robepierrist' had to be cautious in defending it. That said, republican student leader Jules-Théophile Sambuc, noted that '[a]u mot de République, l'esprit se retrace les horreurs trop nécessaires de 1793'. Sambuc assured his readers that 'un bon citoyen' would never dream of combating against the republic and, thus, would have nothing to fear. 'Procès des dix neuf citoyens [...]' *Les Révolutions du XIXe Siècle, op. cit.* (tom. XI). Another pamphlet defended the guillotine as a necessary device against fomenters of intrigue. The piece argued that the crimes of the Valois and Bourbon monarchs had been far worse than the Terror. 'Les montagnards nous offrent, avec l'union et la force, tous les moyens de la saveur'. *Le Montagnard par le citoyen Rogeau* [1833] *Ibid.* (tom I).

polemicists were so self-consciously vague that political violence could be deemed legitimate in nearly all circumstances. For example, Armand Carrel, noted for his moderation and conciliatory attitude, nevertheless wrote, 'tout écrivain, pénétré de sa dignité de citoyen, opposera la loi à l'illégalité et la force à la force. C'est un devoir; adviene que pourra'.³² Although Carrel was not encouraging rebellion, his words did not define, with any precision, the limits of popular violence. Consequently, the readership of *le National*, in determining the import of Carrel's message, was free to interpret it according to a subjective assessment of governmental malfeasance.

In Carrel's words, we see more than the simple pervasiveness of insurgency within different, and in this case moderate, strands of republicanism. Insurgency was synonymous with the rights and duties of citizenship. It was a duty for every citizen to fulfil, not necessarily towards the construction of a future republic, but for *patrie*. However, republicans had to do more than simply make undefined appeals to *patrie*. They had to give the word life, meaning and force. Most of all, they had to connect *patrie* to the idea of republicanism so that nation and republic were indistinguishable. In other words, *patrie* was not simply limited to one's sense of 'frenchness' vis-à-vis other nationalities; instead, it extended to one's adherence to the principles of the French Revolution. Specifically, *patrie* was a function of the sovereign people who composed it. A people whose unity was the result of shared

³² 'Procès du National au sujet des arrestations préventives pour délits de la presse. Plaidoyers de MM. Odilon-Barrot, Charles Comte, et Armand Carrel (Paris: 1832)'. *Ibid.* (tom. X). Carrel defended himself by asserting, 'je n'ai point prêché la rébellion, mais la résistance à l'illégalité'. *Ibid.*

principles and a common identity rather than the simple habitation of the same geographic boundaries. By consequence, the struggle against all forces foreign to *patrie*, including monarchs, aristocrats and the nascent bourgeois aristocracy - in other words, those who seek a dominant rôle in society - was presented as the defense of the nation's sovereignty. Revolutionary republicans were making a calculated gamble that sovereignty, an idea 'derived' from the Revolution, had made the transition to society's 'inherent' ideas. If it had, any assertion of its deprivation would suffice to trigger a popular revolt much like bread crises had done during the *ancien régime*.

Republicans, therefore, considered their attacks on the institution of monarchy and on Louis Philippe to be examples of their superior devotion to France. Republican writers standing trial for offenses against the King or the monarchical state rarely admitted culpable intent. Instead, they described monarchists as motivated by the subversion of the ideals heralded by the Revolution and, thus, more inclined to divisiveness. As such, it was monarchists who were ultimately responsible for forty years of incessant civil war.³³

Despite a staggering degree of division over their specific conceptions of republicanism, July Monarchy republicans found common ground in their antagonism to Louis Philippe as having confiscated the spoils of what was, essentially, a republican revolution. Ultimately, the process and speed at which

³³ 'Procès du journal républicain «Le Patriote d'Allier» prévenu d'attaques contre l'inviolabilité royale et d'offenses publiques envers la personne du roi. (Paris: 1833 [?])' *Ibid.* (tom. X). Some republican polemicists argued that while republicans were convinced that the monarchy would collapse through its own ineptitude, they warned that the people's patience was not without limits.

authority was transferred from Charles X to Louis Philippe would provide republicans with plenty of arguments relative to the régime's lack of legitimacy.³⁴ Hostility to Charles X had been a function of his personal style, in particular, and monarchical rule, in general. For Louis Philippe, this latter reason did not position him in a much stronger footing than his predecessor. That said, the July Revolution was not precipitated by republicans; as a result, in the aftermath of *les trois glorieuses*, they were no stronger than any other group in the unofficial revolutionary coalition.

Yet rather soon after the revolution, the vulnerability of the régime came into sharper focus. As previously mentioned, its revolutionary origins created problems of legitimacy from the start. However, nothing was more problematic than the selection of Louis Philippe. After the great principles announced by the Revolution, it hardly seemed conceivable that Parisians would have taken to the streets in July 1830 for the simple purpose of replacing one monarch with another. Were three days of insurrection amidst a terrible economic crisis undertaken solely for a changing of the guard? As previously noted, though, republicanism was still an esoteric notion during *les trois glorieuses* and the most radical expression on the barricades was probably 'liberté', itself an emotive, yet malleable, word.³⁵ To give direction to the highly charged cry of 'Vive la liberté', republicans again linked it to

³⁴ Interestingly, if the aged Charles X had died in office there was a reasonable possibility that Louis Philippe would have served as regent for the King's minor son. Pilbeam, *op. cit.* at 83.

³⁵ Its meaning to unemployed artisans and workers in July 1830 was anything but ambiguous. To them it was the redress of economic and social grievances. Newman, *op. cit.* at 19-20.

popular sovereignty, asserting that the commitment to freedom necessarily implied hostility to a government not sanctioned by the people. The campaign to promote the July Monarchy as 'la meilleure des républiques' was met with almost universal derision by republicans. Most tended to view the revolution which produced such mediocre results as having plunged France into an extended revolutionary state. In essence, the July Monarchy was perceived as a transitional period before the nation's ultimate political destiny was settled as either a return to absolutist monarchy or a republic.³⁶

Revolution, Republicanism and June 1832

The first identifiably republican insurrection to threaten the July Monarchy occurred on 5-6 June 1832 around the funeral of the Napoleonic General Lamarque. The funeral was rich in symbolism. Lamarque had been a military hero during both the Revolution and the Empire. One of the first glaring shortcomings of the July Monarchy was its failure to assist nationalists in Belgium, Poland, and the German and Italian states.³⁷ Lamarque's death simply highlighted the present régime's failure to live up to the mission of liberation once carved out by the French republic. On another level, though, Lamarque was killed by cholera, the epidemic which had been decimating Europe for a year and, in 1832, was cutting a swathe of death through urban France. Some *faubouriens* believed cholera to be

³⁶ Laponneraye, Albert, 'Défense du citoyen Laponneraye prononcée aux Assises du Département de la Seine, le 21 avril 1832 (Paris: s.d.)' *Ibid.* (tom XI).

³⁷ Pilbeam, *op. cit.* at 90.

government plot against the already economically vulnerable poor.³⁸ The insurrection lasted for two days but, lacking in leadership and coördination, was crushed. A number of participants were put on trial. As with most of the violent political events directed against Louis Philippe, the framework of insurrection was posed most clearly during the trials as leading republicans either leapt to the defense of the combatants or justified the act of insurgency in very general terms.

If spontaneity is characterised by the absence of planning or organisation, the revolution of 1832, like *les trois glorieuses*, was a spontaneous affair. It was a classical uprising in the mould of 1789, 1830 and 1848 whose defining characteristics, according to the paradigm developed by Ernest Labrousse were (i) mass participation; (ii) spontaneity marked by a 'levée-en-masse rather than an 'armée encadrée de la révolution' and (iii) endogenic origins - in other words, borne out of an internal social crisis and not because of 'un choc extérieur' such as the surrender at Sedan which doomed the Second Empire.³⁹ The insurrection failed, however. Coming so soon after the July revolution, it did not attract the massive

³⁸ Studies on the cholera epidemic of 1832 in France have clearly demonstrated the relationship between economic status and vulnerability to the disease. See: Kaelble, Helmut. *Industrialisation and Social Inequality in 19th Century Europe*. (translated by Bruce Little) (Leamington Spa: 1986), pp. 131-2, 138-9, citing studies by Chevalier, Louis, 'Paris', *Le choléra. La première épidémie du XIXe siècle*. (*Idem.*, ed.) (Paris: 1958); Engrand, M. and C. 'Epidémie et pauperisme: Le choléra à Lille en 1832', *L'homme, la vie et la mort dans le Nord au XIXe siècle*. (M. Gillet, ed.) (Lille: 1972). While no evidence has yet been produced to sustain a theory of governmental complicity in poisoning the sewers, in 1832 rumours circulated in both Paris and Bordeaux that either agents of the rich or the government had made such an attempt. Delaporte, François. *Disease and Civilization. The Cholera in Paris, 1832*. (translated by Arthur Goldhammer) (Cambridge, MA: 1986), Chapter 3.

³⁹ Labrousse, Ernest, '1848-1830-1789. Comment naissent les Révolutions', *Actes du Congrès Historique du Centenaire de la Révolution de 1848*. (Paris: 1948), p. 3.

support necessary to overthrow Louis Philippe. Beyond that, the suddenness of its eruption worked against the development of any coördinated direction which could have given the protest a sense of organisation and leadership.⁴⁰

Although it was an aftershock of the July revolution, the insurrection of June 1832 was a revolution. It corresponded with a prolonged economic crisis, disappointment with the new régime and a plague-like epidemic whose impact was particularly severe amongst workers and artisans. The remedy for all these ailments was promoted to be a republic. Even in defeat and through its apparent futility, the revolution presented crucial attributes of France's insurrectionary tradition for consideration. Specifically, that the primary arsenal in the revolutionary struggle is composed of confidence, optimism and righteousness.⁴¹

The revolution of 1832 cast a new light on *les trois glorieuses*. Questions were raised over whether it was legitimate to erect heroic monuments to the

⁴⁰ None the less, on 5 June 1832, the government's position vis-à-vis the insurgents was less assured. Louis Blanc noted how three hours after the revolution commenced, the insurgents were in control of half of Paris. 'Les employés des ministères avaient caché les papiers importants, et déjà l'on ne songeait plus aux Tuileries qu'à des préparatifs de fuite'. Beyond that, Louis Blanc opined that the July Monarchy may have fallen on the morning of 6 June had the insurrection been coördinated enough to draft and distribute several thousand copies of the announcement of the formation of a new provisional government headed by Lafayette. Blanc, Louis. *Histoire de Dix Ans, op. cit.* (tom. III), pp. 302-11.

⁴¹ Again, we turn to Louis Blanc who wrote of Armand Carrel's refusal to support the 1832 revolution. Carrel believed that, militarily, it was incapable of succeeding. In distinguishing the principles which assure success to 'une armée en campagne' from those decisive to 'un soulèvement populaire', Blanc wrote of the latter: 'L'audace, qui fut le procédé de Danton et même son génie, l'audace est la prudence des partis en lutte. Car, en révolution, la confiance a tous les profits du hasard'. *Ibid.* at 312.

barricades of July when those of June 1832 were made an object of horror and reprobation, considering that both were 'composées des mêmes élémens rassemblés par les mêmes mains qui croyaient servir la même cause!'⁴² Was, as the foregoing suggests, the revolution of 1832 the more politically-sophisticated, more determined replay of July 1830? One of those convicted in the second trial of insurgents, 'un ouvrier tailleur', Victor Prospert, related how, during the insurrection, he was asked by someone how he could fight against a régime which he helped found. 'Je n'y pensais guère, lui répartis-je, quant aux trois jours j'ai versé mon sang, et si le 29 juillet j'avais entendu quelqu'un crier Vive le duc d'Orléans, je l'aurais fusillé sur-le-champ'. For his troubles, Prospert was condemned to ten years detention.⁴³

The trial arising out of the insurrection of June 1832 against brought into focus the issue of motivation. Specifically, why did the insurgents take to the barricades and what did they hope to accomplish? One argument propounded by Prospert characterised 'liberté' as something tangible rather than the imprecise, pliable domain of a revolutionary élite. His purpose on 5-6 June, Prospert argued, was to recover the liberty stolen from the workers by 'la classe privilégiée' after July 1830. To put his example in more concrete terms, Prospert compared it to the larceny of a hat off his head. The force which justified the retrieval of his hat

⁴² 'Procès des Vingt-deux accusés du Cloître Saint-Méry, événemens des 5 et 6 juin 1832, suivi des pièces justificatives. (Paris: 1832)', pp. 5-6. *Les Révolutions du XIXe Siècle, op. cit.* (tom. XI).

⁴³ 'Prospert (ouvrier tailleur) devant ses juges. Relation de tout ce qui s'est passé à la Cour d'assises de Paris (deuxième section) le 21 novembre 1832. (Paris: 1832)', p. 8. *Ibid.*

likewise validated the recovery of the nation's liberty. If in either circumstance 'mon voleur succombait dans la lutte, il n'aurait à s'en prendre qu'à lui'.⁴⁴

Depicted as property, 'liberté' became more comprehensible and more immediate to a populace often lacking in material possessions and consumed by a seemingly endless economic crisis. In a related theme, the political struggle, through Prospert's characterisation, could be transformed into a revolt carrying similar identifiable and meaningful stakes. At least for one worker, 'liberté', and his social class-based interpretation of it, had become an 'inherent idea'. It was generative of the same emotions that once fueled the prototypical food riot. Inherent rights attached to objects deemed indispensable to existence - for example, rights to grain or rights to glean or scavenge in a forest. By focussing attention on the detention of an 'object' deemed essential to a community's well-being, the value of 'liberté' was represented as indistinguishable from the grain needed for bread or the wood used for fuel. Rendering the analogy a little more concrete was the fact that bread prices and access to forests were very real issues at the time. Just as grain is the life blood of the individual, so too, 'liberté' is at the essence of society. Without clarifying or giving any sense of understanding to a concept which remains highly charged with ambiguity to this day, Prospert enshrined it with the same sanctity accorded tangible articles.

While the foregoing did not constitute a defense of insurgency, Prospert's comparison is instructive in revealing the evolution of collective protest. While a grain riot was not a revolutionary act, clearly protests over 'liberté' were more

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*

substantial and entailed a challenge to social conventions and/or political institutions. In enlarging the scope of 'inherent ideas' of French society, the insurrectionary tradition had created the conditions for a *mentalité* of permanent revolutionary vigilance. Following the revolution of 1830 by just under two years, the insurrection of the Cloître Saint-Méry also produced the first major trial concerning an attempt at overthrowing the new régime. The very fact of the trials and their relations to the fleeting fortunes of revolutionary martyrdom were questioned by Armand Marrast in *La Tribune*. Marrast postulated that, '[s]i la victoire les avait secondés, vous écrieriez leurs noms sur les tables d'airain du Panthéon'.⁴⁵ Similarly, *le National* reminded its readers that 'ce n'est pas toujours un crime de résister à la force armée et d'élever des barricades contre elle, témoin nos journées de juillet. Il y a des cas où c'est un droit et un devoir de combattre le gouvernement par la force des armes'.⁴⁶

An interesting point emerges from these two articles. The accused were on trial for having violated the same type of law whose violation in July 1830 had led to the empowerment of the present monarchy. Consequently, the corollary, of course, is that if *les trois glorieuses* had failed, power would have remained in Charles X's hands. Rather than the accolades they received in the early days of the July Monarchy, these insurgents would have been prosecuted vigorously for their transgressions. This point would seem to be wholly implausible were it not for the fact that the previous forty-three years of French history had been punctuated by

⁴⁵ 'Procès des Vingt-deux [...]', pp. 7-9. *Ibid.*

⁴⁶ 'Procès des Vingt-deux [...]', pp. 66-8. *Ibid.*

the resolution of political questions through extra-legal confrontations. In the process, political legitimacy became a question as ephemeral as the sovereign people wished it to be and political instability remained self-perpetuating.

A régime such as the Bourbon restoration was vulnerable to popular protest since it had no popular mandate. Similarly, the July Monarchy and, earlier, the various governments of the Revolution were equally susceptible to the forces to which they owed their creations. This point was driven home by the insurrection whose original motivation may have been fear of the cholera epidemic but which ultimately transformed itself into an effort to redefine the settlement of July 1830. Its reverberations would simply add to the revolutionary liturgy.

The July Monarchy was fully aware of the portent which even a militarily defeated insurrection could hold for its future security. To this end it engaged in a relentless pursuit against newspapers whose accounts of General Lamarque's funeral may have helped ignite the revolution which followed. The régime's attention was directed, in particular, at articles which drew a link between Lamarque as a venerable figure from the Revolution who represented its highest ideals and the unstable political climate of 1832. For example, in an article published after both the funeral and the insurrection, *le Corsaire* referred to the Restoration's inability to fully comprehend the popular emotions roused by the death of General Foy in 1825. The article questioned whether the *juste milieu* of the July Monarchy would be any more appreciative of the lessons of General

Lamarque's death.⁴⁷

The editors of *le National* also found themselves faced with incitement to riot charges for the publication of an eulogy by a law student named Vidau at Lamarque's catafalque. Vidau spoke of the July Monarchy as being consumed by shame and fear and called for popular initiative to produce republican institutions ('«[...] donnons-nous le signal, et nous ne serons pas sourds à votre appel. L'an 1832 aura son juillet aussi!!!!»'). Summing up his argument at *le National's* trial, Procureur-général Persil traced the roots of Parisian insurgency and identified two causes. The first was historical in making martyrs out of the Jacobins of the Revolution. The other factor behind insurgency was contemporary in as much as veneration of historical figures is coupled with an appeal to the people that the republic, alone, has proven capable of ameliorating its hardships and restoring its sovereignty. As regards the historical component, Persil argued that

tous les personnages que l'histoire nous représente comme des monstres étaient loués et offerts comme des modèles: il n'est pas jusques à Danton, Marat, Robespierre, qui n'avaient trouvé dans ces sociétés leurs adulateurs, et la Convention elle-même ses prosélytes. Vous n'en serez pas surpris lorsque vous vous rappellerez que le régicide est la morale de la plupart de ces associations, et l'inégalité de la propriété le monstre qu'elles poursuivent.⁴⁸

⁴⁷ 'Procès du *Corsaire*, prévenu d'excitation à la haine et au mépris du gouvernement. (Paris: 1832)', p. 5. *Ibid.* (tom. X) The paper was found guilty of having excited hatred against the King and its manager was condemned to six months imprisonment and a 1,000 francs fine.

⁴⁸ 'Procès du *Corsaire* [...]', pp. 23-4, 31-3. *Ibid.* *Le National* was acquitted of all charges leveled against it.

The insurrection of June 1832 generated further reflections on the Revolution in the form of the bizarre story related by Louis Blanc of a sinister figure dressed in black and carrying a red flag capped by a *bonnet phrygien* appearing at the head of Lamarque's funeral cortege. 'C'était le souvenir de 93 qu'on faisait revivre aux yeux de la bourgeoisie. L'indignation fut grande, surtout chez les républicains, dont cette apparition effrayante tendait à calomnier les doctrines'.⁴⁹

We may never know whether this mysterious individual was one of the many *agents provocateurs* employed by the July Monarchy to turn perceptions of republicans as violent instigators into a self-fulfilling prophecy. Beyond this, we cannot ascertain the degree to which his appearance frightened the bourgeoisie into abstention or hostility towards insurrection and thus further accentuated the gulf separating moderate from revolutionary republicans. It is highly doubtful whether any rapprochement was possible between the two strains of republicanism since moderates anticipated a parliamentary road to their goal while the revolutionary republicans of this study believed the foundation of a republic to be inseparable from revolution.⁵⁰

On the other hand, Louis Blanc's concerns are instructive for underscoring the volatility attached to symbols reminiscent of the Revolution's popular aspects.

⁴⁹ Blanc, Louis, *op. cit.* (tom. III), p. 299.

⁵⁰ See: Pilbeam, *op. cit.* at 167-8. Republicanism had taken quite a bashing during the Restoration. With most of the leading former republicans in exile or sniffing after political positions, there were few individuals in France before 1830 who were able or willing to articulate the republican message. In fact, when mentioned, republicanism was identified with indiscriminate and arbitrary executions. *Ibid.* at 19.

More specifically, for those elements of French society whose neutrality in, or passive acceptance of, the insurrections of 1789, 1830 and 1848 contributed to their triumphs, the *bonnet phrygien* and the spectre of Danton, Marat and Robespierre alluded to by the prosecutor tapped into the near hysterical fear of anything connected with the Terror. This was a fear which, when tapped into, was often unable to distinguish between the popular violence represented by insurgency and the state violence represented by policies like the Terror.⁵¹

For the Parisian revolutionaries, these not-too-distant symbols, celebratory of the heroism of the popular faubourgs, were the *leitmotifs* which tended to reaffirm its political faith and invigorate its revolutionary resolve. The symbols were evidence of the depth - and limits - of its political strength.⁵²

Indigenous to the insurgent battle was another powerful self-affirming force not found in the sphere of parliamentary reform: the creation of a classification of martyrs. As the first militarily defeated uprising at Paris since that of 1-4 Prairial Year III, the insurrection of 1832 threatened to throw the revolutionary movement into dormancy. Instead, the insurrection and trials served as a vehicle for

⁵¹ The revolutionary republican movement sometimes attempted to address this fear by analogising the next insurgent battle to *les trois glorieuses*. '[S]'il est vrai que nous devons obtenir la victoire, nous montrerons à nos ennemis ce calme et cette généreuse modération dont nous leur avons déjà donné des preuves après la victoire de la grande semaine'. Baraduc, Louis, 'Relation du procès intenté à M. Laissac devant la cour d'assises de l'Hérault, par L. Baraduc (Montpellier: 1832)', pp. 10-11. *Les Révolutions du XIXe Siècle, op. cit.* (tom. VII).

⁵² Although symbols such as liberty trees, iconography and *bonnets phrygien* 'abounded' in the early days of the July Monarchy, the régime quickly realised the potential threat lurking behind these symbols and did what it could to dampen enthusiasm for symbols associated with the Revolution. Pilbeam, *op. cit.* at 90.

revolutionary republicans to propagate their views and solidify in opposition to Louis Philippe.⁵³ The struggle also created the conditions for the emergence of a revolutionary cadre so essential to the post-insurrectionary stage of the revolution. However, the revolutionary flame had to be kept burning. For those whose participation in the June insurrection owed more to economic despair than to political fervour, the insurrection had to be endowed with a historical purpose as yet unfulfilled. To do otherwise would have lumbered what happened in June 1832 with all the negative attributes of a *jacquerie* (such as transitory, though recurring, concerns). The larger goal, then, was to develop fidelity à *perpétuité* to the greater designs of revolutionary change. The actors in insurrections had to feel as though they were playing a crucial rôle on their nation's historical stage. To this end, the insurrection was a success. At least one of those convicted and imprisoned for his part in the *journée* was recorded to have declared to his fellow accused: '«Ce n'est rien que cela, nous nous reverrons aux barricades!»'⁵⁴

The indefatigable nature of the cause fought for on the barricades of June

⁵³ Five months after the uprising, the normally cautious *le National* remarked upon the increase in numbers which were making republicans more steadfast and determined in their convictions: 'Il s'enforce dans l'avenir avec une incroyable détermination [...] L'etouffer, est impossible; le satisfaire, est-il encore temps? C'est là la question'. 'Procès des Vingt-deux [...]', p. 145. *Les Révolutions du XIXe Siècle, op. cit.* (tom. XI).

⁵⁴ 'Procès des Vingt-deux [...]', p. 132. *Ibid.* (tom. XI). Beyond this *profession de foi* by Jean Vigouroux, we have the example of Michel Auguste Geoffroy whose death sentence was later commuted to ten years imprisonment at Doullens. Appointed a member of the *Commission d'enquête pour les récompenses nationales* at the Hôtel de Ville after the revolution of February 1848, Geoffroy was also a secretary of Barbès' *Club de la Révolution*. He was eventually deported for having fired shots on behalf of the June 1848 insurgents. *Dictionnaire Biographique, op. cit.* (Première partie, tom. II).

1832 was also celebrated in verse, an often effective means for evoking an emotional response. Typically, a popular journal would change the words of a familiar song in relating a fictionalised account of a current event in couplets. In this manner, ideas or actions would be immortalised in a style readily adaptable to memory. In 'Les Taches de Sang du Pont d'Arcole', originally published in a Parisian journal called *le Bon Sens* and subsequently reprinted in provincial journals, a crowd gathering at Pont d'Arcole after the June 1832 uprising notices some blood. Immediately the crowd wonders whether this is meant to be preparations for the anniversary of *les trois glorieuses*. The authorities quickly arrive and order the blood to be washed away ('«Ce sang parle; il faut qu'on l'efface!»'). The concluding lines summon a picture of intense emotion and determination as an old man puts the preceding images into perspective for his son.

Sans coère et sans épouvante,
 Un vieillard à l'oeil pénétrant,
 Dit à son fils, en lui montrant
 La ligne de feu qui serpente:
 «Vois-tu ce sang pur et brillant
 «Qui s'étend par sa chute même,
 «Et colere l'onde en fuyant?
 «De la liberté c'est l'emblème:
 «On la propage en la noyant»⁵⁵

The foregoing is rich in symbolic content. Not only does it locate the pulse of the June uprising in the deceptions following *les trois glorieuses*, it positions the as yet to be fulfilled quest for liberty in popular protest. This is all accomplished

⁵⁵ 'Le Prolétaire (Marseille: 1832)', p. 24. *Les Révolutions du XIXe Siècle, op. cit.* (tom. IX).

within the context of an old man, presumably a veteran or, at least, a witness to other revolutionary *journées*, imparting his wisdom and experience to a successor generation. Thus, the semblance of an oral history, and its significance for the present, is made manifest by one of the nameless, faceless and selfless participants of *les grandes journées* of the Revolution. This was an account that didn't rely on a familiar name from the Revolution. As such, it was clearly designed to elicit empathy and breed inspiration.

The immediate aftermath of the insurrection and trials produced another more far-reaching result - a schism in the primary republican society, *la Société des Amis du Peuple*. The insurrection had given the directors of *les Amis du Peuple* the sensation that censorship of political associations was in the offing. It also determined that the Society's viability was dependent upon splitting up into smaller sects. This paved the way for its eclipse by the more militant *la Société des Droits de l'Homme et du Citoyen*. However, this society soon divided along methodological, if not ideological, lines. Characterisations of the divisions reflected a growing tendency towards analysing the present revolutionary era under the Revolution's template. For example, Pierre Leroux distinguished three sects within the Society - one headed by Marrast, another by Lebon and Jean-Jacques Vignerte⁵⁶ and the third by Cavaignac - and labeled them 'la queue de

⁵⁶ Vignerte was another revolutionary strongly influenced by Buonarroti. Galante-Garrone, *op. cit.* at 161-3. During the Second Republic, Vignerte headed the list of representatives sent to the Constituent Assembly from the Hautes-Pyrénées. He was allied with the Mountain in the Assembly. In December 1851 he organised the resistance to the coup d'état in his native province. *Dictionnaire Biographique, op. cit.* (première partie, tom. III).

Danton», «la queue de Robespierre» and «la tendance de la fraternité», respectively. Republicans grouped around Marrast emphasized political liberties while those associated with Lebon and Vignerte reflected the Buonarrotian penchant for social equality.⁵⁷ In another example, the prosecutor in the trial of various members of the Society accused of having plotted an insurrection for the third anniversary of *les trois glorieuses* was quite taken by the names given to various sections of *la Société des Droits de l'Homme* - Marat, Saint-Just, Robespierre, le 21 Janvier, la Montagne, le Bonnet rouge and les Gueux. The prosecutor asserted in open court that the choices of these names were not 'le produit de quelques passions délirantes, mais l'oeuvre systématique d'une comité dirigeant [...]' which, while divided over tactics, was none the less unified in purpose. In this case, the insurrection-minded committee (headed by Lebon) was characterised as *le Montagnard* whereas Raspail's more reformist committee was called *le Girondin*.⁵⁸

More important than the historical accuracy of these names (after all, both Robespierre and Danton were regicides and both benefitted from the insurrection of 31 May-2 June 1793 which led to the expulsion of 'les Girondins'), was its impact in shaping the parameters of the contemporary political debate. Heroes of the Revolution formed the *cris de ralliement* of early 1830s republicanism. Yet this was no mere exercise in channeling disaffected workers into cells notable for their name

⁵⁷ Cited in: Galante-Garrone, *op. cit.* at 167-8.

⁵⁸ 'Procès des vingt-sept ou de la Société des Droits de l'homme et des élèves de l'Ecole Polytechnique [1834]', pp. 5, 8. *Les Révolutions du XIXe Siècle, op. cit.* (tom. III).

recognition. On the contrary, the choice of names reflected a conscious effort at creating a revolutionary identity by reference to personalities despised by the *juste milieu*.

The June 1832 uprising, therefore, had significant implications for *la Société des Droits de l'Homme*. It revealed an undercurrent of revolutionary resolve in Paris sorely lacking in preparation and instruction but overflowing with enthusiasm. The main problem to overcome was how to channel that energy into an efficacious force.⁵⁹ This is precisely the point at which the Society encountered the previously alluded-to internal differences. Neither Leroux nor the prosecutor had completely exaggerated the identification of the Lebon/Vignerte group with 'Robespierism'. This characterisation was far from fortuitous. June 1832 had also been an inspiration for Buonarroti who set about reorganising an underground network of insurrectionary secret societies modeled after his experiences in the Conspiracy of the Equals. Depending on your viewpoint, these secret cells were to either infiltrate, or affiliate and maintain close coöperation with, sections of *la Société des Droits de l'Homme*.⁶⁰ Furthermore, the schism within the Society tended to concentrate

⁵⁹ In as much as it presented the spectre of a small number of citizens defying, and nearly toppling, the government, Auguste Blanqui referred to June 1832 as 'cette «collision fortuite». Blanqui was to claim that this affirmed his preoccupation with a militarily well-planned insurrection. Dommanget, Maurice. *Auguste Blanqui. Des Origines à la Révolution de 1848. Premiers combats et premières prisons*. (Paris: 1969), p. 121. See also: Galante-Garrone, *op. cit.* at p. 357, fn. 60 where he writes that the *journée* of 5-6 June marked the decisive turning point in republicanism from legal to clandestine opposition to the régime.

⁶⁰ *Ibid.* at 173-6. In particular, Galante-Garrone noted the example of Mathieu (d'Epinal) who, as president of *la Société des Droits de l'Homme* in the Vosges maintained close communication with Buonarroti and Teste. The government was concerned over the existence of a network of Buonarroti-inspired Carbonari ventes

Buonarroti's sphere of influence amongst a hard-core following. These disciples would assimilate the seemingly disparate doctrines of *Babouisme* and *Jacobinisme* (à la Robespierre) into an organic ideology reflective of the concerns of 19th century workers.⁶¹ Unlike the moderate wing of *la Société des Droits de l'Homme* which emphasized political reforms at the expense of social and economic issues, the language of the revolutionary group emphasized social regeneration as a fundamental component of republicanism. Underneath it all, workers were largely unmoved by calls for greater parliamentary democracy. If politics was to have any pertinence to their experience, it had to be immediate, direct and participatory. Insurgency was all of these. By addressing matters of more immediate relevance to the 19th century *sans-culottes* and proletariat, Buonarroti and his followers also instilled a sense of inevitable historical destiny to the insurgent battle. In so doing, they sought to cultivate a revolutionary vanguard ready for the next *prise d'armes*.⁶²

as far from Paris as Basti (Corsica). *A.N.*, BB¹⁸ 1356.

⁶¹ Galante-Garrone, *op. cit.* at 169. Galante-Garrone wrote that while the first néo-Babouvistes directed their efforts at 'la masse de travailleurs' (by which he included artisans), Buonarroti's message was especially inspirational for the nascent proletariat. From Buonarroti, the working class derived a consciousness that the political struggle was actually an aspect of class conflict.

⁶² The significance of workers to the revolutionary republican movement has been studied most recently by Alain Faure who concluded, on the basis of a sample, that two-thirds of those involved in the insurrection of 5-6 June 1832 were 'ouvriers' while the remaining one-third included clerks, shop assistants, students, teachers, shopkeepers, domestics and landlords. As regards *la Société des Droits de l'Homme*, Faure found that three-quarters of the *sectionnaires* were 'ouvriers' and that these tended to be concentrated in the sections of the Society dominated by 'le comité Lebon (montagnard)'. This led Faure to conclude that as the numbers of workers in republican societies increased between 1830 and 1834, the republican movement not only shifted its agenda to respond to its new members' concerns, but also became far more militant and revolutionary. In the process, this attracted an even greater proportion of workers. Faure, Alain, 'Mouvements populaires et

Proscribing the Past and Present

Simultaneously, the July Monarchy, after June 1832, began to perceive that the major threat posed to it came less from legitimists than from the republicans in *la Société des Droits de l'Homme*. Part of its response was a determination to repress any glorification or revival of *souvenirs* from *la Révolution populaire* of 1793-4. This included alarm over conspicuous displays of symbols peculiar to the Revolution as well as a general wariness of the potential for trouble posed by anniversaries of revolutionary *journées*.⁶³

An extreme example of the government's concern over the latter was its decision in 1833 to abrogate 21 January as a *fête nationale*. Although official recognition was a product of the Restoration government of Louis XVIII on 19 January 1816, the manner by which the *Chambre élective* and the *Chambre des pairs* worded the repeal caused Louis Blanc to wonder whether the legislators were more concerned about the date's potential for stirring legitimist or republican passions.⁶⁴ Bearing in mind that the legitimist threat in 1833 was far less imposing than that represented by *la Société des Droits de l'Homme*, it would not be too far fetched to presume that Louis Philippe, despite his regicide heritage, had now perceived that he was in danger of falling victim to a repetition of the past. His own experiences during the Revolution would certainly influence his resolve to limit any

Mouvement Ouvrier à Paris (1830 - 1834)', *Le Mouvement Social* (no. 88) (juillet-septembre 1974), pp. 51-92, 78-85.

⁶³ See, e.g., report of 'un démagogue' at Aix who, coiffed in a 'bonnet rouge [...] rappèle de tristes souvenirs'. *A.N.*, BB₁₈ 1220.

⁶⁴ Blanc, Louis, *op. cit.* at (tom. IV), p. 83.

identity between the progression of the Revolution and 'his' revolution of events pre-dating 1792.

There were striking similarities between 1789-91 and 1830. In both 1789 and 1830, an economic crisis and disaffection with a Bourbon monarchy had led to popular protest at Paris. The result of the protest was political reform without much consideration given to why ordinary individuals engaged in political protest. Despite his efforts at combatting the glorification of the Revolution as a succession of popular struggles, Louis Philippe, none the less, erected a column celebrating *les trois glorieuses* on the very spot where some forty-odd years before the Bastille had stood. Yet this was probably less risky than one might have assumed at the time. By limiting the official view of what was acceptable from the Revolution to the symbolic rising against the Bourbon Monarchy and the establishment of constitutional monarchy, Louis Philippe was not only rewriting history but also endeavouring to relive it.

So strong was the potency of recollections of the Revolution that we can assume Louis Philippe's attempts to strip the Revolution of popular leaders, *journées*, symbols and ideas which followed the constitutional monarchy, was an effort to avoid their recurrence. To this end, the régime's prosecutors embarked on a policy of including portraits of Robespierre and writings by Saint-Just found amongst an accused's position as evidence of *des mauvaises passions* and, therefore, an inclination towards violent behaviour. As is apparent, the July Monarchy had inadvertently promoted a new image of Robespierre. No longer only the master executioner and *buveur de sang* (although this image wasn't completely

expunged), the Incorruptible was more often portrayed as a catalyst for the stirring of popular emotions and insurrectionary fervour.⁶⁵

Sensing perhaps that a successful revolution was now imminent, the now dominant revolutionary committee of *la Société des Droits de l'Homme* published, under the direction of Teste, its republican constitution.⁶⁶ Using as the Constitution of 1793 as a referent, Teste argued that any constitution must be preceded by something akin to the *Déclaration des Droits de l'Homme et du Citoyen* proposed by Robespierre, but not voted on by the Convention, in 1793.⁶⁷ Teste's *Déclaration des principes fondamentaux de la société*, nearly identical to Robespierre's work, was centered around principles guaranteeing the exercise of popular sovereignty and anchoring political institutions and social relationships to the Revolution's tripartite slogan *liberté, égalité, fraternité*. Teste also found inspiration in Robespierre's conception of popular sovereignty codified insurgency as not only a

⁶⁵ The element of class division took root around the memory of Robespierre who, perhaps paradoxically, was transformed into the workers' friend. 'Le nom de Robespierre suffisait à épouvanter la bourgeoisie'. Weill, Georges, *op. cit.* at 94-5. Louis Blanc opined that as the orleanists and revolutionary republicans each utilised the spectre of Robespierre for their own purposes, the revolutionaries had 'en essayant de la réhabiliter [...] commettait une imprudence et multipliait les obstacles à vaincre'. Blanc, Louis, *op. cit.* at (tom. IV), p. 116.

⁶⁶ Teste, Charles-Antoine. 'Projet de Constitution Républicaine et Déclarations des principes fondamentaux de la Société; précédés d'un exposé des motifs [1833]'. *Les Révolutions du XIXe Siècle, op. cit.* (tom. VII).

⁶⁷ While Teste acknowledged that his attention was focused on this constitution, as opposed to the 'moins populaire' Constitution of the Year III, he also noted that it was not a complete blueprint in-and-of itself since it did not include a number of social measures that had been proposed. Further, Teste stated, its concern with the organisation of authority necessary for the proper conduct of the war was largely the result of circumstances. (pp. 7-8). *Ibid.*

right but also a duty against an authority who contravened the people's sovereignty.⁶⁸

The significance of these articles to a country which, since August 1830, was rightly or wrongly perceived to be in a permanent state of revolution was two-fold. First, they sanctified the sovereign will of the people in such a manner that it could never be eviscerated, completely delegated or limited. It remained constant, permanent and legitimate. Secondly, by implication, it depicted reformist republicans as élitists fearful of unleashing the virtue inherent in unrestrained sovereignty. If nothing else, their faith in parliamentary politics bore witness to both timidity and a generally undemocratic spirit.

More than anything, these articles reflected the ideas and influence of Buonarroti who edited Teste's final draft. Buonarroti had never seen any advantage in a general alliance of republicans. Instead, he believed that an appeal premised on social class divisions would be the most successful route to the production of a social republic.⁶⁹ The reference to the 'sovereign will of the people', vague as it may have been, was intended to embody and protect the spirit of populism against the temptation to revert to authoritarian rule. Ultimately, Teste had located the legitimacy for insurgency in the righteousness of popular choice. Thus stated, insurgency became a self-validating process. However, inherent within Teste's argument were several unanswered questions, not the least of which was posed by

⁶⁸ Teste's Article 49 corresponds literally to Robespierre's Article 29; in Article 50 Teste wrote that 'le pouvoir insurrectionnel qui aide le peuple à recouvrer la souveraineté, mérite bien de la patrie et de l'humanité'. *Ibid.*

⁶⁹ Galante-Garrone, *op. cit.* at 304.

his belief that *la démocratie parfaite* was best symbolised and achieved through armed vigilance. What about those who didn't participate in the insurrection either out of opposition, ambivalence or logistical problems? Further, Teste's picture of a utopia of popular consensus was dependent upon too many fictions. At best it appeared to be either an expedient legitimisation for an impending insurrection or a tonic to maintain the revolutionary devotion of his troops.

Underlying the revolutionary republican rhetoric was the dilemma that only a small minority of activists in Paris (and perhaps a few other urban centers) were receptive to calls 'aux armes'. If this were true, in the event of victory, any claims to a popular mandate would be difficult to sustain. On the other hand, history bore witness to the fact that an initiative taken in Paris was fully able to overcome any challenge posed by possible counterrevolution in the provinces. Beyond that, though, and a potentially greater source of worry, was that by linking popular sovereignty with popular protest, the revolutionary movement may unwittingly have generated a spiral of political instability. This, of course, was the problem encountered by the July Monarchy of a régime whose birth was conceived on the barricades. Some moderate republicans, stirred into support for an insurrection by the draconian laws of 1834⁷⁰, none the less fell back on earlier distinctions about the legitimacy of insurgency during a monarchy and its redundancy during a republic.⁷¹ Revolutionary republicans, in remaining faithful to the *Jacobin-*

⁷⁰ Weill, *op. cit.* at 99-100.

⁷¹ Marrast, Armand, 'Doctrines Républicaines. Programme de la Tribune (Paris: 1833)'. *Les Révolutions du XIXe Siècle, op. cit.* (tom. X). Marrast argued that republics are based on progress which allows them constant flexibility, malleability

Babouviste tradition imbibed from Buonarroti, could not subscribe to the subtle political distinctions now postulated by the temporal and temporary militancy of Marrast and Raspail. Any circumstantial consensus was bound to be fleeting.

By April 1834 the tension between the government and the republican opposition, having remained taut since June 1832, had clearly reached a breaking point. Laws passed in February 1834 severely restricted hawkers from freely selling political pamphlets and, in April 1834, political associations, whatever, their size, had to receive the prefect's sanction. These measures were directed specifically at *la Société des Droits de l'Homme*.⁷² The Society was never adequately able to resolve the dilemma of rising to the government's challenge or submitting to it. The parent society at Paris remained encumbered by its internal confusion and factionalism and offered no direction to its more militant provincial affiliates.⁷³

Alone, Lyon, which since the uprising of November 1831 had demonstrated an extraordinary receptivity to militant republicanism agitated with force sufficient to topple the régime. Lyon had developed a relatively powerful *Société des Droits de l'Homme* which maintained some informational and personnel links with the

and perfectibility. Therefore, insurgency is anachronistic during a republic.

⁷² Coinciding with the repression of the June 1832 uprising was an economic upturn. For a brief period, the July Monarchy breathed a sigh of relief that the wind had been taken out of the revolutionaries' sails. However, when the anticipated disembowelment of republicanism didn't materialise, the monarchy resumed its politics of paranoia. Pilbeam, *op. cit.* at 179-80.

⁷³ Louis Blanc believed that the revolution was certain to have succeeded had the Paris *Société des Droits de l'Homme* given the provinces a sign of support. Blanc, Louis, *op. cit.* at (tom. IV), pp. 234-5.

city's mutualist and other worker organisations.⁷⁴ However, Lyon was somewhat unique amongst French cities. Its weavers had already been revolutionary masters of the city (though for only three days) while a mutualists' strike in February 1834 had nearly pushed the Lyonnais into civil war (though not necessarily one motivated by political concerns).⁷⁵

Though certainly the most consequential of the *journées d'avril 1834*, the Lyon uprising was, according to Robert Bezucha, more a product of the economic climate (and, in particular, the general strike and trial of strike leaders which commenced on 5 April) than of a penchant for republicanism.⁷⁶ On the other hand,

⁷⁴ A changing of the guard in the Lyonnais mutualist society in 1833 produced an Executive Council that was both younger (and presumably more in tune with the developing republican rhetoric) and more likely to connect politics with economic concerns (two-thirds of the new leadership were members of the Lyon branch of the *Société des Droits de l'Homme*). Bezucha, Robert. *The Lyon Uprising of 1834. Social and Political Conflict in the Early July Monarchy*. (Cambridge MA: 1974), p. 111.

⁷⁵ Louis Blanc, *op. cit.* at 250-61. During the mutualists' work stoppage (12 - 22 February 1834) the leadership of the Lyonnais section of the *Société des Droits de l'Homme* felt itself unable to either lead the insurrection demanded by some of its mutualist members or to completely dampen its fervour. Edouard Albert, on behalf of the Society, and perhaps with the purpose of bluffing the militants into believing the Society was serious about a confrontation with the authorities, was sent to Paris to solicit the support of Godefroi Cavaignac and Guinard. In the meantime, however, the strike was settled and Albert was left to ponder over the general militancy of Lyon vis-à-vis Paris. "Paris isn't like Lyon." [he wrote] "It has no need of being curbed, it rather wants the spur". Bezucha, *op. cit.* at 129.

⁷⁶ *Ibid.* at 174, citing an eyewitness report that "[t]he workers of Lyon did not revolt as Republicans, but as workers united by a mutual interest". However, as Bezucha also recognised, one must be wary of interpreting the events at Lyon through, what might have been, the self-serving accounts of the actors. It is important to remember that an economic dispute was far less threatening to the social and political order than was an overtly republican insurrection. Consequently, it was in the government's interest to portray the uprising as decidedly republican since this would justify its apparent overreaction. Conversely, it was in the insurgents' interest to characterise the revolt as motivated by economic hardship

though it played a minor rôle in the April uprising, the importance of the *Société des Droits de l'Homme* in transforming 'the idiom of association into a coherent framework for collective action' must not be minimalised as the catalyst for the events of February and April 1834.⁷⁷ Furthermore, it is difficult to adequately maintain that, in the aftermath of November 1831, militant weavers actually believed the July Monarchy was inclined to satisfy their aspirations and impartially arbitrate economic grievances. In point of fact, the ebb-and-flow of the six days of insurgency at Lyon may have been influenced by an expectation that Paris and other cities would react in a similar fashion. Consequently, Lyon, not Paris, would be the revolutionary beacon of France. This, however, did not occur and despite sporadic outbreaks of violence and republican chants in other municipalities, the insurrection in Lyon produced no repercussions in the rest of France.⁷⁸

In so far as the Parisian reaction to events at Lyon something less than imitative, several conclusions regarding this insurrection may be drawn. First, the cautious approach of the *Société des Droits de l'Homme* indicates that its influence amongst Parisian workers was perhaps greater than that of worker organisations. Perhaps because of the *sans-culottes* tradition, Parisian workers were more tuned-in to political issues than their peers in other French cities. At Lyon the reverse was generally true and the *canuts* were more traditionally influenced by their craft organisations than political associations. The difference in worker traditions at Paris

since this would underscore the insensitivity of the authorities.

⁷⁷ Sewell, William H., Jr. *Work and Revolution in France. The Language of Labor from the Old Regime to 1848*. (Cambridge: 1980), p. 209.

⁷⁸ Bezucha, *op. cit.* at 172-4.

and Lyon was, in many respects, determinative of the approaches adopted by the Parisian and Lyonnais sections of the *Société des Droits de l'Homme*.

Secondly, and related to the preceding point, Parisian societies had been in a state of decline in 1833. As a result they may not have seen much advantage in a confrontation that, likely as not, would signal their death knell. Many Parisian revolutionaries speculated that the government hoped to provoke the *Société des Droits de l'Homme* into a premature battle which would be easily crushed by the expectant government troops. For his part, Buonarroti urged the Lyonnais mutualists to exercise prudence and moderation during their February strike.⁷⁹ Months later, Buonarroti expressed dismay over the insurrections of the spring. '«Malheureusement, un zèle aveugle a entravé la course de la démocratie en France; on a voulu cueillir le fruit avant qu'il fût mûr»'.⁸⁰ The Lyon *Société des Droits de l'Homme*, in awaiting the signal from the parent society at Paris, was, itself, far less encouraging than the increasingly militant workers at Lyon had hoped. Further complications resulted from the mixed signals given by Lyon's more radical republican newspaper, *la Glaneuse*. In an article commemorating the second anniversary of November 1831, the paper promised that, should the workers of Lyon rise again, '«nous serons [...] à notre poste, PRÊTS À ACCOMPLIR NOTRE MISSION, A ACHEVER NOTRE TÂCHE»'. Within a month, *la Glaneuse* drew an ill-defined distinction between riot and insurgency, approving of the latter '«when the people have found it impossible for several years to change legally the order of

⁷⁹ Blanc, Louis, *op. cit.* at (tom IV), p. 258.

⁸⁰ Galante-Garrone, *op. cit.* at 307.

things"⁸¹.

Inconsistency and timidity undermined any semblance of credibility the Lyon *Société des Droits de l'Homme* hoped to cultivate amongst increasingly politicised weavers. Its clearly defensive approach to insurgency⁸² underestimated the degree to which mutualists inseparably associated republicanism with social and economic concerns.⁸³ The 1834 insurrection in Lyon was, in part, provoked by economic factors and was made by the city's artisans. Unlike 1831, however, in addition, the very essence of the French state had been questioned. The very murkiness of the issues in 1834, as opposed to their clarity and simplicity in 1831, had rendered appeasement through provisional measures and promises an unworkable option. The 1834 insurrection at Lyon was a product of complex forces. The July Monarchy was not going to sustain its early liberal approach to mutualism and republican discourse when, in 1834, Lyonnais workers had linked the two together.

However, the rising in Lyon confirmed Paris as the only conceivable staging ground for the revolutionary theatre and, it was at Paris, that the strength of the

⁸¹ 'Procès de la «Glaneuse». 12 mars 1834. (Lyon: s.d.) *Les Révolutions du XIXe Siècle, op. cit.* (tom. VI); (emphasis original). Bezucha, *op. cit.* at 91, quoting from *la Glaneuse* (19 Décembre 1833).

⁸² See, e.g., 'Association Lyonnaise des Droits de l'homme et du citoyen. Au peuple. Le peuple souffre parce qu'il gouverne pas. Le peuple et les députés. De la liberté civile. Le paysan et son curé. (Lyon: s.d.)'. *Les Révolutions du XIXe Siècle, op. cit.* (tom VI).

⁸³ See, e.g., 'La Révolte de Lyon en 1834, ou la fille du prolétaire. (Paris: 1835)'. *Ibid.*: 'Car il veut vivre en travaillant ou mourir en combattant. Cette formule restera dans l'histoire: elle est écrite avec le sang des lyonnais sur le drapeau du prolétariat [sic]; malheureusement elle est destinée à reparaître à chacune des crises futures de notre société industrielle'.

Société des Droits de l'Homme was most apparent. The only threat posed by the events in Lyon to the stability of the July Monarchy was the portent they carried for reverberations in Paris. Isolated, Lyon could not expect to overthrow the highly centralised administration seated at Paris. Instead, a prior coördination of effort between it and revolutionaries at the capital would have been necessary to seriously undermine the régime. In Paris, though, the politicised workers and artisans joined republican societies. At any rate, they had yet to form autonomous, apolitical worker organisations such as existed in Lyon. Consequently, their actions were largely dictated by the caution urged by their bourgeois leaders who had previously determined against succumbing to the government's bait.

Disturbing the King's Sleep - Regicides

The 1834 insurrections produced two immediate problems for the July Monarchy: assassination attempts and clandestine secret societies. A critical lesson learned after the Lyon insurrection was that the fortunes of a revolution were very dependent upon the choice of target. The uprising at Lyon proved to be little more than an irritant to the government which was far more concerned that its forces be able to put down any signs of rebellion at Paris. In response, some opponents of the régime began to consider the personal nature of monarchies. Specifically, in so far as a monarchial régime revolved around the person of the king, his death could accelerate the revolutionary republican process or, at any rate, create more favourable conditions for its advent.

The execution of Louis XVI on 21 January 1793 was a far more symbolic start

for the First Republic than its declaration on 21 September 1792. However, the sequence of these two dates provided a critical distinction between revolutionary republicanism in the early 1790s and revolutionary republicanism in the early 1830s. In the former, the execution of Louis XVI had followed from the abolition of the monarchy. Consequently, there was no question of succession and the act of regicide had simply confirmed and solidified the event which had preceded it by exactly four months. During the July Monarchy, though, the issue of regicide was shrouded in the dilemma of whether the act was an expression of hostility towards the individual (Louis Philippe) or the institution of royalty. In point of fact, it was not altogether axiomatic that Louis Philippe's death would produce either a republic or a revolution that would produce a republic.⁸⁴

Beginning with the first alleged attempt against Louis Philippe, the régime endeavoured to link the republican societies with the various assassins. For their part, republicans contrasted their wider objectives to the limited impact which the King's death would produce.⁸⁵ The government's most concerted effort to paint republicans as prospective regicides arose in the case of Fieschi, Pépin and Morey

⁸⁴ In February 1836 *le Pilote du Calvados* contrasted the general act of regicide from Fieschi's lack of courage and resolve in his specific attempt. According to the paper, Fieschi 'avait retardé de dix ou de vingt ans une révolution'. BB¹⁸ 1362.

⁸⁵ *Société des Droits de l'Homme*. 'Procès du coup de pistolet. Publié par deux sectionnaires. (Paris: 1833)'. *Ibid.* (tom. III). Bergeron, a republican and combatant of June 1832 denied any intention to kill Louis Philippe. 'La mort d'un roi, pour nous, c'est la mort d'un homme, des frais à payer pour l'intronisation de son successeur, une cohue de nouveaux courtisans à engraisser, et rien de plus'. (p. 97). Underscoring the frequency of regicidal attempts against Louis Philippe was Prince de Joinville's response to a question whether the King should be congratulated for having escaped being shot. "Certainly. We always do it". Johnson, Douglas, *Guizot. Aspects of French History 1789-1874*. (London: 1963), p. 165.

who, in 1835, attempted to kill Louis Philippe and his entourage with 'la machine infernale'. Pépin and Morey had been members of the *Société des Droits de l'Homme*. Pépin, most likely in an unsuccessful effort at getting his death sentence commuted, implicated Blanqui as an accessory to the attempt. Confronted with the accusation at the trial of his *Société des Familles* (where Blanqui, Barbès and others were accused of storing a cache of explosives for the purpose of blasting their way into the revolutionary annals), Blanqui convincingly denied any involvement in, or prior knowledge of, Fieschi's plan. Ever the pragmatist who only occasionally suffered from fits of revolutionary impulsiveness, Blanqui shared the common republican disdain for assassination.

However, the temptation to take a shot at the King, steadily building since the early days of the July Monarchy, reached fruition in the repressive aftermath which followed April 1834.⁸⁶ As previously noted, both Pépin and Morey had been members of *la Société des Droits de l'Homme*. In addition, however, the authors of at least three other attempts - Alibaud (1836), Darmès (1840) and Quenisset (1841) - were, by their own admissions, inspired by earlier uprisings or contemporary

⁸⁶ Dommanget, *op. cit.* at 163. Dommanget noted that 'le régicide était devenue une action méritoire, parfois même un sujet de plaisanterie dans les groupements les plus résolus de l'opposition'. Amongst the evidence presented against Barbès at his trial for having organised the insurrection of 1839 were two documents (one allegedly written prior to Fieschi's attempt) which utilised the typical revolutionary penchant for hyperbolic metaphor. Barbès analogised the insurrectionary task to the killing of a hydra. Just as it is necessary to cut off all the hydra's heads in order to kill it, it was likewise crucial, during a monarchy, to destroy both the monarch ('le tyran') and the social order ('la tyrannie'). 'Cour de Pairs. Attentat des 12 et 13 mai 1839. Réquisitoires et répliques de M. Franck-Carré, Procureur général dans les débats ouverts le 27 juin 1839, avec l'exposé des charges, individuelles, par MM. Boucly et Nouguié, Avocats généraux. (Paris: 1839)', pp. 34-7. *Les Révolutions du XIXe Siècle* (Deuxième série, 1834-48; tom. IX) (Paris: 1974).

militant republican discourse.⁸⁷ It is therefore quite plausible to conclude that once repressed (in 1834), the revolutionary dynamic sought out other methods for realising its design. Fieschi, Alibaud, Darmès and Quenisset all made their attempts during periods of high governmental oppression or low activity of secret societies. Although the *Société des Familles* was in existence at the time of Fieschi's attempt, it appeared to have been only an interim society sandwiched between the *Société des Droits de l'Homme* and the *Société des Saisons*. Through their inspirations and aspirations, the would-be king-killers had, due to circumstances, supplanted *le peuple* as the arbiters of political disputes. In many respects, the regicide represented the micro-revolutionary movement. Alibaud justified his attempt by characterising himself as an executioner forced to commit the act because of the conduct of his intended victim.⁸⁸ Obviously, Alibaud had successfully imbibed the defensive justification utilised at an earlier time by defenders of insurgency.

The July Monarchy was also quite concerned over the 'aftershocks' which followed the attempts. Similar to the manner by which insurrections drew attention

⁸⁷ Alibaud invoked the massacre of 'citoyens dans les rues de Lyon et au cloître Saint-Méry' for his determination to kill Louis Philippe. Blanc, Louis, *op. cit.* at (tom. V), p. 50. Darmès, having listed his occupation as 'conspirateur', was largely influenced by the work of future Communard Jean-Jacques Pillot, *Ni châteaux, ni chaumières*, and commenced his republican activism at the end of 1832, perhaps also crediting his regicidal tendencies to the uprising of June 1832. 'Cour de Pairs. Attentat du 15 octobre 1840. RAPPORT fait à la cour par M. le Girod (d'Ain) (Paris: 1841)', pp. 7, 37. *Les Révolutions du XIXe Siècle, op. cit.* at (2ème série, tom. X). Quenisset asserted that his goal had been to start a revolution. Previously, Quenisset had been associated with Mathieu (d'Epinal) who, as president of the *Société des Droits de l'Homme* in the Vosges, maintained a close relationship with Buonarroti and Teste. 'Cour de Pairs. Attentat du 13 septembre 1841. RAPPORT fait à la Cour par M. le comte de Bastard. (Paris: 1841)'. *Ibid.* at (2ème série, tom. XI).

⁸⁸ Blanc, Louis, *op. cit.* at (tom. V), p. 49.

to the vulnerability of the régime, assassination attempts carried with them the portent for agitating an already hostile populace.⁸⁹ The example of the regicide was not only pertinent for other regicides but also for revolutionary leaders.⁹⁰ As part of the government's case against members of the *Société des Saisons* for involvement in the insurrection of May 1839 (to which we have already alluded and will have more to say below) were various writings by those inculpated in the 1839 uprising. In a letter dated 23 February 1836, Marc Dufraisse described Fieschi's efforts not as 'un attentat' but as a revolution and, therefore, moral since it was directed against counterrevolutionaries. '«Le premier devoir de l'homme est d'anéantir tout ce qui s'oppose au progrès, c'est-à-dire la révolution»'. Dufraisse next contrasted the characters of the three accused, praising only Morey and expressing sorrow that his execution did not stir 'le peuple'. Dufraisse's eulogy of Morey did not suggest any moral difference between regicides and insurgents provided both were motivated by revolutionary designs. '«Ah! mon ami, la tradition révolutionnaire est morte dans les coeurs! [...] Quand donc viendra le jour des réhabilitations?»'⁹¹

⁸⁹ In general, Alibaud was more widely admired than Fieschi since, according to one speaker at Saint-Sever (Landes), the device used by Fieschi was such that it could have inadvertently killed some innocent citizens. Support for Alibaud was also expressed at Grenoble, Lyon and Poitiers (Vienne). At Douai (Nord), portraits of Fieschi, Pépin and Morey were sold along with depictions of their execution. Expressions of support for Alibaud at Lyon partially explains the cancellation of the King's expected visit there on 29 July 1836. *A.N.*, BB₁₈ 1364, 1368.

⁹⁰ A manuscript seized amongst Darmès possessions lauded Alibaud in a warning to Louis Philippe: '«aux tyrans du peuple que la race d'Alibaud n'est pas éteinte»'. 'Cour de Pairs. Attentat du 15 octobre 1840 [...]', p. 9, *Les Révolutions du XIXe Siècle, op. cit.*

⁹¹ 'Cour des Pairs. Affaire des 12 et 13 mai 1839. Rapport fait à la Cour les 11 et 12 juin 1839, par M. Merilhou, comprenant les faits généraux et la première série des faits particuliers. (Paris: 1839)', pp. 25-7. *Ibid.* at (tom. IX).

Dufraisse's defense, though, does not reflect the general spirit prevailing among revolutionary republicans, most of whom continued to distance themselves from regicidal attempts.⁹² Popular calls of 'mort au roi!' were not, in all probability, directed personally at Louis Philippe as much as at the institution of which he was the visible manifestation. Consequently, republicans had to confront the very distinct possibility that an act of violence committed against an individual would be seen as just that - an act of violence and, correspondingly, would generate more revulsion than support. Further, while some republican tracts continued to list 21 January alongside 14 July, 10 August and 27-29 July as steps in the revolutionary process, sanctity was accorded Louis XVI's execution while disdain typified attempts against Louis Philippe. The distinction is comprehensible only by way of reference to the propensity of revolutionaries to enrobe their extralegal acts in an alternative form of legality, one borne out of popular sovereignty. A lone assassin neither expressed the sovereign will nor guaranteed the accomplishment of a revolution. Bearing in mind that only a minority actually participated in insurrections, the foregoing may appear to be an artificial distinction or a blatantly duplicitous argument. On the other hand, it carried more viable implications regarding the acceptability of, and limits to, violence.

We would be remiss, however, if we ignored the revolutionarily intransigent *le Moniteur Républicain*, an ephemeral journal which, none the less, appeared to be a source of worry to the régime. An article entitled 'Du Régicide' defended

⁹² For example, after Alibaud's attempt, Blanqui wrote in *la Revue retrospective*: '«Un assassinat [...] ne peut être l'affaire d'un complot»'. Quoted in: Sencier, Georges, *Le Babouvisme après Babeuf* (Paris: 1912, reprinted, Genève: s.d.), p. 91.

assassination attempts in the romanticised terms of 'l'homme de progrès' whose only employable resource for accomplishing his duty is to become 'le régicide, le tyrannicide, l'assassinat, comme on voudra qualifier cette action héroïque'.⁹³ In adopting so bellicose a stance, the paper confronted the accusation that republicans were 'des hommes de sang' by claiming that a more thorough cleansing of the Bourbon taint in 1793 would have spared France bloody incidents like the Vendée and, later, the White Terror. Turning its attention to Louis Philippe, the article characterised him as no less guilty than Louis XVI of 'conspiration contre le peuple'. There was one notable difference, however: under an absolutist monarchy, 'on sait du moins à quoi s'en tenir' and is therefore not working under a permanent deception. Unlike the standard republican disclaimer that the death of a king could only follow from a revolution, *le Moniteur Républicain* argued that the recent history of failed uprisings proves that the reverse is true today.⁹⁴ The paper called upon 'l'homme de bien qui se sent de la force dans le bras et une vraie conviction dans le coeur' to be the 'juge souverain de la vie ou de la mort du tyran'. Apparently sovereignty could be delegated. The paper further bolstered its rather audacious position by quoting Saint-Just who favourably compared the murder of Caesar before the Senate to the respectful proceedings accorded 'un homme assassin du peuple' - Louis XVI.

⁹³ *Le Moniteur Républicain* (no. 6) 16 Floréal an 46. As is apparent, the paper's revolutionary fidelity extended all the way to the abandonment of the Gregorian calendar and resurrection of the republican one.

⁹⁴ '[L]es clubs, les émeutes, les insurrections ayant manqué, l'attentat devait venir à son tour pour trancher le noeud gordien de l'avenir'. *Ibid.*

In this very powerful article, *le Moniteur Républicain* estimated that the chances of sufficiently arousing 'les rangs démocratiques' into a *prise d'armes* in 1838 were, indeed, slim. It none the less blurred the distinction expressed by other revolutionaries between the exercise of popular sovereignty displayed by insurgents and the anarchical sovereignty evinced by the lone assassin. If the idea of popular sovereignty was crucial to legitimising the acts of violence that were an inseparable consequence of an uprising, it was no less crucial to the characterization of the regicide as revolutionary. In the furtherance of the revolutionary goal, there was no need to attach relative value to the acts of the individual and the collective group. However, in the process, there was something unsavoury about the equation of assassins and insurgents. The defense of the former by way of comparison to the latter was bound to conjure up all the stereotypes of revolutionaries that revolutionary republicans had been combatting. Images of *buveurs de sang* and criminality which had, for so many years, tarnished the memories of Robespierre, Saint-Just, Marat, Babeuf, *et. al* were threatening to be revived by the revolutionaries own discourse.

Disturbing the King's Sleep II - Professional Revolutionaries

On 12 and 13 May 1839, Paris again became the theatre of what would turn out to be the final insurrection against the July Monarchy before 1848. The *Société des Saisons*, a highly secret and hierarchically well-organised militant republican society led by Barbès, Blanqui and Martin Bernard had hoped to take advantage of the combination of another economic crisis, a ministerial crisis, an international

exposition and a changing of the troops stationed at Paris to lead a revolution. The plan called for the establishment of a provisional government composed of Blanqui, Barbès, Martin Bernard, Voyer d'Argenson, Laponneraye, Lamennais and Dubosc. However, within hours of its manifestation, the uprising was crushed. Although the *Saisons* had a membership totally around 1,000, a smaller number than that showed up at the appointed hour. To the insurgents it was the classic case of throwing a revolution and nobody showing up. Some *sociétaires* who did turn up quickly became frustrated by the apparent lack of organisation as weapons had to be procured by breaking in to an armourer's warehouse. In terms of the general Parisian public, it watched with little more than curiosity as the spectacle unfolded and played itself out. In countless ways, the insurrection of May 1839 was a parody of revolution.⁹⁵

The *Société des Saisons* epitomised the fruition of Buonarroti's conspiratorial concept of revolution. Organised along the lines of a pyramid whereby those at the lower echelons did not know the identity of those immediately above them in the hierarchy, it vaguely imitated Babeuf's clandestine organisation. Further, it conformed to Buonarroti's experience that secrecy and discretion within a revolutionary society best minimised the effective operation of infiltrators and informants, the very flaw which compromised the Conspiracy of the Equals.

⁹⁵ On the insurrection of May 1839, few incisive studies have been made. The best are: Dommanget, *op. cit.* at 145-239 and Latta, Claude, 'L'insurrection de 1839', *Blanqui et les Blanquistes* (Paris: 1986), pp. 69-85. Another account can be found in: Bernstein, Samuel, *Auguste Blanqui and the Art of Insurrection* (London: 1971), Chapter 6; A fairly detailed rendering of the events can be found in: Zévaès, Alexandre, *Une Révolution manquée: le 12 mai 1839*. (Paris: 1933).

Buonarroti's influence on the post-1834 revolutionary movement was not limited to Paris. At Lyon where, arguably, the most self-consciously neo-babouvist movement existed, militant republicans created a parallel society to the *Saisons* called *la Société des Égaux*.⁹⁶ Beyond the structure and name identity at Lyon, Buonarroti's insistence on class struggle, adopted from Babeuf, had become the cornerstone which marked May 1839 as an uprising of workers and artisans.⁹⁷ Beyond this, though, a quick survey of the records of those arrested for participation in the insurrection reveals a proportion of workers nearly equal to the June 1848 uprising as well as an impressive number of participants in the insurrections of 1832 and 1834.⁹⁸

At the trial of the accused insurgents, the attorney-general endeavoured to emphasize and highlight the revolutionary propensity of those in the dock. His strategy was obviously to summon the same feelings of abhorrence and revulsion felt towards regicides. Just as the assassins' conspiratorial actions were distinguishable from a spontaneous popular uprising, so too, the prosecutor argued, the revolution of 1839 lacked spontaneity. As opposed to the circumstances which led to the barricades of 1832 and 1834 - the cholera epidemic

⁹⁶ Benoît, Joseph, *Confessions d'un prolétaire* (Paris: 1968), p. 61. 'Pendant des années, même après la mort du vieux conspirateur, la presse d'opposition, les sociétés secrètes, et même l'insurrection de 1839 ont évolué dans une orbite que nous pourrions appeler buonarrotienne'. Galante-Garrone, *op. cit.* at 314.

⁹⁷ Latta, *op. cit.* at 77-80.

⁹⁸ *Ibid.* at 81-4. Latta accepted this evidence as proof that 'parmi les ouvriers parisiens, d'une véritable catégorie de «révolutionnaires professionnels» [...] prêts à tous les coups de main contre le régime, experts dans le combat de rues, dans l'art de fabriquer de la poudre ou de construire des barricades'.

and the association and press laws, respectively,⁹⁹ - the insurgents of 1839 were motivated by fertile imaginings that they could achieve 'aujourd'hui ce qui rêvait Baboeuf il y a plus de quarante ans'. In point of fact, it was argued, the revolutionary movement existed in a sub-society with an alternative code of behaviour. Most distressing for the nation, the prosecutor continued, revolutionaries were in a perpetual state of war with existent society.¹⁰⁰ The prosecution's acknowledgement of specific grievances underlying the 1832 and 1834 insurrections was a crude attempt at distinguishing the past from the present; after all, wasn't there an economic crisis in 1839? That said, it none the less alluded to a revolutionary continuum during the July Monarchy which included the attempts by Fieschi and Alibaud as well as the non-politically motivated attempt by mentally-deranged François Meunier.¹⁰¹ Anticipating François Furet by almost a century-and-a-half, the prosecution believed the revolutionary republican tradition to be an aberration (*un dérapage?*) of the tradition of 1789 represented by Louis Philippe. This view marginalised the revolutionary *journées*, First Republic, Robespierre and Jacobinism as unnecessary deviations from the liberal agenda of 1789. In a similar vein the revolutionary republicans of 1839 were depicted as

⁹⁹ 'Cour de Pairs. Attentat des 12 et 13 mai 1839. RÉQUISITOIRE de M. Franck-Carré, Procureur-général, avec l'exposé des charges individuelles, par MM. Boucly et Nougulier, Avocats généraux. (Paris: 1840)', pp. 4-5. *Les Révolutions du XIXe Siècle, op. cit.* at (2ème Série, tom. X).

¹⁰⁰ 'Cour de Pairs. Attentat des 12 et 13 mai 1839. Rapport fait à la cour par M. Merilhou, comprenant la seconde série des faits particuliers. (Paris: 1839)', pp. 123-4, *Ibid.*

¹⁰¹ 'Cour de Pairs. Attentat des 12 et 13 mai 1839. RÉQUISITOIRE de Procureur-général. Arrêté du mercredi 12 juin 1839. Réquisitoire du 12 juin '839. Acte d'accusation. (Paris: 1839)', pp. 36-48, *Ibid.*

perpetuating this false tradition. To the July Monarchy, the revolutionary republicans were diverting the natural progression of history through artificial means by obfuscating fidelity to the Revolution with the repetition of its least salubrious features. Thus, committing the moral equivalent of criminality in the political arena.¹⁰²

Before the repression of the May 1839 insurrection, the revolutionary tradition, or, more precisely the insurrectionary tradition, was perhaps the most meaningful legacy of the Revolution. The pressure placed on the July Monarchy was the combination of two themes. First, a powerful belief that, in seemingly replaying 1789, *les trois glorieuses* was not destined to parody the Revolution, but rather to realise its higher aspirations. Second, a constant and steady confirmation of popular sovereignty in its purest, least diluted manifestation. Just as the Revolution reached its zenith by way of the *journée révolutionnaire*, so too would popular protest keep clear the path blazed by *les trois glorieuses*. The insurrection of 1839 was the culmination of a succession of revolutionary reprises under the July Monarchy that featured *journées*, assassination attempts, secret societies and an assortment of propaganda. However, the revolutionary tradition was not able to withstand the monarchy's ability to adapt and improvise repressive answers.

¹⁰² The official reporter on the trials of the May 1839 insurgents, Merilhou, noted the existence of a revolutionary society formed to fill the void left by the *Saisons*. This new society operates 'sous la bannière de Saint-Just, dont ils citent les doctrines avec enthousiasme et ils ont ambitionné un nom qui fait encore après plus de trente ans, l'effroi de la postérité; ils ont voulu s'appeler Jacobins!' 'Cour de Pairs. Attentat des 12 et 13 mai 1839. Rapport fait à la cour par M. Merilhou, comprenant la seconde série des faits particuliers. (Paris: 1839)', p. 122, *Les Révolutions du XIXe Siècle, op. cit.* at (tom. X).

However, in spite of periodic economic depressions and their own enthusiasm and confidence, revolutionary republicans were unable to rouse France out of its languor and generate anything approaching revolutionary intensity.¹⁰³

The insurrection of 1839 did raise two significant questions. Was the revolutionary tradition sufficiently viable enough to operate independently of events? In other words, in the absence of a specific, direct and immediate provocation was the Buonarrotien conception of a conspiratorial revolution a credible option? Beyond this, could the insurgent tradition maintain its dynamism or derive any consolation after so intemperate an uprising as that of 1839 and the wave of regicidal attempts by republican sympathisers?

As previously stated, the events of May 1839 were loosely tied to the confluence of commercial/industrial problems with a ministerial crisis which led to Molé's resignation in March 1839. Putting aside economic matters for the moment, was it at all conceivable that a dispute between parliamentarians (Guizot, Thiers, Barrot) and an advocate of the monarchial will (Molé) could capture the popular imagination in a manner remotely reminiscent of June 1832 and April 1834? Apparently not. Using the ministerial crisis less as a pretext than as a tactical advantage, the *Saisons* rushed into battle despite the hesitancy of its leadership. As a result, the insurrection was unable to expand its base of support beyond those already committed to it. To onlookers, it took on an air of theatricality (or, more

¹⁰³ The 1839 insurrection's one victory, the disarming of guards at the Hôtel de Ville, revealed the futility of the uprising. As Barbès read 'd'une voix forte' the names of the new Provisional Government and appealed to Parisians to take up arms, only a few hundred curious spectators were on hand to witness the event. Latta, *op. cit.* at 73.

precisely, drama considering the nearly 100 deaths). While the revolutionaries might have been able to tap into the economic crisis, such matters were typically appendaged to the emotional rush of insurgency and larger goal of forging a republic. Ultimately, nearly nine years of incessant struggle against Louis Philippe had produced a weariness in Paris that, in 1839, degenerated into immobility.¹⁰⁴

In 1832 and 1834 it was still possible to revive the spirit that invigorated insurgents in July 1830. Emotions continued to run strong and the embers of dissent kindled by a press and propaganda campaign threatened to ignite popular passions over governmental insensitivity and stagnation. However, thought was never quite able to coordinate with action. Having failed to adequately resolve its own internal turmoil, republicanism failed to respond and appreciate the depth of hostility to the fledgling monarchy. On one level, the political system worked against the evolution of the monarchy into a republic. On another level, the revolutionaries were never quite certain about the timing of an insurrection or the attendant message. In the process, they raised the expectations of their followers and, as in 1839, rushed head first into disaster. It would be difficult to maintain the passion for revolution when defeat and repression characterized all revolutionary their epilogues. In 1839 the July Monarchy was in a reasonably entrenched position. Barring a crisis relevant to both workers and bourgeoisie (at least guaranteeing the latter's passivity), political faith, devotion and revolutionary

¹⁰⁴ Louis Blanc, *op. cit.* at (tom. V), pp. 415-6.

traditions would not suffice to overcome the superior forces of the régime.¹⁰⁵

The success or failure of an uprising begs the relevant question regarding the volatile political atmosphere of the 1830s, a period dominated by real or perceived analogies to the Revolution. The Parisian working class' was clearly becoming more grounded in the politics of revolutionary republicanism. This was demonstrated by its increasing proportion amongst the insurgents of 1832, 1834 and 1839. The very general agenda of social republicanism, the programmatic component of revolutionary republicans, seemingly offered a panacea for the amelioration of a host of social ills from economic fluctuations to high prices to the increasing intrusion of mechanised industry and formalised work relationships. Perpetual revolution also offered to restore the dignity lost by the abdication of control over the post-revolutionary events after July 1830. A poster placarded in Paris at the end of April 1837 compared the present mood under the July Monarchy to that of August 1792 when the people, its passion tempered by continued suffering under the constitutional monarchy, 'reprit toute sa vigueur, et redevint sang pur'.¹⁰⁶

If the revolutionary dynamic was as self-validating as its promoters claimed, it worked independent of an intervening crisis. While a specific crisis might accelerate an insurrection or, at any rate, make it appear more imperative, by

¹⁰⁵ Louis Blanc remarked that, having agitated ordinary members of the *Saisons*, the leadership was in no position to dampen their resolve to take to the streets '[c]ar la foi politique a son ivresse et le dévouement ses illusions'. *Ibid.* at (tom. V), p. 412.

¹⁰⁶ Cour de Pairs. Affaire des 12 et 13 mai 1839. Rapport fait à la Cour les 11 et 12 juin 1839, par M. Merilhou, comprenant les faits généraux et la première série des faits particuliers. (Paris: 1839)', pp. 35-6, *Les Révolutions du XIXe Siècle, op. cit.* at (tom. IV).

highlighting the problems within existent society, the revolutionary *mentalité* was not constrained by quantifiable circumstances. In altering the *mentalité* of protest, the French Revolution defined a perpetual and inherently revolutionary situation whenever sovereignty is subordinate to an oligarchy. For what it was worth, the revolution of 1839, though rash in hindsight, epitomised the ceaseless undercurrent of revolution below the surface of the July Monarchy. This was an opposition which was neither the direct product of despair nor satisfied by the chaos arising from its actions. Instead, it confidently anticipated the definitive, perhaps imminent, collapse of a régime which contravened its understanding of the society regenerated by the French Revolution.

In the short run, the imprisonment of Blanqui, Barbès and Martin Bernard deprived revolutionary republicans of the leadership, organisation and unrelenting dedication upon which it had grown dependent. Further, the demise of the *Saisons*, produced a void which remained unfilled until the Second Republic. In these two respects, the uprising served the purposes of the July Monarchy. However, the very occurrence of the uprising substantiated the revolutionaries' argument that, as the decade came to a close, France's destiny was at a cross-roads.

In December 1839, Lamennais urged that violence was counter-productive to effectuating change.¹⁰⁷ The following year, however, his views had altered. Rather than stress the impetuosity of insurrection, Lamennais philosophically asserted that the immediacy of the moment sometimes provides events within their

¹⁰⁷ Lamennais, Félicité de, 'De l'esclavage moderne. (Paris: décembre 1839)', pp. 83-4. *Ibid.* (at tom. III).

own dynamic; the resulting progress will thus be achieved violently or pacifically.¹⁰⁸ Although his name appeared on the Provisional Government read out by Barbès on 12 May 1839, Lamennais was neither a member of the *Saisons* nor a proponent of insurgency. None the less, his words were symptomatic of the pervasive view that French society was sitting atop a smouldering volcano. Yet in 1840, as in 1839, there was no new significant, identifiable crisis that should have encouraged this view. On the other hand, 1840 marked both a year of strike activity unprecedented since 1833 and the emergence of a distinctively labour-oriented philosophy; in short, the advent of socialism.¹⁰⁹ What Lamennais appeared to be referring to was the concourse of an insurrectionary tradition, worker politicisation and burgeoning labour militancy. For the July Monarchy, specifically, and liberalism, generally, this lethal mix portended a most precarious future.

Another republican who viewed the 1839 uprising as the inevitable response to oppression was lawyer, journalist and art critic, Théophile Thoré. Thoré harboured no illusions about the relationship between insurgency and 'le parti démocratique', a point he believed was thrown into stark relief in May 1839. Paraphrasing Robespierre's Declaration of Rights of Man and Citizen, Thoré wrote, 'L'insurrection de mai a prouvé que le Peuple n'entend point renoncer à ce qu'il considère toujours comme **le plus saint de ses devoirs**. L'espoir de

¹⁰⁸ Lamennais, Félicité de, 'Le Pays et le gouvernement. (Paris: 1840)', pp. 109-10. *Ibid.* 'Nous sommes à l'un de ces moments suprêmes où les choses, plus fortes que les hommes, les dominent et entraînent la société où elle doit aller'. This document landed Lamennais a one-year stint at Sainte-Pélagie and a 2,000 franc fine. *Dictionnaire Biographique, op. cit.* at tom. II.

¹⁰⁹ Sewell, *op. cit.* at 219-23.

l'affranchissement a toujours vécu dans les coeurs français'.¹¹⁰ Thoré believed 'le parti révolutionnaire' would remain viable as long as the moral, intellectual and material well-being of the people was ignored. In defense of Thoré, Henri Celliez argued, 'Les insurrections et leurs résultats ont exercé sur le Parti démocratique une si grande influence, qu'elles sont inévitablement liées à son histoire'. Celliez concluded that as part of this popular history, May 1839 was an incremental aspect of the progression of the nation's history.¹¹¹ Celliez, himself, conflated Babouvisme with Saint-Simonianism in a pamphlet entitled, *Devoir des révolutionnaires*:

On commença à comprendre que la seule alliance des idées nouvelles avec les traditions révolutionnaires donnerait aux unes comme aux autres pouvoir de vivre et de se répandre dans la société pour la transformer. Socialistes et révolutionnaires ont compris que la révolution sociale ne peut se faire sans la révolution politique, ni la révolution politique sans la révolution sociale; ou mieux encore, qu'il n'y a que une Révolution, à la fois politique et sociale.¹¹²

At a democratic banquet in the eleventh arrondissement attended by more than 200 workers, students, National Guardsmen and socialists, Napoléon Gallois made a toast, 'Au 14 juillet 89! Au 10 août 92! Aux 27, 28 et 29 juillet 1830!'. Although he paid homage to the efficacy of insurgency on those dates, Galois did not ignore defeats such as May 1839. 'Il y aurait encore ingratitude de notre

¹¹⁰ Thoré, Théophile, 'La Verité sur le Parti Démocratique. (Paris: 1840)', p. 30, *Ibid.* at (tom. IV). (Emphasis original).

¹¹¹ 'Procès de T. Thoré, auteur de la brochure intitulée La Verité sur le Parti Démocratique. (Paris: 1841)', pp. 54-5, *Ibid.* Thoré was convicted of making an apology of criminal activity, attacking respect for the law and provoking class hatred.

¹¹² Celliez, Henri, *Devoirs des révolutionnaires*. (Paris et Bruxelles: 1840), pp. 17-8.

part à oublier que ce sont là de précieux souvenirs, de saints exemples [...]¹¹³ Six weeks later, in September 1840, *l'Association des Travailleurs Égalitaires* organised a reformist banquet at Châtillon where the club's president spoke of the revolution as verging upon accomplishment but requiring defense against the régime's treasonous designs: '«Citoyens, comme nos pères, nous saurons vaincre toutes les résistances intérieures [...]»'¹¹⁴

One of those who assisted at this banquet was Marius Darmès who, on 15 October 1840, tried to assassinate Louis Philippe. Earlier reservations about regicides notwithstanding, other members of this society had previously been, and continued to be, amongst the emergent class of *révolutionnaires professionnels*. The following table lists individuals whose names surfaced in Darmès assassination attempt.¹¹⁵

Name	Profession	1830-1840	1848-1851
Duclos, Valentin	coppersmith	June 1832; <i>Société des Droits de l'Homme</i> ; Meunier's attempt [?]; May 1839 [?]	June Days (deported)
Considère, Claude-François-Xavier	unknown	attempted to start republican insurrection (2 January 1832) - 5 years in prison.	
Guéret, Louis, <i>dît</i> Grand Louis	cabinetmaker	directed the <i>Saisons</i> after May 1839	

¹¹³ 'Banquets Démocratiques. Au profit des familles des détenus politiques. (Paris: 1840)', p. 8, *ibid.* at (tom. III).

¹¹⁴ 'Cour des Pairs. Attentat du 15 octobre 1840 [Darmès]. RAPPORT fait à la cour par M. le baron Girod (de l'Ain) (Paris: 1840)', *ibid.*, at (tom. X).

¹¹⁵ 'Cours de Pairs. Attentat du 15 octobre 1840. Arrêt du mardi, 11 mai 1841. ACTE D'ACCUSATION. (Paris: 1841)', *ibid.* As far as the Table is concerned, columns 3 & 4 concern the individual's known and **suspected** activities during 1830-1840 and 1848-1851, respectively..Question marks after dates refer to possible involvement in the event.

Martin, Alexandre, <i>dit</i> Albert	son of peasants; mechanic	June 1832; April 1834; May 1839; organised <i>Nouvelles Saisons</i> after 1840.	Provisional Government (1848)
Racarie, Louis-Auguste-François	mechanic	<i>Saisons</i>	February and June 1848
Robert, Jean	dyer and cleaner		National Guardsman; June 1848 refused 'marcher contre ses frères'
Moreau, Pierre, <i>dit</i> Tourangeau	locksmith	reformer of <i>compagnonnage</i> ; associate of Flora Tristan	
Carter, William Felix	sculptor and journalist		February 1848; resistance to December 1851 (killed a sergeant)
Brun		June 1832 (lost a limb)	
Dorgal, Louis Etienne	piano worker	May 1839	administrative council of Mont-de-Piété; June 1848 (deported to Algeria)
Queyras, Christopher-Marie-Joseph	wallet maker	June 1832 (convicted)	

Only two days after the *Journal du Peuple* reported on the 1840 banquet, the continuing rise in unemployment led to the construction of barricades in the Faubourg Saint-Antoine. Although the uprising in the traditional *sans culottes* stronghold was quickly demolished, within days the Faubourg was the scene of further popular protest.¹¹⁶

The revolution of 1839 became the catalyst in a resurgence of insurrectionary discourse. Increasingly, insurgency was promoted as a natural phenomenon in France's modern political development. As each insurrection since 1830 gave rise to a proportionate escalation in worker participation, evidence of expanded politicisation was a function of popular protest. The Revolution had been the progenitor in defining insurgency as byword of democracy in action. During ~~an~~ a régime which maintained a restricted electoral system, little was required to

¹¹⁶ 'Partie Non Officielle', *Le Moniteur Universel*, 8 and 10 Septembre 1840.

refigure 'le parti démocratique' as 'le parti révolutionnaire'. Insurgency, as spawned by conspiratorial secret societies, maintained the Buonarroten conception of revolution where, in an effort at avoiding 'une révolution escamotée', nothing was left to hazard.

The revolution of 1839 was a directed insurrection. Though it didn't generate much support, this could not necessarily have been predicted with any certainty before 12 May 1839. At that point, the insurgent tradition, spontaneously rejuvenated in 1831, 1832 and 1834, worked in tandem with an intense propaganda campaign of pamphlets and newspapers. The overriding significance of May 1839 lay in its relative independence of events. Yes, there was an economic crisis but workers had been feeling its effects since 1837.¹¹⁷ The fact is that the revolutionaries were opportunists anticipating the most propitious moment to launch their challenge. For the first time in the nineteenth century, the revolutionary tradition did not manifest itself as a reactive force but, instead, reflected the confluence of thought and action capable of producing its own conditions. Although missing from earlier uprisings, the insurrectionary discourse of the régime's early years was finally being internalised and manifested as an imprescriptible right.

The July Monarchy was the unnatural result of a popular uprising; in other words, one that ostensibly reflected the concerns of the *menu peuple* and generated its active support. However, the monarchy's inability to extricate itself from these origins reinvigorated 'la force révolutionnaire' with a measure of

¹¹⁷ Dommanget, *op. cit.* at 186.

righteousness not seen since the Revolution. In the process, the French Revolution assumed larger-than-life proportions. Its *journées* (14 July, 10 August, 31 May-2 June) were venerated while bourgeois parlementarians like Robespierre were transformed into popular icons. Though it renewed the identification between sovereignty and insurgency, *les trois glorieuses* simply revealed the destructive potential of the crowd without articulating its aims. The definition of republicanism supplied by its revolutionary adherents as a panacea for social, economic and political inequality, provided republicanism with its pivotal quality, popular sovereignty.

Sovereignty became the revolutionary's rationale for insurgency and, specifically, was said to represent democracy in its rawest, least adulterated form. That said, as a distinctly Parisian expression, it did not necessarily reflect the sovereign rights of the rest of the nation. Was it legitimate for Paris, as both the conductor of new ideas as well as the seat of authority in a highly centralised state, to shroud its acts in the nation's sovereignty? This question was rarely broached by the revolutionary republicans during the July Monarchy not least for the disquieting contradictions it raised.

The struggles under the July Monarchy were thus largely a mixture of contemporary factors and crises that circulated around burgeoning class conflict. Into the mix was thrown the French Revolution which acted as a prism through which the prevailing issues were filtered. The issues, in their most general sense, were the same. However, in a more specific sense, they were features of their respective time frames. This, though, did not prevent the enshrinement of the

Revolution possessing eternal qualities worthy of incantation after more than four decades of having been buried beneath a succession of reaction, empire and restored monarchies.

The Revolution's revival was neither the result of Louis Philippe's ascension to the throne nor was it necessarily the comparisons invited between pre-First Republic France and the July Monarchy. Instead, it was the revitalisation of insurgency that let loose reassessments of the Revolution. All the post-hoc rationalisations of political violence, be it as a metaphor for popular sovereignty or an appropriate response to prolonged periods of oppression, could not compete with the adrenal rush stirred by victory on the barricades. Committed support for the Revolution's orthodoxy after July 1830 hinged it to the struggles engaged in at Paris.¹¹⁸ This was not simply a function of a future republic receiving the requisite level of support from those responsible for its inception. On the contrary, it was a cogitation upon the unique nature of revolutionary conceptions of republicanism as akin to a religious crusade heralded by those who maintained faith in the Revolution's tradition.

However, after 1839 the insurrectionary tradition lay dormant, awaiting another propitious opportunity to expose the limits of Louis Philippe's political liberalism. When another economic crisis (1846-7), scandals (breach of public duty by two government ministers over the sale of a mine concession, duc de Choiseul-

¹¹⁸ '[D]ans la France du XIX^{ème} siècle, non seulement les républicains se proclament avec vigueur les Fils de la Révolution, mais la République elle-même, pour naître, a besoin des révolutionnaires'. Carlin, Maryse and Malaussena, Paul, 'La Journée Révolutionnaire', *Des Républiques françaises*. (Etudes coordonnées et présentées par Paul Isoart and Christian Bidegaray) (Paris: 1988), pp. 138-56, 138.

Praslin's murder of his wife)) and monarchial intransigence over opposition banquets all combined in 1847, the July Monarchy, and its significantly older monarch, were incapable of weathering the protests. Yet the gap in insurrectionary activity between 1840 and 1848 appears to contradict the idea that the revolutionary tradition had been absorbed during the previous decade. For example, if, as Weill has suggested, the disappearance of various personalities either through exile, imprisonment or death during the 1840s, effectively curtailed revolutionary republican activity¹¹⁹, it is more difficult to support the idea of a fully developed revolutionary tradition. After all, if a tradition is a collective set of values and ideals, it cannot pivot on the viability of individual actors. On the other hand, though, couldn't it also be true that the revolution of February 1848 was the result of a germinating, though temporarily latent, seed of revolutionary republicanism? As we've already seen and will see again in the next chapter, the early months of the Second Republic witnessed the resurfacing of many July Monarchy revolutionary republicans as well as the ideals about insurgency expressed in the 1830s. Beyond this, it is quite fallacious to premise existence, or lack thereof, of an insurrectionary tradition on its continual manifestation.

The extraordinary activity during the first four years after *les trois glorieuses* substantiates the proposition that the July revolution was simply a revolution within a larger revolutionary process. Accordingly, when the régime turned to the machinery of repression in 1834, the opportunities for toppling the government decreased exponentially. While it is true that revolutionaries were often their own

¹¹⁹ Weill, *op. cit.* at 198-9.

worst enemies, it is also true that the government was determined to use all resources at its disposal to prevent a crisis from developing into a pretext for revolution.

Given this, one may ask whether 1839 was merely an aberration, the final futile gesture of an irreconcilable element within the opposition? Yes and no. On the one hand, the insurrection's defeat tended to reveal the impotence of a small cadre of underground *sociétaires*, who were unable to rally a sufficient portion of Paris to their calls 'aux armes!'. To some, the *Familles*, and later the *Saisons*, appeared locked in a self-contained utopia of revolutionary delusions. On the other hand, however, revolutionary republicans had to adapt to repressive circumstances by adopting a Buonarrotien model of conspiratorial politics. According to this model, revolutionary activity neither requires nor desires large-scale participation in the planning stages. Instead, its success is premised on the ignition of passions by a revolutionary vanguard taking advantage of immediate opportunities and/or general social and political frustration. The fact that the uprising of 12-13 May 1839 failed to produce the expected response was, perhaps, one of the risks of doing revolutionary business.¹²⁰

However, the insurgent tradition during the July Monarchy rarely acted as a measured response capable of achieving its goals. This chapter ends at the precise point where it commenced. In 1830 opposition to Charles X, a function of his imperious stance and a nagging economic crisis, was so high and diffuse that his overthrow, though unexpected, was conceivable. From its inception until its

¹²⁰ Latta, *op. cit.* at 84.

destruction, the same could be said of the July Monarchy. In 1850, Charles de Lavarenne wrote, 'La révolution de 1830 avait trois fausses couches (1832, 34 et 39) avant de produire l'embryon de février'.¹²¹ De Lavarenne may have underestimated circumstances peculiar to 1848 which clearly enhanced the prospects of a successful uprising then, as opposed to the 1830s. That said, at the point of conception, all insurgents expected their insurrections to transmute into revolutions. Consequently, what was 1848 if not a more fortuitous revolutionary aftershock?

Revolutionary optimism was a direct consequence of a renewal of romanticised perceptions regarding insurgency and popular sovereignty during the French Revolution. The ideas of the youthful generation of revolutionary republicans in the 1830s were a product of two seemingly incongruous experiences. First, their reassessment of a revolutionary past recently rescued from the depths of opprobrium. Nothing would distinguish this generation from its predecessors more than its support for insurrection. Secondly, the romantic idealism of this generation set them on a quest for a regenerated society. Inevitably, in pursuit of a society purified of domination, corruption and discord, some eschewed revolutionary answers altogether. In so doing, they were influenced by mentors whose experiences under the Revolution hadn't been very positive (e.g., Saint-Simon, Fourier). However, for many, the search for a new harmony was predicated on the destruction of old habits, institutions and traditions. Hence their

¹²¹ De Lavarenne, *Le Gouvernement provisoire et l'Hôtel de Ville dévoilés*, quoted in Dommanget, op. cit. at 228.

arrival at the revolutionary ideal and the romantic pursuit of contemporary dreams by reference to the past. In their eyes, the sequence of events between 1789 and 1793 had combined with *les trois glorieuses* to enshrine insurrection with a place of reverence in the revolutionary Panthéon.

CHAPTER FOUR

INSURGENCY AND THE CASE OF 1848

During the nineteenth century much of the violence associated with the French Revolution had been justified from a defensive posture. In other words, because the issues at stake involved the transformation of France's political institutions and social structure, it was inevitable that the clash between the preservation of the *ancien régime* and the construction of a new order was bound to entail violence. However, weren't the limits of the revolutionary enterprise reached with the foundation of a representative check on the power of the monarchy and the destruction of hereditary privileges? Apparently not. Even after the monarch's authority had been limited and ultimately abolished, insurgency still occurred. Obviously the Revolution's climax was not achieved by the simple act of declaring France a republic. Consequently, the defence of further acts of violence required a redefinition of the ultimate purpose of the French Revolution.

Yet, at the end of the 1820s, the French monarchy under Charles X appeared determined to roll-back even on those modest accomplishments of the Revolution confirmed by the settlement of 1815. The spectre of the *ancien régime* provided just as stark a challenge to the nation between 1827-30 as it had between 1789-92. When that threat was repelled in 1830, the legitimization of further acts of

revolutionary violence was going to be a bit more difficult, especially since the new order had no intention of reviving traditional forms of social privilege and political autocracy. In other words, when the nation was impotent against the combined power of monarch and aristocracy, the only recourse was insurrection. By contrast the 1830 Revolution altered that political climate by replacing it with notions of liberty and civil equality and providing outlets for protest which negated the need to press demands through violence. Consequently, after *les trois glorieuses*, those empowered by the revolution and many of their opponents no longer believed in the need for revolutionary violence. Whatever change was necessary could be accommodated within the institutions erected after the revolution. Nonetheless, the further acts of political violence which punctuated the July Monarchy revealed an internalisation of the idea that the insurrectionary tradition of the Revolution was not limited to régimes led by Bourbons.

The revolution of 22-24 February 1848 which overthrew the liberal monarchy appeared, as had its triumphant predecessor of 1830, to be a spontaneous affair borne out of a multitude of crises and scandals from the previous years. The combination of an agricultural and industrial depression with the intransigent stance of the monarchy towards political reform invigorated the legislative opposition into sponsoring and participating in a number of banquets. At one such banquet in July 1847 fêting Lamartine's *Histoire des Girondins*, the poet-cum-historian-cum-politician implored that "my book required a conclusion; it is you

who are making it."¹ The foregoing point requires further elucidation: as well as the crises and banquets, 1847 was also a most productive year for histories of the Revolution. Besides Lamartine's study, the first volumes of Louis Blanc's and Michelet's histories appeared as did Alphonse Esquiros' *Histoire des Montagnards*. In terms of circulation, all of these works, and in particular Lamartine's *Histoire des Girondins*, enjoyed a stunning success.² This alone accounts for very little; intellectual curiosities are not necessarily written for the purpose of creating a reactive response in their audiences. Yet these four studies were not simple intellectual curiosities; only one author, Michelet, was an academic and all four were guilty of various factual inaccuracies. This, though, does not address the essential question for purposes of this chapter - what, if anything, did Lamartine, Louis Blanc, Michelet and Esquiros contribute towards the unfolding of events at the end of February 1848?

Unfortunately, as with assessing the impact or value of any discourse on popular passions, one is confronted with a completely intangible factor which allows only for the most subjective conjectures. On the other hand, despite different approaches, all four works were motivated by, what can best be described

¹ Quoted in: Johnson, Douglas. *Guizot: Aspects of French History, 1789-1874*. (London: 1963), p.244. Lamartine would later disavow his purported rôle as an instigator of the February revolution causing Balzac to refer to him as "a fire raiser turned fireman." Duveau, Georges. *1848. The Making of a Revolution*. (translated by Anne Carter) (Harvard University Press, Cambridge: 1984), p. 15. Duveau attributed Lamartine's apparent waffling to the poet's cynicism in hoping to drive workers to the barricades as a pretext for a repressive backlash by the bourgeoisie.

² Aubry, Dominique. *Quatre-vingt-treize et les Jacobins. Regards du 19e Siècle*. (Presses Universitaires de Lyon: 1988), p. 56.

as, an exaltation of *la Révolution populaire*.³ Although it would be difficult to sustain a premise that this was a large impetus in driving Parisians to the barricades in February 1848, the tone and emphasis of these histories generally created a mood of popular righteousness. This, in turn, reflected a combination of exasperation over monarchial crises and the rapid development and internalisation of democratic and social ideas forged during the preceding seventeen years.

The fact that Louis-Philippe was finally de-throned, spending his final years in exile across the Channel, owed precious little to the revolutionary tradition as a conscious act. Most secret society leaders were dead or imprisoned on 22 February 1848 and the hesitancy of leading republicans to sanctify a general uprising was as reminiscent of April 1834 as were the issues at stake: freedom of association and freedom of speech. The paucity of revolutionary activity or discourse in the 1840s did little to inject a sense of immediacy into the demonstrations planned as a protest to the government's intransigence over the banquets. In fact, Louis Blanc wrote that, even in the face of the monarchy's problems between 1846-7, disunity amongst republicans had actually impeded the inevitability of a revolution until the banquet crisis brought together the disparate strains of republicanism advanced by *le National* and *la Réforme*.⁴ Although the prospect of an insurrection succeeding

³ *Ibid.* at 56-61. Aubry refers particularly to the conflict between Michelet and Louis Blanc over the latter's contention that the Jacobins best represented popular interests; Michelet's condemnation of the Jacobins was largely motivated by his belief to the contrary.

⁴ Louis Blanc. *Histoire de la Révolution de 1848*. (Paris:1871), (tom. I), p. 64.

was discussed at a gathering on 21 February of leading republicans like Louis Blanc, Flocon, Albert, Caussidière, Thoré, Etienne Arago, Baune and future communard Delescluze, the issue could not be resolved with any degree of forthrightness. The demonstration against the cancellation of the banquet planned for 22 February would ultimately assume a life of its own as the government failed to rally support amongst the National Guard.

Nearly eighteen years after having succeeded Charles X, Louis-Philippe was paradoxically pursuing the same divisive policies he had in the 1830s while displaying none of the repressive resolve that had characterised that phase of his reign. The revolution of 1848, though a spontaneous uprising, was not completely un-predictable; passions enflamed by Guizot's position vis-à-vis the banquet had stripped the government of any loyalty it hoped to command from either the liberal parliamentary opposition or the republicans. The government had acted no differently than it did in passing the Draconian laws of 1834-5 with the essential distinction that the propaganda campaign it waged against the republican menace in those earlier years made the régime a more palatable option by comparison. Having seen the disintegration of its bourgeois consensus, the July Monarchy became prey to a rapid acceleration of events which few on 21 February actually believed would topple the régime.

Opposition to Louis-Philippe's refusal to acquiesce in political reform may have been the original premise behind the demonstration. However, protest turned to revolution when it was joined by economic and social frustrations. This was precisely what the republican movement, in the generic sense, had feared. Some

republicans worried about the future stability of yet another republic premised on revolution while other republicans feared that the new republic would be saddled with the resolution of social issues. Nevertheless, one of the characteristics of a spontaneous revolution is the brief shining moment of coöperation between quite disparate interests, as yet unaware of their differences.⁵ In February 1848 a potpourri of complaints, including the régime's descent into political scandal and malaise and its inability to revive economic confidence, drove many of the July Monarchy's former supporters into the opposition camp. For the moment, they appeared to have closed ranks with republicans. However, republicans, though united by their opposition in principle to monarchical rule, were, themselves, hopelessly divided over the extent or limits of a republic. The inclusion of those who opposed the personal rule of Louis-Philippe without even desiring the alternative of a republic was bound to be destructive of any semblance of consensus once the King had abdicated.

As with *les trois glorieuses*, the euphoria attending Louis-Philippe's abdication was bound to be tempered by fundamental differences within the victors' conceptions. The February revolution awakened the sleeping revolutionary giant. It was the outcome of the February insurrection which rendered it a revolution. There is precious little evidence to suggest that the cancellation of the Paris banquet was enough to inspire protest of revolutionary proportions. None the less, the February revolution put a revolutionary process in motion which raised the

⁵ See: e.g., Newman, Edgar Leon. 'What the Crowd Wanted in the French Revolution of 1830'. *1830 in France* (edited by John M. Merriman) (New York: 1975), pp. 17-40.

political consciousness of individuals and groups who had a number of social and economic grievances. The transfer of authority in February inspired them to consider how the political avenues opened up by the revolutionary dynamic could be applied to the redress of these social and economic imbalances. If the February revolution cleared the ground for a reasonable expectation that social demands would be accommodated, it also opened up a void for competing visions of the revolution to clash over how to define the republic.

The phenomenon of revolutionary aftershocks - a series of insurrectionary outbursts - followed all revolutionary transfers of authority beginning with the Revolution. In many ways, the true spirit of a revolution is more readily located in the aftershock. The revolutionary aftershock is no mere spontaneous and propitious event. It is generated within the specific revolutionary context when aspirations unleashed by the transference of authority go unfulfilled. Given the nature of demands registered by protestors in February 1848 satisfaction could have been achieved without an accompanying revolution. However, after February the undercurrent of social and economic discontent beneath the surface of the July Monarchy was imbued with the new-found political consciousness of a nation in revolution.⁶ The cycle of revolutionary aftershocks, as a function of the inevitable schism between incompatible revolutionary 'soul-mates', which marked the initial years of the July Monarchy would be no less a factor in the first few months of the Second Republic. For the revolutionary republicans February 1848 appeared to have

⁶ This issue is succinctly addressed in Tilly, Charles and Lees, Lynn H., 'The People of June, 1848'. *Revolution and Reaction. 1848 and the Second French Republic.* (Roger Price, ed.) (London: 1975), pp. 170-209, 173.

been just another aftershock of *les trois glorieuses*, albeit one with a more successful resolution.

For Alphonse Esquiros there was little doubt as to the nature of the uprising and the sources of its inspiration. While acknowledging the correspondence between the evolution of ideas and society, Esquiros affirmed that '[c]e qui ne change pas, ce sont les sentiments. J'ai dit ailleurs par quels liens nous devons nous rattacher à notre passé révolutionnaire'. Esquiros concluded that, by their actions on the barricades of 24 February, these ideals can only be preserved by 'la jeunesse des écoles et des ouvriers des faubourgs'.⁷ In other words, because the overthrow of the July Monarchy was the result of revolutionary initiative, it provided an opportunity for regenerating society. Such a task could only be entrusted to those whose idealism (in the case of the students) or impotence (in the case of the workers) led them to the barricades in an effort at radically transforming society.

In writing the foregoing words, Esquiros mirrored the general aura of both stupor and enthusiasm following the monarchy's collapse. In hoping to avoid the errors of 1830, some argued that the revolutionary initiative be kept in the hands of the insurgents. To this end, Marc Caussidière⁸ endeavoured to create a Parisian police force whose membership was limited to applicants who (i) had been

⁷ 'Le Peuple (no.1) (1 mars 1848)'. *Les Révolutions du XIXe Siècle*. (Troisième série, 1848; tom. VII) (EDHIS, Paris: 1984).

⁸ Caussidière had previously been active in republican politics in Saint-Etienne during the 1830s. Moving over to Lyon, he endeavoured to infuse the *canuts* with a dose of republicanism as the complement to their economic grievances. During the early months of the Second Republic he was Prefect of Police of Paris but went into exile after the June Days.

imprisoned during the July Monarchy for political offences; (ii) participated on the barricades of February; (iii) were well-conducted and had served honourably in the army.⁹ In other words, the new republic required that those who protected it possessed the proper revolutionary credentials. Caussidière's measure was designed to grant official status to insurgents, recognising their past actions as having merited *la patrie* in much the same way as victorious soldiers were rewarded by Bonaparte; in so far as the Empire was sustained by the reverence for its troops, so too the Republic would publicly indulge and honour its revolutionary roots. Beyond that, at least for Caussidière, the act of revolution did not stop at the barricades.

Almost from the start, however, a dichotomous situation arose. The newly-proclaimed Provisional Government sought to minimise its identification with Parisian insurgency. First, Lamartine inveighed against the adoption of the red flag as the new national symbol. In an appeal designed to attenuate the revolutionary republicans' grip on the revolutionary tradition, Lamartine connected their choice of the red flag as the fledgling republic's standard to the repression of popular sovereignty evinced by the 1791 massacre at the Champ de Mars. Lamartine's incomplete recitation of history was a resounding success; he not only blurred what would have been the most visible distinction between the July Monarchy and the revolution which reduced it to memory, but also sought to deprive *la république démocratique et sociale* of its historical roots. In fact, Lamartine failed to note that the red flag became, in 1793, the standard for the popular sovereignty of the Paris

⁹ Caussidière, Marc. *Secret History of the Revolutions of 1848. Memoirs of Citizen Caussidière, ex-prefect of police and representative of the people.* (translator unknown) (2 vols.) (London: 1848), vol. 1, p. 100.

Commune. This underscored the romantic poet's apparent fear that this symbol conjured up the uniquely popular aspects of the French Revolution at the critical point where expectations of the new, though as yet undeclared, republic were at their height. Viewed in this context, the red flag threatened to revive memories of price controls, unrestrained, anarchic exercises of direct democracy, executions and the leading rôle played by the *sans-culottes* in the Revolution; further, adoption of the red flag might legitimise insurgency as a natural and legitimate expression of popular sovereignty. While this phenomenon was amply affirmed by Louis-Philippe's abdication, there was a clear and present danger that, if left unchecked, political revolution would lead to social revolution.

By the end of March, a 'Bulletin de la République', produced under the auspices of then-Interior Minister Ledru-Rollin endeavoured to quash rampant fears of 'mob rule' from Paris by drawing a contrast between the First and Second Republics. Noting that circumstances both within and outside of France necessitated severe measure fifty-five years before, the communiqué, in reassuring tones, explained that 'parce qu'ils ont courageusement accompli leur rude tâche, [...] la nôtre est plus facile'.¹⁰ Ledru-Rollin, recognised as a popular voice in republican circles, appeared to have succumbed to the consensus-building desires of the majority of his colleagues. Whether Ledru-Rollin was acting as a crude political opportunist willing to ditch both Louis Blanc and the ineffective Albert into the depths of a lonely and silent isolation or whether he naïvely believed that the social republic would best be advanced in a parliament created by manhood

¹⁰ Bulletin de la République. (no. 8) 28 Mars 1848.

suffrage can never be precisely assessed. What we can be certain of is that Ledru-Rollin had clearly miscalculated the determination of revolutionary republicans to maintain the initiative provided them in February.

Yet Ledru-Rollin's indulgence should be excused since the first few weeks of March bore witness to the typical outpourings of unanimity and solidarity that, in an earlier period, had led a reluctant Louis XVI to don a *bonnet phrygien*. Within this mood of optimism and euphoria, the *Club des Jacobins*, noting the potentially divisive connotations deriving from its name, reassured the faint-hearted that 'les Jacobins de 1848, fiers de continuer l'oeuvre de leurs pères, n'ont plus à remplir une aussi terrible tâche qu'en 1793; il n'y a plus guère aujourd'hui que des aristocrates bourgeois, et ceux-là sont peu dangereux'.¹¹ Yet behind much of this discourse severe problems lurked - ultimately the demands which brought Parisians to the barricades would become clearer and the expectation of their immediate satisfaction would provide the spontaneous and un-expected events of late February with positive aspects.

Although the revolution of February 1848 produced a coalition 'précaire des barricadiers bourgeois de la rue de Rivoli et des barricadiers plus traditionnels du faubourg Saint-Denis', the protagonists were to view their brief alliance in widely

¹¹ 'Avis aux Membres du Club des Jacobins'. *Les Murailles Révolutionnaires*, *op. cit.* at (tom. II), pp. 528-9. *Le Courrier d'Indre-et-Loire* reported that on 26 March a Club des Jacobins opened its doors and published its manifesto; its members wore red scarves. At the club's third or fourth meeting 'une masse d'ouvriers' banged on the doors, shouting (quite unfraternally): '« A bas les écharpes rouges! A bas les hommes de 93! Vous êtes les ennemis de notre République! A bas les hommes de sang! »'

differing ways.¹² Whereas the former, including some of its more progressive elements, may have gone too far in placating rural opinion as to the real significance of the uprising, Parisian workers idealised about their contribution to, and expectations of, France's insurrectionary history. Popular vigilance in 1848 was directly related to the deceptions of 1830 where the persistence of impure elements, be they 'légitimistes, orléanistes, financiers', after the fray had made necessary a reënactment of the insurgent theatre.¹³

Yet despite fears that 1848 could degenerate in much the same manner as its predecessor in 1830, there was little, if any, antagonism between the tenuous alliance that would now give shape to the insurrection. In point of fact, blind optimism in an as yet undefined republic, reflected by the relative post-insurrectionary calm at Paris, merely masked the unarticulated expectations of those who expected to play a rôle beyond that of insurgent. The revolution of 1848 had clearly given revolutionary republicans a semblance of authority; after all, there were many indications that the revolution had been made in their interests. Caussidière and Sobrier, both veterans of uprisings against Louis-Philippe, were vested with the authority of maintaining order in Paris while many who participated on the barricades displayed great restraint in the aftermath.¹⁴ Yet just

¹² Dureau, Georges. 'Les barricades'. 1848. *Le Livre du Centenaire*. (Éditions Atlas, Paris: 1948), pp. 109-118, 114.

¹³ *La Commune de Paris. Moniteur des Clubs*. (rédacteur-en-chef: Cahaigne) (no. 1) 9 mars 1848.

¹⁴ For his part, Tocqueville attributed this demeanour to two factors: (i) a special moral code which immediately follows any uprising and (ii) the surprise victory which, having occurred so rapidly and having met with so little resistance, did not allow for the inflammation of emotions. de Tocqueville, Alexis. *Recollections*.

as the cry 'Vive la liberté!' was laid bare of any universal understanding after July 1830, so too 'Vive la République!' appeared to be mere naked verbiage. For all its pretensions at fulfilling the demands for political reform, the February revolution had really proved to be a prelude for a better defined, more concentrated battle.

The path back to republicanism was not strictly a Parisian phenomenon. During the economic crisis, republican propaganda from Paris appeared in various provinces, offering seemingly attractive responses to the economic malaise of 1846. Even after France appeared to be pulling out of its depression, the damage to the July Monarchy had already been done. Many provincials had become sufficiently politicised as to never again give their allegiance to a monarchy. Given that

most French people had only known the regimes of the Restoration and the July Monarchy, both which - and particularly the latter - had initiated measures hostile to the poorest sections of the rural community, republicanism had necessarily re-emerged as an alternative.¹⁵

In other words, many French provincials anticipated that republicanism would herald a new era of social and economic amelioration.¹⁶ Unbeknownst to each other, perhaps, many peasants and urban workers shared a common social class specific view of republicanism as an expression of hostility against their mutual nemesis, the bourgeoisie.¹⁷

(translated by George Lawrence) (Open University Set Book, London: 1975), pp. 91-2.

¹⁵ McPhee, Peter. *The Politics of Rural Life. Political Mobilization in the French Countryside, 1846-1852*. (Oxford: 1992), p. 73.

¹⁶ *Ibid.* at 71-4.

¹⁷ *Ibid.* at 65-9.

Whereas revolts against the July Monarchy at Paris had largely been dominated by political considerations, the revolts had Lyon were a mixture of republicanism and issues peculiar to the Lyon silk workers. Consequently, while a variety of issues conspired to undermine the July Monarchy, at Lyon the insurrection was reduced to class warfare. An address 'Aux Combattants Lyonnais' following the municipal revolution there on 25 February spoke of '[l]e feu qui nous a conduits sur les barricades dans les mémorables journées de novembre 1831 et d'avril 1834' as having provided the impetus for 'les mémorables journées de février 1848, pour renverser un pouvoir exécrable et tyrannique'.¹⁸ Thus, within days of the Monarchy's collapse, Lyonnais insurgents had revived references to their early battles against the July Monarchy and, in doing so, clearly evinced the expectation that the aspirations seemingly realised at the end of February 1848 were precisely those which had previously driven the Lyonnais to the barricades - establishment of a workers' republic. Beyond that, in the first few days after the insurrection, several articles in newspapers testified to worker participation in previous revolutions, a fact first made apparent on 14 July 1789 and subsequently reaffirmed.¹⁹

In point of fact, just as in 1830, workers had played a critical rôle on the barricades of 1848. However, while both the nascent July Monarchy and Second Republic faced the same dilemma of controlling the insurrectionary forces, the

¹⁸ *Les Murailles Révolutionnaires de 1848*. (Delvau, Alfred, ed.) (Paris: 1867-8), p.216.

¹⁹ E.g., 'Feuilleton' *La République* (Lyon) (no.2) (s.d.); 'Prise de la Bastille' *Ibid.* (no. 3) 7 mars 1848.

latter endeavoured to harness the energy of the insurgents by encouraging their enrolment in the National Guard. The alliance of workers and the republic was to be solidified when the élite batallions of the National Guard protested against the changes in that institution. Consequently, through the democratisation of the National Guard, the Second Republic was able to stave off the adversarial rôle vis-à-vis the lumpenproletariat that it was destined to assume.

However, would the Parisian working class be able to maintain their loyalty to a republic which increasingly saw itself as having to make concessions to the rest of France? In other words, at some point the Parisian revolution was going to have to broaden its appeal beyond the capital. Although revamping the National Guard and establishing the National Workshops appeared to have won over the loyalty of Parisian workers to the republic, revolutionary republicans were not entirely satisfied that such gestures represented a sufficient enough break with the past. The first issue to drive a wedge into the unity of republicans was the announcement of elections to a legislative assembly. The elections were originally set for 9 April. However, fear of a conservative reaction in the provinces overwhelming the more progressive votes in republican urban centres caused the republic's first elections to be postponed for a fortnight.²⁰ One of the main fears was the credence that might be given Auguste Blanqui's warning of a rural, royalist legislature pitted against an agitated Parisian populace.²¹

²⁰ This issue is covered in McPhee, *op. cit.* at 89-90.

²¹ Blanqui, Auguste. 'Première pétition pour l'ajournement des élections. (6 mars 1848)' *Louis Auguste Blanqui. Écrits sur la Révolution. Oeuvres complètes. Textes politiques et lettres de prison.* (Présenté et annoté par A. Münster) (éditions galilée,

During the period of electioneering, some candidates sought to enhance their republican credentials with references to service on the barricades. For example, on 3 April, Napoléon Lebon, in pursuit of an endorsement from the recently re-formed *Société des Droits de l'Homme*, substantiated his 'Profession de foi' by stating that he had been a member of the same society as the four sergeants of La Rochelle (whose 1822 execution for having plotted against the Restoration earned them a spot in the revolutionary Pantheon); had combatted on the barricades of July 1830 but had declined the *croix de juillet* as a foreswearance of allegiance to Louis-Philippe; had been imprisoned nine times between 1830 and 1834 (presumably for political offences) before escaping from prison and exiling himself in Spain from where he returned to France at the first news of the February revolution.²² Likewise, Armand Barbès obviously expected that reprinting his own defiant admission before the judges in 1839 of having organised and led the insurrection of 15 May would confirm his suitability to lead a National Guard legion.²³ Other 'professions de foi' proudly announced that various candidates had

Paris: 1977), pp. 162-4, 163. See also: *La République* (Lyon) (no. 13) 31 mars 1848. In 'une édition extraordinaire' of *La Commune de Paris au Peuple Électeur*. Léonard Gallois wrote that if a reactionary assembly is elected 'il faudrait de nouveau descendre dans la rue, le fusil à le main; que la guerre civile deviendrait inévitable'.

²² *La Commune de Paris*. (no. 29) 6 avril 1848.

²³ 'Candidature du Citoyen Armand Barbès. Aux Citoyens Gardes Nationaux de la douzième légion'. *Les Murailles Révolutionnaires*, op. cit. at (tom. I), pp. 468-70. While establishing his revolutionary credentials, Barbès was careful to deny the accusation that he murdered a lieutenant in the 1839 uprising; while revolutionary activity may have been a badge of honour, criminal acts were not acceptable.

been proscribed for involvement in uprisings in 1831, 1832 and/or 1834.²⁴

Does the foregoing bear witness to an acceptance of France's insurgent tradition, a recognition of the righteousness of previous extralegal assaults on the July Monarchy? No; this appeal was found in only a bare minority of the testaments produced all over the country and were generally concentrated in either Paris or the immediate vicinity. Nonetheless, while the purpose of these statements was not to challenge the Provisional Government, they did demonstrate that, for some, participation on the barricades rendered one a particularly suitable representative of the republic. Presumably this had to do with the notion that the republic was more than simply a political form but was actually an ideal worthy of sacrifice.

Almost from the outset it was recognised that the republic and, for that matter, the revolution which produced it required legitimacy. So long as power was exercised by the Provisional Government, there was going to be an impression of a dictatorship and a denial of one of the prime tenets of a republic - representative government. From its inception, the Provisional Government was doomed to an ephemeral existence. Incompatibility of visions combined with an ever-present recognition of its own lack of mandate contributed to a widely held belief that the Provisional Government was a caretaker body. Created in the wake of the successful

²⁴ See, e.g., the following 'Professions de foi': Bressy (d'Arpajon), candidate of the 7th arrondissement. *Ibid.* at (tom. I), pp. 462-3; Aubert Roche, candidate at La Marne. *Ibid.* at (tom. II), pp. 71-2; Legrand, candidate in the department of l'Oise. *Ibid.* at (tom. I), p. 472; Jean Terson, candidate in the department of the Seine. *Ibid.* at (tom. II), pp. 519-20. In his study of 'le parti républicain', Georges Weill noted that political condemnations or destitutions under Louis-Philippe became 'titres d'honneur' during the election of April 1848. *Histoire du Parti Républicain en France, 1814-1870*. (Paris: 1928) (Slatkine Reprints, Genève: 1980), p. 223.

uprising, its ideological composition reflected the fusion of liberal and socialist republicans who, together, dismantled the July Monarchy. However, when it came time to define the meaning of the February insurrection, it was the liberal, bourgeois vision which prevailed. The persistent fear of provincial counter-revolution for several uneasy weeks enabled liberals to temporarily hold the revolutionary coalition together as well as to maintain its proportional superiority on the Provisional Government.

By mid-March it was apparent that one of the critical issues for workers, *petite-bourgeoisie* and socialists in February 1848 was rapidly becoming a tool for distinguishing the concepts of republic and revolution. Specifically, the election of a constituent assembly had starkly positioned Paris and a few other urban centres against the rest of the nation. The terms 'republic' and 'revolution', once synonymous under the July Monarchy, no longer expressed the same aspirations and ideals. *Les républicains de la veille*, those who had often suffered for the republican ideal during the July Monarchy, were now confronted with their earlier imprecations against the continued viability of the insurgent tradition during a republic. On 6 April 1848, Raspail still waxed lyrical about the panaceaic qualities of a republic.²⁵ One week later, however, Raspail had refined the foregoing so that his definition of a republic excluded *les républicains du lendemain* (the popular designation for clerics, *légitimistes* and *orléanistes*). Their conversion to the republic led to suspicions over the intentions behind their declarations of support for it. Raspail urged that the potential for *les républicains du lendemain* to win an

²⁵ *L'Ami du Peuple en 1848*. (no. 10) 6 Avril 1848.

electoral majority in the newly elected assembly would provide the pretext for a fresh wave of insurgency in the struggle for a republic.²⁶

A few days later, on 16 April, a mass demonstration with no identifiable objectives was crushed by the National Guard acting upon orders of Interior Minister Ledru-Rollin. By this action, Raspail noted, the Provisional Government had revealed its revolutionary roots as resurrected Girondins, destined to meet a similar fate as their antecedents: 'Courage, Messieurs les Girondins, vous ne maniez pas mal, dès votre coup d'essai, le 93! Ajoutez à votre lyre un gourdin en sautoir'. Increasingly presented as a bourgeois republic, the Second Republic was transformed in the words of Raspail into 'la plus hideuse monarchie'. Because the notion of the republic as the embodiment of popular sovereignty had yet to materialize, Raspail provided himself with a rationale for resisting the existent government. The Provisional Government, Raspail claimed, had shown itself to be 'the people's' adversary by using a purported communist or blanquist threat as a pretext for repressing the expression of political and social disillusionment.²⁷

For Raspail, previously identified as leader of the moderate wing of *la Société des Droits de l'homme* during the July Monarchy, an article he wrote in 1831 regarding government encouragement of bourgeois fears of the working class, described the state of France after 16 April. The cycle of insurgency dating back to 1789 would stop only upon some form of inter-class rapprochement.²⁸ Thus, as the

²⁶ *Ibid.* (no.12) 13 Avril 1848.

²⁷ *Ibid.* (no. 14) 20 Avril 1848.

²⁸ *Ibid.*

change to Louis-Philippe perpetrated the same class antagonisms found during the Restoration, so too no appreciable alteration appeared in this relationship after the February Revolution. Raspail's metaphor of Girondin for the Provisional Government of 1848 was quite telling since it created a mutual identity between the initial governments of France's two experiments with republicanism. In developing this simile, the obvious implication was that the repetition of the revolutionary *journées* of 31 May-2 June 1793 might finally close the internecine warfare between bourgeois and working-class republicans.

For its part, the Provisional Government did little to discourage the growing popular mistrust in Paris as to its designs. Moreover, the Provisional Government inspired little confidence in its ability to comprehend the growing apprehension amongst the Parisian working class. After the demonstration of 16 April was dispersed, Lamartine made an exaggerated announcement that an insurrection to replace the Provisional Government with a Committee of Public Safety had been stopped.²⁹ If Lamartine's reference was designed to elicit support from the *menu peuple*, it was clearly misdirected. By 1848, a romantic nostalgia for the 1793-4 period had ingrained itself in the popular conscience and the Terror was increasingly seen as the only government that had ever corresponded to the expressions of the *menu peuple*. While the 16 April was a fiasco that lacked any sense of coherence, timeliness or certainty of purpose, the manifestation's origins

²⁹ Ménard, Louis. *Prologue d'une révolution*. (Paris: 1849), pp. 106-7.

have remained a mystery.³⁰ Nevertheless, as Raspail's example bears witness, the Provisional Government's reaction to the April protest simply polarized public opinion. Henceforward, for revolutionary republicans, insurgency was also a defensive measure against government oppression. For example, recollections of June 1832³¹ or the uprisings at Lyon in 1831 and 1834³² began to figure into the revolutionary liturgy. In some instances, they assumed an aura of immediacy and accessibility more digestible to working class appetites in 1848 than the Revolution's *journées* whose significance, though still powerful, had been partially eclipsed by the more recent events. In 1848 there was no longer a personality of Buonarroti's stature to disseminate primary accounts of the venerated Revolution as a social struggle verging on the emancipation of the lowest social strata.

On the other hand, however, the Second Republic was marked by a resurgence of newspaper titles reflective of the more popular aspects of the Revolution. Foremost amongst these was *le Père Duchêne*. From its first issue, *le Père Duchêne* assumed Hébert's former rôle as the clarion of the popular forces at Paris. That said, he was careful to deny the sanguinary vindicateness often

³⁰ Marx attributed it to governmental intrigue and Marrast's desire for the *embastillement* of Paris by provincial reactionaries. Marx, Karl. *The Class Struggles in France, 1848-1850*. (Moscow: 1972), p. 47.

³¹ In a one issue newspaper, *le Démocratie Égalitaire, Semaine sociale et républicaine*, the government's actions on 16 April were analogized to that of the July Monarchy in June 1832. *Les Révolutions du XIXe Siècle, op. cit.* (Troisième série, tom. VII).

³² *Le Spartacus* (Lyon) (no. 1) 16 avril 1848. The newspaper reported on the commemoration at Lyon of the fourteenth anniversary of the April 1834 uprising. The ceremony attracted *transportés* of the rebellion as well as notable personalities such as the Provisional Government's commissioner to the Rhône department, Emmanuel Arago.

associated with its nominal progenitor.³³ Nevertheless, by the second issue, *le Père Duchêne* advised the Provisional Government to be energetic in rooting-out anti-democratic, reactionary forces. Although employing less 'foutres' and 'bougres' than the original *le Père Duchêne*, the 1848 version might have been insinuating the need for a renewed Terror.³⁴

Little more than two weeks later, in the aftermath of the elections to the Constituent Assembly and the violent repression of a workers' demonstration at Rouen, *le Père Duchêne* urged 'des lois sévères, des mesures terribles' to eradicate the forces of reaction whose viability had led to incessant civil war and threatened to plunge the nation 'dans l'abîme du despotisme'. *Le Père Duchêne* reminded its readers that the popular violence in the early stages of the Revolution, by rendering the clergy and nobility nearly impotent, had allowed for reform to be produced without encountering too much resistance. The tone of the paper seemed to imply a correspondence between the hostile circumstances faced by both the Revolution and the February revolution. *Le Père Duchêne* warned that as the euphoria of national unity subsides at the approach of potentially more divisive questions, the direction and, by consequence, the essence, of a revolution is put at stake. *Le Père Duchêne* was willing to allow the newly elected Constituent Assembly to prove its

³³ 'Mes théories, à moi, sont celles du peuple; mes raisonnemens [sic] sont ceux du peuple; j'aime à faire résonner la crosse de mon fusil; en un mot, je suis révolutionnaire'. *Le Père Duchêne* (no. 1) 10 avril 1848. Dautry estimated that 60,000-80,000 copies were sold of each issue of the bi-weekly *le Père Duchêne*; it was one of the twelve newspapers (including two monarchist papers) suppressed in the aftermath of the June Days. Dautry, Jean. *1848 et la deuxième république*. (Paris: 1977), p. 81.

³⁴ *Le Père Duchêne* (no. 2) 16 avril 1848.

fidelity to the social revolution but it none the less urged its readers 'n'oublie pas un seul instant que la patrie est en danger'.³⁵ The expression 'la patrie est en danger' was certainly evocative of the Revolution. In the context of 1792 it was a call to the *volontaires* to defend France from foreign adversaries. However, on another level, 'patrie' was associated with the sovereign nation and the warning was a reminder that the Revolution which produced 'patrie' was besieged by internal opponents.

The foregoing words of *le Père Duchêne* were nearly identical to similar sentiments expressed during the July Monarchy regarding the inherent righteousness and patriotism of popular insurgency against recalcitrant mandatories.³⁶ However, unlike the July Monarchy, the Second Republic had decreed male suffrage and, in as much as the revolutionary movement paid scant, if any, attention to the political and civic enfranchisement of women, the pretext for insurrection found in Louis-Philippe's restricted electorate was no longer a factor in April 1848. Was there still a rationale to bolster the increasingly bellicose and provocative sentiments to which *le Père Duchêne* represented only one expression? In part, the insurgent tradition was based on the principle that sovereignty could never be entirely delegated. Was the manifestation of sovereignty found on the barricades of February 1848 the triumph of the ideal of republicanism formerly attested to, in varying degrees, in 1830, 1831, 1832, 1834 and 1839? If so, the newly constructed republic had to be sufficiently malleable to absorb and reform

³⁵ *Ibid.* (no. 7) 2 mai 1848.

³⁶ *Ibid.* (no.4) 23 avril 1848. In an article entitled 'Les Élections', *le Père Duchêne* correlated popular violence with patriotism: 'A ceux qui s'écrient: Tu est trop violent, je répondrai: Vous n'êtes pas assez patriotes'.

itself in the face of manifestations of popular will.

Elections were viewed as a very imperfect manner for expressing demands incompletely articulated during, but nevertheless underlying, the insurrection of February. To many social republicans, it seemed terribly incongruous that seventeen and one-half years of struggle and propaganda against Louis-Philippe and a successful three day uprising against him had produced so little of their agenda. To them, the names and faces might have changed, but society remained indentured to bourgeois interests. Perhaps the ultimate insult was the election to the Constituent Assembly produced a majority of liberal republicans and Orléanists. Increasingly the gulf separating urban France (and especially Paris) from the rest of the nation loomed large to contemporaries. That said, as Peter McPhee's previously cited study of peasant politicization has informed us, rural areas were not as politically unsophisticated or hostile to the republic or social revolution as contemporary Parisian revolutionaries and subsequent historians have imagined. However, reality is often conflated with our perceptions of a situation.

Parisian revolutionaries were at a crossroads. As was the case with their revolutionary ancestors, their goal, at least ostensibly, was the creation of a unified, sovereign French nation. In their vision, the nation was a construct that transcended and would ultimately eradicate all other divisions in society. The republic represented the purest articulation of the nation's political ideal. As the embodiment of a sovereign people, the republic represented the desires of the body politic. Unaccustomed to political discourse, abstract concepts and critical thinking, Parisian revolutionary republicans believed provincial voters were likely to

have their confusion allayed by local notables and clerics masquerading as republicans. Consequently, faced with the prospect of inexperienced, unpredictable and ignorant rural voters determining the future of a revolution forged at Paris, Parisian revolutionaries could not fathom a relinquishment of control to the vagaries of republican formalities.

For all the discourse on *fraternité* and the dawning of a new era in France, the Second Republic was still plagued by an inability to arrive at an accord between its urban centres and rural communities. Mutual distrust as to each other's designs created a paranoiac political atmosphere pitting, in the minds of social republicans, the new world versus the old one. Traditional relationships marked by servitude, paternalism and a sense of one's place contributed to the fear and uncertainty that ideas originating at Paris or Lyon threatened the countryside.³⁷ Stereotypes of rampaging and pillaging Parisians or Lyonnais contrasted with images of ignorant and backward villagers to heighten tension and disrupt the profound changes which the February revolution had originally inspired. These sentiments were echoed in a special pre-election issue of Sobrier's newspaper, *La Commune de Paris* which forecast that the failure of deputies with sufficiently revolutionary credentials

³⁷ One of the classic examples of this is found in Tocqueville's description of his electoral campaign in *Recollections, op. cit.* at 111-20. In particular, by his own account, Tocqueville represented precisely the type of *républicain du lendemain* complained about by the social republicans. Acknowledging that he 'had been faithful to the end to the oath [he] had sworn to the monarchy', Tocqueville made a curious gesture of allegiance to the republic in a 'bold profession of anti-revolutionary faith [...] preceded by one of faith in the Republic'. *Ibid.* at 112, 114. In other words, under the guidance provided by liberals like Tocqueville and other rural notables, the change from monarchy to republic and its potential social ramifications could be blunted by adaptation to, and therefore coöptation of, the republic.

to be elected would require the Parisian populace 'de nouveau descendre dans la rue, le fusil à la main'. As the relative conservatism of a nationally elected assembly sitting at Paris conflicted with the revolutionary atmosphere that still prevailed in the capital, the foregoing clearly envisioned a replay of 31 May-2 June 1793.³⁸ This was precisely what terrified the provinces about Paris and fed into *notable* manipulation of provincial fears.³⁹

However, while a newspaper such as *la Commune de Paris* may have been one of the more important revolutionary republican newspapers of the day⁴⁰, an infamous bulletin from the Interior Ministry (written by George Sand) dated 15 April nearly reproduced the sentiments expressed in Sobrier's newspaper. Referring to the elected assembly as 'une fausse représentation', the directive noted that Paris is 'le mandataire de toute la population du territoire national' and, alone, 'est le poste avancé de l'armée qui combat pour l'idée républicaine'.⁴¹

The elections at the end of April effectively marked the close of the revolution of February 1848 and ushered in a two-month period of increasing class and geographic polarisation. After many years of having their political consciousness raised by a conglomerate of radical, socialist and Icarian republicans,

³⁸ *La Commune de Paris au Peuple Électeur* (Édition extraordinaire).

³⁹ McPhee, *op. cit.* at 98.

⁴⁰ Dautry, *op. cit.* at 81.

⁴¹ Quoted in Weill, Georges, *op. cit.* at 219, footnote 1. Duveau noted that the tone of Sand's proclamation was so inflammatory that, in response to it, Lamartine drew up his will. Elias Regnault, who edited the Interior Ministry's *Bulletin de la République*, was tending to his sick mother and was thus unaware of Sand's prose. Duveau, 1848. *The Making of a Revolution*, *op. cit.* at 89.

workers at Rouen increasingly clashed with liberal republicans during the first few months of the Second Republic.⁴² This culminated in the murder of nearly a dozen workers protesting against the election of the liberal republican Antoine Sénard. The events at Rouen, coupled with the threat of violence at Limoges⁴³ intensified the impression that a 'White' (or 'Blue') Terror was in the offing. The future of the republic would ultimately be determined when 'la guerre civile sortir de la tempête des rues' at Paris. It was further suggested that revolutionary energy at Paris was synonymous with divine retribution, the force which once commanded the unquestioned allegiance of French kings.⁴⁴

Despite taking the offensive against the new assembly, revolutionary republicans were now at a point of desperation. The reversal of the July Monarchy and its replacement by what amounted to a republic in name only had actually impeded the advantage revolutionary republicans expected to gain from a successful insurrection. They were now in the precarious position of disclaiming much of the dogma on the panacea of suffrage that had been a key component of rallying bourgeois opposition to Louis-Philippe. In the process, through their increasing militant stance, revolutionary republicans were dangerously marginalising themselves in a republic that had assumed decidedly liberal hues.⁴⁵

⁴² On the subject of Rouen, see: Aminzade, Ronald. *Ballots and Barricades*. (Princeton: 1993), pp. 174-90.

⁴³ Merriman, John. *The Red City. Limoges and the French Nineteenth Century*. (Oxford: 1985), pp. 77-8.

⁴⁴ *La Commune de Paris*. (no. 55) 1 mai 1848.

⁴⁵ To Lyonnais social republican Joseph Benoît, the *journée* of 15 May posed a terrible dilemma for revolutionary republicans. 'Que répondre en effet à ce reproche

Perhaps, more tragically for them was their failure to realize just how much common ground they shared with newly enfranchised rural voters over hostility to the bourgeoisie.

A difficult lesson derived from the elections of 23 April was that outside of the threat they posed to an existing government, disgruntled Parisian workers, *les sans-culottes d'autrefois*, were more or less isolated. Having failed to go beyond the confines of their urban-based demands and find common ground with their counterparts in the countryside, they no longer determined the course of events posterior to the *journées* they initiated. The dilemma for revolutionary republicans was that their earlier intoxication with the potentially curative properties of a republic blinded them to certain realities of French political development. In their desire to assuage the fear borne out of the experience of the Revolution that the republic equated to dictatorship, republicans denied the option of a dictatorship of Paris or, at any rate, contained it within the narrow circumstances of the French Revolution. Consequently, their opposition, first, to the holding of elections and, then, to the results of those elections reduced both their choices and the credibility of those choices.

Nearly nine years to the day that Blanqui and Barbès had inspired a challenge to Louis-Philippe, the same two protagonists were involved in another purported uprising. The issue this time was French assistance in liberating Poland, a subject which had plagued Louis-Philippe's foreign policy since it went straight to the heart

d'insurrection contre le suffrage universel que la révolution venait d'inaugurer?'. Benoît, *op. cit.* at 142.

of both the Revolution's and the Empire's most nationalistic tendencies. At stake was France's belief that, as the precursor of a new age of nationalism and sovereignty, it was duty-bound to spread revolutionary fires to other countries searching for liberation from either oppressive rulers or domination by their neighbours. At its most elementary level, this issue united Jacobins, Bonapartists and socialists before chauvinistic overtones destroyed this precarious consensus. Still, in 1848, with France once again a republic European nationalists viewed it as their mentor. It appeared as though France was in a position to assume centre stage in European geo-politics and, in turn, to rally popular support behind the republic at the moment when its social promises were being broken. However, the republic, led by Lamartine's Ministry of Foreign Affairs, took a cautious approach and issued proclamations designed to placate the fears of European courts that France was about to embark on a fresh wave of wars of liberation.⁴⁶

On 15 May, Polish and other European nationalists exiled at Paris, the more militant republican clubs and over one-tenth the workers inscribed on the National Workshop rolls⁴⁷ organised a march in support of French intervention in Poland's nationalist movement. The demonstration was designed to coincide with the Constituent Assembly's discussion of the issue. Symbolically assembling at the Place de la Bastille, the procession moved towards the National Assembly where a

⁴⁶ On this subject, see: Jennings, Lawrence C. *France and Europe in 1848*. (Oxford: 1973). Chapter one is especially instructive on the relationship between French Jacobinism and foreign policy.

⁴⁷ Emile Thomas, the Provisional Government's director of the National Workshops, estimated that 14,000 inscribed workers participated in the demonstration. Dautry, *op. cit.* at 139, footnote 9.

petition was delivered urging aid for Poland. The situation soon grew out of control. The phalanx invaded the Assembly and after Raspail's initial speech in favour of Poland was delivered in modulated tones, a succession of speakers, beginning with Barbès, were less conciliatory. While most speakers confined themselves to the Polish question, Blanqui ventured into more sensitive terrains such as the massacre at Rouen and the number of broken promises made to the workers by the republic.

Sensing a plot by *agents provocateurs* and, at any rate, believing the prospects for a successful insurrection so soon after the election to be fraught with too much uncertainty, Blanqui was originally a reluctant participant in anything approaching a *putsch*.⁴⁸ Nevertheless, despite the efforts of a Blanquist, Paul Deflotte, to neutralise the harangues of a probable *agent provocateur*, Aloysius Huber, to dissolve the Assembly, a wave of euphoria carried the demonstration to the Hôtel de Ville. In keeping with the character of previous *journées*, a new Provisional Government was announced and, just as swiftly, repressed. The 'leaders' of this purported conspiracy were arrested and the popular movement was incapacitated. Suspicion was directed at a number of personalities, most notably, Blanqui, Raspail, Barbès, Louis Blanc, Caussidière, Albert and the commander of the Parisian National Guard, General Courtais. Courtais' complicity was based on an omission, rather than a commission - his refusal to unleash his troops against the demonstration.

⁴⁸ Bernstein, Samuel. *Auguste Blanqui and the Art of Insurrection*. (London: 1971), pp. 178-9.

It should strike us as anomalous that, with the social measures enacted in the aftermath of the February revolution now under threat, revolutionary republicans and workers should find their revolutionary verve in the foreign policy arena. However, as previously noted, the notion of 'France the liberator' was a powerful remnant of the Revolution which, in 1848, appeared to create a façade of republican unity. For all the discourses on *patrie* and popular sovereignty, the notion of France's inherent superiority *vis-à-vis* its neighbours commanded the greatest allegiance. Viewed cynically, it was the revolutionary republicans' trump card to the nation. Seen from a more trusting perspective, it was the lowest common denominator to reconcile those who had finally transferred their loyalty from royal authority to confidence in, and fidelity to, the republic. Both factors worked in tandem in May 1848: on the one hand, Blanqui, Barbès, *et. al.* could well have figured that support for the oppressed of Belgium, Ireland, Poland and the Italian and German states would have a repercussion in France. Fully expecting that France's political conscience would shift towards considerations of inequality and oppression at home, revolutionary republicans must have believed that this would increase the prospects for a successful social revolution. The foreign question, thus posed, carried significant implications for the development of a *prise de conscience* capable of overturning the constituted authority in much the same way that the *levée en masse* did during the Revolution.

However, the demonstration, in surpassing its modest origins, came to symbolise the paradox of the insurgent tradition. First, its propensity to colour perceptions of the scope of popular protest occurring at Paris. Second, the pretext

for reaction furnished by this tradition to the 'forces of order'.⁴⁹ A Ministry of Justice report, for instance, claimed that documents found at Sobrier's dwelling demonstrated an intent to reverse the executive power, dissolve the Constituent Assembly, immediately apply 'des théories sociales les plus impraticables et les plus insensés', redistribute wealth à la Robin Hood and reestablish the Terror.⁵⁰ The preparation of such a report would seem to indicate a course of confrontation embarked upon by the government against both the revolutionary movement and all other advocates of a social republic.

The revolutionary movement, heretofore solidified strictly by a common perception of the revolutionary tradition⁵¹, abandoned the charade of patience towards the Constituent Assembly. Its discourse, now reflecting an expectation of armed struggle over the definition of the republic, became even more militant.⁵²

⁴⁹ See the range of opinion regarding the nature of the demonstration presented in *1848 in France*. (Roger Price, ed.) (London: 1975), pp. 98-9.

⁵⁰ 'Rapport sommaire sur la procedure relative à l'attentat du 15 mai [1848]'. BB³⁰333.

⁵¹ On the idea of a revolutionary movement, see: Amann, Peter, 'The Paris Club Movement in 1848'. *Revolution and Reaction. 1848 and the Second French Republic*. (edited by Roger Price) (New York: 1975), pp. 115-32.

⁵² The inevitability of the occurrence of an armed conflict after 15 May was reflected upon by authors as diverse as Tocqueville and Benoît. Tocqueville noted that '[i]t is fair to say that the whole interval between 21st May [date of the Festival of Concord] and the days of June were filled with anxious anticipation of those days'. Tocqueville, *op. cit.* at 163. Benoît wrote that after 15 May, 'chacun pouvait voir les apprêts d'une bataille et d'une lutte décisive'. Benoît, *op. cit.* at 143. Louis Blanc believed that the June Days were simply the culmination of a reactionary conspiracy commenced on 16 April to deprive the republic of its revolutionary character. Blanc asserted that either through provocation or the passage of repressive legislation, the popular forces were incited to engage the government in a series of *journées* which were bound to solidify the position of authority. Louis Blanc, *op. cit.* at (tom. II), pp. 129-30.

The demonstration of 15 May, though borne out of the Polish question, became transformed into a popular initiative against the threat of socially regressive legislation being considered by the Assembly.⁵³

For those Parisians who had been brought to the February barricades by their prolonged unemployment, the February revolution had been a 'success' if for no other reason than its recognition of the 'right to work' as embodied in the creation of National Workshops.⁵⁴ With the National Workshops threatened with closure and its recognised leaders either silenced (Louis Blanc, Blanqui, Raspail, Barbès, Albert) or coöpted (Ledru-Rollin, Flocon), it was apparent the revolution's popular initiative did not have much direction.

Le Père Duchêne welcomed the social discord as 'un fléau cruel' which was nevertheless necessary 'étouffer l'injustice et le privilège [...] détruire les abus qui minent notre société' and, most importantly, because 'elle seule peut sauver la République'. The foregoing was written in response to Charles Dupin, the Orleanist deputy, who had spoken of 'le bon Paris', distinguishing it from 'le parc de travailleurs' who, according to Dupin, were bent on sowing disorder.⁵⁵ In 1834, Dupin had opined that a republic '« traînerait la patrie dans le sang »'⁵⁶. However, on 29 February 1848, proving his malleability, Dupin energetically proclaimed,

⁵³ On 20 May, the Constituent Assembly began deliberations on the future of the National Workshops.

⁵⁴ Sewell Jr., William H. *Work and Revolution in France. The Language of Labor from the Old Regime to 1848*. (Cambridge: 1980), p. 272.

⁵⁵ *Le Père Duchêne*. (no. 16) 23-25 mai 1848.

⁵⁶ Weill, *op. cit.* at 95.

'« Vive la République! »'⁵⁷

The revolutionary press did not fail to alert its readership to its impression of the true nature of the Second Republic. The republic was now a misnomer, a political fiction directed by the very forces which had either actively or tacitly sustained the July Monarchy until its eleventh hour. Suddenly the same adjective used to qualify the July 1830 revolution was applied to February 1848 - 'une révolution ESCAMOTÉE!⁵⁸ After Louis Blanc was targeted for investigation by the Assembly over his conduct on 15 May, the organ most devoted to him, *l'Organisation du Travail*, assailed (what it characterised as) the new dynasty of Marrast and *le National* for their manipulation of a revolution they had originally opposed.⁵⁹

As under Louis Philippe, the revolutionary republican press resonated the theme that a government borne out of insurgency had an inherent obligation to satisfy the social agenda expressed by insurgents. The fact that subservience to the institutions of the *ancien régime* had been predicated on a tradition of subservience was not availing to a government premised on the principles of popular sovereignty. In a warning to the Constituent Assembly, *l'Organisation du Travail* asserted that, in the wake of the *ancien régime's* destruction, aristocratic posturing

⁵⁷ Guillemin, Henri. *La première résurrection de la République. 24 Février 1848.* (Collection de Trente Journées Qui Ont Fait la France) (Paris: 1967), p. 174.

⁵⁸ 'Au Peuple', *L'Aimable Faubourien. Journal de la Canaille.* (no. 1) 1-4 juin 1848.

⁵⁹ *L'Organisation du Travail. Journal des Ouvriers.* (no. 4) 6 Juin 1848.

was no longer a guarantee of longevity.⁶⁰

Thus, the Second Republic was labeled a misnomer, *une république sans des républicains*, and susceptible to any and all forces dedicated to *la vraie république*. However, the latter was a rather slippery concept, whose parameters were defined by making revolutionary change inseparable from a republic. The notion that a revolution, as characterised by the unsettled period following a successful uprising, might not immediately realise the aspirations of its combattants simply meant that the insurrectionary process would continue in a series of revolutionary 'aftershocks'. It was in the revolutionary 'aftershocks' that the loftier ideals expressed in the revolution intersected with, and ran a parallel course to, the urgent need to gratify the more immediate, material-based demands of the insurgents. More precisely, *cris de ralliement* such as 'vive la liberté', 'vive la réforme', 'vive la république' and, in some cases, 'vive la république démocratique et sociale' generally did not express universally understood or agreed-upon ideals. As a result, they were capable of manipulation and transformation in the post-insurrectionary period. Yet, during this same period, the change in *régime* increased the expectation that material problems, whether rising food prices, low wages or unemployment, would naturally find their resolution within the broader articulation of liberty or republic.

Inhabitants of the popular *faubourgs* who staffed barricades in February 1848 may not have expected the departure of Louis Philippe to render them masters of their nation's destiny. At the same time, though, they did anticipate that

⁶⁰ *Ibid.* (no. 7) 9 Juin 1848: 'Cependant ils sont nés d'hier, -élevés par les barricades. - Tomberont-ils de même?'

the new state would be more attentive to their needs. To this end, the creation of National Workshops and the Luxembourg Commission in the republic's first few months, had given some reason for optimism.

In particular, the National Workshops seemed, at their outset, to symbolise the sensitivity of republican government to the resolution of social problems such as unemployment. However, the Workshops were plagued by several problems. In the first place, they were created by the Provisional Government; consequently, after national elections in April they would become vulnerable as the product of revolutionary intoxication. Secondly, they were designed to alleviate unemployment; however, they appeared to be little more than charitable foundations. Enrolled workers were given little to do while nothing was being done to procure permanent employment. What's more, although purportedly inspired by Louis Blanc's *L'Organisation du Travail*, from the workers' perspective, the Workshops were hardly a prototype for the socialisation of labour and production. Finally, the Workshops were presented as a defense against worker militancy and attraction to revolutionary clubs since workers would be in a confined space rather than out in the streets; with little to do in the Workshops, however, workers read socialist and revolutionary newspapers and engaged in radical discourse - all at the government's expense.⁶¹

By early June, the political landscape of the Second Republic had been redrawn within the parameters of that most republican of republican devices -

⁶¹ On the National Workshops, see: McKay, D.C., *The National Workshops*. (Cambridge, MA: 1933).

manhood suffrage. Perhaps paradoxically, leaders of republican opinion as diverse as Barbès, Blanqui, Louis Blanc and Ledru-Rollin were now, respectively, in prison, in flight, facing censure in the National Assembly or dependent on the falling star of Lamartine as the *quid pro quo* for serving on the newly created Executive Commission.⁶²

More immediate than the loss of key personalities and defenders was the prospect that the National Workshops would be either closed altogether or refashioned in such a way as to reduce their effectiveness. The invasion of the Assembly on 15 May led to widespread condemnation of the Workshops in the bourgeois press. Little more than a fortnight later, the Assembly gave in to the pressures of the conservative Comte de Falloux and paved the way for the Workshops' closure. Throughout June, their existence was being whittled-away by the *Commission spéciale* appointed to find an alternative to the increasingly expensive Workshops. The Workshops further evidenced the chasm dividing rural and urban France as peasant antagonism to taxation was aggravated by the perception that tax increases subsidized unemployed Parisians.⁶³

Recognising the potential trouble that would accompany any sort of restructuring of the Workshops, the War Ministry, simultaneous to the work of the *Commission spéciale*, made preparations for an expected insurrection. Behind the

⁶² Regarding Ledru-Rollin, Dautry wrote that the reluctant decision to include him on the Executive Commission was owed to Lamartine who repaid Ledru-Rollin for his coöperation in the repression of the 16 April demonstration. As a consequence, 'Ledru-Rollin se sent plus ou moins prisonnier de Lamartine'. Dautry, *op. cit.* at 129-30.

⁶³ McPhee, *op. cit.* at 87-8, 101-2.

façade of national unity which the Festival of Concord (21 May) was meant to project lay the deep wounds of the previous three months. The Festival was meant to recreate the sense of fraternity of two powerfully choreographed festivals of the Revolution - the Festival of the Federation and the Festival of the Supreme Being. However, fraternal feelings hardly characterised France in May 1848. Revolutionary republicans wondered whether the revolution had acted prematurely in endeavouring to integrate the less politically sophisticated and more conservative regions of France into a triumph secured at Paris. Even Lamartine reflected the sense of indifference when he said, '« On ne fait pas les fêtes, le fêtes se font. »'⁶⁴

However much the institution of manhood suffrage bore witness to the political revolution of February, the complementary social revolution had again proven elusive. Although the social revolution was of more direct consequence to the burgeoning working class, the failure to develop a separate class consciousness had left the working class vulnerable to paternalistic measures like the Workshops. None the less, the boundless future seemingly offered at the beginning of March contrasted starkly with the mood of despair and frustration from late May through June. The premature rush to seek legitimacy and acceptance of the revolution through legislative elections served to simply alienate the Second Republic from the source of its vitality. For revolutionary republicans, the Second Republic was nearly indistinguishable from the previous régime. While Louis Philippe may have been gone, his imprint survived the fall as liberals, whether monarchists or republicans, joined together to protect their common interests. By comparison to the

⁶⁴ *Ibid.* at 151.

accomplishments of the initial period of the First Republic, the Second Republic paled considerably.

However, a revolt against the July Monarchy was more readily defensible than was a *prise d'armes* against a republic. After all, had not calls *aux armes* against Louis Philippe been premised upon the presumed ameliorative qualities of a republic? Was not *Vive la République* the rallying cry on the barricades of February 1848? Revolutionary republicans risked both their own credibility as well as the general credibility of a republic in their persistent calls for revolt. Basing a revolt against a popularly elected government on issues such as food and employment risked harkening back to the days of *jacqueries* and food riots and thus condemning the insurgents as archaic reactionaries.⁶⁵ On the other hand, this democratically elected Assembly was largely unsympathetic to the particular concerns of the Parisian population. Just as during the July Monarchy, the Parisian revolutionaries grew frustrated by their impotence over and insignificance to the direction of the post-insurrectionary course of events.⁶⁶ During the July Monarchy, protest could be anchored in calls for a republic. However, violent opposition to a republic by an ostensibly republican force had to be premised upon different, less amorphous principles.

In part, the Assembly itself furnished substantiation for the argument that

⁶⁵ 'L'Émeute et la Révolution'. *La Carmagnole. Journal des enfants de Paris*. (no. 4) 11-15 juin 1848. According to the author of this piece, riots are generally geographically and aspirationally limited. Consequently, they are more likely to inspire fear and hatred.

⁶⁶ *L'Organisation du Travail* (no. 8) 10 Juin 1848.

it was pursuing policies which, in the past, had been the source of popular protest in advance of a republican revolution.⁶⁷ Yet, on another level, the ultimate failure of the Second Republic in 1848 was a function of both temporal and logistical circumstances. Only three months after the defeat of Louis Philippe, the successor government was showing signs of ending the revolution by limiting its effects to a political transformation. In closing the National Workshops, the Assembly denied the social component of the revolution. Instead, the Assembly had rapidly emphasized that its mandate was derived from conservative provincial electors who feared and despised the disgruntled *barricadeurs* of February and their irritating pretensions at knowing what was best for France.

In the faubourgs, Parisian revolutionary republicans nevertheless clung to their belief that the revolutionary initiative had never been relinquished to the forces of order and stability. The series of events that commenced in mid-May had lent an aura of urgency to the situation. The clubs and popular press responded with a campaign designed to reinvigorate the *faubouriens* with a sense of their

⁶⁷ Examples of this include the 7 June vote on a *loi sur les attroupements* about which *l'Organisation du Travail* remarked that it invited comparisons to the first such law passed on 21 October 1789 and its use against the Champ de Mars petitioners on 17 July 1791. It was also noted that the introduction of the 1848 law was 5 June, a more than ironic coincidence to the events of that day in 1832. *Ibid.* (no. 6) 8 Juin 1848. Furthermore, in response to concerns that the Assembly would restrict freedom of assembly and reinstitute the payment of caution money, *le Père Duchêne* forecasted, 'Vous verrez, camarades, que nous serons obligés de reprendre nos fusils un de ces quatre matins et de refaire quelques barricades'. 'Le Décret d'urgence' *Ibid.* (no. 24) 8-11 Juin 1848. See also: *La Vraie République* (no. 81) 15 juin 1848. According to Donald McKay, both *la loi sur les attroupements* and the requirement that newspapers pay a *cautionnement* adopted in June 1848 were more restrictive than similar laws adopted by the July Monarchy. McKay, Donald Cope. *The National Workshops; a Study in the French Revolution of 1848*. (Harvard: 1933), pp. 125-9.

undiminished vitality in directing the revolutionary process. In an address to the Club de la Révolution, Barbès compared the fermentation of ideas and actions of that society to the Jacobin club as led by Robespierre, Couthon and Saint-Just. Barbès argued that just as the Jacobins sensed the moment to act, so too the 1848 clubs had a mission to fulfil as the *avant-courrier* of an ascending revolution. Similarly, Marat's name was invoked as Barbès endeavoured to develop similarities between the *ancien régime* monarchy and the present republic.⁶⁸ The invectives Marat launched against the monarchy before 10 August 1792 would, no doubt, have been directed at the Assembly of 1848 'car Marat ne voulait pas seulement la République, il voulait la liberté et le bonheur de tous les hommes'.⁶⁹

The foregoing references to inhabitants of the Pantheon of popular revolution in the First Republic reminded readers that the goals of a revolution are not necessarily realised by the declaration of a republic. After all, following the *journée* of 10 August 1792 the First Republic was declared. That said, the conversion from monarchy to republic did not appear to have engendered much of the change expected by those who stormed the Tuileries. The political process

⁶⁸ 'Adresse de Barbès au Club de la Révolution'. *Le Travail. Véritable Organe des Intérêts Populaires* (no. 5) 4-6 juin 1848.

⁶⁹ *Journal des Sans-Culottes* (no. 2) 4-8 juin 1848. The editor of this journal, Constant Hilbey, wrote a rejoinder to Lamartine's *Histoire des Girondins* entitled *Marat et ses calomnieux ou réfutation de l'Histoire des Girondins, par Constant Hilbey*. Perhaps because Raspail had already taken the name *l'Ami du Peuple*, Hilbey chose to identify his target audience in the name of his paper. None the less, a good portion of his journal was directed either at reproducing Marat's words and giving them contemporary significance or defending Marat's reputation. One wonders why, in those tumultuous first months of the Second Republic, historical curiosities would have been so mesmerizing to Hilbey.

was still dominated by provincials who were unresponsive to *sans-culottes* concerns. As its stewardship over the Revolution appeared to diminish, Parisians, between 31 May and 2 June 1793, reasserted control over the specific agenda of their Revolution. The analogy between this scenario and that of 1848 was striking. With the precedent of 1793 firmly etched in their minds revolutionary republicans provided themselves with legitimacy for an uprising against a republican government. Considering that so much of the official discourse after the February revolution was couched in the language of the First Republic, it was hardly surprising that revolutionary republicans would locate a situational analogy in the Revolution for their perceptions of the task at hand. However, whereas Parisian revolutionary republicans located a revolutionary imperative in the Girondins expulsion, provincial fears and enmity toward Parisian revolutionaries was furthered by their own recollection of this episode of the Revolution. McPhee noted how many provincials shared the same concern for Poland expressed at Paris but distrusted (what they saw as) the dictatorial tendencies of Parisian revolutionaries acting under colour of the national interest.⁷⁰ Basically, the dynamics of popular protest had changed to such an extent that any manifestation against the government was a potential contest for power. Insurgents and authorities, alike, grasped the realities of a political culture in which reformist demands often entailed revolutionary change.

More than the apparent similarities of popular pressure which came to bear on both the First and Second Republics was the mood of despair in June. The

⁷⁰ McPhee, *op. cit.* at 98.

violent displacement of authority cried out for a correspondingly militant and radical change in the structure of society. Yet, in general, the emotional rush following a successful *journée*, whether in 1789, 1792, 1830 or 1848, is set up for disappointment when the beliefs in social transformation are frustrated. The relatively minor progress made after *les trois glorieuses* (even in a political sense) certainly posed a stark contrast with the resurrection of the republic in 1848. Nevertheless, it was precisely this resurrection which also conjured up greater expectations amongst those who had created the change. Thus, while generating a certain sense of optimism, the social measures enacted by the Provisional Government were not the catalysts for the overwhelming despair felt in June. It is reasonably safe to say that the revolutionary aftershocks of May and June would have been felt sooner had it not been for even such limited initiatives as the Luxembourg Commission, National Workshops and democratisation of the National Guard. We get a foretaste of what would occur in little more than two weeks from the following words of 'un Ouvrier des ateliers nationaux': '[N]ous n'attenterons à la souveraineté de votre République, que lorsqu'elle immolera sa soeur la liberté, répudiera l'Égalité sa fille, et renoncera à la Fraternité sa seule force, et son plus ferme appui'.⁷¹

Tocqueville wrote that the June Days 'stood in the same relation to the facts of the February Revolution as the theory of socialism stood to its ideas; or, rather it sprang naturally from those ideas, as a son from his mother'.⁷² Tocqueville's

⁷¹ 'Plan ran plan' *Le Père Duchêne* (no. 23) 6-8 Juin 1848.

⁷² Tocqueville, *op. cit.* at 169.

theory behind the June Days presents two distinct possibilities. First, the one hand, Tocqueville referred to the connection between the February revolution and socialism. Secondly, to Tocqueville, the advent of socialism could only come about through violence.

On 23 June 1848, as the first barricades since February were being constructed at Paris, confirmation of the closure of the National Workshops created a mood of hopelessness and resignation to the insurgent battle. Yet to confine the uprising to such temporal, though no less crucial, concerns as bread and work is too restrictive a view of events at Paris between February and June 1848. While it is true that the motivating factor behind the insurrection was the fear engendered by the closure of the Workshops, it is no less true that the overriding issue was, on one level, control of the February revolution and, on another, the final chapter in an encore performance of 1793-4. With the likelihood of state guarantees regarding the procurement of work growing dimmer, workers, whose one source of political self-esteem was found on the barricade, resorted to an alternative, though no less familiar, method of work - *la journée révolutionnaire*.

As this chapter had endeavoured to point out, the June Days were an inevitable consequence of the February revolution. Consequently, they had little to do with the actual closing of the National Workshops. No amount of acclamations of confidence in the Provisional Government or nationally elected Assembly could serve as a definitive transfer of sovereignty won on the barricades. If Paris remained relatively calm between March and June 1848 (with the possible exception of 15 May), on Thursday, 22 June, *l'Organisation du Travail* none the less drew attention

to the fact that 'le peuple est comme le tempête, et quelquefois un beau temps recèle un orage'.⁷³

The following morning a procession of workers filed off towards the spot where, little more than fifty-nine years earlier, the French Revolution had its symbolic origin. Then, the Bastille Prison loomed large in the furniture making district of the Faubourg Saint-Antoine. In 1848, however, there was no longer an *ancien régime* fortress to remind artisans of their subordinate position and general impertinence. Instead, there was a column, erected by the July Monarchy, to honour those insurgents who toppled the Bourbon Restoration. The Place de la Bastille was a veritable sanctum of the insurrectionary tradition. It was there that popular protest initially appeared as revolutionary activity and there that a revolutionary régime chose to acknowledge its insurgent roots. Symbolically, the workers in June 1848 sang a song from the Revolution, '*Ça Ira*' and, upon reaching the *colonne de juillet*, listened to Louis Pujol, a lieutenant in the National Workshops, 'recall the victors of the fourteenth of July'.⁷⁴ Consistent with their earlier affirmations of an insurgent tradition, the workers on 23 June appeared to draw their revolutionary zeal and energy from recollections of the Revolution. That same day, *l'Organisation du Travail* recited Articles 27, 28 and 29 of Robespierre's *Déclaration des Droits de l'Homme et du Citoyen* regarding, respectively, resistance to oppression, oppression defined and the right to insurrection. Ominously, the paper warned, 'n'oubliez pas que le bras du peuple peut vous atteindre partout,

⁷³ *L'Organisation du Travail* (no. 20) 22 Juin 1848.

⁷⁴ Duveau, *op. cit.* at 133.

qu'il peut vous briser [...]'⁷⁵

The 'soldiers of despair' were thus celebrated in the heroic mould of their forebearers even if, on a personal level, they were driven by the immediate fear of hunger. During the four days between the construction of the first barricade near Porte Saint-Denis and the final shots fired at rue des Amandiers, the revolutionary press defined the uprising as an effort to fulfil the promise of liberation which the fall of Louis Philippe should have signaled. For example, the first and final issue of one newspaper rhetorically asked, 'Devions-nous donc penser que, trois mois après février, le peuple indignement trompé, songerait à se jeter par désespoir dans les bras d'un prétendant, préférant à la mort par la faim la nourriture de l'esclave?' The masthead of this paper bore the abbreviated version of the Lyonnais *canuts'* mantra of 1831, 'Vivre en travaillant ...!' Further, its lead article drew an unflattering parallel between the eclipse of euphoria in 1830 and the sense of desperation in 1848 before endowing the June insurgents with the noble purpose of defending the republic they founded in February. It was clear from this journal and from other similar examples that the insurgent tradition had expanded beyond the *journées* of the Revolution.⁷⁶ The efforts of Parisian *sans-culottes* in the Year II, Lyonnais *canuts* in 1831 and workers (whether Rouennais, Lilleois or Parisian) in 1848 were all presented as part of the same revolutionary continuum.

Implicit within the effort at characterising the June insurrection as defensive

⁷⁵ *L'Organisation du Travail* (no. 21) 23 Juin 1848.

⁷⁶ *Journal Démocratique et Officiel des Ateliers Nationaux* (no. 1) 22-24 Juin 1848.

of the ideals struggled for in 1830, 1831, 1832, 1834 1839, and which February 1848 purportedly represented, lay the ultimate legitimacy and revolutionary nature of the uprising. After the first day of fighting, art critic Théophile Thoré's comparatively well-circulated *La Vraie République* placed the present situation in the context of a readily identifiable and retrievable history.

Et qui est responsable de ces massacres terribles?

[¶] Sur qui donc nos ministres actuels, et nos cinq rois, nouveaux maîtres rejetaient-ils le sang de Saint-Merry, de la rue Transnonain, et des barricades de 1830 et de 1848?

[¶] Sur les Bourbons et les d'Orléans [sic], sur Polignac, ou sur Guizot, sur les oppresseurs de la patrie.

[¶] A qui donc faut-il attribuer la guerre sociale qui désole Paris?

[¶] Faut-il laver Polignac et Marmont du sang versé en juillet, M. Thiers et M. Bugeaud des massacres de la rue Transnonian, Louis-Philippe du sang versé en juin, en avril, en mai, en février?

[¶] Ou, bien faut-il accuser aussi le pouvoir actuel des malheurs du 23 juin.

The article concluded with a lamentation over the fratricidal degeneration of the unity achieved four months previous 'après la révolution populaire, après la proclamation de la république démocratique et sociale'.⁷⁷ Thoré, one of the leading spokespersons for the socialist republicans, articulated an assumption, rather than a desire as to the nature of what was achieved in February. After the numerous struggles against the July Monarchy, how could the defeat of that régime produce so little change in terms of either programme or personnel? Most discouraging of all was the apparent denial of this tradition by some of its former defenders. This, more than anything, highlighted the sense of abandonment and rendered

⁷⁷ *La Vraie République* (no. 90) 24 juin 1848. See also: des Menars, R. Reymond. 'La Faubourg Saint-Antoine du 23 au 27 juin 1848. (Paris: 1848)', p. 2. *Les Révolutions du XIXe Siècle, op. cit.* (troisième série, tom. I).

insurgency an imperative.⁷⁸

The component of insurrection within the French revolutionary tradition was essentially a political struggle. If limited to social issues it risked being reduced to the myopic scope and oftentimes transitory aspirations of a grain riot. Admittedly, the June insurgents were 'soldiers of despair'. However, lurking beneath the surface of the revolt by a populace whose material well-being was increasingly threatened was a feeling that its despair was, in part, self-inflicted. As significant as anything was their relinquishment of the political initiative seized in February. By consequence, the social revolution of June was indistinguishable from the political revolution of February. Similarly, the various republican uprisings during the July Monarchy were inseparable from *les trois glorieuses*. Perhaps, all of these were part of the same process put in motion during the last decade of the eighteenth century. While the socio-economic character of the insurgents may have changed over time, the revolutionary dynamic remained constant.⁷⁹

After the revolutions of 1830 and February 1848 nothing resembling a

⁷⁸ François Arago, Minister of War during the Second Republic, had been a conspicuous opponent of the July Monarchy. During the June Days, at the Place du Panthéon, Arago urged some insurgents to lay down their arms; instead, he was met with a ghost from his past: '«Vous ne vous souvenez donc plus du cloître Saint-Merry?»' Quoted in: Ménard, Louis, *op. cit.* at 213.

⁷⁹ Tilly and Lees concluded that the *journées* of the Revolution and the June Days of 1848 were 'part of a typical revolutionary sequence'. Having said that, they also noted that the increasing proletarianisation of the French labour force had endowed it with a greater sense of social class separateness and solidarity that anticipated modern social class distinctions between dependent and independent workers. *Op. cit.* at 192, 202. While acknowledging the importance of transformations in French economic development on social class relationships and politicisation, it is beyond the scope of the present study to scientifically delineate and analyze the significance of such distinctions.

consensus emerged. Between the post-insurrectionary visions of those who assumed the reigns of authority and the aspirations of those who, by design or by default, had vested them with authority, there existed an unbridgeable gulf. In the process, the revolutionary aftershocks following 1830 and 1848 were portrayed as the undemocratic tendencies of Parisians intoxicated by Robespierre-inspired fantasies of a sovereign nation. However, nothing was clearer to Parisian revolutionary republicans than the fact that, having commenced every revolutionary process since 1789, it was not only their right, but their duty, to terminate the revolutions according to their own terms. However, part of the problem was the apparent fulfilment of expectations Parisian revolutionaries had of provincials and vice versa. Anticipating peasant indifference, prejudice or mollification by local *notables*, Parisian revolutionaries believed their mission to entail the political education of the peasantry. Peasant political culture was less predictable, though, and revolutionary republicans might have lost a golden opportunity through their own biases. Similarly, peasant paranoia over roving bands of recently unemployed workers, based as it was on the popular peasant culture of the brigand-bogeyman, none the less did nothing to develop the unity so necessary for their separate, though mutual, support for the social revolution.

From around mid-May 1848 it was rapidly becoming apparent to a significant portion of the politicized *menu peuple* that a clash with the existing authority was inevitable. The political conception of a republic as epitomized by the election of representatives under a franchise restricted only by gender neither guaranteed nor comported with the idea of popular sovereignty evidenced on the

barricades. To the question when should the revolution come to an end must be appended a more compelling inquiry for the insurgent tradition, in general, and the Second Republic, in particular: who should determine the end of the revolution? In this respect, it is perhaps a bit too imprecise to speak of 'républicains de la ~~v~~eille' and 'républicains du lendemain'. The June Days seemed to underscore a division between 'républicains légalistes' and 'militant~~s~~ républicains' within the revolutionary tradition.

CHAPTER FIVE

THE INSURGENT TRADITION: 1868-1871

Background and Summary:

The republican movement was profoundly affected by the events which occurred between the fall of the July Monarchy and the collapse of the Second Empire in 1870. Between 1848 and 1870, France had experienced a relatively short-lived experiment in republican government, a dramatic increase in its industrial development and the formation of a new working class ideology and organisation which, by virtue of its international bases, was unencumbered by the legacy of the French Revolution. During the 1860s the liberalizing tendencies of the Empire fostered the reemergence of republicanism. However, because the political process seemed to present opportunities, most republicans were committed to the gradual realization of their goals through parliamentary means.

None the less, there still remained a recalcitrant cadre of revolutionary republicans. Their steadfast opposition to the Empire not only revealed their proclivity for the institution of a republic but also signified their recognition of different forms of republicanism. Determined to avoid a recurrence of the experiences of the Second Republic, revolutionary republicans believed their goals could only be achieved through violent confrontation. This chapter will assess the discourse of revolutionary republicans between 1868 and 1871 and, specifically,

their development of a stronger social class emphasis. In the wake of the disappointment of the Second Republic and the context of the declaration of the Third Republic against the backdrop of military defeat, revolutionary republicans looked to an alternative tradition of the Revolution.

When, as a prelude to the inauguration of the Second Empire, President Louis Bonaparte suspended the constitution of the Second Republic in December 1851, the fallen régime found a surprising number of provincial supporters.¹ On the other hand, the same could not be said for Paris where insurgents against the coup d'état turned up in smaller numbers than they had in the *journées* of July 1830, February 1848 or June 1848.² Paris' relative silence and the lack of an insurgent tradition in the provinces would prove to be the decisive factors in the coup's success. Why was Paris reluctant to stir in defence of a republic forged less than four years earlier on barricades erected in the city? The reason was summed-up by a ~~demit~~^{démoc-soc} deputy to the Legislative Assembly, Victor Schoelcher. Noting that the best efforts of republican deputies to move Parisians workers to fight against the coup were largely ignored or derided, Schoelcher speculated the recollection of June 1848 was a more compelling reason for abstention than was fidelity to a political form which, thus far, had produced only mixed results.³

¹ Ted Margadant has identified 13 departments which turned out over 1,000 armed individuals in resistance to the coup - Yonne, Nièvre, Saône-et-Loire, Basses-Alpes, Var, Hérault, Gard, Vaucluse, Ardèche, Drôme, Pyrénées-Orientales, Gers and Lot-et-Garonne. Margadant, Ted. *French Peasants in Revolt. The Insurrection of 1851*. (Princeton: 1979), p. 22.

² Agulhon, Maurice. *The Republican Experiment, 1848-1852*. (translated by Janet Lloyd) (Cambridge University Press: 1983), pp. 144-9.

³ Schoelcher, Victor. *Les Crimes du Deux Décembre*. (London: 1852), pp. 247-8.

The repression of the pockets of resistance to Louis-Napoleon's coup d'état was intensified during the first half of the Second Empire. Manhood suffrage was restored and the Empire's popularity, though diminished in successive polls, was seemingly confirmed in plebiscites and legislative elections held at various points. However, political discourse was strictly curtailed. The combined effects of the exile or imprisonment of dissenting voices, censorship and a climate of intolerance furthered by the Empire's popularity and its repressive measures had stifled the development of political pluralism, let alone revolutionary discourse, in the 1850s.

However, by the 1860s the situation had changed dramatically. Various laws restrictive of civil liberties were liberalized and the decade was marked both by the resurrection of a republican opposition and a workers' movement. Initially sponsored by the government, the coöpted worker organisations had spawned an independent movement. Furthermore, by 1868, freedom of the press, speech and association had been decreed and Bonapartism no longer appeared to be incompatible with the principles of the French Revolution.

In terms of timing, however, the Empire could not have chosen a less propitious moment for introducing reforms. Whereas political repression and economic prosperity had characterized the 1850s, the 1860s, while inaugurating greater political liberties, had been a decade of general economic slow down and heightened international tension. Liberalism became a paradoxical proposition as protectionist forces looked upon an autonomous parliament as an institution for combatting the implementation of specific liberal policies which were perceived as being behind France's economic woes. In addition, political opponents of the

régime, whether legitimists, orleanists or liberal republicans, took an opportunistic view of the innovations and hoped to seize the chance to challenge the régime without unleashing a revolution that could upset the social order.

Despite making overtures to the working class (usually at the risk of alienating liberal bourgeois opinion), Napoleon III was unable to completely command its allegiance. This was particularly apparent when restrictions on the freedom of the press and the right to assemble were relaxed in 1868; many workers who had previously ignored political answers to capital-labour questions suddenly became receptive to the messages proffered by the reemerging socialist republicans. For those who saw a connection between economic democracy and popular sovereignty, the Empire, like previous autocratic governments, was capable of making no more than palliative concessions to the working class. Allowing civil liberties and the right to associate simply accelerated the Empire's problems as the régime's opponents were now provided with both the means and the grounds for criticising its policies.

Compounding matters further for the Empire was its pursuit of a reckless and short-sighted foreign policy. Through the pursuit of expansionist policies in Italy, Luxembourg and Mexico, France had alienated most of its European neighbours. War, at some point, was inevitable; when it did occur in the summer of 1870 the inability of France to repel the Prussians was as much the result of the Empire's external isolation in failing to gain any European support as it was a symptom of internal tension stemming from uncertainty over whether the greater enemy was Prussia or Napoleon III.

Nevertheless, the Empire's collapse in the wake of Sedan and the declaration of the Republic shortly thereafter would only lead to a temporary period of political and social stability. Now that the war was being prosecuted by a republican government, its consequences were far clearer: democracy versus autocracy, the French nation against the Prussian king. Any sense of collective relief at Napoleon's fall would soon be tempered, though, by a more fundamental disagreement over the pressing issue of the conduct of the war and the provisioning of a besieged Paris. The very word 'nation' would take on a more highly charged meaning, particularly in light of the previous failures of parliamentary republicanism and the sacrifices being endured by Paris on behalf of the nation. Therefore, while the war was the immediate source of tension in the period between September 1870 and January 1871, longer-standing disputes, such as lingering hostilities from 1848, were not far from the surface and desperately required resolution.

Insofar as it was declared against the backcloth of war, the Third Republic naturally invited analogies to the French Revolution; furthermore the challenges posed to it by revolutionary republicans were to be premised on the understanding that in 1793 the recovery of the revolutionary initiative by the *sans-culottes* had both staved off military defeat and preserved the French nation formed by the Revolution. To the extent that the Third Republic was also the result of war and a revolutionary *journée*, there was a parallel between the circumstances attending the births of the First and Third Republics.

However, republicans were lumbered with the sectarianism which had plagued the Second Republic. As the products of insurgency, prior republican

régimes had been unable to reconcile their revolutionary origins with the urge to create a stable political republic complete with free elections. In endeavouring to legitimise an extralegal act, republican politicians had eschewed what appeared to be an inextricable relationship between republicanism and political violence. The intransigence of the ancien régime and the July Monarchy had justified and compelled the use of force in bringing about reform. As the Empire began to provide opportunities for greater political expression and as republicanism attenuated its connection to social revolution through greater compatibility with liberalism, the prospects of France's peaceful transition to a republic was conceivable. On the other hand, because of the significant social transformation which their vision of a republic implied, socialist republicans harboured no illusions that such a tranquil passage would be possible or even desirable⁴; revolutions are borne out of desperation and desperate times require revolutionary means. Because their agenda called for both extreme political and social change, many socialist republicans were unique in their fidelity to France's revolutionary past.

Whereas some republicans hoped to realise their goals through an alliance with the liberal opposition to the Empire, socialists under the Second Empire

⁴ In *Le Réveil* (no. 96) 29 Août 1869, Charles Delescluze, a *quarante-huitard*, confronted the possibility that changed circumstances had rendered insurgency an anachronistic means for resolving France's political and social problems and that those who had been exiled during the Second Republic and Empire were no longer understood the needs of their society. Delescluze noted that the maintenance of the revolutionary flame by 'les proscrits' was a necessary force in the recovery of the timeless principles gained and lost in 1848. '[L]es besoins de la société ne varient pas avec les moeurs artificielles que peuvent lui imposer les malheurs des temps. Ils sont aujourd'hui ce qu'ils étaient il y a vingt ans, et réclament les mêmes remèdes [...]'

developed a variety of responses. Some, like Proudhon, eschewed political answers altogether, focussing their attention on obtaining social reform through an alliance with the existent régime. In this respect, prior experiments in republicanism had proven that republican government was not a necessary ingredient in the fruition of a socialist programme.

In seeking answers for the failure of a republic founded on a revolution, socialist republicans, were not only forced to defend the necessity of political change for social reform but also had to confront how short the last effort at revolutionary republicanism had fallen of its promise. For the most part, the First and Second Republics had demonstrated that, no less than a monarchy or an empire, a republic could be used to further the interests of a minority of the population and to either empower a new élite or to maintain the present élite; while this was to be expected of a monarchy, it seemed to contradict the notion of a society presumably reconstituted by popular sovereignty.

Just as sectarianism had contributed to the collapse of the First Republic, so too dissension within the republican left (from the precursors of radicalism to revolutionary socialists) had hastened the demise of the Second Republic. In spite of the fact that nearly all of the republicans who could be classified as either revolutionary socialists or *démoc*socs had, at some point, suffered under the republic, lingering hostilities between the Blanquist *Société Universelle des Communistes Révolutionnaires* and two other societies, *Société de la Révolution* and *l'Union Socialiste*, led, respectively, by Ledru-Rollin and Louis Blanc, continued

to plague any efforts at *rapprochement* while they were in exile or prison.⁵ Invited to contribute a toast to a banquet being organised in London by the three groups to commemorate the third anniversary of the February 1848 revolution, Blanqui from his prison cell at Belle-Ile, wrote a stinging indictment of all members of the former Provisional Government of the Second Republic, accusing them of having breached the faith invested in them by 'le peuple' after the insurrection which toppled Louis-Philippe. In this document Blanqui asserted that two measures were necessary for a revolution to realise the promise it offers its combatants:

1^o) le désarmement général des gardes bourgeoises; 2^o) l'armement et l'organisation en milice nationale de tous les ouvriers. [¶] Sans doute il est bien d'autres mesures indispensables; mais elles sortiront naturellement de ce premier acte, qui est la garantie préalable, l'unique gage de sécurité pour le peuple.[...] [¶] Les armes et l'organisation, voilà l'élément décisif du progrès, le moyen sérieux d'en finir avec la misère! Qui a du fer, a du pain. On se prosterne devant les baïonnettes, on balaie les cohues désarmées. La France hérissée de travailleurs en armes, c'est l'avènement du socialisme.⁶

In stressing that revolutions were violent manifestations of social class tension, Blanqui provided a highly charged class-based understanding of France's revolutionary tradition; in other words, a recognition that revolutions were not the result of a national consensus. The advent of socialism, according to Blanqui, was primordially dependent upon insurgency and maintenance of the insurgent initiative through the *révolution en permanence*. For Blanqui, the failed histories of French revolutions had been characterised by self-imposed restraints on the part

⁵ Bernstein, *op. cit.* at Chapter 13.

⁶ Blanqui, Auguste. 'Avis au peuple (toast du 25 février 1851)'. *Louis Auguste Blanqui. Ecrits sur la Révolution. Oeuvres complètes (tome 1)*. (présenté et annoté par A. Münster) (Editions galilée, Paris: 1977), pp.327-31.

of the insurgents; having risen up against social injustice and political impotence, insurgents destroyed the various governments of the French Revolution, the Restoration and the July Monarchy. However, in rapidly exiting from the revolutionary stage, insurgency was limited to a destructive rôle; by voluntarily making the transition from dynamic performers to passive observers, the forces of insurgency entrusted the completion of their revolutionary work-in-progress to others.

Prior to 1848, political and social republicans looked to the Montagnard tradition as represented by Robespierre, Saint-Just, *et al.* as the counter to constitutional monarchism and liberal republicanism represented, respectively, by the heritage of 1789-92 and the Girondins. In contrast, the Montagnard tradition was characterised by the involvement of popular classes (necessary for destroying the institutions and power structure of the state but not necessarily its social order) who would invest power in a temporarily constituted oligarchy. Once stability had been achieved, the transition to a democratised political structure (as represented by parliamentary government) could be instituted and the social reforms demanded by the nation legally produced.⁷ However, the experiences of the Second Republic fulfilled only a part of the Montagnard equation: in other words, while the July Monarchy was destroyed by a revolution and a legislature produced by manhood suffrage, social reforms had been, at best, ephemeral, and political democracy had, ultimately, been debased by the electoral reforms of 1850.

⁷ This was essentially the progression of events that Louis Blanc had in mind in writing *L'Organisation du Travail*.

A New Revolutionary Republican Tradition:

In 1864 *Les Hébertistes, plainte contre une calomnie de l'histoire* written by a Blanquist, Gustave Tridon, was published. In part, Tridon's short study is a glorification of the leaders of the 1793 Paris Commune. Their strident advocacy of a controlled economy and an increase in the juridical and political terror was promoted as having preserved the Revolution from a return to the *ancien régime*. When, in March 1794, their sectarian politics were seen as more of a hindrance to bourgeois interests, Hébert and his followers were given a date with the scaffold. Until Tridon's book, the Hébertists had been relegated to the fringes of histories of the Revolution, presented as factional distractions to the principal actors in the revolutionary drama.

Tridon's work on the Hébertists not only charted new historiographical ground on the Revolution but also provided revolutionary socialist republicans with a point of reference opposed not only to liberal republicanism but also to the Montagnard tradition.⁸ Far more populist in its orientation than Jacobinism, Hébertism also implied the maintenance of the revolutionary initiative through periodic renewals of popular protest. Whereas the histories of the French Revolution produced in the months prior to 1848, were largely rehabilitative of the Jacobins, *Les Hébertistes* took a different slant. In drawing upon a romanticised view of the 1793 Commune in the aftermath of the experiences of the Second Republic, *les Hébertistes* was more a charged propagandistic document than an

⁸ See: Soboul, Albert, 'Tradition et création dans le mouvement révolutionnaire français au XIXe siècle'. *La Commune de 1871. Colloque de Paris (mai 1971)*., pp. 15-31 (Paris: 1972).

accurate historical record.⁹ On the other hand, Tridon was careful to avoid the presumption that his was a work of propaganda as this would have generated the wheels of the régime's censorship.¹⁰

Much of Tridon's account provided few surprises for the reader. As the following paraphrasing indicates, it represented a predictably militant rendition of the Revolution. The roots of French republicanism developed during the Revolution; spurred on by popular pressure in Paris, the republican movement had been led by a succession of middle-class spokesmen. These individuals who emerged in response to the failures of their predecessors in placating the popular demands were vital to the Republic's survival. However, the relationship between the *sans-culottes* and the Jacobins had been characterised by paternalism as the latter could not countenance the former's independence. When in late 1793/early 1794 the popular movement urged an extension of the Terror, and as its interests diverged from those of the bourgeoisie, it was deprived of its leadership and relegated to a reactive rather than an active rôle for the duration of the Revolution.

In his understanding of the Revolution, Tridon considered that Hébertisme's adherents were society's underclass; while acknowledging their inclination towards violence, Tridon justified this by arguing that, for them, oppression had been as debilitating as a physical ailment.¹¹ Thus, for the Hébertists, the Revolution had

⁹ Dommanget, Maurice. *Hommes et Choses de la Commune*. (Marseille: 1937), p. 123.

¹⁰ Bernstein, Samuel. *Auguste Blanqui and the Art of Insurrection*. (Lawrence and Wishart, London: 1971), p. 270.

¹¹ Thus, for Tridon physiological ailments and the responses they produce served as a metaphor for the effects of oppression on its victims and Hébertisme was

been less a matter of ideology than a case of survival. Violence was not simply a considered option but a natural reactive response. Insurgency could thus be explained and understood through reference to Comtean principles on science and society; to the extent that oppression was not a natural feature of society, the body politic's response to it served as a neat allegory to the anatomical body's response to unnatural phenomena.

In the context of the 1860s, the development of the cult of Hébert reflected the extent to which France had changed over the course of the century. Most of the republicans under the July Monarchy and the Second Republic remained, on principle, opposed to the Empire but no longer viewed insurgency as the most efficacious means for effectuating change. After all, the conditions which had required insurgency in the past - governmental resistance to civil liberties - had seemingly been overcome. Even the Empire had given lip-service to its legitimacy being dependent upon the interplay between relatively free speech and a popular mandate achieved through periodic plebiscites and legislative elections. In keeping with this spirit, republicans would concentrate their efforts on the electoral system rather than on the uncertainty of a ^{COUP}~~prise~~ *de main* and the inevitable period of instability followed by repression and censorship that had characterised prior efforts.

As all but the most militant of republicans eschewed their insurrectionary

described as 'l'âme enfiévrée de la soif de la justice, ulcérée de haine contre la race des immolateurs, se lançant au but presque en aveugle, sans souci de l'obstacle ni du péril'. 'Les Hébertistes. Plainte contre une calomnie de l'Histoire' (1864). *Oeuvres Diverses de Gustave Tridon*. (Paris: 1891), pp. 15-6.

tradition and republicanism became less revolutionary and more parliamentary, revolutionary socialist republicans developed a starker contrast between the broader constituency they purported to represent and the narrower interests of bourgeois republicans. In short, revolutionary socialist republicans saw themselves as following in, what they perceived to be, the Hébertist tradition. According to this tradition, insurgents, in the mistaken belief of having made a national revolution, have prematurely handed over the revolutionary reins to the bourgeoisie. In the process, however, they have unwittingly confirmed their subservience to the less-nationally minded bourgeoisie.

For those who remembered the Second Republic's brief history, Tridon's recitation of the initial phase of the First Republic seemed to offer an explanation for the experiences between February and June 1848. When Tridon wrote, 'Si elle [l'Hébertisme] a l'exaltation qui fait vaincre, elle manque du sang-froid qui conserve la victoire'¹², he was explicitly referring to the Revolution. However, to some the same words might have applied to the period which saw the destruction of the July Monarchy amidst declarations of 'Vive la République démocratique et sociale!' This, of course, was followed by the dismantling of the National Workshops in June and the imposition of restrictions on voting rights in 1850. In each case, the revolutionaries had been duped into destroying one set of masters only to empower another.¹³ For Tridon, Hébertisme was the legacy of the Revolution shorn

¹² *Ibid.* at 16.

¹³ Carle, Gaston. 'De 1848 à 1851'. *La Misère*. (no. 1) 6 février 1870. 'Est-ce en vain que nous aurions appris que 1848, 1830 et 1793 ont vu balayer les rois sous le vent du mépris et de la colère? Est-ce en vain que les révolutions ont voulu nous

of its bourgeois results. It represented an affirmation of insurgency as the pivotal point in a revolution and the insurgents as the critical determinant in the post-insurrectionary course of events.

While Tridon's resurrection of Hébert would resonate during the various crises of 1870-1, the depiction of Hébert as the symbol of the popular hero has been criticised by at least one scholar as inconsistent with reality.¹⁴ Tridon's motives for selecting the Hébertistes as his subject would appear to reflect a number of different circumstances that had manifested themselves since the 1860s. Insurrections at Paris had produced two republics (August, 1792 and February, 1848) yet forces outside of Paris and hostile to the ideas which fuelled the insurrections tended to determine the ultimate direction of the republics. As the revolutions lost their insurrectionary impetus, they were weakened before being suspended under the guise of order. In contrast to this type of political arrangement there stood the Paris Commune of 1793. In Tridon's eyes, the Commune had maintained the spirit and energy of the Revolution. It refused to succumb to the illusion that the French countryside could be rapidly integrated into

faire hommes, et faut-il rester esclaves?'

¹⁴ Aubry, Dominique. *Quatre-vingt-treize et les Jacobins. Regards du 19e siècle*. (Presses Universitaires de Lyon: 1988), p. 98. Aubry argues that Tridon ignored a number of pertinent facts about Hébert which had important implications for the nineteenth century: he was not opposed to private property; he was the head of a legally constituted governing body (the Paris Commune) and, in emphasizing the rôles played by individuals (Hébert, Chaumette, Ronsin, Cloots), Tridon was, like previous historians, reducing the Revolution's significance to the actions of exceptional figures. On the other hand, in focussing on Tridon's scholarship Aubry's attention appears to be misdirected. As previously noted, in all likelihood Tridon's work was solely intended as propaganda.

a newly revolutionised society. Paris was where progressive ideas germinated and where the nation's interests could be better elucidated away from the parochialism of the provinces; in short, there would be a dictatorship of Paris over the rest of the country.

If Hébert emerged out of Tridon's work as a symbol for the popular revolutionary movement, Tridon may have been drawing upon his own association with the small cadre of revolutionary students who grouped around their mentor, Blanqui.¹⁵ In asking his young disciples to prepare sketches of prominent individuals from the Revolution, Blanqui had instilled his followers with a belief that the individual rather than the circumstance was the force behind historical progression. Although an individual may not be capable of creating the propitious conditions for a revolution, s/he knows how to identify and exploit such a situation; in this manner, s/he is able to embody and channel popular aspirations and dissent towards a revolutionary solution. In the nineteenth century, Blanqui was the conduit for the revolution in which popular energy and aggression was directed at the transformation of social and political institutions. In Tridon's study, Hébert had filled this rôle nearly three-quarters of a century earlier. To the extent that insurgency was the driving force behind revolutions, the viability of a revolution was seen as dependent upon individuals such as Blanqui and Hébert. For example, in Tridon's work, the execution of Hébert deprived the popular movement of its direction and focus; in spite of the fact that its demands had yet to be fulfilled, the

¹⁵ Hutton, Patrick H. *The Cult of the Revolutionary Tradition: The Blanquists in French Politics, 1864-1893*. (California: 1981), pp. 26-8.

popular movement was unable to sustain itself and the *sans-culottes* were no longer to figure as actors in the Revolution. Similarly, the arrest of Blanqui following the May 1848 demonstration could be seen as creating a leadership vacuum which proved to be fatal to the revolutionary forces one month later. By consequence, the defeat of the June workers' uprising may have dispirited parisian revolutionaries into a state of ambivalence upon which Louis Bonaparte was to capitalise in December 1851.

While the circulation of Tridon's book was probably rather small and its immediate impact not too profound¹⁶, the effect of his ideas in regard to the indispensability of a revolutionary leader became acutely apparent during the Commune's efforts to negotiate the release of Auguste Blanqui who had been arrested on the eve of the Commune (17 March). Blanquists in official positions on the Commune (such as *Procurator-General*, Raoul Rigault) became fixated with the idea that the success and survival of the Commune was dependent upon Blanqui's participation; to this end they engaged in nearly two months of fruitless negotiations with the Versaillais to secure Blanqui's release offering, at the final stage, to swap all of the prisoners held by the Commune for Blanqui.¹⁷ The maintenance of a cult dedicated to a revolutionary individual would appear to be more relevant to dynastic régimes and to contradict the premises of a republic;

¹⁶ Bernstein, *op. cit.* at 271 where it was asserted that *Les Hébertistes* 'was over the heads of workers, and too unsubstantial for intellectuals'.

¹⁷ *Ibid.* at 86-7. Hutton states that the efforts by the Blanquists to retrieve their mentor was due to their belief 'that Blanqui was the missing element in the Commune's leadership, a figure who could play the role that had been Hébert's in 1793'.

with this in mind, the slavish devotion of some communards to Blanqui's liberation proved to be a costly misdirection of energy.

The Blanquists, however, were a diverse group. On one level there was a small group of aspiring doctors, lawyers, journalists and, later, skilled workers who formed its most loyal and active wing; included in this group were Tridon, Rigault and a number of other individuals who would play an active rôle in the Commune - Émile Eudes, Gustave Genton, Théophile Ferré, Edmond Mégy, Ernest Granger, Gaston and Charles Da Costa. On another level there were sympathisers who, while unwilling to engage in the conspiratorial activities of the first group, were nonetheless appreciative of Blanqui's symbolism to the overriding cause of nineteenth century republicanism. This group ran the gamut of advanced republican opinion from Arthur Ranc and Georges Clemenceau to Karl Marx's son-in-law, Charles Longuet and Paul Lafargue, and the novelist Jules Vallès.¹⁸ Because the second group did not unflinchingly embrace the cultish aspects of Blanquism, they resisted the devotion to the Hébertist tradition which was one of the hallmarks of the first group. In other words, they could admire Blanqui but separate him from his self-claimed antecedents. Nonetheless their receptivity to some of Blanqui's ideas assured that some of these elements would find a broader audience amongst the revolutionary republican opposition which emerged after the liberalisation of press laws and flourished after the fall of the Empire. Indeed, the historical *prise de conscience* of revolutionary republicanism would henceforth be marked by a shift in emphasis from the neo-Jacobinism of the July Monarchy and Second Republic

¹⁸ Hutton, *op. cit.* at 24 and 34.

to variations on the more militant heritage of neo-Hébertism. Even where these historical precedents were not explicitly acknowledged we are able to identify them.

The sudden interest in Hébertism cannot be attributed solely to the Blanquists' fixation with ritualism and historical paradigms. In fact, it represented a comprehensible manner of coming to grips with France's second attempt at republican government. Contrary to most republicans, Blanqui believed that the Republic's transformation into an Empire had simply been the natural end-product of policies pursued by those empowered at the Republic's inception. Whether socialists (Louis-Blanc, Albert) or radicals (Ledru-Rollin, Flocon) or conservative (Marrast, Marie), all republicans associated with the Republic bore responsibility for its demise.¹⁹ Thus, resurgent Hébertism was also a reaction against the Jacobinism of the Second Republic and, in particular, its emphasis on parliamentary resolutions to the social questions raised by the revolution. By contrast, Hébertisme was symbolised by affirmation, rather than denial, that the spirit of confrontation and energy generated by violence was necessary for, and characteristic of, republican revolution. This same revolutionary élan is no less integral to the social revolution which renders republicanism so viable.

Blanquism represented yet another example of the persistence of the French Revolution's factionalism and efforts to replay its dramatic political struggles. Although the opportunities for the distinctions between revolutionary republicans

¹⁹ Blanqui, *op. cit.* See also: Blanqui, Auguste. 'A propos des clameurs contre l'Avis au Peuple (avril 1851)'. *Ibid.* at 332-5.

and reformist republicans to manifest themselves were very limited during the Second Empire,²⁰ the pressures of the Franco-Prussian War would accenuate the divide. For Blanquists, the propitious moment for insurgency appeared to offer itself on 14 August 1870. In a carefully planned raid aimed at securing the arsenal stored at the La Villette fire station, the insurgents had anticipated support from the surrounding working class community at Belleville and little resistance from the firemen; instead, they failed to generate any support and were easily routed. Henceforth, 'the Blanquists were content to be absorbed into the larger revolutionary horde' and if any future insurrections were planned, they never materialised.²¹

After the military débâcle led to the fall of the Empire on 4 September, Blanqui acknowledged that, while the timing of the sortie may have been all

²⁰ After Victor Noir, a journalist on Henri Rochefort's *La Marseillaise* was killed by the Emperor's half-brother, Pierre in January 1870, Rochefort printed, what amounted to, a call to insurrection on the day of the funeral. However, faced with threats by the government that it would meet any revolutionary threats with severe action, Rochefort and Delescluze, the organisers of the funeral procession, decided to re-route the procession to the Neuilly Cemetery and avoid the agitated working-class districts near the Père Lachaise. Rochefort's reticence on this occasion would cast doubt on his revolutionary sympathies and his influence on the events leading up to and including the Paris Commune would be reduced. By contrast, several Blanquists and a number of future Communards, including Gustave Flourens and Auguste Vermorel, had strenuously objected to the diversion to Neuilly. Williams, Roger L. *Henri Rochefort. Prince of the Gutter Press*. (New York: 1966), pp. 49-54. On the other hand, it has been said that insofar as 'the demonstration exhibited more of the hallmarks of a festival than of an insurrection', the Blanquists' belief that it provided revolutionary republicans with an insurrectionary opportunity is more reflective of their naïve confusion of ritualistic practises with revolutionary situations. Hutton, *op. cit.* at 56-8.

²¹ *Ibid.* at 67-8.

wrong, the righteousness of its intentions were proven three weeks later.²² According to Patrick Hutton, the failure of the La Villette insurrection not only had a profound effect on future Blanquist endeavours but also had an impact on their view of insurrections. After La Villette, Blanquists were content to play the rôle of revolutionary martyrs; though they might be unsuccessful at leading a revolution, they could take satisfaction in the knowledge that they had served as a harbinger of a future revolution while exposing *les républicains du lendemain*.²³

More fundamentally, what accounts for the failure of the La Villette uprising to adequately challenge the Empire and the success of a spontaneous *journée* on 4 September were the events that intervened between those dates; specifically, the realisation that the Emperor's reckless war had now become the Emperor's defeat. The Blanquists had demonstrated that they were no less reckless in understanding the extent to which France's revolutionary traditions, as the products of insurrections, were borne out of specific circumstances. In many ways this was consistent with their misguided belief that political and social disaffection is capable of being transformed into a revolutionary opportunity by the intercession of a charismatic and credible leader. While Blanqui may personally have opposed the timing of the 14 August insurrection (as he did in May, 1839), he had recently written a treatise in which he advanced the idea that superior planning was the key

²² Blanqui, Auguste. 'L'Affaire de la Villette'. *La Patrie en danger*. (no. 10) (16 septembre 1870).

²³ Hutton, *op. cit.* at 64-5.

to a successful uprising.²⁴

Martyrdom and the Revolutionary Tradition

While an individual may not have been able to forge a revolution in the absence of a revolutionary situation, references to the actions of individuals in previous insurrections were routinely invoked between the summer of 1870 and the fall of the Commune. These recollections might serve an inspirational purpose while uniting those whose fidelity to republicanism was premised on the revolutionary tradition. Their deaths provided the opportunity for retrospection and glorification. The death of Armand Barbès provided the occasion for a poem celebrating the eternal struggle to which he had devoted himself: 'Il est doux pour nos coeurs, perdant ce grand soutien,/De voir renaître alors (coïncidence étrange),/Plus forte que jamais, l'héroïque phalange/ Qui, comme lui, luttant pour les peuple et ses droits,/Et aussi la prison pour prix de ses exploits'.²⁵ It was not always someone as prominent as Barbès whose death merited such attention. An obituary for the father of André Murat (Internationalist and adjunct mayor of the 10th arrondissement) was announced in Jules Vallès' *le Cri du Peuple*. The obituary not only focussed on Murat père's progeny but also on his own participation as a combattant at Lyon in November 1831.²⁶ In other words, Murat fils' revolutionary credentials were probably imbibed at a young age from his previously active father.

²⁴ Blanqui, Auguste. *Instructions pour une prise d'armes*. (1868; reprinted, Futur Antérieur, Paris: 1972).

²⁵ 'Salut d'un Gavroche' *Gavroche* (no.,. 6) 9 juillet 1870.

²⁶ *Le Cri du Peuple* (no. 12) 6 Mars 1871.

For every Murat, however, there were countless others who might vicariously identify with the revolutionary struggle. The revolutionary republican press went to great pains to reach these individuals. After a *journée* on 31 October 1870 failed to change the personnel of the Government of National Defence, revolutionary republicans were compelled to defend the act of launching an insurrection against a republic. This was a somewhat delicate issue since it called into question the idea of whether revolutionary protest is appropriate during a republic.

The author of one article implied that the struggle for the democratic and social republic began during the Revolution and has been carried on through by successive generations in the nineteenth century. 'Au milieu d'eux [combatants of June 1848] est née la jeune génération: espérons au'elle se groupera autour de ces quelques hommes qui n'ont pas désespéré de la Revolution, et qu'au jour prochain du réveil, - le 31 octobre deviendra un 10 août'.²⁷ After the *journée* was repressed, an orator at a Belleville club spoke of revenge in similar terms: '«Eh bien, 93 reviendra, soyez-en sûrs, citoyens, nous retrouverons des Robespierre et des Marat.»'²⁸ On 24 February 1871, a procession was held to commemorate those who fell, twenty-three years earlier, fighting for the Second Republic. In recalling the

²⁷ Sapia, Théophile, 'Le cas de M. Clément-Thomas'. *La Résistance. Organe démocratique et socialiste*. (no. 15) 22 décembre 1870/2 Nivôse an 79. Although the article contains a strong social class element to it, Sapia noted that nothing short of a violent revolution could save France. '« Si d'ici un temps très-court nous ne jettons pas par la fenêtre ces bêtes de proie, viles et lâches, qui, de par le plébiscite, habitent les palais monarchiens, la France est morte [...]»' One month after writing this article Sapia, apparently heeding his own advice, was killed during the *journée* of 22 January 1871.

²⁸ Molinari, *Les Clubs Rouges*, *op. cit.* at 22.

jours of June 1848 and 22 January 1871 as moments that defined the death of republicanism, the author closed by saying that the death of the Third Republic will simply lead to a revolution that will produce a Fourth Republic.²⁹ As the foregoing indicates, supporters of the Commune endeavoured to tap into the emotional outrage over the collapse of the Second Republic. In April, a call for a revolutionary *levée en masse* appealed directly for support from 'ceux qui ont assisté aux luttes de juin 1848 et au guet-apens de décembre 1851, ceux qui ont pleuré de rage en voyant défiler leurs fils condamnés aux pontons'.³⁰

Jules Vallès referred to the *jours* of 31 October and 22 January as patriotic battles in the ongoing process to regenerate France. Those who participated in them would be properly remembered when their struggle is completed by another generation: 'L'histoire seule se serait souvenue, et aurait fait à chacun sa part dans les annales de la Patrie - le jour où il y aurait ^{eu} ~~en~~ de nouveau une Patrie'.³¹ At the inquest into the *jour* of 18 March 1871 which led to the founding of the Commune, a wallpaper^{es} named Héliçon testified to having been raised on stories about the *jours* of 1832, 1834 and 1835(?). 'Février [1848] est

²⁹ Breuillé, Al., 'Le Peuple veille' *Le Cri du Peuple* (no. 5) 26 février 1871. After having obtained his baccalauréat in 1866, 19-year old Alfred Breuillé became a militant Blanquist. During the last fortnight of the Commune he replaced Théophile Ferré as substitute prosecutor of the Commune. Exiled in England, Ireland and Belgium after the Commune's repression, Breuillé returned to France after the General Amnesty in 1881 and, in 1897, was elected Second Vice-President of the Paris municipal council. *Dictionnaire Biographique du Mouvement Ouvrier Français*. (publié sous la direction de Jean Maitron) (2e partie, tom. IV) (Paris: 1967).

³⁰ 'La Levée en Masse', *La Montagne* (no. 8) 21 Germinal an 79/10 avril 1871.

³¹ Vallès, Jules, 'Les Républicains devant les Conseils de Guerre'. *Le Cri du Peuple* (no. 2) 23 février 1871.

arrivé', Héliçon continued, 'les journées de juin sont arrivées. Les enfants sont élevés à entendre glorifier les révolutions'.³² Eugène Varlin, a leading member of the International and, later, a communard, received his revolutionary tutelage from his grandfather, a *volontaire* in 1792 who regaled his progeny with 'les émouvants chapitres de ses inépuisables souvenirs' of the Revolution, the Empire and *les trois glorieuses*.³³

In September 1870, Blanqui's *La Patrie en Danger* endeavoured to force the nascent republic to show its colours. A delegation of three 'combatants de juin 1848' was sent to procure the freedom of Nourrit, imprisoned for life for killing General Bréa. Obviously, the purpose of this was to force the Third Republic to establish whether it represented the social and democratic revolution.³⁴ Within a week, the newly installed republic had defined itself in refusing to arm '[l]e citoyen Deloume [...] ancien combattant de 1839 et de 1848'. To *La Patrie en Danger*, '[i]l est évident [...] que le gouvernement actuel répugne à armer les révolutionnaires'.³⁵

Those who perished on the barricades during the numerous nineteenth century insurrections received a particularly honoured place in the revolutionary liturgy. Recognition of the activities of veteran insurgents not only legitimized their

³² Dommanget, Maurice. *Hommes et Choses de la Commune* (Marseille: 1937), p. 32.

³³ Foulon, Maurice. *Eugène Varlin*. (Paris: 1934), p. 10. Paule Lejeune wrote that Eugène 'fut en effet imprégné des récits de lutte contre les tyrans; il fut élevé dans le culte de la liberté et du savoir et dans la confiance en l'avenir meilleur des masses'. *Eugène Varlin. Pratique militante et écrits d'un ouvrier communard*. (Présenté par Paule Lejeune) (Paris: 1977), p. 7.

³⁴ *La Patrie en Danger* (no. 3) 9 septembre 1870/22 fructidor an 78.

³⁵ *La Patrie en Danger* (no. 10) 16 septembre 1870/30 fructidor an 78.

activities but also fashioned tangible symbols around which revolutionary republicanism could galvanize. Further, it pricked the thorn that seemed to perpetually rest in the side of republicanism - specifically, what form the republic in 1870 would assume. Revolutionary republicans not only distinguished themselves from moderates but also from those on the left who eschewed republicanism as irrelevant to the resolution of social issues - Proudhon-influenced Internationalists. When, in 1869, the latter engaged in discussions with the liberal opposition to the Empire, their pretensions at speaking for workers were chastised by followers of Blanqui: «Les vaincus de juin ne discutent pas avec leurs meurtriers; ils attendent»³⁶

War and Revolution

Perhaps nothing distinguished the advent of the Third Republic from the Second Republic's origins more than the former's declaration against the backcloth of war. Some used the war to refer to the exigent situation facing France's third attempt at republicanism. A letter sent to the republican newspaper *la Commune de Paris* one week after the surrender at Sedan noted that the security of France was now inextricably tied to perceptions of the republic.

Aujourd'hui le peuple est disposé à donner son sang pour sauver le pays, mais il surveille sur la République qui contient toutes les libertés, toutes les espérances des déshérités.

[¶] La République et la France sont confondues par lui dans un même amour et s'il est prêt à combattre pour reconquérir l'intégrité du territoire de l'une, il est prêt à mourir pour assurer l'existence de l'autre.

³⁶ Dommanget, Maurice. *Hommes et Choses de la Commune*. (Marseille: 1937), pp. 185-6.

[¶] Vive la République démocratique et sociale!³⁷

The author of this letter adopted the position once held by the Jacobins about the need to tap into revolutionary energy when the security of the nation is at stake. If the energy and commitment to the national cause necessary to defeat the foreign enemy is proportionate to the level of devotion to the nation, the nation must offer something to its defenders. In this way, revolutions are nearly analogous to war since both require allegiance to, and sacrifice for, the cause one is fighting for. A letter to Félix Pyat's *le Combat* queried whether '[n]os coeurs, énervés par la corruption impériale, sont-ils capables de comprendre les nécessités et les sacrifices, conditions nécessaires de la lutte suprême et de la victoire'.³⁸

A month later the issue of patriotism and revolution was raised in *la Patrie en Danger*: 'Le prolétaire, plus patriote que ses meneurs, quoi qu'on dise, est toujours disposé à donner sa vie; mais il a besoin d'être rassuré sur ses derrières; il laisse, dans son taudis, sa famille en proie à la détresse, et il n'ignore pas quelle sinistre besogne les contre-révolutionnaires préparent dans l'ombre tandis qu'on l'occupe aux remparts'.³⁹

³⁷ Letter from A. Dardaux, *La Commune de Paris* (no. 2) 24 Fructidor an 78/11 September 1870.

³⁸ Letter from Maurice Treillard (who identified himself as 'ancien rédacteur de la *Réforme*') *Le Combat* (no. 6) 4e jour complémentaire an 78/21 septembre 1870. Treillard came from a family of Lyonnais militants. He may have been the brother of Camille Treillard who was the Commune's Director-General of Public Assistance and later executed during the Bloody Week. *Dictionnaire Biographique [...]*, *op. cit.* (2e série, tom. IX).

³⁹ 'Les meillure des Mitrailleuses', *La Patrie en Danger* (no. 46) 5 Brumaire an 79/26 Octobre 1870. The author of this piece, C.G. Jacqueline was a surveyor who belonged to the International. A similar theme can be found in *La Résistance. Organe démocratique et social du XIVe Arrondissement*. (no. 1) 20 brumaire an 79:

The poor performance of French soldiers before September was readily attributed to a lack of commitment to the Empire. *Le Combat* optimistically reflected that the transition from empire to republic would invigorate the French determination. It was not simply a matter of defending the nascent republic, though; on the contrary, republican France 'a conscience de la grande mission qu'il a à remplir. On dirait que le souffle de 92 l'anime, que la grande âme de la Révolution est en lui'.⁴⁰

However, beginning in late September 1870, several papers began to question whether the change in régime earlier in the month had engendered a requisite revolutionary transformation. *La Patrie en Danger* suggested that military success in 1792 was preceded by an internal cleansing: 'Ils [les révolutionnaires de 1792] commencèrent par mettre à mort les traîtres [...]'.⁴¹ The following month, the same paper postulated that military defeats in 1792-3 and the disaster of 1870 contained a historical message relative to republicanism. Beginning with a

'[...] à défaut de fortune, de propriétés à défendre, il nous reste un héritage, celui que nous a légué la Révolution et la philosophie française. Mais au prix de notre sang, nous demandons une compensation, celle de vous démasquer'.

⁴⁰ *La Combat* (no. 1) 29 fructidor an 78/16 Septembre 1870. In the following issue, an article imploring the readership to fight for the republic did so by way of reference to the chorus of *la Marseillaise*. *Ibid.* (no. 2) 30 fructidor an 78/17 September 1870.

⁴¹ 'Sachons Trouver des armes!' *La Patrie en Danger* (no. 18) 4 Vendémiaire an 79/25 Septembre 1870. This article was penned by Dr. Louis Lacambre, Blanqui's nephew. During the July Monarchy, Lacambre belonged to the Society of Rights of Man before joining various republican and communist secret societies. Lacambre participated in the *journée* of 15 May 1848 as well as the June Days for which he was condemned. Taking refuge in Spain, Lacambre returned to France after the fall of the Empire. On the eve of the Commune's declaration, Blanqui was arrested at his home in the Lot. *Dictionnaire Biographique [...], op. cit.* (2e série, tom. VI).

comparison of Louis XVI's and Napoleon III's rash declarations of war, the article proceeded to compare how, in both cases, the people sensed treason and reversed the Bourbon Monarchy and Second Empire. However, it was clear that the author didn't believe the declaration of the republic to be the final word. History preserved an ominous warning to the Government of National Defence. The early days of the First Republic were dominated by the Girondins, described as 'des avocats et des discoureurs' who lacked 'le tempérament révolutionnaire' and, instead, wanted 'gouverner à la manière de rois, et changer le moins possible'. Consequently, the people purged the Convention of the Girondins and turned over direction of the Revolution and the war to the Montagnards who, in turn, saved France. 'La Révolution du 4 septembre a remis le pouvoir à des nouveaux Girondins, comme les premiers incapables [...] [¶] Fera-t-il [le peuple] un 31 mai [1793] et une révolution pacifique ou une grande manifestation?'⁴² Similarly, *le Combat*, though still predicting victory, did so with a dose of caution: 'La République vaincra si elle est la République'. However, *le Combat* found the fledgling republic, its policies and personnel, to be something less than inspiring. 'L'empire continué [sic] par les moyens impériaux, sous le nom de République'.⁴³

The foregoing imprecations appeared somewhat prophetic. The fall of the Empire did nothing to reverse France's military misfortunes. Instead, if anything, with Paris besieged, the situation was even more perilous. Revolutionary republicans pressed their frustrations and disappointment with the republic by

⁴² '1792 - 1870' *La Patrie en Danger* (no. 46) 5 Brumaire an 79/26 Octobre 1870.

⁴³ *Le Combat* (no. 5) 3me jour complémentaire an 78/20 septembre an 79.

stressing the extent to which revolutionary energy had been exhausted by an uninspiring régime.⁴⁴ As the siege of Paris continued, efforts to inspire the capital's defense often included contemporary examples of Paris' revolutionary resolve.⁴⁵

The final capitulation to the Prussians on 28 January gave further grist to the revolutionary republicans' mill of denunciations against the government. However much considerations of national unity might have forced them to shroud their attacks against the government during the war, no such hesitations existed once the surrender was announced. As the Prussian military prepared for its triumphant march through Paris, Jules Vallès' *le Cri du Peuple* urged its readership not to engage the Prussian military but to concentrate their energies on a resumption of the insurgent battle to define the republic.⁴⁶

The allusions to 1792-3 made during the siege appeared ever more pertinent in spring 1871. The hostility felt towards the Prussians was confounded in equal doses of vitriol spewed out at the Versailles government. Revolutionary republicans had traditionally claimed their conception of the republic to be more reflective of the nationalism generated by the Revolution. In the wake of the surrender, however, revolutionary republicans were now bolstering their discourse with charges of national betrayal and social class polarization. Recollections of 1792-3 weighed heavily on the Parisian collective conscience. For revolutionary republicans,

⁴⁴ *Le Combat* (no. 68) 2 Frimaire an 79/22 Novembre 1870.

⁴⁵ 'Les Barricades', *Le Combat* (no. 89) 23 Frimaire an 79/13 Décembre 1870 (the example of June 1848 was cited); *Ibid.* (no. 127) 30 Nivôse an 79/19 Janvier 1871 ('Les Prussiens ne viendront jamais dans la rue Transnonain ni au cloître Saint-Merry'.)

⁴⁶ *Le Cri du Peuple* (nos. 8 & 9) 1 March 1871.

however, this was an aspect of history which validated their claims. The *journées* of 4 August 1792 and 31 May-2 June 1793 were not simply the revolutionary expressions of a sovereign people but also made manifest a connection between insurgency and national salvation. By the time the Commune was declared at the end of March 1871, the battle war between France and Prussia had been eclipsed by an impending civil war between Paris and the National Assembly. To some, the declaration of the Paris Commune was vindication for Paris' historical commitment to republicanism, most recently evidenced by its solitary, stoic stance during the winter.⁴⁷ Beyond this, just as the example of the eighteenth century served to inspire the resolve of Parisians in 1871 to defend the nation's interest and honour, so too, the dictates of posterity required contemporary Parisians to leave a similar example of their national commitment.⁴⁸

Paris: Foyer of the Revolutionary Tradition

The siege of Paris and declaration of the Commune aggravated one of the

⁴⁷ 'La Patrie est en Danger' *Le Cri du Peuple* (no. 44) 14 Avril 1871. The author of this article was Henri Place (*dit* Henri Verlet). Place's father was pursued for his opposition to Louis Napoleon's coup while his son studied to be a lawyer. An Internationalist and Blanquist, Place *jeune* participated in the *journées* of 31 October 1870 and 22 January 1871. Condemned after the Commune's repression to New Caledonia, Place persistently refused to ask for a governmental pardon. *Dictionnaire Biographique [...]*, *op. cit.* (2e série, tom. VIII).

⁴⁸ 'Peuple, choisis!' *La Montagne* (no. 6) 18 Germinal, an 79/7 Avril 1871:
Il faut que l'histoire lègue aux générations de l'avenir la tradition sublime, héroïque, épique, d'une population chassant de ses murs un pouvoir corrompé et corrompu, royaliste et prussien, d'une population se gouvernant elle-même. Que-dis-je? gouvernée par des hommes sortis des flancs de la plèbe, obscurs, inconnus, modestes, point avocats ni gratte-papier.

more discomfoting aspects of the revolutionary tradition - the perception of an immense divide separating rural and urban France. Previously we have seen how this was an issue during the critical early months of the Second Republic. In 1848 revolutionary republicans resurrected references the spectre of Girondins in their midst in distinguishing their own revolutionary agenda from that of the newly elected provincial legislators. In 1870-1 circumstances brought a different set of issues to the surface. As the preceding section indicated, the disastrous military situation in 1870 invited memories of revolutionary France's first forays into foreign conflict in 1792. At that time, the French army's first victories corresponded with an increase in popular political agitation at Paris.⁴⁹ To many, the latter appeared to have energized the French with a new-found commitment based on expectations of a republic defined by democratic principles.⁵⁰

However, by 1870 France already had two experiments with republican government under its belt. To revolutionary republicans, the First and Second Republics sowed the seeds of their demise by allowing themselves to be manipulated by bourgeois interests. In other words, the defence of social particularism by the bourgeoisie had caused the most committed revolutionaries to lose interest in the republics' survivals. If nothing else, to revolutionary republicans, this was evidence of the inextricable connection between revolution

⁴⁹ France's victory at Valmy on 20 September 1792 preceded the formal declaration of the First Republic by one day.

⁵⁰ During late spring, 1793, the moral superiority and national commitment of France's republican army was touted as the reason why France was able to defeat the numerically superior forces of the Coalition.

and republicanism, in general, and revolution and Paris, in particular.

In the pages of *le Combat*, Félix Pyat extolled the revolutionary verve of Paris by insisting that France's safety rests with the energy of the Parisians. Citing a litany of revolutionary *journées* beginning with the sack of the Tuileries on 10 August 1792, Pyat argued that the connection between insurgent activity and national salvation is as necessary in 1870 as it was in 1792-3.⁵¹ Within days, another contributor to *le Combat*, Benjamin Gastineau, echoed a theme once sounded by Godefroy Cavaignac regarding 'la force révolutionnaire'. Gastineau claimed that 'la force révolutionnaire' represents the great triumphs of the Revolution: 'le droit au-dessus du fait, l'égalité ou la justice au-dessus du privilège, les intérêts généraux au-dessus des intérêts particuliers'. More than anything else, Gastineau urged, '[l]a force révolutionnaire seule peut nous sauver et nous faire triompher de l'invasion et de la réaction, de même qu'elle a sauvé nos héroïques pères de 92 et de 93!⁵² Clearly, the manner by which these articles exhorted a revolutionary imperative was reflective of the particular circumstances of the autumn of 1870. As the social class element of insurgency was deëmphasized, its past example of raising the universal

⁵¹ *Le Combat* (no. 10) 4 Vendémiaire an 79/25 Septembre 1870.

⁵² Gastineau, Benjamin, 'La Force Révolutionnaire'. *Le Combat* (no. 15) 9 Vendémiaire an 79/30 Septembre 1870. Gastineau was a typographer who, during the Second Empire, became a journalist on Thoré's *La Vraie République* and Proudhon's *La Voix du Peuple*. In 1858 he edited a newspaper in Saint-Quentin that was critical of the Empire. For his troubles, was deported to Algeria (his condemnation coincided with Orsini's assassination attempt against the Emperor). Pardoned in 1859, he later published an account of Proudhon's ideas. Gastineau returned to Paris at the fall of the Empire and, under the Commune, he was appointed Inspector of the libraries and Director of the Mazarine Library. After the Commune's repression he found refuge in Belgium. *Dictionnaire Biographique [...], op. cit.* (2e série, tom. VI).

ideals that characterised the national spirit forged by the Revolution was, instead, promoted.

However, the notion that insurgency was a national phenomenon was soon overwhelmed by allusions to Paris as the foyers of France's revolutionary traditions and ideals. Gastineau, for example, stated that Paris' decision to stand firm against the Prussians had nothing to do with the defence of its physical properties of buildings, monuments, boutiques. Instead, Gastineau claimed, insurgency at Paris represents the defence of

les institutions, les principes, la liberté, la Révolution, - non la maison, l'habit, et l'enveloppe, mais bien le droit, l'âme et l'expression d'un peuple. [¶] Or l'âme du peuple de Paris, ce sont ses quatre Révolutions, c'est la République de 1792, de 1830, de 1848 et de 1870. Voilà ses propriétés chères et sacrées, voilà ses forteresses inexpugnables.

[¶] En 92, les Républicains savaient pour qui et pour quoi ils se battaient. Pour la République universelle, pour la grande Révolution libératrice des peuples, exterminatrice des aristocrates, pulvérisatrice des rois et de leur servitudes.⁵³

This is yet another example of revolutionary republicans assuming the higher ground of French nationalism. Yet, in 1870, their historical claims at embodying the true essence of the Revolution's idealism took on a new immediacy against the backdrop of a military débâcle and a besieged city.

Throughout the autumn of 1870, France's military predicament grew more precarious. Revolutionary republicans did not focus their discourse on preserving the republic against the Prussian invader but, instead, concentrated on the general defence of *patrie* by whatever means. Naturally, of course, their rhetoric continued

⁵³ Gastineau, Benjamin, 'Paris à Défendre', *Le Combat* (no. 35) 27 Vendémiaire an 79/18 Octobre 1870.

to underscore the historical lessons from the French Revolution regarding the link between revolutionary commitment and national defence. Pyat rhetorically asked, 'Mais où sont les hommes et le peuple de 92? Présents! Même sang, même langue, même droit, même guerre! Que manque-t-il? Le nombre? Non! il est double. Qui donc? Au grand corps il manque l'organe d'impulsion, l'organe central et vital, le coeur la Commune de Paris.'⁵⁴ Even though prudence dictated that it move out of the increasingly hostile environment of Paris, it was because of the prospect of a resurrection of the Paris Commune that caused a portion of the government to refuse to completely abandon the capital.⁵⁵

Until 3 November, revolutionary republicans endeavoured to lay the stress on the nationally unifying properties of their project. Whereas others were motivated only by considerations of self-interest and particularism, the pulse of the nation was located in the revolutionary dynamic at Paris. On 3 November, the results of a national plebiscite revealed just how remote the Parisian revolutionary republican movement was from the general views of the rest of the country.

Increasingly, the language of revolutionary republicans became more bellicose. At meetings of the Club des Montagnards (boulevard de Strasbourg) and Club Favié in the working class suburb of Belleville, speakers challenged the government's authority *vis-à-vis* Paris.⁵⁶ Thus, the groundwork for a contest

⁵⁴ *Le Combat* (no. 22) 16 Vendémiaire an 79/7 Octobre 1870. See also: *Le Combat* (no. 20) 14 Vendémiaire an 79/5 Octobre 1870. These articles were written by Pyat and Gastineau, respectively.

⁵⁵ Edwards, Stewart. *The Paris Commune 1871*. (Newton Abbot: 1972), p. 62.

⁵⁶ de Molinari, M.G., *Les Clubs rouges pendant le siege de Paris*. (Paris: 1871), p. 67.

between the Government of National Defence and Parisian revolutionaries was being established. Against the backcloth of war and the siege, Parisian revolutionaries tempered the political and social overtones of their remarks, instead highlighting the patriotic nuances of their cause. Just as in the efforts of the *sans culottes* in 1793, *patrie* and Parisian insurgency were part of the same process in 1870.⁵⁷ The sacrifices endured by Parisians were made manifest in an open letter from Pyat to General Clément Thomas, the head of the National Guard. Pyat warned that, historically, the durability of French republics have been proportionate to the continued commitment of the capital to their survival. Specifically, according to Pyat, the demise of the Second Republic was the result of the disheartening experience of the June 1848 repression. By contrast, the First Republic was salvaged by the revolutionary initiative of Parisians in overriding the jurisdiction of the national government.⁵⁸

Circumstances during the autumn and early winter of 1870-1 allowed Parisian revolutionaries to shroud the fear-provoking revolutionary intonations of their discourse in the fabric of nationalism. In the process, their determination to stand firm against the Prussian encirclement appeared as a deliberate attempt to endow their rhetoric with patriotic credentials denied the ineffective national leadership. Sharp contrasts could thus develop between different conceptions of republicanism. However, during the siege, even most Parisians were more inclined

⁵⁷ For example, at the Club Favié on 19 December, the aborted *journée* of 31 October was acclaimed for having preëmpted any thoughts the government may have had about capitulating to the Prussians. *Ibid.* at 157.

⁵⁸ *Le Combat* (no. 69) 3 Frimaire/23 Novembre 1870.

to trust their government than to engage in revolutionary activity. Consequently, in the context of the entire nation, the revolutionary republicans remained a relatively minor force in a part of the country that was now politically isolated.

On the other hand, beginning with the fall of Sedan, revolutionary republicans were preparing the groundwork for their own assertions of legitimately representing the true ideals of republicanism. When the armistice with Prussia was announced at the end of January 1871, a political vacuum appeared to have been opened. If the Government of National Defence had failed to measure up to its nominal mandate, could it be trusted with any other decisions relative to the fledgling republic? More specifically, after months of material deprivation and death amid stoic heroism, Parisians embodied the spirit of national sacrifice so critical to the survival of the First Republic.

Conflict between the national government and Parisian revolutionaries, long expected, was accelerated by the announcement of the armistice. During the siege, Paris had been moving steadily towards an administrative autonomy heavily influenced by elements of Jacobinism.⁵⁹ The results of elections to the National Assembly on 8 February simply confirmed the extent to which circumstances had

⁵⁹ Dautry, Jean and Scheler, Lucien. *Le Comité Central Républicain des vingt arrondissements de Paris*. (Paris: 1960). Dautry and Scheler underscored how the Central Republican Committee of the Twenty Arrondissements assumed a sort of unofficial jurisdiction over Paris. According to the authors, the influence of the International Association of Workers on the Committee was rather weak. Even one of the few decidedly working class districts of Paris - Belleville - 'l'influence politique sur les masses y appartiendra de plus en plus aux éléments jacobins et blanquistes'. *Ibid.* at 22. Dautry and Scheler concluded that the future political and social character of the Commune was anticipated by the members of the Committee during the siege.

ideologically separated Paris from the rest of the country. Although historically of a more radical political temperament, Paris, in February 1871, also felt its efforts on behalf of France to have been scorned by the pro-peace, conservative majority elected to the Assembly. Less encouraging for the newly elected Assembly was the fact that Parisian hostility towards Prussia was rapidly redirecting its focus at the conservatism on display in the Assembly. Despite some rather half-hearted efforts by the more politically moderate government at placating Paris, early on it was rather obvious that Paris' sense of separateness from the rest of the country had rendered the differences irreconcilable.⁶⁰

The declaration of the Commune during the ~~third~~^{fourth} week of March shouldn't have caught anyone by surprise. After all, as we've seen, revolutionary republicans were touting the virtues of a popularly controlled Paris Commune during the siege. Once the armistice was agreed to it was not unexpected that Parisians who had previously eschewed revolutionary politics would now become receptive to its message. However, the first messages delivered by the Commune's official channels were aimed at reminding the peasantry of the historical debt it owed to Paris' revolutionary energy.

The third issue of the *Journal Officiel de la Commune* contrasted Paris' revolutionary audacity with the Government, contemptuously described as 'nos

⁶⁰ The efforts of Thiers' government at avoiding, and ultimately giving in to, civil war are covered in J.P.T. Bury and R.P. Tombs. *Thiers. 1797-1877. A Political Life.* (London: 1986), pp. 196-201. Whatever efforts the government undertook were going to suffer from a stark credibility crisis. Despite Thiers' apparent support for republican government in 1871, he was forever associated with the repression of the insurrections during the July Monarchy as well as the disenfranchisement laws of the Second Republic. *Ibid.* at 200.

formalistes et nos réglemens', in arguing that the latter could never produce military leaders of the stature of Marceau or Hoche.⁶¹ None the less, the communards were cognizant that they were fighting an uphill battle in garnering the support of the bourgeoisie and peasantry who were more interested in the restoration of order than in the resumption of hostilities against Prussia. Consequently, three days later the paper took another page out of the annals of the Revolution. After a series of rhetorical questions over responsibility for France's partial escape from the *ancien régime's* constrictions, the paper extolled the sacrifices endured by 'la canaille' at Paris. Whether one refers to the peasant acquisition of land or the social and economic mobility of the bourgeoisie, it was largely due to the efforts of 'la canaille' that France was liberated. 'Vous tous, tant que vous êtes, qui vous a faits hommes libres, citoyens? La canaille de 1789, de 1830, de 1848. [...] C'est elle qui fait les révolutions et sans en profiter. Qu'y gagne-t-elle, la canaille? La misère, la haine de ceux qu'elle sert, parfois d'exil, souvent la

⁶¹ Joigneaux, Pierre, 'A Nous les Audacieux!'. *Journal Officiel de la Commune* 23 Mars 1871. Joigneaux had been a secret society member during the July Monarchy. While on trial in 1838, he claimed Babeuf to be one of his inspirations and Buonarroti to be one of his accomplices. Elected representative of the Drôme to the Constituent Assembly in 1848, Joigneaux voted with the *Montagne*. During that time he took an interest in agricultural matters and argued that the Revolution's destruction of the traditional nobility had simply fostered a new aristocracy in the form of a rural bourgeoisie. In 1848 he urged a resumption of the struggles waged by the popular peasant crusader against injustice, Jacques Bonhomme. Although Joigneaux contributed the cited piece to the official organ of the Commune, he was an elected representative to the National Assembly from the Côte-d'Or. See: Galante-Garrone, Alessandro. *Philippe Buonarroti et les Révolutionnaires du XIXe Siècle*. (traduction par Claude Manceron) (Paris: 1975), p. 315; Dureau, Georges. *1848. The Making of a Revolution*. (translated by Anne Carter) (Cambridge, MA: 1984), pp. 210-1; *Dictionnaire Biographique, op. cit.* (1e série, tom. II).

mort'.⁶² Over the next couple of days, the paper celebrated the anonymity of 'la canaille' who overthrew the constituted monarchial authority on 10 August 1792: 'Les plus inconnus, les plus misérables, ceux qui tiennent le plus à la patrie parce qu'ils ne possèdent pas d'autre bien [...]'⁶³

Two issues are at work here. First, devotion to nation appears to be a function of poverty; wealth weakens national sentiment and furthers the attachment to interests which may be incompatible with the nation's survival. By contrast, through their actions, those Parisians who endured the siege and remained in Paris after the February elections had clearly evinced their allegiance to *patrie*. Second, the 'canaille' were nameless and faceless; they were unmotivated by individual political ambitions and their actions were not reflective of a desire to achieve what legal channels had foreclosed. Just as their ancestors had not personally benefitted from the Revolution, so too, self-interest did not prompt the communards from challenging the authority now seated at Versailles.⁶⁴

Isolated Paris. Besieged Paris. Sacrificial Paris. These themes ran through so much of the communards' discourse. Whether targeted by foreign enemies as the key to defeating France or misrepresented by claimants to the halls of power, Paris, in the words of the communards, had suffered the opprobrium of national scorn. In the eighty-two years before 1871, it had been verbally chastised, threatened,

⁶² 'La Canaille' *Ibid.* 25 Mars 1871.

⁶³ 'Le 10 Août. La commune insurrectionnelle'. *Ibid.* 26 & 27 Mars 1871.

⁶⁴ Some newspapers noted the logistical coincidence that, after eighty-two years, revolutionary Paris had again confronted a force from Versailles which threatened its existence. Bouis, Casimir, 'Oui en avant', *Le Cri du Peuple* (no. 34) 4 Avril 1871.

massacred and starved by those who sought to personally benefit from the Revolution's destruction of the *ancien régime*.⁶⁵ Only Paris had the foresight to fulfil the revolutionary ideals announced at the end of the previous century without being constrained by the dictates of a legality that was no more legitimate than the premises of the *ancien régime*. Arguments such as these were designed to invigorate Parisians with a sense of self-righteousness and to rehabilitate their image as recalcitrant revolutionaries.

As the situation in France transformed itself from national defence against the foreign invader to national salvation from bourgeois exploitation, Parisians consciously assumed their traditional revolutionary rôle. In a larger sense, Paris 'lutte pour le salut de la France entière, et sent approcher le moment où la révolution du 18 mars 1871 aura enfin renversé les obstacles qui entravent sa marche civilisatrice'.⁶⁶ As the foregoing should reveal, the Commune was rather unambiguous as to its intentions. This was not simply a revolution to restore municipal liberties to France. Furthermore, it was more than simply a reaction to the perception of a national betrayal. Whatever their backgrounds - *quarante-*

⁶⁵ Regnard, A. 'Chouans et Girondins'. *Journal Officielle de la Commune 7 Avril 1871*. A doctor, free mason and Blanquist under the Empire, Regnard was a member of the Commune's Art Commission where he took a special interest in the Opera. In 1872, while in exile in England, he broke with the Blanquists, blaming them, in part, for the Commune's defeat. *Dictionnaire Biographique, op. cit.* (2e série, tom. VIII); Hutton, *op. cit.* This article compared the threat issued on 30 May 1793 by the Girondin deputy to the Convention, Maxim Isnard, to annihilate Paris if the Convention should be intimidated to statements made by Minister of Foreign Affairs Jules Favre.

⁶⁶ *L'Affranchi* (no. 12) 24 germinal an 79/13 avril 1871. Pascal Grousset, a delegate to the Commune from the 18th arrondissement, was the 26-year old editor of this paper.

huitards, Blanquists, Internationalists, neo-Jacobins, neo-Hébertists - most Communards believed the foundations of a republic to be clearly anchored in the revolutionary initiative of Paris. The Communards tried to resurrect and maintain the fraternal links between revolutionary government and popular political activity that had typified the initial periods of France's first two experiments with republicanism. As the Communards were quick to emphasize, the rush to stabilise a republican government by attenuating its revolutionary roots through the repression of Paris explains, in large measure, their tragic denouements.⁶⁷

La Révolution en permanence

Just as Paris' unique rôle in the French Revolution had more fully developed its sense of a revolutionary *mentalité*, so too, as the preceding indicated, the end product of France's revolutionary tradition - establishment of a republic - does not herald the epilogue of insurgency. Responding to the *journée* of 31 October 1870 and the national plebiscite three days later, Blanqui's *la Patrie en Danger*, linked the personnel of the freshly legitimised government of 1870 with previous self-proclaimed proselytizers to republicanism - the Thermidorians of 1794, Lafayette in 1830 and the Provisional Government and Executive Commission of 1848. The article ended with the following advice: 'Il faut que le peuple manifest sa volonté

⁶⁷ Denis, Pierre. 'A la Nation', *Le Cri du Peuple* (no.67) 7 Mai 1871. Both as a member of the International and the Commune, Denis reflected the decentralist, federalist tendencies of his mentor, Proudhon. Noël, Bernard. *Dictionnaire de la Commune*. (tom. I) (Paris: 1978).

de se sauver, et qu'il prenne lui-même la direction de ses destinées'.⁶⁸

The foregoing raised an interesting point relative to the culmination of a revolution. In other words, it goes without saying that revolutionary republicans were unwavering in their belief that a republic could only be established through insurgency. However, at what point does the insurgent initiative become redundant? Is this somehow related to the government personnel? Or, is a régime founded on revolutionary impulse forever subject to manifestations of undiluted sovereignty?

In early 1870 revolutionary republicans began contemplating the future of post-Napoleonic France. The expectation that the Empire would not survive the Emperor became more prevalent with such incidents as the murder of the republican journalist Victor Noir by the Louis-Bonaparte's nephew. Remaining faithful to their revolutionary antecedents, revolutionary republicans, none the less, wondered, '[e]st-ce en vain que les révolutions ont voulu nous faire hommes, et faut-il rester esclaves?'⁶⁹ The experiences of 1794, 1830 and 1848 had conditioned revolutionary republicans to critically assess how the optimism attending previous insurrectionary efforts had fallen so short of creating an enduring republic.

On one level, in assessing the shortcomings of previous revolutions, some revolutionaries eschewed the decidedly political nature of predecessor revolutions. In other words, persistent calls for the establishment of a republic prior to 1792

⁶⁸ Saillard, 'La Besogne de la Réaction', *La Patrie en Danger* (no. 62) 21 Brumaire an 79/11 Novembre 1870.

⁶⁹ Carle, Gaston, 'De 1848 à 1851', *La Misère* (no. 1) 6 février 1870.

and 1848 had pre-determined the limitations of the revolutions of those years. Consequently, the imperative of a social revolution was overshadowed and, ultimately, buried by the rush to declare the First and Second Republics. For 1870, the past had left behind one crucial lesson: the need to improvise a revolution which alters the social structure. In a nation bereft of the avenues for reform found elsewhere, there was no room for political conciliation.⁷⁰ More commonly, and related to the foregoing point, the failures of previous revolutions were attributed to a willingness to prematurely relinquish the revolutionary initiative.

According to Gustave Tridon, the lesson of 1794 and 1848 is that '[l]e peuple ne doit pas déposer les armes avant que les castes oppressives ne soient anéanties et assimilées [...] cette lutte, qui est toute l'histoire, ne peut se clore que par la défaite définitive de l'aristocratie et de la religion; toute atermoiement est un désastre'. For Tridon, the only way to ensure the definitive success of the revolutionary initiative is to remain vigilant against the propensity for revolutions to degenerate into further abuses of authority.⁷¹ Although he never really quantified how long the period of revolutionary vigilance would or should last, Tridon underscored the need for a cultural regeneration of society as the necessary

⁷⁰ Richard, Albert, 'L'Association Internationale des Travailleurs', pp. 9-10. Richard, an activist in the Lyonnais section of the International, wrote that France's traditions rendered it unfit for the resolution of social issues through parliamentary means. Contrasting France with Britain, the United States and Switzerland, Richard proclaimed, '[e]n France, il n'y a pas de milieu entre la réaction et la révolution'.

⁷¹ Tridon, Gustave, 'La Force'. *Oeuvres Diverses de Gustave Tridon*. (Louis Watteau, ed.); (Paris: 1891), pp. 104-7. As regards, abuses of authority, Tridon referred to the Convention and the Committee of Public Safety.

complement to the institution of a republic.⁷² This might entail the postponement of some republican measures until the nation is sufficiently conditioned in the ideals of the regenerated society. On a more pragmatic level, there was a recognition that a society in a permanent state of revolution can more readily adapt to changed circumstances and relationships; consequently, it can more readily mobilise and articulate the people's needs: 'il nous faudra donc, nous les amis du peuple, conspirer demain comme nous conspirons hier, comme nous conspirons aujourd'hui'.⁷³

Later, as the February 1871 elections approached, the prospect that the Assembly might be dominated by provincial reactionaries led to a resumption of rhetoric about the connection between republics and revolution. Jules Andrieu, a future *communard*, argued that the failure of committed republicans to be elected will necessitate the resumption of civil war. After paraphrasing Marat's warning that the salvation of the republic might require 30,000 heads to fall, Andrieu urged, '[i]l faut donc que les députés du peuple n'aient point la faiblesse de reculer devant la guerre civile et l'emploi des moyens révolutionnaires pour sauver la République'.⁷⁴

⁷² Of course, it can be argued that revolutionary regeneration is simply an alternative form of absolutism. Tocqueville, Alexis de. *The Old Regime and the French Revolution*. (translated by Stuart Gilbert) (New York: 1955), p. 147. Lynn Hunt expanded upon this concept by studying Jacobin efforts at creating a new national consensus. Specifically, according to Hunt the conscious recasting of cultural referents, social values and systems of authority was all part of a process of infusing the newly formed nation with revolutionary ideals. Hunt, Lynn. *Politics, Culture and Class in the French Revolution*. (Berkeley: 1984). Of course, the concept of regeneration takes on absolutist tendencies if the verb infusing is substituted with indoctrinating.

⁷³ Molinari, *op. cit.*

⁷⁴ Molinari, *op. cit.* at 309-10.

At the approach of the twenty-third anniversary of the Second Republic's declaration, the theme of *la révolution escamotée* was resurrected. Regarding revolutions in 1792, 1830, 1848 and 1870, the author asserted, '[m]ais si ces victoires du peuple sont légitimes, il s'en faut qu'elles soient complètes ou durables'. The failure of that ill-defined entity persistently referred to as 'le peuple' to retain the revolutionary initiative after a successful *prise d'armes* has justified the periodic recommencement of revolutionary struggles.⁷⁵

However, most revolutionaries still swore fidelity to the republican catechism....with some qualifications. In the aftermath of the Empire's collapse there was little time to devote to such abstract concepts as a regenerated society. Instead, the task at hand was to fabricate an enduring republic. A week after the Third Republic's declaration revolutionary republicans wrote of the need to recall the disasters of France's previous experiments with republicanism and to heed these lessons. Some suggested that personnel from the Empire either be immediately purged from official duties in the Republic or disqualified from participating in it.⁷⁶ On a more extreme level, Constant Hilbey, formerly the editor of the short-lived *Journal des Sans-Culottes* in 1848, wrote in a Lyonnais paper of the need to

⁷⁵ Rogeard, A. 'Le 24 Février 1848-1871'. *Le Vengeur* (no. 23) 25 février 1871/7 Ventôse an 79. Rogeard was yet another communard who spent a good deal of time in and out of legal trouble during the Empire. During the Commune, Rogeard concentrated on defending the Commune's legality and the concept of direct democracy. He escaped Paris during the 'Bloody Week' and, interestingly, landed a position as the private tutor to the children of a Hungarian count at Pest. *Dictionnaire Biographique, op. cit.* (2e série, tom. IX).

⁷⁶ 'Letter from A. Dardaux', *La Commune de Paris* (no.2) 11 Septembre 1870/24 Fructidor an 78.

reestablish the Terror against potential oppressors. However, allusions to the Terror and the identification of French republicanism with such a policy was generally not conducive to building strong support for a fledgling republic. None the less, Hilbey urged that history has proven that a republic which stresses clemency is bound for a short existence since '[o]n a vu trop souvent de faux défenseurs du peuple lui prêcher la clémence au moment de sa victoire, pour sauver des traîtres qui leur ressemblaient'.⁷⁷ Later, as confidence in the government waned, some revolutionary republicans engaged in rhetoric clearly evocative of the spectre of the Terror. Similar to Hilbey, others wrote of 'la force révolutionnaire [...] résulte des prodiges même de la Révolution française' as a kind of societal prophylactic against the recurrence of oppression and privilege.⁷⁸

One source of worry for many revolutionary republicans was the personnel of the Government of National Defence. They looked remarkably like men who had once held prominent positions in the July Monarchy and Second Republic; the former could not claim strong republican credentials, the latter had proven themselves to be mediocre custodians of republicanism. While the mandate of this government was limited to prosecuting the war to a successful conclusion, it would also set the tone for the republic's precepts. This was first underscored by Auguste Blanqui who, at a speech at Belleville, responded to a call by Jules Vallès that the new government should be given three weeks to effectuate social reforms. Blanqui

⁷⁷ 'La Terreur', *Gnafron* (Lyon) (2e Année, no. 2) 18 Septembre 1870.

⁷⁸ Gastineau, Benjamin, 'La Force Révolutionnaire', *Le Combat* (no.15) 9 Vendémiaire an 79/30 Septembre 1870.

noted that while patience in 1830 and 1848 had led, respectively, to eighteen years of Louis Philippe and the June Days, the time was not propitious to overthrow the government. For Blanqui, the situation in 1870 was complicated by the presence of the enemy on French soil; so long as the government was adequately conducting the defence, revolutionaries must remain patient.⁷⁹ In the words of Félix Pyat, '[l]a République vaincra si elle est la République'.⁸⁰ However, doubt was soon cast over whether a country conditioned by 'la corruption impériale' is able 'de comprendre les nécessités et les sacrifices, conditions nécessaires de la lutte suprême et de la victoire'.⁸¹

Over the autumn of 1870, the military situation continued to deteriorate. In response, revolutionaries adopted a less generous assessment of the government and resumed their revolutionary critique. Blanqui and his followers also considered what options were available if the government did not fulfil its military mandate and they cautioned that, in spite of their magnanimity, 'nous sommes en pleine révolution, il faut agir révolutionnairement'.⁸²

References to revolutionary vigilance were imbued with the shades of popular activism during 1793. Blanqui's *la Patrie en Danger* argued that if the people is not permitted by the Government of National Defence to exercise its

⁷⁹ *Le Courrier Français* (no. 9) 18 septembre 1870. See also: *La Patrie en Danger* (no. 13) 1er Jour complémentaire an 78/19 Septembre 1870.

⁸⁰ *Le Combat* (no. 5) 3me jour complémentaire an 78/20 septembre 1870.

⁸¹ *Ibid.* (no. 6) 4e jour complémentaire an 78/21 septembre 1870.

⁸² Breuillé, A., 'Les Amis de la Legalité', *La Patrie en Danger* (no. 19) 5 Vendémiaire an 79/26 Septembre 1870.

sovereignty through elections, the people must 'se lève dans sa souveraineté' and take the nation's defence and the future of the republic into its own hands.⁸³ In November, a newspaper entitled *l'Oeil de Marat* was launched. Its choice of revolutionary personality expressed through his persistent watchfulness underscored the historical lesson the paper was aiming at: the relationship between an adequate national defence and revolutionary vigilance.⁸⁴ The connection between these themes was raised at a club meeting at the end of November when a speaker exclaimed that France can only be saved by 'un homme de 93; cet homme, c'est Blanqui, Blanqui l'Incorruptible, Blanqui l'effroi des tyrans'.⁸⁵ The fact that the speaker had not only apparently conflated the *sans-culottes* with Robespierre and Blanqui as the incarnate of Robespierre (whom he despised⁸⁶) is irrelevant; there is a larger issue here of legitimising contemporary figures by casting them in the mould of revolutionary heroes whose exploits were preserved for posterity.

As the siege of Paris wore on and the Government of National Defence seemed incapable of reversing the military defeats it inherited, revolutionary republicans became more strident in their discourse. Many predicted that the

⁸³ Saillard, 'Incapacité et Trahison'. *La Patrie en Danger* (no. 33) 22 Vendémiaire an 79/13 Octobre 1870. This was quite ironic, given the fact that Blanqui was a committed believer that a period of revolutionary regeneration was necessary before the future of a republic could be entrusted to the uncertainty of elections.

⁸⁴ *L'Oeil de Marat. Moniteur des XIX et XX Arrondissements*. 29 Novembre 1870.

⁸⁵ Molinari, *op. cit.* at 107-8.

⁸⁶ See: Blanqui, Louis Auguste, 'Notes inédites sur Robespierre (1850)'. *Louis Auguste Blanqui. Ecrits sur la Révolution. Oeuvres complètes. Tome 1.* (présenté et annoté par A. Münster) (Paris: 1977).

fruitless endurance of material hardships would lead to a resumption of the revolutionary struggles. Essentially, this was a fairly well-founded recognition that the artificial unanimity engendered by the war would not be sustained by a government premised on liberal principles.

The spectre of 1848 loomed large, particularly as the Third Republic appeared to be following the path of self-destruction carved out by its republican predecessor. Endeavouring to capitalise on this, the Commune sought provincial support by presenting itself as the best defender of republicanism. In locations like Lyon, where revolutionary republicanism was second only to Paris, the appeal was to the city's rich insurrectionary tradition.⁸⁷ Some of the provinces that had risen up against Louis Bonaparte's *coup d'état* also manifested support for the Paris Commune. While it is doubtful that they were attracted to the Commune's social agenda it is more likely that they believed Paris to be more committed to the survival of the republic.⁸⁸ Consequently, it was to the legacy of 1792 and the ideal

⁸⁷ Testut, Oscar. *L'Internationale et le Jacobinisme au ban de l'Europe*. (Paris: 1872), tome II, pp. 128-30. '«S'il reste encore un coeur qui bat dans votre poitrine, vous devez faire la révolution. Si vous ne le [sic] faites pas, c'est que vous n'êtes plus les lyonnais de 1834, de 1848 et de 1851.»' The message apparently worked as the Republican-Socialist Central Committee of Southern France placarded Lyon on 18 May with calls to arm in defense of Paris against 'les chouans': '«Levez-vous comme se sont levés vos pères de 32 [sic] et de 34 et renversez d'un souffle le petit Thiers et tous ses suppôts.»' *Ibid.* at 165. Several months prior to the declaration of the Paris Commune, there were communes at Marseille, Nîmes and Lyon. The Lyon Commune was the most militant and lasted from 16 September to 6 November 1870. There would be one final, spasmodic outburst of revolutionary activity at Lyon in support of the declaration of the Paris Commune but this new attempt at a commune was repressed in one day.

⁸⁸ Gaillard, Jeanne. *Communes de Province, Commune de Paris 1870-1871*. (Paris: 1971), pp. 69-75. Those provinces that supported Paris might also have been intrigued by Paris' tenacious stance against the Prussian army and a belief that the

of a unified, fraternal nation that they gave their allegiance to Paris rather than to the more divisive memory of 1793.⁸⁹

For revolutionary Parisians, though, the Second Republic's rush to moderation and legality, followed by its relatively quick eclipse, appeared to offer sufficient substantiation for the prolongation of the revolutionary period. Given the material deprivations endured by Parisians during the siege, the prospect of the Versailles government neglecting the social dimension of the republic was a compelling reason to oppose it. The future deputy prosecutor of the Commune, Gaston Da Costa, chastised the government for its neglect of the people's material well being and predicted 'la question sociale [...] se videra dans une lutte sanglante'. The degeneration of the Second Republic into civil war four months after its inception was frequently cited as proof that social welfare is an indivisible aspect of the republican mandate.⁹⁰

During May 1871 - the Commune's final, fateful month -*L'Etoile*, in its fourth of eight numbers, began a serialisation entitled 'Les Soldats du Désespoir'. The first of the series dealt with June 1848 and sought to develop a connection between the

Commune represented local liberties.

⁸⁹ *Ibid.* at 71; See also: Testut, *op. cit.* at 130, 138.

⁹⁰ Da Costa, Gaston, 'Aux Traîtres'. *La Résistance* (no. 16) 3 Nivôse an 79/23 décembre 1870. Da Costa was a 20-year old law student at the time of the Commune. Personally loyal to the Commune's public prosecutor, Raoul Rigault, da Costa's performance in the aftermath of the Commune belied his once self-proclaimed devotion to Blanquism. During the Commune's repression, da Costa informed on another Blanquist and communard, Eugène Protot, and, towards the end of the century became a virulent anti-Dreyfusard. Noël, *op. cit.* (tom. I).

material despair of nearly twenty-three years before and the hardships of 1871.⁹¹ The analogy was clear. Just as the Second Republic rapidly lost whatever was left of its early idealism and degenerated into reaction in June 1848, so too, the Third Republic would follow that same perilous path unless its revolutionary nature was preserved by its most ardent adherents.

After the declaration of the Commune, a number of revolutionary republicans postulated whether their battle against Versailles was simply the continuation of a revolutionary *prise de conscience* that was originally launched over eighty years before. A few days before the Commune was declared, Paul Lafargue, Bordeaux communard and son-in-law of Karl Marx, alluded to the massacres of workers at Lyon in 1831 and Rouen and Paris in 1848 in warning, '[l]e sang est la rosée qui fait germer les combattants de notre cause'.⁹²

The declaration of the Commune was presented by many as the culmination of the revolutionary battles of the past eight decades. Rather than strictly a battle over municipal liberties or a lingering dispute over how the war was conducted, many of the Commune's defenders presented it as the fulfilment of the ideals of the French Revolution. Displaying a distinct lack of clairvoyance, some revolutionaries predicted that, in its battle against Versailles, Paris could command the allegiance of the petite bourgeoisie in the towns and the peasants in the countryside. On the other hand, opposition would come from the new commercial aristocracy of high finance, speculators and exploiters along with their royalist representatives in the

⁹¹ *L'Etoile* (no. 4) 8 Mai 1871.

⁹² Girault, Jacques. *La Commune et Bordeaux*. (Paris: 1971), pp. 220-1.

Assembly.⁹³ The choice of terminology in this and other papers was clearly designed to reduce revolutionaries and counterrevolutionaries to readily recognizable formulaic equations.

As part of the division of the world between the righteous and the oppressive, revolutionaries relied on reference to that ambiguous entity known as the people as being the chief source for legitimate authority. More precisely, perhaps, legitimate authority can only emanate from an insurgent struggle. Albert Regnard, one of the young followers of Blanqui and the Commune's appointed secretary general of the Prefecture of Police, defended the war between Paris and Versailles by quoting Saint-Just that '«entre le peuple et ses ennemis, il n'y a plus rien de commun que la glaive»'. Regnard put this in the context of the present by later saying, 'l'ère de la Révolution ne peut être close tant que des misérables refusent d'en reconnaître la légitimité et combattent avec autant de rage que d'impudence le gouvernement reconnu par le peuple'.⁹⁴

For some, the revolutionary tradition had been a constant struggle to defend the ideal forged in 1789 of an autonomous and sovereign nation against the forces of oppression and domination. Even though this ideal was seemingly realised in 1789 proof of the resilience of its enemies could be found in Thermidor Year II and December 1851.

As the final chapter in Versailles' war against Paris was about to be written,

⁹³ A. Breuillé, 'Ce qu'il nous faut', *La Nouvelle République* (no. 12) 3 Germinal an 79/24 Mars 1871.

⁹⁴ Regnard, A., 'Philosophie politique et sociale de la Force révolutionnaire'. *La Nouvelle République* (no. 15) 7 Germinal an 79/27 Mars 1871.

Le Cri du Peuple sought to invigorate its audience by reminding them that the repression of the popular revolution in June had directly led to the Second Republic's termination in December 1851.⁹⁵ The import of this message is that the salvation of a republic is dependent on the conservation of the revolutionary energy and activism of those who created the revolution. This was a message first understood by the Jacobins in 1793 but one that was perilously forgotten by Thermidorians and *quarante-huitards* as they ignored the social dimension of revolutions. As part of the same struggle against oppression, the Commune had an obligation to posterity. 'Il faut que l'histoire lègue aux générations de l'avenir la tradition sublime, héroïque, épique, d'une population chassant de ses murs un pouvoir corrompé et corrompu [...]'.⁹⁶

If the eighteenth century altered the dynamics of protest in creating a revolutionary tradition, all subsequent manifestations of protest against oppression had been part of the same revolutionary process. The specific institutions and social relationships of the *ancien régime* may have been destroyed. That said, the larger issue of a people made cognizant of its sovereignty through its participation in the insurgent struggle, but still subject to domination, remained viable. 'Peuple, la Révolution qui renverse les trônes et détruit les bastilles, lutte encore aujourd'hui pour défendre tes droits et ta liberté'.⁹⁷

While the source of the conflict may have remained the same, it was clear

⁹⁵ 'Soyez-vous de Juin', *Le Cri du Peuple* (no. 73) 13 Mai 1871.

⁹⁶ *La Montagne* (no. 6) 18 Germinal an 79/7 avril 1871.

⁹⁷ 'Au Peuple!!!!' *La Fédération* (no. 5) 4 Mai 1871.

to many communards that the cast of characters had changed rôles over time. Specifically, this was a recognition that the heirs of the challenge to the *ancien régime* had, by 1871, succeeded to the halls of power. Having successfully transmuted into a rôle it once despised (even locating the seat of authority at Versailles!), bourgeois control and hegemony required the same uncompromising, intransigent attitude once exhibited by monarchists and aristocrats.⁹⁸

In characterising their struggle as revolutionary, the communards fully expected nothing short of a violent resolution. They adopted a defensive posture and claimed to be engaged in what might have been the final chance at preserving the idealism proclaimed by generations of revolutionary forbearers. In doing so, in their own minds, they foreclosed any possibility of a mediated resolution of the conflict. That, of course, is not to say that the government at Versailles was any more amenable to compromise. In an obvious allusion to Thiers' prominence as Chief Executive of the government, Gustave Maroteau, editor of *la Commune*, noted that timidity will herald a return to the sad past of 'toutes les erreurs et dans toutes les scandales du règne de Louis-Philippe'.⁹⁹ Adolphe Clémence, communard

⁹⁸ 'Versailles 1789-1871', *Paris Libre* (no. 3) 25 Germinal an 79/14 Avril 1871.

⁹⁹ Maroteau, Gustave, 'La Violence', *La Commune* (no. 16) 28 Germinal an 79/18 avril 1871. At age seventeen, Maroteau left the Lycée Louis-le-Grand in 1866 to pursue a career as a journalistic opponent of the Empire. An ardent defender of the Commune, he had the distinction of having a life imprisonment sentence imposed on him by the Council of War strictly because of his writings (he had no official function on the Commune). Maroteau had been sickly for quite some time and banishment to New Caledonia ended his life in 1875. According to Louise Michel, his demise began during the second week of March and his one wish was to make it to the fourth anniversary of the Commune on 18 March. He succeeded. Noël, *op. cit.* (tom. II).

from the 4th arrondissement and grandson of a member of Babeuf's Conspiracy of the Equals, cited the examples of July 1830, February 1848 and September 1870 in questioning whether revolutionaries should exercise moderation and generosity towards their adversaries after a successful *prise d'armes*.¹⁰⁰ *Le Cri du Peuple* characterised the present crisis as nothing short of the final act of the production commenced in 1848: 'Cette lutte sacrilège ne finira qu'après un écrasement définitif. [¶] Triompher ou mourir. Tout est là; et nous triompherons'.¹⁰¹

Revolutionary Spins

How does one give the proper 'spin' to a revolution? In other words, how are support for and confidence in a revolutionary movement generated? By February 1871, the surrender to Prussia was a *fait accompli* and France had elected an Assembly that was meant to restore stability and order in a newly republicanised state. The persistent challenges to this state of affairs by revolutionary republicans at Paris was going to be difficult to pitch to all but the most committed of revolutionaries. Provincials and bourgeois republicans had long been suspicious of the capital's historical penchant for militant politics. The gauntlet thrown down in March was seen by many as yet another effort by Parisian revolutionaries to force their will on the rest of France.

Although the war ended ingloriously, most of the nation was relieved. For

¹⁰⁰ Clémence, Adolphe. *De l'Antagonisme Sociale. Ses Causes et Ses Effets.*, p. 40. Clémence was a close ally of his fellow bookbinder on the Commune, Varlin.

¹⁰¹ Bouis, Casimir, 'La Révolution', *Le Cri du Peuple*. (no. 39) 9 Avril 1871.

Parisian revolutionaries, however, the end of the war was paradoxical. On the one hand, there was a stark contrast between their own patriotic efforts and the apparent duplicity or, more charitably, the incompetence of the government. On the other hand, with the war over, did anyone outside of Paris still care? Consequently, in appealing to those unconverted to their cause, revolutionary republicans stressed the moral righteousness of revolution as well as the liberating debt owed by certain segments of French society to the revolutionary process. Beyond that, they could always highlight the overtly monarchist shade to the National Assembly as posing a particular threat to the long-term survival of the Republic.

In late October, nearly a fortnight prior to the collapse of the autonomy movement at Lyon, a Lyonnais paper disputed the notion that the French Revolution was a bourgeois revolution. Instead, the article claimed, the Revolution

étaient tous les désirs et toutes les souffrances de la terre [...] c'était surtout la démolition et la reconstruction sociale effectuées au milieu du déchaînement des intérêts et des partis hostiles, en face de l'ennemi victorieux, des départements soulevés et de la mort suspendue sur les têtes [...]¹⁰²

On the surface it might appear that this would be just the sort of argument to completely alienate any potential bourgeois support for revolution. After all, histories of the Revolution to that point had all endorsed the view that the bourgeoisie had received a disproportionate share of the spoils from the fall of the *ancien régime*. However, this article had a larger purpose. It recalled a time when

¹⁰² 'Comprendra-t-on enfin?', *Gnafron. Journal de la Révolution*. (2e Année, no. 7) 23 Octobre 1870.

revolution was free of social, regional or any other form of particularism but, instead, represented the aspirations of the nation *en bloc*.

If the results of the Revolution had not been widely diffused throughout society, this was because somewhere along the way its purpose had been subverted. Consequently, in the context of the renewed opportunities of October 1870, the time seemed propitious for a revolutionary regeneration that would ground the nation on the fraternal principles of the Revolution. Application of these principles should produce fear only in those who sought to perpetuate a society premised on domination and subordination. This was an effort to accentuate the rather nebulous concept of revolutionary fraternalism as the defining characteristic of French nationalism fashioned in the 1790s. Accordingly, the bourgeoisie had little to fear since the French Revolution had been about neither class warfare nor the empowerment of the bourgeoisie at the expense of the nobility. A class-based interpretation of the Revolution was bound to create anxiety in the bourgeoisie over the application of these principles against them. The impending prospects of its own eventual displacement by revolution had caused the bourgeoisie to eschew the revolutionary principles it once defended. More ominously, though, the article also warned that such a fraternal regeneration could not be accomplished slowly or peacefully and that '[v]aincre est une nécessité absolue pour le droit [...]'¹⁰³

The theme of revolutionary stoicism and sacrifice was revived during the Commune. The foregoing article was written during the siege when national solidarity was required. However, the relative unity produced by the war had simply

¹⁰³ *Ibid.*

been a temporary façade masquing over hostilities. The climax to the war merely accentuated the climate of distrust that traditionally followed France's revolutions. Against this backcloth of unfolding belligerence, the bourgeoisie largely abandoned Paris. The conflict between Paris and the national government had assumed undeniable social class proportions. Revolutionary discourse would, henceforward, reflect this reality.

The polemicists of the Commune knew better than to ignore the social class dimension to their struggle. As previously noted, 1871 was perceived by many Parisian workers as a long-awaited vindication of June 1848.¹⁰⁴ However, in raising the issue, supporters of the Commune generally did so in the context of the revolutionary emancipation of the bourgeoisie and the peasantry and thus avoided the divisive rhetoric that frightened the bourgeoisie in 1848. Not coincidentally, both peasants and bourgeoisie were constituencies which, since the French Revolution, had alternated between fear of, and hostility to, the militant actions and ideology of revolutionary republicans. If nothing else, to those concerned with order, stability and legality, insurgency was diametrically opposed to those principles.

On the eve of the elections to the Commune, the Comité électoral du XVIII^e arrondissement referred to 'les journaux monarchistes' (i.e., any newspapers that opposed the Commune) in defending the legitimacy of Paris' initiative. 'Nous leur démanderons, à notre tour, quel était le droit de 1789, de 1830, de 1848 et du 4

¹⁰⁴ See: Gossez, Remi, 'Mil Huit Cent Quarante Huit'. *La Commune de 1871*, *op. cit.* at 33-47.

septembre. [¶] Sinon le droit de la révolution'.¹⁰⁵ From this and other similar statements, it is clear that the communards and its supporters fully perceived that they were engaged in a struggle of revolutionary proportions. In emphasizing the revolutionary nature of their project, the communards sought to situate it as part of the continuum which commenced with the first challenge to the *ancien régime*. Just as their revolutionary predecessors had done, they would make their own contribution to the attributes constituting the national character.

However, persuading the general public of the righteousness of revolutionary change and its association with violence was not going to be easy. Supporters of the Parisian revolution had few media outlets available to express these views and to reach out to a wider public. Consequently, more often than not, their opinions went no further than those whose support they already commanded.

In the aftermath of the Commune's declaration, Parisian journals remarked that legality had never attended the inception of any modern French régime. 'Ainsi depuis trois générations, nous n'avons eu que des pouvoirs de fait, la force seule a fait le droit: les vainqueurs au Capitole, les vaincus aux gémonies'. The author alluded to the fact that, in undermining the *ancien régime*, the French Revolution had cleared the field of all established rules and principles. In the context of an unstable social and political milieu, 'il est souverainement ridicule d'opposer aux grands mouvements populaires une mesquine querelle de légalité'. Beyond this, readers were reminded that social and political progress can only be accomplished when the status quo is threatened. 'C'est d'illégalités semblables qu'est faite la

¹⁰⁵ *La Nouvelle République* (no. 14) 6 Germinal an 79/26 Mars 1871.

suprême justice. Et si l'humanité n'avait jamais été illégale, elle n'eût jamais fait un pas en avant'.¹⁰⁶ The following day the same journal compared the need to make 'des sauts brusques et imprévus' with the odious nature of the resistance to 'les grands progrès' augured by a revolution. The author supported his argument with references to 1789, 1848 and 18 March 1871.¹⁰⁷

In Paris with its rich revolutionary tradition, the Commune's legitimacy could readily be grounded on the same mandate accorded previous revolutionary régimes. In fact, from its inception in mid-March until its devastation towards the end of May, the Commune was able to command the support of a diverse cross-section of those who remained at Paris. In his study of the 'socially and politically mixed' 2d arrondissement, Robert Tombs noted the absence of social class tensions in the district that characterised previous nineteenth century French revolutions. Beyond this, there was widespread acceptance of the Commune in the 2d arrondissement but this support was not necessarily accepted on the Commune's

¹⁰⁶ Duchêne, Georges, 'Nécessité de parler net', *La Commune* (no. 11) 30 mars 1871/19 Germinal an 79.

¹⁰⁷ Brissac, Henri, 'La Révolution à Paris', *La Commune* (no. 9) 8 Germinal an 79/28 Mars 1871. In addition to being a journalist, Brissac was also secretary, first, to the Commune's Executive Commission, and then, to the Committee of Public Safety. Noël, *op. cit.* (tom I). A week before Brissac's article, Armond Lévy rhetorically asked whether 'le commission de l'Hôtel de Ville en juillet 1830, le gouvernement provisoire de février 1848 et le gouvernement de la défense nationale au 4 septembre 1870 ont eu une plus noble et plus légitime origine' than the Commune. 'Une Assemblée Communale de Paris', *Le Patriote* (2e Année, no. 26) 21 Mars 1871. Lévy had an interesting revolutionary career. He participated on the February 1848 barricades and the 15 May *journée* (for which he was imprisoned). Although he went into exile during the Empire, Lévy became had two 'pet' causes: the liberation of oppressed nationalities and socialism. An Internationalist of the Proudhonian persuasion, Lévy did become an ardent republican but opposed a Jacobin-style dictatorship. *Dictionnaire Biographique, op. cit.* (2e série, tom. VII).

pronouncements regarding the social republic. Instead, it was more reflective of a general recognition of the Commune as the *de facto* government.¹⁰⁸

The previously alluded to article in the *Journal Officiel de la Commune* reminding the peasantry and the bourgeoisie of the debt they owed 'la canaille' seemed to play to the theme of social class conflict. Described as poor, anonymous individuals whose devotion to *patrie* is a function of the paucity of their material means, the official organ of the Commune noted that, for its troubles in freeing the nation from oppression in 1789, 1830 and 1848, 'la canaille' has been the recipient of a fair dose of opprobrium.¹⁰⁹ Despite its poverty, 'la canaille' willingly endured countless sacrifices. Consequently, the liberation of 'la canaille' was presented as the last act in France's revolutionary drama and a justification for the Commune's confrontational stance. At le Creusot, workers were reminded of the righteousness of their struggle in the following terms: '«de même que la Révolution de 1789 et 1793 a affranchi la bourgeoisie, de même il faut que le prolétariat soit affranchi en 1871»'.¹¹⁰

In contrast to the efforts by 'la canaille' there were the 'rural hoards'. Historically lacking any sense of principles and manipulable by their piety and compliance to social protocol, the peasantry readily became the bogeyman presaging a return of reaction. Just as the example of 'la canaille' was positively

¹⁰⁸ Tombs, Robert, 'Prudent Rebels: The 2nd *Arrondissement* during the Paris Commune of 1871'. *French History*, pp. 393-413, (vol. 5, no. 4) December 1991.

¹⁰⁹ *Journal Officiel de la Commune*, 25, 26, 27 Mars 1871.

¹¹⁰ Ponsot, P. *Les Grèves de 1870 et la Commune de 1871 au Creusot*. (Paris: 1957), p. 64.

touted, the reverse was generally true when reference was made to the peasantry. Although it might be unfair to suggest that this was a crude, cynical attempt by the communards to divide the country, there were dividends to be reaped by this argument. In the first place, it was a means for solidifying the unity amongst Parisians that had been building since the siege. Secondly, it clearly harkened back to the activity of Chouans and Vendéans during the French Revolution and the claims that the Second Republic had recruited rural thugs to repress Parisian workers in June 1848. Finally, if the notion of modern day Chouans was accurate it was substantiation for the view that the government had no support amongst the regular army. After all, on 18 March, French troops were more willing to fire on their military superiors than on the Parisians who emerged to protect the cannons on the bluffs of Montmartre. However, as a study of this phenomenon has concluded, the available evidence indicates that the government, in fact, relied on 'ordinary conscripts' who had no deep commitment to counterrevolution or hostility to the Parisians. That said, however, given the historical enmity of peasants towards Parisian radicalism, the validity of assertions regarding the composition of enemy troops was beyond reproach.¹¹¹

Adopting a different argument, communards validated the revolutionary enterprise as being dictated by a litany of governmental-directed intolerance and violence. During the first week of April 1871, Gustave Tridon's *Les Hébertistes* was serialised in the journal, *la Montagne*. It is hardly surprising that Tridon's

¹¹¹ Tombs, Robert, 'Paris and the Rural Hordes: an Exploration of Myth and Reality in the French Civil War of 1871'. *The Historical Journal*, pp. 797-808, (vol. 29, no. 4) 1986.

glorification of Parisian revolutionaries who once advocated the need for *sans-culottes* vigilance over a bourgeois government would be revived in the immediate aftermath of Paris' rebuff of Versailles. (What is perhaps surprising is the irony that it would be serialised in a journal entitled *la Montagne*!) In introducing his historical study, Tridon did not hesitate to develop its contemporary significance to the larger issue of revolutionary violence. Directing his comments at what was probably an absent bourgeois audience, Tridon reminded his readership of France's sordid history of governmental oppression against religious dissent (Saint Bartholomew's Day massacre of August 1572 and Vendéan rebels of 1793) and social class protest (Prairial an III and June 1848). 'D'un mouvement instinctif, les panaches tricolores se rapprochent des panaches blancs [...]'¹¹² The import of this message was as much about governmental violence as it was about the failure of France to live up to the promise of the Revolution. Intolerance in Valois France was nearly indistinguishable from bourgeois intolerance centuries later and the same circumstances that justified force against the former were no less fitting when asserted against the latter. As fate would have it, Tridon's discourse became prophecy as the third week of May 1871 witnessed the entrance of governmental troops into Paris. The resulting carnage totaled between 20,000 and 30,000.

¹¹² *La Montagne* (no. 1) 3 avril 1871/13 Germinal an 79.

CONCLUSION

In the eyes of revolutionary republicans, there was nothing intrinsically altruistic about a republic. This was particularly true if, as they viewed it, republics could simply serve as a subterfuge for the perpetuation of oppression and domination. By 1871 revolutionary republicanism was not only a feature of the idealised experience of the first two years of the First Republic but also included the agony of the Second Republic. Consequently, the immediate rush of optimism that greeted the latter's founding was largely missing in September 1870. In many respects, the groundwork for conflict between republicans had been prepared during the last few years of the Empire. Liberalised laws at the end of the Second Empire prohibited criticism of the régime but allowed republicans to rhetorically battle each other. As a result, beginning in 1868, a full two years before the Empire's collapse, revolutionary republicans openly questioned whatever generic republicanism might have previously had in the run-up to February 1848. The relief amongst republicans at having overthrown Louis-Philippe in 1848 did not characterise the mood attending the denouement of the Second Empire. Experiences forged over the century had irreparably fractured the republican movement into mutually contemptuous and hostile camps.

Because of the need to maintain unity in the face of a more pressing battle, the Third Republic was given a reprieve from immediate revolutionary aftershocks. It is safe to say that the republic's improvisation against the backcloth of war had bought it a certain amount of time. However, on another level, the disastrous

conduct of the war and its intensified impact on Paris, in particular, allowed revolutionary republicans to garner greater support than they were accustomed to generating. Compared to the defeatist and submissive government, the resolute stance of defiance displayed by revolutionary republicans appeared more emblematic of *patrie*. In other words, revolutionary republicanism seemed more harmonious with the spirit of republicanism initiated by the French Revolution.

Invigorated by the semblance of parallels between the Year II of the Republic and the situation in 1870, revolutionary republicans persistently played the French Revolution trump card against the government. Revolutionary republicans shrewdly took advantage of a weak national government (split between two locales) in developing a quasi-governmental apparatus at Paris that handled many of the day-to-day problems of the besieged capital. In the process they continued to engender more corollaries between the contemporary setting and 1793. However, while it was one thing for many of the revolutionary newspapers of the period to provide the date both in terms of the Gregorian and revolutionary calendars, it was quite another for the Commune to revive the Committee of Public Safety. In short, many revolutionary republicans proved themselves incapable of escaping from the prisons of a tradition which had, thus far, proved so useful. As Robert Tombs observed in his article on the myth of rural hordes, '[t]he Chouan myth is evidence of an intensely dramatic political mentality so aware of the past as to be dangerously out of touch with present reality'.¹

Perhaps unfairly, many historians have perpetuated a method of

¹ Tombs, 'Paris and the Rural Hordes', *op. cit.* at 807.

anachronistically labeling communards according to classifications evocative of the French Revolution. Hence, there is a misconception that, underneath it all, the Commune was fractiously divided between Jacobins, Hébertists and Internationalists.² It is true that a form of hero worship divided the communards; in many cases this was reflective of generational differences - those following the *queue de Jacobins* tended to be of the *quarante-huitard* generation while supporters of Blanqui, weaned on a steady dose of their mentor's revolutionary past and Tridon's studies, considered themselves heirs to the Hébertist tradition.

That said, all shared in a tradition which premised the foundations of republicanism on its inseparability from revolutionary struggle. A glance at the biographical information supplied about various contributors to revolutionary newspapers during the siege and the Commune reveals a variety of backgrounds, some of the Jacobin persuasion, others Blanquist and a few Internationalists who once followed Proudhon. However, all were ultimately unified in their support for a strain of republicanism whose referents were to be found in the revolutionary context of the 1790s.

It is beyond the scope of this essay to prognosticate on the shape the Commune's programme would have assumed had it enjoyed a period of stability. In other words, the insurgent tradition has little to do with whether the republic

² Rihs, Charles. *La Commune de Paris. Sa Structure et ses Doctrines (1871)*. (Genève: 1955), pp. 47-56, 143-78. Rihs was distinctly unsophisticated in his categorisation of Internationalists. A number of communards had once been followers of P-J Proudhon in the early French contingents to the International and, as a result, they heeded their mentor's lead in ignoring republicanism. Most, including Eugène Varlin and Benoît Malon, had changed their view of politics by the end of the Empire and viewed a republic as the best path to socialism.

imagined by communards would have been a Jacobin republic of small producers that no longer conformed to emerging industrial realities and new philosophies. The revolutionary republican tradition never really unfurled its banner beyond the general slogans and hazy objective of creating a society predicated on the loftier, as yet unrealised, ideals of the Revolution.

However, the revolutionary tradition continued to reverberate as a beacon of social progress. Though its concepts might have been vague, the historically-based justifications for revolutionary violence and the need for *un bouleversement* of bourgeois society combined elements of traditional popular protest with more recent notions of popular sovereignty. These ideas had been more thoroughly imbibed by the highly politicised populace of Paris. Charles Beslay, a republican deputy in 1848, member of the Commune for the 6th arrondissement and Delegate to the Bank of France, wrote the following with reference to the bourgeoisie: 'Nous l'avons vue, sans doute, conquérir avec énergie les droits de la Révolution; mais sans l'appui du peuple, sa victoire ne se serait-elle pas transformée en défaite?'³ Because of their more sophisticated understanding of social and political relationships, as well as their historical rôle in advancing France's progress, Parisian revolutionaries saw no contradiction between the ideals of a unitary French nation and their own disproportionate influence over the political process. In fact, since the Revolution, this had been part of the French political culture. As previously noted, the acceptance of the Commune in the relatively affluent 2d arrondissement bears

³ Beslay, Charles. *Mes Souvenirs 1830-1848-1870*. (Paris-Neuchatel-Bruxelles: 1874), p.257.

witness to Parisians ease at adapting to sudden political shifts.

The revolutionary imperative which sprouted at Paris during the last decade of the eighteenth century, and had ever since alternated between germination and dormancy, appeared to have reached maturity with the Commune. By 1871 Parisian revolutionaries abandoned the illusions they maintained in 1848 relative to the receptivity of French peasants to revolutionary goals. Though appeals for support were made to the peasantry, Parisian revolutionaries in 1871 appeared determined to exercise an indefinite period of revolutionary dictatorship. This would last until the nation could be fully instructed in the revolutionary republican orthodoxy. Conveniently, they were assisted in this mission by the circumstance of war and the coincidence of war with the dictatorship of Paris in 1793. Owing to the revolutionary infrastructure in Paris during the siege as well as a well-oiled journalistic machine of revolutionary rhetoric, the transition to the Commune, amongst Parisians, was fairly smooth.

Did the thorough and bloody repression of the Commune signal the termination of a revolutionary tradition in France which could no longer withstand the superior forces available to the government? Or, was the Commune simply a historical aberration - a function of the war and lack of moderate republican leadership - that supplied the revolutionary republican tradition one final opportunity to manifest itself? Had insurgency, by 1871, run its course as a viable form of political expression and as a determinant of political disputes? Jacques Rougerie noted that '[l]orsque l'insurrection tourna à la révolution, la Commune se trouva engluée dans une tradition révolutionnaire, qui n'avait le défaut que d'être

vieille de quelque quatre-vingt ans'. As a result, he concluded, 'la Commune n'est que la dernière révolution du XIXe siècle, point ultime, et final, de la geste révolutionnaire française du XIXe siècle. Crépuscule, et non pas aurore'.⁴

It is nearly impossible to determine whether the Commune was the final fitful manifestation of a revolutionary tradition established by the French Revolution. Evidence suggests that in the context of Paris' changing demographics, the same conditions that might have encouraged a revolutionary tradition at Paris throughout the century was no longer possible at the century's end. Specifically, the migrational increase in Paris' population during the nineteenth-century came from the region immediately surrounding Paris (e.g., Seine, Seine-et-Oise) as well as the more urbanised *départements* in the north and east of the country. According to Louis Chevalier

Ce sont des gens de l'Est et du Nord qui ont fait la Révolution française à Paris, ainsi que les Révolutions de 1830 et de 1848; ils appartenaient à des régions plus profondément urbaines que les autres régions de France et conservant des traditions de vie municipale active, tourmentée et souvent sanglante.⁵

Consequently, as the population of Paris swelled with a greater geographic cross-section of France, a decreasing percentage of its inhabitants had been conditioned in revolutionary politics. Furthermore, as studies of French syndicalism reveal, industrialisation altered both the ideological and geographical dynamics of

⁴ *Procès des Communards* (présentés par Jacques Rougerie) (Paris: 1978), p. 241.

⁵ Chevalier, Louis, *La Formation de la Population Parisienne au XIXe Siècle. Travaux et Documents* (Paris: 1950), pp. 17, 59.

revolutionary activity in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.⁶ However, more recent events suggest the endurance of the revolutionary tradition. For example, during the uprisings of 1968, aspects of the revolutionary tradition reëmerged in forms ranging from expressions of social regeneration to references to revolutionaries as *enragés*. As the focus of this study is the survival of the revolutionary tradition in the nineteenth-century, a discussion of its cessation is strictly limited to conjecture.

The French revolutionary tradition was like a tremendous weight on the shoulders of the nineteenth-century. In terms of timing, scope and impact, the French Revolution definitively established the parameters of 'revolution'. Its legacy - the destruction of the vestiges of the *ancien régime* and endless discourse on the regeneration of society - was also a proverbial cross to bear for the revolutionaries of the succeeding century. The almost incessant need to phrase or legitimise revolutionary discourse by way of reference to the French Revolution was understandable but, at the same time, inhibiting. It was understandable to the extent that revolutionary republicans could draw upon the sweeping changes produced by the Revolution to justify their own frightening calls for revolution and all that these entailed. Beyond that, they could emphasize the disparity between the rôle played by the *menu peuple* in the Revolution and what it actually got out of it. However, the weight of the Revolution got progressively heavier as it grew to ever larger, sometimes mythical, proportions.

⁶ See: Amdur, Kathryn E., *Syndicalist Legacy. Trade Unions and Politics in Two French Cities in the Era of World War I* (Urbana & Chicago: 1986).

After the French Revolution, the dimensions of popular protest would never be the same. The Revolution established the rituals, rhythm and conditions of insurgency that were so faithfully adhered to by countless, disconnected nineteenth-century revolutionaries. In the process of utilising the same means employed by their familial and ideological ancestors and imbuing them with the same incantations, revolutionary republicans, likewise, endeavoured a revolutionary regeneration of their world. The problem was that, too often, in their imagination, their world looked suspiciously like that of the 1790s. Haunted by their cults of commemoration and memorialisation and fertile heroic fantasies, nineteenth-century revolutionaries conflated fidelity to the Revolution's legacy with emulation.

Insurgency, once a form of popular protest used to express grievances during the *ancien régime*, had assumed revolutionary proportions at the end of the 18th century. Yet, when the unstable political environment bequeathed France by the Revolution was finally, and imperceptibly, solidified with the establishment of liberal republicanism, insurgency as a revolutionary mode of action, might have become redundant. As liberal republicanism and its ideals were imbibed by the nation, it was placed on the firm footing once enjoyed by the *ancien régime*. As a consequence, insurgency was relegated, again, to the expression of specific, non-revolutionary grievances. Perhaps the lesson of the Commune's post-mortem had to do with the mooring of liberal republicanism to a more secure foundation and, in the process, the insurgent tradition had finally come full circle.

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La Lutte à Outrance

La Marseillaise

La Mère Duchêne (1871)

La Mère Duchêne (1870) (conservative)

La Misère

La Montagne. Journal de la Révolution Sociale

La Nouvelle République. Journal de la Révolution de Paris

La Patrie en Deuil

La Patrie en Danger

La Petite Marseillaise

La Régénérateur. organe de la Solidarité et de la Fraternité des Peuples

La République Sauvée

La République des Travailleurs. Organe de l'Association Internationale (Sections des Batignolles et des Ternes)

La République. Journal de la Constituante (moderate)

La Résistance. Organe démocratique et socialiste. Journal de la ligue républicaine.

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La Révolution Politique et Sociale

La Sociale

La Souveraineté du Peuple. Journal des Idées Sociales

La Tante Duchêne (conservative)

Le Bonnet Rouge

Le Chatiment

Le Chatiment

Le Combat

Le Corsaire (conservative)

Le Courrier Français

Le Cri du Peuple

Le Drapeau

Le Drapeau Rouge

Le Faubourg

Le Faubourien

Le Feu gregois

Le fils Duchêne

Le Flambeau République

Le Gueux

Le Journal Populaire (1871) (conservative)

Le Misérable

Le Mont Aventin

Le Mot d'Ordre

Le Patriote

Le Patriote Français

Le Père Duchêne

Le Peuple

Le Prolétaire. organe des revendications sociales

Le Réfractaire

Le Réprouvé. Organe de la Libre Pensée

Le Républicain. Écho du coeur de Jésus

Le Réveil

Le Salut Public

Le Sans-Culotte

Le Tribun du Peuple

Le Vengeur

Les Mémoires du Père Duchesne

Les Mouches et les Araignées

MANUSCRIPTS AND ARCHIVAL MATERIAL

Buonarroti MSS 20804 (N.A.Fr.)

BB¹⁸ 967-1515 General Correspondence of Criminal Division of Ministry of Justice

BB¹⁸ 1206 Republican manifestations (1832)

BB¹⁸ 1219-1226, 1231 Prefect reports

BB¹⁸ 1220 Republican manifestations (1833)

BB¹⁸ 1221, 1223, 1224, 1226 Republican manifestations and regicides (1834)

BB¹⁸ 1231 Republican manifestations (1835)

BB¹⁸ 1258-65 Republicans manifestations (1842-7)

BB¹⁸ 1265, 1363, 1371 Effect of Alibaud's attempt (1836)

BB¹⁸ 1356-1357 Reports of dissent (1834)

BB¹⁸ 1319, 1339, 1340 Procureur général reports (1831-5)

BB¹⁸ 1362-1371 Republican manifestations and regicides (Alibaud, Pepin, Morey, Fieschi) (1836-9)

BB¹⁸ 1470a,b,c, 1494 Surveillance of the Press

BB¹⁸ 1472 Surveillance of secret societies

BB¹⁸ 1474 Surveillance of clubs and associations

BB¹⁸ 1481 Procureur général reports (1848-50)

BB¹⁸ 1644, 1646 Reports of threats against the Empire

BB¹⁸ 1780 Affaire Baudin (dossier 9565) (1867-9)

BB³⁰ 333-424 Papers and reports from the Ministry of Justice

BB³⁰ 333 Report on republicans

BB³⁰ 358-366 Letters from procureurs généraux (1849-52)

BB³⁰ 370-388 Monthly reports from procureurs généraux (1849-52)

BB³⁰ 391-397 Political Affairs (1850-1852)

BB³⁰ 398-402 Mixed commissions on insurrection of 1851.

BB³⁰ 408 Procureur général report

F. Misc Ephemeral Newspapers (1848-9)

F.Misc. 97 (Lyon) *Le Peuple Souverain*

F.Misc. 370 *Le Représentant du peuple*

F.Misc. 387 *L'Avenir National*

F.Misc. 456 *L'Accusateur public*

F.Misc. 463 *L'Aigle républicain*

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PAMPHLETS

Les Révolutions du XIXe Siècle

Première série, 1830-4, (12 volumes) (Paris: 1974)

Tom. I *Les Associations Républicaines, 1830-34.*

Tom. II *La Société des Amis du Peuple, 1830-2.*

Tom. III *La Société des Droits de l'Homme et du Citoyen, 1832-4.*

Tom. IV *Naissance du mouvement ouvrier, 1830-4.*

Toms V & VI *Le mouvement social à Lyon, 1830-4.*

Tom. VII *Écrits de Philippe Buonarroti*

Tom. VIII *Cabet et les publications du Populaire, 1831-4.*

Tom. IX *La propagande républicain en province, 1830-4.*

Tom. X *La presse républicaine devant les tribunaux, 1831-4.*

Tom. XI *Les républicaines devant les tribunaux, 1831-4.*
Tom. XII *Feuilles populaires et documents diverses, 1830-4.*

Seconde série, 1834-48 (12 volumes) (Paris: 1979)

Toms I & II *Le Mouvement Ouvrier, 1834-48.*

Toms III & IV *La Propagande Socialiste, 1834-48.*

Tom. V *Cabet, le Communisme icarien de 1840 à 1847.*

Toms VI - VIII *Révolutionnaires et Néo-Babouvistes, 1835-47.*

Toms IX - XI *Les procès des sociétés secrètes devant la Cour des Pairs. L'insurrection de Mai 1839. L'attentat Darmès 11 Mai 1840. L'attentat Quénisset 13 Septembre 1841.*

Tom. XII *Feuilles populaires et documents diverses, 1835-48.*

Troisième série, 1848 (9 volumes) (Paris: 1984)

Toms I - IX *La Révolution Démocratique et Sociale.*

Note on Les Révolutions du XIXe Siècle:

Published by Éditions d'Histoire Sociale (EDHIS), *les Révolutions du XIXe Siècle* is a collection of documents relative to revolution, republicanism and socialism between 1830 and 1872 (the fourth series, covering 1852-1872 was not consulted for this study). Aside from a brief introduction by Maurice Agulhon to the third series, there is neither commentary on the documents nor an indication where the documents can be found. Furthermore, there are no page numbers aside from the pagination in the original document. Consequently, in footnotes, references had to be limited to the series and volume number where the document can be found. Nearly every document is a printed source, although there are a few manuscripts. All said, this is a most invaluable resource tool. The documents selected for the collection are a mixture of fairly well known and obscure pamphlets, ephemeral newspapers, treatises and accounts of trials. All thirty-three volumes of the first three series have been extensively consulted for this study.

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