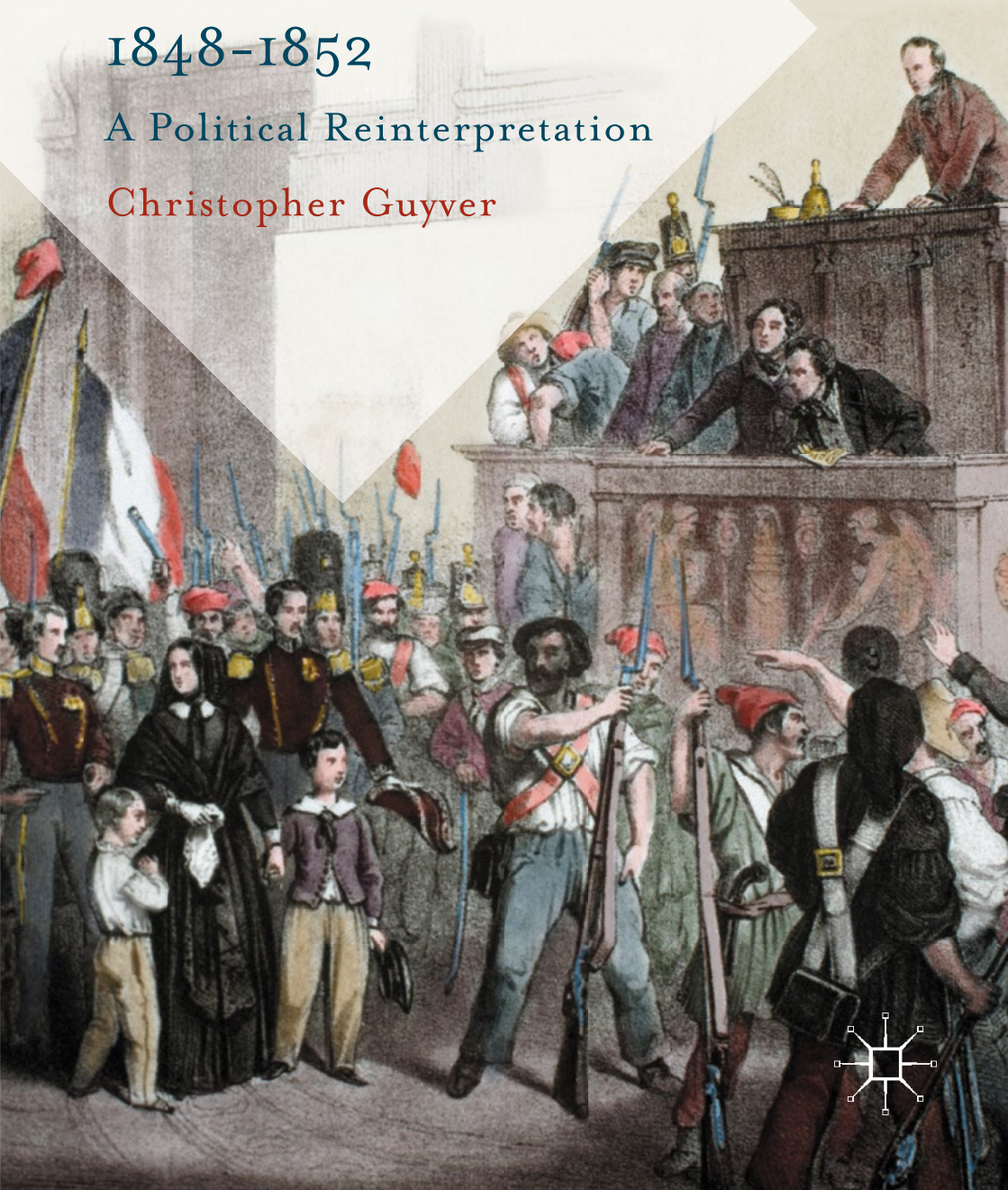


THE SECOND FRENCH REPUBLIC

1848-1852

A Political Reinterpretation

Christopher Guyver



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*For my parents, Robert and Margaret Guyver.
With love and gratitude*

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Introduction

The history of France after 1814 is a catalogue of instability, fear, hope, and failure. This instability is a constant theme in the literature of the period, and contemporaries often yearned for more heroic eras. Many of those who lived through this period hated it. Historians can take the very different view that this was one of the most fascinating periods to study. Many of the themes beloved of historians—continuity, change, the enacting of revolutionary ritual, violence, and fear—leap out from this epoch.

The revolutionary destruction of the *ancien régime* after 1789 and the succession of constitutions did not solve the problem of how to rule France. This problem did not go away with either the Terror, the coup of Thermidor, the coup of Brumaire, the coronation of Napoleon as Emperor, or his abdication in April 1814 when the Bourbons were recalled to France. The compromise of July 1830 pleased the ruling class of *notables* (a term that came into usage under Napoleon to designate the new ruling class, an amalgam of the pre-revolutionary nobility and the new men who made up the “masses of granite” of society).

We now know that France has been a Republic ever since 1870, with the important exception of the period 1940–44. This was not, however, inevitable as there were other traditions that had a strong grip on loyalties within the political class, and as the suffrage extended, among all (male) voters. Royalism was divided between fidelity to the elder branch of the Bourbons (legitimism) or to the cadet branch (Orleanism). Both branches had had their time in the sun: the senior branch ruled from 1814, interrupted by the Hundred Days of 1815 and fell in 1830, to be replaced by

the junior branch of the Orléans family, which fell in turn in 1848. Even after these two revolutions, there was still a strong possibility that France could have become a monarchy once more in the early 1850s. The last and, in 1852, triumphant political tendency was Bonapartism, which was itself a product of the Revolution of 1789 and fed as much on bitterness against the monarchies of 1814/15–48 as any variant of republicanism. Even after the proclamation of the Republic in September 1870, it took nearly half a decade for the republican form of government to be given definitive constitutional form.

After the bloodshed of the First Republic, the founders of the Second wanted the world to see that the republican form of government was profoundly humanitarian and a break with the corruption of the monarchical form of government. Of all the regimes of the period 1814–70, the Second Republic (1848–52) has left the greatest legacy in France: not least of which was the abolition of slavery in the colonies and the abolition of the death penalty for political offenses. The introduction of universal manhood suffrage involved millions of Frenchmen in the political decisions of their nation. The novelty of this system gave the Second Republic's elections a greater urgency than they had before in the period of restricted suffrage. Understanding the fear that the word "democracy" caused to the political elites requires a leap of historical imagination. But although the stakes were higher, decisions made at the top were still just as important: thus five-and-a-half million votes may have opened the doors of the Élysée Palace to President Louis-Napoleon Bonaparte in December 1848, but the decision to have a *coup d'état* three years later in December 1851 was his, and his alone.

For the majority of the Second Republic's existence, France was not governed by convinced republicans. If Pierre Rosanvallon has qualified the constitutional monarchy of 1814–48 as the "impossible," the Republic of 1848 was no less impossible.¹ Republicanism's capital was the highest during periods of revolutionary instability, as was seen in 1830, 1848, and 1870, but as a system of government it only scraped through third time lucky when all other possibilities had been exhausted.

This book's focus is the fears and plans of the political elite displaced in February 1848 but absorbed back into power in the following months and years, and why suspicion of and indifference toward the Republic as a form of government and fear and hatred of the new ideas of socialism were what divided them the least. We are offered the intriguing, if unedifying, spectacle of men and women often described as liberals being ready to sacrifice

all the principles they had tended before 1848 in order to preserve society as they knew it during the longest political crisis of the nineteenth century.

The general trend in historiography over the last century and a half has been first to dismiss the Republic as a futile endeavor and later to embrace it as the harbinger of social democracy. Its futility was most powerfully illustrated by three of the most influential works written on it: two were written during its short existence and the third soon after its extinction: Tocqueville's *Souvenirs*, Marx's *The Class Struggles in France*, and *The Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte*. Marx's true fame was to emerge in the 1860s at the time of the First International and the publication of *Capital*. Tocqueville, who had served as Minister of Foreign Affairs during the summer of 1849 and had already written the two books of *Democracy in America*, needed no such introduction to contemporaries, but his *Souvenirs* were written in the seclusion caused by the early stages of the tuberculosis that was to kill him in 1859.

Having produced the *Communist Manifesto* with Engels in January 1848, which eagerly predicted the impending revolution of the proletariat, Marx needed to explain why the outcome of the revolutions of 1848 had been so different from his confident forecast. Unlike his conservative contemporaries, for whom the 1848 revolution was a meaningless interlude, Marx had to tread the line of emphasizing both why it was important in the history of the class struggle (a concept he borrowed from the liberal French historians Thierry and Guizot) and why its failure was historically necessary, through building up a powerful counterrevolution that could in turn produce a stronger revolutionary force. *The Class Struggles in France, 1848–1850*, was Marx's first historical work and was published first in the *Neue Rheinische Zeitung* in 1850, based on his own reporting for that newspaper.² The ultimate answer to Marx's conundrum of how to account for the failure of a necessary revolution was in *The Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte*, produced straight after the *coup d'état* of 2 December 1851. In what is generally reckoned to be his most brilliant political pamphlet, he developed the themes already latent in the earlier work, namely, the conservatism of the peasantry and the cravenness of the bourgeoisie, as well as the divisions of the ruling class.³ Much of his account was based on his own firsthand observations, correspondence with people on the spot, and on a wide-ranging reading of the daily press.

Tocqueville's *Souvenirs*, written partly while he was convalescing from tuberculosis, have been equally influential on our understanding of the Republic. Tocqueville had a satirist's eye for the foibles of his contempo-

raries (and very often for those of his close friends). Although he came to very different conclusions, Tocqueville had drunk from the same historical springs as Marx: he, too, believed in the role of class struggle in history; where he, the aristocratic liberal and the exiled socialist journalist Marx agreed, it could be powerful, for instance in their analysis of the June Days.

Marie d'Agoult, famous to posterity as the mistress of Franz Liszt and mother of Cosima Wagner, writing as Daniel Stern, quickly produced her *Histoire de la Révolution de 1848*, based on eyewitness testimony, written sources from newspapers, and help from leading republicans and socialists. It covered the period of the Republic to the presidential election of 10 December 1848 (and as the third and final volume was published in the very different world of the France of Napoleon III of 1853, it is not surprising that the history ended at that point). The first volume of the three-volume history was published in 1850, when it was clear that the democratic and social Republic she had welcomed in February 1848 was dead, if not formally buried. This was a work of faith in the people, whose "naive enthusiasm of fraternity, a proud disinterest, delicate courtesy, natural generosity, and humanity" had been betrayed by the old Orleanist political class and a minority of secret society members.⁴ As she admitted in the preface to the second edition in 1862, this was a work that was written in the heat of the moment.⁵ So well written was this book (her account of the February Revolution is still the most gripping to date), and so forgotten its author, that subsequent historians have had little scruple in lifting sections of her work (she, in turn, lifted passages from Charles Robin's *Histoire de la Révolution française de 1848*).⁶ Her grand philosophical theme that the Revolution was an ineluctable historical process (she was well read in German philosophy, Hegel above all, something that was rare among her French contemporaries) would have to be put on hold by the election of Louis-Napoleon Bonaparte in December 1848, when the history ended.

The first wave of semi-official publications on the Republic's history that soon followed were nearly all written from a standpoint almost unknown today: the triumph of authority embodied in Prince Louis-Napoleon Bonaparte against socialist anarchy and parliamentary intrigue. Many of these were rushed into print in December 1851 and January 1852 as justifications of the coup or biographies of Louis-Napoleon Bonaparte. Granier de Cassagnac's later histories were the official, almost monolithic history of the Republic, published by Henri Plon, which boasted its patronage by

the Emperor. Not till Eugène Ténot's critical accounts of the coup were published in France in the 1860s could an alternative voice be heard.⁷

We are lucky that the Second Republic's history is abundant in primary sources. Among the most important are newspapers. France had one of the liveliest public spheres of the nineteenth century, even in periods of censorship. The importance of these dailies is in their ownership and political allegiance: the *Journal des Débats littéraires et politiques* (often shortened to the *Débats*, a usage which this book follows) had been the most prominent newspaper to support Guizot's government in the 1840s; the *Constitutionnel* was owned by Thiers till early 1849, when it switched its allegiance to President Louis-Napoleon Bonaparte. The *Presse*, a loose cannon among the newspapers, but owned by the commercially able Émile de Girardin, swerved from conservatism to republicanism during the Republic's history. The *Univers*, edited by Louis Veuillot, was one of the first media-savvy organs of the Catholic Church. The leading articles of all these newspapers were a daily feed of opinion in the battle to influence the public. This was also an era of cosmopolitan media and *The Times* and the *Indépendance belge* both help the historian because their reports were not subject to censorship within France, and even if their editorial lines were conservative, they did not always scruple to sit on uncomfortable facts.

Balzac, the dominant literary genius of the July Monarchy, was too worn out by his labors to write after 1848 and died in August 1850. Without him, the Second Republic has still left its mark on literature. The most famous novel to deal with the period is Flaubert's *L'Éducation sentimentale*, first published in 1869. This cruel, cynical work about the lost opportunities of youth is still cited as a primary source. Flaubert's other novel that passes through the period of the Republic is the satire *Bouvard et Pécuchet*, in which political events hardly impinge on the lives of the two characters. Émile Zola's first novel of the massive Rougon-Macquart cycle, *La Fortune des Rougon*, told the story of the Second Republic in the small Provençal town of Plassans, in which the Republic is assassinated symbolically at the end. As soon as he left France after the coup of 1851, Victor Hugo produced a collection of invective poetry, *Les Châtiments*, and his autobiographical novel, *Histoire d'un crime*, written after he returned in 1870.

Lamartine, Marc Caussidière, and Hippolyte Carnot, all out of power by the summer of 1848, put their versions into the public gaze very quickly. Proudhon also rushed his memoirs of 1848 into print.⁸ Others were only published a century after their composition: Charles

de Rémusat's remarkable *Mémoires de ma vie*, edited by Charles Pouthas, were published in seven volumes between 1958 and 1967, and the unpublished sections are still frequently consulted in the Bibliothèque nationale. We have memoirs by, among others, Barrot, Maxime du Camp, Falloux, Guizot, Maupas, Persigny, either published posthumously or many years after the events.⁹ Naturally, the use of memoir literature is problematic, especially since we all know that memory is fallible and malleable, and often becomes more so when politicians put pen to paper. Nevertheless, there are gems of description of places and of the main players (this is one of Rémusat's star turns). Most of these works were, to judge from internal evidence, composed during the Second Empire: the memoirists were not worried about explaining away the repressive policies they sponsored but rather how they had let themselves be defeated by the wiles of Louis-Napoleon Bonaparte. The self-justification is, however, part of the story: it shows how the Second Republic mattered in the decades that followed.

Diaries, so helpful in recording the vicissitudes of mood, conversations, and speculations about the future as well as humor (often not concordant with twenty-first-century tastes), tell us a great deal. We have an abundance of diaries from the elite world, from Austrian diplomats, Rodolphe Apponyi (the nephew of the ambassador) and Baron von Hübner, the ambassador from 1851, to the well-connected English political economist Nassau Senior; high-ranking soldiers such as the Marshal de Castellane; literary figures such as Edmond Got, Victor Hugo, and Xavier Marmier; the great historian Jules Michelet; the *salonnière* the duchesse de Maillé; and the mother-in-law of Thiers, Madame Dosne. This fund has been further enriched by recent publications. Charles de Montalembert's *Journal intime* edited by Nicole Roger-Taillade is a hugely useful resource, not least because of his accounts of the incessant meetings and frustrations and compromises of being a major figure in the Party of Order. Long believed lost but found in the Archives of Lucca by Philippe Delorme and published in 2009, the *Journal* of the comte de Chambord has helped to cast light on a personage long deemed too enigmatic for serious analysis; even though Chambord tended in his earlier diaries to be discreet to a fault, they still yield some suggestive nuggets about legitimist policy. This list is not complete without the diaries of Queen Victoria, digitized for the Diamond Jubilee in 2012.¹⁰

Although the papers of General Changarnier, an important figure in the Second Republic, cannot be traced, the letters he wrote to Betty de Rothschild are invaluable.¹¹ The correspondence of Adolphe de Circourt

to Henry Reeve, covering the period 1849–53 and kept at the British Library, offers crucial insights into Parisian society and political life. Barrot's letters to an "Anglaise," kept at the Archives Nationales and copied in a secretary's hand, are, I believe, genuine.¹² The archives of General de La Moricière, Minister of War twice during the Republic, can now be consulted at the Archives Nationales, in the Fonds Dampierre (289 AP). The correspondence of Léon Faucher, twice Minister of the Interior, was published in 1867, 13 years after his death. I have used the printed correspondence of other *notable* figures, such as Prosper Mérimée, Sainte-Beuve, and Alfred de Vigny, who were not members of the Assembly or of the government but were part of high society.¹³

By the end of the nineteenth century, as the events of 1848–52 receded from living memory, a new generation of writers concentrated on the Second Republic. The prolific historian Pierre de La Gorce (1846–1934), whose sympathies were with the Catholic right, produced his *Histoire de la Seconde République française* in 1887.¹⁴ On the brink of the Boulanger crisis, this work implicitly predicted that the Third Republic would suffer the same fate as the Second (by 1887 the Third Republic's duration had nearly reached the maximum for any regime so far in the nineteenth century). This was above all a political history, of changes of ministry and with scant discussion of the variants of republicanism. Socialism, a major theme in the Republic's history, was covered in a chapter after the *coup d'état* in the second volume of his *Histoire de la Seconde République française*.

Contemporary to La Gorce's work was Eugène Spuller's *Histoire parlementaire de la Seconde République, suivie d'une petite histoire du Second Empire* (1891). Like La Gorce, the interest of Spuller (1835–96) was the Republic's political history. A politician to his finger tips, having served in government in the 1880s and 1890s, he consciously wanted to show how the romanticism of the republicans of 1848 was totally misplaced in the face of the cynical, hardened politicians of the Party of Order, whose efficiency and organization, if not their beliefs, Spuller admired.¹⁵ A counterpoint to this overly political approach was George Renard's volume on the Republic in Jean Jaurès's *Histoire socialiste* (1901).¹⁶

In the second half of the twentieth century, André-Jean Tudesq's work on the *grands notables* during the period 1840–49, published in 1964, cannot be gainsaid, above all in empirical scope.¹⁷ Nevertheless, the chief limitation of Tudesq's work for the purposes of this book is that it ends in 1849, when the Barrot Ministry was summarily dismissed by Louis-Napoleon on 30 October. As we shall see, the influence of the *notables* was felt till 1851.

If there is one scholar who can be said to have made the Second Republic his own, it is the late Maurice Agulhon. His work *La République au village* showed the deep roots republicanism had planted in the department of the Var. His general history of the Republic, *1848, ou l'apprentissage de la République* (1972), translated as *The Republican Experiment* in 1983, sought to rescue the regime as a valid republican government and to give the leaders of the Provisional Government of 1848 their full due.¹⁸

What Agulhon himself called a “pléiade” of English-speaking scholars in the 1970s concentrated on exploiting the Archives Nationales in order to de-victimize the growth of democracy.¹⁹ John Merriman’s *The Agony of the Republic* looked at the police repression of republicans during the presidency of Louis-Napoleon. Ted W. Margadant’s work on the provincial resistance to the *coup d’état* of 2 December 1851 gave a thorough account of rural republicanism.²⁰ Through the work of Roger Price since the 1970s we have been able to read a series of studies of the interaction between the social classes and political power.²¹ In 1981, *French Provincial Police and the Fall of the Second Republic*, Thomas R. Forstenzer’s study of the prefectural corps, commented on the “scant interest in the counter-revolutionary side of the Second Republic” shown by American and British historians, and punctured the myth that social fear was a hoax, an invention of cynical bureaucrats obeying the orders from the President, Louis-Napoleon Bonaparte.²² Forstenzer overstated his case, as we shall see, but he exposed an important chink in the armor of the prevailing historiography. More recently, we now have a far clearer understanding of what motivated insurgents in Paris to mount the barricades thanks to the recent works of Louis Hincker and Jill Harsin.²³

The growth of socialism as a thought system is a major theme of nineteenth-century history. Recent studies have been boosted, above all, by Jonathan Beecher’s biographies of Fourier and Considerant; Pamela Pilbeam’s work on republicanism, socialism, and Saint-Simonism; and Michèle Riot-Sarcey’s essay on social fear in the July Monarchy.²⁴ This book will follow these findings by asking how far socialism was misunderstood and how far this misunderstanding affected political choice.

The 150th anniversary of the February Revolution in 1998 and of the *coup d’état* in 2001 produced fruitful and interesting conference proceedings. Especially important for this book is François Fourn’s paper, “1849–1851: l’anticommunisme en France. *Le Spectre rouge de 1852*,” which systematically explored for the first time the mass pamphleteering campaign against socialism.²⁵ Jean-Claude Caron’s study, *Frères de sang*,

about civil war in France in the nineteenth century emphasized the presence of violence within the state.²⁶ William Fortescue's *France and 1848: The End of Monarchy* (2005) has provided a cogent narrative analysis based on wide reading of the French press.

Biography has the virtue of emphasizing the contingency of many decisions in politics, and historians of nineteenth-century France have been well served by, among others, Éric Anceau's biography of Napoleon III, based closely on newly available primary sources; Laurent Theis's of Guizot and Brogan's of Tocqueville; and Munro Price's biography of Louis-Philippe.²⁷

The hardy perennials of conspiracy theory and rumor dominated people's minds and determined decision-making, as François Ploux's *De bouche à l'oreille* has shown.²⁸ How far conspiracies did exist is harder to ascertain: papers got burnt when it was thought that their continued material existence would be compromising, or far more often conversations never reached paper. Following the Chinese whispers of planned *coups d'état* and of insurrections is an often confusing and fruitless process for the historian. The fact remains, however, that such rumors were taken seriously at the time and were more compelling for the historical actors over a century and a half ago than they seem today under scholarly scrutiny.

In the first chapter, we shall look at how the fears provoked by the Republic were conditioned by the events and practices of the Restoration and the July Monarchies. Chapter 3 will show the abatement of the elites in the months that followed the February Revolution of 1848. Their bounce back and fight against the crowds on the barricades during the June Days will be documented in Chap. 4. Chapter 5 will follow the conservative republic under Cavaignac and the advent of Louis-Napoleon Bonaparte as a successful presidential candidate in December 1848. The two Ministries of Barrot, populated mainly by Orleanists, will be covered in Chap. 6. The new government, installed by a President fed up with men of the old order, is covered from November 1849 to January 1851, when the President dismissed his main internal military rival, General Changarnier. Finally, I shall follow the path to the coup of 1851 and beyond, to the formal destruction of the Republic in 1852.

1.1 NOTE ON NAMES AND TRANSLATION

Where possible I have used the version of the names used by the actors themselves: thus Considerant instead of Considérant, La Moricière instead of Lamoricière. The exception to this rule is Louis-Napoleon: although

some English-language writers now use “Louis-Napoléon” I have preferred the more traditional spelling. I have translated most of the passages from the original French; in the remaining cases where English was used originally (for instance by Circourt, Mérimée, and Montalembert), I have left them in their pristine state.

NOTES

1. Pierre Rosanvallon, *La Monarchie impossible: les Chartes de 1814 et de 1830* (Paris: Fayard, 1994).
2. Engels, cit. D. Fernbach, introduction to K. Marx, *Surveys from Exile* (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1973), 9.
3. David McLellan, *Karl Marx: His Life and Thought* (London: Macmillan, 1973), 221; Jonathan Sperber, *Karl Marx: A Nineteenth-Century Life* (New York and London: Liveright Publishing, 2013), 289.
4. Stern, *Histoire de la Révolution de 1848* (3 vols, Paris: L. Martinet, 1850–3), 1: 270; see also Jacques Vier, *La Comtesse d’Agoult et son temps* (4 vols, Paris: Armand Colin, 1959–63), 3: 71; Charles Dupêchez, *Marie d’Agoult, 1805–1876* (Paris: Perrin, 1989), 204; Phyllis Stock-Morton, *The Life of Marie d’Agoult alias Daniel Stern* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins, 2003), 153.
5. Stern, *Histoire*, 2nd ed. (Paris: Charpentier, 1862), vol. 1, p. v.
6. E.g. D. C. McKay, *The National Workshops: A Study of the French Revolution of 1848* (Cambridge, MA, and London: Harvard University Press, 1933), Jules Bertaut, *1848 et la Seconde République* (Paris: Arthème Fayard, 1937), 40 cf. Stern, 1: 100–1. For Stern’s own plagiarism, see Vier, *La Comtesse d’Agoult*, 3: 80–2.
7. B.-A. Granier de Cassagnac, *Histoire de la chute du roi Louis-Philippe, de la République de 1848 et du rétablissement de l’Empire (1847–1855)* (2 vols, Paris: Librairie de Henri Plon, imprimeur de l’empereur, 1857); Eugène Ténoc, *La Province en décembre 1851: étude historique sur le coup d’État*. (Paris: chez les principaux libraires, 1865) and idem, *Paris en décembre 1851: étude historique sur le coup d’État*, 6th ed. (Paris: Le Chevalier, 1868).
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The Limited World of the Constitutional Monarchy

The Second Republic was founded by republicans and killed by Bonapartists. In between, however, its politics was dominated by former constitutional monarchists. The period 1848–51 cannot be understood without taking into account the continuities and discontinuities with the two monarchical regimes of the Restoration and the July Monarchy that ruled France between 1814 and 1848. The political practices, the provisional rallying of *notables* to the Republic, and the social fear and anxieties that dominated decisions and policy during the short span of the Republic were conditioned in the half century of constitutional monarchy that preceded 1848.

In the beginning was the Restoration. Like the regimes that followed it, its origins were messy and its founding principle was ambiguous. Imposed by a mixture of luck, diplomacy, and military conquest, the Restoration was based on both the dynastic legitimacy of the Bourbons, returned from their long exile, and on the Constitutional Charter, which guaranteed limits on the monarchy as well as a representative government. There had been no guarantee that either the Bourbons would rule after Napoleon's abdication in April 1814 or there would be a written constitution. The republic was not considered the natural successor to Napoleon, even if Tsar Alexander talked about it in passing.¹ A republic could only conjure up fears of dictatorship and terror in the memories of the ruling elites—not just of France but of Europe; a monarchy was deemed a far safer guarantee of moderation.

It was the French Revolution that established parliamentary government in France, but its more durable foundation dates from 1814. All parties were keen that France have some form of constitutional rule, which was extraordinary given that most other European monarchies would have to wait at least two generations themselves to become constitutional. Even if Louis XVIII brushed aside the constitution drafted by Talleyrand and the Senate, and granted his own Constitutional Charter to the French nation on 4 June 1814, to give the impression that he was issuing a constitution by his free will, the fact remains that France was one of the most liberal states in western Europe, where Frenchmen enjoyed greater freedoms than even in the much vaunted British system (for example, French Protestants had greater rights than did British Catholics at that time).² Among his powers, the king appointed and dismissed his ministries, a power that remained in the hands of Louis-Philippe after 1830, and Louis-Napoleon after 1848. The legislature was bicameral, divided between the Chamber of Peers and the Chamber of Deputies. The Charter stipulated that any male voter over thirty who paid over 300 francs annual tax was eligible to vote, and that electoral candidates had to be over forty and pay over 1,000 francs direct tax.³

The most visible and tangible part of the state's power was the army. In the aftermath of Waterloo, the army was reduced drastically and many officers were put on half pay. This was not the case for many of Napoleon's generals and marshals. While it cannot be denied that some had been either shot (Ney) or massacred by crowds (Brune), many more survived the change of regime with their prestige, titles, rank, and wealth intact, and, in a few cases, enhanced. Indeed, it was a group of marshals who pushed Napoleon to abdicate in April 1814. The role played by high-ranking military officers in political life between 1814 and 1851 was not defined in any constitution or law, but they were present and influential throughout—far more so than they had been under Napoleon, who had fobbed off his marshals and generals with titles, land, and money. Louis XVIII set a precedent for appointing a high-ranking soldier to a caretaker ministry when he made General Dessolle Minister of Foreign Affairs and caretaker *président du conseil des ministres* (President of the Council of Ministers, which was the term then used for head of government: *premier ministre* (prime minister) came into current use in France only under the Third Republic) on 29 December 1818.⁴ Louis-Philippe would also resort to appointing marshals on several occasions, as we shall see. The apogee of the power of the generals in the nineteenth century was to be the Second Republic.

In spite of the installation of a constitutional system by the Charter, the court remained the pinnacle of both politics and society.⁵ Napoleon himself had kept a sumptuous court, stiff with hierarchical ritual. This suited Louis XVIII, though he had a lighter touch with public opinion. Nevertheless, even more traditionally perhaps, the king's brother, Charles the comte d'Artois (who would succeed as Charles X in 1824), established a rival court in the pavillon de Marsan in the wing of the Tuileries Palace where his apartments were. Indeed, the fact that the Bourbons did not return to the neglected Versailles, but kept their principal royal residence as the Tuileries in the very center of Paris meant that, with the fall of the Empire, Parisian civil society was fused with the court. The phenomenon of an alternative court would not recur during the July Monarchy, but its ghost haunted the political world after 1848.

After the grimness of the Empire, elite civil society revived, with its literary and political salons, where there were, in Jeremy Jennings's words, "significant levels of continuity" of the practice of the *ancien regime*.⁶ The salons, the pinnacle of elite society, were hardly democratic. As Steven D. Kale has pointed out, the elite world more or less equaled the number of people enfranchised in the Charter.⁷ But within them they provided space for discussion of all manner of literary and political topics. Often presided over by a woman, which made them a target of the hyper-masculine left republicans, the salon was the hub where social and political matters met.⁸

The inexperienced deputies of different parliamentary factions started to meet in *réunions*, often in larger rooms than salons because of their numbers. From September 1815, *ultra* deputies, so called because of their ultra-royalism, would meet in a room on the rue Thérèse rented in the name of Jean-Pierre Piet-Thardiveau, deputy for the Sarthe⁹; in 1818, liberals, who supported the Charter but not necessarily the king's inalienable right to rule, organized their election campaign in the *réunion* Laffitte. When a large number of men new to parliamentary life arrived in Paris in 1848, the *réunions* would come into their own.

If the Charter could not function without a monarch, it was worryingly clear that the monarchical system could function without the Charter. Although Louis XVIII honored the Charter, his brother the comte d'Artois inspired fear for the future. Artois himself would be forever linked to the shadowy *ultra* group the Chevaliers de la Foi (Knights of the Faith).¹⁰ Even if he was not the *ultras'* puppet master, it says much about the fears and rumor that circulated at the time that so many thought

he was leading a nationwide conspiracy from his quarters in the pavillon Marsan in the Tuileries.¹¹ The man who as king banished the Society of Jesus from France was often thought himself to be a Jesuit.¹² As Geoffrey Cubitt has shown, the Jesuit conspiracy was taken seriously. The fears that rose after the Hundred Days that the Bourbons, in spite of all evidence, were plotting to restore a feudal theocracy run by the hated Jesuits and the Inquisition continued for generations and reemerged at times of stress and discord.

Even in an era of parliaments, newspapers, and revolutions, dynastic politics still mattered. Indeed, not since the sixteenth century had the question of which dynasty ruled France mattered so much. Since at least 1814, some hoped, and others feared, that the distant cousin of Louis XVIII and Charles X, Louis-Philippe, the duc d'Orléans would one day be king.¹³ In *ultra* circles, the Orléans family was dubbed the *branche régicide* (the regicide branch), as Orléans's father had voted for the death of Louis XVI in 1793.¹⁴ Orléans coming to the throne was not just a distant possibility. Until 1820, neither of the two sons of Charles, the duc de Berry and the duc d'Angoulême had produced a son. When the duchesse de Berry gave birth, seven months after her husband's assassination, to Henri, duc de Bordeaux, later known as the comte de Chambord, the duc and duchesse d'Orléans took it badly, even insisting on pulling the umbilical cord.¹⁵ Even so, if the duc de Bordeaux had not been born, Orléans would have had to have waited for his near contemporary, the duc d'Angoulême (born 1775, two years after Orléans), to die before he could ascend the throne. But Orléans was thinking in the long term, not just of himself but of his own branch of the family. Partly to show his cousin Louis XVIII that it was still possible for a prince to associate with such men, Orléans stayed in close contact with many liberal politicians, journalists, and above all, Napoleon's former marshals, whom he invited often to his *soirées* at his residence in the Palais-Royal, which was decorated with Horace Vernet's giant paintings of Napoleonic victories.¹⁶ From the summer of 1829, it was received wisdom that only the Orléans family would ultimately benefit from the actions of the king and his chief minister Jules de Polignac.¹⁷

By the Restoration, the word "liberal" had come to have connotations of opposition to the *ultras* and support for the Charter as the bedrock of the regime and for an unembarrassed acceptance of the constitutional and economic gains of 1789, especially in the face of the *ultras*. We must, however, banish from our minds the connection between liberalism and social

democracy that has arisen since the second half of the twentieth century. During the Restoration, the term was so vague as to be a simple label for opponents of the *ultras* and could be applied to men whose ideas differed as much as Benjamin Constant and François Guizot. Liberal ideas in the early to mid-nineteenth century appear to be most alien in their focus on wealth and property. Even if some prominent liberals, for instance, campaigned against slavery in the colonies, others, such as Charles Dunoyer, supported it, for the reason that the slaves were, he thought, racially inferior and therefore not deserving of emancipation.¹⁸ The protection of the wealth transferred by the Revolution as well as the maintenance of the constitutional gains that benefited the rich were the main aims of liberalism. Any other organization, whether it be the Catholic Church or an association of workers, that did not help to shore up this wealth was a grave threat.

The integration of liberal values of inserting wealth and property in representation was the work of the Doctrinaires, a group which Francis Démier compares to a think tank.¹⁹ This was a small and very select coterie so small that Rémusat jested that it could fit on one sofa²⁰: Prosper de Barante (1782–1866), Victor de Broglie (1785–1870), François Guizot, Charles de Rémusat, Pierre-Paul Royer-Collard (1763–1845), and Hercule de Serre (1776–1824). Although de Serre died in 1824 and Royer Collard was rapidly aging and did not like the July Monarchy's revolutionary origins, the other, younger men had stellar careers after 1830: Barante was ambassador in Turin and then Saint Petersburg, Broglie became President of the Council of Ministers, and Rémusat was Minister of the Interior. It was Guizot, however, who would have the most brilliant career. A Protestant born in Nîmes in 1787 who lost his father in the Terror, and a professor of history at the Sorbonne till he was suspended during the Restoration, Guizot would become the dominant figure in the second half of the July Monarchy. Guizot was always an elitist, which was by no means incompatible with liberalism then or now.²¹ He never abandoned his belief that the true voice of the sovereignty of reason could be only representative government; popular democracy would never be an option for a stable government or society.²² Their publications throughout the Restoration gave them an intellectual supremacy, above all, in history and journalism, among the reading public. But it was during the years of Decazes's Ministry (1817–1820) that they had the greatest impact, which would have reverberations through the rest of the century. The electoral law of 5 February 1817 abandoned the system of indirect voting introduced in 1814: henceforth there would be equality among eligible