

OTHERING FRANCE:

Depictions of French Politics in *Punch*, 1848-1851

by

Carson Yichen Zhou

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Abstract

This thesis examines caricatures of French politics in the British cartoon periodical *Punch* between the years 1848 and 1851. I argue that although the French “Other” was seen by Britons in the eighteenth century as a military danger, by the 1848 revolution it had been transformed into a dystopian analogue of Great Britain’s own constitutional achievements. *Punch* contributes to the British nation-building project by juxtaposing the supposed failures of the French liberal movement, with the supposed successes of British government. Its cartoons depict French constitutionalism in the era as violent and radical, constantly threatened by the forces of revolutionary turmoil on the one hand, and Bonapartist autocracy on the other. Moreover, *Punch* depicts these problems as self-inflicted; when given the choice between disorder and dictatorship, Frenchmen chose the latter.

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I – Introduction

Then at the apogee of its power and influence, 1851 was an eventful year for the United Kingdom. It was a proud time to be a Briton. Though what “Briton” meant was ambiguous, the year provided plenty of reminders that the term was associated with riches and grandeur. The Great Exhibition opened in May, and for the next five months, brought to London Europe’s latest innovations. In November, the first permanent telegraph cable was laid across the channel. Paris and London, the capitals of two foes, now found themselves, through the wonders of science and engineering, more closely connected to each other than either was to Edinburgh or Marseilles. To Londoners’ consternation however, the first significant news to cross from France via the cable was reports of Louis Napoleon’s coup, followed by accounts of a bloody crackdown on the Paris boulevards. Rumours of French invasion were fanned by the media. Britons were reminded that their prosperity was ever threatened by their neighbors across the channel.

Britain’s relationship with France is essential to understanding British national identity. As Linda Colley argues in her study on British nation-building in the eighteenth century, “Britishness” was defined through the juxtaposition of an alien and hostile French “Other.”¹ For the first century and a half of Britain’s existence, the country was engaged in a protracted conflict with France, rallying English, Welsh, and Scots alike against a common foe.² As Colley argues, Britons, not just the English, “defined themselves as Protestants struggling for survival against the world’s foremost Catholic power. They defined themselves against the French as they

¹ Linda Colley, *Britons* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1992).

² Particularly, many Scots found themselves appointed to positions of power at the forefront of Britain’s struggle against the French. As Scottish elites were gradually amalgamated into the old English aristocracy, they put aside their traditionally amicable relationship with France and became more invested in the Union. See Colley 117-132.

imagined them to be, superstitious, militarist, decadent, and unfree.”³ While acknowledging this adversarial relationship, and the rise of what Gerald Newman terms a negative “Gallic Stereotype,” scholars also focus on, as Newman puts it, the “quickened tempo of intellectual and social exchange between the two great powers of the day.”⁴ Frenchmen and Britons considered their nations tied more to each other than to any other state, and as Robin Eagles observes of the eighteenth century, British elites “wallowed in French culture, sported her most outrageous affectations, communed with her nobility and philosophers, lived there, and imported (illegally) her goods.”⁵ This fraternal rivalry persisted well into the Victorian era, and the submarine cable carrying news of yet another French threat was simply one more manifestation of the impact of cross-channel relations on Victorian political culture.

Unfortunately, scholarship on British nation building in the nineteenth century neglects France’s continued role in that process; most historians now focus on the role of the imperial Other, as opposed to the French Other.⁶ But while Waterloo marked the beginning of a gradual thawing in Anglo-French relations, few Britons could have predicted these shifts, and relations with France were poor to the eve of the Crimean War. In 1848, the Duke of Wellington claimed in a letter that the French could land unopposed anywhere along the south coast. Although the real danger posed by a France at the brink of revolution was negligible, the public outcry that

³ Colley, 5.

⁴ Gerald Newman in particular straddles both perspectives. For his early perspectives on the adversarial relationship between Britain and France, see “Anti French Propaganda and British Liberal Nationalism in the Early Nineteenth Century,” *Victorian Studies* 18, no. 4 (1975): 385-415. For his more recent work on Anglo-French cultural exchange, see Gerald Newman, *The Rise of English Nationalism* (London: Macmillan, 1997), 2.

⁵ Robin Eagles, *Francophilia in English Society* (London: Macmillan Press, 2000), 9.

⁶ See for instance, Julie Codell, ed., *Imperial Co-Histories* (London: Rosemont, 2003); J.S. Bratton et al., *Acts of Supremacy: The British Empire and the Stage 1790-1930* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1991); Kathleen Wilson, ed., *A New Imperial History* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004). One exception in particular stands out: Georgios Varouxakis, *Victorian Political Thought on France and the French* (New York: Palgrave, 2002).

followed provoked the government into proposing a new militia bill.⁷ The rise of Louis Napoleon added a new dimension to this hostility, for memories of the first Napoleon still lingered in the public consciousness. To Britons, many of whom grew up or served during the wars, Napoleonic motifs were familiar and sinister, stark reminders of enduring rivalries. The mass media, including a growing visual media represented here by the comic periodical *Punch*, depicted the new French regime as jingoistic and authoritarian. For the next decade, Britons would – literally – see Napoleon III as an adversary and a danger, for *Punch* made his distinctive goatee and waxed moustache instantly recognizable to a wide public.

France's primary role in Britain's nation-building project, however, was by then no longer military. Where Napoleon's escape from Elba had provoked panic, the media expressed general skepticism toward the latest invasion scares. The perceived danger from France was present, but had ebbed significantly since Waterloo. Rather, France was significant to Victorians as a dystopian analogue to Britain. Whilst the rest of Europe was ruled by monarchical autocracies, France's experimentation with different governments was comparable to Britons' own constitutional experiences; it was thus comprehensible to the public in a way the rest of the continent was not. How did Britons conceptualize French governance, and what role did it play in Britain's own nation-building narrative? My aim is to explore the relationship between mid-century Victorian perceptions of French politics, and the construction of British identity, through a case study of caricatures of the fall of the Second Republic, and Louis Napoleon's rise to power in the comic periodical *Punch* between the 1848 Revolution and the restoration of the Empire in 1852.

⁷ Michael Partridge, "Wellington and the Defense of the Realm, 1819-52," in *Wellington: Studies in the Military and Political Career of the first Duke of Wellington*, ed. Norman Gash (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1990), 238-265.

This case study will explore the French Other in an era when its contribution to British identity was changing, and its significance, or so the lack of attention since would suggest, supposedly diminishing. Just like the real parties who fought for control of France, the Other was not a singular entity. Depictions of the “effete” court of Louis Phillipe were very different from Louis Napoleon’s plebian militarism. The symbolism used to depict French regimes changed with time and in response to political developments. For instance, with the rise of Bonapartism, the French cock, a national symbol used since the middle ages, was largely supplanted in *Punch* by the eagle – a change of regime led to the mass retirement of obsolete imagery in favour of new imagery. While British depictions of the Bourbons rarely used individual kings to represent the state, Napoleonic France was often personified by Napoleon himself, wearing his distinctive uniform and bicorn. As Napoleon III amassed power, *Punch* cartoons resurrected many of these long retired tropes – including images of his long-dead uncle. Britons may have invented a shared nationalism through the construction of an essentialized French Other, but this Other was comprised of multiple and fluid identities.

Embedded within *Punch*’s disparate and at times conflicting imagery is a remarkably cohesive narrative as to France’s political significance from an elite British perspective. *Punch* depicted France as a poorly administered polity whose convenient juxtaposition with Britain highlighted the liberalism and constitutionality of British institutions. Whereas Britons, or so the traditional narrative claimed, acquired their freedoms through peaceable and gradual reforms, the French sought their liberty through violence and turmoil, anathema to *Punch*’s literate, largely upper and middle class audience. That liberty then devolved into a farce perpetuated by Bonapartist autocracy. From 1789 onward, Paris saw more regime changes than any other capital in Europe. France was depicted not only as the embodiment of instability, but also as a source for

sedition that threatened to spread revolution abroad. Such an interpretation must have been particularly striking to Britons in 1848, as the upheavals in Paris sparked a tide of uprisings that spread across the continent. Louis Napoleon's advent, meanwhile, reminded Britons of the insecurity of the war years and added a new dimension to France's dystopian image. The opposition in *Punch* between what was portrayed as jingoistic Caearism in Paris, and the freedom supposedly enjoyed in London, was all the more striking since Louis Napoleon made a conscious effort to robe his regime with the cloak of legality. When reduced to a *Punch* cartoon, French politics could not but seem to British eyes a twisted caricature, an inversion of their own beloved institutions: France was the antithesis of Britain.

Commonly referred to as "the Most British of Institutions," *Punch* has been a favourite source for scholars of nineteenth-century Britain. Yet, until the publication of Richard Altick's *Punch: the Lively Youth of a British Institution*, the only full-length scholarly work on *Punch* was Marion Spielmann's 1895 *History of Punch*.⁸ Altick observes that *Punch's* success relied on its contributors' incredibly expansive range of cultural and historical references, resulting in an "educated" humour that mirrored the formal reporting of the *Times*. For Altick, *Punch's* witty yet inoffensive content contributed to its popularity amongst Britain's upper crust, for it appealed to their proprieties and sensibilities.⁹ More recently, Patrick Leary's study, *The Punch Brotherhood*, demonstrates that *Punch's* depictions of French political culture did not solely reflect the interests of *Punch's* proprietors and contributors, but rather the popular mood of the moment. Leary has observed that the choice of subject for the large cuts, the full cartoon spread that served as the centerpiece of each weekly issue, was not an individual decision; rather, it was

⁸ Richard Altick, *Punch: The Lively Youth of a British Institution, 1841-1851* (Columbus: Ohio State University Press, 1997); Marion Spielmann, *History of Punch* (London: Cassell, 1895). For non-academic accounts, see Susan Briggs, *Cap and Bell* (London: Macdonald and co., 1972); Arthur Prager, *The Mahogany Tree* (Gloucestershire: Hawthorn Press, 1979). Richard Geoffrey and George Price, *A History of Punch* (London: Collins, 1957).

⁹ Altick, 9-40.

decided at a weekly dinner meeting of the magazine staff. Leary argues that “of all the qualities sought after in pursuit of what Mark Lemon [founding editor of *Punch*] praises as ‘a Punchy cut,’ the most prized is topicality.”¹⁰ Leary and Altick both point out that the creators of the large cut drew heavily from the *Times*, then the voice of the establishment and Britain’s newspaper of record, to ensure that the large cut addressed topics already at the fore of Londoners’ consciousness. In fact, very often, the subject of the large cut matched that of the leading article in the *Times*, and indeed, the major newspapers openly admitted *Punch* into their ranks by referencing, and sometimes reproducing, *Punch* articles and cartoons. Altick even characterizes *Punch* as a “weekly illustrated comic supplement to *The Times*, reflecting as in a distorting mirror a selection of the week’s news and jauntily editorializing on its significance.”¹¹ Thus, the sheer number of large cuts devoted to the French political scene between 1848 and 1852 highlights France’s importance in the consciousness of British elites. France was the subject of more large cuts than all other foreign powers combined, and through them, *Punch* meticulously charted the rise of Louis Napoleon from parvenu, to elected president, to dictator, to emperor.

Punch’s readers and contemporaries themselves seemed just as conscious of *Punch*’s role as an archive of middle class attitudes and interests. One article in the *Athenaeum*, perhaps the most distinguished cultural periodical of the Victorian period, claimed that “the future historian of the nineteenth century will, we imagine, reckon the volumes of *Punch* as not the least useful among the materials of his work, not as much as a record of events...but rather as testifying to the temper in which they were at any time viewed by the English middle class.”¹² *Punch*’s content then, not only hints at the underlying paradigms informing the views of its elite audience,

¹⁰ Patrick Leary, *The Punch Brotherhood* (London: The British Library, 2010), 45.

¹¹ Altick, xix.

¹² *Athenaeum*, July 17, 1875, 29.

but are also indicative of the hot-button topics then talked about week to week in Victorian drawing rooms.¹³ Just as Leary's work would seem to suggest, French politics appeared so often in *Punch* not because of the idiosyncratic interests of *Punch* contributors, but because it was interesting to consumers – especially the learned middle class who were politically involved, and heavily invested in business on the continent. Even *Punch's* full title, *Punch, or, the London Charivari*, exemplifies France's continued significance in British minds by paying homage to *Punch's* famous Paris counterpart, the illustrated newspaper *Le Charivari*.

Punch's caricatures of mid-century France existed within a long tradition of political commentary fascinated with the French governmental malaise. During the 1790s, with the constitutional gains of Britain's own Glorious Revolution just a century old, the outbreak of the French Revolution had particular salience for British thinkers of a range of political beliefs, who sought to compare the two revolutions to reflect on the nature, and desirability, of Britain's own government and reform process.¹⁴ In what became known as the Revolution Controversy, British moderates and conservatives, most notably represented by Edmund Burke and his *Reflections on the Revolution in France*, defended Britain's aristocratic oligarchy from the assaults of a range of radicals who, in supporting the French revolutionaries, indirectly pushed for further reform in

¹³ Although out of the scope of this paper, it must be noted that the implication of *Punch's* wide reach is that its images and articles were not just passive receptacles of Victorian table-talk, but also actively influenced *Punch's* consumers. The "Crystal Palace" was coined by *Punch*, and the cartoon also shaped the public's thoughts on politics; Lord Palmerston came to be known as "the Judicious Bottle-Holder" due to a *Punch* large cut. Altick, 618-634. Also see "The Judicious Bottle Holder," *Punch* XXI, December 6, 1851, 245.

¹⁴ As Steven Blakemore puts it, the Revolution "erupted into a great ideological war over the significance of the past, for the Revolution was, in many ways, a referendum on history." Opponents and supporters of the revolution engaged in what Blakemore calls an "intertextual war" on the revolution's role. For Britons pondering the nature of their own constitutional arrangements, the French Revolution could be variously an "apocalyptic" analogue, or a model for future reform. *Intertextual War: Edmund Burke and the French Revolution in the Writings of Mary Wollstonecraft, Thomas Paine, and James Mackintosh* (London: Associated University Presses, 1997), 15. Also see Hedva Ben-Israel, *English Historians on the French Revolution* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1968).

Britain and a reduction in the power of the landed aristocracy.¹⁵ Burke juxtaposed what he saw as the more practical British constitution, founded on specific protections, with the nebulous idealism of the French revolution, and its undefined notions of “liberty.” Where change in Britain was gradual and radicalism discouraged by the constitution’s reliance on precedent and tradition, the abstraction of French revolutionary ideals meant that they could be loosely interpreted, in conflicting ways, to support the agenda of whoever was in power. Burke predicted that a popular general would take advantage of the resultant chaos, and turn the republic into a military dictatorship. Thus, instead of comparing 1789 France with 1688 England, as did the revolution’s British supporters, Burke chose to compare the French Revolution with the upheaval caused by the English Civil War and Cromwell’s despotism. Burke’s self-satisfied narrative of British constitution-building gained traction as the revolution became increasingly violent, especially after war broke out between the two countries. Napoleon’s 18th Brumaire coup only seemed to fulfill Burke’s prediction that the republic would fall to military adventurism, and his interpretation soon became accepted consensus among British elites.¹⁶

In critiquing the French experience, Burke not only lauded the gradual, comparatively peaceful process by which Britons gained freedom, but also established a precedent for the comparability of French and British constitutional arrangements. British hegemony in the years after Waterloo, the decline of British republicanism and, in 1830, the outbreak of yet another revolution in France, meant that by 1848, most of these comparisons were founded on the ideas in Burke’s *Reflections* – smugly superior accounts that assumed, and then sought to explain, both the failure of French constitutionalism, and France’s violent swings between anarchy and

¹⁵ Marilyn Butler, ed., *Burke, Paine, Godwin, and the Revolution Controversy* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1984).

¹⁶ For a more detailed account, see Daniel Ritchie, ed., *Edmund Burke: Appraisals and Applications* (New Brunswick: Transaction, 1990), 75-148.

autocracy. Some Victorian theorists sought as answers cultural or even racial differences between broadly stereotyped Frenchmen and Britons. One 1860 article that appeared in the *Westminster Review* argued that differences in attitude between the British and the French made constitutional government impossible for the latter: “If you talk to a Frenchman of the good effect of parliamentary debate, the answer is, ‘Ils ne font que bavarder.’ ‘Ce ne sont que des bavards;’ or if you allude to a free political press, they say, ‘cela regarde les messieurs de la presse.’”¹⁷ In other words, the French did not see the value in political debate, or free press. “Bavarder” suggests not just indifference, but hostility, a dismissive attitude toward the parliamentary process. These claims about the nature of the French rest on the assumption that free press and parliamentary debate are necessary to constitutional government, and moreover, that Britain exemplifies the benefits of both. By implication, because France lacks these prerequisites, France is unable to establish a proper constitutional government. Governance thus tends toward either authoritarianism or lack of any orderly state structure at all.

Another article, published in the *Edinburgh Review* soon after the collapse of the Second Empire, reflecting on yet another revolution in France, theorized that the 1789 Revolution destroyed precisely those institutions that maintained stability during power vacuums – a powerful aristocracy, the inviolability of hereditary monarchy, and a powerful Catholic Church – and as a result, France slipped into turmoil the moment the state’s grasp weakened.¹⁸ This implied that Britain possessed such stabilizing institutions – a powerful aristocracy, a strong monarchy, and the Anglican Church – and that they were not only markers of the nation’s political culture, but also protected it from revolution. The article parallels Burke’s narrative in that both find their solutions in French institutional weaknesses. Even Gladstone had a theory for

¹⁷ *Westminster Review*, Jan 1860, 59.

¹⁸ *Edinburgh Review*, Jan 1871, 1-32.

France's constitutional headaches, that the "extraordinary race by which [France] is inhabited appear to be richly, nay, supremely, endowed with every gift but one – the gift of true political sagacity."¹⁹ For Gladstone, the French simply lacked political acumen, and as a result, possessed a natural predisposition toward incompetent, ineffectual, and disorderly governance.²⁰

By Victorian times, the continued evolution of Burke's narrative at the hands of a new generation of political theorists had created a binary opposition between two stereotyped visions of France and Britain. By identifying the supposed weaknesses of French political culture, these thinkers were simultaneously defining the strengths and iconic features of British constitutionalism. Where Linda Colley claims that, in the eighteenth century, the "invention of Britishness was closely bound up with Protestantism, with war with France, and with the acquisition of Empire," we can add that by the nineteenth century, Britons were also constructing their national identity from the sense of exceptionalism they felt from their unique system of government.²¹ Britons would no longer unite in armed struggle against France the military threat, but they could however, unite around their governing institutions – whether crown, parliament, or bill of rights – against a French Other that exemplified revolution and failed constitutionalism.

¹⁹ Gladstone, "Germany, France, and England," *Edinburgh Review*, Oct 1870, 554-593. A commentary on the Hohenzollern candidature that would soon lead to war between France and Prussia, the article was originally anonymous; however, it was not long before the authorship became an open secret. Such a candid expression of opinion on a major policy matter by the Prime Minister raised eyebrows.

²⁰ Even Walter Bagehot wrote on the subject. See Varouxakis, 117-122.

²¹ Colley, 8.

II - The Radicalization of France

Punch contributed to this Francophobic binary by reinterpreting French national symbols as inferior analogues of British symbols, ensuring that the comparison between the two nations would be apparent to the audience. Caricatures are extensions of their creators' political agenda, and are created as vehicles to propagate those agendas. What Alfred Gell suggests of aesthetics is true of *Punch*, "persons or 'social agents' are...substituted for by art objects," not just art objects in the sense of a stylized image of the original, but also as allusions to famous paintings and Homeric epics.²² A cartoon of Napoleon III is not a faithful physical representation; rather, his features are twisted to convey specific notions the creators hope to associate with the man himself, especially those notions that are essential to his identity but are not visible in life – a long hooked nose reminiscent of an eagle's beak suggestive of his imperial pretensions, a large bulbous head rendering him comical, in the background his uncle's portrait alluding to the figure's historical baggage. A caricatured identity of Louis Napoleon is built through picture symbols, each one conveying an idea, and a series of which convey a narrative about who Louis Napoleon is and how he should be seen. As William Mitchell notes, the caricature "takes the stereotype and deforms or disfigures it, exaggerating some features or rendering the figure of the Other in terms of some subhuman object in order to ridicule or humiliate."²³ This caricaturing process hyperbolizes the inadequacies of French governance to differentiate between the British system and its successes, from the French system and its failures.

One striking example of this process is *Punch's* depiction of Marianne. An allegory of reason and liberty, she emerged in the wake of the 1789 revolution as a personification of the

²² Alfred Gell, *Art and Agency* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1998), 5. Gell might even suggest that as an extension of political agents, defined by him as "the source, the origin, of causal events," *Punch* caricatures can themselves be seen as secondary agents (16).

²³ W. J. Thomas Mitchell, *What Do Pictures Want?* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2005), 20.

new republic. By the time of Louis Napoleon's election as president, her allegorical significance had come to be subsumed into her latter role, and she was most commonly known in France simply as "the Republic." Broadly speaking, there were two styles of depicting "the Republic:" a conservative version, often crowned with a laurel wreath, and a radical version, wearing a Phrygian cap. *Punch* always chose to use the latter image, a significant indication that *Punch* associated France's new republic with the radical left.

The Phrygian cap was the distinguishing feature of the original allegory of liberty. Worn by freed slaves in Roman times, the cap was representative of a populist brand of liberty, thus differentiating the radical Marianne with the cap, from the conservative version without. At first Marianne was usually an energetic young woman alluding to the dynamic popular movement she embodied, whether literally in motion as in Eugene Delacroix's painting "Liberty Leading the People," or figuratively through the brandishing of weaponry. The chaos caused by the 1848 revolution, however, provoked a conservative backlash. The army crushed the June Days uprising, and voters overwhelmingly returned Louis Napoleon as the republic's first president. The icons of the new regime changed to reflect this rightward shift in popular sentiment. As Maurice Agulhon observes, the radical "Republic" was "too reminiscent of '93 and marked too much by populist fervor" for a new regime that was attempting desperately to restore order in the streets.²⁴ Gone was the rebellious, revolutionary youth with hair and clothing in disarray, breasts often bared, often in motion, for she was far too threatening to the elites still on watch after the June uprisings. In her place was an older matron seated or standing still, hair tied, clothing immaculate, suggestive of the conservative status quo that Bonaparte's presidency had pledged

²⁴ Maurice Agulhon, *Marianne into Battle* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1979), 90.

to protect.²⁵ At the same time, Liberty lost her distinctive Phrygian cap, which was then appropriated by the extreme left, the Mountain, to embody the radicalized liberty they preached.²⁶ Considering that the June uprisings involved workers and unemployed whose explicit purpose was to establish a “democratic and social republic,” it is no surprise that the Phrygian Cap, mark of the freed slave and a symbol of freedom from elite rule, was distrusted by the republic’s leadership as a subversive symbol. Weapons were either omitted or sheathed to reduce the militancy of the image. In the place of naked steel, an olive branch was commonly used to indicate peace and reconciliation, accompanied by symbols of economic prosperity. The right-wing government was keen to reject populist idealism in favour of order, and as a result, in state-sponsored high art, the radical republic with the Phrygian cap was quickly replaced by the conservative republic with the olive branch. Indeed, Louis Napoleon seemed to be eminently aware of the incendiary nature of radical symbolism. Artworks depicting the radical republic were quietly set aside and refused display by government galleries and academies, and within days of the coup, existing statues and paintings were taken down all over France. Even the liberty trees planted after the revolution were dug up.²⁷ This shift in French iconography from radical to conservative allegory was thus motivated by fear of disorder. As Albert Boime observes, the “violent and tumultuous” Marianne inherited from 1793 and 1830 was “not present

²⁵ Dominique Papety’s *The Republic* is an example of the conservative allegory. She is standing straight and immobile, and is modestly dressed. She wears the laurel wreath instead of the Phrygian cap, and in her right hand she holds the hand of justice. There are no weapons, and in the bottom right corner of the painting is a small haystack, symbolizing economic prosperity.

²⁶ Leo Loubere, “The Emergence of the Extreme Left in Lower Languedoc, 1848-1851,” *The American Historical Review* 73, no. 4 (1968): 1028.

²⁷ See Agulhon, 122-124.

in the 1848 images. The feelings of intense good will and optimism which prevailed in the initial phase of Second Republic required a more temperate and low pitched symbol.”²⁸

Punch then, had a choice between two versions of Liberty-and-Republic for use in its large cuts. Whereas Louis Napoleon, France’s new autocrat, hoped to suppress the radical allegory (and soon the conservative one as well) and the memories it evoked of revolutionary change, it was the radical Republic that appeared in *Punch* because she better embodied British preconceptions of liberty and republicanism in France – a violent populist movement that undermined the stability and order of the established elites.²⁹ The manner in which *Punch* depicts Marianne is meant to demonstrate the notion that liberty in France, as opposed to liberty in Britain, is diseased and endangered. Most notably, for the occasion of the 1851 coup, the large cut “France is Tranquil!” depicts a bound and gagged Marianne guarded by an armed soldier (fig. 1). In response to the June Days, meanwhile, Marianne plays the role of the titular convalescent in “‘The Convalescent’ in France” (fig. 2). With sunken eyes and one hand clutched to her stomach, she is attended to by Thiers and Cavaignac, while her assailant, a Montagnard “Red Republican” with communism inscribed on the hem of his tunic, is forcibly removed by a soldier of the Garde Mobile. She is aged to portray her precarious health, and her only distinguishing feature is her Phrygian cap. Ironically, the republican moderates tending to

²⁸ Albert Boime, “The Second Republic’s Contest for the Figure of the Republic,” *The Art Bulletin* 53, no. 1 (1971): 76.

²⁹ The name “Marianne” should be properly applied only to the radical Republic, and not its conservative counterpart. Though already in use, the name did not become universal until after the fall of the Second Empire. Its growing acceptance derived from the Montagnards who refused to work for reform within the parliamentary system as Louis Napoleon became more autocratic. Montagnard secret societies adopted Marianne as their code name, and soon the radical Liberty-and-Republic also came to be known as Marianne. Louis Napoleon’s coup and the restoration of the Empire discredited France’s experiment with a conservative republic, driving moderate republicans into alliance with the radicals. Consequently, when a new republic emerged in 1871, the radical was the only one that remained of the two allegories – the conservative Republic had, after all, condoned the autocrat that overthrew her. Hence, we can safely refer to the radical Liberty-and-Republic in *Punch* large cuts as “Marianne,” as opposed to the conservative version then popular in France. See Alguhon, 125-131; Albert Boime, *Art in the Age of Civil Struggle* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2007), 614-620; Eugen Weber, “The Second Republic, Politics, and the Peasant,” *French Historical Studies* 11, no. 4 (1980): 531.

her in the cartoon were advocates of a conservative republic, and of reconciliation between the new order and the adherents of the old. They would have been uncomfortable with the Phrygian cap imagery – Cavaignac, suppressor of the June uprisings, would even have found it seditious. Nor did Marianne’s depictions improve with the restoration of order. In the late 1848 large cut “The Judgement of Paris,” a pun on Paris of Troy and the city of Paris, a young and immature Marianne decides between Cavaignac and Louis Napoleon. The cartoon illustrated voters’ naiveté through its depiction of an infantilized Marianne with childlike proportions, wide eyes, and an innocently unknowing smile, and also by alluding to the disastrous consequences that followed in Homer’s epic (fig. 3). Whereas “the Convalescent” literalizes the notion of an assault on liberty, the “Judgement of Paris” operates in the opposite fashion by transfiguring a real event into metaphor.

In the context of the dominant Burkeian narrative of a dystopian France, we can interpret these images as likenesses of the Burkeian gaze. Normally we would only be able to speculate as to how British commentators pictured French political dysfunction based on the content and tone of their writings. But the topicality of *Punch* caricatures means that they are as close as can be to visualizations of how commentators imagined the French dystopia. To Britons who subscribed to the Burkeian narrative, the French character, dismissive of political debate and lacking in political sagacity, is as much a component of the French identity as is French clothing and hairstyles, but more difficult to depict visually. The caricatures embody the “character” of French politics. The consumer of the *Punch* cartoon is *seeing* French temperament through the eyes of Lemon, or Tenniel, and those well-to-do Victorians who would have sympathized with *Punch*’s vision of France. As visual symbolism of the degeneracy of the French political system, its players, whether Marianne, or Louis Napoleon, are depicted by the cartoonists as physically

misshapen, diminutive, and otherwise comical in their appearance. Heads are variously bulbous, oddly shaped, and oversized. Bodies are weak, thin, and fragile. Louis Napoleon is not represented as well proportioned in *Punch* until the Anglo-French alliance during the Crimean War. The *Punch* Mariannes – the diseased convalescent, the naïve child, the chained victim – are all products of a Burkeian gaze that relegated France to the role of a failed state, and in doing so legitimated Britain's own constitutional system in an era fraught with revolution.

Punch's Marianne is herself divided between two identities. On the one hand, as we have seen, she is the perpetual victim – naïve and physically abused by socialists and Bonapartists. But, on the other hand, she is cast in some instances as exactly the radical revolutionary her Phrygian cap is supposed to embody, a threat to the peace and stability of France's neighbors. In the cartoon "The Great Sea Serpent of 1848," the monarchs of Europe confront Marianne, an enormous sea serpent wearing a Phrygian Cap, from a small boat.³⁰ Through the serpent, Marianne's radical brand of liberalism is made monstrous, denying her humanity and any resemblance to civil governance. In another cartoon, Marianne appears driving the stagecoach "Revolution" while her crowned passengers try desperately to stay upright; a shocked and disapproving John Bull watches from his roadside inn (fig. 4). As the personification of Britain, John Bull's depiction as the inn-keeper alludes to Britain's role as a safe haven for political exiles, including both Louis Phillipe and Louis Napoleon. The latter spent not only his youth in Britain, but also his twilight years as an exile. The British inn represents salvation from revolutionary chaos, and it is significant that John Bull the inn keeper is separate from both the continental monarchs, and Marianne driving the stage coach – British disapproval extends to both the continental monarchs, and the revolutionary subversion that threatens them.

³⁰ *Punch* XV, November 4, 1848, 195.

Marianne's radical persona outside of France was contrary to the conservative image being advocated by the French government. One cartoon with accompanying text shows that *Punch's* contributors and proprietors were not only eminently aware of this distinction, but that their rejection of the conservative Marianne in favour of the radical was a conscious choice. The cartoon depicts both faces of a mock French coin. On one face, in *Punch's* only use of the conservative image of the republic, labeled "the Republican medal," the conservative Republic sits stately upon a throne. Her accoutrements include the laurel wreath instead of Phrygian cap, bushels of wheat, harp, and fasces, suggestive respectively of economic prosperity, peace, and order.³¹ The words liberty, equality, and fraternity are inscribed along the coin's edges. The other face, labelled "the reverse," depicts a bearded, scowling, and heavily armed "Red Republican," wearing a Phrygian cap and heavily armed. "Liberty" and "religion" are trodden under foot, and he is framed by clouds of smoke. Along the edges appear the words "socialism," "communism," and "atheism" (fig. 5). The accompanying poem explicitly links the republic to the extreme left, and a rejection of stable community relationships: "That third red cap surmounts a face...A republic to the red one that owes neither kith nor kin." The Conservative figure in the coin is then revealed to be a fraud, and the Red Republican on the reverse to be the true personification of the republic:

And here in rear of all the rest, the true republic see, no figment vain of artist's brain –
 sad, stern reality; a painted harridan whose show of strength mocks the tale told by those
 palsied hands and cheeks, thro' all their plastering pale...that which she wears for
 armour, is a s'raight-waistcoat, meant to keep from harm those frantic hands, 'gainst her
 own entrails bent; the gag that rends her frothing lip is kindly used to tame the
 blasphemies she would put forth in Freedom's sacred name.³²

³¹ In Roman times, the fasces represented the jurisdiction of the state. Magistrates were accompanied by lictors bearing the fasces, the number of which depended on the rank of the magistrate. The Roman Republic was, after all, a role model for the Republican movement – and both republicans and Bonapartists drew heavily from Roman symbolism.

³² *Punch* XIV, December 2, 1848, 236.

The regime may stand for order, but behind the façade is the specter of revolution. In the context of the cartoons we have examined so far, this passage reconciles the seemingly conflicting interpretations of Marianne as weak and ineffectual, yet also a violent threat to her neighbors. The conservative vision is firmly rejected in favour of the radical, and the radical in turn is shown to be literally insane. The sufferings of the “Convalescent” examined above are revealed to be self inflicted, for Marianne and her Red Republican assailant are, as on the coin, simply two faces of the same entity. Marianne then, is dangerous not only to her neighbors, but also to herself. The text condemns French constitutionalism as violent and irrational, and combined with the coin motif, inextricably ties it radicalism. Though the sentiment the republic represents, “Freedom’s sacred name,” is admirable, the regime is shown to be inherently self-destructive.³³ This demonstrates not only an awareness of state-sponsored attempts to mobilize the image of the republic as a conservative guardian of order, but is also a conscious satire of those efforts. It rejects the narrative of order created by the French government, in favour of *Punch*’s own narrative of constitutional failure.

To Britons then, France was not only the victim of revolution, but also its progenitor, and unlike Britannia, Marianne sowed chaos and dissension in her wake. In Marianne’s double role as both victim and threat, *Punch* distinguished between the republic as a positive force, the last stand of “Freedom’s sacred name” against Bonapartist autocracy, and the republic’s negative image as a twisted caricature of orderly governance. Marianne was, after all, an allegory of liberty, and though Britons were suspicious of the violently obtained brand of liberty she represented, they were still beneficiaries of their own struggle for constitutional freedom. As a

³³ Interestingly, the article and cartoon are responses to a March 1848 competition sponsored by the French government, in which painters from all over France were asked to sketch an allegory of the republic, to be judged by artists and statesmen chaired by the Interior Ministry. The competition was prolonged indefinitely due to the June Days, and no prize was ever awarded. See Boime, which is the only detailed account of this particular event.

result, they were sympathetic to the underlying ideal of “liberty.” In a wide range of large cuts *Punch* showed itself explicitly in favour of constitutionalism abroad.³⁴ Moreover, on the domestic front the periodical had Chartist sympathies, and was still in the process of shaking off its own reputation for radical leanings. An overtly hostile depiction of liberty in France would have aligned with neither the sympathies of the periodical, nor Britons. As a result, for all her failings, Marianne, and by extension “liberty” in France was still depicted as more inherently desirable than the possible alternatives. To Britons, the sentiment of liberty was worthy, even if her radical associations were not. Hence she is almost always a youthful beauty – the violent revolutionary was the exception rather than the norm.

Punch expressed this tension between Britons’ liberal-constitutional sympathies and the Second Republic’s radical associations through tacit approval of the Republic as France’s closest approximation to British constitutionality. In the large cut marking the fall of Louis Phillipe, drawn by artist John Leech, a revolutionary soldier snuffs a lamp flame shaped like Louis Phillipe with a Phrygian cap marked “Liberty.”³⁵ Richard Altick observes that:

The extinguisher-liberty cap was an emblematic device...used by graphic satirists on both sides of the channel during the Napoleonic era to represent the repressive force of government, in England the attempt to put down sedition, in France to suppress the light of liberty. Now the chances of history linked the two images – of a deposed monarch and of freedom denied – in an inferential likening of the new revolution to the original one.³⁶

In this case, however, it is liberty extinguishing, not being extinguished, a key reversal. The cartoon plays on the irony of the suppressed liberals swapping roles with the “repressive force of

³⁴Most notably, see *Punch* XIV, December 23, 1848, 267. Mr. Punch shows the Great Powers of the continent how to cook a “constitutional plum pudding.” The essential ingredients include “order,” “religion,” “trial by jury,” “true freedom of the subjects,” and “common sense,” implying that the surrounding states, including a Frenchman in a Phrygian cap, lack these qualities.

³⁵ Leech is one of *Punch*’s most well known artists, having contributed since the first issue in 1841.

³⁶ Altick, 405-406.

government.” It also alludes to the violent, anti-establishment origins of the new republic. But with Louis Philippe prominent in the large cuts of the preceding weeks due to Wellington’s invasion scare, the cartoon is largely celebratory. The flame that represents Louis Phillipe is a small, pudgy figure in an undignified pose with his bottom stuck in the lamp opening. Juxtaposed with the tall upright soldier snuffing out his light, the former king is an unimpressive figure (fig. 6). After the December 1851 coup however, *Punch* shifted from criticizing the republic’s weaknesses, to mourning its destruction in cartoons that are at times nostalgic in their depiction of the former Republic. In one large cut, the republic is represented by the goose that lays the golden eggs, which the butcher, Louis Napoleon, cuts open.³⁷ It establishes a dichotomy between the Republic, which is inherently beneficial, and Louis Napoleon, whose greed for power has led him into an act he would come to regret, as is implied by the connection to the Aesop fable. In another cartoon, *Punch* parodies an engraving of Oliver Cromwell brooding over the body of King Charles I: “Louis Napoleon Viewing the Body of Liberty.”³⁸ As the coup marked what *Punch* saw as the beginning of military government, the cartoon thus associated the republican regime with “liberty,” and Louis Napoleon with autocracy. But viewed in the context of a cartoon in which Liberty-and-Republic is victimized, as in “the Convalescent” and “France is Tranquil,” it must be said that *Punch*’s support for the republic was not a function of the regime’s strengths. Rather, the republic was the only alternative to Orleanists, socialists, and Bonapartist autocracy. In this respect, *Punch* delivers a historical judgment: the republic was an ineffectual government that sought in vain to maintain order in the streets, but was nevertheless, for all its problems, built upon the principle of liberty. The icon of this regime, Marianne, acts as the tragic heroine in a picture book drama of the republic’s fall. In it, Marianne is too weak and

³⁷ *Punch* XXI, December 13, 1851, 254.

³⁸ *Punch* XXII, January 3, 1852, 5.

too naive, to resist her assailants, whether they be Bonapartists or Red Republicans. Implicit in Marianne's helplessness is *Punch's* own theory for the fundamental flaw of French constitutionalism: France's chronic inability to protect itself from external dangers.

This failing could not entirely be blamed on the existence of these threats. Juxtaposed with those cartoons in which Marianne is violently handled by Louis Napoleon's regime – most notably in December 1851 in four straight weeks of large cuts condemning the coup – are hints that *Punch's* contributors considered French liberals responsible for their own failure to establish a constitutional government.³⁹ The naïve and immature Marianne from the "Judgment of Paris" might serve as a precursor for Gladstone's remarks on French political sagacity (or the lack thereof). In "Scenes from the 'President's Progress,'" Louis Napoleon is measured for his imperial robes. The scene depicts Louis Napoleon as the titular scoundrel from Hogarth's "Rake's Progress." Napoleonic accessories are littered about, and a painting of Napoleon I is displayed on the mantelpiece. There are two female allegories in the scene. The first, France, looks at Louis Napoleon with apprehension. The second, in her Phrygian cap, representing liberty and republic, is looking away and openly weeping. Louis Napoleon is offering the republic his hand (fig. 7).⁴⁰ If the focus were solely Louis Napoleon's ambitions, there would be no need for Marianne's appearance; the same scene excluding the two female allegories would suffice. But Marianne's presence draws the audiences' attention toward not only the imperial trappings, but also the silent conversation between the three personalities. Louis Napoleon's beckoning gesture symbolizes the seductive power of the Napoleonic legend, and his hope that

³⁹ Figures 3, 11; *Punch*, XXI, 1851, December 13, 255; XXII, January 3, 1852, 5. "Louis Napoleon Viewing the Body of Liberty," "France is Tranquil," "Killing the Goose" are all reactions to the coup.

⁴⁰ Note the use of female allegory to represent not only liberty-and-republic, but also France itself, demonstrating just how closely *Punch* associated one with the other. The first, though not explicitly the revolutionary Marianne, is conflated with her – after all, Marianne was the female allegory commonly known to *Punch's* viewers.

French liberals would acquiesce to his fait-accomplis. The soon-to-be emperor is offering France and the liberal opposition the glory embodied by the Napoleonic trappings at his feet and, just as importantly the prospect of order after years of turmoil. Even with France's unease, and Marianne's tears, their very presence suggests submission. For all their protests, France and the liberal movement are accomplices in "the President's Progress." The scene evokes not only the 1848 presidential election, in which Louis Napoleon defeated Cavaignac with 5,587,759 votes to just 1,474,687, but also the plebiscites of December 20th to 21st, when 7,145,000 voted in support of the coup, with just 600,000 in opposition. The presidential election was depicted in "The Young Republic of France Contemplating Suicide" (fig. 8). In this large cut, Marianne is on the verge of jumping into a giant version of Napoleon's hat that is filled with water. *Punch* had no illusions as to where a Bonaparte presidency would lead – letters along the hat's brim spell out "Nap: Emp. Fran." Meanwhile, graffiti on the wall reads, "Vive Napoleon! Election President." There is no one forcing Marianne to the deed; suicide suggests a death wish on Marianne's part, a willingness to jump. When given the choice, it seemed Frenchmen were overwhelmingly in favour of the order promised by Louis Napoleon, as opposed to the perceived disorder embodied by Marianne. *Punch* had no qualms about depicting Louis Napoleon as liberty's murderer, but to *Punch*, France itself was complicit in the act.

III – Explaining French Radicalism

So who exactly was the *Punch* Marianne? She was an amalgamation of the French republic, the ideal of liberty, and, in certain cases, the French nation. She embodied what *Punch* saw as an unhealthy, radicalized French version of liberty. Beset by enemies on all sides, she is more the sickly convalescent than the specter of revolution, yet, the Phrygian cap motif, and those rare instances where *Punch* recasts Marianne as the leader of the forces of turmoil, reveals British anxieties that the disease of instability plaguing France may be contagious. At the heart of *Punch's* interpretation of the nature of the revolutionary threat are questions of class that were at the forefront of the British consciousness. *Punch's* depiction of the French masses was negative, and was centered on a stereotyped French worker, who doubled as a revolutionary agent who sought to undermine British stability. In some cartoons labeled a “Red Republican,” in other cartoons a “Socialist,” his role as a seditious character suggests that *Punch's* contributors saw the 1848 revolution in France as a dangerous working class populist movement, reflecting the suspicions of *Punch's* upper and middle class readership. Division by class was often perceived at the time as the way things ought to be – as one stanza from Cecil Humphrey's popular 1848 hymn “All Things Bright and Beautiful” reads, “The rich man in his castle, /the poor man at his gate, /God made them, high and lowly, /and order'd their estate.”⁴¹ David Cannadine, in both *The Rise and Fall of Class in Britain* and in *Ornamentalism*, not only echoes the traditional observation that the inequalities of Britain's hierarchical society were seen by many as right and proper, but further argues that class was so central to Britain's identity that the imperial enterprise itself was driven by the need to replicate this hierarchy in Britain's colonies.⁴² A

⁴¹ Cecil Humphreys, *Hymns for Little Children* (London: Joseph Masters, 1887).

⁴² David Cannadine, *Ornamentalism* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001); *The Rise and Fall of Class in Britain* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1999).

violent revolution by the French masses against the ruling class would have been regarded by *Punch*'s elite audience not only as a threat to themselves, but also an offense against the hierarchy they saw as the natural order, which they were actively attempting to perpetuate both in Britain and abroad.

The June Days uprising especially acquired the undertones of a working class attempt to overthrow the state. In the "Convalescent," the June Days are depicted as an effort by "Red Republicans" to assault Liberty-and-Republic in the guise of Marianne. Like Marianne, the figure of the Red Republican is a stock character used by *Punch* to represent a very broad political grouping, in this case French socialist agitators who were calling for the creation of a "democratic and social republic."⁴³ But regardless of his specific identification, the Red Republican personifies the French proletariat, and very broadly, "socialist" ideals in much the same way that Marianne embodies "liberty." He is usually disheveled, dressed in patched clothing, and a coal miner's cap. His eyes are set back and shaded darkly, his gaze often furtive and indirect, alluding to the underhanded and subversive nature of his activities. Equally striking is the beard; Christopher Oldstone-Moore observes that "in the early nineteenth century the beard indicated particular radical political affiliations, including socialism or Chartism, and was generally unfashionable."⁴⁴ In the context of *Punch* the full, untrimmed beard stands out when juxtaposed with all of the politicians and important personages who remain clean-shaven – or at most, possess facial hair that is carefully groomed. Taken together the beard and tattered clothing suggests an individual who is materially impoverished and politically radical.

⁴³ Behind the vague idealism, the central platform of the movement was the restoration of the state sponsored workshops that aimed to reduce unemployment in the immediate aftermath of Louis Phillipe's overthrow.

⁴⁴ Christopher Oldstone-Moore, "The Beard Movement in Victorian Britain," *Victorian Studies* 48, no. 1 (2005), 7.

Poverty also alludes to potential moral shortcoming. Rainer Emig claims that “poverty and destitution were commonly seen [by Victorians] as a moral problem, if not indeed a hereditary one.”⁴⁵ The grimy, bearded French plebian in the *Punch* cartoons is associated with criminality. In the “Convalescent” he is responsible for an assault, and in subsequent large cuts such as “John Bull’s Alien Act,” from 1848 (fig. 9), and “Very like a Whale!”⁴⁶ from 1851, he is a French agent spreading sedition in Britain. In the former, John Bull kicks him into the channel; the Frenchman’s papers (labeled “sedition,” “disaffection,” “treason,” and “communism”) flutter about. The caption reads, “I’ll ‘propaganda’ you, you meddling French scoundrel – take that.” Significantly he is dressed as a gentleman in tail coat and top hat, but with the dense beard, his identity is beyond doubt regardless of his gentleman’s disguise.⁴⁷ This idea of radicalism in disguise complements not only the Red Republican’s role as an agent provocateur, but also the inferential linking of Marianne with the Montagnards. As in the double-sided coin motif discussed previously, Marianne and the Mountain are not only closely associated, but in that particular case, Marianne is simply the conservative guise of Red Republicanism.

The “Alien Act” cartoon underscores popular anxieties over French revolutionary subversion. The Chartist Movement had seized the 1848 revolution as an opportunity to congratulate the fledgling French Republic, and even sent delegates to the French Provisional Government. In April over 150,000 demonstrators assembled on Kensington Common to submit yet another petition for constitutional reform. Following the 1789 example of radicals like

⁴⁵ Rainer Emig, “The Victorian Abject,” in *Victorian Visual Culture*, ed. Renate Brosch (Heidelberg: Heidelberg University Press, 2008), 167.

⁴⁶ *Punch* XX, April 19, 1851, 159.

⁴⁷ Even though the beard is trimmed and the attire formal, his identity as the same Red Republican that appears in “Very Like a Whale!” can be established through a series of images that compound features of the Red Republican in disguise with his more disorderly self. For instance, in the “Terrific Ascent of the Hero of a Hundred Fetes,” *Punch* XXIII, September 4, 1852, 109, he appears with his beard trimmed back, but with the same averted gaze and coal miner’s cap.

Richard Price, the Chartists used 1848 to push for their own reform demands. A popular saying, “Let not the world say, the Frenchmen are free, while Englishmen are slaves,” soon appeared in Chartist circles, while writers for the Chartist newspaper the *Northern Star* developed the habit of finishing editorials with the line “France has the Republic and England must have the Charter!”⁴⁸ Consequently, authorities directed special attention to the activities of Frenchmen in Britain, and one police report claimed that there were over 400 French members in the Chartist movement.⁴⁹ The titular “Aliens Act” from the large cut was parliament’s response to these concerns, allowing the government to expel foreigners in the interest of national security, a bill specifically targeted toward the French. The motif of a plebian “scoundrel” disguised by fine dress seems to be a pointed attack at most if not all Frenchmen; no matter their socio-economic status, they are at heart, little better than the working class trouble makers lining the Paris barricades. Like Marianne’s Phrygian Cap, the cartoon suggests that political radicalism is not just the affliction of those Frenchmen who are outspoken about their political leanings, but also of a wide swath of the French public – strip the Frenchman of his gentleman’s trappings, and a subversive radical is what remains.⁵⁰

In addition, the fact that the disguised scoundrel is really the “Red Republican” from the Convalescent accentuates *Punch*’s portrayal of the supposed radicalism of the French lower classes as a threat to the stability of France’s neighbors. Anxieties over subversion did not

⁴⁸ Henry Weisser, “Chartism in 1848,” *Albion* 13, no. 1 (1981): 20.

⁴⁹ Weisser, 17.

⁵⁰ It is clear by this point, that to *Punch*, the French threat was no longer military. Even during the height of Wellington’s 1848 invasion scare, *Punch* not only lampooned French military capabilities, but, more importantly, denied the existence of the danger. Several large cuts attacked Wellington’s fear mongering, dismissing the danger as imaginary. When the government attempted to fund military expenditures through increased taxes, public furor forced the abandonment of the scheme. The prospect of a French invasion was simply not taken seriously enough to open the public’s pocketbooks, whereas fear of French political subversion later in the same year was considered far more dangerous. *Punch*’s mid-nineteenth century conception of the French threat had transformed from the military juggernaut of the Napoleonic Wars to the plebian radical threatening Britain with revolution at home. See *Punch* XIV, 1848, 7, 17, 33-39, 49.

subside with the restoration of order on the continent. Socialist opposition toward the Great Exhibition of 1851 was also blamed on the French and in the large cut “Very like a Whale!”, a French socialist leads the British lion by a chain, while “Socialist propaganda” hangs from the walls in the background.⁵¹ The title alludes to a scene in *Hamlet* where the prince toys with a sycophantic courtier eager to agree to everything he would say. Just as in “Convalescent,” the plebian agitator is given a formal political designation – a socialist – and through this process, *Punch* constructs an identity for radical political groups closely tied to the working class.

Interestingly however, the marriage between the French working class and political radicalism in *Punch* does not extend to the Chartists, the Red Republicans’ British counterparts. It was no secret that *Punch* harboured Chartist sympathies, even if tempered by its need to appeal to its bourgeois audience, and *Punch*’s illustrated campaign against supposed working class radicals in France stands in opposition to its positive treatment of the Chartist demonstrations. The French plebian is depicted as a violent subversive, using underhanded means to achieve political change. On the other hand, in both the written articles and the cartoons, *Punch* was eager to emphasize that the Chartist demonstrations were peaceful, and moreover, where there is no discussion of the platform of the French radicals, *Punch* depicts the Chartist demands as reasonable. This latter issue is directly alluded to in the title of the large cut “Not So Very Unreasonable,” where a quintessential Chartist, dressed in workman’s clothes with sleeves rolled up, drops “The Charter” at Queen Victoria’s door. He is received by Lord Russell, who exclaims “My Mistress says she hopes you won’t call a meeting of her creditors; but if you leave your bill in the usual way, it shall be properly attended to” (fig. 10). The image of a “bill,” punning on

⁵¹ *Punch* XX, April 19, 1851, 159.

payment and a piece of legislation, suggests that Chartist demands are something that is properly owed to the masses by Britain's ruling class.

The metaphor also fits within the hierarchical world-view ascribed to British elites by scholars like David Cannadine. The Chartist in the cartoon knows his place on the Victorian social ladder. He is respectful to Lord Russell, the Queen's housekeeper, presenting the bill in a manner not threatening, but expectant. Of course, Lord Russell's expression, that the Queen "hopes you won't call a meeting of her creditors," expresses concerns that the Chartist may yet resort to forceful measures if his dues are not paid in a timely fashion. His workman's clothes are clean and proper, unlike the Frenchman's. He wears a beard, the mark of the radical, but his is neatly trimmed, identifying the Chartist movement with a more moderate, more palatable brand of radicalism. Overall, his visual presentation is respectable, compared positively to the furtive Frenchman. Indeed, where the French agitator associates the lower class with poverty and criminal acts, the Chartist is depicted on the job, earning his keep by delivering the bill. The Chartist's portrayal appeals to the notion that it is right and proper to work for one's living.

The contrast between the Chartist and the French Socialist allows us a glimpse into how *Punch's* contributors, and by extension its audience, conceived of the difference between appropriate and inappropriate political reform. The Frenchman is actively undermining the hierarchical status quo, whereas the Chartist accepts his place in that hierarchy, and works for change within those boundaries. Implicit within the juxtaposition is the assertion that the overthrow of existing social ladders is not only immoral, but the cause of France's problems. As far as *Punch* is concerned, the Red Republican is a threat to constitutionality, represented by Marianne, and is an attempt to usurp the status and possessions of the upper classes. For *Punch* the threat of revolution did not stem from Chartist demonstrations, but rather from French

agitation. The peaceful exchange between the Chartist and Lord Russell emphasizes not only the civility of a supposedly radical movement, but also the civility of the government's response, and in doing so, juxtaposes a British constitutional system that allows for agitation without recourse to violence, with a French alternative that carries with it "subversion" and "disaffection."

This association between Red Republicanism and working class agitation also suggests that the radical's fine clothing in "The Alien Act" is not only a disguise, but a comment on radicalism's unstable class valence. The gentleman was not just defined by material wealth. Although what constituted a gentleman in Victorian Britain was ambiguous, as Sheldon Rothblatt observes, what we do know is that for contemporaries the "gentleman is someone who behaves like one."⁵² A gentleman was certainly not a subversive or a provocateur. His disagreements with the political system were resolved in the open and through the constitutional machinery, not through violence. Thus it is the Red Republican's very actions that define him as ungentlemanly, regardless of his material situation. Through his shaded eyes, and sly glances, the Red Republican is marked as a political actor who does not operate through proper constitutional channels. For *Punch*, it was not that non-gentlemen tended toward radicalism, but rather that radicalism automatically made one non-gentlemen – the Red Republican is critiqued not for being working class, but for being unrespectable.⁵³ This concept is worth noting because as Mark Usunier argues, under the direction of Mark Lemon, *Punch* dropped its radical sympathies in the

⁵² Sheldon Rothblatt, "English Gentleman (Review)," *Victorian Studies* 27, vol 3 (Spring 1984): 395.

⁵³ As a result of this, the term "plebeian" is a better descriptor for the Red Republican than is "working class," and its socioeconomic connotations. In Roman tradition, plebeians were a separate class of citizen than Patricians, but many acquired great wealth and high office. Indeed, by the end of the republic, the old Patrician families with their connotations of nobility and aristocratic exclusivity had all but died out.

late 1840s and 1850s in favour of a more respectable worldview because of the desire of “the *Punch* men to be recognized as gentlemen.”⁵⁴

Punch’s depiction of France through the lens of respectability allowed it to temper the inherent radicalism still associated with the paper in 1848. Not only was *Punch* pro-Chartist, but Julie Codell argues that *Punch* caricatures were similarly democratic:

[They] rudely take art off its pedestal and put it among the flotsam of current events motivated by events motivated by social forces and power struggles in the realm of banality, chaos, momentary focus, and shifting worth. *Punch*’s puns on artists’ names (then as now, worth much in the art market economy) and paintings’ titles (often serious and melodramatic) threw cultural order and hierarchy into carnivalesque disarray.⁵⁵

Yet, one aspect that sets the Burkeian narrative of *Punch* cartoons apart from that of other political commentators is that satire must appeal to the preconceptions of its consumers, hence, as both Altick and Leary have pointed out, the importance of topicality. *Punch*’s “carnivalesque disarray” was directed at the very small subset of well-off middle and upper class Victorians who collected fine paintings and special edition Shakespeares. As Codell observes, “*Punch* parodies Victorian notions of civilization in its carnival response to critics’ and artists’ presumed authority, reduced to silly puns on their names and works.” Most working class adherents of Chartism would have had trouble understanding many of these “silly puns” in high-art references like “The Judgement of Paris.” Thus, although Codell concludes from her observations that *Punch* rejects “the hegemonic values” of Victorian cultural hierarchies, one might argue that *Punch* actually embraces these cultural hierarchies by creating a separate space for the enjoyment of its productions, an inside joke, that was reserved for elites. Through the cartoons, elite consumers were in communion with the cartoonists (aspiring gentlemen themselves) over great poets like

⁵⁴Mark Usunier, “The Aspiring Men of *Punch*” (MA Diss., University of Saskatchewan, 2010), ii.

⁵⁵Codell, 423-424.

Homer, and painters like Paul de la Roche.⁵⁶ *Punch* was in this way almost as establishmentarian as the *Times*, and its vision of France was coloured by its gentlemanly – even aristocratic – notions of what constitutes a proper government.

With issues of class and respectability at the center of *Punch's* depiction of political radicalism in France, we can also reexamine the Marianne figure vis-à-vis her British analogues. Her lack of possessions, besides the freedman's Phrygian cap and her simple dress, would place her near the bottom rung of French society. She may be a victim of the Red Republican in the "Convalescent," but this stand-in for liberty and a constitutional republic is still very much, as mentioned above, associated with a radicalism that is in turn associated with the French working class subversive. Thus, while liberty itself is seen as a worthy ideal in *Punch* cartoons, her plebian associations mean that she is still an allusion to *Punch's* Burkeian interpretation of the French 1848 revolution as an unfortunate rejection of a natural, hierarchical social order in favour of poorly-defined political ideologies. In contrast, Britannia, and less directly, John Bull, Marianne's British counterparts, embody the benefits of an unequal status quo. Both are propertied. John Bull in particular was the quintessential British yeoman, whereas Britannia is armed and armoured with the accoutrements of the Greek hoplite – a citizen who can afford his own weaponry. Britannia is an older, wiser figure, reminiscent of the Greek Goddess Athena. She bears herself with authority and *dignitas* usually associated with those in a position of power – which to Britons accustomed to the distinctions of social rank, would have alluded to an upper

⁵⁶ Peter Bailey has described this discriminatory form of expression as "Knowingness," or "what everybody knows, but some know better than others." Bailey uses the example of sexual suggestion in music halls, both on stage and through prostitutes in the audience. The audience was aware of the innuendo and the subtle solicitation, but it was never explicit. Bailey observes that knowingness "in the nature of its address its lessons are never spelled out. Like the joke with its similarly complicit engagement, [knowingness'] particular expressive bloom withers with explanation." For *Punch*, elite consumers of high-art were more "knowing," mobilizing their experiences with the high-art in question to enjoy the cartoons. Their experience of *Punch* is separated by years of classical education and familiarity with high art, from the lower-middle class or working class understanding of *Punch*. See Peter Bailey, "Conspiracies of Meaning," *Past and Present*, no. 144 (1994): 138, 154.

class matron, even the Queen.⁵⁷ In addition, her pose is stationary, almost statue-like, marking her as a source of stability and order.⁵⁸ As Marina Warner notes, “She was always associated with patriotism, especially after 1672, when the crosses of St. George and St. Andrew appeared on her shield. But her primary significance was the British constitution, her secondary, the pride that grows from the benefits [the constitution] confers.”⁵⁹

In contrast, Marianne is youthful and naïve. Whereas Britannia’s stationary pose was demonstrative of stability, Marianne’s stationary pose in many cartoons is demonstrative of weakness, whether as a diseased convalescent, bound and cowering, or simply dead. Marianne’s victimhood contrasts with Britannia’s self sufficiency, possessing both the equipment and experience necessary for self-defense. The difference between the two is suggestive of a paternalistic attitude on the part of *Punch* toward the lower classes of which Marianne is a member. Liberty in France is beset by enemies, and the republic is plagued by instability *because*, so *Punch* suggests, it is founded on a populist movement that undermines the class divisions that maintain order. The argument is reminiscent of that found in the *Edinburgh Review* article, blaming France’s chronic instability on the destruction of the aristocracy and church, and also of the two-sided coin in which Red Republicanism is tied to atheism. This class-based perspective also supplements our explanation for *Punch*’s decision to omit the conservative allegory popular under Louis Napoleon’s presidency. The Conservative Republic was, after all,

⁵⁷ As Anne Helmreich notes, Britannia “dominated the pages of *Punch* as well as the culture at large in response to the build up of the British navy and army... And even when playing her roles of vulnerable virgin and weeping Madonna, Britannia often wears her classical drapery and brush helmet, so that her militaristic associations are never entirely suppressed.” Anne Helmreich, “Domesticating Britannia,” in *Art, Nation and Gender*, ed. Tricia Cusack and Sighe Bhreathnach-Lynch (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2003), 18.

⁵⁸ It was common for *Britannia* to play the role of a maternal figure. In *Punch* XXII, 1852, 66 she is mother to the navy. In *Punch* XXVI, 1854, 85, she is “taking care of the soldiers’ children.” See *Punch* XXVI, 1854, 144, for Britannia in her traditional role as armed Athena, symbolizing the nation’s power.

⁵⁹ Marina Warner, *Monuments and Maidens* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2001), 46.

eerily similar to Britannia – both are matronly, stationary figures embodying stability, elite representatives of regimes that perpetuate class divisions rather than undermine them.

Punch's rejection of Marianne's radicalism whilst celebrating the liberal ideals she embodies infantilizes the French liberal movement. Marianne is thus comparable to *Punch's* caricatures of the Irish. As Lewis Curtis demonstrates, *Britannia* was commonly imagined as a heroic protector, and though Marianne's depiction never reaches the level of harshness of the periodical's treatment of the Irish, Marianne is still the subject of a trivializing gaze in which she is the victim in need of protection.⁶⁰ Whereas the Irish in *Punch* are often completely dehumanized into apes, Marianne is at least unrespectable.⁶¹ As we have seen, her clothing did not meet the standards of a lady. Where Britannia was always well dressed, Marianne is disheveled, her dress informal. Some of her actions are also scandalous: driving the revolutionary stagecoach in wild abandon for one. Like the Irish, Frenchmen are subjects of a British gaze that reduces them into a people unable to rule themselves. Moreover, as Charity Mewburn demonstrates, this inferential linking between the Irish and the French Other is reminiscent of a "natural" religio-racial linking between what was seen as two Catholic-Gaelic peoples.⁶² In both cases, the othering process legitimates the supremacy of British political culture, and the essentiality of constitutionalism in the British identity.

⁶⁰ See Lewis Curtis, *Apes and Angels* (Washington: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1997).

⁶¹ Moreover, she is dehumanized at least once, in "The Great Sea Serpent" discussed on page 15.

⁶² See Charity Mewburn, "Representing the Irish Body in England and France" (PhD Diss., University of British Columbia, 2005). As Anne Cisló notes of British images of the Irish, referring to observations by Benjamin Disraeli and Lord Salisbury, "a representative of the Celtic race – as portrayed in the above props – was semi-civilized and dangerous." Anne Cisló, "The Victorian Stereotype of an Irishman," *Hard Science Linguistics*, eds. Victor Yngve and Zdzisław Wasik (New York: Continuum, 2004), 260. See Varouxakis, 105-117 on British commentary on the French as a "Celtic" race.

IV – Caricaturing Napoleon III

On the eve of the December 1851 coup, the French “Other” constructed by *Punch* was thus represented by two central figures: the plebian agitator, a working class ruffian that disrupts social hierarchies, and Marianne, a victimized conflation of the republic and the liberal movement, who is complicit in her own demise. Together they comprised a French “Other” that embodied revolutionary turmoil and failed constitutionalism. Yet, for all the Francophobia in caricaturing France’s supposedly dysfunctional, and often violent, political processes, depictions of Frenchmen more generally are mixed. The “othering” of France occurred predominantly on a political level and, as we have seen, *Punch* was partial to the ideals if not the practices of French liberalism. Outside politics, *Punch*’s depiction of France was positive. For instance, in one large cut depicting the Great Exhibition, titled “The Great Derby Race for Eighteen Hundred and Fifty One,” France is represented by a determined-looking French plebian mounted on a galloping horse just slightly behind England.⁶³ In a cartoon themed on economic progress, France’s position is flattering – which is all the more striking as the large cut on French socialist subversion precedes it by just a few weeks. Meanwhile, the completion of the submarine cable between Dover and Calais was the occasion for another large cut titled “The Siamese Twins,” celebrating the linking of the two countries, and depicting a John Bull physically connected to a distant Frenchman.⁶⁴ *Punch* may have deplored France’s politics, but as Robin Eagles observes, “one may be a Francophile and abhor French absolutism.” There was no paradox in *Punch* acknowledging the close ties between Britain and France, all the while maintaining a sustained assault on France’s governmental swings between anarchy and autocracy.

⁶³ *Punch* XX, June 7, 1851, 213. Some scholars have referred to the man on the galloping horse as Louis Napoleon; however, his trademark goatee is missing, as are all Bonapartist references. The facial features lack the exaggerated forehead and small chin.

⁶⁴ *Punch* XXI, November 25, 1851, 235.

Louis Napoleon's December 1851 coup, however, altered *Punch's* perception of French political culture.⁶⁵ Whereas before the coup, Louis Napoleon had been treated as an individual separate from France itself, after 1851, he played an increasingly significant role as a stand-in for the new regime. Just as Marianne was the figurehead of the republic, and the plebian agitator that of the radical republicans, Louis Napoleon personified the authoritarian empire he created. To *Punch*, the Empire was no surprise – the periodical had been following Louis Napoleon's career even before he was elected president – and the coup seemed to confirm its perception of a France incapable of constitutional rule. Just as it did with the Republic, *Punch* ignored the prospect of the Empire as a military danger. The Napoleonic "Other" was another political stock character that reemphasized the exceptionality of the British constitutional tradition. Liberty and republic were now helplessly trapped between the anarchy promised by the Radicals, and the autocracy offered by the Bonapartists. Caricatures of the new government were devoted to the task of ridiculing what *Punch* depicted as the defining aspects of the Empire: Napoleon III's imperial pretensions, the personality cult of Napoleon I, the increasing authoritarianism of the new regime, and its military jingoism.

Punch showed little respect for the emblems of the new regime. The Napoleonic eagle proved to be an especially popular target. Since the middle ages, the animal emblem of France had traditionally been the Gallic Cock. As a French analogue to the British lion, it served as a stand in for the French nation no matter who was in power. As a combative animal in staged fights, it often appeared in representations of military or foreign affairs. Its significance lay in its

⁶⁵ For more on the impact of Napoleon III on British policy more broadly, see J. P. Parry, "The Impact of Napoleon III on British Politics 1851-1880," *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society* 11, sixth series (2001): 147-175.

antiquity, stretching back to medieval times.⁶⁶ Derived from a play on words – in Latin, Gallus meant both a man from Gaul and a rooster – *Punch* used the cock to accentuate and ridicule Louis Napoleon’s imperial presumptions. In the large cut “The International Poultry Show,” Queen Victoria visits an exhibit displaying the American, Austrian, Russian, and Prussian eagles.⁶⁷ The Gallic cock is in the foreground with a fake beak tied around its head and the label, “French eagle.” Ridiculing Napoleon III’s attempt to graft the emblem of the Empire onto a national emblem with a long heritage, the cartoon trivializes the emperor’s dynastic aspirations, which would have had particular salience with aristocratic Britons. Where many of the other eagles on display represent dynasties several centuries old, the Bonapartes are shown to be parvenus reaching above their station, hoping vainly that no one would notice the disguise. The theme of the shameless social climber is reminiscent of the plebian agitator dressed in tailcoat and top hat. Once again France’s troubles are blamed, partially, on the circumvention, if not the outright destruction, of established social hierarchies. The costumed Gallic cock demonstrates first, *Punch*’s awareness of how Bonapartist attempts to construct a regime around a single individual just three decades dead is distinct from the nation building efforts of other French governments, and second, underscores Bonapartism as yet another revolutionary movement birthed by a country depicted as the harbinger of revolutionary upheaval. By disguising the Gallic rooster with an eagle’s beak, Bonapartists despoil a long-standing tradition, not withstanding Louis Napoleon’s claims to be the guardian of order.

Punch also lampooned France’s new Napoleonic cult. Bonapartism was not so much a coherent ideology or even devotion to a particular family, as it was devotion to the memory of a

⁶⁶ Maurice Agulbon, “Politics, Images, and Symbols in Post-Revolutionary France,” in *Rites of Power*, ed. S. Wilentz (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1999), 184.

⁶⁷ *Punch* XXIV, January 29, 1853, 45.

single individual, Napoleon I.⁶⁸ Louis Napoleon's bona-fides as a presidential candidate rested on his status as the legitimate heir of his uncle. *Punch* used the trappings and idiosyncrasies of Napoleon I to parody the Second Empire as a travesty of the first; the cartoons in *Punch* are in fact visual expressions of Marx's famous epitaph, that the Second Empire is a "farce," ruled by Napoleon "the little." In almost all of the cartoons depicting Louis Napoleon, there is some token of the first emperor to remind the audience that the new regime was a poor imitation. Possession is a key issue, for Louis Napoleon is appropriating the possessions and accoutrements of another – often literally, for some of Napoleon I's most distinctive features happened to be his signature bicorne and uniform. Does the uncle's hat fit the nephew? The answer is most often no. Recall the oversized Napoleonic bicorne from "The Young Republic of France Contemplates Suicide." There is no one wearing the hat, and the letters "Nap. Emp. Fran" does not specifically specify *which* Napoleon, but the reference would undoubtedly have been to Napoleon I, the hat's owner. The size itself is fitting for a regime and a man who was larger than life, and in suicide, Marianne's sacrifice was to restore the regime associated with the hat, the Empire of Napoleon I. But the Empire is forty years gone and the emperor himself dead nearly as long, and *Punch* makes it clear that Louis Napoleon is at best a poor imitation, and at worst a fraud. Through his absence from the cartoon, *Punch* brands Napoleon's nephew as a non-entity. Playing on the same theme, another cartoon casts Louis Napoleon as Phaeton, the description reading, "the ambitious Phaeton drives his uncle's car, and sets France on fire."⁶⁹ In Greek mythology, Phaeton was allowed to drive his father's chariot and pull the sun across the sky, but was unable to control it, being struck down by Zeus to prevent him from lighting the Earth ablaze. For *Punch* then, Louis

⁶⁸ Sudhir Hazareesingh, *The Saint Napoleon* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2004); Sudhir Hazareesingh, *The Legend of Napoleon* (London: Granta Publications, 2004); Matthew Truesdell, *Spectacular Politics* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997).

⁶⁹ *Punch* XXIII, March 13, 1852, 93.

Napoleon's coup was already a tragedy for France, and the journal predicted that it would also end badly for Louis Napoleon himself. The new Napoleon is too small to fit his uncle's boots.

These themes are most poignantly expressed in the large cut "A Beggar on Horseback." The cartoon depicts Louis Napoleon dressed in his uncle's uniform, reminiscent of Jacques-Louis David's equestrian painting "Napoleon Crossing the Alps." Louis Napoleon however, is riding for the edge of a cliff, the bodies of the coup's dead lying trampled beneath him. The cartoon implies that this attempt to ape Napoleon I is doomed to end in disaster. The description accompanying the title is particularly interesting, and reads "the Brummagem Bonaparte out for a ride" (fig. 11). The term "Brummagem" refers to something of, from, or pertaining to the city of Birmingham. At the time Birmingham was one of the manufacturing centers of the industrial revolution – many products being mass produced and of low quality. Moreover, Birmingham was famous for counterfeit goods, and Charles Dicken's 1836 novel *The Pickwick Papers* used the term "Brummagem button" as slang for counterfeit coins. The word was also used to describe the typical urban worker from Birmingham. To label Louis Napoleon the "Brummagem Bonaparte," and a "beggar on horseback," was not only to call him a shoddy imitation of his uncle, but was also an attack on his comparatively humble familial background. Like Marianne, and the Red Republican dressed to the nines, the Bonapartes are yet another example of what elite Britons would have seen as a society turned on its head, ruled by those who should be the ruled. Once more *Punch* depicts the sin of French government as the destruction of proper social norms, the hierarchy from which Britain's own rulers derives their legitimacy.

To *Punch* then, Louis Napoleon's regime was simply illegitimate, for it did not rest on age-old tradition or noble blood-line, nor did it have constitutional justification. For all of *Punch's* supposed radicalism and Chartist sympathies, its conception of the right to rule was

conservative. To *Punch*, Napoleon III ruled at the point of the bayonet. The bound and gagged Marianne from “France is Tranquil,” forced to comply by the soldier, and the equestrian Louis Napoleon in “Beggar on Horseback,” his victims beneath his steed, are all caricatures that make clear that the new government relied on force, not legality. In a cartoon depicting the “interior of a French court of justice, 1852,” Louis Napoleon plays the role of judge, jury, and lawyers, and to reemphasize the point that the regime rests on violence, the court is ringed with soldiers.⁷⁰ Britons would have been familiar with the setting from the perspective of their own courts – and the binary implicit within the cartoon is that justice is served fairly in the British court system.

⁷⁰ *Punch* XXII, February 14, 1852, 62.

V - Conclusion

Punch's narrative of the failure of French liberalism is summarized in "The Seven Ages of the Republic" (fig. 12). Like "Judgement of Paris" and "Louis Napoleon Viewing the Body of Liberty," it satirizes contemporary politics through the educated gentleman's medium of high art, in this case by parodying Shakespeare's "Seven Ages of Man." It is a set of seven panels accompanied by a poem, telling the story of the republic's rise and fall as if it were a seven act play. At the time the cartoon was first issued, Louis Napoleon had not yet been elected – but *Punch* was already predicting how it would end. In the cartoon and accompanying poem, the republic is born an armed and plotting youth, and through the intervening violence – "o'er'riding Law with a soldier's insolence," – finally degenerates into the vision of liberty in the sixth panel, "Poor liberty, with constitution weak, halting 'twixt' anarchy and despotism, her youthful bonnet rouge too wide for her shrunk brains, and the big boastful voice, turning again to the old treble, pipes Louis Napoleon in." Weak government, naïve idealism, and indeed, the French liberal movement's lack of common sense, meant that the nation was forced to choose between the two extremes. For *Punch* the irony of the French situation is that autocracy and anarchy are both derived from the French liberal movement's own failings. In the choice "twixt anarchy and despotism," France chose the latter, "piping Louis Napoleon in." France's problems were self-made.

Indeed, the *Punch* issue for the third week of December 1848 carried a peculiar article that might serve as the accompanying narrative to the images we have so far discussed. Titled "French and English Constitutional Cookery," it describes the British constitution as "a mixture peculiar to this country," forming "a magnificent whole," and ridicules France's "fruitless

attempt to make up the compound upon the English pattern.”⁷¹ The article identifies violent revolution and political radicalism as a major contributor to the republic’s failure. “They have been pulling all the fat of the land to pieces,” adopting “a system of battering that consists in battering each other.” But interestingly enough, *Punch* claims that even if France had avoided the turmoil, “there is one omission that would utterly prevent the success of her constitution-culinary experiment:” Britain’s system of limited monarchy. *Punch* argues that the monarchy is a unifying influence required “for binding together all the rest.” Its complaint against French liberalism then, was not only its radicalism, or even its often violent expression, but rather a fundamental distaste for Republicanism. The French liberals could never have satisfied *Punch*’s expectations of sound government. Under the monarchies of both Louis Philippe and Louis Napoleon, the French constitution was dismissed as an autocratic farce, and the Republic, even if it had sprung into existence through peaceful means, was fundamentally at odds with *Punch*’s monarchical world view. Its perspective coloured by the gentlemanly aspirations of its contributors and a wider political discourse that assumed, and then sought to explain, the failings of French constitutionalism, *Punch* crafted its own narrative on French political culture that Burke himself might have found familiar. This narrative harnessed the turmoil of 1848 to reinforce the triumphalism of British liberalism, just as did Burke’s *Reflections* in 1789. For *Punch*, as for many British political commentators, there was just one viable system of government – their own.

⁷¹ See *Punch* XV, December 23, 1848, 266.

Figure 1: France is Tranquil – Marianne once more as victim. *Punch* XXI, December 20, 1851, 265.



Figure 2: The Convalescent – note the matching Phrygian caps on Marianne and her assailant.
Punch XV, September 30, 1848, 141.

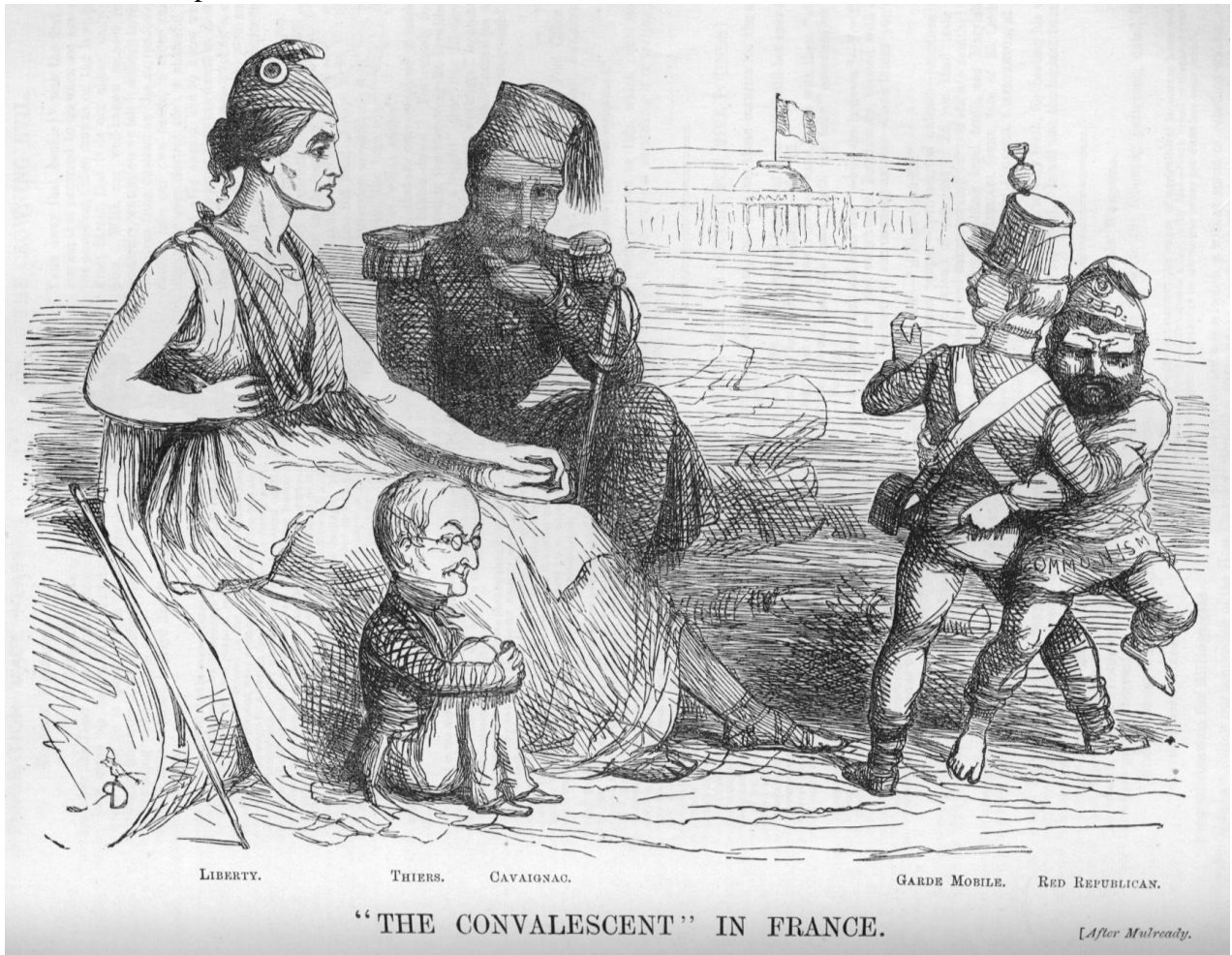


Figure 3: Judgement of Paris – note Marianne's youthful, informal wear. *Punch* XV, October 28, 1848, 184.

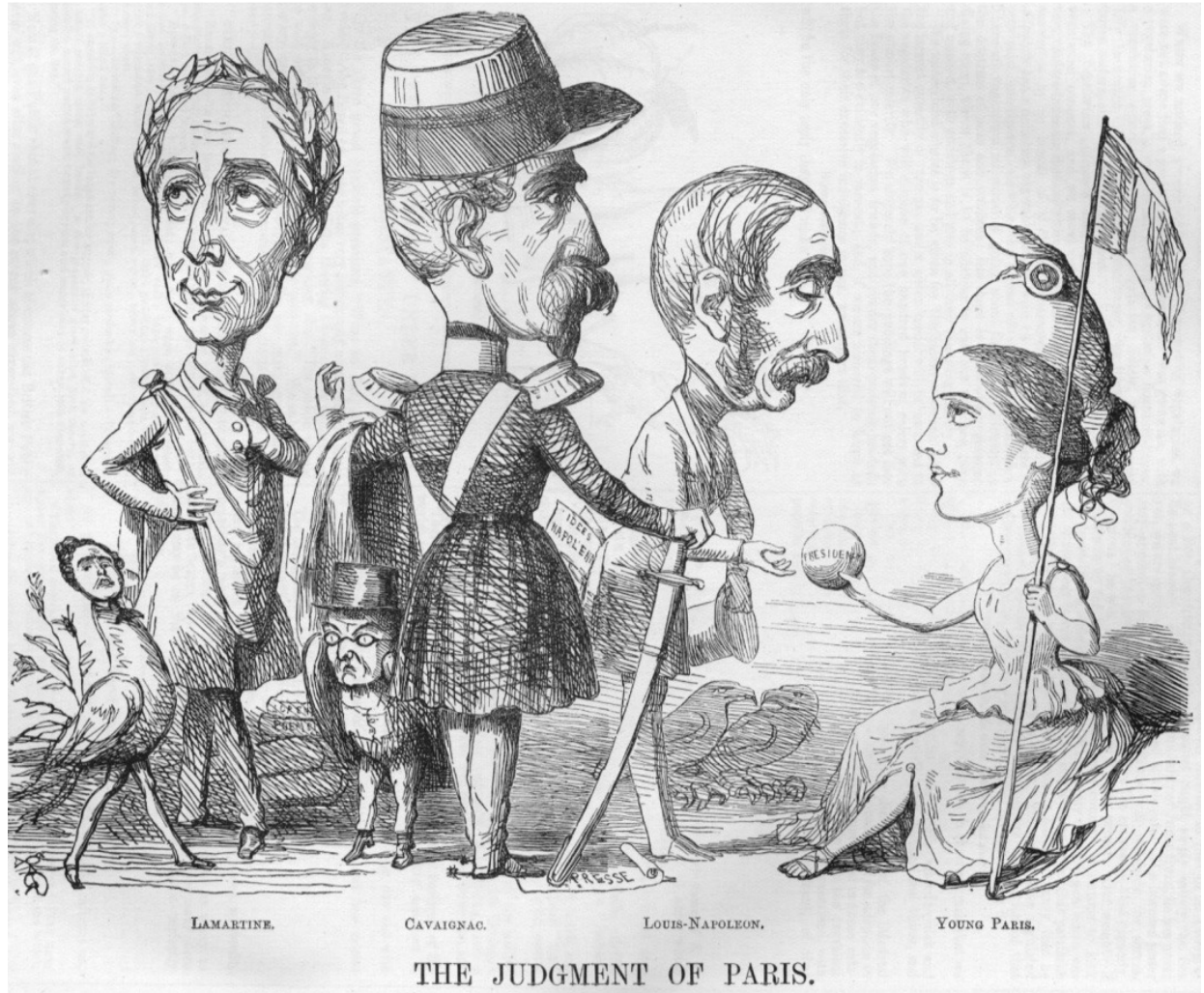


Figure 4: The New Continental Coach – Marianne, revolution incarnate. *Punch* XIV, April 8, 1848, 162.



Figure 5: Pictures of the Republic. Punch XV, December 2, 1848, 236.



Figure 6: Put Out! *Punch* XIV, February 26, 1848, 101.



Figure 8: Marianne contemplates suicide. *Punch* XV, December 2, 1848, 237.

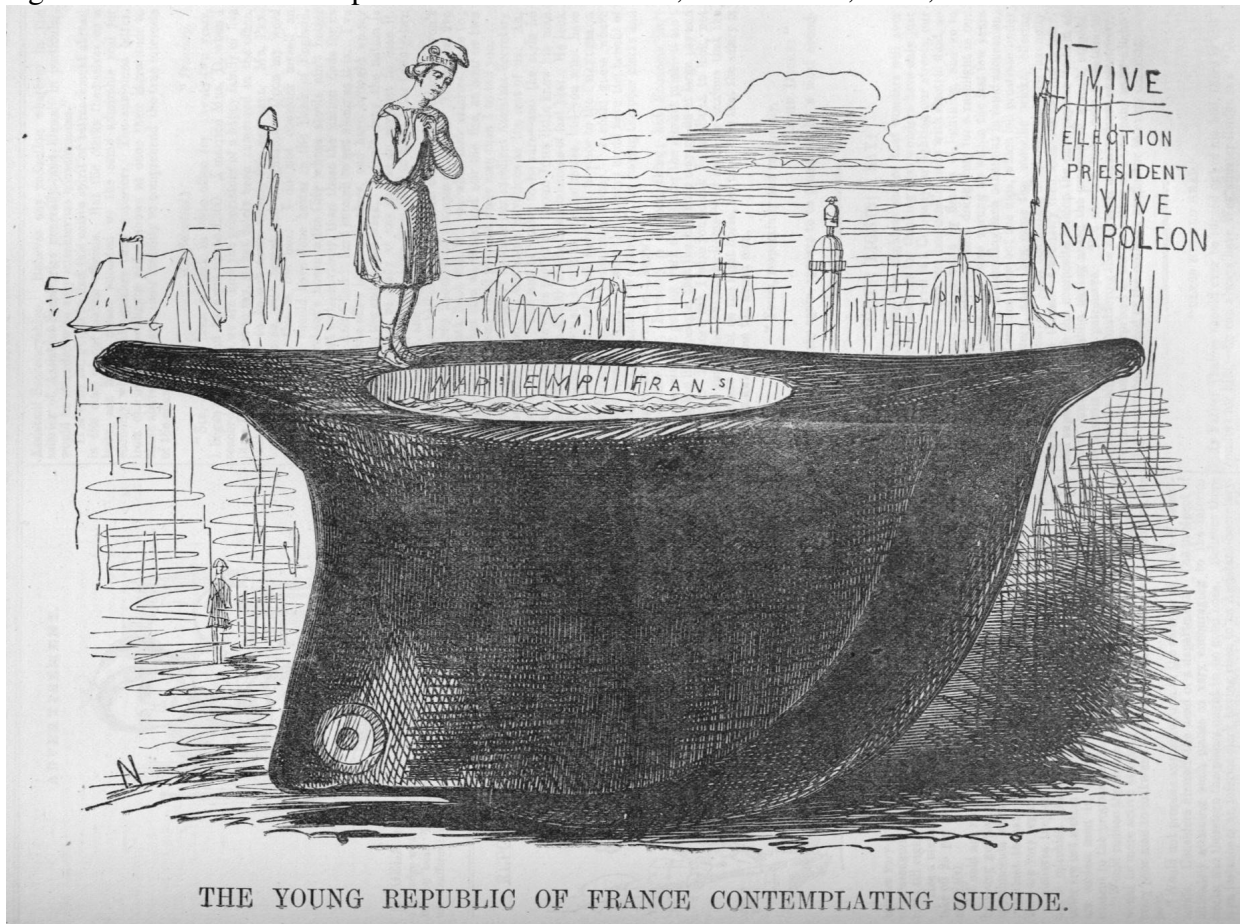


Figure 9: John Bull's Alien Act. *Punch* XIV, April 22, 1848, 180.



Figure 10: Not So Very Unreasonable. *Punch* XIV, April 1, 1848, 157.



Figure 11: The Brummagem Bonaparte. *Punch* XXII, December 27, 1851, 275.



A BEGGAR ON HORSEBACK;
Or, the Brummagem Bonaparte out for a Ride.

Figure 12: The Seven Ages of the Republic. *Punch* XV, November 25, 1848, 224.



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