British Celebrations of Foreign Revolutions, 1789-1848

Rémy Duthille

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Volume 2 :
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British Celebrations of Foreign Revolutions, 1789-1848

Présenté en vue de l'obtention de
l'Habilitation à Diriger des Recherches :
Politique radicale et sociabilité en Grande-Bretagne,
1688-1848

Par Rémy DUTHILLE
Maître de conférences à l'Université Bordeaux Montaigne

JURY

M. Fabrice Bensimon	Sorbonne Université
Mme Emmanuelle de Champs	CY Cergy Paris Université
M. Jean-François Dunyach	Sorbonne Université
Mme Suzy Halimi	Université Paris 3 Sorbonne nouvelle
Mme Katrina Navickas	University of Hertfordshire
M. Mark Philp	University of Warwick

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Abbreviations

AD	Archives départementales
AM	Archives municipales
Archives parlementaires	Archives parlementaires de la Révolution Française Digitised by the Institut d'Histoire de la Révolution française: https://www.persee.fr/collection/arcpa
BM	British Museum, followed by catalogue number.
Cobbett's Parliamentary History	Cobbett, William, ed. *Cobbett's Parliamentary History of England*... London, Published by R. Bagshaw, 1806-20. 36 vols.
ESTC	English Short Title Catalogue. <http://estc.bl.uk/>.
George, *Catalogue*	F. G. Stephens and M. D. George, *Catalogue of Political and Personal Satires in the Department of Prints and Drawings in the British Museum*. London: Trustees of the British Museum, 1870-1954. 11 vols.
Maitron	*Le Maitron. Dictionnaire biographique du mouvement ouvrier et du mouvement social*. <https://maitron.fr/>.
Moniteur	*Réimpression de l'ancien Moniteur: seule histoire authentique et inaltérée de la Révolution française, depuis la réunion des États-Généraux jusqu'au Consulat* (Paris : H. Plon, 1858-1870), 32 vols.
ODNB	*Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*. Oxford University Press. <https://www.oxforddnb.com>.
OED	*Oxford English Dictionary Online*. Oxford University Press, December 2021. <https://www.oed.com>.

Introduction

It has become customary to characterize the 1750-1850 period as the "Age of Revolution". As Eric Hobsbawm wrote: "never in European history and rarely anywhere else, has revolutionism been so endemic, so general, so likely to spread by spontaneous contagion as well as by deliberate propaganda."[1] Though no disciple of *Reflections on the Revolution in France* (1790), Hobsbawm used Edmund Burke's medical tropes of "contagion", a favourite model for those Britons who feared "French principles" might cross the Channel and actuate a popular uprising in the British Isles. The "Age of Revolution" was not a category invented retrospectively, as so many names of periods were. "It is an age of revolutions, in which everything may be looked for", Thomas Paine famously declared in *The Rights of Man* (1791–1792).

Britain underwent no political and social revolution from 1789 to 1848, but it was shaken by foreign events. The aristocracy, the middling ranks and the government repeatedly worried that Britain might fall prey to revolution. Testimonies of fear, anguish and wishes for a witch-hunt of alleged revolutionary traitors abound in both print and manuscripts of the time. Historiographical discussion has long been concerned with threats of revolution, revolutionary undercurrents and government repression. Evaluation of insurrectionary groups' chances of success went along with themes of avoidance of revolution, and stability maintained amidst turmoil. Negative questions have flourished: why did revolution *not* break out in Britain (as if it should have)?[2] British history in general, not just in this period, has also been told from the perspective of the moments when Britain missed revolution, sometimes narrowly.[3] Hobsbawm believed that the crisis of 1830-1832 was closest to a revolutionary situation in Britain, but historians have since revised the time

[1] Eric John Hobsbawm, *The Age of Revolution: Europe, 1789-1848* (London: Abacus, 1997), p. 138.
[2] George Rudé, 'Why Was There No Revolution in England in 1830 or 1848?', in *Studien Über Die Revolution*, ed. by Manfred Kossok (Berlin: Akademie-Verlag, 1969), pp. 231–44; I. R. Christie, *Stress and Stability in Late Eighteenth-Century Britain: Reflections on the British Avoidance of Revolution* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1984).
[3] Frank J. McLynn, *The Road Not Taken: How Britain Narrowly Missed a Revolution, 1381-1926* (London: Bodley Head, 2012).

frame.[4] The mutinies at Spithead and the Nore, in 1797, have been favourite candidates.[5] Historians have pondered over the problem of evaluating the revolutionary groups' chances of success in the 1790s.[6] More recently, the 1819-1820 period received intense attention, for its acute conflict in England (the massacre of Peterloo in August 1819) and, with three books alone in 2020, the "Radical War" in Scotland.[7] In a review of missed opportunities along the centuries, Frank McLynn passed over the 1790s and Peterloo in a few lines and settled for Chartism as the last-but-one major revolutionary crisis.[8] In 1848, too, the British State vigorously warded off threats from Chartists and Irish revolutionaries.[9] There has been considerable debate about the factors of discontent and sedition, from bare hunger protest to political or class consciousness, about the degree of organization and seriousness of the threats, and about ways in which to understand "language" in relation to class and politics.[10]

This book, distancing itself from such questions about "revolutionary Britannia", is rather concerned with British celebrations of foreign revolutions, from the first French revolution of 1789 to the European Springtime of the Peoples in 1848. It examines sociable events such as dinners, festivals, demonstrations, teas or political meetings, their rendition in print and image, and their discussion, essentially in the press, pamphlets, and private letters. The revolutions in question are political uprisings, usually leading to a regime change, and sometimes to social upheaval and major reforms. There is no need for a highly theoretical definition of "revolution" here, provided one keeps in mind that revolutions are game-changing events, not simple coups, riots, rebellions, or transfers of power. All the

[4] Fabrice Bensimon, 'Royaume-Uni: Captain Swing, réforme et radicalisme', in *La Liberté guidant les peuples : les révolutions de 1830 en Europe*, ed. by Sylvie Aprile, Emmanuel Fureix, and Jean-Claude Caron, Époques (Seyssel: Champ Vallon, 2013), pp. 177–84 (p. 177). Hobsbawm's original view is in *Industry and Empire* (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1969), p. 54-55.

[5] Malcolm Ian Thomis and Peter Holt, *Threats of Revolution in Britain, 1789-1848* (London: Macmillan, 1977).

[6] Roger Wells, 'English Society and Revolutionary Politics in the 1790s: The Case for Insurrection', in *The French Revolution and British Popular Politics*, ed. by Mark Philp (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991), pp. 188–226 (p. 188).

[7] Malcolm Chase, *1820: Disorder and Stability in the United Kingdom* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2013); Robert Poole, *Peterloo: The English Uprising* (Oxford; New York: Oxford University Press, 2019); Murray Armstrong, *The Fight for Scottish Democracy: Rebellion and Reform in 1820* (London: Pluto Press, 2020); Maggie Craig, *One Week in April: The Scottish Radical Rising of 1820* (Birlinn, 2020); Kenny MacAskill, *Radical Scotland: Uncovering Scotland's Radical History : From the French Revolutionary Era to the 1820 Rising* (London: Biteback, 2020).

[8] McLynn.

[9] John Saville, *1848: The British State and the Chartist Movement* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987).

[10] Edward Royle, *Revolutionary Britannia? Reflections on the Threat of Revolution in Britain 1789-1848* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2000), pp. 1–12 especially.

"revolutions" celebrated in this book were identified at the time as revolutions. It matters that British contemporaries labelled them that way, irrespective of twenty-first-century definitions. This study does not presuppose any theoretical view about the absence of revolution in Britain in the period studied, or at any time. It does not seek to explain Britain's alleged stability, but rather probes what British contemporaries had to say about their own, and other, countries when confronted with revolution abroad.

A central thesis of this book is that British sociability was inflected by celebrations of foreign revolutions, in France predominantly, but also in North America, Spain and other Mediterranean countries, Latin America, and Central-Eastern European countries. Dinners and other events carried ideological messages through speeches, toasts, and songs. British celebrations of revolution have not been much studied by historians. Understandably, French *fêtes révolutionnaires* and American festivals in the age of the Revolution and the Young Republic have attracted much attention because they were perceived as sites of nation-making and cradles of republicanism.[11] British celebrations of foreign revolution are also of interest as they reveal facets of early nineteenth-century political culture and sociability. By means of several case studies, this book will put to the test Élie Halévy's "law of increasing insularity", according to which, in the nineteenth century, the British reacted to foreign revolutions with increasing hostility and indifference.[12] The contention here is that there was no indifference, but a continuous engagement with foreign events and revolutions – certainly not involving all Britons, but at least various constituencies. A revolutionary sociability started in 1789 and continued until the aftermath of the 1848 revolutions, until the mid-1850s. This is not to say that structures never changed over six decades, or were the same in London and the provinces, in England, Scotland and Wales. But across the broad spectrum of festivals, a Bastille Day dinner in 1791 and a Chartist Polish meeting in 1838 bear some resemblance and raise some common problems of politics and symbolism.

[11] Among a voluminous bibliography: Mona Ozouf, *Festivals and the French Revolution*, trans. by Alan Sheridan (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1991); *Les Fêtes de la Révolution: colloque de Clermont-Ferrand (juin 1974)*, ed. by Jean Ehrard and Paul Viallaneix (Paris: Société des études robespierristes, 1977); Simon P. Newman, *Parades and the Politics of the Street: Festive Culture in the Early American Republic* (Philadelphia, PA: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1997); David Waldstreicher, *In the Midst of Perpetual Fetes: The Making of American Nationalism, 1776-1820* (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 1997).

[12] Élie Halévy, 'English Public Opinion and the French Revolutions of the Nineteenth Century', in *Studies in Anglo-French History during the Eighteenth, Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries*, ed. by Alfred Coville and Harold William Vazeille Temperley (Cambridge, 1935), pp. 51–60 (p. 60).

Let there be no misunderstanding about the phrase "revolutionary sociability", a shorthand phrase that will be used only in this introduction. It does not necessarily mean that participants were revolutionaries, who wanted revolution in Britain; nor did it imply that the form of sociability was revolutionary itself. Those are questions to raise, not assumptions to start from. "Revolutionary sociability", defined as the forms of sociability of those who celebrated foreign revolution with sociable events, may take many forms and be motivated by many reasons, not all of them "revolutionary", some of them perhaps (why not?) conservative.

This book, then, is concerned with sociability, not with all conceivable forms of celebration in print, press, literature, the arts, and politics of the times; neither does it examine all forms of revolution, social, intellectual, aesthetic, and so on. Literary sources are useful when they emanate from the revolutionary sociability, when they comment on it or take part in debates raised by it. For instance, *The Prelude* is of interest for our purposes for its evocation of the Festival of the Federation, and for comments on French symbolism; but literary questions as to Wordsworth's celebration, recantation, or ambivalence on revolution, and at what textual level, are largely beyond the scope of this book, which is a history of a form of sociability, not a comprehensive cultural history of the Age of Revolution. Literature matters because revolutionary sociability encouraged the writing and performance of literary texts, like songs and poems. It is also important because many historical studies of the Romantic Age have been inflected by literary methodology,[13] and because literary, generic and semiotic categories are useful to discuss the symbolism and practices of revolutionary sociability.

The concept of sociability, originating with Jürgen Habermas's account of the ideal Enlightenment coffeehouse, has encouraged analysis of a number of unlikely cultural sites, and their associated literature and print cultures, such as prisons and taverns,[14] now theorized as "plebeian", or "counter-hegemonic" public spheres.[15] One of the interests of a

[13] See e.g. John Barrell, *Imagining the King's Death: Figurative Treason, Fantasies of Regicide, 1793-1796* (Oxford; New York: Oxford University Press, 2000); Jon Mee, *Conversable Worlds: Literature, Contention, and Community 1762 to 1830* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011); Harriet Guest, *Unbounded Attachment: Sentiment and Politics in the Age of the French Revolution* (Oxford; New York: Oxford University Press, 2013).

[14] Christina Parolin, *Radical Spaces: Venues of Popular Politics in London, 1790-c. 1845* (Canberra: ANU E Press, 2010); Michael T. Davis, Iain McCalman, and Christina Parolin, *Newgate in Revolution: An Anthology of Radical Prison Literature in the Age of Revolution* (London; New York: Continuum, 2005).

[15] Geoff Eley, 'Nations, Publics, and Political Culture: Placing Habermas in the Nineteenth Century', in *Habermas and the Public Sphere*, ed. by Craig J. Calhoun (Cambridge, MA; London: MIT Press, 1993), pp. 289–339.

study ranging from 1789 to 1848 is that it spans different historiographical fields of the study of historiography. Besides a few accounts of the whole period,[16] many studies concentrate on shorter period. Studies on 1790s Britain[17] have shown the deleterious impact of state surveillance, the toughening of treason law and daily loyalist harassment on radical cultural practices and sociability.[18] Modes of conversation were hotly contested, a model of private, restricted conversation vying with mass meetings held by large radical societies like the London Corresponding Society.[19] This dynamic field must yet connect to studies of Scotland and northern England paying attention to spatial effects in the early nineteenth century,[20] and to studies of loyalism and Chartism looking at the construction of identities through commemorations.[21] James Epstein has shown how ritual dining and toasting enabled the Chartists to lay claim to a revolutionary tradition with English, but also French, forebears.[22] Matthew Roberts recently published the most developed study of Chartist dinners and their political symbolism; his remarks on the Chartists' "eclecticism that transcended national boundaries and ranged freely across the history of civilization" suggest the possibility of following up Epstein's hint of a possible transnational history.[23] The construction of a British national model of sociability in the eighteenth century remains

[16] Clara Tuite and Gillian Russell, *Romantic Sociability: Social Networks and Literary Culture in Britain, 1770-1840* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002); Ian Newman, *The Romantic Tavern: Literature and Conviviality in the Age of Revolution*, Cambridge Studies in Romanticism, 125 (Cambridge; New York: Cambridge University Press, 2019).

[17] *The Cambridge Companion to British Literature of the French Revolution in the 1790s*, ed. by Pamela Clemit (Cambridge; New York: Cambridge University Press, 2011); Jon Mee, *Print, Publicity, and Popular Radicalism in the 1790s: The Laurel of Liberty*, Cambridge Studies in Romanticism, 112 (Cambridge; New York: Cambridge University Press, 2016).

[18] Barrell, *Imagining the King's Death*.

[19] Mee, *Conversable Worlds*; Mee, *Print, Publicity, and Popular Radicalism in the 1790s*.

[20] Gordon Pentland, *Radicalism, Reform, and National Identity in Scotland, 1820-1833*, Studies in History New Series (Woodbridge, UK ; Rochester, NY: Royal Historical Society/Boydell Press, 2008); Katrina Navickas, *Protest and the Politics of Space and Place, 1789-1848* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2016).

[21] *Contested Sites: Commemoration, Memorial and Popular Politics in Nineteenth-Century Britain*, ed. by Paul A. Pickering and Alex Tyrrell, Studies in Labour History (Aldershot; Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2004); Malcolm Chase, *Chartism: A New History* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2007); Katrina Navickas, *Loyalism and Radicalism in Lancashire, 1798-1815*, Oxford Historical Monographs (Oxford; New York: Oxford University Press, 2009).

[22] James Epstein, 'Radical Dining, Toasting and Symbolic Expression in Early Nineteenth-Century Lancashire: Rituals of Solidarity', *Albion: A Quarterly Journal Concerned with British Studies*, 20.2 (1988), 271–91.

[23] Matthew Roberts, *Chartism, Commemoration and the Cult of the Radical Hero* (Abingdon, UK; New York, NY: Routledge, 2019), p. 6.

legitimate[24] and is compatible with the project of examining interactions with foreign countries.

This book builds on this rich scholarship and tries to analyse sociability across six decades, trying to find continuities and differences. This means, for instance, testing the validity of conclusions on the 1790s beyond this decade, or conversely, comparing the much-studied Chartist dinners with earlier dining culture to assess continuities and original traits. Revolutionary sociability, of course, is only a part of the wider sociability of the period. It is of interest to situate those particular celebrations of revolution within, or outside, established forms of sociability, and to examine whether they were innovative and transformed habitual patterns in turn. One question is whether celebration of revolution was revolutionary or traditional in its form, breaking away from or following established customs.

Because it considers celebrations of foreign revolution, this book is necessarily concerned with transnational processes. When at all possible, it discusses British political perceptions and actions both in the local context of dinners and in transnational context. Nineteenth-century revolutions have recently been studied as transnational "waves" by historians wishing to decompartmentalize national narratives.[25] Transnational patterns of information and publication also emerged in this period.[26] Not just revolutionaries, but conservative loyalists had their transnational networks.[27] This book offers a contribution, showing the reception of foreign revolutions and transnational networks linking societies, emigrants, and journalists. The celebrations often perform a dialectic of the national and the international, even the universal. This book is not primarily concerned with spatial analysis, but takes local specificities into account. It considers England, Wales, and Scotland, to the exclusion of Ireland. Irish celebrations of foreign revolution would easily fill another book. The bulk of evidence and the historiography, and the strong Irish

[24] *British Sociability in the Long Eighteenth Century: Challenging the Anglo-French Connection*, ed. by Valérie Capdeville and Alain Kerhervé, Studies in the Eighteenth Century (Woodbridge (UK); Rochester, NY: Boydell and Brewer, 2019).
[25] *La Liberté guidant les peuples: les révolutions de 1830 en Europe*, ed. by Sylvie Aprile, Jean-Claude Caron, and Emmanuel Fureix (Seyssel: Champ Vallon, 2013).
[26] *Mondialisation de l'information: la révolution médiatique du XIXe siècle*, ed. by Delphine Diaz and Renaud Meltz (Rennes: Presses universitaires de Rennes, 2019).
[27] *Cosmopolitan Conservatisms: Countering Revolution in Transnational Networks, Ideas and Movements (c. 1700-1930)*, ed. by Matthijs Lok, Friedemann Pestel, and Juliette Reboul, Studies in the History of Political Thought, 16 (Boston; Leiden: Brill, 2021); Andrew R. Holmes, 'Presbyterians, Loyalty and Orangeism in Nineteenth-Century Ulster', in *Loyalism and the Formation of the British World, 1775-1914*, ed. by Allan Blackstock and Frank O'Gorman (Woodbridge: The Boydell Press, 2014), pp. 125–44.

specificities, would have unbalanced this account. Contrary to Britain, Ireland was the site of several actual or attempted revolutions. The 1798 Rising and the 1848 Young Ireland rebellion each contributed to a rich and complex tradition which, with its ideologies, martyrs, myths and memories, has irrigated republican nationalism and is still controversial today.[28] This study refers to Irish proceedings when they interfere with Britain, for instance when Britons saluted Ireland, when newspapers on one island published news of celebrations held on the other, or when parallel or contrasted developments took place.

A study of the British reception of European and American revolutions contributes to internationalizing radicalism and Chartism, whose story has usually been told in a purely British framework. Britain remains difficult to link with continental countries, because it was spared by revolution (though not by the fear, and repercussions of it) at the time, but probably even more because of historiographical choices constructing radicalism and Chartism as insular, British movements. In the last decade, historians have tried to connect European countries around clusters of revolutions; a collection of essays by French historians on "the revolutions of 1830" – not just the Parisian Three Glorious Days of June, but a pan-European wave of protest – is exemplary in this respect.[29] In the wake of historians like Malcolm Chase, who questioned "insular interpretations of Chartism", Fabrice Bensimon proposed a "study of the global dimensions of Chartism",[30] a task which still lies ahead of us. Examining celebrations of foreign revolutions will throw light on international aspects of sociability. Such work could be cross-fertilized with intellectual-history approaches linking up sociable events with speeches, press and pamphlets.

*

The first public celebration of the French Revolution offers a good starting point to raise many of the issues associated with revolutionary sociability.[31] On 4 November 1789, on the anniversary of the Glorious Revolution of 1688, the London Revolution Society met

[28] Given the impossibility of an exhaustive bibliography, a reference to a review essay of the large literature occasioned by the 1798 bicentenary and two other works give some idea of the field: Ian McBride, 'Review Article: Reclaiming the Rebellion: 1798 in 1998', *Irish Historical Studies*, 31.123 (1999), 395–410; Catriona Kennedy, 'Republican Relicts: Gender, Memory, and Mourning in Irish Nationalist Culture, ca. 1798–1848', *Journal of British Studies*, 59.3 (2020), 608–37 (pp. 1798–1848); Christine Kinealy, *Repeal and Revolution: 1848 in Ireland* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2009).
[29] Aprile, Caron, and Fureix.
[30] Fabrice Bensimon, 'Chartism in the British World and Beyond', in *The MacKenzie Moment and Imperial History: Essays in Honour of John M. MacKenzie*, ed. by Stephanie Barczewski and Martin Farr, Britain and the World (Cham: Springer International Publishing, 2019), pp. 311–35 (pp. 311, 313).
[31] For a fuller analysis of the events, see Chapter 2.

at the Meeting Place of the Old Jewry, where they heard an address by the Presbyterian clergyman Richard Price. This address and the formal dinner that followed in a nearby tavern were the first public manifestations of sympathy for the French Revolution.[32] The Revolution Society, a club mainly composed of dissenting divines and merchants, had met to celebrate the Glorious Revolution since the 1760s at least.[33] It had adopted pro-American positions during the Independence War, and was revived by the centenary in 1788, and by the events in France. Price's rousing discourse in 1789 praised the French Revolution as a continuation and achievement of the Glorious Revolution. While the French proclaimed the absolute break with the feudal past, Price, living in a post-revolutionary society, saw 1789 as an apocalyptic acme in the line of the English revolution of 1688 and the American one of 1776. He defined the legacy of 1688 as civil and religious liberty, and warned the English to remain vigilant and mend their constitution. The famous peroration of the sermon exhorted princes to reform to avoid a revolution that would destroy them.

At the ensuing dinner, the Revolution Society drank toasts to the French Revolution and resolved, on a motion by Price, to send a congratulatory address to the French National Assembly.[34] Lord Stanhope, one of the very few Whig magnates sympathetic to the Revolution and to Rational Dissent, sent it to the President of the Assembly. Ultimately, the society entered into a correspondence with some fifty-two French Jacobin clubs, which lasted until at least February 1792.[35] This correspondence, which has been described as futile and based on misunderstandings,[36] nevertheless reveals the dilemmas of English Whigs trying to remain within constitutional bounds, while their French correspondents turned to republicanism.[37]

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[32] Richard Price, 'A Discourse on the Love of Our Country', in *Political Writings*, ed. by David Oswald Thomas, Cambridge Texts in the History of Political Thought (Cambridge; New York: Cambridge University Press, 1991), pp. 176–96.

[33] Revolution Society minute book, 16 June 1788 – 4 November 1791, British Library, Add. MS 64814; Rémy Duthille, 'London Revolution Society (act. 1788–1793)', *ODNB*.

[34] *An Abstract of the History and Proceedings of the Revolution Society: In London. To Which Is Annexed a Copy of the Bill of Rights* (London: Printed by order of the committee, 1789).

[35] The society published the correspondence to silence critics: *The Correspondence of the Revolution Society in London, with the National Assembly, and with Various Societies of the Friends of Liberty in France and England* (London, 1792). See figure 2 p. 375.

[36] George Stead Veitch, *The Genesis of Parliamentary Reform* (London: Constable, 1964), chap. 6; Philippe Roger, 'Trading Words, Waging War: The Mystified Relationship between British Radicals and French "Révolutionnaires"', *Huntington Library Quarterly*, 63.3 (2000), 299–317.on

[37] Rémy Duthille, 'Célébrer 1688 Après 1789: Le Discours de La Revolution Society et Sa Réception En France et En Angleterre', in *Lumières et Histoire. Enlightenment and History*, ed. by Alicia C. Montoya, Peggy Davis, and Tristan Coignard (Paris: Champion, 2010), pp. 245–62.

Price's sermon, soon published as *A Discourse on the Love of Our Country*, is usually seen as the opening salvo of the "Revolution debate" in Britain,[38] because it elicited Edmund Burke's irate response in *Reflections on the Revolution in France* (November 1790). But the 4 November 1789 was also the first celebration of foreign revolution and it displayed some patterns and raised issues relevant to later revolutions and other groups. Mild reform versus violent revolution was a structuring antithesis. The moot point was whether Britain needed another revolution, a peaceful one, or whether, having carried out its revolution long ago, the country did not need another one. The ambivalence was so strong in this case, that the Revolution Society dissolved at some point in 1794, in the context of war against France and loyalist pressure.

The first revolutionary celebration displayed traits typical of later events: the comparison of Britain's seventeenth-century revolutions with continental uprisings, and the reform/revolution nexus were central to many celebrations of revolution, which begged the question of imitating foreign violence or revolutionizing through peaceful, constitutional reform. But perhaps the first issue was *what* was being celebrated exactly. Price, in his peroration, exulted in seeing the French people's freedom, "*[t]heir King led in triumph, and an arbitrary monarch surrendering himself to his subjects"*. Burke read this as a reminder of Charles I's execution, and a reference to the October Days, a humiliating occasion when the Parisian mob brought the royal family to the capital under escort.[39] A private letter to Price by his nephew John Cadogan Morgan, then travelling in Paris, suggests that Price was in fact alluding to the king's triumphal entrance into Paris on 17 July.[40] Burke, naturally, could not know this. Whatever event Price may have been celebrating (supposing he *did* allude to a particular event), the episode raises the question of the precise object of commemoration. A revolution could stand for many ideals, and undergo many contradictory interpretations. One revealing choice is that of dates to commemorate, because any date encodes a set of ideological assumptions. The book will therefore explore what revolutions meant for those who celebrated it, and those who

[38] David Oswald Thomas, *The Honest Mind: The Thought and Work of Richard Price* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1977), chap. 14; H. T. Dickinson, 'The Political Context', in *The Cambridge Companion to British Literature of the French Revolution in the 1790s*, ed. by Pamela Clemit (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011), pp. 1–15.

[39] Edmund Burke, *The Writings and Speeches of Edmund Burke*, ed. by Leslie George Mitchell, William Burton Todd, and Paul Langford (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1989), VIII, p. 116.

[40] George Cadogan Morgan, *Travels in Revolutionary France; and A Journey across America*, ed. by Mary-Ann Constantine and Paul Frame, Wales and the French Revolution (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 2012), p. 19.

criticized those celebrations, as well as the conflicts between rival celebrations, and the evolution of the dates celebrated.

Another recurring issue, raised first by Burke, was that of the legitimacy and representativeness of celebrants. Again, it was Burke who made the most cogent point. The Revolution Society was a simple club, he noted, composed of Dissenters of no great social standing. Individuals should not bypass the government and presume to correspond with a foreign power: "I should think it, at least improper and irregular, for me to open a formal public correspondence with the actual government of a foreign nation, without the express authority of the government under which I live".[41] Had Burke known that the Revolution Society had invited the Duc d'Orléans, who declined,[42] he would have been confirmed in his worst suspicions. The Revolution Society was engaging in para-diplomacy, bypassing Cabinet and Parliament, addressing a foreign government as if they represented the British people. In Burke's view, they did not. The Revolution Society, for its part, believed in the French idea that the National Assembly was a Congress of mankind; they felt they did not correspond with a foreign parliament but with brethren.[43]

Burke's objections, then, raised two cognate problems: the issue of the representativeness of revolutionary celebrants (and their claim to represent the British nation), and the justness of the celebrants' claim to address a foreign nation. The question of "the people", as opposed to monarch, court, and/or Parliament, recurred in the course of later revolutions. So did para-diplomatic practices such as epistolary exchanges, delegations, and the adoption of foreign revolutionary language, symbolism and ideology.

Burke repudiated democracy and saw the aristocracy and gentry as natural guardians of the unenfranchised. His objection about the social identity of celebrants was that they were not respectable enough. As time wore on, the issue of respectability, a perennial problem for radicals, intersected with that of democracy and inclusiveness. Meetings must be respectable *and* gather the common people. Attention must be paid, then, to socio-economic and gender barriers to the revolutionary sociability, especially when organizers claimed democratic values. To what extent did the real composition of a meeting reflect a democratic ideal, or the appeal to "universal" values? Dinners were homosocial

[41] Burke, *Writings and Speeches*, VIII, pp. 56–57.
[42] Minutes of the Revolution Society, BL Add. MSS 64814, fo. 24.
[43] On the concept of *Congrès du monde entier* : Sophie Wahnich, *L'Impossible Citoyen: L'étranger Dans Le Discours de La Révolution Française*, Bibliothèque Albin Michel. Histoire (Paris: Albin Michel, 1997), pp. 163–200.

events, but a mixed-sex sociability also developed, in which the precise place of women is of prime interest.

The issue of representativeness involves constitutional, moral, and social issues. Price's optimistic genealogy of revolutions was couched in the millenarian idiom of Dissent and reflected the hopes of particular religious communities outside the Anglican mainstream. But this does not mean that only outcast groups, the excluded, the marginalized, celebrated revolutions because they wanted to imitate them, while the conservative Anglican majority stood by aghast. This book explores the reasons why individuals and groups chose to organize formal dinners, processions or other sociable and symbolic forms of celebration. Predictably, "radicals" of all hues celebrated revolutions – but many plebeians also vocally opposed them, burning Tom Paine effigies and engaging in many other symbolic actions. To return to Burke and the 4 November celebrants, Price and the London Revolution Society were not the lowest of the low. In 1789, the Dissenters were agitating for their enfranchisement, considering themselves as more virtuous and enlightened than the corrupt aristocracy and the debased poor.[44] The position of Dissenters in late eighteenth-century England is open to debate. According to J.C.D. Clark, they were a tiny minority embattled in futile rear-guard battles against a strong Anglican hegemonic nobility;[45] but another view sees them as well-off middling people defining a gentlemanliness of their own, as an elite of sorts that wielded some political influence.[46] Ian Newman has shown that the Bishopsgate Tavern, the venue of the 4 November dinner, had associations with mercantile interests and crystallized anguish on the part of Burke, who feared constitutional subversion by the rich rather than a revolution of the poor.[47] In other words, the English toasters of revolution were not the lowest of the low; they chafed in an ambiguous position of influential powerlessness.

The 4 November dinner suggested several differently motivated sorts of celebrants: the benevolent reformist rejoicing in foreign liberation and looking for inspiration (Price's self-definition), the political, social, and/or religious, radical who took revolution as example and guidance (Burke's accusation), and, possibly, the merchant eyeing

[44] See e.g. Joseph Priestley, *Memoirs* (London: Allenson, 1904), p. 54.
[45] J. C. D. Clark, *English Society, 1660-1832: Religion, Ideology and Politics during the Ancien Regime* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000).
[46] John Seed, 'Gentlemen Dissenters: The Social and Political Meanings of Rational Dissent in the 1770s and 1780s', *The Historical Journal*, 28 (1985), pp. 299–325; John Seed, ''A set of men powerful enough in many things' : Rational Dissent and political opposition in England, 1770-1790'.
[47] Ian Newman, *The Romantic Tavern*, pp. 37–67.

opportunities and computing socio-political rewards gained by supporting foreign revolution. The first public celebration of the French Revolution in Britain, then, should be a warning against the facile assumption that celebrants of revolution must be committed to revolution in Britain, or recruited among the marginal, the excluded, or the poor. Neither the social, nor the ideological, composition of the group of celebrants can be taken for granted. It is also important to examine to what extent the groups committed to reform were ready to apply their reforms in their own sociable events, and whether they opened their doors to the poor, or women.

Burke's indignant reaction to Price's jubilant peroration also points towards the history of emotions. Though this book does not position itself within this particular historical field, it does offer a wealth of examples of emotions, positive and negative, related to perceptions of the past, present, and future. This book does not distinguish very precisely between celebration ("an act of celebrating a significant or happy day or event", according to the *Oxford English Dictionary*) and commemoration ("a calling to remembrance, or preserving in memory, by some solemn observance, public celebration, etc."). One reason for not distinguishing the two strictly is that in many events, contrasted emotions alternated. A jubilant celebration might comprise a toast to the defunct drunk in silence, or other solemn moments of remembrance, for instance a narrative of past ordeals. Press articles could indifferently write of "celebration" or "commemoration". Rather than label events, I will pay attention to the words used in narratives of celebratory events. "Celebration" is in general a more accurate word, because of the usually dominant emotion of joy in remembering positive revolutionary events. It is also better because the primary sense of the word was religious, referring to the Eucharist. Price's revolution sermon announced the blissful end of times, in a millenarian strain that was both religious and progressist; it reminded Burke of the "enthusiastic" Puritans of the 1640s. This book examines very few religious observances, but there was an underlying religiosity in many revolutionary celebrations, though often displaced to forms of secular, progressist, eschatology.

One last set of questions raised by Price and the Revolution Society is the perceptions of foreigners, and the dynamic of mutual perceptions, which represents a central topic of interest in the society's correspondence. Revolutionary sociability offers a rich repository of images of foreigners, ranging from traditional clichés to new images forged on pre-existing models, embodiments of nations in flags or heroes, and

representations in poetry or song. The dialectic of involvement and aloofness, or sympathy and rejection, is central to many perceptions and attitudes: again, Halévy's "law of increasing insularity" must be questioned. Caitlin Fitz recently wrote that, in the nineteenth century, the United States celebrated revolutions in the newly independent Latin American States, because they thought they saw their own reflection in those budding republics. "In celebrating foreign revolutions, U.S. observers were celebrating themselves, and like Narcissus, they were so riveted they could barely look away. They were blithely unaware that the object of their affection was an image, an illusion".[48] This Narcissus effect could not function in the same way in Britain, a country which was emphatically not born of popular revolution and republican transformation, and which, since Burke's *Reflections*, had prided itself on being unrevolutionary. Yet, admiration of revolution abroad always held out to the British a mirror of their own unrevolutionary present, and sometimes, of their seventeenth-century revolutionary past.

France holds a central, though not hegemonic, position in this book. This is easily explained, first, by France's status as "the headquarters of all revolutions" in Eric Hobsbawm's phrase.[49] The French revolutionary tradition, since 1789, had defined the lexicon of modern politics, everywhere in Europe (though of course words like "Jacobin" would be modified in translation and create confusion). The second reason, of course, is the longstanding Anglo-French specular rivalry.[50] Abundant scholarship has examined eighteenth-century perceptions and cultural transfers,[51] as well as comparisons and transfers in the nineteenth century.[52] But this book does not endorse Linda Colley's view that

[48] Caitlin Fitz, *Our Sister Republics: The United States in an Age of American Revolutions* (New York; London: Liveright, 2016), p. 11.
[49] Hobsbawm, p. 165.
[50] Linda Colley, *Britons: Forging the Nation, 1707-1837* (New Haven, CT; London: Yale University Press, 1992); Renaud Morieux, *The Channel: England, France and the Construction of a Maritime Border in the Eighteenth Century* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2016); John Richard Moores, *Representations of France in English Satirical Prints 1740-1832* (Palgrave Macmillan, 2015).
[51] Among a large bibliography: *'Better in France?' The Circulation of Ideas across the Channel in the Eighteenth Century*, ed. by Frédéric Ogée (Lewisburg, PA: Bucknell University Press, 2005); *Anglo-French Attitudes : Comparisons and Transfers between English and French Intellectuals since the Eighteenth Century*, ed. by Christophe Charle, Julien Vincent, and Jay Murray Winter (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2007); *British-French Exchanges in the Eighteenth Century*, ed. by Kathleen Hardesty and Dorothy Medlin (Newcastle: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2007); *Cultural Transfers: France and Britain in the Long Eighteenth Century*, ed. by Ann Thomson and others, Studies on Voltaire & the Eighteenth Century, 2010:04 (Oxford: Voltaire Foundation, 2010).
[52] Fabrice Bensimon and Sylvie Aprile, *La France et l'Angleterre au XIXe siècle: échanges, représentations, comparaisons* (Paris: Créaphis, 2006); Charle, Vincent, and Winter; Emmanuelle de Champs, *Enlightenment and Utility: Bentham in French, Bentham in France*, Ideas in Context (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015).

Britishness was forged through opposition with France.[53] Rather than positing "the Other", it looks at "the others", a plurality of other countries that diffracted images of Britain and enabled it to define itself. Historians have fortunately looked beyond France and examined perceptions of, and transfers with, the British Empire and less familiar areas. The "Re-Imagining Democracy" research network project resulted in a broad conceptual history of democracy in the British North Atlantic, France, and the Mediterranean in an expansive "age of revolutions" from 1750 to 1860.[54] This book, then, provides some material to complement the many histories of Anglo-French relations, but also discusses the British people's involvement with areas like Spain, South America, and Poland, and the ways in which revolutions there comforted, subverted or modified earlier perceptions.

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The sources used in this book comprise mostly manuscripts, songs, pamphlets, memoirs and correspondences, and especially newspaper reports of celebratory dinners. The press can prove the degree of visibility of revolutionary celebrations, but heavy reliance on the medium entails its problems.[55] The key issue is probably that press articles, supposedly *transmitting* or expressing an external reality, in fact conjure it up: the degree of formatting and idealization raises the issue of the accounts' documentary value. Press accounts may not so much be representations of dinners as pragmatic utterances. Writing about festivities in the United States in the 1790s, David Waldstreicher noted that "it is necessary to see newspaper accounts of celebrations less as objective reportage than as rhetoric. In this case, they are a genre unto themselves, a genre that defines what it ostensibly describes."[56] This book will explore some implications of Waldstreicher's statement, including the possibility of parody, since the radical dinner account became a recognizable genre. For the moment, the key issue is that the dinner formats the event, offering an idealized and orderly representation. Press accounts of dinners almost infallibly insist on the order and unanimity prevailing. Press sources indeed usually convey what dinner organizers wanted to show, not what they wanted to hide: feuds over toasting,

[53] Colley, *Britons*.
[54] *Re-Imagining Democracy in the Age of Revolutions: America, France, Britain, Ireland, 1750-1850*, ed. by Joanna Innes and Mark Philp (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013); *Re-Imagining Democracy in the Mediterranean: 1780-1860*, ed. by Joanna Innes and Mark Philp (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2018).
[55] On the press, this study relies on various articles and on: Jeremy Black, *The English Press in the Eighteenth Century* (Abingdon; New York: Routledge, 2010); *Dictionary of Nineteenth-Century Journalism in Great Britain and Ireland*, ed. by Laurel Brake and Marysa Demoor (Gent: Academia Press, 2009).
[56] Waldstreicher, pp. 32–33.

precedence, guest lists, and other pre-dinner arrangements, tensions during dinners and possible aftermaths of recrimination and bitterness. Wherever it was possible, press sources were complemented by private correspondences and biographies, and occasionally rival papers or pamphlets, which can supply details hidden from "authorized" versions published in some papers.

In other words, sources could perhaps best be divided between material emanating from dinner organizers themselves and outside sources (rather than classified according to their format or nature). The distinction is sometimes difficult to make, since papers could presumably be provided with toast lists or other documents by organizers, and then choose to publish them as they were, or add commentaries. The analysis of revolutionary celebrations, especially after 1815, relies mostly on accounts of dinners published in newspapers and the periodical press. Where several accounts exist, they have been compared. I have heeded Ian Newman's caveat that manuscripts reveal conflicts and incidents unmentioned in official reports.[57] Newman's example of the silencing of John Thelwall's disruptive, solitary refusal to toast the army during the French Revolution, is exemplary of the way printed sources, and especially, newspapers, can present dinners in the way the organizers wanted them to appear, not in their messy, sometimes unpalatable reality. There are, however, cases when hostile newspapers jumped on incidents and commented them. The coverage of large popular gatherings could vary enormously from one paper to the other, with widely differing attendance numbers and extreme discrepancy in the wording of speeches. This was the case of open-air Chartist meetings especially.[58] The case is somewhat different in the celebrations studied in this book, which were mostly dinners in taverns, with well-prepared lists of stewards, songs, turns of speech, and toasts. Given their highly structured nature, formal dinners celebrating revolution were easier to report than Chartist mass meetings on windswept moors. Of course, journalists would summarize speeches in a free indirect style that enabled them to pass over what they could not hear, did not understand or wanted to ignore. Comparing newspaper accounts, however, always enabled me to gather the drift of the speech, if not the imagery and exact language (which is one reason for not attempting literary analysis here, giving the uncertainty of

[57] Ian Newman, 'The Anti-Social Convivialist: Toasting and Resistance to Sociability', in *British Sociability in the Long Eighteenth Century*, ed. by Valérie Capdeville and Alain Kerhervé (Boydell and Brewer, 2019), pp. 219–36 (p. 221) <https://doi.org/10.1017/9781787444904.017>.
[58] Paul A. Pickering, 'Class without Words: Symbolic Communication in the Chartist Movement', *Past & Present*, 112 (1986), 144–62; Chase, *Chartism*, p. 4.

reporting). While newspaper accounts often differed in emphasis and wording, there were stronger differences between glib "authorized" accounts of dinners and carping in private correspondence, as happened for instance in dinners surrounding Major John Cartwright after 1815. The main difference lies between official and unofficial (or hostile) accounts, not so much between print and manuscript sources. In an influential article, James Epstein dissected an exceptionally long account of an anniversary dinner published in November 1848 in the main Chartist newspaper, the *Northern Star*.[59] His analysis shows the wealth of information to be gathered from press reports, and exemplifies how it has to be contextualized and weighed with respect of other sources. Very few dinner accounts in the press could yield as much information as Epstein's. Matt Roberts's wishes about Chartist newspapers may well be voiced about the earlier radical press:

> It would be useful to know more about the planning and choreography of commemorative events, in particular how one went about securing a toast to a specific individual, behind-the-scenes preparation that the Chartist press unfortunately failed to supply."[60]

Press accounts of dinners in the Chartist and radical press were usually short and raised questions that only other sources could answer.

Archives have a specific value when it comes to revolutionary celebrations. They give access to events that the press would never cover. Newspapers covered only a fraction of revolutionary sociability. Larger, prestigious, often Tory-conservative dinners, enjoyed maximal coverage in dominant papers like *The Times*. The radical press covered dinners put up by popular leaders. Some were direct outlets of leaders whose actions they covered; that was sometimes the case in the unstamped press which evaded the hefty tax imposed on paper, a move that acquired a radical edge given the repressive legislation, especially the Stamp Act, one of the infamous 'Six Acts' passed after the Peterloo massacre in 1819. Richard Carlile's *Republican*, for instance, chronicled celebrations organized by Carlile's followers. Many other celebrations of foreign revolutions stayed out of the limelight. Toasts drunk in free-and-easies, or simply at home or among friends, went unrecorded in the papers. Such daily rituals are revealed in private correspondence, in spy reports and judicial proceedings. In the 1790s, as state surveillance intruded into hitherto "private" spaces, a

[59] James Epstein, 'Radical Dining, Toasting and Symbolic Expression'.
[60] Matthew Roberts, *Chartism, Commemoration and the Cult of the Radical Hero*, pp. 72–73.

spate of prosecutions brought to light allegedly seditious toasts.[61] The Home Office papers are a precious source here, in the 1790s and in the early nineteenth century. This archive has enabled Iain McCalman to reconstitute the alehouse culture of "ultra-radicals" in the years between the 1795 Gagging Acts and the advent of Chartism in 1838.[62]

The archives reveal actions that the press does not cover, but informers could turn benign occurrences into indictable patterns of behaviour. Among the archives consulted for this study, the spy reports preparing the 1793 Scottish trials and the 1794 English trials of radical activists, revealed much French revolutionary symbolism in daily routines among radical societies. The reports were also marred by exaggeration and 'Jacobin' tagging. Spies were prone to exaggerate dangers to justify their own importance (and their job). This is most visible in the reports sent by "J. B." to Henry Dundas about the Edinburgh Friends of the People in 1792-1794. Attending a meeting in the Canongate in Edinburgh in January 1794, he described the full room as "the School of Sedition", presided over by "an old Sans Culotte",[63] conjuring up an indictable, French Jacobin conspiracy. Thus, archives do not transparently "reveal" an underlying revolutionary underground; they offer skewed interpretations of speech, gesture and symbolism, projecting sedition onto sociability.

Studying six decades of celebrations involves examining only a selection of papers. Most were consulted on electronic bases. Digitized papers represent only a fraction of the hard copies extant.[64] Although I consulted many original, undigitized, newspapers, especially from the 1790s, most of the research depends on electronic databases that form a digital corpus. The selection bias involved can be relativized, because the major papers, such as the *Times*, or influential periodicals like the *Edinburgh Review* are all digitized. Gale's databases of digitized papers from the British Library, as far as I could see, comprise many of the most widely read papers. This book relies mostly on the radical and Chartist

[61] James Epstein, '"Equality and No King." Sociability and Sedition: The Case of John Frost', in *Romantic Sociability: Social Networks and Literary Culture in Britain, 1770-1840*, ed. by Clara Tuite and Gillian Russell (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), pp. 43–61. On the collapse of the private sphere and government surveillance, see John Barrell, *The Spirit of Despotism: Invasions of Privacy in the 1790s* (Oxford; New York: Oxford University Press, 2006).

[62] Iain McCalman, 'Ultra-Radicalism and Convivial Debating-Clubs in London, 1795-1838', *English Historical Review*, 102 (1987), 309–33.

[63] National Records of Scotland, RH 2/4/74 f. 113, J.B. to Henry Dundas, Henry Dundas, Edinburghn 22 January 1794.

[64] Laurel Brake and James Mussell, 'Digital Nineteenth-Century Serials for the Twenty-First Century: A Conversation', *19: Interdisciplinary Studies in the Long Nineteenth Century*, 2015.21 (2015). The author assess the proportion of digitized material as perhaps 1 per cent of the nineteenth-century press.

press, not out of deliberate choice but because conservative newspapers did not cover revolutionary sociability much.

The coverage of dinners varied in time. The French Revolution was a formative phase. Only a few large dinners, mostly Whiggish Bastille Day celebrations, attracted the notice of the main London papers. The coverage of festivals in the radical press of the 1790s, which contrasts with later radical periodicals, is discussed in chapter 1.

The golden age of newspaper accounts of dinners was really the nineteenth century. In the nineteenth century, coverage changed, revealing both increased acceptance of revolutionary sociability, possibly, and shifts in papers' outlooks. Dignified coverage of Pitt Club dinners and other Tory or official events became a staple of *The Times* and other conservative papers. The *Morning Chronicle* duly reported on the proceedings of the Fox Club. *The Times*, adopted a ministerial, anti-Jacobin stance, and lashed at Bastille Day dinners in the 1790s, but its more reformist line in the early 1830s led it to cover dinners for France and Poland in 1830 with equanimity, even sympathy. This is important, given the paper's increasing reputation of accuracy and independence, and its soaring circulation.[65] Regular publication in the *Times* gave events like the Polish balls in the 1830s a degree of visibility and respectability that steady coverage in a tiny radical organ. Thus, newspaper coverage is not just documentary in import: the fact of coverage in prestigious papers like the *Times* lent Polish dinners a prestige that dinners for other causes lacked.

The radical press, however, is the largest source of information on early nineteenth-century revolutionary sociability. The major radical periodicals of the period are also digitized by HathiTrust and other websites. This is the case of Cobbett's widely read *Weekly Register*, T. J. Wooler's *Black Dwarf*, which ran from 1817 and 1824 and whose circulation peaked at 12,000 in 1820, and Richard Carlile's *Republican*, which had a narrow readership but represented a significant strand of "ultra-radical", freethinking ideology. Circulation figures are deceptive, since practices of collective reading, shared subscriptions and borrowings multiplied the number of readers. Thus, instead of weighing the "influence" of papers by numerical figures, it is more prudent to note that certain festivals in the honour of certain foreign revolutions were either celebrated, or more frequently, read about in certain ideological constituencies, among the followers of this or that strand of radicalism.

[65] Circulation rose from 5,000 in 1800 to 28,000 by 1841 (John Richard Wood, 'Times (1785-)', ed. by Laurel Brake and Marysa Demoor, *Dictionary of Nineteenth-Century Journalism in Great Britain and Ireland* (Gent: Academia Press, 2009), pp. 596–97.).

This study has tried to cover the different radical groupings rather than focus on papers' circulation.

In the 1820s, William Cobbett's *Political Register* published long accounts of dinners, where toasts and speeches were interlarded with intrusive journalistic comments. The genre of the long account of dinners as polemic, serving as pretext for general reviews of politics, fell out of fashion with Cobbett's death in 1835. From 1836 and the lowering of taxes on the press, a new generation of papers appeared, contributing shorter accounts with mentions of main guests, numerical estimates of the audience, main toasts and summaries of speeches.

Sections on Chartism rely predominantly on digitized versions of *The Northern Star* (1837-1852).[66] Since it was materially impossible to peruse many papers, it appeared reasonable and legitimate to choose the one that "quickly became a major force in radicalism journalism" and "was selling around 10,000 copies weekly" by January 1838,[67] and kept up high sales until a sharp decline in 1848. Headed by the popular leader Feargus O'Connor, the *Northern Star* stood at the centre of the nexus of Chartist politics, culture and sociability; it advertised the activities of churches, reading clubs, and temperance societies and "in its turn, the paper was honoured at banquets and meetings, praised in poems, speeches, and toasts".[68] Other Chartist papers were used, less frequently because they yielded less information on revolutionary celebrations. This was the case of the *Northern Liberator*, a successful, long-lived newspaper established in Tyneside (1837-1840) and of G. W. M. Reynolds's newspapers.

This study, then, focuses on the revolutionary sociability as it was visible in the press. It is more interested in the publicity, the invasion of the public sphere with foreign revolutionary symbols, than with secret, underground politics. Further research based on Home Office papers on other periods (for instance in 1820, marked by celebrations of the Spanish Revolution in the aftermath of Peterloo), could prolong this work by contextualizing the main, "newsworthy" celebrations documented here in the context of the

[66] For a definition of the "Chartist press" based on its functional role in the Chartist movement, and its dialectical definition in contrast with rival publications: Aled G. Jones, 'Chartist Journalism and Print Culture in Britain, 1830-1855', in *Papers for the People: A Study of the Chartist Press*, ed. by Joan Allen and Owen R. Ashton (London: Merlin, 2005), pp. 1–24 (p. 6); for circulation figures for the *Northern Star*.
[67] Chase, *Chartism*, pp. 16, 17.
[68] Gregory Vargo and Malcolm Chase, '*Northern Star* (1837-1852)', ed. by Laurel Brake and Marysa Demoor, *Dictionary of Nineteenth-Century Journalism in Great Britain and Ireland* (Gent: Academia Press, 2009), pp. 459–60 (p. 459).

daily practices of grassroots radical circles. Some French archives could also shed light on the world of political exiles. At the very end of the period studied, following the 1848 revolutions, spy reports sent to the French police after 1851 document the sociability of French political emigrants in London; in this respect Sylvie Aprile mentions toasts drunk to the Republic of the downfall of Napoleon III's Empire drunk in cafés.[69]

Another type of source, the foreign press, could enrich this study. It focuses on Britons celebrating foreign revolution, and bases itself on British newspapers mostly, though recourse was made to the French exile press with *La Voix du proscrit* to comment on French celebrations of the 1848 Revolution in London. This is very much the exception that justifies the rules. There were indeed societies of foreign refugees in Britain that held their own celebrations. Dynamic political newspapers edited by emigrants in London, and often published in their own native language, certainly shed light on those celebrations.[70] The sociability of the French in exile in London after 1848 revolved around the anniversary of the February Revolution, and their newspapers reported celebrations in great details, commenting also on the importance of this and other revolutions.[71] This rich foreign political press has not been consulted, except in exceptional cases when Britons were also involved. A study of the sociability, and festive celebrations of national revolutions, in, say, the Spanish liberal Blanco White's *El Español* (1810-1814) and its followers, or the French or German exile in London, would certainly be a worthwhile extension of this book.

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The book comprises two parts. Chapter 1 to 3 examine the British involvement with the first French revolution until 1804. Chapter 4, bearing on cultural and political of the political uses of the French Revolution in the early nineteenth century, provides a transition to chapters 5 and 6, which are devoted to British celebrations of European and American revolutions of the nineteenth century, until the 1848 Springtime of the Peoples.

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[69] Sylvie Aprile, *Le Siècle des exilés: bannis et proscrits de 1789 à la Commune*, CNRS histoire (Paris: CNRS éditions, 2010), pp. 157–64.

[70] Sylvie Aprile, 'Voices of Exile : French Newspapers in England', in *Exiles from European Revolutions: Refugees in Mid-Victorian England*, ed. by Sabine Freitag (London: Berghahn, 2003), pp. 149–63; Aprile, *Le siècle des exilés*, pp. 188–93; Constance Bantman and Ana Cláudia Suriani da Silva, *The Foreign Political Press in Nineteenth-Century London: Politics from a Distance* (London: Bloomsbury Academic, 2017).

[71] Constance Bantman and Thomas C. Jones, 'From Republicanism to Anarchism: 50 Years of French Exilic Newspaper Publishing', in *The Foreign Political Press in Nineteenth-Century London: Politics from a Distance*, ed. by Constance Bantman and Ana Cláudia Suriani da Silva (London: Bloomsbury Academic, 2017), pp. 1–14 (p. 100).

The first three chapters trace three series of sociable events that involved Britons celebrating the Revolution. They have different chronologies and do not correspond to distinct periods of the revolutionary decade. Each of the three chapters pursues a series of celebrations; intersections between some series, such as the mention of the same dinner twice, at key junctures of the narratives provide some structure and show the interdependence of parallel developments.

Chapter 1 is a history of British perceptions of the French *fêtes révolutionnaires*, from 1790 to 1804. Those festivals were one of the major, and most characteristic, politico-cultural achievements of the French Revolution. Those festivals were organized by French people in France, and some involved the presence or participation of Britons. The enquiry bears on the dialectic of involvement and retreat, and on British judgments of the politics of revolutionary celebration. This chapter discusses both the press coverage of French festivals (essentially by London-based journalists), and the testimonies of Britons who participated in them in Paris. Helen Maria Williams, author of multi-volume *Letters from France*, is a central witness whose judgments reflected on many years of revolutionary experience.

Chapter 2 examines a little-known sub-category of *fêtes révolutionnaires*: international festivals given in the honour of Britons and other representatives of the "free nations" from 1790 to 1802. It looks at the ideological and diplomatic stakes involved, raising the issue of the British participants' agency or passivity as tools of foreign influence. The chapter also looks at later dinners given to the Scotsman Thomas Muir and the Irishman James Napper Tandy, which were, again, enmeshed in diplomatic and propagandistic concerns.

Chapter 3 turns away from French festivals and looks at those Britons who organized pro-French dinners in Britain, especially Bastille Day celebrations from 1790 to 1793. This three-year period of increasingly monitored expression was cut short by the outbreak of war in February 1793. This chapter is concerned with to the actors' identity and motives, the content, context and reception of the dinners. It unearths a rich array of toasts, songs, pamphlets and private correspondence reacting to the dinners. This comprises material on radicals and Whig reformers celebrating the French Revolution, but also a rich seam of loyalist material using the cultural and literary forms of the times to disparage organisers and diners.

Chapter 4 discusses the structure of dinners and looks at the ways the French Revolution of 1789 informed their main components: toasts, songs, and speeches. It starts where chapter 3 left British celebrations: with the mid-1790s sequence of war, loyalist blackout and repression culminating in the Two Acts of November 1794. Chapter 4 traces the reconstruction of a radical sociability in the teeth of the loyalist repression of the 1790s, and analyses how the French Revolution, and nineteenth-century revolutions, displaced earlier historical references, and resurfaced in moments of crisis, until and including the European revolutions of 1848. This chapter prepares the next ones by briefly discussing reactions to revolutions in the 1820s, 1830s and 1840s.

Chapters 5 and 6 are devoted to British celebrations, in the form of dinners, meetings, and other sociable forms, of revolutionary outbursts that battered the European continent from 1820 to 1848. They are organized around sections corresponding to case studies. They can be read as self-contained units, but taken together, they also weave thematic and biographical strands, building an overall image of patterns of celebrations. Chapter 5 concentrates on general celebrations of revolution among the ultra-radicals in the 1810s and 1820, and on revolution in the Iberian world (the Spanish 1820-1823 *trienio* and South American independences) and in North America. Chapter 6 examines the revolutions of 1830 in France and Poland, and of 1848, in France again, also discussing some transnational patterns beyond France. It retraces celebrations of the 1848 French Revolution until the mid-1850s, when they cease to be reported in the press.

Chapter 1.
From Federation to Coronation:
The British and French Revolutionary Festivals, 1790-1804

One of the most novel, and conspicuous, features of the French Revolution was the staging of festivals, deploying an emergent political symbolism to herald the Revolution's values and achievements. Year on year, pageants, speeches, decoration, hymns and scenography made sense of the great *journées* of the Revolution, especially the Fall of the Bastille of 14 July 1789 and the storming of the Tuileries palace on 10 August 1792, which provoked the demise of the monarchy and paved the way to the republic. Republican France proudly, defiantly too, exhibited its values for the whole world to see. The British press, and British travellers in France, noted those developments and responded to them in ways which, taken together, usefully enrich the map of emotions felt in the 1790s. These themes are hardly addressed in the many studies on British reactions to the French Revolution, with the notable exception of scholarship on 1790s drama.[1]

The story of French festivals, as seen through the British lens, is bracketed by two festivals. It starts with an intense focus on the 1790 Federation, the first anniversary celebration of the Fall of the Bastille. This event provoked many responses in press and pamphlets, and a wave of commercialization, theatre directors dramatizing the events on the London stage. Such an avid interest is equalled only by the curiosity elicited by Napoleon's coronation on 2 December 1804, an imperial ceremony which, in many ways, represents the political and symbolic opposite of the Federation, because it closed the sequence of revolutionary festivals, ushering in imperial ones. Between those two highpoints, other festivals attracted commentary and criticism; attention slackened off after the outbreak of the war in February 1793, focusing only on a few major events, such as Robespierre's Festival of the Supreme Being.

[1] G. Taylor, *The French Revolution and the London Stage: 1789-1805* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000); P. Degott, 'Enthousiasme, méfiance ou rejet ? L'influence de la révolution française sur le répertoire lyrique de la scène britannique', *XVII-XVIII. Revue de la Société d'études anglo-américaines des XVIIe et XVIIIe siècles*, 69, 2012, 67–83; L. V. Troost, 'An Entirely New and Splendid Spectacle, Founded on the Subject of the French Revolution : The Fall of the Bastille on the London Stage', in K. Cope and R. C. Leitz (eds), *The Sensational Centuries : Essays on the Enhancement of Sense Experience in the Seventeenth, Eighteenth, and Nineteenth Centuries* (New York: AMS Press, 2013), pp. 175–94; C. Feilla, *The Sentimental Theater of the French Revolution* (Farnham, Surrey ; Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2013).

Defining and classifying revolutionary festivals is no straightforward enterprise. In her major book on the subject, originally published in 1976, Mona Ozouf discussed various types of classification, and, rejecting her predecessors' interpretation of festivals as representative of the faction that organized them, she concluded on a basic a unity of all festival sharing structural traits. For Ozouf, festivals served to transfer the sacred focus of sovereignty from the King in the *ancien régime* monarchy to the nation.[2] Against this abstract, structural kind of analysis, Sophie Wahnich argued more recently in favour of a political reading of festivals, which views them from a strategic and political standpoint. Without returning to the nineteenth-century historians' reduction of festivals to mere political manipulations, she ascribed to them a "thermostatic" function of regulating public humours, warming up morale or cooling down crowds according to the circumstances.[3] Another important account of festivals is Guillaume Mazeau's, who argues that the imagery of festivals mattered because of the "increasing role of symbolic forms and rituals in the regulation of collective tensions, at a juncture when the old regime of representation falls apart"; festivals also ease the anguish created by the revolutionary break.[4] This chapter bases itself essentially on Ozouf's views on political ritual, but also appreciates Mazaud's account of the spectacular and resorts to Wahnich's management of emotions when appropriate.

Though some manifestations are difficult to neatly classify, British commentators examined events that were clearly considered at the time, and still are, as festivals: essentially the major ones taking place in Paris. The yearly Festivals of the Federation, the Festival of Reason in 1793, the Festival of the Supreme Being on 8 June 1794, pantheonizations (transfers of ashes into the Pantheon) all fall within this scope. The next chapter will consider a specific class of festivals, *fêtes civiques* given by Jacobin clubs or municipalities in the honour of foreigners. Though not discussed in classic works on festivals, they constitute a category of festivals sharing similar denominations, organizations and symbolism. There was a degree of polemical blurring, however, because some British observers also occasionally described as festivals grim rejoicing at guillotinings and massacres: from 1792, loyalists revelled in denouncing a topsy-turvy

[2] Mona OZOUF, *Festivals and the French Revolution*, Cambridge, MA, 1991.
[3] Sophie Wahnich, 'Réfléchir les rituels pendant la Révolution française', *ethnographiques.org*, 33, 2016 <http://www.ethnographiques.org/2016/Wahnich> [accessed 1 February 2022].
[4] Guillaume Mazeau, 'La Révolution, les fêtes et leurs images. Spectacles publics et représentation politique (Paris, 1789-1799)', *Images Re-vues. Histoire, anthropologie et théorie de l'art*, Hors-série 6, 2018, paras 25, 12 <http://journals.openedition.org/imagesrevues/4390>; my translation.

world where sans culottes celebrated murder and violence in dance and song. This was the case, in particular, with the execution of Louis XVI, which the loyalist press presented as a festival and an occasion for joy. On January 25, 1793, the *Lloyd's Evening Post* published an "extract of a Letter from Paris, Jan.20", written "under extreme affliction", and pointing out that "the savage Corporation of Paris ordered an illumination for joy to take place this evening." Such a festival celebrating the execution of Louis XVI was an instance of "unrelenting barbary". On the same page, another, longer article gave further details on the king's execution and noted that since the decree of death, "a general consternation has prevailed throughout Paris; – The Sans-Culottes are the only persons that rejoice" while "[t]he honest citizens [...] mourned in private with their families the murder of their much-loved Sovereign." Presenting the king's execution as a festival confirm the general loyalist view of the French Revolution as the work of a minority of incendiaries manipulated by a few ringleaders, a state of "anarchy" inverting the signs and values commonly accepted in civilized countries, in this case an illumination marking a national disgrace instead of a victory. The grim festival of death is a loyalist invention, a recurring trope gaining in intensity as the Revolution took its violent turn.

Most British commentators merely presented festivals as puppet shows with faction leaders pulling the strings, trusting the organizers rather than looking for deeper causes. Ozouf criticized this kind of political reading, which was that of nineteenth-, and most twentieth-century historians. For such writers, festivals "provide a mirror in which the Revolution as a whole may be viewed". Thus, the Federation of 1790 becomes the emblem of "a Revolution that is still open, still filled with hopes" and the Festival Reason takes on the frozen, terrifying glaze of Robespierre's Terror.[5] The term "Terror" should not be taken at face value (some researchers, like Rachel Rogers, do not use it). It was a retrospective name given by ex-Robespierrists who wanted to exculpate themselves after Thermidor. The term is used here to denote *perceptions* of a system of terror, and does not indicate an acceptance on the author's part of the existence of such a system.[6] British commentators wanted to see festivals as a microcosm of the state of France, and they projected on them their own opinions and prejudices.

[5] Ozouf, *Festivals and the French Revolution*, pp. 23–24.
[6] For a recent analysis of "the Terror" and its ideological construction: Michel Biard and Marisa Linton, *Terror: The French Revolution and Its Demons* (London: Polity, 2021).

Ozouf's work raises the more general question of ritual and drama.[7] The French revolutionaries conceived festivals as anti-theatrical. In the wake of Rousseau's *Lettre à d'Alembert sur les spectacles* (1758), they rejected the hierarchical ancien régime model of theatricality and its deceptive illusions in favour of civic rituals bonding the whole people in the cult of the republic. They wanted to collapse the stage-audience distinction and substitute civic rites performed by all to the illusions and hierarchies of ancien-régime theatres. Again, this dialectic of transparency and artifice central to Ozouf (and Rousseau) was present in an ideological conflict crystallizing in Britain on whether participants in French fêtes were sincere celebrants of a civic worship, or gulled, or wicked, spectators of a sordid spectacle. This chapter will discuss this dimension, both by presenting run-of-the-mill judgments illustrating the average debate (or lack thereof), and by enhancing the few percipient commentators who pondered over the use, or success of festivals, and their affinity with the sacred.

British attitudes to the Federation of 1790 were expressed in the form of official, diplomatic dispatches, coverage in the news, pamphlets, the theatre, commercialization of objects, and travel narratives. Later festivals received less attention, but still a sizeable mass of commentary and visual satire survives. Many Britons commented on festivals from the other side of the Channel, in dozens of press articles and mentions in pamphlets; and, for a short time in the autumn of 1790, on the stage. A few Britons also witnessed, even participated in, festivals in Paris and elsewhere in France, and they provide a precious testimony of perceptions of those events, which were not always hemmed in by ideology. One aim of this chapter, then, will be to trace the range of reactions, from direct depiction to vicarious enthusiasm and standoffish detestation. British visions of French festivals also offer an opportunity for sifting British political conflicts indirectly, through the mediation of France. An important theme throughout is the dialectic of distance and identification. The insistence on foreignness or wish to collapse borders, the search for revolutionary novelty or reduction to familiar Francophobe stereotypes, comparisons between England and France, or London and Paris, reflections on the variety of human nature are the main modalities of a such dialectic, which animates both friendly, and unfriendly comments on festivals.

[7] Ozouf, *Festivals and the French Revolution*, chaps 1–2; Mona Ozouf, 'Le Simulacre et la fête révolutionnaire', in *Les Fêtes de la Révolution : colloque de Clermont-Ferrand (juin 1974)*, ed. by Jean Ehrard and Paul Viallaneix (Paris: Société des études robespierristes, 1977), pp. 323–53. See also Antoine de Baecque, *Le Corps de l'histoire: métaphores et politique (1770 - 1800)*, Essai histoire (Paris: Calmann-Lévy, 1993), pp. 304–11.

This chapter discusses the Festival of the Federation, reactions in the press and commercial offshoots, before moving on to a central section on English witnesses of the Federation and later festivals, centring on Helen Maria Williams, the most perceptive commentator. The final part of the chapter examines press and pamphlet treatments of festivals from 1791 to Napoleon's coronation, focusing on the main festivals. It is helpful to start with some general properties of the press coverage, illustrating them with examples from the Federation.

The British press coverage of the festivals: general characteristics

This section and the following ones treat the Festival of the Federation. It is not a chronological narrative, but an analysis of different actors' perceptions.

The traditional methods of the British press had not much changed for decades.[8] The London papers relied on official documents, and occasional letters sent by individuals, but they had no full-time correspondents abroad. The French press, freed from censorship, became a significant source of information from 1789, especially since there was a diversity of ideological options: thus, the 1790s became the "highpoint in borrowing from the foreign press".[9] This diversity shrank, and by the mid-1790s, the dominance of the official *Moniteur* and demise of counter-revolutionary press had become a problem. Papers outside London copied directly from the London press, rather than resorting to translations from France. James Perry's trip to Paris in the summer and autumn of 1791 to cover events for the *Morning Chronicle* was an exception which did not change the rules of the profession. The London papers relied on the Parisian press, which focused on the spectacles in the capital, and not on the French provincial press, which covered local federations rather than the Parisian one.[10] The British press, then, reported only on the Paris events. The odd exception confirms the rule: on 13-15 July 1790, the *St James's Chronicle*'s report on the Strasbourg confederation, a major gathering of some 75,000 delegates, appeared in the

[8] J. Black, *The English Press in the Eighteenth Century* (Abingdon, Oxon ; New York: Routledge, 2010); J. Kristiansen, 'Foreign News Reporting in Transition: James Perry and the French Constitution Ceremony', in S. G. Brandtzæg, P. Goring, and C. Watson (eds), *Travelling Chronicles: News and Newspapers from the Early Modern Period to the Eighteenth Century* (Brill, 2018), LXVI, 181–202.
[9] Jeremy Black, *The English Press in the Eighteenth Century*, p. 61.
[10] On reporting by the French local press: Éric Wauters, 'La Fête de la Fédération dans la presse: réconciliation nationale ou ligne de fracture?', in *La Fête de la Fédération*, ed. by Pascal Dupuy, Changer d'époque, 25 (Rouen: Publications des Universités de Rouen et du Havre, 2012), pp. 61–71 (p. 67).

"Berlin" section, which suggests that the information was circulated through Germany. Such a concentration on Paris conveyed an overwhelming impression of unity and order, only reinforced by the aesthetic uniformity of the grand Roman style. The British public never learnt about the immense variety of the local federations: the revolutionary symbolism was still in its infancy and the Parisian choices had not yet hardened into norms. The sublime spectacle displayed in Paris gave a misleading impression of order, hiding from view the forces of reaction and disunity that played out in many localities, what with counter-revolutionary plotting, the influence of the church locally undermining federations, or denominational conflict in some provinces. This is not to say that all British papers were enthusiastic about the Revolution. Some voiced misgivings, even frank opposition to the Revolution, but even in that case rumours and fears of counter-revolution prevailed over analysis of the local situations.

Besides their documentary interest, press reports on the Federation are of moment because they established tropes that defined the reception of later festivals throughout the revolutionary decade, and after. The press inherited a concern for national character, lasting into the nineteenth century.[11] While philosophers discussed the determinants of national characters – most famously Hume responding in an essay "On National Character" to Montesquieu's disquisitions in *The Spirit of the Laws* –, at the non-specialist level, "character" could be reduced to a few psychological traits and expressed through anecdotes conveyed in the press or in travellers' narratives.[12] Journalists and other commentators scrutinized French festivals for signs that the Revolution had modified the national character, or left it immutable. British journalists loved nothing better than track old, negative, stereotypes about the French under revolutionary trappings. National character also mediated questions about the possible revolutionary contagion to Britain: sifting purely French traits from shared characteristics helped predict similar developments in Britain.

Commentators wondered whether it was possible for a people to change, for a revolutionary climacteric to reshape the nation's character. This questioning addresses a central ambition of French revolutionaries: that of regenerating corrupt individuals and shaping a new man, or alternatively, restoring the natural man undistorted by monarchical

[11] Roberto Romani, *National Character and Public Spirit in Britain and France, 1750-1914* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002).
[12] For depictions of English national character in somewhat contradictory ways: Paul Langford, *Englishness Identified: Manners and Character, 1650-1850* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000).

civilisation.[13] No British newspaper consulted expressed a belief in the purifying virtue of the festival. Some papers displayed a healthy dose of scepticism about the transforming potential of the revolutionary process. On 14 July 1790, all day long, the spectators participated in the ceremonies in the pouring rain: "it is difficult to determine whether the indifference, and even exultation with which they danced under it, arose from the ardour of their present sentiments, or the levity of their ancient character".[14] Spartans or *petits maîtres*? The question remained open, but if the journalists wanted to believe that the festival promoted national reconciliation, they did not think the power of ritual would purge the French of their ancien régime foibles and instil republican virtue into them.

Another favourite trope of festival commentators was anarchy and disorder. The British were certainly curious to know how each major festival would look like, what riots or violence could happen, and how such a large crowd of excitable French people would behave. With the Gordon Riots fresh in Londoners' minds, the threat of large masses in revolutionary times was daunting indeed. The London papers noticed the strong security measures taken before the Federation: all coaches, save those of the royal family and ambassadors, were forbidden in the streets next to the Champ de Mars. Apart from minor incidents, the festival was remarkable for its absence of violence.[15] On the night of July 14, the Whig *Gazetteer* wrote optimistically that the "grand illumination" was troubled "by the stubborn obstinacy of some inveterate Aristocrats, who did not light up their houses, or had fled with their domestics, and left their windows dark emblems of their own minds. They fell a prey to the indignation of the populace; and all the massacre of this day, so much dreaded in anticipation, was the massacre of some thousand panels of glass."[16] To that extent, the Federation was a success: La Fayette, whom the King had made major general of the Federation, had succeeded in keeping order.[17] Counter-revolution failed to derail the festival. "The joy, on account of the happy completion of this grand ceremony, is universal, and even those who would have rejoiced at mischief are constrained to *appear* pleased".[18]

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[13] Mona Ozouf, *L'Homme Régénéré: Essais Sur La Révolution Française*, Bibliothèque Des Histoires (Paris: Gallimard, 1989).
[14] *St. James's Chronicle*, 17-20 July 1790.
[15] See e.g. *World*, 20 July; *Bath Chronicle*, 22 July.
[16] *Gazetteer and New Daily Advertiser*, 19 July 1790; see also *Universal Magazine of Knowledge and Pleasure*, July 1790, p.49.
[17] Gilbert du Motier de La Fayette (1757-1834), an aristocrat who fought with the Americans during the War of Independence, commanded the National Guard and enjoyed a large popularity in July 1790. His longevity and political activities under the Restoration made him popular with British liberals, as future chapters show.
[18] *Hampshire Chronicle*, 26 July 1790.

Behind the concern for order lay an interrogation about the unity of France and the strength of counter-revolutionary opinion.

The most essential property of festivals, which makes them important sites of discussion and criticism for British commentators, is their supposedly representative nature. The Federation became an emblem of the Revolution, a miniature replica of France for all to see. British observers tended to treat later festivals in the same way, as metonymies of France. Revolutionary fervour or applause under duress, civic order or barely controlled licentiousness became symbols of the whole destiny of revolutionary France. Festivals encoded ideological stakes and can therefore serve as litmus tests of political opinions on the Revolution and on the kind of society commentators found desirable.

The idea of festivals as metonyms of France implies three functions, which are present, to varying degrees, in descriptions throughout the 1790s. As shown, festivals were supposedly indicative of the state of the French nation. Secondly, they were taken to be performative: many commentators saw festivals as factious manipulations of the people of Paris: this trope of the festival as puppeteering was especially strong when Robespierre supposedly ruled alone. Thirdly, festivals took on a predictive function: some commentators wanted to read the future through them, especially during the war, when the French Republic staged itself in arms and British commentators were eager for signs of change. During the Federation, the descriptive function was clearly present, through considerations on the French national character; so was the performative function, the Federation being supposed to unite the people and work lasting effects. As for prediction, the Federation certainly heralded halcyon days for those Britons committed to "universal benevolence" and Anglo-French reconciliation. But others preferred to wait.

The radical press was less interested in festivals as metonyms of French regeneration. Some papers became "radical" in the 1790s because editorship was taken up by a politically committed man: this was the case of Sampson Perry taking over the *Argus* in March 1789, turning it into "the mouthpiece" of English radicalism by mid-1790s, or William Cowdroy and the *Chester Chronicle.*[19] The *Chester Chronicle* alone published significant materials on French festivals, possibly because its editor, William Cowdroy,

[19] On the Argus : Rachel Rogers, *Friends of the Revolution: The British Radical Community in Early Republican Paris 1792-1794* (London: Breviary Stuff Publications, 2021), pp. 49–54, 153–55 quotation p. 49. On the *Chester Chronicle:* Martin John Smith, 'English Radical Newspapers in the French Revolutionary Era, 1790-1803' (unpublished Ph.D., Royal Holloway, University of London, 1979), p. 15; Marion Löffler, 'Introduction', in *Welsh Responses to the French Revolution: Press and Public Discourse, 1789-1802*, Wales and the French Revolution (Cardiff: University Of Wales Press, 2012), pp. 1–71 (p. 12). See a selection from the *Chester Chronicle* p.131-171.

was politically radical and could rely on the resources of a successful provincial newspaper (though it is highly unlikely he could fund a correspondent in France). The paper sold about 1,700 copies and its readership extended to North Wales and perhaps Scotland. The *Chester Chronicle* also covered many different festivals because of its exceptional longevity: it commented on the 1790 Federation and, despite threats by loyalists on Cowdroy's life, it was the only periodical that maintained a radical stance until the proprietor resumed editorship in 1797.

Other radical periodicals were short-lived, and often sought the patronage of radical societies. The *Manchester Herald* was published for barely a year, from 31 March 1792 to 23 March 1793; one of its sponsors, the cotton manufacturer Thomas Walker, was a member of the Manchester Society for Constitutional Information and its more famous London namesake. Walker, as well as Perry, were members of the British liberal community that lived in Paris at least for a moment in 1792-1793.[20] They knew about festivals and could easily get information from French papers or Paris-based British acquaintances.[21] The limited coverage of festivals, then was due to limited column space rather than ignorance. There are very occasional mentions of French festivals. For instance, the *Edinburgh Gazetteer,* a weekly paper close to the Scottish Friends of the People and published from16 November 1792 to 29 January 1794, published the directions for the celebration of the 10 August 1793, but without any editorial comment.[22] The *Gazetteer* was interested in the debates in the Convention, the French constitution and the wars in the Vendée and against Britain. As for intellectual publications like the Norwich *Cabinet* (published 1794-1795), they preferred reflecting on general issues and literature than reporting on daily occurrences and precise events. The publications of the London Corresponding Society did not mention festivals. The Festival of the Supreme Being, on 8 June 1794, took place barely a month after Thomas Hardy and other LCS leaders were imprisoned. It was imprudent indeed to praise Robespierre, republicanism and deism while the movement's leaders awaited trials for high treason. The festival's neoclassical aesthetic might also have been difficult for British plebeian radicals to handle. The *Moral and Political Magazine of the London Corresponding Society* was published from June 1796 to May 1797, during the French Directory, a period of uninspiring festivals. Periodicals like

[20] On that particular community, see below p. 170 and following.
[21] For instance, John Hurford Stone provided Sampson Perry with information about French military campaigns to include in the *Argus*: Rachel Rogers, *Friends of the Revolution*, p. 49.
[22] *Edinburgh Gazetteer*, 20 August 1793, p. 2.

Thomas Spence's *Politics for the People* or Daniel Isaac Eaton's *Pig's Meat* preferred to parody established English forms, and references like historical precedents or "God Save the King", in a bid to appropriate loyalist symbols for the cause of reform and popular rights.[23] Radical periodicals, then, were not interested in the aesthetic of French festivals; as for ideas and political developments, they looked for them in assemblies' debates and legislation rather than in festivals.

The circulation of radical periodicals was dwarfed by that of the loyalist press, because stamp duties hit sales (especially after 1797) and loyalist activists and magistrates made sure that public places like coffeehouses were purged of radical publications.[24] As will be seen later, the ministerial press did not devote much space to revolutionary festivals, or only, especially under the Directory, when they were occasions for official pronouncements on war and French foreign policy.[25]

British reactions to the Festival of the Federation: government, the press and commerce

The French rationale for a festival and the British ambassadors' perception

Most historians have seen the year 1790 as the happy year of the French Revolution, a lull before the onrush of events in 1791. In this view, the Festival of the Federation represented a midsummer climax of harmony, a moment of peace that reconciled a divided people, if only temporarily. This chapter follows Ozouf and other historians, who opposed this irenic view, judging this festival rather as "a way of bringing a turbulent period to a close rather than setting men in motion".[26]

The festival took place on a single day, but it was part of a month-long sequence, and the British press covered the whole. Hasty preparations on the Champ de Mars began in early July. After a sacred drama performed on the 13th, at Notre Dame (renamed the Temple of Liberty), which earned some plaudits from the British press, the ceremony

[23] On the radicals' "constitutionalist idiom", see James Epstein, *Radical Expression: Political Language, Ritual, and Symbol in England, 1790-1850* (Oxford; New York: Oxford University Press, 1994), chap. 1. See more in chapter 4 on struggles for appropriation of French and English symbols.
[24] On sales and circulation, see Martin John Smith, chap. 4.
[25] In the 1790s, the *Daily Advertiser, Diary, Morning Herald, Oracle, Public Advertiser, Public Ledger, Star, Times,* and *World* , were controlled by the Treasury: Karl Schweizer and Rebecca Klein, 'The French Revolution and Developments in the London Daily Press to 1793', *Publishing History*, 18 (1985), 85-98 (p. 89).
[26] Ozouf, *Festivals and the French Revolution*, p. 44. On the rejection of 1790 as the Revolution's happy year, see also Roger Dupuy, *La Garde nationale, 1789-1872*, Folio Histoire, 181 (Paris: Gallimard, 2010), p. 98.

proper, on the 14th, consisted of three carefully choreographed moments.[27] A long procession started at eight in the morning from the Porte St Martin; at the Place Louis XV (now Place de la Concorde), the King and National Assembly joined the procession. They crossed the bridge of boats specially constructed for the occasion and marched into the Field of Confederation, as the Champ de Mars was renamed. After the participants were seated (it took some two hours to fill the massive circus built in the previous month), high mass was performed. Finally, the King swore the oath, followed by the President of the National Assembly and the deputies of the eighty-three *départements*, the national guards, and the people. In the evening, the hundreds of thousands of participants, including the King, had dinner in the open air; the *fédérés* dined at the Château de la Muette, the night ending in popular rejoicing. This marked the beginning of a fortnight-long sequence of popular festivities in the forms of fireworks, jousts, and balls on the ruins of the Bastille. The Federation remained in the forefront of public consciousness through the theatre, with plays running in Britain and France in the summer and autumn, and through the dissemination of memorabilia.

The Parisian Festival of the Federation was the crowning event of a movement of federations in the provinces that had built up a sense of national solidarity and defiance against the Revolution's enemies.[28] As such federative festivals spread over France, the regular troops risked catching the revolutionary frenzy, and the Constituent Assembly, at the request of the National Guard and the Paris municipality, decreed a national festival on 14 July, ostensibly to celebrate the anniversary of the Fall of the Bastille but more importantly, to keep the federations under control and cement the unity of the nation. Annie Jourdan noted that 1790 was the year of the rise of perils, with counterrevolution hardening, and unrest and revolt spreading in the South of France in the form of religious conflict pitting Catholics against Protestants.[29] In that sense, the Federation on 14 July was no spur to revolutionary enthusiasm, but an attempt to conserve peace, to uphold law and order and stabilize the revolution. Mona Ozouf could write of its "profoundly conservative character".[30] Thousands of federations took place simultaneously in French towns and

[27] See e.g. *Gazetteer and New Daily Advertiser*, 19 July. The music, by Gossec, was much praised.
[28] Micah Alpaugh, 'Les Émotions collectives et le mouvement des fédérations (1789-1790)', trans. by Julien Louvrier, *Annales historiques de la Révolution française*, 372, 2013, 49–80.
[29] Annie Jourdan, *Nouvelle Histoire de la Révolution*, Au fil de l'histoire (Paris: Flammarion, 2018), pp. 65, 74. See p. 65-75 on the political and social context.
[30] Ozouf, *Festivals and the French Revolution*, p. 44.

villages, where participants took the same oath.[31] The relative freedom left to the organizers resulted in a wide array of festivals that incorporated local customs, religious traditions, and even oriental or ancient symbolism.[32] Festivals, as Guillaume Mazeau reminded us, were not inherently subversive and were often in the continuity of ancien-régime *réjouissances*, which served to legitimize the authorities.[33]

The Federation was a cultural event of prime importance, but the British ambassador did not see it as a significant political shift. George Granville Leveson-Gower, second Earl Gower, was very brief in his despatches to the Foreign Office. He wrote on July 16 that the festival "was conducted with astonishing regularity"; despite the fall of a temporary wooden bridge over the Seine (an accident that several English papers noted). He merely added the text of the King's oath, and noted that the people did not applaud the Duke of Orléans, alone of the Royal Family. On July 23, Gower noted dismissively that the Federation introduced a week of "Panem et circenses".[34] The festival served to gauge the Royal Family's popularity. One feels it was a distraction for the ambassador, as it could hardly help him in his mandate of sounding the court and the National Assembly for France's designs in foreign and colonial policy.

The British press on the Federation: preparations

The British knew about the projected festival by mid-June. The London papers, followed by their provincial counterparts, published projects as soon as they obtained them from Paris. On 16 June, the *Chester Chronicle*, treated its readers with a "description of the intended grand Revolution Anniversary, at Paris", which evoked a bridge of boats on the Seine, and the conversion of the Field of Mars into a coliseum, "which, when finished, will be not unlike the celebrated one of Rome". The Federation would outdo the antiquity in sublimity. "What an assembly! says the French writer from whom I have chiefly drawn the above; never did Athens, Sparta, Corinth, Tyre, Thebes, Carthage, or Rome, offer such a spectacle!" The *Chester Chronicle*, which opened its columns to English and Welsh radicals, is one of the very few papers that adopted a stance favourable to the French

[31] The oath was circulated in a letter sent forth by the municipality of Paris a few days before the event: *Ibid.*, p. 43.
[32] *Ibid.*, pp. 51–3.
[33] Mazeau, para. 6.
[34] George Granville Leveson Earl Gower, *The Despatches of Earl Gower*, ed. by Oscar Browning (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1885), pp. 14, 17. The draft of instructions to Gower features on p.1-4.

Revolution until 1797.[35] Its account of the preparations reveals its optimism about the fate of the Revolution.

Some people harboured dark misgivings. Many crossed the Channel to see the festival, "the universal loadstone", as the *Derby Mercury* called it on 8 July, but rumours of violence and counter-revolutionary plots spread from France to Britain. Caleb Whitefoord, writing shortly before the Federation, evinced the typical fear that the French could not be trusted to celebrate their newly won liberty safely:

> A great Number of People are hurrying over to Paris to be present at the Celebration of the Anniversary of the Revolution. I hope my D[r] Sir you don't intend to assist it. I augur mischief there, and have no idea that 500,000 People drunk with Liberty can assemble together without heating and fermenting and producing some bloody Catastrophe.[36]

The reporting on the Federation revealed the political fault lines of Britain in 1790. This was the case in France as well, where three tendencies stood out in the Parisian press. Patriots saw the Federation as a magnificent festival promoting national reconciliation; an in-between position noted that the popular joy was somewhat spoiled by confused threats; the Maratist extreme left, and on the other side of the political spectrum, the counter-revolutionaries, both denounced a spectacle staged to gull the people.[37] The London press followed the majority tendency of the Parisian press and sometimes noted counter-revolutionary tendencies in France. Some papers seemed to believe in reconciliation. Marat's radicalism was absent. British papers did not present the festival as a political machination, as they were to do from 1791 on. While the coverage of the ceremony itself in the British press tended to be factual, ideological bias appeared in shorter articles on the preparations, the aftermath or the broader situation of France. There was no significant distinctiveness in the Scottish, or in the English provincial press, except that was more hostility against the Revolution in Scotland. The Scottish papers often copied their London counterparts.[38] The *Edinburgh Herald,* which Henry Dundas controlled on behalf of the

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[35] Marion Löffler, *Welsh Responses to the French Revolution: Press and Public Discourse, 1789-1802*, Wales and the French Revolution (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 2012), p. 12. It was widely read in North Wales, but also circulated in Scotland.

[36] Charles Whitefoord, *The Whitefoord Papers; Being the Correspondence and Other Manuscripts of Colonel Charles Whitefoord and Caleb Whiteford, from 1739 to 1810* (Oxford, 1898), p. 208.

[37] Wauters, p. 62.

[38] This is the case of the long accounts published in the *Caledonian Mercury* and *Edinburgh Evening Courant* on July 22. On July 19, the *Edinburgh Herald* wrote that its article was taken from the *London Gazette* of July 13.

Pitt administration, was not particularly virulent against the Federation, but the *Edinburgh Evening Courant*, which he subsidized, published adverse comments.[39] This suggests that Dundas probably did not perceive the Federation as a sensitive issue to monitor through the press. Conversely, it did not take ministerial prodding for the *Courant* to criticize the Revolution, and in London, the ministerial *Times* and *Oracle* sided against the Revolution. The conflict was emerging between optimists who foretold liberty, enlightened reform and peace, and conservatives who denounced levelling and pillage, a good three months before Edmund Burke published *Reflections on the Revolution in France* (1 November 1790). Most of the London press was poised between curiosity and a wait-and-see attitude.

The *Edinburgh Evening Courant* and *London Chronicle*, holding opposite viewpoints on the same stories current in France, are examples of early political contention. Both insisted on rumours of "confusion, and perhaps mischief"[40] and on the enthusiastic spadework going on to prepare for the festival. The Edinburgh paper feared sexual and social upheaval:

> […] A great many beautiful women, dressed as Amazons, and headed by a Mad. Charton, are to attend the fete at Paris on the 14th. Among them, It is said, will be 200 Frenchwomen, who are to form themselves into a regular body, habiled [sic] as Amazons. What this great day may produce, and whether it may be of joy or sorrow, time only can determine; but the more prudent people are all leaving Paris, through the apprehension of some mischief on that day.[41]

The madam and her amazons threatened subversion of gender, and hence social, hierarchies. Even the unanimous enthusiasm of the Parisians, including ladies pushing wheelbarrows and "employing themselves in other laborious occupations", disrupted the social order. Such articles made sense within the context of a discourse developing in England about a rampant egalitarianism in France that was beginning to affect all social relations and the tiniest details of daily life. The same paper mentioned a report that the National Assembly would force everybody to wear black. "But let them beware how they carry matters too far – innovations are dangerous – already they have created enemies in all the ancient Nobility."[42] As both British well-wishers and critics correctly understood,

[39] On Dundas's incomplete control of the press in 1790: David J. Brown, 'The Government Response to Scottish Radicalism, 1792-1802', in *Scotland in the Age of the French Revolution*, ed. by Bob Harris (Edinburgh: John Donald, 2005), pp. 99–124 (p. 104).
[40] *Edinburgh Evening Courant*, 15 July 1790.
[41] *Edinburgh Evening Courant*, 15 July 1790.
[42] *Edinburgh Evening Courant*, 17 July 1790.

the Federation inserted itself in the French politics of symbolism, e.g. in the form of cockades and new forms of address.

The *Edinburgh Evening Courant* also resorted to the beloved Anglo-French contrast, to confirm that France was still the same:

> The characteristic spirit of the two nations, France and England, appears even in their conduct on the present occasion. – The wise and prudent part of the Parisians, unequal to the bustle and dangers of a mob, have left Paris – the English are flocking hither to enjoy the festival on Wednesday, for a *mob* is much more on their way. [43]

The *London Chronicle* mentioned the same kind of picturesque details, and compared French and English characters, but to opposite political effect. Dismissing fears, it evoked the preparations with a freshness that did justice to the optimism of the days:

> Eighteen thousand men are constantly at work in forming the amphitheatre for the spectators; and as it is feared that their labour is not sufficient to complete it for the appointed day, many citizens of Paris repair thither as volunteers to assist them. This day their number was very great; many women went to work, and some of them very genteely dressed, tucked up their petticoats, and handled the pick-axe. Luckily these Amazons had breeches under their feminine dress. – The French say that every thing in England is done by a spirit of calculation; here every thing may be said to be set agoing by enthusiasm.[44]

The "Amazons" are metaphorical and eroticized; but even as they tuck up their petticoats and wield pickaxes, they do not seem to threaten the peace or the established order. The concluding judgment recalled current French prejudices against perfidious Albion. The journalist toned down the subversive character of the Federation by falling back on the reassuring image of the French as vivacious, enthusiastic, and obsessed with fashion.

The British press coverage of the ceremony and following merry-making

A few papers dramatized the longing for news and highlighted the efforts they made to satisfy it.[45] The *Whitehall Evening Post* copied essentially the same letter as the *St James's Chronicle*, on the same day, but with two extra paragraphs thematising the thirst for the news:

[43] *Edinburgh Evening Courant*, 17 July 1790.
[44] *London Chronicle*, 8-10 July 1790.
[45] The *Gazetteer and New Daily Advertiser* (19 July) justified its late account "because we do not covet the honour of being the first to propagate falshood."

> Anxious to communicate to you the tranquil result of our great festival, which has so completely defeated the hopes and belied the auguries of freedom, I embrace the opportunity of the Courier who is just setting off. I am compelled therefore to defer till tomorrow that ample and regular account from which I am now precluded by scantiness of time, and disabled by the agitation of mind produced by so great a scene."[46]

The report was written in Paris *to the moment*, as in a Richardsonian novel full of suspense and sentiment, just in time for the mail coach to whisk it off to London. The end of the article opposes two kinds of readers. "Less ambitious of gratifying the appetite of the curious, than of appeasing the solicitude of the benevolent, I hasten to close this account, which though it be deficient in order and barren of details, will yet convey to the Friends of Freedom and Humanity the glad news that this day has passed undisturbed by tumult, and unstained with civil blood."[47] Such an article suggests that the Revolution, at least in its earlier stages, could be an object of curiosity without ideological implications or any need to take sides. The paper appeals to the right kind of reader, the "benevolent" one who wishes to know that the Federation, and by implication the Revolution, were safe and bloodless. The paragraph reveals the degree of curiosity, some of if malign, that the Federation elicited, and it presented the readers of the *Whitehall Evening Post* in a positive fashion. Meanwhile, the rhetorical ploy turns the defects of the article into assets, because details only feel the unseemly gluttony of the "the curious".

The few letters accounting for the Federation arrived in London on 17 July. English papers devoted much space, as much as one page, to the festival. The articles were very similar, based as they were on a few letters from Paris, and later on programmes circulating in France. The London press published the letters in the very few days following 17 July; provincial England and Scotland followed suit a few days later. Even a paper in Jamaica published an account of the Federation in late September.[48] The articles all narrated the events of the day in chronological order, detailing the thirty groups composing the procession. The articles mentioned the route of the procession, without commenting on its political or religious significance. The bulk of the articles bore on the proceedings on the Champ de Mars. The climax was the series of oaths, starting with the one that Louis XVI swore inside his pavilion: "I, citizen, King of the French, do swear that I will employ the

[46] *Whitehall Evening Post*, 17-20 July 1790.
[47] *Whitehall Evening Post*, 17-20 July 1790.
[48] *Kingston Daily Adviser*, 20 September 1790.

whole power delegated to me by the constitutional law of the State, to maintain the Constitution, and enforce the execution of the law."[49] The National Assembly members, the national guards, and then the whole assembly of half a million, proceeded to take the oath. The press focused on the King's acceptance of the new parliamentary monarchy, rather than on popular allegiance.

The British press dutifully noted the edifying tableaux involving mothers and children, and other age groups, which composed the long scenography.[50] Such virtuous compositions were still fresh and new; two years at most were enough to take the gloss off them. British press accounts of the Federation's pageant, like the hundreds of *procès-verbaux* historians study, leave an overall impression of majestic dullness. The press occasionally gave glimpses of spontaneous behaviour. On 20 July 1790, the *World* gave its readers one of the rather bawdy song that were sung as the deputies were going to the Field of Mars: "Ye ARISTOCRATS, / You are lost! / We shall kiss your Wives, / And you'll kiss our –." The paper also noted that Mirabeau had called the heavens "aristocrats" on account of the pouring rain. Mirabeau was taking part in in the French debate around the weather at the Federation, which inverted the equation between the sun and the Revolution: this debate developed in French literature of the revolutionary decade[51] and found echoes in Britain. Many reports showed that the joy of the crowd was so great, that "in the flow of Joy, its [the people's] ecstacy was frequently manifested by involuntary *bursts of tears!*"[52] "The multitude were frantic in the expression of their joy" when they saw "the captors and demolishers of the Bastile"[53]. While even some French patriots, like Mirabeau, were disappointed,[54] the British press coverage of the 14 July events was generally benevolent, and devoid of national animosity. Neither the sacred drama at Notre Dame nor the high mass celebrated by the bishop of Autun (Talleyrand) in the afternoon attracted adverse comments, not even the sacralisation of the national altar on which the *fédérés* swore. "Every one had cut a piece of the table as a relick", the *World* wrote, without any anti-Catholic slant.[55]

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[49] *Gazetteer and New Daily Advertiser,* 19 July 1790.
[50] *St. James's Chronicle*, 17-20 July 1790.
[51] Olivier Ritz, *Les Métaphores naturelles dans le débat sur la Révolution* (Paris: Classiques Garnier, 2016), pp. 25–44.
[52] *Aberdeen Journal,* 2 August 1790.
[53] *British Chronicle, or, Pugh's Hereford Journal*, 21 July 1790. *Les vainqueurs de la Bastille* had taken part in the Storming on 14 July 1789.
[54] Ozouf, *Festivals and the French Revolution,* p. 49.
[55] *World*, 20 July 1790. Anti-Catholicism was extremely marginal. Among dozens of articles examined, it was present in only one letter to the editor of the *Public Advertiser* (28 July).

The dinner following the Federation was a moment of grace and harmony. "Every part of the neighbouring country was covered with tents, and in various appointed places dinner and wine were delivered to the poor gratis."[56] In a rare acknowledgment of the presence of Britons at the Federation, the *Aberdeen Journal* reported on the dinner given to the *fédérés* at La Muette:

> As soon as the company was dispersed from the Champ de Mars, the Provincial Deputies retired to an entertainment prepared for them by the National Guards of the sixty Paris districts, at La MUETTE, where they found 15,000 covers laid, and an ample supply of wine, which many others partook of, and amongst them some of our own countrymen, whose example, as the senior sons of liberty, was readily followed up by her younger children, and some of them sacrificed so copiously to the jolly god, as to be scarcely able to join in the general cry of *Vive la Liberte*.[57]

The banquet symbolically reproduces the beloved narrative presenting the French as imitators of the Britons, their teachers, or, as here, "senior sons of liberty". The intoxication of liberty takes on a jovial aspect, far from the sinister threat Burke was to denounce three months later. It is unlikely the *Aberdeen Journal* had a correspondent in Paris: rather, the journalist must have received inspiration from French papers. The press also drew a picture of simple, joyful harmony when covering the large public ball that was given on the Sunday following the Federation, in the ruins of the Bastille, under the banner inscribed "Ici l'on danse".[58]

The discrepancy between the dull official pageant and the effusions of popular joy raises the question of the definition and location of *la fête* itself. French historians have meditated on that tension, and some, like Daniel Guérin, have located the true fête outside the official events, in the emotional release *against* the authorities.[59] The Federation may be read as the attempted containment, by the National Assembly and army officers, of the carnivalesque energy of the masses.[60] For Antoine de Baecque, similarly, the official ceremony was pure theatre, in the sense of a stage-managed ceremony for a passive audience, while the true *fête* lay in the enthusiastic spadework before, and the popular

[56] *Gazetteer and New Daily Advertiser*, 19 July 1790; *Hampshire Chronicle*, 26 July 1790.
[57] *Aberdeen Journal*, 2 August 1790.
[58] *Public Advertiser*, 27 July 1790.
[59] Ozouf, *Festivals and the French Revolution*, p. 31; Daniel Guérin, *La Lutte de classes sous la Première République: 1793-1797*, La suite des temps, 16, Nouv. éd. rev. et augm. (France: Gallimard, 1968).
[60] Claire Trévien, 'Le Monde à l'envers: The Carnivalesque in Prints of the Construction of the Fête de La Fédération of 1790', *French History*, 26.1 (2012), 34–52 (p. 39).

entertainment after.[61] True, the preparations of the festival gave lasting contributions to the image of the Revolution, and in the form of the song *Ça ira*, promised to a long posterity in France and abroad. The English press reported on that song immediately. But such a distinction between official and unofficial (or popular) festival is not so clear-cut in the British press. Papers reproduced official programmes at length and added snippets of anecdotal local colour. The idea that the essence of the festival lies in popular joy is more palpable in eyewitnesses' accounts than in the press: direct experience makes all the difference from copying letters and articles from abroad.

Commentators based in Britain often projected their ideology on the Federation. It kept up the hopes of reformers who expected a constitutional and economic overhaul of Britain. Before Burke's *Reflections*, it also revealed undercurrents of counter-revolutionary opposition. Soon after the festival came the criticism of its social implications. *The Times* presented the magnificent illuminations and spectacles on the Sunday following the Federation as saturnalia. "There was such a general system of liberty at the late REVOLUTION Festival in France, that it is thought it will give a *new birth* to some thousand free born children." Servants of both sexes "took liberties" with their masters and mistresses. "Distinction was lost": by mid-1790, the *Times* was denouncing the spectre of socio-economic levelling.[62] Others, as will be seen with Helen Maria Williams, subscribed to an optimistic Whig narrative. More immediately, the Federation offered opportunities for business in an increasingly commercialised world of art and drama.

The commercial and theatrical exploitation of the Federation in England:

Entrepreneurs were quick to cash in on the public's curiosity. A number of porcelain objects and metal ware bore Federation motifs. The Musée de la Révolution française at Vizille (Isère, France) has on display a cream pot with inscriptions relative to the festival of the Federation.[63] The Bastille was a more frequent motif, and in 1789, it could be allied with British patriotic imagery with no sense of contradiction, as attested by a large English-made earthenware jug bearing an image of the Bastille ruins with the English words "The Destruction of the BASTILLE" on one face, and a reproduction of Benjamin West's *Death*

[61] Antoine de Baecque, 'Le Ris et les pleurs: spectacles des affections', in *Fêtes et Révolution*, ed. by Béatrice de Andia (Paris: Délégation à l'action artistique de la ville de Paris, 1989), pp. 140–55; Baecque, *Le corps de l'histoire*, p. 304. Cecilia Feilla elaborates on the distinction between theatre and festival in *The Sentimental Theater of the French Revolution*, p. 106-107.
[62] *Times*, 27 July 1790.
[63] Collection number MRF 1992-2.

of General Wolfe (1770) on the other (the object is inscribed "Richard Stitt Marchant Comber 1791").[64] Public opinion progressively polarized and in majority turned against France; 1792 was probably the pivotal year, marked as it was by Paine's second part of *Rights of Man*, the foundation of the London Corresponding Society in January, the Royal Proclamation against seditious writings in May and the loyalist wave in the autumn and winter 1792-1793.[65] By early 1793, manufacturers were issuing products with counter-revolutionary messages, such as the jug representing "Separation of Louis XVI from his Family" and, on the other side, "Massacre of the French King" with a representation of the guillotine. Similarly, Matthew Boulton sold metal medals and tokens to France, until the National Assembly banned imports in June 1792. Josiah Wedgwood issued series of cameos representing France and liberty, and portraits of revolutionary leaders. Soon, however, manufacturers felt the wind turn, and, by mid-1792, they were catering to loyalist audiences.[66] Revolutionary-themed objects were much more frequent in France. The *fédérés* brought home souvenirs of the day, carrying a message of unity between King, army and people.[67] Helen Maria Williams mentioned Madame Brulart, ci-devant de Genlis, who wore "a medallion made of a stone of the Bastille polished."[68] She herself bought a snuff-box with a picture of the conservative Abbé Maury popping out.[69] The English in Paris visited the site of the Bastille and picked up stones as souvenir. The young Wordsworth remembered in *The Prelude* that he "from the rubbish gathered up a stone, / And pocketed the relic, in the guise / Of an enthusiast," though he recognized affecting "more emotion than [he] felt."[70] English sympathizers of the Revolution displayed their own stones: parliamentary reformer John Horne Tooke had a fragment of the Bastille

[64] MRF 1990-77. The description was communicated by the Musée de la Révolution française, Vizille.
[65] On popular loyalism: Robert R. Dozier, *For King, Constitution and Country: the English Loyalists and the French Revolution* (Lexington, KY: University Press of Kentucky, 1983); H. T. Dickinson, 'Popular Conservatism and Militant Loyalism 1789-1815', in *Britain and the French Revolution, 1789-1815*, ed. by H. T. Dickinson (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1989), pp. 103–25; Mark Philp, 'Vulgar Conservatism, 1792-3', *English Historical Review*, 110 (1995), 42–69; Atle L. Wold, 'Loyalism in Scotland in the 1790s', in *Reactions to Revolutions : The 1790s and Their Aftermath*, ed. by Martin Schmidt and others, Kulturgeschichtliche Perspektiven, 2 (Münster: Lit, 2007), pp. 109–36.
[66] David Bindman, *The Shadow of the Guillotine: Britain and the French Revolution* (London: British Museum publications, 1989), pp. 94–101.
[67] Ozouf, *Festivals and the French Revolution*, p. 57.
[68] Helen Maria Williams, *Letters Written in France: In the Summer 1790, to a Friend in England, Containing Various Anecdotes Relative to the French Revolution*, ed. by Neil Fraistat and Susan S Lanser, Broadview Literary Texts (Peterborough, Ont: Broadview, 2001), p. 79. Treating Bastille stones as jewelry was frequent at the time: Hans-Jürgen Lüsebrink and Rolf Reichardt, *The Bastille: A History of a Symbol of Despotism and Freedom*, trans. by Norbert Schürer, Bicentennial Reflections on the French Revolution (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1997), p. 80.
[69] Helen Maria Williams, *Letters Written in France*, p. 86.
[70] *The Prelude*, IX.65-71.

"deposited in a conspicuous place in his study".[71] Such stones were important tokens, to be exchanged and displayed, as was the case at the commemorative dinner of 14 July 1791 at the Crown and Anchor in London.

The Federation also inspired a few iconographic representations.[72] The young caricaturist Frederick George Byron set out to visit France in 1790, probably out of curiosity about the Revolution.[73] He may well have found himself in Paris during the Federation without even intending it, so sudden was the organisation of the event. Byron sent to London five watercolours with French themes, among them *Returning from a Review at the Champ de Mars in Paris* (probably inspired by the Federation but printed in 1802 only).[74] He also drew his most ambitious work, *La Fête de la Fédération au Champ de Mars en 1790*.[75] This large-scale composition (201x75cm) is a bird's eye view of the large amphitheatre packed with spectators. The interior of the great oval contains serpentine columns of federates; neither the king (in a pavilion in the distant background) nor La Fayette or even the federates form any visual focus. Byron wanted to paint the spectators rather than the spectacle: a well-dressed crowd with umbrellas here and there, in an idealized rendition of a very rainy day. Byron's clever use of the umbrellas may be likened to that of some revolutionary commentators, like the 15 July 1790 *Journal de Paris*, which turned the umbrellas as a sign of comradeship, the metaphor of a community of sentiments.[76] As Philippe Bordes commented, "it is not the official ceremony that the artists want to immortalize, but the extraordinary bustle in the tribunes, the behaviour of spectators clapping hands, eating, drinking, talking and wooing each other."[77] This interest in spectators rather than spectacle is an important theme that recurs in later examples. Byron's depiction contrasts with that of newspapers, because he focuses on the atmosphere of gaiety, almost of frivolity, not on the official programme. The point of view is a figuration of popular sovereignty. While the King receded into nothingness in the far horizon, the

[71] Alexander Stephens, *Memoirs of John Horne Tooke*, 2 vols (London: J. Johnson, 1813), II, p. 112.
[72] Bindman, pp. 93–97.
[73] Frederick George Byron was the first cousin of Lord Byron's father. He had a very brief carreer from 1784 to his death in 1792, at the age of 27. This paragraph is based on: Philippe Bordes, 'De la Satire sociale à la charge contre Burke: La Cour d'auberge à Calais (1790) de F. G. Byron', *Revue Du Louvre et Des Musées de France*, 4, 1992, 57–64.
[74] On *Returning from a Review* (BM 8275), see Bindman, p. 94; Pascal Dupuy, *Caricatures anglaises, 1789-1815: face à la Révolution et l'Empire*, Collections du musée Carnavalet (Paris: Paris-Musées, 2008), p. 114. See fig. 1, p. 374.
[75] The painting is held at the Musée Carnavalet in Paris: <http://parismuseescollections.paris.fr/fr/musee-carnavalet/oeuvres/la-fete-de-la-federation-au-champ-de-mars-en-1790#infos-principales>.
[76] Ritz, pp. 38–39.
[77] Bordes, p. 61. My translation.

circular framework represented citizens acting in the sight of the whole people. While newspapers suggest efficient top-down control in a sedate constitutional monarchy, Byron adopts the point of view of the spectator enjoying newly won liberty in simple pleasures.

The Federation soon fell out of fashion, however. In the autumn of 1790, he planned, with the printer William Holland, an aquatint and a series of engravings, but neither project went through.[78] There was no longer a market for light-hearted depictions of Paris.

The most important way, apart from the press, in which the London public was exposed to the Federation, was the theatre. The Federation, with its grandiose setting and extensive press coverage, made ideal material for theatre managers. Just a year before, the Fall of the Bastille had whetted competition between licensed and unlicensed playhouses, and "inspired a more radical reaction from the minor houses, similar to that of the deprivileged theatres of Paris."[79] Even criticisms of the Federation suggest that it lent itself to dramatic imaginings. As early as 22 July, the *Times* imagined the Paris Federation as a spectacle and suggested to managers the prologue of *Henry V* as a model, with Lafayette assuming "the post of MARS, and at his heels, / Leash'd in like hounds, should famine, sword, and fire / Crouch for employment."[80] This short parody is perhaps the earliest of the *Times'* many counter-revolutionary Shakespearian squibs.[81] On August 3, the *London Chronicle* also predicted that "[t]he Fœderation in Paris, on the 14th of July last, promises to furnish materials for all the English theatres, and no doubt every Manager will make an attempt."

No less than six productions about the Festival ran from the summer to the winter of 1790, in both the patented and the fringe theatres. The texts of only two plays have survived, those of the harlequinades *The Paris Federation* (given at a minor, unlicensed house, the Royalty Theatre, from August 1790) and *The Picture of Paris, Taken in the Year 1790* by Charles Bonner and Robert Merry, which premiered on December 1790 at Covent Garden.[82] Representations of the Federation followed a pattern established by plays on the fall of the Bastille. The two harlequinades first ran in theatres outside the jurisdiction of the Lord Chancellor, who had forbidden topics touching too closely on the demise of the

[78] See the call for subscription in *World*, 19 October 1790.
[79] George Taylor, p. 47.
[80] *Times*, 22 July 1790.
[81] See chapter 3, p.148 and following for further examples.
[82] See the full list in: Cecilia Feilla, 'Performing History: Harlequinades of the French Revolution on the Popular London Stage', *Studies in Eighteenth Century Culture*, 45 (2016), 61–81 (pp. 66–67).

French monarchy. The same entrepreneurs were sometimes involved in 1789 and 1790. The patented theatres entered the fray only later, because of intestine crisis rather than political or commercial squeamishness. The representations of the Federation on the London stage shared key features: they attempted to reproduce onstage the outsized ceremony, with the various actors, King, royal family, National Assembly, La Fayette and the guardsmen, and with stock characters (priests, market women) embodying the audience.

The circus proprietor Philip Astley (1742-1814), who knew Paris well for having opened an "Amphithéâtre Astley" in the rue du Faubourg-du-Temple in 1783, was the first to cash in on the vogue for the Federation in England.[83] He wished to stage as lively and faithful a representation of the Federation as possible in the family circus, the "Royal Grove", located at Westminster Bridge. By the late 1780s, he was working with his son John Conway Philip Astley (1768-1821).

He went to Paris to attend the federation and sent sketches and instructions to his son back in London.[84] The show was "a new Musical Sketch founded on the Paris Confederation". Press articles promised "inimitable scenery and machinery" representing the grandiose setting, but also realistic depiction of "Inhabitants of Paris, as they really appeared on the above day."[85] Astley made astute use of a new feature inaugurated by the Federation: the battalions of children. The press had mentioned all the elements present in the advertisements, rousing the public's curiosity.[86] The show premiered on 26 July. For the *Public Advertiser*, the "interesting and so-much talked of subject" attracted a numerous audience eager to see the difference between French and English freedom. "Our Gallic neighbours", the paper added with a patriotic flourish, can never "put themselves on a footing with England, however desirous they may be so to do."[87] The show ran in London with much success, then toured in Dublin for ten days in November.[88]

Another canny entrepreneur, Ralph Wewitzer (1748-1825), had also attended the festival in Paris.[89] Probably as successful was Sadler's Well, which "also ran a two-part *The Champ de Mars; or, Loyal Fœderation* until 18 July 1791".[90] The *London Chronicle*

[83] Marius Kwint, 'Astley, Philip (1742–1814), equestrian performer and circus proprietor', *ODNB*.
[84] *Public Advertiser*, 15 June 1790.
[85] *English Chronicle*, 22 July 1790.
[86] *English Chronicle*, 22 July 1790.
[87] *Public Advertiser*, 28 July 1790.
[88] John Hall Stewart, 'The French Revolution on the Dublin Stage, 1790-1794', *Journal of the Royal Society of Antiquaries of Ireland*, 91.2 (1961), 183–92 (pp. 183–85).
[89] Peter Thomson, 'Wewitzer, Ralph (1748–1825), actor', *ODNB*.
[90] D. WORRALL, *Theatric Revolution, op. cit.*, p. 95.

found the national cockade "new and picturesque" and praised the "loyalty" of the performance, because it showed the French royal family visiting the workers on the Champ de Mars before the ceremony.[91] A run of nearly a year for a topical play suggests some lasting appeal of the Federation, but also a deft management to adapt the play to the shifting tastes of the public.

Both *The Paris Federation* and *The Picture of Paris* tried to reproduce the grandeur of the settings in realistic fashion, while using sentimental and sensational ploys, such as visits to the gloomy dungeons of the Bastille. Both shows followed generic conventions, with a first part involving the characters of Harlequin, Columbine and Pantaloon, and a second part set in Paris. The shows played with national stereotypes to reassert British superiority. The libretto of *The Paris Federation* features a song castigating "the cruel Aristocracy" and "Lettres de Cachet":

> We now possess the rights of man,
> Our king no longer heads their plan;
> 'Tis that which gives us life.[92]

The libretto included the scores of other revolutionary songs, including *Ça ira*, adapted to the harpsichord.[93] It is a very rare example of pro-Revolution material of popular origin to be found outside radical publications, this time addressed to an aristocratic and middling-rank public. The Federation was an occasion for disseminating revolutionary material, a rare occurrence which happened with few later festivals. In this case, the reason was not any political engagement of the theatre manager, but his perception of the London audiences' thirst for realism, and even of a fad for revolution. By mid-1790, many in the British public did not perceive the French Revolution as threatening, or subversive. A theatre manager's bet on *Ça ira*'s popularity suggests there were enough sympathizers to support a market. In 1790, it was light-hearted, and its violent potential emerged only later.[94] The song had a long career in Britain, as chapter 4 will show. In any case, politically risky songs and scenes were countered by praise of Britannia and her king.[95] The

[91] *London Chronicle*, 31 July - 3 August 1790.
[92] *A Sketch of the Entertainment, Now Performing at the Royalty Theatre, in Two Parts: Consisting of a Pantomimic Preludio, and The Paris Federation. To Which Is Added, the Popular French Music, Adapted to the Harpsichord* (London: to be had at the Theatre, 1790), pp. 11–13.
[93] The song was also sold as a single folio sheet in Dublin, where the *Picture of Paris* was also played: *Ca ira. A Celebrated French National Air As Sung in the Picture of Paris* (in English and French), Dublin: Hime, [1790?], British Library H.1601.g.(13.).
[94] Laura Mason, '"Ça Ira" and the Birth of the Revolutionary Song', *History Workshop*, 28, 1989, 22–38.
[95] Feilla, 'Performing History', p. 75; George Taylor, p. 45.

pantomimes showed sympathy to French liberty but reasserted that British liberty was older, and more perfect, implying that revolution was unnecessary in Britain. The French Revolution was a spectacle seen from the other shore of the Channel, safely.

British eyewitnesses' responses to French festivals, from the Federation to Thermidor

The Federation: a festival for the whole world?

While audiences in Britain enthused over the Federation, Britons in France could not remain indifferent. Nationals of other European countries also witnessed the Federation, like the German Count von Wolzogen. There were at least four attempts to send foreign delegations to the Festival, one by Dutch patriots, another one by Anacharsis Cloots, erstwhile German Baron and self-styled "ambassador of the human race", a third by the American naval commander John Paul Jones.[96] The National Assembly allowed foreigners to attend but denied them any representative function.

The third attempt was made by the Duc de La Rochefoucauld, who invited his correspondents of the London Revolution Society. Price's *Discourse on the Love of Our Country* expressed the hopes entertained for a decade by the followers of Lord Lansdowne, the Whig magnate, who, as Lord Shelburne, had put an end to the American War and negotiated the Treaty of Paris.[97] Since the early 1780s, the Bowood Circle, which gathered reformers like Price, Joseph Priestley and Jeremy Bentham in Lansdowne's country house, speculated that political liberalization and free-trade agreements between the large powers of Europe and the United States could usher in a period of everlasting peace and economic prosperity through.[98] In 1790, those men were sanguine about the prospect of perpetual Anglo-French peace. On 22 May, the National Assembly passed its celebrated "Declaration of Peace to the World", renouncing wars of conquest and any attack on a free people. The Duke de La Rochefoucauld-Liancourt invited Price to send a delegation to the Paris Federation. Price declined the invitation on account of his poor health; he also confided

[96] On the Batavian patriots : Mazeau, p. 19. Michel Vovelle, 'Anacharsis Cloots, l'orateur Du Genre Humain', in *Politique, Religion et Laïcité*, ed. by Christine Peyrard, Le Temps de l'histoire (Aix-en-Provence: Presses universitaires de Provence, 2017), pp. 81–87 (para. 4).; on Jones: *Archives parlementaires*, vol.17, p.40-41.
[97] J. M. Norris, *Shelburne and Reform* (London; New York: St Martin's Press, 1963); *An Enlightenment Statesman in Whig Britain: Lord Shelburne in Context, 1737-1805*, ed. by Nigel Aston and Clarissa Campbell Orr, Studies in Early Modern Cultural, Political and Social History, 11 (Woodbridge: Boydell, 2011).
[98] Richard Whatmore, 'Shelburne and Perpetual Peace : Small States, Commerce, and International Relations within the Bowood Circle', in *An Enlightenment Statesman in Whig Britain : Lord Shelburne in Context, 1737-1805*, ed. by Nigel Aston and Clarissa Campbell Orr, Studies in Early Modern Cultural, Political and Social History, 11 (Woodbridge: Boydell, 2011), pp. 249–73 (p. 257).

misgivings about the risk of insurrection (in a private letter, not in public).[99] He also wrote to La Rochefoucauld that the Revolution Society could not send a respectable deputation to Paris, because the two noblemen in the society had resigned their membership. Because the society was so small, exchanges with the Jacobin clubs and especially the National Assembly became unequal and embarrassing. Epistolary exchanges failed to materialize into travel. Still, the cosmopolitan ideals of this particular set of men were expressed in the correspondence with France,[100] but also, as this section and the next will consider, in the press, and, most eloquently, in Helen Maria Williams's *Letters Written in France*.

The abstract of occurrences for July 1790 in the *English Review* read the Festival of the Federation through the cosmopolitan lens shared by Price, the Lansdowne set and the Revolution Society.[101] They saw the Federation as the fruit of a century of enlightening knowledge and the herald of a free, constitutional monarchy giving power to the most respectable classes in France. They predicted that the parliamentary monarchy would be stable.

The decency of the Federation symbolized for them the perfection of the new French monarchy, based on reason and "on principles of abstracted perfection," for the first time in recorded history. The article displayed an unbounded faith in reason: it could serve "to regulate futurity". In keeping with the ideas of Lansdowne and his circle, they hoped that Anglo-French warfare would give way to rivalry in trade, arts and crafts. The Federation justified faith in reason and the spread of knowledge, while keeping politics within the purview of the "respectable", as a blueprint for a technocratic polity controlled by the middling orders.

Helen Maria Williams on French festivals

Helen Maria Williams' writings eloquently expressed this progressive view. She was certainly the most cogent British commentator of French festivals. She is now remembered for her *Letters Written in France in the Summer 1790*, which contain a classic passage on the Federation. But her eight-volume series of letters provide a running commentary on the Revolution until 1796; she added remarks on the Revolution in her

[99] Letter from Richard Price to the Duc de La Rochefoucauld-Liancourt, 2 July 1790, in Richard Price, *The Correspondence of Richard Price*, 3 vols (Durham, NC; Cardiff, UK: Duke University Press ; University of Wales Press, 1994), III, p. 306. Price to La Rochefoucauld, 6 July 1790, in Rémy Duthille, 'Thirteen Uncollected Letters of Richard Price', *Enlightenment and Dissent*, 27 (2011), 83–142 (pp. 123–24, 126–27).
[100] To answer critics, the Revolution Society published its French correspondence in 1792: *Correspondence of the Revolution Society*.
[101] *English Review, or, An Abstract of English and Foreign Literature*, 16 (July 1790), 74-80.

1798 *Tour of Switzerland* and continued to meditate on French manners and politics throughout the Napoleonic era and until the French Restoration, publishing a volume of letters in 1819. In the course of the Revolutionary decade, her position on festivals matured: she was the only one that reflected on that phenomenon over so many years. As Deborah Kennedy correctly saw, her first volume "clearly endorses the politics of the Revolution Society"; she was one of its main exponents since her lively writings had more appeal than those of the society.[102] In the 1780s, Williams had been a protégée of Dr Kippis, a longstanding colleague and friend of Price's; she was influenced by Dissent and her politics leaned towards the Whigs, although she claimed that she did not understand much politics and that she preferred to remain within the bounds of ladylike propriety. She had established a reputation with anti-slavery sentimental poems such as "Peru" in 1784 and "A Poem on the Bill lately Passed for Regulating the Slave Trade" in 1788.

She arrived in Paris on the day before the Federation, and she experienced the great event in raptures. She remained in France permanently from the summer of 1792, after two stays in England in 1791 and 1792. In the autumn of 1792, she started hosting a salon at home rue Helvétius in Paris, where she entertained French politicians and British travellers. Kennedy suggested that personal connections and sympathies were more important to her than ideological considerations,[103] but her frequentations and especially the portraits she drew in her works placed her firmly within the Girondin faction. She relished the Parisian sociability that gave women a prime role in nurturing and enlivening conversation. Along with her lover, John Hurford Stone, a committed radical, she played a role of go-between between English radicals and French businessmen and politicians; both were active in the *Société des Amis des Droits de l'Homme* that celebrated the Revolution in 1792, as chapter 3 will show. Williams and her sister remained in Paris even after the outbreak of war, and spent six weeks in prison in the autumn of 1793. In July 1794, Williams and Stone left Paris for a six-month stay in Switzerland, in company of Benjamin Vaughan, on a secret mission for the Committee of Public Safety.[104]

Most criticism on Williams's *Letters* has focused on the first volume, and shown its generic complexity, and the role of gender and literary conventions in representation.[105]

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[102] D. Kennedy, *Helen Maria Williams and the Age of Revolution* (Lewisburg, PA; London: Bucknell University Press; Associated University Presses, 2002), p. 55.
[103] *Ibid.*, p. 108.
[104] On the circumstances of the stay, see: Helen Maria Williams, *A Tour in Switzerland*, ed. by Patrick H. Vincent and Florence Widmer-Schnyder, Travaux sur la Suisse des Lumieres, 4 (Geneva: Slatkine, 2011).
[105] This account used in particular: Mary A. Favret, 'Spectatrice as Spectacle: Helen Maria Williams at Home in the Revolution', *Studies in Romanticism*, 32.2 (1993), 273–95; Steven Blakemore, *Crisis in*

But her life is well narrated in Deborah Kennedy's biography; recently, Kimberley Page-Jones and Véronique Léonard-Rocques have analysed her view of the sociability of French festivals, not just in 1790, but later in the decade, comparing it with the opposite, conservative, view of another eyewitness and letter-writer, Charlotte Biggs.[106]

Williams's first volume of *Letters* appeared as London theatres were awash with plays on the Revolution. Consistently playing down revolutionary violence, depicting Revolution on the mode of Sterne's *Sentimental Journey*, it was a popular and critical success, because it met a mood of optimism and sympathy for France. This encouraged Williams to publish a continuation, which eventually ran to eight volumes until 1796. The *Letters from France* became less popular in time because her continuing faith in the Revolution despite its violence was out of touch with the British public's disenchantment.[107]

Williams's enthralled description of the federation in the second chapter of her *Letters Written in France in the Summer 1790* has remained famous.[108] Her account presents it as a day to be cherished and remembered forever because, on the Field of the Federation – formerly the warlike Champ de Mars – Frenchmen and women, and foreigners, had bonded in mystic communion, collapsing national and social differences. "The people, sure, the people were the sight!", she enthused: rich and poor bonded together in communion.[109] Even the weather became dramatized: when the moment of taking the oath came, "the sun burst forth" from the rainy clouds, and the people looked up to the deity. Weeping and embraces followed:

> Oh no! this was not a time in which the distinctions of country were remembered. It was the triumph of human kind; it was man asserting the noblest privileges of his nature; and it required but the common feelings of humanity to become in that moment a citizen of the world. For myself, I acknowledge that my heart caught with

Representation: Thomas Paine, Mary Wollstonecraft, Helen Maria Williams, and the Rewriting of the French Revolution (Madison, NJ: Fairleigh Dickinson University Press, 1997); Jack Fruchtman, 'Public Loathing, Private Thoughts: Historical Representation in Helen Maria Williams' Letters from France', in *The intersections of the public and private spheres in early modern England*, ed. by Timothy Dykstal and Paula R. Backscheider (London; Portland, OR: F. Cass, 1996), pp. 223–44. See also the critical edition of a later volume of *Letters* narrating 1793-1794: Helen Maria Williams, *An Eye-Witness Account of the French Revolution by Helen Maria Williams: Letters Containing a Sketch of the Politics of France*, ed. by Jack Fruchtman, Age of revolution and romanticism : interdisciplinary studies, 19 (New York: Peter Lang, 1997).

[106] Deborah Kennedy, *Helen Maria Williams and the Age of Revolution*; Kimberley Page-Jones and Véronique Léonard-Roques, 'Festive Spaces and Patriotic Sociabilities in the Letters of Rachel Charlotte Biggs and Helen Maria Williams', *Études Anglaises*, 74.3 (2021), 353–72.

[107] Deborah Kennedy, *Helen Maria Williams and the Age of Revolution*, p. 86.

[108] Helen Maria Williams, *Letters Written in France*, pp. 64–70.

[109] *Ibid.*, p. 64. This is a quotation from Pope's *First Epistle of the Second Book of Horace* (1737). Williams's emphasis on classlessness is somewhat belied by details from her account of the preparation, which mentions ladies working very little and some clergymen refusing to participate.

> enthusiasm the general sympathy; my eyes were filled with tears; and I shall never forget the sensations of that day.[110]

Here, Williams expressed Richard Price's cosmopolitan ideal of "universal benevolence", but in the language of sensibility, not in his apocalyptic Dissenting idiom. Using further sentimental tropes, she noted that the strength of emotion, especially the sublime, overwhelmed any power of utterance. "It is much easier to feel what is sublime than to paint it; and all I shall be able to give you will be a faint sketch, to which your own imagination must add colouring and spirit."[111] The sublimity of the Federation must be felt; those who did not were unnatural, and the absent could only imagine it by appealing to their own feelings of humanity. At the same time, as Mary Favret showed, the emotional response and the familiar form of the letter enabled Williams to enlist the reader into the community of universal, human sympathies.[112]

A striking feature of Williams's narrative is the tension between this sentimental rendition of personal feelings and documentary exactness. She reproduced the full list of the procession, which she could have found in the British press, in French brochures sold in Paris in advance of the event, or even in a leaflet sold at a newspaper office in Rouen, the city near which she was staying with French friends in the autumn of 1790 while she was writing the *Letters*.[113] She peppered her documentary narrative with anecdotes conveying the heady atmosphere of the times, quoting for instance Parisians' jokes about the pouring rain as a national cement. Ever attentive to national characters, she noted the "gaiety which distinguished the French character".[114] They could feel as citizens of the world for an exceptional moment, but remained decidedly French in their everyday life.

Far from being a starry-eyed enthusiast, however, Williams harboured misgivings about the revolutionary process, and her description of the Federation is not so transparently positive as it looks. Admittedly, she did not understand all the tensions pervading the event. In particular, she failed to grasp the malaise Louis XVI created by refusing to take the oath in the open air, before his people. She recalls La Fayette's witty retort that the oath was not an aria that could not be played twice.[115] Cecilia Feilla saw this moment as a "crisis of

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[110] *Ibid.*, p. 69.
[111] *Ibid.*, p. 63. On Williams's positive sublime, as distinguished from Burke's use of the sublime, see Blakemore, *Crisis in representation*.
[112] Favret, p. 280.
[113] On the 8-page leaflet sold in Rouen by the *Chronique nationale et étrangère*, see Wauters, p. 65.
[114] Helen Maria Williams, *Letters Written in France*, p. 69.
[115] *Ibid.*, p. 70. Very few papers in London noted the incident: see 'Foreign Intelligence', *European Magazine*, 18 (1790), 73–76 (p. 75).

performativity". "La Fayette said that repeating the oath would reduce it to a mere performance, a show, while the oath was a performative speech-act, a binding utterance, in essence an action."[116] La Fayette's witty retort evacuated the central problem of the validity of the king's utterances in the context of the emerging new constitutional order. Williams failed to appreciate the political significance of the episode, but she could hardly be expected to, as a freshly arrived foreigner. She did perceive other dangers. On his way to dinner after the festival, she told us, La Fayette fell in with a royalist crowd that threatened to kiss him to death. She quoted Nero in Racine's *Britannicus*: "I embrace my rival, but it is to destroy him."[117] English readers would be familiar with the French fad of kissing at the Federation.[118] Williams's shift to a tragic mode, sharply contrasting with the romance prevailing so far, reveals that she was aware of counter-revolutionary threats.[119]

Williams's treatment of the Federation was enriched by her mention of the private theatricals she participated in at the home of her friends, M. and Mme Du Fossé, in their castle near Rouen. Despite La Fayette's refusal to turn the king's oath into a show, the French used spectacle and re-enactments appropriate the revolution and turn into citizens. Williams played "the Representative of Liberty […] with all usual attributes" in a play by Collot d'Herbois, *La Famille patriote ou la Fédération.*[120] Despite Williams's insistence on spontaneity and unanimity on the Champ de Mars, the private representation revealed the props, costumes, and sheer artificiality of the *fête* as spectacle. The play might well have inspired some details of Williams's own account: for instance, a character mentions the sun bursting through the clouds and shining on the Champ de Mars, a detail which Williams used to great effect as we saw.[121]

Williams did not blindly eulogize the Federation; she was aware, to some extent, of its theatrical dimension, and she also realized that it left open the question "[w]hether the new form of government, establishing in France, be more or less perfect than our own".[122]

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[116] Feilla, *The Sentimental Theater of the French Revolution*, p. 101. Feilla notes that the miscarried oath was quoted among charges of perjury against Louis XVI during his trial.
[117] Helen Maria Williams, *Letters Written in France*, p. 70.
[118] Cruikshank's caricature *A New French Bussing Match or More Cursing & Swearing for the Assembly* (BM 7661) represents pairs of characters of opposite political sides kissing hypocritically.
[119] On shifts between different modes of representation: Steven Blakemore, 'Comedy, Tragedy and Romance in Williams' Letters from France', in *Crisis in Representation : Thomas Paine, Mary Wollstonecraft, Helen Maria Williams, and the Rewriting of the French Revolution* (Madison, NJ: Fairleigh Dickinson University Press, 1997), pp. 163–79.
[120] Page-Jones and Léonard-Roques, pp. 359–61 quotation from Williams p. 360. As the authors wrote, Collot d'Herbois was to enforce harsh repression as one of Robespierre's allies, and Williams criticized him sharply in later volumes of the *Letters*.
[121] The passage in Collot's play is quoted in Ritz, p. 41.
[122] Helen Maria Williams, *Letters Written in France*, p. 91.

She would not decide for another two years at least. In the first volume, she fondly traced the joyful aftermath of the Federation, the dances after the ceremony, the Bastille-themed trinkets, and the evocation of other Federations, as in Rouen, where the national guards picturesquely stuck branches in their hats: "it seemed like Birnham Wood coming to Dunsinane".[123] The reference to Macbeth (contrary to later ones contemning the Montagnards) is devoid of tragic symbolism; here, she retained only the miraculous aspect of the march. She also used an anecdote found in Camille Desmoulins' paper *Révolutions de Paris* to present another "miracle" in the joint celebration of the Federation by curé and Protestant clergyman in Montauban.[124]

Williams witnessed several other festivals[125] and wrote some vivid vignettes, which suggests that she subscribed to the revolutionaries' Rousseauvian tenets. Here is a scene that happened in her neighbourhood in Paris: "On Sunday last, after vespers, the tree of liberty was planted, with great rejoicings, in the middle of the square in which we live." After paraphrasing the orator's speech, she added that this formed "a most picturesque groupe. – There was something in the scene which gave me an idea of the simplicity of ancient times."[126] "[T]he people danced with all their hearts and souls" to the tune of *Ça ira*, a song which, at this stage of the Revolution, Williams always associated by light-hearted gaity. "The decorated tree", Elizabeth Bohl noted, "becomes the centerpiece in a tableau of ideal civic communication, celebrating the rule of law."[127] The festival, aestheticized as a self-contained unit, presents the Revolution as the prelude to democratic governmennt.

An examination of Williams's treatment of the *fête de Châteauvieux* brings out traits of her writing and socio-political attitudes. The festival was held on 14 April 1792 "to honour the Swiss of Châteauvieux, who mutinied in August 1790 and were rescued from the galleys in which [the counter-revolutionary marquis de] Bouillé had put them."[128] Committed revolutionaries like the feminist activist Théroigne de Méricourt and the future Montagnard leader Collot d'Herbois had petitioned the Commune of Paris for such a festival. Marie-Joseph Chénier officiated as poet, David as painter and pageant-master. The

[123] *Ibid.*, pp. 77, 79, 89.
[124] *Ibid*., p.90.
[125] In particular a ceremony at the Jacobin club in the honour of British people. See chapter 2, p.111.
[126] Helen Maria Williams, *Letters from France: Containing Many New Anecdotes Relative to the French Revolution, and the Present State of French Manners. By Helen Maria Williams. Vol.II*, The second edition (London: printed for G. G. J. and J. Robinson, 1792), p. 195.
[127] Elizabeth A. Bohls, *Women Travel Writers and the Language of Aesthetics, 1716-1818*, Cambridge Studies in Romanticism, 13 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), p. 122.
[128] Ozouf, *Festivals and the French Revolution*, p. 66.

symbolic and political stakes were high. The festival honoured liberty, and all its martyrs, and had to reclaim the Champ de Mars, the site of the Federation but also the place where Lafayette had shed patriot blood in 1791.[129] There was a radical edge to a festival honouring mutineers and discharged convicts. It was to be a ceremony of expiation of bloodshed and a demonstration of the strength of popular sections against royalists and moderates. Effigies of Rousseau, Voltaire, Sidney and Franklin, as well as a representation of William Tell and Swiss liberty, represented philosophers who had suffered, in the cause of freedom.[130] The French, even if they considered that their own revolution was unique, still held English liberty as an example. Williams's description was stronger on evocative detail than on analysis. She sided with the organizers, without giving much detail about political groupings. Her account tallies with that in the *Révolutions de Paris*: the festival was all the more touching because devoid of any luxury; the crowd used a wheat-ear instead of bayonets to police the demonstration.[131] Williams adroitly staged herself as engaged spectator. "We saw the procession from the apartments of Mons. Desormeaux, in the Palais de Bourbon" (Desormeaux was the former librarian to the Prince de Condé.) The crowd shouted that they were aristocrats because they were staying in a palace, but they soon realized that she was "entirely disposed to sympathize in their festivity" and that they were Englishwomen. The men in Williams's party cried "Vive la nation!" and the crowd below answered "Vivent les Anglaises!"[132] For all her professed revolutionary fervour, Williams neither mingled with the demonstrators nor took part in the shouting, adopting a middle-class ladylike demeanour. She even interspersed her narrative with hopes that the French would never lose their politeness in the revolution. Yet she adopted a revolutionary stance, as her defence of the Châteauvieux festival and reliance on Desmoulins' paper reveal.

Williams's account deserves comparison with that of two other British subjects who were present at the same festival but were much more actively committed. James Watt and Thomas Cooper were in Paris on a mission from the London Revolution Society.[133] Watt

[129] Wahnich, 'Réfléchir les rituels pendant la Révolution française'. On the massacre on the Champ de Mars, see below p. 65.
[130] On Algernon Sidney (1623-1683), who died on the scaffold and was revered by British radicals, and American and French revolutionaries: Alan Craig Houston, *Algernon Sidney and the Republican Heritage in England and America* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2014); Rachel Hammersley, *French Revolutionaries and English Republicans: The Cordeliers Club, 1790-1794*, Royal Historical Society Studies in History (Rochester, NY: Boydell Press, 2005), pp. 10–13.
[131] Ozouf, *Festivals and the French Revolution*, pp. 66–69; Helen Maria Williams, *Letters from France*, pp. 143–44.
[132] Helen Maria Williams, *Letters from France*, pp. 145–46.
[133] On Watt and Cooper: Albert Goodwin, *The Friends of Liberty: The English Democratic Movement in the Age of the French Revolution* (London: Hutchinson, 1979), pp. 201–3.

was the inventor's son and the representative of the textile firm of Thomas Walker, a manufacturer with radical leanings who had written a pamphlet against Burke. Watt had joined Thomas Cooper, another Manchester manufacturer and radical writer. Watt wished to act as delegate of the Manchester Constitutional Society, and to be entitled to establish a regular correspondence with Jacobin clubs in various cities. Invited by the Mayor of Paris, Pétion (who had been entertained by the Revolution Society on 4 November 1791), Watt and Cooper participated in the demonstration, marching among the Swiss soldiers and the crowd. They might very well have borne the effigy of Algernon Sidney, the Commonwealthman whose memory was honoured in Whig and radical circles in England. No doubt on the basis of letters from Watt and Cooper, the *Manchester Herald* published two long articles on the festival, interpreting it as "the subject of a regular struggle for superiority between the adherents of the Court and the popular party", and explaining the background story of the Swiss regiment.[134] The narrative captures the excitement of the marchers:

> They met at seven in the morning – they arrived at the Champ de Mars, not before eight in the evening – there were no military – there were no peace-officers – there was no accident, no quarrel, no drunkenness, no ribaldry, no disturbance – from seven in the morning till eight in the evening, 150,000 people men and women, amused themselves, with singing and dancing, with marching in the procession, with expressing every good wish to the nation, to the ENGLISH to the Americans, and to the world. They supported the fatigue, because they did not feel it. I saw at least 50,000 people dancing at once to Ca ira – I heard repeatedly 100,000 voices cry out *Vivent les Anglois*. I was witness to sentiments from the mouths of the multitude, which an English philosopher would be applauded for, by philosophers – I saw, that the people have capabilities which despotism and aristocracy have too long hidden – in short every thing passed off with the utmost tranquility, though near 300,000 people were assembled in the Champ de Mars alone; not a single accident happened to blot the triumph of this glorious day, and it will stand a lasting monument of the *virtue of the* PEOPLE when left to the honest effusion of their own sentiments and unshackled by the satellites of despotism.[135]

[134] *Manchester Herald*, 28 April 1792, p. 3.
[135] *Manchester Herald*, 28 April 1792, p. 3.

There is an epic ring to this evocation of an enormous non-violent crowd. Besides the obvious need to refute loyalist depictions of violence, the article's insistence on the common people's capacity for self-restraint and organization bears witness to a faith in the people and in the revolution.[136] "I saw", "I heard", "I was witness": the narrative, like that of other Britons in Paris at the time, claimed authority because of its immediate rendering of direct, eyewitness experience.[137] William's account contained many of those elements, like the singing and the applause to the English, but the Manchester article argues the festival reveals the agency of the people, its innate goodness, and the historic change effected by the Revolution. Williams's account, by contrast, centred on her own direct, limited perceptions, without the panoramic sweep and philosophical reflection of the other account. Reading the *Letters* leaves the impression that the crowd cheered a small party of English people, while the *Manchester Herald* article suggested that the cries *Vive les Anglois* stemmed from the depths of the crowd and expressed a political wish for union with England. While Williams affirmed the unity of the people, she also asserted the social distance between the sans-culottes and the richer Englishwomen. Despite such sympathetic depictions, the Châteauvieux festival became notorious in Britain. Edmund Burke quoted Watt and Cooper's controversial actions in the Commons as evidence of revolutionary plotting, during a debate on R. B. Sheridan's motion relative to the existence of seditious practices in Britain. Burke was especially indignant at their waving the Union Jack in a demonstration in the honour of soldiers condemned to the galleys.[138]

The August Days, which toppled the monarchy, and the massacres of September 1792 launched a new phase, republican and increasingly bloody. Williams started to represent festivals as betrayals of revolutionary ideals, lamenting the September Massacres:

> What is become of the transport which beat high in every bosom, when an assembled million of the human race vowed on the altar of their country, in the name of the represented nation, inviolable fraternity and union – an eternal federation! This was indeed the golden age of the revolution. – But it is past! – the enchanting spell is broken, and the fair scenes of order, through which imagination

[136] The *St James's Chronicle* called the festival "*knave's* holiday" (19-21 April 1792); for the *British Gazette and Sunday Monitor*, the marchers were "a motley and disorderly rabble" (22 April). The loyalist press noted the absence of mischief but seemed to regret it.
[137] On the "eyewitness authority" of narratives by Britons in Paris, see Rachel Rogers, *Friends of the Revolution*, pp. 172–79.
[138] *Cobbett's Parliamentary History*, vol. 30, co. 552.

> wandered, are transformed into the desolation of the wilderness, and clouded by the darkness of the tempest.[139]

In particular, she "presents the Festival of the Supreme Being as the antitype of the Fête de la Fédération".[140] She finds similar accents to lament the vanishing of the Federation's spirit. The Festival of the Supreme Being (20 prairial an II, 8 June 1794) was part of Robespierre's programme of festivals, and many felt it was his own dictatorial moment. Like other observers, Williams was disgusted by the contrast between "the most gay and charming spectacle imaginable", complete with adornments, parades and family tableaux, and the carnage of the Terror. She felt that the men, women, and children, were forced into mechanical movement, suggesting they were compelled to participate. This was a recurring criticism of this festival.[141] Williams wrote after Thermidor: still a Girondin, she presented Robespierre as the ultimate villain and took up the emerging Thermidoreans' concept of the system of Terror.

> Upon a tribune in the centre of the theatre, Robespierre as president of the convention appeared; and having for a few hours disencumbered the square of the revolution of the guillotine, this high-priest of Moloch, within view of that very spot where his daily sacrifice of human victims was offered up, covered with their blood, invoked the Parent of universal nature, talked of the charms of virtue, and breathed the hope of immortality.[142]

She may quite possibly have believed in many of Robespierre's professed principles on virtue and religion; if so, his hypocrisy, sullying valuable principles, was all the more unbearable. The Festival of the Supreme Being, which Williams did not attend because she had just left for Switzerland, served her to characterize Robespierre's dictatorship, as the terrible despotism of a vainglorious atheist, a form of power she found even worse than religious persecution.

For Williams, festivals were not just political tricks, though they could be that too. She also passed general judgments based on beliefs rather than personal or partisan dislike.

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[139] Helen Maria Williams, *Letters from France*, p. 6.
[140] Ian Haywood, *Bloody Romanticism: Spectacular Violence and the Politics of Representation, 1776-1832*, Palgrave Studies in the Enlightenment, Romanticism and Cultures of Print (Basingstoke; New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2006), p. 83.
[141] F. A. Aulard inspired an influential line of anti-Robespierrist criticism, emphasizing festivals were political actions rather than cults with deep popular roots: *Le Culte de la Raison et le culte de l'Être supreme, 1793-1794* (Paris: F. Alcan, 1892). A. Mathiez retorted that the cults were a true religion, not political artefacts.
[142] Helen Maria Williams, *An eye-witness account of the French Revolution by Helen Maria Williams*, pp. 168, 169. The Miltonic characterization of Robespierre as Moloch is recurrent in Williams.

She became more conservative in time; or rather, dechristianization and new cults in France made her more keenly aware of the power of ritual and established religion. In 1790, she praised the revolutionaries for harnessing reason and feelings to the nation through festivals. "The leaders of the French Revolution, are men well acquainted with the human heart." They use both reason and "the most powerful passions of human nature, by the appointment of solemnities perfectly calculated to awaken that general sympathy which is caught from heart to heart with irresistible energy, fills every eye with hears, and throbs in every bosom." She used the metaphor of electricity to describe the "sympathy" which communicated sentiments from heart to heart and produces unanimity in sentiment. She heard of a procession in Paris in which "five hundred young ladies walked dressed in white, and decorated with cockades of the national ribbon, leading by silken cords a number of prisoners newly released from captivity; they walked to church to be purified. She commented on the use of beauty mobilized in the cause of liberty, to win over Frenchmen's "gallantry and sensibility".[143] Williams understood festivals as a liturgy, a form of civic worship, which, in 1790, was still in continuity with Christianity.

In late 1792, she pondered over the September Massacres and wondered if occasional violence merely disgraced, or destroyed the cause of liberty. She gave the French mitigating circumstances, because they were just coming out of a long period of superstition:

> They have been condemned to darkness, and their eyes are dazzled by light. The French have thrown aside the ritual of despotism; but they have not all had time to learn the liturgy of that new constitution which is laid upon the altar of their country. But the genuine principles of enlightened freedom will soon be better comprehended, and may perhaps at no distant period be adopted by all the nations of Europe. Liberty may bring "her sons from afar, and her daughters from the ends of the earth."[144]

Price would have subscribed to such a messianic project. Williams prophesized no less than "the reign of humanity, of order, and of peace." [145] New republican festivals would help the French towards a free, rational respect of the constitution.

As revolutionary festivals turned against Christianity, Williams's judgments evolved from hostility to Catholicism as an established religion to hostility to revolutionary

[143] Helen Maria Williams, *Letters Written in France*, p. 90.
[144] Helen Maria Williams, *Letters from France*, p. 205. The quotation is Isaiah, 43:6.
[145] Helen Maria Williams, *Letters from France*, p. 205.

state religion. The first volume of *Letters* made it clear she disliked the Catholic worship; she "was looking for the new not the old".[146] To Burke, who reproached the French with pulling down, instead of repairing, their house, she countered: "instead of employing the mason, and the carpenter, in repairing the ravages of time on Gothic edifices, they have erected obelisks to a pagan divinity".[147] In 1793, she did not hesitate to recommend Voltaire on the sacrament of French kings in Reims and other exploded mysteries.[148] By the time she commented on Louis XVI's piety before his execution, she already warned that philosophy had a tendency to become infidelity, and that the French should not banish religion.[149] She did not take the loyalist turn, as so many did then, but felt the need for a religious underpinning of any society, even more so in times of revolution.

Williams did not object to new revolutionary cults, but increasingly complained of the lack of decency in republican forms. In *A Tour in Switzerland* (1798), she likened the doctrine of the theophilanthropists to that of the Dissenters, praising the simplicity of both forms of worship.[150] (The British Cabinet also believed in a link between theophilanthropy and radical Dissent, suspecting William Godwin of instilling this religion in children's books.[151]) Williams found Robespierre's *culte décadaire* rather ridiculous, noting that the rivalry between partisans of Sunday and of *decadi* resulting in both days becoming holidays, to the greatest joy of Parisians.[152] She denounced the "unceremonious speed"[153] of republican burials. In 1798, criticizing the "cold-blooded philosophy" of municipal officers, she sounded like Burke reproaching the French with lacking "a pious predilection

[146] Deborah Kennedy, *Helen Maria Williams and the Age of Revolution*, p. 61.
[147] Helen Maria Williams, *Letters from France*, pp. 72–73.
[148] Helen Maria Williams, *Letters from France: Containing a Great Variety of Interesting and Original Information Concerning the Most Important Events That Have Lately Occurred in That Country, and Particularly Respecting the Campaign of 1792*, 2 vols (London: printed for G. G. and J. Robinson, Paternoster-Row, 1793), III, p. 160.
[149] *Ibid.*, p. 32.
[150] Helen Maria Williams, *A Tour in Switzerland*, p. 124. The Directory supported theophilanthropy, a form of worship based on natural religion, to shore up republican institutions against the influence of the Catholic church.
[151] Matthew O Grenby, 'Politicizing the Nursery: British Children's Literature and the French Revolution', *The Lion and the Unicorn*, 27.1 (2003), 1–26 (p. 3).
[152] Decadi was the tenth day of the decade, the ten-day unit which replaced weeks in the republican calendar. Helen Maria Williams, *Letters Containing a Sketch of the Scenes Which Passed in Carious Departments of France during the Tyranny of Robespierre: And of the Events Which Took Place in Paris on the 28th of July 1794. By Helen Maria Williams. Vol.III* (London: printed for G. G. and J. Robinson, Paternoster-Row, 1795), pp. 7–8.
[153] Helen Maria Williams, *Letters containing a sketch of the scenes which passed in various departments of France during the tyranny of Robespierre* (1796), reprinted in *Women's Travel Writings in Revolutionary France*, ed. by Stephen Bending and Stephen Bygrave, Chawton House Library Series, 7 vols (London: Pickering & Chatto, 2007), III, p. 77.

for [their] ancestors".[154] Her denunciation of botched republican burial rites was similar to the views of the loyalist John Gifford.[155] Williams understood that the Revolution must invent new republican rites of passage, to cement the nation. She had perceived, in other words, problems that Mona Ozouf showed to be central to festivals. She praised the unrestrained liberty of conscience enjoyed in Switzerland, while recommending a dignified public worship. She evolved from an effusive, sentimental reaction to the Federation of 1790, to a more mature position by the end of the decade, one that combined a mildly conservative criticism of the failings of republican ritual with a preference for plain, Dissenting-style worship. She had somehow come round to the view that Catholic ritual, antiquated and superstitious as it was, at least provided solace and bonding. Though not a Burkean creed, this judgment was a far cry from her early stance.

When it came to festivals, Williams was a spectator, not an actor, and occasionally an analyst. Her concern for pure religion, devoid of the corruptions introduced by popery, made her sensitive to French attempts at promoting natural religion to prop up the republic. But her high hopes in the Revolution made actual festivals especially disappointing. Such disillusionment should not be ascribed to Williams's identity as a Briton, or as a spectator. French festivals generally fell short of the immense hopes invested in them. Williams's reactions over the years illustrates Mona Ozouf's point about the linkage of festivals with utopia, which engendered "an immense disillusionment": instead of uniting people, festivals excluded them, turned minorities into outcasts, and by dint of repeating themselves, became parodies.[156] Williams charted the declension of revolutionary ideal into factionalism and bitterness; her roots in British sentimentalism and the critique of British political culture gave a particular edge to her vision, but some French writers also felt disappointment while trying to salvage at least some ideals of the Revolution. As such Helen Maria Williams could be fruitfully confronted with French actors and eyewitness like the liberals of the Coppet circle, starting with Germaine de Staël and Benjamin Constant.

William Wordsworth and other visitors on the Federation, 1790-1791

[154] Helen Maria Williams, *A Tour in Switzerland; or, a View of the Present State of the Governments and Manners of Those Cantons: With Comparative Sketches of the Present State of Paris* (London: printed for G. G. and J. Robinson, Paternoster-Row, 1798), pp. 88–89; Burke, *Writings and Speeches*, VIII, p. 86.
[155] B. N. Schilling, *Conservative England and the Case against Voltaire* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1950), p. 224.
[156] Ozouf, *Festivals and the French Revolution*, p. 11.

Other travellers remained for shorter periods and commented on fewer festivals. Closest to Williams was the young William Wordsworth, who shared many of her ideas in the early 1790s. The poet had known Williams in England, before her departure for Paris; he had dedicated a sonnet to her and he shared her admiration for the Revolution and its values.[157] His unpublished "Letter to the Bishop of Llandaff" (1793) revealed him as a republican and a partisan of regicide, aligned with the Montagne rather than the Gironde, contrary to what he was to claim retrospectively in the *Prelude*.[158] Wordsworth witnessed the Festival of the Federation twice, in Arras in 1790 and in Blois in 1792. He also probably attended a smaller festival in Orléans in September 1792, celebrating the abolition of the monarchy.[159] It was the first Federation that left an indelible mark on him, as it did on Williams. The poet was travelling to Switzerland in the company of Felix Vaughan, a radical barrister and a recent graduate of Jesus College, Cambridge. Nicholas Roe quoted at length a letter by Vaughan to William Frend from 19 July 1790, which gives an idea of the festival in Arras and its reception by the party of Englishmen. Vaughan was fascinated by the simultaneity of celebrations throughout France and found "the feelings & sentiments prevailing here […] much finer than all the spectacles in the world." He went on to comment on the French people's respect for the English and wish for peace. "Every man seems to wear a face of content, & the king seems to be the idol of his people. I think they are an example for mankind in general & I trust such a one as will not remain without imitation."[160] Wordsworth did not describe the official pageant but the *Prelude* evokes the joy on the people's bright faces. Walking south "through Hamlets, Towns, / Gaudy with reliques of that Festival, / Flowers left let to wither on triumphal Arcs, / And window Garlands" [161] was like a continuous feast enlivened by acts of charity. Roe rightly points out that this vision "substantiates" the passage in the *Prelude* narrating the poet's descent of the Saône with a troop of homecoming *fédérés*.[162] The scene of fraternization between the *fédérés* and the two Englishmen is loaded with sacred significance, repeating Biblical

[157] On Williams's influence on Wordsworth and the many textual parallels between the two, see: Richard Gravil, 'Helen Maria Williams: Wordsworth's Revolutionary Anima', *Wordsworth Circle*, 40.1 (2009), 55–64.
[158] On Wordsworth's radicalism during his French stay: Nicholas Roe, *Wordsworth and Coleridge: The Radical Years* (Oxford; New York: Clarendon Press ; Oxford University Press, 1988); *Wordsworth and France*, ed. by David Duff, Marc Porée, and Martin Procházka.
[159] Émile Legouis, *William Wordsworth and Annette Vallon* (London: Dent, Dutton, 1922), p. 64.
[160] Felix Vaughan to William Frend, Paris, 19 July 1790, CUL Add. MSS 7886/263, quoted in Roe, pp. 21–22.
[161] *The Prelude*, Book VI, 361-364, in William Wordsworth, *The Major Works*, ed. by Stephen Charles Gill, Oxford World's Classics (Oxford; New York: Oxford University Press, 2008), p. 459.
[162] *The Prelude*, Book X, 403-404, 397, 409-413, in *Ibid.*, p. 460.

hospitality. Wordsworth and his companion were "Guests welcome almost as the Angels were / To Abraham of old." (X.403-404) After the Federation, a religious solemnity "in the sight of Heaven" (X.397), national enmities had broken down, as in Williams's vision of this festival.

> We bore a name,
> Honoured in France, the name of Englishmen,
> And hospitably did they give us Hail
> As their forerunners in a glorious course,
> And round and round the board they danced again.

Wordsworth captures the admiration for the English, "forerunners" in liberty through the Glorious Revolution of 1688, which was such a strong component of the French hospitality and hope for an eternal reconciliation. The individuals' joy, in dancing and singing, mirrored that of the nation at large. Wordsworth did not focus on resounding proclamations, but on ordinary people's small acts of goodwill and fraternity. The emphasis on the homecoming and utter absence of representation of the Federation itself is telling. The essential point was not the official fête at Arras, but the people's unity in the joy of recovered freedom. The genuine popular fête did not coincide with the official occasion.

Wordsworth had become politicized and to a degree integrated in French society, by the time he witnessed the Federation in Blois in 1792. He had joined the local Jacobin club and must have met Grégoire, the département's constitutional bishop and deputy to the National Assembly. On 14 July, Grégoire gave a rousing speech, exhorting his audience, especially mothers, to educate and morally improve the next generation. He also prophesied universal peace and a federation of the peoples as the outcome of the Revolution.[163] This would have reminded Wordsworth, who had read the English literature on the Revolution, of Price's *Discourse on the Love of Our Country*. Grégoire rekindled the enthusiasm generated at the first Federation.

It is that festival which remained for Wordsworth, as for Williams, the epiphany, against which he was to measure the decline of the Revolution. At the height of Robespierre's power, a memory afforded him what he called one of the merciful "green spots" in the "desert". He reminisced about walking through Arras two days after the Federation, under a triumphal arch, "a rainbow made of garish ornaments", which served

[163] Roe, p. 264. On Grégoire's speech and women: Alyssa Goldstein Sepinwall, *The Abbé Grégoire and the French Revolution: The Making of Modern Universalism* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2005), p. 100.

as metonym for the people's simple joy. Wordsworth bitterly remembered that Arras was the hometown of "that Robespierre, who afterwards / Wielded the scepter of the atheist." The irony seemed to taunt the young poet, the "blameless spectacle" having undergone "such a strange reverse" in the tragic history of the Revolution.[164]

In the sonnet *Calais*, dated August 15th, 1802, Wordsworth railed against the festival ordained on St Napoleon (and also, to rally Catholic opinion, on Assumption Day). Henceforth, Bonaparte was Consul for life. "Festivals have I seen that were not names": Napoleon's fête was no true popular rejoicing. People went about their business as usual, their indifference sharply contrasting with their joy in 1790, and with the poet's own feelings at that time:

> Another time
> That was, when I was here long years ago:
> The senselessness of joy was then sublime![165]

For other travellers too, the Federation was an imperishable memory, at least as late as 1792. The narrative of the English travel writer Richard Twiss (1747-1821), who visited Paris in the summer of 1792, is indicative of the lingering remembrance of the Federation and its inscription in the Paris revolutionary townscape. Twiss visited the Champ de Mars, "the largest Circus in the world" whose measurements he gave with much precision. The spot was worth remembering as the place of the first national confederation. Though his account is devoid of Williams's sentimentalism, he evoked the sublimely simple joy of the Federation: "on the 14th of July, 1790, the anniversary of the day of [the Bastille] having been taken, a long mast was erected in the middle of the place where it stood, crowned with flowers and ribbands, and bearing this simple and expressive inscription: *Ici on Danse*. – Here is dancing."[166] The remembrance of the Federation was also attached to other sites, especially the statue of Henri IV on the Pont Neuf, which had been the site, "during three evenings after the federation, in 1790, [of] magnificent festivals".[167] On the city map, however, the site of pilgrimage was the Champ de Mars, hallowed by very recent history.

Other travellers were untouched by revolutionary politics. In October 1790, Mary Berry saw the ruins of the Bastille without ideas of liberty and popular dancing coming to her mind. She judged the site through the polite lens of antique architecture. The

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[164] *The Prelude*, X.440-465, in Wordsworth, pp. 543–44.
[165] "Calais", in Wordsworth, p. 283.
[166] Richard Twiss, *A Trip to Paris in July and August, 1792* (London: Minerva Press, 1793), pp. 18–19.
[167] *Ibid.*, p. 75. Williams revered Henri IV as France's best king.

amphitheatre of the Champ de Mars in the moonlight reminded her of "N[icolas] Poussin's fine ideal landscapes of Greece".[168] Another politically indifferent traveller did not even find any reclaiming value in aesthetic: C. B. Wollaston, a British naval lieutenant, was in Reims on 14 July 1790. "It rained so exceedingly hard during the ceremony, and there was such a mob of People, that we could hardly see anything that was going, and indeed there was little to be seen."[169]

More significant is the philosophical attitude displayed by Sir James Hall of Dunglass (1761-1832), who visited France from June to July 1791. He witnessed two festivals: Voltaire's pantheonization on 11 July, and the Federation on the fourteenth. His three-volume diary[170] gives fascinating insights into the daily life of a Scotsman in Paris at a juncture when the monarchy was capsizing and republicanism was in the ascendant. Hall had an abiding interest in science; he had introduced Lavoisier's chemical theories in Scotland and was conducting experiments in geology. His trip was motivated by a desire to see the French Revolution at close quarters, and by scientific purposes, as he headed for the Auvergne mountains on a field trip after his stay in Paris. He travelled with a party of Scotsmen comprising Lord Daer and Daer's two brothers. Daer, who had travelled to Paris three times since the mid-1780s, was to become a central figure in Scottish radicalism, and an artisan in the rapprochement of Scottish reformers and English corresponding societies from the spring of 1792.[171] Among their varied centres of interest, ranging from science to agriculture and manners, Hall and Daer followed politics closely. It is a moot point whether they became republicans or how their political opinions matured during their French trip. Besides scientists like Lavoisier, they frequented a set of Frenchmen, notably Turgot, Mirabeau, Lafayette, La Rochefoucauld, Siéyès, who believed in equality before the law, and popular sovereignty exercised by a monocameral assembly, as opposed to the British balance of powers. Hall, Daer and their French acquaintances believed in Anglo-French

[168] Mary Berry, *Extracts of the Journals and Correspondence of Miss Berry, from the Year 1783 to 1852*, 3 vols (London, 1865), I, p. 119. She wrote that, when the people are tired of revolutionary destruction without any improvement, "[t]he aristocratical party […] will then come forward, and perhaps have it in their power (if really good patriots) to settle a good constitution" (p.218).

[169] "Letter from C. B. Wollaston, a British naval lieutenant, to his sister-in-law describing the events in Rheims on 14 July 1790", in J. M. Thompson, *English Witnesses of the French Revolution* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1938), p. 83.

[170] National Library of Scotland, MS 6329-6332: Journal of Sir James Hall of Dunglass, 4th Bart. Extracts were published in F. C. Green, 'Sir James Hall's Impressions of France in 1791', *French Studies*, 18 (1964), 236–43.

[171] On Daer, see: Bob Harris, *A Tale of Three Cities: The Life and Times of Lord Daer, 1763-1794* (Edinburgh: John Donald, 2015). On Hall and the 1791 trip, see especially p.144-165; Michael Brown, 'A Scottish Literati in Paris : The Case of Sir James Hall', *Journal of Irish and Scottish Studies*, 2.1 (2008), 73–100..

reconciliation and Enlightenment progressivism, much like the Shelburne set and the London Revolution Society.[172] To provide a continuity with preceding analyses of the Federation, Hall's perception of the fourteenth of July, 1791, will be given priority, before the apotheosis of Voltaire, which took place three days before. Hall noted in his diary:

> Thursday 14th July.
>
> We endeavoured to get into the Tribune des Suppléans, but not being able to make that out we went to see the federation.
>
> The show was much more worth seeing than I expected. All round the arena is a slope twenty or thirty feet broad so inclined as to allow people to see pretty well over one another's heads tho' it would be better if the inclination were greater. This space all round was crowded almost in every part. In the middle stands the autel de la Patrie so situated as to make a considerable effect round it the troops were drawn up. The whole presented a curious mixture of regularity in the troops & confusion in the spectators. The scene [must?] be much like that of an antient circus only that the space here is double of the widness [sic] in proportion to the length & the length is about the same as far as I can judge by an imperfect recollection as the circus maximus.
>
> We observed, that the flag of one of the divisions of the guards was torn & we have since learnt that this was owing to the name of the King having been torn off.
>
> After the ceremony was over we went up with croud upon the autel de la Patrie the view from it of such a multitude in motion had a striking effect. They reckon that there must have been here at least 200,000 people.
>
> It was curious to observe that in some places people by a kind of ~~agreement~~ arrangement sat all down upon the earth & if a few people were obstinate they were compelled to sit down by being called to by those that were sitting & sometimes by being pelted with stones. This exhibited a picture of civil society.[173]

Hall and his party witnessed the Federation, but only because they could not gain access to the tribunes of the Constituent Assembly: already in 1791, the Federation was no longer the unmissable fête it was the year before. Hall's vision is that of the seasoned traveller, well versed in the classics, who could compare the Champ de Mars with what he saw in Rome on a previous tour. In the final paragraph, Hall philosophizes on "a picture of civil

[172] Bob Harris, *A Tale of Three Cities*, pp. 159, 164.
[173] Journal of Sir James Hall of Dunglass, NLS, MS 6331, fo.116-118. The word "agreement" is crossed out in the manuscript.

society", following a habit that must have originated in his student days at Edinburgh. Hall's notes provide no narrative and very little description. Hall's anti-Hobbesian vision of the crowd's self-regulation provides a rebuttal to loyalist depictions of the anarchy of any mob left without a strong coercive power.

The politics took place elsewhere: in the evening, he met before dinner with Lord Mountmorres, who told him that a committee of the Assembly "had thrown out that they meant in reinstating the king to curb his power very much" but that the nation would not like it.[174] After dinner, he went to the opera, then to the Jacobin club for the second time in the day. "All the men at the same time are full of Politics & as far I could see were of one mind in detesting the conduct of the Assembly at this moment"; they wanted to present a petition against the committee. "It is in the highest degree probable that some great commotion will take place", Hall commented, unless the Assembly gives way to the people's wishes.[175] Hall was witnessing the fallout of the flight to Varennes on 21 June. The royal family's attempted flight to Austria and their humiliating return had given a fillip to republican sentiment; the fiction that the King had been kidnapped did not satisfy the most advanced revolutionaries. The republican petition in preparation when Hall visited the Jacobins prompted a crowd to demonstrate peacefully on the Champ de Mars on 17 July. The National Guard, under the command of La Fayette, fired on the crowd; the massacre of the Champ de Mars caused the first rift between the Assembly and the sections organizing the common people of Paris. Hall's diary gives a vivid, day-to-day, account of the multiple impressions crowding on the mind of the visitors. The Federation was like a lull amidst the bustle of news, rumours and political moves. After his stay at the Jacobins, Hall dined at the banker Perregaux's, with a party of Englishmen and women. Among them was "famous Col[l] Tarleton". A colourful character, and lover of another celebrity, Mary Robinson, Banastre Tarleton had participated in the Federation in his uniform.[176] Tarleton said "there were to be dinners in honour of the French revolution in many different societies in London and in many towns, that he had been employed to quell an insurrection of the prisoners in one of the prisons in London, that they called out down with the Bastille." [177] The colonel was repeating rumours about mob violence in London prisons that had multiplied in England: his remark connected the French *fête* with the London dinners

[174] Journal of Sir James Hall of Dunglass, NLS, MS 6331, fo.119.
[175] Journal of Sir James Hall of Dunglass, NLS, MS 6331, fo.121.
[176] Guest, p. 61.
[177] Journal of Sir James Hall of Dunglass, NLS, MS 6331, fo.127-128.

discussed in chapter 3. Hall's diary inserts the Federation into a fluid sequence of visits and meetings in various places of political sociability. Rumours and conversations kept the visitor to France connected with Britain and reminded him of the correspondences between Bastille Day in Paris and London.

French festivals from 1791 to 1804

The next sections discuss mutations in the reactions to festivals, focusing on those that elicited the most significant reactions: Voltaire's pantheonization; the Festival of Reason; a distinct and in some ways opposite one, the Festival of the Supreme Being, on 8 July 1794, widely seen in Britain as Robespierre's apotheosis; and finally, Napoleon's coronation, the most widely covered event since the Federation. Depictions were increasingly negative, so that in 1804 no one in Britain defended Napoleon or his festivals.

Voltaire's pantheonization

Voltaire's entry into the Pantheon took place on 11 July 1791; he was the second to enter France's mausoleum, after Mirabeau, who had died in April. Interring "great men" in the church of Sainte-Geneviève was not particularly controversial in Britain: Westminster Abbey, after all, offered a dignified precedent. In the course of years, the Pantheon became problematic, partly because of the choice of candidates to honour, and several historians have passed a verdict of failure on the institution.[178] When Voltaire entered the Pantheon, however, the cult had the attraction of novelty, and the building offered a magnificent décor. The grand ceremony was the conclusion of a long process. The British press covered all the steps, from the lobbying for the festival to the ceremony, a grand procession that snaked through Paris. "The English, Bernard Schilling noted, regarded the apotheosis as one of the really notable events of the Revolution, and newspapers gave it wide publicity."[179] Though many papers denounced the French people's "atheistic zeal",[180] the

[178] Jean-Claude Bonnet, *Naissance du Panthéon: essai sur le culte des grands hommes* (Paris: Fayard, 1998); Mona Ozouf, 'The Pantheon: The École Normale of the Dead', in *Realms of Memory: The Construction of the French Past*, ed. by Pierre Nora and Lawrence D. Kritzman, trans. by Arthur Goldhammer, European Perspectives, 3 vols (New York: Columbia University Press, 1996), III, 325–46. For Joseph Clarke, "the Pantheon proved to be an unhappy expedient, a contentious and expensive exercise in the volatility of Revolutionary memory." (*Commemorating the Dead in Revolutionary France: Revolution and Remembrance, 1789-1799*, Cambridge Social and Cultural Histories ; 11 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), p. 128.). On Mirabeau and the Pantheon, see below, p. 107.
[179] Schilling, p. 242. The whole of chapter 12 is devoted to "the apotheosis of Voltaire."
[180] *Ibid.*, p. 244.

festival also gave opportunities for publishing deist writings by Voltaire and discuss the Revolution in more profound ways than usual in the press.

Voltaire's notoriety informed all responses to the event. The British public saw him as an atheist, and would not consider his deism. Voltaire had been in the limelight since his son-in-law, the Marquis de Villette, proposed to transport his remains, interred in the Abbaye de Seillières, in Champagne, to Paris. The English press reported Villette's speech in November 1790, and subsequent discussions by the National Assembly in May about a proper burial for the great man.[181] By late June, the press was able to publish the programme decreed by the National Assembly, sometimes with negative comments. The *Gazetteer* saw the festival as a trick, a manipulation to keep "subjects" (not citizens) under the revolutionary spell. "These are the particulars of a ceremony intended in honour of a man, who endeavours to take from mankind, the best bond of moral principle, and certainly was unable to substitute any other. But the National Assembly do not refer to the objects of his writings, or seriously care, whether the ceremony is honourable to him, or not. It is one of the shews by which they think it prudent to entertain their new subjects!"[182] The National Assembly showed its true colours by paying homage to such an atheist. Voltaire's remains took weeks to be carted to Paris; English journalists loved the irony that in each village, people paid homage to "the holy reliques" along the way.[183] The *Public Advertiser* noted that "Voltaire, who in France was formerly reprobated as an heretic, is now canonized as a Saint."[184]

The coverage of the pantheonization centred on the procession, inevitable because the ceremony itself took place within the closed doors of the Pantheon and very few people had access to it. The greatest artists of the time cooperated for the spectacle.[185] The procession stopped at symbolic places like the opera and Villette's house, where Voltaire died. The main attraction was the sarcophagus, drawn by handsome horses and surmounted by an effigy of Voltaire lying in his gown. Avner Ben Amos stressed the absence of religion and the new pomp that the Revolution borrowed from the Catholic religion but used to supplant it.[186] The pantheonization was in keeping with the revolutionary elites' deistic tenets, but failed to unite a nation where the Catholic faith still prevailed. The few

[181] *Times*, 20 November 1790, 3 December 1790, 16 May 1791.
[182] *Gazetteer and New Daily Advertiser*, 25 June 1791.
[183] *Evening Mail*, 27-29 July 1791.
[184] *Public Advertiser*, 25 July 1791.
[185] For a description and analysis of the ceremony: Avner Ben-Amos, *Funerals, Politics, and Memory in Modern France: 1789-1996* (Oxford University Press, 2000), pp. 34–37.
[186] *Ibid.*, p. 37.

descriptions in the English press paid attention to the beauty of the spectacle, but said nothing of its ideological import. For the *London Chronicle*, the procession

> was truly magnificent. There were at least 10,000 persons in the ranks, and the surrounding multitudes through the whole route were beyond calculation.
>
> The car was followed by the principal actresses of the opera, dressed in white, and their heads encircled with roses. The day had been so wet that the streets were exceedingly dirty, and these charming women had the means of showing the French dexterity of walking. A group of English women would have been over the ankles at every step – They had not a speck on their white stockings at the end of their journey, which was no less than four miles, and lasted from noon till near midnight. – No disturbance whatever happened.[187]

Such accounts, published in conservative papers, preferred to reiterate essentialized stereotypes about Frenchwomen than recognize Voltaire's relevance to the Revolution.

However, the long travel of Voltaire's remains also enabled the *Chester Chronicle* to publish revolutionary material, such as this oath, taken by children on the passage of the procession: "Our fathers, enlightened by Voltaire, take their full revenge, this day, against the work of fanaticism, of which, if the least vestige should remain, we SWEAR to accomplish its extirpation!"[188] On 5 August, the same paper published "the creed of Voltaire", allegedly distributed at the ceremony: this deist confession of faith was an extract from the article "Symbole, ou credo" in Voltaire's *Dictionnaire philosophique*, and it was republished in the newspaper of the Cordeliers club in Paris.[189] The *Chester Chronicle*, in this instance as in several others, was an exception in the increasingly conservative press. Nevertheless, the possibility it had of publishing such revolutionary material testifies to the relative freedom of the press in mid-1791; after the Royal Proclamation of 25 May 1792, such publications became impossible.[190]

Testimonies by British eyewitnesses also yield a contrasted image. Visitors noticed a few elements – the waxen figure of Voltaire lying on a bed, the rain and dirt – but held differing viewpoints. Lord Gower, the British ambassador, dismissed the procession in one contemptuous sentence. "The procession in honor of Voltaire which took place on Monday

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[187] *London Chronicle*, 16-19 July 1791. The same account was published in the ministerial *Star* (on 18 July) and in the *Edinburgh Evening Courant*, on 21 July, two papers hostile to the Revolution.
[188] *Chester Chronicle*, 3 June 1791.
[189] *Journal du club des Cordeliers, société des amis des droits de l'homme et du citoyen*, n°5, in *Les Cordeliers dans la Révolution française. Vol. 2: Textes et documents*, ed. by Jacques De Cock (Lyon: Fantasques Ed, 2002), pp. 964–65.
[190] On loyalism and repression of dissident opinion, see above, n. 62 p. 41.

seemed more calculated to give entertainment to children than to have any good or even bad effect excepting that it afforded an excuse for one whole days idleness; a thing which he himself used often to lament."[191]

Sir James Hall adopted a politically opposite perspective. He and Thomas Douglas, Daer's brother, went upon the boulevards to the look at "the triumphal entry of Voltaire into Paris". He noticed the crowds of spectators. "We walked to the arsenal and called at Lavoisier's. We eat a chop with M. who was just going out to join the procession as an academician. He made us follow him & he took up into the procession & walked with it from near the bastille to the Place Louis XVI. The show was pretty as we went along the windows of all the houses being full of people & the sides of the streets scaffolds &c all covered with spectators. We grew very tired of the ceremony & left it at the place Louis XV." But he was sceptical about the effect of the show on the audience's minds and the appropriateness of Voltaire as a revolutionary figure. "People flocked to the show as they would have done to any other; but it was a matter of doubt whether Voltaire, had he been alive, would not have been an aristocrate."[192] As David Brown comments, Voltaire's "flirtation with Frederick of Prussia" made Hall uncomfortable about his democratic credentials.[193] The democratic slant of his politics also explains his way of looking at spectators rather than spectacle, without casting demeaning judgments on their shabby appearance, unlike other commentators. Like an increasing part of Parisian public opinion, Hall was becoming attracted to republicanism, rejecting Louis XVI's double-dealings in favour of democratic transparency. Voltaire was a backward symbol for such politics, and for all Hall's admiration for the Revolution, the pantheonization became boring.

Henry Temple, second Viscount Palmerston, provided yet another perspective, mildly sympathetic but more conservative in outlook. Palmerston, his wife and son, the future Prime Minister, had arrived in Paris on 9 July 1791, two days before Voltaire's pantheonization. Palmerston's diary reveals his interest in politics. On the day after his arrival, he attended a sitting of the National Assembly, then visited the Jacobin Club in the evening. He perceived the rise of republicanism, and the depth of outrage against the King following the flight to Varennes. His description did not idealize the procession, but mentioned the rain and "the very shabby, ill-dressed people". The procession was both dirty

[191] Gower, *The Despatches of Earl Gower*, p. 105.
[192] Journal of Sir James Hall of Dunglass, NL, MS 6331, fo.97.
[193] Michael Brown, p. 99.

and magnificent. He also noticed the central importance of women, like Madame Villette, who joined the procession.[194]

One last British eyewitness, the antiquary and classical scholar Stephen Weston, enriched his treatment of the ceremony by broader considerations on Voltaire, his fame and his significance.[195] Rather conventionally, he castigated Voltaire for writing down the clergy and trying to laugh religion out of the kingdom. But he also had political grievances: he reproached the patriarch of Ferney with singing liberty while fawning on Frederick and abetting the partition of Poland. Rousseau, a benefactor of humanity, would have been a far better candidate. Echoing the loyalist press, Weston saw the pantheonization as a recreation for gullible masses. "The remonstrances against Voltaire's deification were very strong on the side of all serious men, and well wishers to good manners and uncorrupt integrity; but the people must be amused."[196] He noted that a woman said "the *bon dieu* was an aristocrate" because it rained:[197] the jokes cracked at the 1790 Federation, recorded by Williams, were still current. He found Voltaire's effigy sitting on the chariot a sorry sight (Palmerston found it lifelike). Weston's final comments on Voltaire suggest that the Pantheon was but one aspect of the building of celebrity in the 1790s.[198] Voltaire was a "martyr to celebrity", because his coffin was opened and his remains, two dusty bones, were declared to be in a perfect state of conservation. Writing an obituary of sorts, Weston mentions Voltaire's daily coffee-drinking and opium-smoking habits. In keeping with tendencies seen in Boswell's *Life of Johnson*, anecdotes were more potent than statues to keep a great man's life and works alive. This implies some belittling of the Pantheon and the revolutionaries' memorial policy.

Later pantheonizations

Later pantheonizations received less attention. Voltaire's name was often pronounced together with Jean-Jacques Rousseau's, but while the citizen of Geneva had admirers in England, such as Richard Lovell Edgeworth, who set out to practice his

[194] George Granville Leveson Earl GOWER, « Diary of the Second Viscount Palmerston in France », in Oscar BROWNING (éd.), *The Despatches of Earl Gower*, Cambridge, 1885, p. 283-310, p. 283-289, quotation p.289.
[195] Stephen Weston, *Letters from Paris, during the Summer of 1791* (London: printrd [sic] for J. Debrett, Piccadilly, and W. Clarke, New Bond Street, 1792), pp. 103–8.
[196] *Ibid.*, p. 104.
[197] *Ibid.*, p. 106.
[198] On Voltaire's celebrity in his lifetime: Antoine Lilti, *Figures publiques: l'invention de la célébrité, 1750-1850* (Paris: Fayard, 2014), chap. 1.

educational theories, there was no one to defend Voltaire.[199] Rousseau received the honours of the Pantheon on 11 October 1794; as in Voltaire's case, the body had to be brought to Paris, this time from Ermenonville. The loyalist press loved to remind readers that Rousseau loved mankind but had abandoned his own children, which made him a prime philosopher of Jacobinism.[200] But he was more difficult to hate than Voltaire: "Rousseau, with all his faults, was certainly of a mild and gentle disposition, and perhaps there is not a greater paradox."[201] Even at this late date, a newspaper could publish a long description of the ceremony, noting Rousseau's qualities and his status as a philanthropist, which suggest lingering popularity in England.[202]

The other pantheonization that attracted much notice was Marat's. Much of the British press, and the loyalist public, hated the radical journalist who goaded the Revolution in the direction of sans-culotte democracy. The English press was fascinated by Marat's death (13 July 1793), its dramatic aspect and the character of the murderess Charlotte Corday. Marat's burial, though legally not a *fête révolutionnaire*, partook of that character. The Sections of the Commune de Paris walked his body through Paris. The lurid staging appealed to the press. "Four women bore the bathing-machine in which Marat was standing when he was assassinated; his shirt, stained with blood, was carried by another Amazon at the top of a pike. After this followed a wooden bedstead, on which the corpse of Marat was carried by Citizens."[203] Marat entered the Pantheon on 25 November 1793. He replaced Mirabeau, who was depantheonized because of discoveries about his financial and political corruption.[204] This replacement was immediately controversial and the press used classic loyalist tropes: the fickleness of the crowd, the instability and anarchy of Jacobinism. "The Convention give as a reason for removing Mirabeau from the Pantheon, and substituting Marat, that no man can be great without virtue. – What the virtue of Marat was they do not tell us. He was twelve months since universally hated and despised, even by the Conventionists themselves."[205] This became worse when, on 8 February 1795, Marat's

[199] On Rousseau: Edward Duffy, *Rousseau in England. The Context for Shelley's Critique of the Enlightenment* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1979).
[200] *Oracle and Public Advertiser*, 8 May 1794.
[201] Lord Dunstanville, *Thoughts on the Theory and Practice of the French Constitution. In Four Letters* (R. Blamire, 1794), p. 2.
[202] *Oracle and Public Advertiser*, 10 November 1794.
[203] *Evening Mail*, 24-26 July 1793.
[204] On Marat's pantheonization (21 September 1794), an "apologetic" affair, a "requiem for the Terror on the part of a dispirited Montagnard rump": Clarke, pp. 218–20.
[205] *General Evening Post*, 7-10 December 1793.

remains were dragged out of the Pantheon and into a gutter.[206] In April 1794, the London press had already predicted the fate of Marat's bones, on hearing of Danton's fall.[207]

By the late 1790s, pantheonizations had fallen into disrepute in the eyes of the Britons. They had become the symbol of the fickleness of mob rule. The *European Magazine*, in 1804, cast a retrospective glance on "[t]he insanity of the people in pantheonizing and dispantheonizing Marat and Mirabeau".[208] The Pantheon, a desecrated temple, only testified to an incomprehensible, bloody faction war. "One dictator followed another, Marat, Robespierre […] sent their predecessor to their death and then pantheonized them."[209]

Against Christianity: the Festivals of Reason and of the Supreme Being

From 1793, the British press covered few French festivals. The war disrupted the circulation of news. Mail from Paris could take over two weeks to reach England, and papers bitterly complained of delays.[210] While loyalist papers like the *Times* or the *True Briton* vied for access to government information, generally papers relied on the French press. The war with France left them before the dilemma of giving priority to news of the French Wars or reporting parliamentary debates.[211] Reports of French festivals, then, were no fillers. As time passed, festivals received only cursory attention. They could make the news in Britain because they were very important in France and were thought to reveal the nature of the regime – that was the case of the Festival of the Supreme Being in 1794; they could also be reported, under the Directory, because they were occasions for speeches on military and diplomatic policy, areas which directly affected Britain's interests.

In the first category were the Festival of Reason, the main celebration in the widespread dechristianization campaigns, and the Festival of the Supreme Being, with which it should not be confounded, as it was a deist festival in the honour of the deity, organized by Robespierre on behalf of the Constituent Assembly.[212] In 1793 and 1794, the

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[206] *London Packet*, 20-23 February 1795; *Lloyd's Evening Post*, 25-27 February 1795. After Robespierre's fall in July 1794, Marat's ashes were transferred to the Pantheon in September, but the reaction against the left and the sans-culottes, now out of power, included a spate of pamphlets and smashing of busts: Clarke, pp. 220–23.
[207] *Whitehall Evening Post*, 5-8 April 1794; *General Evening Post*, 8-10 April 1794.
[208] Quoted in "pantheonize, v.", *OED*.
[209] *Caledonian Mercury*, 24 April 1800.
[210] See e.g. a snippet on waiting for news of the 10 August celebration in *Edinburgh Evening Courant*, 19 August 1793.
[211] Jeremy Black, *The English Press in the Eighteenth Century*, pp. 283–84.
[212] On dechristianization, the cult of Reason and the cult of the Supreme Being, see: Michel Vovelle, *La Révolution contre l'Eglise: de la Raison à l'être suprême : 1793* (Bruxelles: Complexe, 1988); William

press and other British commentators occasionally reported on the dechristianizing festivals which multiplied in France. There was probably no British eyewitness to any such festival, as the few Britons remaining in France could be imprisoned, or worse.

The British public was usually informed by translations from Parisian papers, which published occasional descriptions and snippets of news or letters written by *représentants en mission* read at the bar of the Convention. The London press mentioned a few provincial festivals; for instance, in January 1794, a letter from Bordeaux presented festivals as a sign of good order in a city undergoing regeneration through the guillotine.[213] Dechristianization went along with the execution of the rich, the bankers and engrossers of the people's necessities, in keeping with Parisian decrees punishing forestallers and capping prices. Campaigns of dechristianization swept across France in 1793 and early 1794; the term was not used during the Revolution and has been the object of historiographical contestation.[214] The movement involved persecution and murder of priests, the desecration of churches and holy places, the interdiction of worship, and in the symbolic realm, the replacement of Christian usages with the republican calendar and the renaming of places. It is not certain whether those actions were orchestrated by the central government in Paris or by local powers, but Robespierre was certainly not the grand master pulling the ropes that loyalist Britons wanted him to be. On the contrary, he was one of those in the Committee of Public Safety who pushed back against Hébert and other proponents of dechristianization, a policy which went against his own personal belief in the existence of a deity, and which threatened chaos and discord. The Festival of the Supreme Being, which took place on 20 prairial An II (8 June 1794) precisely served to counter atheism and acknowledge a supreme being, a deity, though not the God of revealed Christianity.[215] It was part of a system of festivals taking place every ten days.[216] This was a move to counter the spread of atheism propagated by zealots like Hébert and Chaumette, who had led a violent anticlerical policy in Paris.

Doyle, *The Oxford History of the French Revolution*, 2nd ed (Oxford ; New York: Oxford University Press, 2002), pp. 260–88.

[213] *Sun*, 7 January 1794. For other reports from the provinces: *Sun*, 31 October 1793 (civic feast in Tonnerre, Yonne), *Sun*, 15 November 1795 (letter of *représentants en mission* Lequinio and Laignelot on the Temple of Reason in Rochefort, Charente-Maritime).

[214] Edward J Woell, 'The Origins and Outcomes of Religious Schism', in *A Companion to the French Revolution*, ed. by Peter McPhee (Chichester, UK; Malden, MA: Wiley-Blackwell, 2013), pp. 145–60 (pp. 153–58).

[215] Paul Chopelin, 'Le Mythe du "grand prêtre" de la Révolution. Robespierre, la religion et l'Être suprême', in *Robespierre: portraits croisés*, ed. by Michel Biard and Philippe Bourdin (Paris: Armand Colin, 2014), pp. 129–44.

[216] On Robespierre's system of festivals, see Maximilien Robespierre, *Discours et rapports à la Convention*, ed. by Marc Bouloiseau, Le Monde en 10/18, 237 (Paris: Union Générale d'Editions, 1965), pp. 284–86.

The loyalist press and pamphlets, popular tales like Hannah More's *Cheap Repository Tracts*, and sermons had no truck for such subtleties. They denounced atheism and the persecution of priests, and lumped together the Festivals of Reason and of the Supreme Being. Immediate reports on festivals tended to be factual; lurid details were added later, to round up an overall picture conflating atheism, deism, republicanism, hypocrisy, and all-out violence into one single hated entity: "Jacobinism." The British never distinguished between different festivals, policies and actors. Robespierre's religious principles, or absence thereof, puzzled them. (There is still no historiographical consensus on Robespierre's innermost religious feelings.[217]) The *Times* found that the Convention's professions of faith "exhibit some of the most glaring contradictions".[218] The deputies proclaimed the Supreme Being and the immortality of the soul but welcomed among their rank atheists who, a year before, had set up the feast of Reason in the deconsecrated Notre Dame. For the *Times*, they conspired to discredit all forms of religion, and "condescended to re-establish the throne of a Supreme Being, in order to appease the sensations of remorse, and all the commotions, produced by their impious innovations." The seed was sown, by mid-1794, for acceptance of the conspiracy theories developed by Abbé Augustin Barruel in France and John Robison in Scotland in 1797.[219]

The Festival of Reason was held on 10 August 1793, on the anniversary of the 1792 *journée*, the attack on the Tuileries which had spelled the end of the monarchy. The *Edinburgh Evening Courant*, a loyalist paper, was indignant at the treatment of the clergy, and at the desecration of Catholic sites and worship:

> Among the particulars relative to the Grand Festival of Reason and Truth, we cannot omit mentioning, that Cobet, formerly Archbishop of Paris, with the red cap of liberty on his head, and a hammer in his head, demolished and beat to pieces, all the images of Jesus-Christ, of the Virgin, and other Saints, which religious reverence had consecrated, for many centuries past, in that venerable pile formerly known by

[217] Frank Tallett, 'Robespierre and Religion', in *Robespierre*, ed. by Colin Haydon and William Doyle (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), pp. 92–108. The most ambitious interpretive attempt is Jonathan A Smyth, *Robespierre and the Festival of the Supreme Being: The Search for a Republican Morality* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2016).

[218] *Times*, 28 July 1794. See also, on 2 August, an article entitled "French Consistency", listing contradictions in Robespierre's religious and political principles.

[219] Michael Taylor has shown the widespread acceptance from 1797 to c.1802, among British conservatives, of the conspiracy theories, elaborated independently, in 1797, by Augustin Barruel and John Robison: 'British Conservatism, the Illuminati, and the Conspiracy Theory of the French Revolution, 1797–1802', *Eighteenth-Century Studies*, 47.3 (2014), 293–312. Ironically, Robespierre constantly denounced plots and conspiracies against the fatherland (Geoffrey Cubitt, 'Robespierre and conspiracy theories', in Colin Haydon and William Doyle (eds.), *Robespierre*, (Cambridge, 1999), pp. 75–91).

the name of the Metropolitan Church of Notre Dame, but now converted into a Temple of *Modern Philosophy!*[220]

The term "Modern Philosophy" designated the supposedly atheistic philosophy of William Godwin and his adherents, and the French freethinkers.[221] Endlessly denounced in anti-Jacobin novels as a cloak for knaves and snare for the unwary and the young, "modern philosophy" referred to a bundle of anxieties that concerned not just religion and politics, but morality and the social fabric as well. Roman Catholicism and the worship of images, so long criticized, were implicitly rehabilitated. Such reactions to sacrilegious festivals, and sympathy for French émigrés, testified to the demise of anti-Catholicism among the élites and the middling sort, which had been under way for over a decade.[222] Anti-Catholicism gave way to anti-atheism with the realization that Catholicism, for all its faults, was still preferable to no religion at all. Even Helen Maria Williams, as we saw, shared this belief.

The details provided by conservative papers could not fail to excite caricaturists. The Festival of Reason was one of the few festivals to inspire them. William Dent's *The French Feast of Reason, or the Cloven-Floot Triumphant* (5 December 1793)[223] presented an incongruous mix of Catholic imagery, and revolutionary and classical symbols: a Phrygian cap mounted on a pole of liberty athwart a crucifix, a crozier nudging the goddess of reason, a gorgon holding a cap of liberty inscribed with a guillotine, and sitting on Pandora's box. The Mountain, erected in the middle of Notre Dame, became, under Dent's penmanship, the "TORCH or VOLCANO of truth, diffusing the light of Reason to the Surrounding Departments" and spewing forth Blasphemy, Murder, Plunder and the like. Counting on the British public's fluent literacy in revolutionary words and symbols, Dent's caricature also referred to the memory of Marat and Le Pelletier, two martyrs to liberty assassinated by royalists. It reused earlier tropes, for instance the volcano reminiscent of the cauldron central to *Revolution Anniversary or, Patriotic Incantations*, another caricature by Dent that criticized the fourteenth of July 1791 dinner in London; the numerous images held up by the crowds hark back to the earlier emblematic tradition of English caricature.[224] *The French Feast of Reason* is typically a caricature whose

[220] *Edinburgh Evening Courant*, 25 November 1793.
[221] On "new Philosophy" as an insult, see Matthew O Grenby, *The Anti-Jacobin Novel: British Conservatism and the French Revolution* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001), chap. 3. It is central in many novels, including Elizabeth Hamilton's *Memoirs of Modern Philosophers* (1800).
[222] Colin Haydon, *Anti-Catholicism in Eighteenth-Century England, c. 1714-80: A Political and Social Study* (Manchester: Manchester University press, 1993).
[223] BM, 8350; George, *Catalogue*, vol. 7, p. 42-43, reprinted in Bindman, p. 157.
[224] On *Revolution Anniversary or, Patriotic Incantations*, see p. 151.

interpretation heavily rests on prior knowledge of men, issues, events and symbols, and on hermeneutic skills. It is accompanied by a text below, concluding on the truthfulness of the representation: "Of which the above Print is, tho' a satyrical, a just representation, for however pleasing the Figure and Devices of those Hypocritical Monsters might appear, those unblinded by enthusiasm could view them in no other light than they are here too truly delineated." The caricaturist is a moralist unveiling the hypocrites and devotees of revolutionary "enthusiasm", the Revolution having become a new blind creed and a competitor of Christianity.

The Convention used the Festival of the Supreme Being to broadcast its republican principles internationally. It also tried to disseminate Robespierre's thought in translation. The British knew the rationale for the Festival, because Robespierre had announced it in advance, especially in his speech to the Convention on May 7. Many papers and periodicals (in their chronicles of events) summarized the speech and reproduced the decree that was taken after it.[225] Robespierre's speech defined the Republic's religious policy. The French nation acknowledged the existence of a Supreme Being and the immortality of the soul. It instituted festivals to recall the moral duties; they were named after the great events of the Revolution and republican virtues, which were listed for each *décade*. The decree also guaranteed freedom of religious worship and announced the suppression of any aristocratic or subversive assembly. The last clause appointed the festival of the Supreme Being for 8 June. The National Library of Scotland possesses the only copy extant of *Report on the connection of moral and religious ideas with republican principles, and on national festivals, made in the name of the Committee of Public Safety, the eighteenth of floreal, the second year of the republic, one and indivisible*.[226] The author's or translator's name is torn off from the copy, and the imprint, with no place of publication, indicates "Printed by order of the National Convention." Careful examination shows that the translation is extremely faithful to Robespierre's original speech. There is no evidence that the text circulated in Britain, though Helen Maria Williams published extracts from the text, which she could

[225] E.g. *Universal Magazine of Knowledge and Pleasure*, 95 (July 1794), 47-48; *Critical Review*, 11 (August 1794), 567-568. On 6 June, the *World* published a significant extract from Robespierre's speech, bearing on festivals.

[226] Crawford.FR.1015(12). The ESTC states this is "[c]learly English printing" and proposes London as the place of publication. The original is *Convention nationale. Rapport fait au nom du Comité de Salut public, par Maximilien Robespierre, sur les rapports des idées religieuses & morales avec les principes républicains, & sur les fêtes nationales. Séance du 18 Floréal, l'an second de la République française une & indivisible* ([Paris], [1794], 30 pp.).

have found in Paris or received from Britain.[227] The press published extracts from the report, seasoning them with hateful strictures:

> every word in this report is a new insult offered to the human species. […] It is evident, by the solemn declaration of this sanguinary demagogue, that the system of the Jacobins has not changed: they aim at the destruction of all governments – at the extirpation of all princes - they must drink their blood, and when an universal anarchy has covered the face of Europe, they hope, like the ancient enemy of mankind, to riot in the crush of the world. But God is alive and sees them.[228]

This sets the tone for much of the commentaries lavished on the Festival of the Supreme Being. Religious issues like blasphemy mattered less than the perceived drift toward Robespierre's personal tyranny and France's expansionism, which threatened its neighbours.

The Festival was striking for its scenography, featuring a procession of men, women, and children bearing oak leaves marching towards a mountain. It had mobilized the best artists of the times, the painter David, the poet Chénier and the composer Gossec. Robespierre walked before his colleagues of the Committee of Public Safety and used a torch to set ablaze a hideous statue representing atheism. This moment, singling him out from his colleagues, earned him much adverse commentary in both France and England, so glaring was the departure from professed republican equality.

A booklet translated from *Le Moniteur* was published, giving the account of the fête and the lyrics of the hymns and songs.[229] The anonymity of the bookseller and the price of two pence suggest a pamphlet for popular consumption, at a dangerous period when the leaders of the London Corresponding Society were undergoing trials. Some press accounts were matter of fact and refrained from censorious comment, and they neither reproduced speeches nor gave clues to decipher the symbolism. Even the ministerial *Times* gave factual

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[227] Helen Maria Williams, *Letters Containing a Sketch of the Politics of France: From the Thirty-First of May 1793, till the Twenty-Eighth of July 1794, and of the Scenes Which Have Passed in the Prisons of Paris. By Helen Maria Williams. Vols. I. and II*, Second edition, 3 vols (Dublin: printed by J. Chambers, No. 5, Abbey-Street, 1796), III, pp. 146–49.

[228] *Oracle*, 24 June 1794.

[229] *The Festival of the Supreme Being, Celebrated at Paris, June 8, 1794. Being a Literal Translation, from the Monetieur [sic], of the Detail Drawn Up by the Celebrated Painter and Representative, David. With the Hymn to the Supreme Being, by Marie Joseph-Chenier, Deputy to the National Convention. Set by Music by Cossec.[sic] Likewise, the Speech of Robespierre, President of the National Convention, to the People Assembled to Celebrate the Festival of the Supreme Being; and a Free Translation of the Hymn Addressed to the Great Eternal, on the Solemnization of the Grand Fete at Paris*. London: Printed for the Booksellers. – anno 1794. Edinburgh University Library, Special Collections, D.S.h.9.24/8. The publication is not listed in ESTC.

details about the procession, probably derived from the Parisian press.[230] As far as I could ascertain, there was no overtly positive depiction of the festival. The *Chester Chronicle*, however, was certainly favourable, as always, to the most advanced, republican tendencies of the French Revolution.[231] It gave some columns inches to Robespierre's two speeches. Delivered on the participants' arrival, the first one extolled the Supreme Being and attendant virtues, and disparaged atheism as the begetter of all vices private and social. The second speech, given after the destruction of the statue, aggregated atheism and fanaticism with kings and courts. The paper's stance is visible in a comment to the following sentence by Robespierre: "Armed by turns with the poignards of fanaticism, and the poisons of atheism, kings have always conspired to assassinate humanity." A footnote reads: "Whatever may the conduct of some Kings, [sic] happy are we Englishmen in living under one whose life is a striking exception to the President's charge." This reads like a parody of a loyalist disclaimer, which could only reinforce the republican charge. It signalled both the applicability to Britain of Robespierre's critique of the monarchy, and the loyalist censorship, or self-censorship, weighing in on the press.

The rest of the press denigrated the festival. The *Scots Magazine* saw "a childish affectation of imitating the ancient Grecian festivals in honour of their divinities. This rare show passed over without any disturbance."[232] Some conservatives, like William Eden, affected to think that civic feasts were ridiculous and not a matter for indignation; others, like John Reeves, could not contain their wrath against "the Covenants and Engagements of the one, the Civic Oaths of the other; both alike sworn, and broken and re-sworn; – the hypocrisy of Solemn Fasts, and the mummery of Civic Feasts; etc."[233] While immediate reports of the Festival of Reason copied the French press, later evocations always incorporated obscene details, the favourite one being that the goddess of Reason was impersonated by a singer or a prostitute. Charlotte Biggs, a traveller in France from 1792 to 1795, recounted this in 1797, and commented on the indifference of the people, who reverted to Sunday rather than *decadi* immediately when they had a choice and spent

[230] *Times*, 20 July 1790. See also *London Packet, or New Lloyd's Evening Post*, 18-20 June 1794; *Whitehall Evening Post*, 19-21 July 1794.
[231] *Chester Chronicle*, 4 June 1794. On 18 July, the paper also published "A Free Translation of the Hymn Addressed to the Great Eternal, on the Solemnization of the Grand Fete at Paris."
[232] *The Scots Magazine* (July 1794), p.438.
[233] William Eden Auckland, *Some Remarks on the Apparent Circumstances of the War,in the Fourth Week of October 1795.*, 3d ed. (London, 1795), p. 29; John Reeves, *Thoughts on the English Government. Addressed to the Quiet Good Sense of the People of England. In a Series of Letters. Letter the First* (London, 1795), p. 23.

festival days in cabarets.[234] Biggs, a middle-class woman who resided in northern France from May 1792 until June 1795, published her letters of France anonymously. She saw the use of pomp and show as a pedagogical tool to inculcate orderliness and patriotism to the lower orders, but she also described the vulgar deportment of the poor during festivals. In her view, the multiplication of popular festivals, the anti-Christian imagery, the political control and coercion of the masses jeopardized the pedagogical potential of the events.[235]

From the Directory to the of Napoleon's coronation

Scurrilous accounts of Robespierre's festival became current during the Directory (1795-1799), a regime buffeted between royalist and republican extremes, and the Consulate (1799-1804), marked by Napoléon Bonaparte's rise to supreme power. A new system of festivals was established, dominated by the Festival of the Republic of 1st Vendémiaire (23 September) and the celebration of earlier revolutionary *journées*. Festivals interested the British press only when they were occasions for statements of foreign or military policy.[236] In 1795, the press reprinted the speech delivered by Pierre-Claude-François Daunou, the President of the Convention, on the festival of the Tenth of August. Daunou placed the Revolution in a dramatic perspective ending with the promise of "clemency" and "virtue" following Robespierre's tyranny. In foreign affairs, he could congratulate the French on recent successes. Victories at Jemappes, Fleurus, and Quiberon had opened the road to the occupation of Belgium and Rhineland, and the establishment of the Batavian Republic in January 1795. France had placed itself back, in Daunou's words, in "the Balance of European Powers". The Treaty of Basel, in June, left France with free hands to punish England. The English people were "indignant at Court perfidy" while the "British Government, terrified in its turn at its sudden solitude and dereliction" was "reduced to behold from the top of its unavailing fleet" the downfall of its former allies.[237] The Republic, it was felt, would pursue the war on Britain relentlessly.

[234] Charlotte Biggs, *A Residence in France during the Years 1792, 1793, 1794, and 1795*, Third edition, 2 vols (London, 1797), II, pp. 24–30, 415–16.
[235] Page-Jones and Léonard-Roques, pp. 364–67.
[236] Examples of festivals copied at length from the *Moniteur* include Sieyès's 14 July speech on the republic (*Oracle*, 24 July 1799), and Lucien Bonaparte's speech on military objectives in the Temple of Mars on the Festival of the Republic (*Oracle*, 29 September, 2 October 1800).
[237] *Star*, 19 August 1795.

Increasingly, celebrations became militarized. The British press published rousing French military oratory, which served to gauge the morale and courage of the enemy.[238] It disparaged the state funeral of General Hoche as "a pompous funeral in honour of a *merciless Ruffian*."[239] The rise of Bonaparte, and the extension of France's dominion abroad, meant that the French press reported generals' speeches and festivals held in occupied territories. Festivals demonstrated the adhesion of the populations of new Sister Republics to the French republican order.[240] The word "federation" changed meaning in the process. The concept of a federation of mankind, so central to the fourteenth of July 1790 was narrowed to the federation of new republics with the French Republic. In 1798, the "Feast of Federation at Rome" still featured republican symbolism (trees of liberty, a statue of Liberty) but, rather than a popular fête, it seemed to be bestowed on the people from high on, with traditional instruments such as wine fountains keeping the populace happy.[241] As Bonaparte concentrated power under the Consulate, he naturally focused the attention. A London paper could transcribe toasts given at the First Consul's dinner on 14 July 1800.[242]

The contradictory image of France as a military dictatorship with Jacobinical anarchy changed during the short Peace of Amiens, which lasted from the Preliminary Peace of London (1 October 1801) to the resumption of war on 20 May 1803.[243] The British travellers who flocked to Paris noticed the spectacles, and revival of sociability. Travelling to France also meant going through layers of time. Traces of the Revolution were everywhere, even when aristocratic or church property reverted to ancient uses. Festivals still existed, but symbolism from five or ten years before felt antiquated. In the summer of 1802, John Carr made a discovery in the town hall of Rouen:

> Upon entering the vestibule of the council chamber, formerly the refectory, I thought I was going behind the scenes of a theatre. It was nearly filled with

[238] See e.g. a speech to the troops by General Augereau on 14 July 1797 in *True Briton*, 7 August 1797. The paper wondered whether the remarkable martial spirit evinced there was the same in all regiments. Other similar harangues include "Speech of General Serrurier to the 4th Division of the Army of Italy, at the Fete in Honour of the Foundation of the Republic", *True Briton*, 18 October 1797.
[239] *Whitehall Evening Post*, 3-5 October 1797.
[240] See e.g. the Festival of the Federation of the Cisalpine Republic celebrated in Milan on 11 July 1797 in *Reading Mercury and Oxford Gazette*, 7 August 1797. The *Oracle* (31 July) judged the spectator were dissatisfied.
[241] *Evening Mail*, 27-30 April 1798.
[242] *London Packet or New Lloyd's Evening Post*, 21-24 July 1800.
[243] On the administrative framework and the social profile of the travellers, skewed in favour of the élites, see: Morieux, chap. 8. An early account is: John Goldworth Alger, *Napoleon's British Visitors and Captives, 1801-1815* (New York: AMS Press, 1904).

> allegorical banners, pasteboard and canvas arches of triumph, altars, emblems of liberty, and despotism, and all the scenic decorations suitable to the frenzied orgies of a republican fete.[244]

Revolutionary festivals were theatrics; nobody, at least not an Englishman like Carr, could believe in their ritual efficacy. In the Pantheon, he noticed the inscription on the portico, "AUX GRANDS HOMMES LA PATRIE RECONNAISSANTE", and saw, where the altar was to be set, a goddess of liberty that Robespierre wanted to use in a grand fête on the very day he died.[245] In Carr's case, festivals and their material basis supported an anecdotal reading of the recent French past.

More than anything else, the coronation of Napoleon departed from the revolutionary festival tradition, with its imperial, hierarchical character as well as its lavish ornaments contrasting with yesterday's virtuous frugality. Napoléon obtained the dignity of Emperor on 18 May 1804, through constitutional means. Though he was already emperor, the coronation marked a symbolic beginning in France and internationally.[246] Even more than Voltaire's pantheonization, the story of Bonaparte's coronation left a long trail in the news, because it was prepared months in advance. British journalists pretended not to be interested and loved to bash their supine French counterparts. "The silly details of the plan of the Coronation of BONAPARTE", the *Morning Post* wrote on December 12, 1804, a week after the coronation, "occupy several sheets of the *Moniteur*; but the readers, we are sure, will not expect us to fill our columns with such dull and uninteresting particulars." The British public, however, was fond of "silly details". For months, the newspapers provided true or invented titbits. Negotiations with the Pope dragged on, and his voyage from Rome to Paris was slowed down by masses of French people who wanted to see the Holy Father, a sure sign for the British press that Robespierre had failed to extirpate religion. British journalists sometimes clutched at straws, commenting on preparations under way at Notre Dame.[247] The provincial press published long articles on

[244] John Carr, *The Stranger in France: Or, A Tour from Devonshire to Paris* (London: J. Johnson, 1803), p. 55.
[245] *Ibid.*, p. 92.
[246] On the coronation ceremony and its domestic and international context: *Le Sacre de Napoléon, 2 Décembre 1804*, ed. by Thierry Lentz (Paris: Nouveau Monde, 2003).
[247] *Morning Chronicle*, 6 September 1804.

coronation preparations, complete with prices.[248] Speculations were rife about the repeatedly postponed date of the coronation.[249]

For British commentators, the coronation became the metaphor of all the Empire's wickedness. Since Napoleon had risen in the military ranks, the press presented his career as an upstart's fraud. Everything was fake, from the diamonds to the regalia and, of course, the *noblesse d'Empire*. The French treasury being empty, Napoleon must have borrowed his jewels.[250] He imposed a loan for the coronation on blockaded Bremen; like all his actions, the coronation was an exertion of violence on satellites and vanquished states.[251]

The press also published shorter articles castigating or mocking Napoleon. This division between long extracts copied from the French and short paragraphs expressing the paper's opinion had not changed since the Federation fourteen years earlier. Some commentators expressed utter disgust at a spectacle of grovelling submission. The *York Herald* found it "impossible to contemplate the mock-heroic Drama of 'Napoleon, Emperor,' without feelings of unmeasurable contempt for the vile Yahoos, who play the principal parts of the scene."[252] But the most common attitude was raillery. Papers published many jokes on Napoleon. On 29 December, the *Morning Post* published a satirical poem "On the Moniteur's Account of the Great Nation", representing "the god of clay" hiding his face, ashamed to see "The Pope agree, / To juggle the *Great Nation*."

Caricaturists jumped into the fray. To satisfy the British public interest's in the coronation and its preparations, William Holland published in September 1804 *Design for an Imperial Crown to Be Used at the Coronation of the New Emperor* (BM 10279), which represented the paraphernalia of the sacrament, complete with "symbols of power" resting on a scarlet "cushion of usurpation." A larger caricature is Gillray's *The Grand Coronation Procession of Napoleone the 1st, Emperor of France, from the Church of Notre Dame, Dec. 2nd, 1804* (BM 10362). The procession of fools and knaves, with Napoleon as a churlish dwarf in the middle, looks like a parody, by anticipation (January 1805), of David's monumental *Sacre de Napoléon* (1805-1807).

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[248] *The Lancaster Gazette and General Advertiser, for Lancashire, Westmorland, &c.*, 8 September 1804; *Norfolk Chronicle*, 8 September 1804.
[249] On 20 November 1804, see *Hull Packet; Morning Chronicle; Morning Post*; *Manchester Mercury*, 27 November 1804; *Caledonian Mercury* and *Trewman's Exeter Flying Post*, 29 November 1804. On negotiations with the Pope on the date, see Lentz, pp. 102–5.
[250] *Morning Post*, 26 December 1804.
[251] *Leeds Intelligencer*, 10 September 1804.
[252] *York Herald*, 8 September 1804

Napoleon's coronation was exceptional in its sheer scale, and in its broad coverage in the British press. The Festival of the Federation, fourteen years earlier, was the only other event of comparable magnitude. The unanimous rejection of Napoleon's coronation contrasted with the generally benign welcome given to the Federation. The radicals most committed to the ideals of the French Revolution saw Bonaparte as a usurper and gravedigger of liberty, and no one was found in Britain to welcome the coronation.

Conclusion

With Napoleon's coronation, then, it seems we have come full circle, so opposite to the Federation this celebration was. Yet, the two events were comparable in the intensity of the British public's curiosity, the competition of newspapers for the earliest, and most newsworthy accounts, and for attention to some aspects which was constant throughout the 1790s. In both cases, the British press, and most commentators, paid as much, or more attention to the preparations than to the actual show, because the character of the preparations, their enthusiasm (during the Federation) or, on the contrary, heavily bureaucratic and top-down character (at Napoleon's coronation, but also the Festival of the Supreme Being) betrayed the intimate nature of the celebration and the regime itself. Another focal point of interest was the public. Helen Maria Williams's exclamation, "The people, sure, the people were the sight!"[253] could serve as a motto for later festivals. Admittedly, there was no public, no "people" watching Napoleon's ceremony, but that was precisely the point: the coronation of a man surrounded by his clique, with no vital communication with his people.

For all this focalization on the people, British observers found it difficult, almost impossible, to ascribe any agency to the common people. Jaundiced commentators presumed to find wirepullers, crooked politicians and demagogues to explain the dynamic of festivals, and of the Revolution itself. This is hardly surprising since the conservative élites considered popular discontents in Britain, from grain riots to mutinies and mass organizations like the London Corresponding Society, as conspiracies and looked for the gentlemen behind them. Such inability to recognize the agency of the lower orders explains their difficulties with finding a credible plebeian voice in loyalist tracts, and their adoption

[253] Helen Maria Williams, *Letters Written in France*, p. 64.

of conspiracy theory in the late 1790s.[254] British observers found the role of women in festivals especially problematic. Throughout the decade, they used epithets like "amazons" to stigmatize women whom they found had stepped out of their proper sphere. Women who marched in festivals must be prostitutes, or fishwives, a stereotype born from the role of *poissardes* during the October Days. Even Williams, who appreciated tableaux of family virtue, accepted that French leaders used women's beauty to advance the interests of the state. Implicitly, she reserved political power to men and consigned women to roles of instruments or spectators. Her own career as a *salonnière* and writer belies this, to the extent that she found channels of influence, but it is difficult to see in her writings any form of empowerment for women of the lowest classes.

The divided, partisan nature of testimonies leaves the question of the French people's support, or even enthusiasm, for festivals in France largely open. Against the dominant popular, and historiographical, view of Robespierre's Festival of the Supreme Being as a political artefact imposed on a reluctant or hostile people, Jonathan Smyth has adduced examples of seemingly genuine enthusiasm.[255] The question of the British people's reaction to festivals is similarly open. How far down the social scale, in particular, were festivals known at all? French festivals were a weapon of the conservatives to castigate the Revolution's allegedly violent and godless character. There was more openness at the beginning of the 1790s, when Helen Maria Williams could briefly impose a vision of an appeased, open-ended, optimistic revolution. Loyalist movements, starting in 1792, strove to impose a hegemonic representation of the Revolution as evil, politically disastrous, religiously sinful, and socially destructive.

What was the role and significance of French festivals in the broader cultural politics of 1790s Britain? The radicals hardly mentioned festivals, and it is doubtful that the artisans of the corresponding societies heard much about them. As the discussion on the press above made clear, the radical newspapers devoted little space to festivals, not so much because they lacked information about them, but because they were interested in other aspects of French politics, especially the constitutional process, debates in the National Assembly, liberal reforms and the fortunes of the war.

[254] Michael Taylor. On the paradoxes of plebeian voices in counter-revolutionary writings, see Kevin Gilmartin, *Writing against Revolution: Literary Conservatism in Britain, 1790-1832*, Cambridge Studies in Romanticism, 69 (Cambridge ; New York: Cambridge University Press, 2007), chap. 1.
[255] Smyth.

By 1794, festivals fed into the loyalist propaganda. They became an auxiliary element of loyalist discourse. French festivals, as this chapter demonstrated, featured regularly in the conservative press. It is unlikely that graphic caricatures of festivals carried a loyalist message over to the lower orders. Admittedly, an image like Thomas Rowlandson's celebrated etching *The Constrast 1792* (December 1792) served this purpose, widely reproduced and imitated as it was. But the few caricatures specifically bearing on French festivals contained long, complex, allusive texts, and a medley of classical and republican symbols that could convince only those who already mastered visual and linguistic political symbols. In other words, they could confirm elite conservative men in their opinions, but probably not educate plebeian readers.

Counter-revolutionary satire only marginally resorted to the model of the French festival when imagining the final demise of the London Corresponding Society. A poem published in 1796 imagined the "decline and fall, death, dissection, and funeral procession" of the LCS after the passing of the December 1795 Treasonable and Seditious Practices and the Seditious Meetings Acts.[256] The imagined procession borrowed from English pageants with artisans of various trades marching in turn. It drew its imagery from the English civil war of the 1640s, with only a few elements coming from the universe of French festivals: the French songs *Carmagnole* and *Ça Ira*, and the role of women, with "six virtuous female citizens" singing "patriotic lines in praise of Modesty". Neither radicals nor conservatives, then, cared much for the neo-classical style; they took up a few striking elements and mixed them with English historical references.

The most massive and enduring legacy of the French festivals is perhaps to be found in the state-sponsored festivals organized during the Napoleonic era. Discussing the 25 October 1809 royal jubilee, which was celebrated in the remotest corners of Britain, Linda Colley mentioned a "cross-Channel competition in ritual and aesthetics". She explains that, to distinguish the British ceremonial from France, it must centre on the monarch, and, second, in good loyalist fashion, it was supposedly steeped in tradition, as opposed to the

[256] *The Decline and Fall, Death, Dissection, and Funeral Procession of His Most Contemptible Lowness the London Corresponding Society; Who Took His Departure from This World on the 18th Day of December 1795: Interspersed with Correct Copies of All the Solemn Dirges, Hymns, Anthems, Chorusses and Psalms, Sung and Chaunted at the Dissection and in the Funeral Procession as It Moved from Palace-Yard to Copenhagen-House. To Which Is Added, the Funeral Oration Delivered on This Melancholy Occasion by the Reverend John Horne Tooke, Priest and Esquire, Chaplain, Council and Principal Politician to His Contemptible Lowness. The Whole Concluding with the Epitaph, from the Pen of His Grace Citizen Duke of Bedford. Dedicated to the Right Hon. Charles James Fox. By the Author of " The Funeral of Mrs. Regency* (London: Printed for, and under the direction of, George Cawthorn, British Library, Strand, 1796).

new-fangled French inventions.[257] Loyalists, including an anonymous wife of a naval officer, presented the jubilee as a spontaneous effusion of the whole people's love for the monarch, but Linda Colley has shown it was master-minded by Charlotte Biggs. The authorities' stage-managing of the event (so criticized in the case of Robespierre's and Napoleon's festivals) was kept secret. The jubilee, marking the recovery of George's popularity, was much criticized by radicals who rehearsed the fifty years of George's reign as a succession of catastrophes. Commenting on this radical critique, Stuart Semmel writes: "[t]hat Britain was not what it might appear from the Jubilee – and that the Jubilee plans amounted to tinsel strewn liberally on a ragged tree – was hammered home with theatrical metaphor."[258] In other words, British radicals like Cobbett submitted the loyalist-patriotic jubilee to the same criticisms that loyalists had levelled at French festivals: the reality of theatricality, artifice and forced diversion was far from the proclaimed spontaneous loyalty and transparent sentimental bonding.

French festivals, then, were an antimodel for the British state, but this does not exhaust the significance of the cultural work they produced in Britain. They probably encouraged reflexion on theatricality, propaganda and the enrolment of patriotic feelings for the state. They also led some astute travellers like Helen Maria Williams and Sir James Hall of Dunglass, to comment on ritual, republican bonding, and the values that hold multitudes together and fuse them into a people.

[257] Colley, *Britons*, p. 216.
[258] Stuart Semmel, 'Radicals, Loyalists, and the Royal Jubilee of 1809', *Journal of British Studies*, 46.3 (2007), 543–69 (p. 550). See also, for a recent summary of the historiography of the jubilee: Page-Jones and Léonard-Roques, pp. 367–69.

Chapter 2
Cross-Channel correspondences:
Festivals for the British, 1790-1802

The previous chapter looked at British perceptions of French festivals. A special category of festival must now attract particular attention. From August 1790 to January 1793, French Jacobin clubs organized a series of *fêtes* celebrating, and manifesting, international fraternity. Some of those festivals were reserved for the British, who participated as guests of honour. The British press did not report on them, with the exception of the very first, the *fête anglo-française* held in Nantes in August 1790.

In August 1790, the *Société des Amis de la Constitution* of Nantes, one of the many that were affiliated with the Paris *Société des Amis de la Constitution* , and known in shorthand under the name of Jacobin club, invited the British in town to a festival of reconciliation. Replete with English and French national symbolism, this festival does not fit obviously within the categories of *fêtes révolutionnaires*, which may explain why standard works on the topic do not mention it. Other similar festivals followed, mainly in Atlantic port cities. Those events were not one-offs, but linked by ties of correspondence, and practices of sociable emulation. They provided landmarks in an Anglo-French revolutionary correspondence, the epistolary component of which some historians have analysed thoroughly.[1] Sources include a number of published sources, including especially accounts of festivals, in pamphlet form and in newspaper articles, the published correspondence of the London Revolution Society with French clubs and the French National Assembly. The festivals in Bordeaux and links between Bordeaux, London and French port cities are documented in the minutes of the local clubs (which are presented below) in the city archives and in the Archives départementales de la Gironde in Bordeaux. The activity of Jacobin clubs manifesting itself partly through epistolary correspondences, some letters from Bordeaux were found in other repositories of archives, especially at the Archives départementales de la Vienne in Poitiers. Despite the role of the Nantes Jacobin

[1] For the broader context, and details of Anglo-French radical exchanges, see: Veitch, chap. 6; Goodwin, chap. 4; Michael L Kennedy, *The Jacobin Clubs in the French Revolution: The First Years* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1982); Michael L Kennedy, *The Jacobin Clubs in the French Revolution: The Middle Years* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1988).

in the story of Anglo-French festivals, the local archives there unfortunately yield only contextual evidence on the Jacobin club, but not on the festivals themselves.

This chapter concentrates on festivals and their symbolism, and their relation with British politics. It will follow the development of the festivals from the aftermath of the Federation in the summer of 1790 to their abrupt end with the outbreak of war in February 1793. This chapter offers a narrative structured around three successive sequences, each of which tied French revolutionaries and various categories of Britons in evolving ways.

A first sequence started with the 4 November 1789 celebration of the Glorious Revolution, with Richard Price's pulpit oration on love of country. The London Revolution Society entered in correspondence with the National Assembly of France immediately after Price's discourse and the dinner that celebrated both 1688 and 1789. The correspondence expanded, but attempts to send a delegation to the Federation in Paris failed. A second phase started when the Federation and the response from France encouraged the Jacobin Club in Nantes to organize a festival, in August 1790, for English, Scottish and Irish seamen and merchants. The example of Nantes became well-known in Jacobin societies, and the cross-Channel correspondence proceeded apace, consisting in large part in exchanges of politeness and good wishes. The English still believed the French supported the constitutional monarchy, while the French expressed republican sentiments by the summer of 1791. The last sequence started in the autumn, when the Mayor of Paris, Pétion, visited London and attended the 4 November 1791 dinner, prompting Jacobin clubs to give international festivals from December 1791 to December 1792.

The French celebrations are unevenly documented, and only by French sources giving no access to British responses. It is however possible to reconstitute networks based on shared social identities and ideological leanings. The dinners were milestones in a process that also involved correspondences and travels. The international festivals – the August 1790 Anglo-French festival, followed by the December 1791 and 1792 festivals – were banquets offered to Englishmen, Scotsmen and Irishmen. The sources often mentioned the three nationalities (Wales is never cited). A number of Britons and Irishmen, a few hundred probably in total, were thus exposed to French revolutionary discourse addressed specifically to them; they were guests of honour in sociable events, and they could answer by reading addressed of thanks. Given the likely social identity of the Britons in question – sea captains and sailors of British ships at harbour, merchants or employees

based in a French seaport –, they were all male in all probability. A few Frenchwomen participated in banquets, including members of a female patriotic society in Bordeaux on one occasion.

Judgments have differed widely on this nexus of sociability. The French historian Jules Michelet praised the December 1791 ceremony at the Paris Jacobins, in the course of which national flags were displayed together in sign of international amity. It prolonged the spirit of the Federation, perhaps the only true festival in his eyes, marked as it was by perfect unanimity. Michelet saw the ceremony at the Jacobins as evidence of admirable sentiments of fraternity on the French side, the better to contrast them with Pitt's anti-revolutionary policies, and anti-Jacobin fury unleashed in England. The Jacobins' gesture of placing together the busts of Price and Sidney, alongside Rousseau, Mirabeau, Mably and Franklin, was truly sublime in Michelet's eyes.[2] Michelet's contrast between France and England was meant to highlight his hostility to *l'Anglais*, defined as the key foreign obstacle to the Revolution; in a later edition Michelet cut down the passages on the English festival while still insisting on the French candour in believing in fraternity with the English.[3]

British commentators have been less enthusiastic. At worst, such Anglo-French intercourse was treasonous; at best, they dismissed a vapid cosmopolitanism, in George Veitch's words, a "harmless" exchange of "vague and high-flown sentiments".[4] Those views were more or less inspired by Edmund Burke, who, as we know, criticized the Revolution Society as upstart usurpers. Burke was to inspire counter-revolutionary theorists in their view of an international conspiracy to overthrow thrones and altars.[5] Burke raised legitimate questions, some of which other observers, including revolutionaries, also voiced at the time. *Reflections on the Revolution in France* appeared at a time when few criticisms of the Revolution were heard yet. Burke singled out Price and the Revolution Society for blistering criticism, based on their identity as Dissenters and putative heirs of

[2] Jules Michelet, *Histoire de la Révolution française*, ed. by Gérard Walter, Bibliothèque de la Pléiade, 55, 2 vols (Paris: Gallimard, 1989), I, p. 442.
[3] Michelet, *Histoire de la Révolution française*, ed. by Paule Petitier, Bibliothèque de la Pléiade 55-56, 2 vols (Paris: Gallimard, 2019), I, pp. 411, 1215.
[4] Veitch, p. 159. Philippe Roger saw the Anglo-French correspondence as largely based on misunderstandings: Roger, p. 304.
[5] For a recent overview of Burke's international influence: *The Reception of Edmund Burke in Europe*, ed. by Martin Fitzpatrick and Peter Jones (London; New York: Bloomsbury Academic, 2017).

Cromwell's regicide and republicanism.[6] He denounced festivals as main vectors of contagion, using a medical metaphor soon to become a classic anti-Jacobin trope. At one point, Burke was seemingly dismissive. "Their confederations, their *spectacles*, their civic feasts, and their enthusiasm, I take no notice of. They are nothing but mere tricks".[7] Nevertheless, he strongly objects to festivals in two passages. He vented his indignation that Louis XVI should have

> promulgated in circular letters to all the regiments his direct authority and encouragement, that the several corps should join themselves with the clubs and confederations in the several municipalities, and mix with them in their feasts and civic entertainments![8]

Naturally, "all this civic swearing, clubbing, and feasting" would undermine discipline, and the military would lend themselves to any desperate operation the Jacobins would lead against liberty and property. As for "the confederation of *Nantz*" (the 20 August 1790 festival), it was part of the Jacobins' "comprehensive scheme of their malignant charity". They had accomplices, Dissenters like Price and Priestley: "in England we find those who stretch out their arms to them, who recommend their examples from more than one pulpit". Burke was shocked by the "standards consecrated" in Jacobin fashion, the national flags being gathered in sign of "leagues of perpetual amity".[9] A private club like the Revolution Society had no legitimate authority; its "after-dinner toasts" did not have the authority of constitutional records and parchments.[10] Festivals honouring revolutionary Frenchmen foreigners usurped parliamentary sovereignty and the royal prerogative and they were part of a European scheme of Jacobin domination. The following pages will show that other actors, including French ones, shared some of Burke's views at the time, but they will also try to sound out the Jacobins' motives beneath the festivals' discourse and symbolism.

[6] Martin Fitzpatrick, 'Edmund Burke and Rational Dissent', in *The Reception of Edmund Burke in Europe*, ed. by Martin Fitzpatrick and Peter Jones, (London; New York: Bloomsbury Academic, 2017), pp. 55–74 (pp. 64–67).
[7] Edmund Burke, *The Writings and Speeches of Edmund Burke*, ed. by Leslie George Mitchell, William Burton Todd, and Paul Langford (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1989), VIII, p. 237.
[8] Burke, *Writings and Speeches*, VIII, p. 261.
[9] Burke, *Writings and Speeches*, VIII, p. 203.
[10] Burke, *Writings and Speeches*, VIII, p. 81.

From the Glorious Revolution to the French Revolution: Anglo-French correspondence, 4 November 1789 – 14 July 1790

The Anglo-French exchanges started with the fateful 4 November 1789 dinner. Richard Price's sermon to the London Revolution Society was the first resounding public statement in favour of the Revolution.[11] While 1688 had been a terrain of ideological warfare throughout the eighteenth century,[12] Price transformed its meaning by placing it firmly in a global narrative of eschatological liberation. He subordinated patriotism ("love of our country") to the Christian duty of "universal benevolence", paving the way for accepting the concept of world revolution and transnational popular politics. He placed the Glorious Revolution at the start of a movement of world liberation through enlightenment, culminating in the French Revolution. Price predicted that the French Revolution would usher in an era of universal peace and bring about the downfall of despotism throughout the world.[13] During the dinner that followed, the guests drank toasts such as "The cause of liberty throughout the globe" and "The friends of humanity throughout the globe", expressing their wish of a world revolution through Enlightenment metaphors of "the dawn of liberty" and "the sunshine of personal and mental freedom."[14]

Price's federation of mankind offered a heady, potent, ideal in the early stages of the Revolution. There was no contradiction between patriotism and cosmopolitanism, the good patriot being the man who felt for the interests and rights of other nations, not just his own. Price's optimistic forecasts (peaceful French constitutional process, political reform in Britain) enthused many beyond the narrow confines of Rational Dissent. Moderate Whig reformers in Parliament felt vindicated. On 4 March 1790, Henry Flood, introducing a motion for a limited reform of the parliamentary representation, expressed the logical certainty of France's post-revolutionary peaceableness: "after her liberty is established, she [France] will not have the inclination to make ambitious war. The better her government

[11] It was published in December with several appendixes detailing the dinner and adding material on France's demography and the Declaration of the Rights of Man and the Citizen. Several editions were published in London and other cities in a few months; in the fourth edition, Price added a preface answering Burke's *Reflections*. The *Discourse* is reprinted in: Richard Price, *Political Writings*, ed. by David Oswald Thomas, Cambridge Texts in the History of Political Thought (Cambridge; New York: Cambridge University Press, 1991), pp. 176–96. For an analysis of the *Discourse* and Price's involvement in the Revolution Society after, see Thomas, pp. 297–308.

[12] Kathleen Wilson, 'Inventing Revolution: 1688 and Eighteenth-Century Popular Politics', *Journal of British Studies*, 28.4 (1989), 349–86.

[13] On the redefinition of patriotism and on cosmopolitanism in the *Discourse*, see: Rémy Duthille, 'Richard Price on Patriotism and Universal Benevolence', *Enlightenment and Dissent*, 28 (2012), 24–41.

[14] Rémy Duthille, *Le Discours radical en Grande-Bretagne, 1768-1789*, Oxford University studies in the enlightenment, 2017:11 (Oxford: Voltaire Foundation, 2017), p. 251.

is, the more rational will be her counsels; the more rational her counsels, the more pacific they will be."[15] It was time for Britain to reform its constitution and avoid convulsions while France was in good dispositions.

A small circle, centring on the rejuvenated Revolution Society and the Society for Constitutional Information (SCI), went well beyond Flood's argument for timely reform and translated Price's love of country into Anglo-French correspondence and festivals. Cosmopolitan feeling led to action: through the intermediary of the Duc de La Rochefoucauld-Liancourt, the Revolution Society sent a letter of congratulation to the French National Assembly, which led to a long correspondence with the Assembly and with at least fifty-two French Jacobin Clubs.[16] This Anglo-French correspondence followed the principle of *don* and *contre-don*. Indeed, the English and the French very frequently echoed and mimicked each other, communing around the same phrases and symbols. For the French, as Philippe Roger argued, the correspondence was "a rite of self-assertion and self-promotion".[17] It enhanced the status of the Jacobin clubs, giving them opportunities to live up to, and display, the universalist rhetoric of the Rights of Man. But the correspondence, for all its seemingly symbiotic nature, hid a widening gap between Frenchmen undergoing conversion to republicanism, and prudent, more narrowly constitutionalist, formalist Englishmen. While in 1789 the French presented themselves as pupils of the British (their elders in liberty, having set up a constitutional monarchy in 1688-1689), they soon repudiated the English revolutions of the seventeenth century and presented the French Revolution as unique, as, indeed, *the* only revolution. The Jacobins still pledged themselves to peace, but the celebration of friendship between the peoples gave way to threats against tyrants, and by 1792 they were urging the peoples (implicitly including the English) to overthrow them. Very few members of the Revolution Society were ready to contemplate the prospect of revolution: the rift was yawning between the French republicans and the timid Englishmen.[18] The republicans and advanced liberals left the Revolution Society for the SCI, which increased its membership and became "the chief

[15] *Cobbett's Parliamentary History*, vol.2 8, co. 452-479, quotation co. 456. Flood proposed householder suffrage and explicitly ruled universal suffrage out.
[16] Nearly all those clubs belonged to the network of *Sociétés des Amis de la Constitution*, affiliated to the mother society in Paris and known in shorthand as Jacobin clubs. They will be referred to as "Jacobin" or as "Friends of the Constitution" below, except independent clubs that did not bear this name.
[17] Roger, p. 304.
[18] Duthille, 'Célébrer 1688 Après 1789'.

channel of communication between the various popular societies in Britain and also between them and the French revolutionaries" [19]

The first Anglo-French festival must be understood in the context of the spirit of the Federation. In July 1790, the Revolution Society was eager to welcome the Federation as the start of a world federation, but failed to send a delegation to Paris. On 14 July 1790, while federations took place across France, some 352 English well-wishers of the Revolution staged their own dinner at the Crown and Anchor, London's largest tavern, on the Strand. This dinner, whose implications for British domestic politics will be discussed later,[20] was a point of contact between the series of international festivals and the series of Bastille Day dinners in Britain. Naturally enough, celebrations of the 14th of July 1790 would take on an international character, because liberal Britons expected the French Revolution to lead to peace. The Revolution Society and other clubs had joined efforts to celebrate the Revolution, with a prestigious showing of nobility and Lord Stanhope in the chair. The company was proud of celebrating the Fall of the Bastille at the same time as thousands of communities in France and elsewhere. Richard Price gave the toast: "A permanent alliance between Great Britain and France, for the purpose of perpetuating an universal peace."[21] He held forth on the necessity of an Anglo-French alliance, which "would save England, guarantee the world's tranquility and fulfil the desire of all the friends of human happiness and liberty. […] The two nations united would be all-powerful; it would be easy for them to associate Holland on this part of the globe, and the United States of America on the other; and when war threatens to trouble general harmony, they will command peace, and peace will continue."[22] Price had proposed an international alliance as early as 1776, as a solution to the conflict between metropolis and American colonists. Now, thanks to the French Revolution, his hopes of perpetual peace seemed

[19] H. T. Dickinson, 'Society for Constitutional Information (act. 1780–1795)', *ODNB*. The SCI was founded in 1780 by Major Cartwright and other men committed to parliamentary reform. The French Revolution gave it a fillip after the depressing mid-1780s period. From 1791, it took a radical turn, spreading spread Thomas Paine's *Rights of Man*, and some of its leaders were put to trial in 1794. On the SCI, see also E. C. Black, *The Association: British Extraparliamentary Political Organization, 1769-1793* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1963), pp. 174–212; Goodwin, pp. 63–114, 116–17, 277–78, 329–30, 389–90.
[20] See below, p. 129.
[21] *English Chronicle*, 13-15 July 1790.
[22] *Révolutions de France et de Brabant*, n°35, July 1790, p.528. See also *Le Moniteur*, vol.5, p.262.

finally to come to fruition.[23] Though not all guests may have shared his eschatological optimism, he had struck the characteristic note of the meeting.

Price's image tallied well with the new French diplomacy, which, on 22 May, renounced wars of conquest in the so-called Declaration of peace to the world. In the columns of several Parisian papers,[24] Price became the archetype of the foreign patriot who disseminated the pacifist universal values of the French Revolution abroad, across an emergent "borderless public space".[25] The French needed such an international, wise, philosophical figurehead, if only to convince themselves that enlightened opinion abroad, especially in Britain, shared the values of its revolution. Price's language of universalism, brotherhood and reconciliation of the peoples overcoming court intrigues, corresponded to the French revolutionaries' ideology. But such rhetoric also served to avoid diplomatic confrontations, because France was in no position to fight a war against Britain, which would jeopardize the Revolution.[26] Both the French clubs and the London Revolution Society feared that the Nootka Sound crisis, an incident involving Spanish and British vessels, might escalate into war and involve France.[27] In private correspondence, Price lucidly declared that he distrusted Pitt and thought that France's peaceable inclinations would not be shared by his own country.[28] His appeal to an Anglo-French alliance was an attempt to assuage French public opinion, not a prediction. Letters from the Revolution Society confirmed some Jacobins in their belief that Pitt prepared for war but the English people wanted peace.[29] In fact, Pitt would have gone to war in case of a grave threat to Britain's mercantile interests, but he wished to maintain peace and the balance of power if at all possible.[30]

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[23] Price imagined that states, while remaining independent and sovereign, would enter into "a general confederacy" of national representatives that would find peaceful solutions to international disputes, thus putting an end to war: Price, *Political Writings*, pp. 25–26.
[24] *Moniteur*, vol.5, p.250; *Les Révolutions de Paris*, n°55, 24-31 July 1790, pp.142-144.
[25] Wahnich, *L'impossible Citoyen*, p. 164.
[26] Mike Rapport, '« Deux nations malheureusement rivales » : les Français en Grande-Bretagne, les Britanniques en France, et la construction des identités nationales pendant la Révolution française', *Annales historiques de la Révolution française*, 342.4 (2005), 21–46 (p. 25).
[27] Spanish men of war cruising in Nootka Sound, near Vancouver Island, seized British ships in early May 1790. The crisis over the sovereignty of North-West America involved France through the Family Compact that tied it to Spain. In October, Spain conceded to Britain the right to set up on the West coast of America and Pitt became convinced the French were not hostile to Britain. Jennifer Mori, *William Pitt and the French Revolution: 1785-1795* (Keele, Staffordshire: Keele University Press, 1997), pp. 87–90.
[28] Duthille, 'Thirteen Uncollected Letters of Richard Price', p. 125; Price, III, p. 301.
[29] See e.g. the sitting of 3 July 1791 at the Bergerac club: Henri Labroue, *La Société populaire de Bergerac pendant la Révolution* (Paris: Société de l'histoire de la Révolution française, 1915), p. 145.
[30] At that point, Pitt would not go to war to help counter-revolutionaries: Jeremy Black, *British Foreign Policy in an Age of Revolutions, 1783-1793* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), p. 348.

If some papers in Paris thought, or feigned to think, that the London dinner expressed the wishes of the English people,[31] others were unconvinced and raised the problem of the club's legitimacy as an ambassador. On 29 July 1790, an account of the London dinner was read out to the National Assembly, which received it well. But while Alexandre de Lameth considered Price's speech as an important statement, Dupont de Nemours retorted that the Parliament, not the Revolution Society, was the nation's voice, and warned that the National Assembly must preserve its dignity, instead of answering a private club.[32] Claiming to be the voice of the people, clubs appeared as usurpers or as upstart private combinations. Members of the National Assembly and of French clubs had taken this line of criticism in the summer of 1790, before Burke's *Reflections*. This suggests that the French legislators were not trying to influence English public opinion through the Revolution Society (unless their public denial was a cynical ploy).[33]

The Nantes Anglo-French festival and its aftermath, 20 August 1790 – 4 November 1791

Despite such criticism, the Crown and Anchor dinner and Price's statement induced the Nantes *Société des Amis de la Constitution*, on 3 August 1790, to draft a letter congratulating the Revolution Society for celebrating the 14th of July. Antoine Français, the President, declared in a speech that the Londoners had "just thrown a bridge […] of communication between France, and the island of Great Britain! It is by actions that we should reply to actions." He suggested his club should organize a "Festival to all the English in Nantz, and the towns around".[34] The patriots of the city and the traders feared war, and an invasion scare that had taken place on 29 July in the city[35] may explain their insistence on reconciliation and peace. The festival took place on 23 August. It is significant as a gesture of friendship toward the British, because it occasioned cross-Channel correspondences and travel, and encouraged imitation and network building. The Nantes festival reveals the working of a rather homogeneous Anglo-French milieu located in the

[31] On English public opinions aversion to war and wish for an alliance with France: *Les Révolutions de Paris,* n° 54, 17-24 July 1790, p.90 (report on the 14 July celebrations in London); on the state of English public opinion: *Les Révolutions de Paris,* n°55, 24-31 July 1790, pp.111-112, 142.
[32] *Archives parlementaires*, vol.17, p.413; *Moniteur,* 31 July 1790, vol.5, p.262.
[33] The French Ambassador in London dismissed the Revolution Society in his dispatches: Veitch, p. 150.
[34] *Public Advertiser*, 26 October 1790.
[35] Gower, *The Despatches of Earl Gower*, pp. 103–4.

professions and commercial classes, attached to values of political and economic liberty, and expressing both solidarity and a sense of rivalry. It is possible to reconstitute the festival in great detail thanks to accounts published in French and translated into English.[36]

On 14 August 1790, the Nantes Jacobins informed their counterparts in Bordeaux of the fête they were to give on the 20th "to the non-resident English in token of thankfulness for that given in London about the federative pact of 14 July last. The captain, boatswain and a sailor of each of the vessels at anchor in Nantes will be invited."[37] Some four hundred people attended and welcomed the representatives of the Englishmen. Also present were the city's two *députés* in the National Assembly, and the heads of the municipal and district administrations. The festival was replete with symbolism uniting the two countries, with joint homages to French and English defenders of liberty. The syntax of the *fêtes révolutionnaires* was still in flux, and the Nantes Jacobins saw no contradiction in juxtaposing Louis XVI and George III. "Each shield below the Flag bears inscriptions: *Revolution of England, Revolution of France, Charta Magna, Federation of 14 August, Breton Federation, Taking of the Bastille*, &c."[38]This seems to be the only example of such conscious, sustained parallelism between the emblems of French and English liberty. The French still considered the English as their elders in terms of liberty, given the precedents of Magna Carta, and especially the 1688 Revolution. The juxtaposition of Louis XVI and George III also indicates that republicanism was neither ingrained nor inevitable; a constitutional monarchy had its chances, at least in 1790. A banner uniting the flags of France and Britain was deposited on an altar and Français pronounced a solemn vow of peace between the two countries. A banquet followed, with a series of toasts honouring the Revolution Society and the English people, and expressing wishes of universal

[36] *Fête anglo-française, donnée par la Société des Amis de la Constitution à Nantes. Le 23 août 1790.* (Nantes: de l'imprimerie d'A.-J. Malassis, 1790). An anonymous pamphlet and several articles in the press also provided many details about the Nantes festival to the English public: Simon Search, *The Spirit of the Times. In a Series of Observations on the Important Events of the Age ... Containing an Account of the English Commemoration of the First Anniversary of the French Revolution, in a Letter to Jos. Priestley, Etc.* (London: sold by H. Gardner, etc., 1790), pp. 93–113. The pamphlet appeared by late September (See announcement in *Gazetteer and New Daily Advertiser*, 24 September 1790).

[37] Extrait d'une lettre de Nantes du 14 août 1790, Correspondance de la Société des Amis de la Constitution, AD Gironde. 12 L 32.

[38] *Fête Anglo-Française, Donnée Par La Société Des Amis de La Constitution à Nantes. Le 23 Août 1790.*, p. 7.

brotherhood. The evening ended with a representation of two plays, *Warwick* and *L'Anglais à Bordeaux*.[39]

It must have been a memorable sociable occasion for the British guests, but unfortunately no testimony of their reactions has come down to us. On the other hand, the festival sheds light on the way the French saw the English and on the kind of peaceful relationship they desired. The toasts and the play *L'Anglais à Bordeaux* deserve particular comment. The account of the fête gives a list of ten toasts drunk to the noise of artillery. The first honoured the London Revolution Society and its president, the Whig magnate Charles Stanhope. The others reflect the cosmopolitan values and the wish for reconciliation: "philosophers and defenders of both nations" as well as the "English people", "the great family of the human kind", and even "to the Kings of England and of the French, and all the good kings that resemble them."

This list is significant because toasting was not a traditional practice in France; though French people routinely gave healths to the king, or to each other, there was no equivalent to ordered lists of toasts as they existed in Britain in formal gatherings. Ritual toasting took place during the festivities following the Federation. On 12 July 1790, the *Patriote français* had published a list of "toasts ou santés pour la revolution"[40] appropriate for the celebration of the Federation. The journalist noted that the character and opinions of men develop through health-giving, and that the English and Americans "appoint the men the most distinguished by their patriotism and eloquence to compose them." The imitation of an Anglo-American custom was relatively new: if friendship for the American republican ally was natural, the adoption of an *English* form testified to a form of respect for English achievements. In fact, the French were following a relatively recent English usage. Irish patriots started publishing toast lists in the press in the 1750s, followed by Wilkites and other oppositional groups in Britain in the next two decades.[41] The French imitation of toasting may be more than simple anglophilia (a word that is not very helpful here), but an acknowledgment of respect for patriot, i.e. oppositional, politicians within a constitutional polity. The adoption of toasting did not mean worship of all things English, or a meaningless homage to English guests, but the adoption of a patriot ritual, that was

[39] Ange Guépin, *Histoire de Nantes. Seconde édition avec dessins de M. Hawke et deux plans* (Nantes : Prosper Sebire, 1839), p.142. The plays are *Le Comte de Warwick*, a tragedy by Jean-François de La Harpe (1763) and *L'Anglais à Bordeaux*, a comedy by Charles-Simon Favart (1763).
[40] *Patriote français*, n°338, 12 July 1790, p.3-4.
[41] Martyn J. Powell, 'Political Toasting in Eighteenth-Century Ireland', *History*, 91.304 (2006), 508–29.

coherent with the transnational nature of patriotism, and absolutely coherent with opposition to Pitt. The Anglo-French fête became the site for a cultural transfer: the adoption by the French of an English custom in a public sphere that had just recently opened in France and, at last, allowed for public political meeting and publication.

The choice of play reveals the ideological, but also local, stakes of the festival, corresponding to the priorities of the mercantile élite of a major French seaport. Favart's comedy *L'Anglais à Bordeaux*, from 1763, turned the French defeat in the Seven Years' War into a triumph. The plot is about a young French merchant's daughter, who captures the heart of an English prisoner of war. The French defeat in arms turns into a triumph on the field of love. The play pays homage to English philosophers ("Lock" rhymes with "Bolingbrok"), rehearses stereotypes about loyal, yet boorish and depressive Englishmen, and calls for reconciliation between the English, the French, and the Spaniards. The setting, in the house of a Bordeaux merchant, suggests that peaceful trade will take over destructive war, and lead to common advantage. All those aspects were highly relevant to the Anglo-French festival. The play gestured towards a rival seaport which the Nantais at once admired, feared and emulated. It is an element in the rivalry of Jacobin societies and of cities vying to honour English guests. The Nantes club might well have staged an original festival to affirm their city's status as a major international port (with an eye to Bordeaux), and to raise the club's profile among its French correspondents and the English. A nineteenth-century historian of Nantes suggested that the *Amis de la Constitution* staged this elaborate fête to give added importance to the club and push forward its leaders.[42] This may well have been a possibility, considering later rivalries between Bordeaux clubs over festivals. Beyond the interest of clubs, the very private interest of leaders could be involved, for a voyage to London would be an occasion for striking new business deals.

It was resolved the Nantes club should send a deputation to London to give the Revolution Society an account of the festival and to offer them the banner. A few weeks later, in September, Antoine Français, and a representative of the city council, Jean Bougon, were deputed to London.[43] Their brief was to meet Stanhope and give him the account of

[42] Ange Guépin, *Histoire de Nantes* (Nantes: Prosper Sebire, C. Mellinet, 1839), p. 411.

[43] Antoine-François Français (1756-1836) was born into an old family of merchants and *notaires*; his mother was the daughter of an advocate to the parliament. He was elected to the Legislative Assembly in 1791 and followed a distinguished political career, rallying Bonaparte after Brumaire. He pursued Anglo-French diplomacy in 1792 when he moved in favour of the naturalization of William Priestley, after the riots that destroyed his father Joseph's house (*Dictionnaire des Législateurs 1791-1792*, ed. by Edna Hindie Lemay, Publications Du Centre International d'étude Du XVIIIe Siècle, 18–19, 2 vols (Ferney-Voltaire: Centre

the festival and a token of fraternity, and to enter into talks to affiliate the Nantes Club with the Revolution Society (apparently they imagined there was a network of English clubs similar to the Jacobins in France).[44] They sent three letters to the club home in Nantes, giving many details of their trip and the warm welcome they received in London. The letters were published in the French press in the autumn,[45] and extracts appeared in the London press. The Revolution Society welcomed the two French delegates. On 29 September, the society's committee invited them to dinner at the London Tavern; on that occasion, Bougon extolled English liberty as teacher of the French, and proposed building a temple to the "divinity of Westminster".[46] As for Français, he assured their English guests that the French constitution was the means of ensuring perpetual world peace, and congratulated them on their having shown themselves "not only English citizens" but "feeling for the *interest* of *all* mankind."[47] Such sentiments were no other than the universal benevolence inculcated by Richard Price. This, and the homage to English liberty, could only endear the Nantais to their London guests, whether they believed in Prician benevolence or in more traditional English patriotism.[48]

The 4 November 1790 dinner, attended by over three hundred guests, was a grand affair. [49] The toasts started with "The Sovereignty of the People" instead of "The King", a radical move but still an acceptable one before the loyalist wave of 1792 forbade any expression of disrespect to the King and royal family. "The King" was only the sixth toast. The company drank many toasts to peace and reconciliation with France, to the National Assembly and, of course, to French societies and the guests from Nantes. The society might well disclaim any wish of revolution in Britain with the toast "May the example of the Revolution we <u>now</u> celebrate, prevent in <u>this</u> Country the necessity of another."[50] Burke's

international d'étude du XVIIIe siècle, 2007), I, pp. 309–11.) Bougon was a painter; a revolutionary administration gave him a sinecure (Guépin, pp. 410–11.).

[44] *Correspondence of the Revolution Society*, p. 64.

[45] First letter by Français et Bougon, 14 September 1790*: Révolutions de France et de Brabant*, n°45, October 1790, pp.290-292. Second letter, 17 September 1790: *Révolutions de France et de Brabant*, n°47, October 1790, pp.384-386. Third letter, 1 October 1790: *Journal de la Correspondance de Nantes*, n°27 supplément, p.453-455. On press reports in France, see Michael L Kennedy, *The Jacobin Clubs in the French Revolution: The First Years*, p. 236.

[46] *Correspondence of the Revolution Society*, p. 66.

[47] *Correspondence of the Revolution Society*, p. 65.

[48] If Price's cosmopolitan 'love of country' was the official ideology of the Revolution Society, many members subscribed to more a traditional patriotism focusing on the constitution, great proclamations like Magna Carta, and the 1688 Revolution: Duthille, *Le Discours radical en Grande-Bretagne, 1768-1789*, chap. 7.

[49] See the official account in Revolution Society Minutes, fo.38-41. They give the figure of "268 gentlemen" (fo.38).

[50] Revolution Society, Minute Book, fo.38.

Reflections, published four days before, were damaging and cast the club as a revolutionary firebrand. One toast, given by Price: "The Parliament of Great Britain, and may it become a National Assembly" provoked an outcry for he appeared to be calling for a French-style revolution in Britain. Price was obliged to explain he only wished for a thoroughgoing reform of Parliament, but the wording and context had left a definite impression of revolutionary zeal, no matter what his real meaning was. Mark Philp singled this toast out as a remarkable instance of disjunction of style and meaning: that was the perennial problem with Price and other radicals who wished to remain within constitutional bounds.[51] This dinner reveals tensions in the Revolution Society ideology between revolutionary cosmopolitanism and older commitments to parliamentary reform and oppositional patriotism. The Frenchmen received the eighteenth position in a list of thirty-one: they were honoured but not privileged. However, their presence was noted.

At both of the dinners attended by the Nantais, the symbolic communication worked through speeches and toasts, but also the gift of objects. It was a flag on 4 November, and on 29 September "a stained drawing (elegantly framed) representing a tricolar [sic] Banner, used at the Fête described, and inscribed, "A l'Union de la France et d'Angleterre." Motto, "Pacte universel.""[52] Another form of reciprocal symbolic communication was the holding of a dinner, in Nantes, on 4 November. The Nantais sent the Londoners the list of toasts drunk on the occasion (the French drank the Revolution of 1688 in first position, before the French Revolution, and higher up than in the English toast list). Clearly the French Jacobins had gone to some lengths to honour their English brothers, using the English custom of toasting, and placing English historical and constitutional references above French ones.[53]

Français and Bougon spent an enjoyable stay as pampered guests. They bathed in a pro-Revolution cultural milieu and received information about the social and political situation of England, which was, if anything, rather misleading. Though Stanhope had already left the Revolution Society,[54] he entertained them at his estate of Chevening House, in Kent, and introduced them to the playwright and politician Richard Brinsley Sheridan. The two Frenchmen enthused over the Lord's welcome in a letter published in the French

[51] Thomas, pp. 307–8; Mark Philp, 'The Fragmented Ideology of Reform', in *The French Revolution and British Popular Politics*, ed. by Mark Philp (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991), pp. 50–77 (p. 55).
[52] *Correspondence of the Revolution Society*, p. 66.
[53] *Correspondence of the Revolution Society*, p. 103.
[54] Stanhope had resigned on 20 July 1790 because of resolutions that bound members absent from a previous meeting: Goodwin, p. 127.

and English press. “We arrived at Lord Stanhope’s two days ago, and were received by his Lordship as if we had been his brothers. He will not suffer us to depart. The first things which attracted our notice in his House were, a *stone* of the *Bastile*, and some *National Cockades*. He thinks of nothing but of the French Revolution, which he considers as the happiest of events.”[55] Again, the narrative is replete with symbolism. The Frenchmen recount how Sheridan made his two very young children drink a bumper to “The Majesty of the French People.” Mrs Sheridan and his sister entertained them with French patriotic songs. The letters suggest that, in certain pro-revolutionary quarters of the English higher orders, political commitment was not just a matter of public life. It had pervaded the home and influenced everyday practices and tastes. The publication of letters such as Bougon and Français’s also thrust Stanhope’s domestic arrangements into the limelight and turned them into public statements of principles. There was a symbiosis between private and public displays of revolutionary patriotism, as the history of Bastille Day dinners in London will confirm in the next chapter. Such was the situation in the autumn of 1790. From 1792 on, loyalist and government forces closed in on the intimacy of the home and considerably complicated the revolutionary politicization of the private realm.[56]

The Nantes delegates saw a pantomime at the Theatre Royal in Covent Garden, *The Picture of Paris*, representing scenes of the Federation and the French Revolution.[57] They reported that the audience gave frantic applause to the revolutionary scenes. They heard that at the end of the 14 July dinner in London, “the guests stopped all the Frenchmen they came across, shook their hands, telling him *mi dear brother*, which means ‘my dear brother’.”[58] Bougon and Français’ presence at the theatre placed them in the position of French spectators of an English representation of French politics. It is a particular example of a game of mirrors that was omnipresent at the time in the press, pamphlets and correspondence of both countries. The French and the English were highly sensitive to their country’s reputation across the Channel. The French public was aware that the English had staged the Federation and might be excused to think their opinion was entirely favourable, on the basis of the plays reviewed in the Paris papers. The two delegates were shown round

[55] *The Times*, 21 October 1790. The French original of this letter by François and Bougon, dated Chevening House, 17 September 1790, is in: *Révolutions de France et de Brabant* n°47, pp.382-386.
[56] Barrell, *The Spirit of Despotism*.
[57] *Rapport des députés de la Société des Amis de la Constitution, à Nantes, auprès de la Société de la Révolution, à Londres, suivi d’un recueil de pièces traduites de l’anglais et relatives à la députation* (Nantes : Malassis, 1790).
[58] *Révolutions de France et de Brabant*, n° 45, p. 291.

London, but all the while, they remained within liberal circles. The spectators of *The Picture of Paris*, probably no fair cross-section of English public opinion, overwhelmingly supported the French Revolution. Stanhope assured them that the people of England loved France and detested Pitt's machinations.

Bougon and Français apparently never met with opponents of the Revolution, though they knew about their existence and suspected their trip would be misreported. Some accounts in the London ministerial press were scathing indeed. The *World*, a ministerial paper, gave the main line of criticism: the Frenchmen were "embarrassed, on finding that the Revolution Society is only a common Club, rendered the instrument of private views, and has no connection with the disposition and will of the Nation. [...] [T]he Revolution Society is no more the organ of it than the Clubs at BROOKES's, and Newmarket."[59] Such criticism anticipated Burke's argument in *Reflections* by a month. In the months to come, papers controlled by the Treasury, such as the *World* or the *Oracle*, mercilessly demanded the Revolution Society's credentials.

What was the ideological significance of those exchanges? The festival was characterized by its defence of the Anglo-French union on political, but also economic, grounds: it would establish free trade. War should give way to an economic competition and to a healthy emulation in the pursuit of the arts and sciences. If France became a manufacturing and trading nation like Britain, there would be an economic competition preferable to war because Anglo-French rivalry "often promotes the interest of both parties". Even if a country loses one field of commerce or another, "things will naturally find their own level" (presumably through some natural economic mechanism like Adam Smith's absolute advantages law) and they can always open new markets, like Asia.[60] The Nantais sang a paean to global capitalism. Though one member of the Nantes club lamented the adverse effects of the Eden Treaty of 1785, which had left France vulnerable to English competition, he asserted that in theory international trade bound the nations together and was the key to general prosperity, like a thread of gold uniting the peoples across the globe.[61] Besides Smith, the Nantais must have been conversant with Montesquieu and his theory of *doux commerce*, somehow inverting its logic. While *doux commerce* exponents

[59] *World*, 4 October 1790.
[60] Search, p. 14.
[61] *Rapport des Députés de la Société des Amis de la Constitution, à Nantes, Auprès de La Société de La Révolution, à Londres, Suivi d'un Recueil de Pièces Traduites de l'anglais et Relatives à La Députation* (Nantes: Malassis, 1790), p. 21.

held that commerce inclines men and society to peace, the Nantes revolutionaries believed that the French National Assembly and other representative assemblies could impose peace as an act of popular will, and that commercial prosperity would follow naturally.[62] The hopes of the Nantes tradesmen were very similar to those entertained by Shelburne and Price, who also defended free trade as the surest pathway to perpetual peace.[63]

Another salient aspect of the speeches was the idea that the Anglo-French union would be an invincible military force. The Nantes Jacobins went further than the Londoners. While Price had suggested at the 14 July London dinner, that the united fleets of France and Britain maintain peace and order, the Nantes Jacobins imagined that soon all the enslaved peoples of Europe would revolt. They did not suggest that the French and British armies should help them, but the idea must not have been far from their minds. In hindsight, it is visible that the logic of the argument justified in advance the so-called 18 November 1792 "Edict of Fraternity", by which the French republic engaged to offer "fraternity and assistance to all peoples who wish to recover their liberty".[64]

The Jacobins displayed the typical Rousseauvian belief of the early Revolution that the peoples were naturally peaceable but were divided and forced into war by kings and courtiers. This belief pervaded the speeches given at the Nantes festival, but also the letters to the Revolution Society.[65] One of its best expressions, complete with a Christian eschatology absent from French discourse, appears in an English pamphlet (which was also translated into French). The pseudonymous Simon Search exhorted the British at the end of his account of the Nantes festival:

> The great blessing of eternal concord, desired by both nations, will only be accomplished when, after the example of Nantz, your chief cities shall send *Ambassadors of Peace*, to declare that you are penetrated with the same sentiments as them, and that, laying aside for ever all ambition, all conquest, all violence and wrong, your only politics shall in future be justice and virtue, and that you desire

[62] On *doux commerce* : Laurence Dickey, 'Doux-Commerce and Humanitarian Values: Free Trade, Sociability and Universal Benevolence in Eighteenth-Century Thinking', *Grotiana*, 22.1 (2001), 271–317.
[63] Shelburne supported the Eden Treaty. On the Bowood circle and their views on economics and worldwide peace, see Richard Whatmore, *Against War and Empire: Geneva, Britain and France in the Eighteenth Century*, The Lewis Walpole Series in Eighteenth-Century Culture and History (New Haven ; London: Yale University Press, 2012), pp. 177–227.
[64] *Moniteur*, vol. 14, p. 517.
[65] *Correspondence of the Revolution Society*. See, in the three weeks following the festival only, the letters from Chalon-sur-Saône, 1 September 1790 (p. 68), Toulouse, 3 September (p. 75), Amiens, 16 September (p. 82).

> for ever to live with the people of France, as children of one family, the subjects of one *God*, as fellow-citizens, and as fellow-men.[66]

Such sentiments were redolent of Price's deprecation of war and conquest, and his appeal to Christian fellowship. Both Jacobin clubs and Revolution Society saw themselves as informal ambassadors of one free people to another, whose legitimacy rested on popular sovereignty, not court intrigue. The Jacobins across France promoted a diplomacy of peoples instead of courts, which would replace professional diplomats with citizens. What if the two countries went at war, however? At the 29 October London Revolution Society dinner, a toast was drunk "to eternal peace between our two nations". Français and Bougon reported that one of them motioned "that if, against the obvious interest of the two nations, this peace was to be troubled, the fraternity between the two Societies would subsist, in order to prove that simple citizens of both countries want to be brothers, whereas their ministers do not even show themselves human."[67] It is unclear whether such continuing fraternity in time of war would lead the brothers to break the law to enforce a supreme natural right violated by their government. Rather, they did not envision the possibility that a democratic government declared war.

For all the talk about liberation, not a word was uttered on black slavery. In this festival, as in the London celebration and in later festivals in Bordeaux and elsewhere, no one addressed the topic of slavery, certainly because the members of the Jacobin club came from the mercantile bourgeoisie that had substantial interests in the slave trade. Nantes was the principal French slaving port, and Bordeaux the main port serving the slaveholding colonies. As for the London Revolution Society, apart from a few courageous statements by Dr Price, its members gave only half-hearted support to abolitionism, an attitude which Anthony Page ascribes to links with slaving interests in the port of London.[68] The following pages give some indications about the Vaughan family, which confirms the involvement of slaving interests in the formulation of ideals of liberty in Anglo-French exchanges in the early part of the Revolution.

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[66] Search, p. 115.

[67] Letter by Français and Bougon, 1 October 1790, in *Journal de la Correspondance de Nantes*, n° 27 supplément, p. 454.

[68] Anthony Page, '"A Species of Slavery": Richard Price's Rational Dissent and Antislavery', *Slavery & Abolition*, 32.1 (2011), 53–73; Anthony Page, 'Rational Dissent, Enlightenment, and the Abolition of the British Slave Trade', *The Historical Journal*, 54.03 (2011), 741–72.

The Nantes Jacobins and the members of the London club had affinities, both sociological as merchants and professionals, and ideological, through a common commitment to free trade and constitutional, parliamentary politics. The "Nantes sequence" does not look like a Jacobin conspiracy to take over British public opinion – or if it was, it ended in dire failure. The free-trade universal ideology extolled in the Anglo-French correspondence and festivals was not an irrelevant diversion either, but rather an attempt to raise the profile of all societies in their own country, so as to exert moral pressure on their respective representatives.

The nature of this attempt is corroborated by Burke's fear that the Dissenters' cosmopolitan ideal abolishing barriers and their appeal to force of public opinion risked to dissolve national governments and hierarchies. The mercantile dominance over both the Revolution Society and the Nantes Jacobins, as well as the eulogies to free-trade confirm Iain Newman's contention that Burke feared "that the coming revolution in Britain w[ould] consist not of an insurrection of the oppressed masses, but of an uprising of respectable tavern-going merchants".[69] Just like the 4 November dinners, the Nantes festival was one of those ostentatious convivial events that threatened to imbalance the British and French polities and their respective diplomacies.

When Bougon and Français returned home, the relationships between the Revolution Society and the Nantes club lapsed into apathy, but the ideology of international festivals matured and other relationships developed, with Bordeaux particularly. In December 1790 or January 1791, the *Société des Amis de la Constitution* in Bordeaux received from the Nantes club a detailed account of the Anglo-French festival. The letters from Nantes were delivered by a "Mr. Vaughan, Anglais, membre de la Société de la révolution de Londres."[70] William Vaughan (1752–1850) was a member of the club and a director of the Royal Exchange Assurance Corporation. His brother Benjamin was a political reformer and a member of Shelburne's inner circle. He had travelled to Paris several times in the early years of the Revolution, and had witnessed the Festival of the Federation in 1790. The Vaughans were a family of Jamaica planters who had business

[69] Ian Newman, 'Edmund Burke in the Tavern', *European Romantic Review*, 24.2 (2013), 125–48 (p. 127).
[70] AD Gironde, 12 L 13, pp.119 (séance du 27 décembre 1790), p.122 (5 janvier 1791). The members' list in the minute-book of the Revolution Society (British Library Add Mss 64814, fo.58-65) indicates "Wm Vaughan".

links with merchants in Bordeaux and, presumably, Nantes.[71] It is quite possible that William gave his brother Benjamin letters to deliver to the Jacobins in Nantes, then Bordeaux.[72] The Bordeaux Jacobins clearly wanted a rapprochement with the English. But cultural transfers were not simple and linear: for instance, the Bordeaux Jacobins heard of Thomas Paine from the German preceptor Karl Friedrich Reinhardt, who read to the club a substantial summary of his principles.[73] A few days later, on 21 May 1791, they wrote to Joseph Priestley and to Paine, complimenting the latter on becoming the defender of two revolutions with his pen, just as La Fayette was with his sword.[74] At the same meeting, they invited two members of the Revolution Society to attend the Federation on 14 July, because "the Storming of the Bastille has become the symbol of the destruction of all Tyrannies, and its Anniversary must be a day of Festival for all Nations. [75] They wanted to send two of their members to London in July 1791,[76] and the President of the club did attend the Bastille Day dinner at the Crown and Anchor in London.[77]

While the Bordeaux Jacobins spun a web of correspondence with the English, new developments started to affect festivals. In France, the revulsion against the monarchy, especially after the king's flight to Varennes (20-21 June 1791) encouraged an abandonment of royal symbolism. Feudal emblems, like the Magna Carta so prominent in the Nantes festival, had to go. Secondly, there emerged a transatlantic triumvirate embodying Enlightenment and Revolution, following the successive deaths of Benjamin

[71] Their father Samuel had acquired estates in Jamaica in 1736; their London dwelling and business headquarters at Dunster's Court served as a market for colonial goods: Craig Compton Murray, 'Benjamin Vaughan (1751-1835): The Life of an Anglo-American Intellectual' (Columbia University, 1989), pp. 18–19. See also E. I. Carlyle and Anita McConnell, 'Vaughan, William (1752–1850), Promoter of the London Docks', *ODNB*.

[72] A member of the Revolution Society from Bordeaux (joining on 3 January 1793) was Theodore Martell, a brandy merchant who also owned slaves: Cullen Louis Michael, *The Brandy Trade under the 'Ancien Régime': Regional Specialisation in the Charente* (Cambridge; New York: Cambridge University Press, 1998), p. 179; Éric Saugera, *Bordeaux, port négrier: chronologie, économie, idéologie, XVIIe-XIXe siècles* (Paris: Karthala, 1995), pp. 262, 305.

[73] Jean Delinière, *Karl Friedrich Reinhard: ein deutscher Aufklärer im Dienste Frankreichs (1761-1837)*, trans. by Carla Kramer (Stuttgart: W. Kohlhammer, 1989), p. 61.

[74] Minutes de la Société des amis de la constitution de Bordeaux, AD Gironde 12 L 13, fo. 291 ; *Lettres écrites au nom de la Société des amis de la constitution à Bordeaux, à la Société de la Révolution, à Londres. A M. Joseph Priestley, Ministre Anglais. A M. Thomas Payne, ci-devant Secrétaire du Congrès des Etats-Unis de l'Amérique*. [Bordeaux] : Imprimées par ordre de la société de Bordeaux, [1791]. BM Poitiers. Casier 143, S21, pièce n°62.

[75] Lettre de la Société des Amis de la Constitution de Bordeaux (21 mai 1791), *Correspondence of the Revolution Society*, p. 168.

[76] Labroue, p. 147.

[77] "M. Armand du Couedic, a Member of the late Parliament of Brittany, and of the present Society of the Friends of the Constitution at Nantes" read out an address at the Crown and Anchor on 14 July 1791 (*London Chronicle*, 14-16 July 1791).

Franklin (17 April 1790), Mirabeau (2 April 1791) and finally Price on 19 April. Mirabeau, Price, and Franklin remained associated in the imagination of British radicals and French Jacobins as representatives of the three nations whose liberty stemmed from intertwined revolutions (1688, 1776, 1789). Patriotic societies across in the three countries honoured them, often pronouncing their names together. London newspapers informed the English public of these homages.[78] Many worried about liberty's fate, like William Temple Franklin confiding to Jefferson: "The Cause of Freedom and good Government is loosing some of its ablest Supporters. Mirabeau, it is said, is dead!—and Dr. Price lies dangerously Ill!!"[79]It was Mirabeau who gave Franklin's funeral eulogy in the National Assembly on 11 June 1790. Many Jacobin clubs in France later mourned for Mirabeau; homages took the form of eulogies, speeches and plays. Mirabeau's death prompted the creation of the Panthéon, and he was the first to be given the honours of this new temple of the fatherland (*patrie*).[80] Some clubs added Price's name to form a trilogy of friends of liberty, neatly symbolizing the triumph of freedom in Britain, America, and France. The Amis de la Constitution in Nantes mourned Price and even aired the idea of naming a district of the city after him (but apparently never acted on the suggestion).[81] The Bordeaux club sent a letter to the Revolution Society likening Price to Mirabeau and Franklin.[82] The linkage between the three men is evident elsewhere in the correspondence of the Revolution Society; some French Jacobin clubs, including that of Paris, went into mourning for Price, and mentioned his name in conjunction with those of Mirabeau or Franklin.[83] Though no festival was held until the autumn of 1791, the clubs remained in symbolic communion, through correspondence and rituals (mourning, eulogies, inauguration of busts), which encouraged other clubs to imitate those practices. Price, Franklin and Mirabeau, then, constituted the sacred trio worshipped by Jacobins and radicals in 1791. They were possibly more revered

[78] *Whitehall Evening Post*, 15 June 1790; *Public Advertiser*, 17 June 1790; *Sunday Chronicle*, 20 June 1790.
[79] William Temple Franklin to Thomas Jefferson, 6 April 1791: Thomas Jefferson, *The Papers of Thomas Jefferson*, ed. by Julian P Boyd (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1983), XX, p. 159.
[80] On Mirabeau's state funeral: Ben-Amos, pp. 30–33. On the theatre: *Commemorating Mirabeau: Mirabeau Aux Champs-Elysées and Other Texts*, ed. by Jessica Mary Goodman, Modern Humanities Research Association Critical Texts, 58 (Cambridge: Modern Humanities Research Association, 2017).
[81] Oliver Stutchbury, 'Nantes and the Death of Richard Price', *Enlightenment and Dissent*, 11 (1992), 158. My own research in the municipal records of Nantes, and the Archives départementales de la Loire Atlantique, were fruitless as well.
[82] Lettre de la Société des Amis de la Constitution de Bordeaux (21 mai 1791), *Correspondence of the Revolution Society*, p. 167.
[83] On 31 May 1791, the *Société des Jeunes Amis de la Constitution à Toulouse* signed their letter: LYCURGUE. SOLON. FRANKLIN. MIRABEAU. PRICE. *Correspondence of the Revolution Society*, p. 160. The clubs of Aix-en-Provence, Bergerac and Clermont-Ferrand mourned Price (p.138, 196, 197, 213; Labroue, p. 119.).

than read; while their names were invoked, their advice could be ignored. Their consecrated aura was a useful binding force in mid- and late 1791. At that very special moment in the Revolution, venerable guides were no more; reference points were vanishing; war loomed ahead and France could veer into anarchy, republicanism, perhaps democracy, or civil war.

The developing symbolism incorporated new elements as the course of events rushed along. On 14 July 1791, the riots in Birmingham, which destroyed Joseph Priestley's house and laboratory, two dissenting chapels and several houses, soon became known in France as an egregious example of fanaticism. The next chapter will discuss the riots in their British context. What matters here is that Priestley, with whom the French Jacobins were already corresponding, became an object of compassion, but also a symbol of science and patriotism oppressed by an obscurantist mob.[84] In the French-American-British commemorative triangle, Priestley stood apart: he was the only one alive and he defended himself with gusto in pamphlet after pamphlet.

Another novelty was the emergence of a fourth "free nation". Poland, under the enlightened kingship of Stanisław Poniatowski, shook the yoke of Russia and voted a Constitution on 3 May 1791. This was the institutional outcome of the four-year Sejm (parliament) of 1788-1792, which effected a veritable Polish Revolution.[85] French and British liberals saw the adoption of the second written constitution in the world after that of the United States as a triumph, and little short of a miracle, for a partitioned country on the benighted periphery of Europe. The constitution, which seemed to revive long-dormant republican virtues, earned Poland a seat in the pantheon of free nations.[86] Henceforth, Poles would be invited as guests of honour, and the Polish king and constitution would feature in toasts, in both France and Britain. The Polish constitution, and the maintenance of peace

[84] On 29 July 1791, the Paris Jacobins opened a subscription; on 10 August they agreed on a draft a letter: F.-A. Aulard, *La Société Des Jacobins. Recueil de Documents Pour l'histoire Du Club Des Jacobins de Paris*, 6 vols (Paris, 1892), III, pp. 59, 82. Priestley was also one of the foreigners the National Assembly gave French citizenship to on 26 September: "he accepted citizenship but declined a position in the Convention, being unable to speak French" (Robert E. Schofield, *The Enlightened Joseph Priestley: A Study of His Life and Work from 1773 to 1804* (University Park, PA: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2004), p. 318.).

[85] Richard Butterwick, 'Political Discourses of the Polish Revolution, 1788-92', *The English Historical Review*, 120.487 (2005), 695–731 (pp. 695–96). Poland's liberty was short-lived. On the pretence of fighting the French Jacobin infection, Catherine II invaded Poland-Lithuania in 1792 and proceeded to the third partition in 1793.

[86] The constitution transformed an elective into a hereditary monarchy, curtailed the nobility's power (abolition of the *liberum* veto, or unanimity rule, in the Diet) and guaranteed freedom of worship while defining Roman Catholicism as state religion. For an English translation of the constitution: Jerzy Lukowski, *Disorderly Liberty: The Political Culture of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth in the Eighteenth Century*, Continuum Studies in Central and East European History (London ; New York: Continuum, 2010), pp. 261–71.

with Britain and the United States while European monarchies formed a counter-revolutionary coalition, contributed to focus celebrations on the four "free nations". This emergence of Poland matters in the history of revolutionary celebrations, not least because the 1791 constitution became an important precedent for a post-1830 cult of Poland. By late 1791, the French continued to celebrate liberty as a universal blessing, regrettably not as an actual state of affairs, through symbolic representatives and international partners.

The festivals of the pavilions, November 1791 – January 1793

A new form of political sociability, the "festivals of the pavilions", emerged in the autumn of 1791.[87] They aimed at maintaining the Anglo-French alliance in an increasingly hostile context, marked by France's entry into war with Austria and Prussia in April 1792. Through the press and informal channels, often in cooperation with Thomas Paine and British radicals in Paris, French revolutionaries like Brissot tried to keep Britain neutral and sever it from Prussia.[88]

The idea of festivals started from remarks made by Pétion, the mayor of Paris, when he attended the Revolution Society's 4 November 1791 commemoration of the Glorious Revolution in London. Pétion was then travelling in England on behalf of the Duc d'Orléans.[89] Some 300 guests gathered at the London Tavern to celebrate the French Revolution, which, ever since Price's *Discourse*, had outshone the tamer 1688 Revolution. There was a small but distinguished contingent of Frenchmen at the dinner: "M. Pethion and M. Augier, members of the late National Assembly of France; Major Montfort, a gentleman who has served many years in the French army, and M. Couedic."[90] The French press reported that Pétion received "the most fraternal welcome from all the English patriots"[91]. Pétion noted in his diary: "When the toast of the 1688 came, I saw that it was

[87] On contacts between the French Jacobins and English radicals in this period, see : Michael L Kennedy, *The Jacobin Clubs in the French Revolution: The Middle Years*, chap. 12.
[88] Paine edited an issue of *La Chronique du mois*, which had nominated John Oswald, James Mackintosh and John Horne Tooke "as go-betweens in the reconciliation between France and Great Britain".Carine Lounissi, *Thomas Paine and the French Revolution* (New York, NY: Springer, 2018), p. 179.
[89] Goodwin, pp. 186–88. The reasons for Pétion's trip are unclear to this day: Pierre Casselle, *L'Anti-Robespierre: Jérôme Pétion ou la Révolution pacifique*, Collection Révolutions (Paris (France): Vendémiaire, 2016), p. 261.
[90] *London Gazette*, 5 November 1791. M. du Couedic must be Armand du Couedic, President of the Nantes club: see above, note 77.
[91] *Patriote français*, n°826, 14 November 1791, p.562. See also *Moniteur*, n°317, 13 November 791, vol.10, p.353 ; *Chronique de Paris*, N°320, 16 November 1791.

very little celebrated; that of the king and his family was met with the dullest silence, that of the French nation with the keenest raptures and the orchestra immediately after struck up the famous tune "Ça ira"."[92] The orchestra played the tune after each toast. Pétion delivered "a short and handsome speech, delivered in French"[93] and Horne Tooke served as interpreter. In addition to seventeenth- and eighteenth-century English Commonwealthmen, the assembly toasted Mirabeau, Paine, and Priestley. They took up Price's 14 July toast: "An alliance between Great Britain and France, for perpetuating peace, and making the world happy". Peaceable intentions notwithstanding, the dinner sent rather alarming messages about revolution. "May the example of one revolution prevent the necessity of another"[94] was an established Whig toast, but it sounded ominous in late 1791. Paine was even more provoking when he gave "The Revolution of the World."[95] Claiming the French Revolution's worldwide scope, he also seemed to announce France's military support to revolution abroad.[96] The *Argus*, which was become London's prime radical newspaper under Sampson Perry's editor, published detailed proceedings of the dinner and revealed that the secretary listed the French clubs in correspondence with the Revolution Society and read out some letters from France.[97]

On his return to Paris, Pétion told the Jacobins of the glowing welcome he received in England, and of the French and British flags the club had tied together for the 4 November dinner. The Jacobin club resolved to imitate this and add the American flag. On 18 December,[98] the bundle of three flags was presented to a crowd of patriots who broke out in applause and acclamations. A delegation of female citizens offered an arch of alliance containing a patriotic offering as a vow of peace between the free nations: "a map of France divided into 83 departments, the cap of liberty, the constitutional act, a civic crown, three flags, ears of corn" and the Jacobin motto in French and English: "To live free or die."[99] A discussion opened on busts to be placed next to that of Mirabeau in the great room.

[92] Marcel Reinhard, 'Le Voyage de Pétion à Londres. 24 Octobre – 11 Novembre 1791', *Revue d'histoire Diplomatique*, 84 (1970), 1–60 (p. 54).
[93] *Argus*, 5 November 1791, p. 4.
[94] *Le Moniteur*, n°317, 13 November 1790, vol.10, p.353.
[95] *London Gazette*, 5 November 1791.
[96] The Legislative Assembly's Edict of fraternity of 19 November 1792 proposed France's armed assistance to peoples struggling for their liberation: *Moniteur*, vol.14, p.517.
[97] *Argus*, 5 November 1791, p. 4.
[98] F.-A. Aulard, *La Société des Jacobins. Recueil de documents pour l'histoire du Club des Jacobins de Paris*, 6 vols (Paris, 1892), III, p. 291.
[99] *Discours Des Citoyennes Françaises, Prononcé à La Société Des Amis de La Constitution, Séante Aux Jacobins, à Paris* (Paris: De l'imprimerie du Patriote français, place du Théâtre-Italien).

Candidates included Rousseau and Sidney (someone proposed to bring over the latter's bust from England). Finally, Franklin and Price were voted in. Sidney's exclusion does not signal any rejection of the civic humanist tradition; on the contrary, the French revolutionaries took a keen interest in seventeenth-century English republicans; Sidney's hour arrived later.[100]

The *Patriote français* found the scene indescribably touching.[101] So did Helen Maria Williams, who was present and described the scene in the second volume of her *Letters*. Tears flowed, she wrote, and sympathy circulated as the names of the English Milton, Locke, and Hampden re-echoed through the hall. "I heard with exultation the well-known names of these celebrated persons, and recollected with pride that I had the honour of belonging to the same country." Her country, she notes, had opened the way with Magna Carta. The American example also had considerable influence in France, but the Americans loved freedom "because they were of English race, and had studied the writings of English philosophers, and the examples of English patriots." While France had to unsheathe her weapons, England must reform herself "with no other arms than those of reason".[102] Here she restated the classic revolution-reform alternative. Williams's testimony shows how much France had travelled since the Federation. Whereas the Federation introduced world citizenship, the festival of the three pavilions heightened her pride in her native England. The pavilions figured a vow of peace, but also reaffirmed the differences between France, Britain and the United States, as if world citizenship were not possible and national boundaries were inescapable. The Jacobins had singled out only three countries, the free ones, presumably because some in their ranks were calling for war. Just after the touching ceremony, Isnard brandished a sword such as France should wield against tyrants; Roederer spoke out for war, and Robespierre against. The festival took place at a period when the opposition was hardening between the pro-war Brissotins, soon to be known as Girondins, and Robespierre and the Montagnards, who opposed a war that would play in the king's hand and jeopardize the Revolution.

Pétion's remarks on his return from London also prompted the *Société des Amis de la Constitution* of Bordeaux to organize their own festival on 8 December 1791, adding the

[100] Jacobin republicanism was inspired by the Ancients more than English Commonwealthmen: Rachel Hammersley, *The English Republican Tradition and Eighteenth-Century France: Between the Ancients and the Moderns* (Manchester, 2010), p. 194.
[101] *Patriote françois*, n°862, 20 December 1791.
[102] Helen Maria Williams, *Letters from France*, pp. 113–16.

Polish flag to the French, British and American ones.[103] It was a display of patriotism in the context of competition with both Nantes and other local clubs. The *Club du Café national*, founded in Bordeaux in the summer of 1789, was one of the earliest such societies in France. The *Amis de la Constitution* was created later, on 16 April 1790, and soon comprised the city élite in trade and the legal professions; the social standing of the *Café national* was lower.[104] A third club, the *Société des Surveillants de la Constitution*, recruited among artisans and shopkeepers. The *Amis* and the *Café national* remained in friendly terms until the autumn of 1792, and it was possible to be a member of both. Then relations deteriorated. The *Amis* were the cradle of the Girondins and eventually lost affiliation to the Paris Jacobins early in 1793. The *Café national*, on the contrary, wished to give power to popular sections and supported the Montagnards. The *Amis* were first in establishing links with the English and planning festivals, but the *Café national*, vying for reputation, imitated them rapidly, starting a correspondence in late May 1791, only weeks after the Amis had started theirs.[105] All three societies, Amis, Café national, and Surveillants, gave festivals to the four free nations in December 1791, suggesting that in the local context of Bordeaux, displays of friendship with Britons made political sense for all parties.

The Bordeaux *Amis* also operated in a national and international context. Expanding the Nantes concept by admitting Americans and Poles was certainly a way for the club to establish its cosmopolitan credentials and the city's leading role in the French Atlantic economy, while paying homage to its large American community. Bordeaux was a thriving port, which had outperformed the French economy significantly.[106] It had longstanding links with British, Irish and American merchants.[107] Composed of merchants, captains, supercargoes and seamen, the American community comprised a stable core and a large floating (in all senses of the term) population aboard the ships anchored off the quai des

[103] Séances des 30 novembre et 1er décembre 1792, an 3e de la liberté. *Extrait des registres de la Société des Amis de la Constitution, à Bordeaux*, p.1. AD Gironde, 8 J 366.
[104] Michael L Kennedy, *The Jacobin Clubs in the French Revolution: The First Years*, pp. 10, 25.
[105] *Correspondence of the Revolution Society…* (1792), p.215. Club du Café national – Comité de Correspondance (Bordeaux, 25 juin 1791). On Amis de la Constitution and Club national and their relationships: Paul R. Hanson, *The Jacobin Republic under Fire: the Federalist Revolt in the French Revolution* (University Park, PA: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2003), pp. 126–27.
[106] François Crouzet, 'Bordeaux : An Eighteenth-Century Wirtschaftswunder?', in *Britain, France and International Commerce: From Louis XIV to Victoria*, Collected Studies Series, 542 (Aldershot (GB), Brookfield, VT: Variorum, 1996).
[107] There is no general study of British and Irish merchants in Bordeaux and their cultural impact on the city, as there is of the German diaspora. See, however : Jean-Pierre Poussou, 'Recherches sur l'immigration anglo-irlandaise à Bordeaux au XVIIIe Siècle', *Revue Historique de Bordeaux*, 1974, 163–80; Jean-Pierre Poussou, 'Les Étrangers à Bordeaux à l'époque moderne', *Annales de Bretagne et des pays de l'Ouest*, 117.1 (2010), 149–164.

Chartrons.[108] The British population in Bordeaux must have been sociologically similar, with an elite of opulent merchants in addition.

The *Amis* planned the 8 December 1791 festival in careful detail. Despite speeches about "Lacedemonian frugality and simplicity", the tables were well stocked; a special subscription was open for the poor. A toast list was drafted on the day before. Only the foreign guests could propose other toasts; they would be drunk in the first tables and repeated by vice-presidents for the next tables to drink them in turn. The club invited deputies of the English, Irish, Scots, Americans and Poles currently in town, as well as representatives of five patriotic societies, including two women's societies. The guests were Joseph Fenwick, consul of the United States, two citizens from Philadelphia, one from Boston, five Englishmen, from Hull, London, Arundell, Appledore and Liverpool, two Scots, from Irvine and Leith, and eight Irishmen from Cork, Limerick, Dublin and Waterford. A M. Sauvage acted as agent and translator of the merchants and captains from the British Isles.[109] Some eight hundred guests sat down in the refectory of the former Récollets convent. The dinner was punctuated by toasts followed by music, in British style. The toasts started with a homage to the Supreme Being, and grace was said.[110] "The Rights of Man" and "The Sovereignty of the People" headed the list. Many toasts naturally paid homage to the guests, to the American Congress, the Revolution Society and reform societies in Edinburgh, Belfast and Dublin.[111] The roll of honour was the much same as the Revolution Society's: the Whig reformers Stanhope, Priestley, Horne Tooke, Benjamin Cooper, the deceased writers on civil liberty Voltaire, Rousseau, Franklin, Sidney, Milton, Price. Some toasts imitated English models: "Trial by jury, the palladium of our liberty", but they did not forget King Stanislas and "the patriotic societies of Poland." This coexisted with French revolutionary references to the "Vainqueurs de la Bastille" (the men who had stormed the fortress on 14 July), the victims of religious fanaticism in Languedoc and of

[108] Silvia Marzagalli, 'Présence étrangère et logiques de fonctionnement des villes atlantiques. Les Américains à Bordeaux, de la Guerre d'Indépendance à 1815', in *Villes atlantiques dans l'Europe occidentale du Moyen Âge au XXe Siècle*, ed. by Guy Saupin, Histoire (Rennes: Presses universitaires de Rennes, 2015), pp. 227–39.

[109] Registre de la Société des Amis de la Constitution de Bordeaux, AD Gironde, 12 L 16 ; *Extrait des registres de la Société des Amis de la Constitution, à Bordeaux*, AD Gironde 8 J 366, p.1-33.

[110] See list of toasts p.12-16.

[111] The Bordeaux Jacobins could have heard about those societies from the Irish and Scottish seamen. The Scottish Friends of the People were formed only in April 1792. But French societies knew about homages to France in dinners in Britain: Bougon and Français wrote after the trip to London: "In all the counties of England, in London, Cambridge, Seaforth, Dundee, societies of wise men met to celebrate the glorious deliverance of the French." (*Rapport des Députés de la Société des Amis de la Constitution*…, p. 4).

the repression on the Champ de Mars on 17 July 1791. Significantly, a toast to Robespierre, Pétion, Grégoire, Roederer, Camus, Prieur, Buzot, and Dubois-Crancé showed that, at this point, it was still possible for an increasingly Girondin club to pay homage to men emerging as Montagnard leaders: the Jacobin network still accommodated a vast array of political persuasions.

The rival *Club du Café national* held its own celebration on the 11th and the *Surveillants de la Constitution* at Saint-Christoly followed suit on the 18th.[112] Pierre Bernadau, a cantankerous commenter of Bordeaux life over several decades, dismissed the dinner at the *Surveillants*, as bad food, unending toasts, noise, and pointless compliments about liberty.[113] Such a testimony should be taken with a pinch of salt, coming from a disgruntled member of a rival society, but it gives some idea of the excesses of rhetoric that inter-club rivalry could provoke. It also suggests that festivals could be poor places of sociability if noise and endless toasting drowned out conversation.

The Jacobins of Bergerac, in Bordeaux's immediate hinterland, soon gave their own festivals. The participation of a city living of the wine trade in symbiosis with Bordeaux confirms the mercantile and naval underpinning of the Anglo-French correspondence. The Bergerac club wrote to the Revolution Society that the English were the forerunners and teachers of the French, who were carrying out a "universal regeneration". While this homage to British constitutional history was typical of the earlier correspondence, hopes of peace had given way to preparations for war. The festival centred on the four flags; to the sound of "Ça ira", the audience cried "vive la Nation Engloise, les Etats Unis, et la Nation Polonaise" before swearing an oath of union. The Bergerac club wrote to the London Revolution Society about the banquet and the participation of women, but did not mention any foreigner, understandably enough in a small town that was neither a seaport nor an international communications hub.[114] This absence suggests that the experience of cosmopolitanism, in this case revolutionary republicanism, was possible even with no

[112] AM Bordeaux, I.72, Registre des délibérations de la Société patriotique des surveillants de la constitution, 17 décembre 1791 ; BM Bordeaux, Tablettes de Bernadau, Misc 1698/6, p.551.
[113] Bernadau, Tablettes, BM Bordeaux, Ms 713(1)/6, fo.555. The manuscripts of the lawyer and polymath Pierre Bernadau (1762-1852), known as *Tablettes* (bearing various titles over the years), provide a jaundiced, cynical chronicle of Bordeaux life over four decades, exposing personal pettiness, rivalries and careerism. For a presentation of Bernadau, see Michel Colle, "Bernadau, l'historien mal-aimé des historiens de Bordeaux", Conférence à l'Académie Montesquieu, 12 May 2014: <https://www.academie-montesquieu.fr/bernadau-le-mal-aime-par-michel-colle-seance-du-lundi-12-mai-2014/>, consulted on 20 December 2021.
[114] *Correspondence of the Revolution Society*, pp. 265–67.

actual contact with foreigners: ties of commerce and correspondence fostered some form of friendship and solidarity.

Following Bordeaux's lead, other cities in France, especially Atlantic seaports, organized their own festivals, in December 1791-January 1792.[115] There was a strong mimetic element at play; clubs emulated each other and wanted their own ceremony once they read about others in their correspondence or in newspapers. Though some smaller societies looked up to the mother society in Paris for advice about how to honour flags in their turn,[116] correspondence often linked clubs together without intervention from Paris. But for the outbreak of war with Britain in February 1793, the festival could have become an annual one – however, those festivals were precisely meant, rather ambiguously, to ward off war and threaten it. They could be called "armed peace festivals". The core of the ceremonies consisted in homages to the British and American contribution to the spread of liberty (English constitution, American Revolution) and wishes of friendship and military alliance to maintain peace and crush tyrants. A prominent theme was the opposition between peoples and kings. Festivals took different forms, the flags (in variable number) forming the only common element. Marseilles honoured only the English; Rouen the English and the Americans, leaving the Poles out. Though contested, the idea that France, Britain, the United and Poland were the four free people in the world was widely shared in France and in British reformist circles.[117] The Bordelais wanted to pay homage to the new constitution edicted by Stanislas Poniatowski in May 1791, because it curtailed the nobility's power and promised more liberty to peasants and cities. It became visible, however, that Polish liberty was more apparent than real, as the magnates forced Stanislas to retire much of his programme.[118] A member of the *Amis de la Constitution* noted that Poland was still unfree; though Stanislas was a "roi honnête homme", the nobility of this

[115] Michael Kennedy counted 23 such festivals from 1 January to 14 July 1792 (Kennedy, *The Jacobin Clubs in the French Revolution: The Middle Years*, p. 152.)
[116] This was the case of the *citoyennes* of Aurillac. *Journal des débats et de la correspondance de la Société des amis de la Constitution, séante aux Jacobins*, 37 (7 April 1792), p.145.
[117] On 30 April 1792, Charles James Fox used it in the debates on Grey's parliamentary reform movement to rebut Pitt's contention that only Britain was free and did not need reform: *Cobbett's Parliamentary History of England*, vol.29, fo.1317.
[118] The *Société des surveillants* in Bordeaux decided to bend the Polish flag hanging in their meeting room and left it in a drooping position as long as the Poles had not recovered their full liberty: Renée Dubos, 'Une Société populaire bordelaise: Les Surveillants de la Constitution', *Revue Historique de Bordeaux*, 28 (1935), p. 226.

would-be democracy was all powerful and the bourgeoisie took very little part in the management of affairs.[119]

The festivals ostensibly promoted peace but also threatened war to tyrants: France was flexing its muscles. They could take the form of military and naval parades in seaports. In Marseille, the ceremony started at 11 to the peal of church bells. The procession started on the Place de la Liberté on the city's central artery, La Canebière. In the van were the English flag borne by a Frenchman, that of the Amis de la Constitution borne by an Englishman, and that of the National Guard. In the procession, the English "mixed with the sea captains of Marseille and those from all the other French seaports present in town, in uniform with their flags unfurled, totalling over three hundred men, followed by the city authorities", the Club's president, public functionaries, clubmen, officers of the National Guard and soldiers.[120] Clearly, the civil and military authorities wished to convey a message of peace to Britain, while tensions were escalating with Prussia and Austria.

The detailed account of the 17 January 1792 festival in Rouen, contained in the minutes of the local club, reveals that foreigners took a relatively small part in proceedings that were dominated by speeches by clubmen and civic leaders.[121] Admittedly, one Englishman had a shining role as flag bearer, and there was a strong British and American presence in the procession, but they were in the position of recipients (of symbolic gifts and speeches) rather than actors. "The captains of eight English and American ships present received each an affiliation diploma and a copy of the constitutional act; the ladies made an additional gift of the national cockade".[122] Alongside talk of fraternity, speeches to the volunteers called for military discipline and watchfulness against tyrants. After the speeches, two young Englishmen were presented with "the national cockade, which they received with a naive, modest joy, to the universal applause of the Assembly, which saw it as the presage of the constant harmony and friendship" between France and England. The Englishmen's bashfulness is hardly unsurprising, what with the language barrier, martial speeches, drum rolls and singing. At the end of the day, the foreigners gave thanks, by way of an interpreter. They offered to diffuse the minutes of the festival at home, should they

[119] Pierre Bernadau, manuscript *Tablettes*, 16 December 1791 (commenting on the ceremony at the *Surveillants*), BM Bordeaux, Misc 1798/6, p.555.
[120] *Relation de la fête de l'alliance des pavillons nationaux anglais et français, par les Marseillais patriotiques, amis de la constitution, le 18 décembre 1791* (Marseille: Imprimerie de Rochebrun et Mazet).
[121] E Chardon, *Cahiers des procès-verbaux des séances de la Société populaire à Rouen (1790-1795). Documents publiés et analysés par E. Chardon* (Rouen: Gy, 1909), pp. 55–67.
[122] Chardon, p. 58.

be given a translation. In other cities, Englishmen were asked to tell their countrymen of the festival and the French people's feelings of fraternity toward them.[123]

It is tempting to see the French Jacobins using foreigners as symbolic tokens, or as pawns in an enterprise of diffusion of their ideology to Britain and the United States. In fact, the motivations for staging festivals were probably multiple and dependent on local context: desire of imitation, individuals and clubs' bids for prominence and public visibility, desire of integrating foreigners (reassuring them about their status in wartime but warning them about war in case of threats to French liberty). The place of foreigners was relatively limited. In some festivals, they were absent and speeches and symbols addressed the nations, not individuals.[124] Elsewhere, they listened to speeches, received gifts and thanked their hosts. The accounts of festivals make it impossible to assess their opinion of the proceedings.

The opening of the Scheldt to French navigation, on 16 November 1792, the "Edict of Fraternity" two days later, and the execution of Louis XVI on 21 January 1793 precipitated the war with Britain (declared on 1 February). The late-1792 festivals looked like last-ditch attempts by French Jacobin clubs to stave off the inevitable.[125] While war with Austria and Prussia raged, France, a republic since September 1792, felt it held the destiny of liberty and civilisation in its hands. The Legislative and the Convention were legislating for mankind, and paving the way, through wise, rational legislation, for universal liberty.[126] The late 1792 international festivals, in a sense, echoed the decree of 26 August whereby the Convention granted honorary French citizenship to distinguished foreigners.[127] Three festivals celebrated the values of cosmopolitanism and brotherhood as late as January 1793, weeks before France declared war on Britain, to salvage the idea of republican internationalism, and also probably because of the widespread belief that Britain was on the verge of revolution. The French legislators held up the hope that the British people would rise in revolution if the Pitt cabinet went to war.

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[123] For instance at Cherbourg on 9 October 1792: *Journal des débats et de la correspondance de la Société des Jacobins, Amis de l'Egalité et de la Liberté, séante aux Jacobins à Paris*, n°117 (18 October 1792), p.489.
[124] For instance, at Tarbes, on 2 May 1792, the *citoyennes* honoured the four flags during a ceremony held on the anniversary of Mirabeau's death (*Mercure universel*, vol.15, p.20).
[125] In Bordeaux for instance, both the *Amis* and the *Surveillants* celebrated a festival a year to the day after the first: Minutes de la Société des amis de la constitution de Bordeaux, AD Gironde, 12 L 13 ; Registre des délibérations de la Société patriotique des surveillants de la constitution, 18 décembre 1792, AM Bordeaux, I.74, fo.129.
[126] Wahnich, *L'Impossible Citoyen*, pp. 163–200.
[127] *Archives parlementaires*, vol.52, p.577.

With war looming ahead, the new flag festivals diffused more aggressive rhetoric. On 13 January 1793, the Female Friends of Liberty, affiliated to the Surveillants,[128] gave a festival to liberty in Bordeaux. The subjects of King George III were absent from a stridently republican event with one foreign guest: consul Joseph Fenwick, appointee of President Jefferson and local representative of the American republic. The frugality (wooden spoons and forks, simple fare) and patriotic songs were republican as well. The British custom of toasting was retained: now naturalized, it could serve to toast "the hope of universal Republic", military victories, propagation of republicanism abroad and "the revolutionary societies of Great Britain". This banquet represents a further stage in the erasure of the English in the French patriotic discourse analysed by Sophie Wahnich.[129] While some foreigners had been lionized but bidden to keep silent – Thomas Paine in the Constituent Assembly, Englishmen awarded medals or given patriotic insignia at festivals – , by January 1793 the reference was to absent oppositional groupings like the London Corresponding Society, the Society for Constitutional Information or what remained of the Revolution Society. In the course of 1792, those radical societies, professedly democratic and leaning toward republicanism, had become the embodiment of the "English people"[130] as it should be; the Pitt administration and the Parliament were illegitimate.

Wartime festivals: Anglophobia and support to Irish and Scottish patriots

After the declaration of war, British flags became an embarrassment: most clubs took them away, while the Marseille *Amis de la Constitution* kept theirs on the grounds that France was at war with the government, not the people.[131] The British naturally no longer took part in French festivals. The laws on suspects led to imprisonments. Even residents who had been loyal to the French Revolution and written to defend it, like Helen Maria Williams, were rounded up and spent time in prison. The British in France found themselves in dire straits. Not only did the Jacobins and officials ramp up an Anglophobic

[128] The "dames de St Dominique" were affiliated to the Surveillants : Dubos, p. 75.. There was another female club sitting rue Bouffard.
[129] Wahnich, *L'Impossible Citoyen*, pp. 243–310.
[130] In October 1792 the Paris Jacobins wrote an Address to the Popular Societies of England, Scotland, and Ireland exculpating the September Massacres. A dozen British societies wrote letters of congratulation to the Convention in the autumn. Michael L Kennedy, *The Jacobin Clubs in the French Revolution: The Middle Years*, pp. 156–57.
[131] Michael L Kennedy, *The Jacobin Clubs in the French Revolution: The Middle Years*, pp. 159–60.

rhetoric, turning the English into enemies of humankind; on a daily basis the British were subject to increasing restrictions.[132]

French festivals, meanwhile, continued, and this time the transnational republicanism focused on the links of friendship with the United States. In the US, 'Jacobins', members of the Democratic-Republican societies (Jeffersonians), staged festivals, which their Federalist opponents resented. French citizens in the United States staged their own festivals.[133] Those celebrations had a strongly international character, involving French and American citizens, and from 1795, citizens of the new Batavian Republic. The toasts strongly affirmed republican brotherhood, military and naval alliances against despots and support to peoples struggling for their liberty, especially the Poles. The English were, by then, part of the execrated league of despots. To continue with the case of Bordeaux, there is evidence of exchanges of festival accounts with clubs in the United States, especially Charleston, in South Carolina, where French merchants also took part in festivals.[134] Throughout the 1790s and into the 1810s, Americans celebrated the Fourth of July and usually took part in French festivals, represented by consul Fenwick, who was expert at defending Americans' interests even through the most severe crises.[135]

By the mid-1790s, then, the French ignored the English in their banquets, or when they toasted them, it was to bring their downfall on them. An exception is British and Irish radical figures who had fled Britain and received support in France. Thomas Muir and James Napper Tandy are two cases in point. Both members of the United Irishmen, they fled Britain where they had suffered prosecution and proscription, and were fêted first on their arrival in Bordeaux, and then in Paris.

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[132] On Anglophobic discourse: Wahnich, *L'impossible Citoyen*. On the treatment of Britons: Michael Rapport, *Nationality and Citizenship in Revolutionary France: The Treatment of Foreigners, 1789-1799* (Oxford; New York: Oxford University Press, 2000).

[133] See e.g. *Procès Verbal de Célébration de La Fête Du 25 Thermidor* (Philadelphia: Parent, 1794); *Fête Civique Célébrée Par Les Patriotes Français, Américains et Hollandais* (Philadelphia: Parent, 1795). On Democratic-Republican societies and their activities : *The Democratic-Republican Societies, 1790-1800: a Documentary Sourcebook of Constitutions, Declarations, Addresses, Resolutions, and Toasts*, ed. by Philip Sheldon Foner (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1976).

[134] See e.g. procès verbal de la célébration de la Fête du Dix Août à Philadelphie, 15 thermidor an II (2 August 1794) : AD Gironde I.16, pièce 28. On Charleston : Michael L. Kennedy, 'A French Jacobin Club in Charleston, South Carolina, 1792-1795', *The South Carolina Historical Magazine*, 91.1 (1990), 4–22; Lawrence Aje, 'L'Évolution de la Perception de la France et des Français en Caroline du Sud à l'heure des Révolutions Française et de Saint-Domingue, 1789-1804', *RSÉAA*, 69 (2012), 85–116 (pp. 89–90).

[135] Silvia Marzagalli, 'Un Américain à Bordeaux. Joseph Fenwick, Premier Consul Des Etats-Unis', *Revue Historique de Bordeaux et Du Département de La Gironde*, 1, 2002, 73–90.

Muir, who was sentenced to fourteen years of transportation to Botany Bay for his involvement in the Scottish Convention of 1793, is now remembered as one of the "Scottish Martyrs".[136] He was to regain Europe after an epic travel that started with his escape from the Australian penal colony and crossed the American continent. Hailed as a martyr, he was treated with a reception on his arrival in Bordeaux in November 1797. Perhaps unsurprisingly given the connections between Bordeaux and the United States, the best account of the fête appeared in a paper in Charleston. "The city has witnessed a scene that has excited enthusiasm in every republican breast." Muir, a "martyr of liberty", "has in this place received the tribute of esteem and affection due to his virtues and his misfortunes". The patriotic societies and other institutions like the academy honoured him. Emblems and illuminations, as well as Muir's appearance at a balcony, lent the dinner a public character: a crowd assembled in the street could cheer him. Toasts reiterated republican values (the first one was to the French Republic), its martyrs, and its current defenders, from "philosophical writers" to armies, and "the nations in alliance with the Republic." Beyond those generic traits, the festival had a specific intention, restating the goal of freeing Britain from the monarchy, by military invasion if international revolution could not effect it. The fourth toast was to "Thomas Muir, and all other victims to English despotism"; it envisioned their reward in a free Britain. The last toast expressed the wish that the army of England may, under the direction of Bonaparte, "the illustrious deliverer of Italy", "speedily unite the Thames to the Seine" so that "the songs sacred to liberty" could echo "on the rocks of Scotland and Ireland".[137]

Muir later read of a banquet given in his honour at the ministry of police in Paris. He published an answer expressing his identity as a Scotsman, but also his solidarity with France, Ireland, and struggling countries:

> You drank "To the United Irishmen;" and "The Highlanders of Scotland," who wait only for the French to break their chains.
>
> I assure you, in the name of the Irish and Scotch, that we will break our chains on the heads of our Tyrants. An effort remains to be made by the *Grande Nation*. It is

[136] Thomas Muir (1765-1799) and his memory had received much critical attention recently: see in particular Gordon Pentland, 'The Posthumous Lives of Thomas Muir', in *Liberty, Property and Popular Politics: England and Scotland, 1688-1815: Essays in Honour of H.T. Dickinson*, ed. by Gordon Pentland and Michael T. Davis (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2016), pp. 207–23; *Thomas Muir of Huntershill : Essays for the Twenty First Century*, ed. by Gerard Carruthers and Don Martin (Edinburgh: Humming Earth, 2016).
[137] *City Gazette and Daily Advertiser* (Charleston, SC), 26 February 1798; see also *Columbian Magazine* (Savannah, GA), 9 March 1798.

> not with the People of England it fights. It is only with a hundred scoundrels. Let them fall, and the Peace of the Universe is established.[138]

Muir responded "in the name of the Irish and Scotch", not as a single individual, to toasts raised at a government reception. Published as it was in the French, and then the British, press, his statement issued a challenge to England. Muir's welcome dinner in Bordeaux is evidence of diplomatic and propagandistic appropriation of expressions of transnational republicanism.[139]

The same goes for James Napper Tandy, another United Irishman that the French honoured. The Irish patriot had conspired for a French expedition to Britain. France had named him a general; he fought against Britain, and following his capture in Hamburg, he was handed over to the British authorities. In 1800, a tribunal in Ireland condemned him to banishment. After some diplomatic wrangling, it was finally decided his place of exile would be France, rather than Botany Bay.[140] On 14 March 1802, he was fêted on his arrival in Bordeaux. The only toast mentioned in the *Morning Post* confirms France's international aspirations: "[t]o the Friends of Liberty throughout the world – may the remembrance of those who have died for Freedom live in the Hearts of our latest Posterity."[141] Until the Peace of Amiens (signed ten days after, on 24 March), and again after the war resumed in May 1803, French festivals cast the British government as an illegitimate monarchy oppressing its own subjects; at least until the Peace, Britons were at best an oppressed people, which is why the French Republic cherished and fêted the opponents to the regime who landed on its shores.

The international festivals staged from 10 August 1790 to mid-January 1793 contain common elements which justify classifying them under a single category. Always prepared by French clubmen (without any apparent input from foreigners at this stage), they honoured foreign guests and followed a ritual comprising symbolic gifts (a copy of the constitution, standards, cockades), speeches by the club's president and, often, the

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[138] "Letter of Thomas Muir, a Scotch refugee, to the minister of general police. (Paris, 8 nivôse – Dec. 28)", *True Briton*, 8 January 1798, translation from *Gazette nationale*, 15 nivôse, an VI (4 January 1798).
[139] Part of this paragraph is based on: Rémy Duthille, 'Political Toasting in the Age of Revolutions: Britain, America and France, 1765-1800', in *Liberty, Property and Popular Politics: England and Scotland 1688-1815. Essays in Honour of H. T. Dickinson*, ed. by Gordon Pentland and Michael T Davis (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2016), pp. 73–86 (pp. 82–83).
[140] James Kelly, 'Tandy, James Napper (1737–1803), Irish nationalist', *ODNB*.
[141] *Morning Post*, 10 April 1802.

constituted local authorities, and a dinner usually punctuated by carefully calibrated toasts honouring the Revolution and the guests. There was some local diversity, depending on the town's politics and socio-economic links with foreign countries. It is no wonder festivals took place along the Atlantic coast from Bordeaux to Dunkerque, through La Rochelle, Nantes, Cherbourg, Rouen, and smaller hinterland towns; and also in Marseille. Some inland cities did however participate, which weakens the thesis of an Anglophilia serving mercantile interests.[142] The Nantes festival clearly served the interests of the local slaving bourgeoisie, but in other places, international festivals expressed ideals of fraternity and republicanism which were compatible with both free trade and protectionist, even autarchic visions of the economy.[143] The very vagueness of homages allowed for different interpretations in different places. But in general, festivals evolved over time toward republicanism. The Nantes festival in August 1790 had been a jumble of symbols, paying homage both to the French revolutionary break and to the ancient English constitution. Following festivals adopted a sterner, neoclassical aesthetic based on flags and busts. If Englishmen were still ritually presented as forerunners and mentors, eulogies of the British constitution and its hallowed liberties gave way to exaltation of France as leading, nay unique, revolutionary nation. Threats in case Britain interfered with French liberty multiplied in 1792.

The maintenance of diplomatic alliances and amity between the peoples in the pursuit of peace formed the ideological core of the festivals. French revolutionary festivals attempted to educate the common people into virtue and citizenship. International fêtes pursued another objective, that of declaring revolutionary principles and friendly intentions to foreigners, with a view that they would spread them in their home countries. During festivals, Britons received homages but their reactions are unknown. As the first chapter showed, emotional reactions to the Federation of 1790 varied enormously, from Helen Maria William's radiant joy to C. B. Wollaston's boredom at Reims. This suggests that British reactions to French festivals must have been varied; even some men committed to the Revolution might have been disappointed in some cases. Were they being coaxed or manipulated? In some communities, it is probable the Jacobins and the local authorities

[142] Michael Kennedy uses this argument to counter Claude Mazauric's Marxist interpretation : Michael L Kennedy, *The Jacobin Clubs in the French Revolution: The Middle Years*, p. 153.

[143] Among proponents of the idea of a universal republic, Thomas Paine endorsed free trade; Price warned the Americans against commerce in *Observations on the Importance of the American Revolution* (1784); Anacharsis Cloots was a follower of Hébert, on the extreme-left side of the Constituent Assembly.

wanted to reassure foreigners that their status was safe even in the midst of turmoil. But, as relations with Britain hardened, the festivals became more ambivalent: the foreigners were left to understand that good behaviour was expected and they had a sword of Damocles hanging over their heads. Research by Mike Rapport and Rachel Rogers has shown to what lengths foreigners had to go to prove their revolutionary loyalty and escape imprisonment.[144] It follows that a "totalitarian" interpretation inspired by François Furet could see those festivals as disciplinary instruments. Further local studies would be necessary to bring out specific dynamics of power to sustain this negative interpretation. This chapter has taken another, more positive line, that takes the Jacobin discourse more seriously. In this interpretation, the Jacobin clubs were in a relatively weak position and tried to endear themselves to Britons to keep Pitt away from the Prussian alliance. If this was the case, the strategy failed. Ironically, the renunciation of offensive war in May 1790 suited Pitt, who did not want war with France. In that sense, the pressure placed on Britain was useless. Conversely, the festivals failed to halt Britain's rallying to the counter-revolutionary coalition. This crisis of November-December 1792 was a turning point in the British celebrations of the French Revolution as well, as the next chapter will explain.

Later celebrations of patriots Thomas Muir and James Napper Tandy took place in a very different context of war. This time, the French celebrated "patriots", taking up the classical eighteenth-century sense of "patriot" as an oppositional lover of liberty, who both loved his country and wanted the good of mankind. Muir and Tandy were precious prizes for the Directory. Their martyrdom at Pitt's hands gave the French the good role of the helper of the oppressed. It also fed a French discourse about Britain, nations panting for freedom and yearning to reject the yoke. That Muir was a Scot and Tandy an Irishmen offered the advantage of castigating *les Anglois* and defending the principle of popular self-determination. In this case as in that of the 1790-1793 festivals, it is difficult to escape the impression that the French authorities were exploiting British people for their own ideological, diplomatic, sometimes locally political, goals. But, instead of putting this down to a particular Jacobin perfidy, one might point out the ambivalence of special dinners and guests of honour. Guests of honour could be showered with praise and symbolic recognition, but this very process also tied them down, transformed him into symbols and

[144] Michael Rapport, *Nationality and Citizenship*; Rachel Rogers, 'White's Hotel: A Junction of British Radical Culture in Early 1790s Paris', *Caliban. French Journal of English Studies*, 33, 2013, 153–72; Rachel Rogers, *Friends of the Revolution*.

mouthpieces of other people's talk, shutting their mouth and appropriating them. This particular process of appropriation was not limited to international Jacobin festivals but can be seen in other events.

Chapter 3.

Celebrating the French Revolution in Britain, 1789-1793

The Festival of the Federation of 14 July 1790 was the start of international festivals in France. It also started a sequence of celebrations in Britain. Sociable events in support of the French Revolution organized by Britons were of two kinds. In 1790, 1791 and 1792, in many towns and cities across the country, supporters of the French Revolution met on Bastille Day, and staged large dinners. In November 1792, celebrations of French military victories constituted a second, smaller and heterogeneous, cluster of events, ranging from plebeian bonfires in Sheffield to more genteel dinners among expatriates in Paris. This festivity, the only one that did not take place in Britain, is relevant because it involved Britons and took place in a locale, White's Hotel, that considered itself as a British enclave in Paris.

The outbreak of the war in February 1793 made such effusions of sympathy impossible, but even before that date, those dinners had attracted considerable opposition, culminating with the notorious Priestley Riots in Birmingham from 14 to 17 July 1791. The most destructive episode of violence since the Gordon Riots of 1780, the relentless destruction and plunder of the property of prominent Dissenters shocked public opinion internationally. The mob violence unleashed at Birmingham was fortunately not the sole response to Bastille Day dinners, but it was no isolated outburst either. Rather, this chapter suggests that there was an undercurrent of threats and violence, mostly based on denominational hatred: Birmingham was the tip of the iceberg.

Celebrations also gave rise to a cultural efflorescence in the form of poems, songs and toasts, speeches, and ironic or satirical rebuttals from opponents, playing out domestic partisan and denominational conflicts. The analysis of those events brings out both the reformers', and their enemies', attitudes to the French Revolution, and to revolution as a vehicle of socio-political change. Despite the abundance of studies on 1790s Britain, there remains work to do to examine the contribution of Bastille Day dinners and their cultural production to the political and cultural world of the early 1790s.

From 1790 to 1791, Bastille Day dinners were in the ascendant, taking a very specific social form that turned out to be highly visible but ephemeral. There is evidence

of celebrations in 1790 in London, Cambridge, and in a different form in Dundee. In 1791, in addition to London and Birmingham, dinners were held in Norwich, Oxford, Derby, Liverpool, Manchester, Wolverhampton, as well as the main Scottish cities and towns: Edinburgh, Glasgow, Dundee again, and Paisley, and in Ireland in Dublin and Belfast. Those dinners, at least the London ones, can best be understood as part of the recently burgeoning "convivial public sphere", a literary-political social space thriving in large taverns in the metropolis, as Ian Newman has shown.[1] As the remembrance of the Birmingham Riots still smarted, and the government started a crackdown on seditious meetings and publications following the Royal Proclamation of 25 May 1792, the celebrations were in retreat in 1792. Bastille Day dinners gave way to more radical celebrations of French military victories in November 1792.

This chapter charts the Bastille Day celebrations from 1790 to 1792, in chronological order, before considering the November 1792 celebrations. The state of sources precludes any Geertzian thick description, but enables a rather detailed description of London dinners in 1790 and 1791, and of the Birmingham Riots. Accounts of dinners are relatively sparse and repetitive. Evidence of pre-dinner preparations or retrospective accounts offer useful complements. A more abundant group of sources consists of a rich cultural array of conservative parodies, squibs, pamphlets, and caricatures targeting French Revolution dinners. Sources are tilted in favour of a few large dinners. I have tried to avoid skewing the perspective through a narrowly metropolitan lens, and to examine the British-wide scope of celebrations, by treating Scottish and English provincial dinners. I have found no equivalent in Wales, however. Though an AHRC-sponsored project has brought to light a wealth of loyalist and radical material from the 1790s, there were no Bastille Day dinners in Wales as far as I could ascertain, and the Welsh cultural associational forms did not generally favour the expression of pro-French sentiment. The revived eisteddfodau sponsored by the London-Welsh Gwyneddigion society encouraged loyalist, rather than radical, poetry. Although the topic of the competition was "Liberty" in 1790, the jury rewarded conservative poets.[2] London may not have offered a hegemonic model. Provincial dinners, however, often took their cue from London while adapting toasts and speeches to their local specificities. But a bare outline in a newspaper article – a list of toasts and songs,

[1] Ian Newman, *The Romantic Tavern*.
[2] Marion Löffler, 'Introduction', in *Welsh Responses to the French Revolution: Press and Public Discourse, 1789-1802*, Wales and the French Revolution (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 2012), pp. 1–71 (p. 23).

a mention of the numerous company, sometimes a few names – provides a mere skeleton for analysis. The toasts and songs might be the same in many places, but good speakers would adapt the speeches, allusions and jokes to local conditions. The similarity in press narratives gives an impression of pan-British cohesion, certainly on purpose, as a show of unity of the Foxite Whigs and Dissenters, but we should bear in mind the underlying local diversity.

General characteristics of 14 July celebrations, 1790 to 1792

Bastille Day dinners were well planned, with toast lists decided in advance, and invitations advertised in the local press. Men prided themselves on putting their names on the stewards list. Dinners were conspicuous, taking place in taverns, upscale establishments that catered to the aristocracy and middling orders, in the centre of cities. This was so with Dadley's Hotel in Birmingham or the Tontine coffeehouse in Glasgow. A guidebook from 1792 describes the latter tavern as the principal "house of public accommodation" of Glasgow, comprising "one of the most elegant and spacious Coffee-rooms in Britain, which, from its proximity to the Exchange, is extremly [sic] convenient for the mercantile part of the community."[3] The London dinners took place at the Crown and Anchor, a major tavern off the Strand, the artery that connected the City with the governmental and fashionable Westminster. The Crown and Anchor was multipurpose and accommodate business dinners and political meetings of various hues.[4] It was labelled as a 'Jacobin' place, but from November 1792, it housed John Reeves's loyalist Association for Preserving Liberty and Property against Republicans and Levellers.

The choice of such a venue, and especially the expensive ticket prices, restricted the audience to the comfortable middling sorts and above.[5] The organizing committee drew from advanced, reformist Whigs, and members of the Society for Constitutional Information. It appealed generically to all "Friends of Freedom"; yet those men were not ready to align their festive practices with their professedly popular politics. Their

[3] Charles Ross, *The Traveller's Guide to Lochlomond, and Its Environs. Illustrated with a Map* (Paisley: printed by John Neilson, 1792), p. 21.
[4] Christina Parolin, 'Radicalism and Reform at the "Gate of Pandemonium": The Crown and Anchor Tavern in Visual Culture, 1790–1820', in *Radical Spaces: Venues of Popular Politics in London, 1790-c. 1845* (Canberra: ANU E Press, 2010), pp. 105–46.
[5] The dinner cost 7s 6d on 14 July 1790 and 1791 in London, 6s in Norwich in 1791. *General Evening Post*, 8-10 July 1790; *Norfolk Chronicle*, 9 July 1791.

celebrations, far from encouraging any democratic participation by the lower orders, respected the conventions of official dinners and fashionable gatherings.[6] The exclusion of the poor, and of women, went without saying. The announcements for dinners show that the organizers saw the French Revolution as universal: a restoration of universal rights with universal implications, and logically to be celebrated by all. Though the self-styled "Friends of Liberty in England" appealed to all lovers of liberty, this emphasis on openness and universality was contradicted by the social and gender exclusion, the tavern premises, and implicitly, by the Dissenting identity of stewards which could only keep Anglicans away. Understandably, Edmund Burke and others denounced as a clique those who spoke the language of natural rights. Burke judged that revolution in Britain threatened not from the mob below, but from corrupt merchant classes symbolized by the Crown and Anchor, which accommodated both radical meetings and lavish nabob feasts of the East India Company.[7]

The organizers and diners who adopted French symbolism were not ready to accept the full consequences of the Rights of Man. "Liberty" was a Whig shibboleth that entailed, at the time, a limited monarchy, religious toleration and a modicum of parliamentary reform meant to integrate more men of property into the political system. Religious dissenters started to claim religious liberty rather than toleration, but there was no consensus on the abolition of the Test and Corporation Acts, let alone the penal laws. Very few reformers at that point defended universal suffrage. Richard Price defended popular sovereignty, but universal suffrage in theory only, reserving the suffrage in practice to "independent" men with financial capacities.[8] Even more advanced radicals like John Cartwright or John Thelwall expected the common people, once given universal suffrage, to show deference to their superiors and return them in the Commons.[9] The reformers at the forefront of the dinners shied away from universal suffrage. In his refutation of Burke, George Rous, who presided in London in 1791, endorsed the Declaration of the Rights of Man, but agreed with Montesquieu that the vote could not be entrusted to those too poor to have a will of their own.[10] Equality, for such moderate reformers, meant equality before the law and the

[6] Nicholas Rogers, *Crowds, Culture, and Politics in Georgian Britain* (Oxford; New York: Oxford University Press, 1998), p. 183.
[7] Ian Newman, *The Romantic Tavern*, chap. 1.
[8] Duthille, *Le Discours radical en Grande-Bretagne, 1768-1789*, pp. 166–67.
[9] H. T. Dickinson, *The Politics of the People in Eighteenth-Century Britain* (Basingstoke; London: Macmillan Press, 1994), p. 185.
[10] George Rous, *Letter to the Right Honourable Edmund Burke by George Rous, Esq, in Reply to His Appeal from the New to the Old Whigs* (London, 1791), p. 117.

abolition of privileges. Such a break with the ancien regime, whether in Britain or France, though considerable, was still a far cry from economic egalitarianism. Fraternity, so uplifting in theory, did not entail rubbing shoulders with the common people or abolishing distances.

The 14th of July 1790: an English federation?

Were the 14 July 1790 British celebrations a federation by proxy? There was no official affiliation with the Paris *fédérés*, and the events were widely different. The common people made up the bulk of the spectators at the French festivals, even if it was the bourgeoisie that paraded in the national guard. In Britain, the festivities gathered an élite in taverns gated by invitations and expensive tickets. However, the English participants felt they were in harmony and unison with the French. For Price, the London feast was an unexpected surprise. He had declined La Rochefoucauld's invitation to attend the Federation in Paris and he anxiously followed news from France. He was one of the stewards and a noteworthy orator at the London Bastille Day dinner. Though La Rochefoucauld congratulated the Londoners on their civic feast,[11] Price somewhat played down the importance of the celebration compared with France. On 2 August, he wrote to Alexander Christie, whose son Thomas he had talked with on his return to France:

> He joined us on the 14th of last month, in celebrating the first Anniversary of the French Revolution. This was indeed a most joyous and animating meeting. It originated with some of my Friends who engaged me to be one of the stewards of the Feast. We were once doubtful about our success, but we have been very agreeably disappointed. But, what was our meeting to the Grand *Confederation* at Paris? Never before was such a scene exhibited on this earth![12]

Ever modest and diffident, Price feared a Bastille Day dinner would fall through. He could write of success because the dinner was well attended, but it also received heavy criticism.

[11] Duc de la Rochefoudauld to Price, 29 July 1790, in Richard Price, *The Correspondence of Richard Price*, ed. by D. O. Thomas and W. Bernard Peach, 3 vols (Durham, NC; Cardiff, UK: Duke University Press; University of Wales Press, 1983), p. 309.
[12] Price, *The Correspondence of Richard Price*, p. 312.

The press announced the dinner in advance.[13] Earl Stanhope chaired; the nineteen other stewards were Dissenters belonging to the London Revolution Society or the SCI. Many prominent Whigs and leader Dissenters were present. Charles James Fox did not attend, but many of his allies, such as Richard Brinsley Sheridan, did. The celebration promised to be squarely about the "ANNIVERSARY of the REVOLUTION in FRANCE", with no reference at all to the Storming of the Bastille. The announcements mentioned the decision of the French National Assembly to celebrate a feast: symbolically, simultaneity with the French was crucial. "[T]he Friends of Liberty in England" decided "to testify their common Joy at an event so important in itself, and which is likely to essentially promote the general Liberty and Happiness of the World".

The story of the dinner has been told elsewhere.[14] Some 652 "friends of liberty" attended at the Crown and Anchor. Its proceedings were modelled on those of the Revolution Society, the dinner starting with invocations of the "Supreme being" by Presbyterian divines belonging to the society, Dr Andrew Kippis and Dr Joseph Towers.[15] The denominational and partisan character of the meeting was obvious. In his speech, Lord Stanhope noted that France had so improved its constitution in both civil and religious liberty, that it was superior to Britain's. The audience easily caught the hints to both the simplicity of French electoral system, in comparison with the unreformed English one, and the civic emancipation of Protestants and Jews in France, in contrast with the maintenance of civil disabilities on English Dissenters.[16] Rehearsing a favourite metaphor, Stanhope judged that the pupil had outstripped the master.

During the dinner, Stanhope gave the toast "To the extinction of all jealousy between France and England, and may they vie with each other in seeking to extend the benefits of peace, liberty, and virtue throughout the world."[17] Price spoke in much the same way. The French system was no less than "an union between philosophy and politics", and he toasted "A league between France and Great Britain, for perpetuating peace, and making the world happy."[18] In Paris, Camille Desmoulins's paper published a longer version of

[13] The paragraph is based on the announcement in *General Evening Post*, 8-10 July 1790.
[14] Ghita Stanhope, *The Life of Charles, Third Earl Stanhope*, ed. by G. P. Gooch (London: Longmans, Green & Co, 1914), pp. 93–95; Veitch, pp. 148–50; Goodwin, pp. 122–23.
[15] Goodwin, p. 122.
[16] On the failure of campaigns to repeal the Test and Corporation Acts: G. M. Ditchfield, 'The Parliamentary Struggle over the Repeal of the Test and Corporation Acts, 1787-1790', *The English Historical Review*, 89.352 (1974), 551–77.
[17] Ghita Stanhope, p. 94.
[18] *Public Advertiser*, 16 July 1790.

Stanhope's and Price's speeches than can be found in the London press, which suggests that the Parisians were eager to know the state of British public opinion, during the Nootka Sound crisis.[19] The sanguine hopes of an extinction of national enmity were of course voiced at the Nantes Anglo-French festival the next month.

The list of toasts was solemn in character. The sheer number of guests and the surrounding symbolism, together with the ritual of toasting in deep silence, conferred an almost sacred character to the proceedings. The first toast listed in the papers was "The Majesty of the People" rather than the loyal toast. Oddly, this did not provoke attacks at the time. On later occasions, radical societies and individuals received a barrage of criticism for giving this disloyal toast.[20] The second toast, "The Nation, the Law, and the King" was the French motto reflecting the hierarchy of constitutional powers, and the text of the oath sworn by Lafayette and the guards during the Federation. The London stewards paid attention to the near-simultaneity of their dinner with the festivals in France. That an oath in Paris could become a toast in London suggests an affinity between the two forms, and the malleability of the toast form, a topic explored further in the next chapter. The next toasts also concerned France, construing the Revolution as a restoration of lost rights. "The Glorious Revolution in France" equated the French revolution with the Glorious Revolution of 1688-89. Guests assumed that France, after some salutary violence, would evolve rather peacefully into a British-style constitutional monarchy.

The guests went to some lengths to adopt French phraseology, but also French symbols. They wore cockades, and, during the toasts, a waiter climbed upon a table bearing a stone from the Bastille, donated by the Chevalier d'Éon, and guests threw their cockades on it.[21] The Bastille stone was a potent symbol of the downfall of absolutism; it was also a one that could circulate between the private and public realms, as its translation from d'Éon's home to the tavern testifies. The Chevalier had given up the idea of giving "a superb Fête at Hammersmith to above 300 persons, mostly of her own country, to celebrate the anniversary of the French Revolution".[22] A French paper wrote that D'Éon's gesture

[19] *Révolutions de France et de Brabant. Par Camille Desmoulins* (Francfort: Keip, 1989), p.526. On Nootka Sound, see p. 94.
[20] The King stripped the Duke of Norfolk of the lord lieutenancy of the West Riding of Yorkshire and his militia colonelcy for drinking that toast at a dinner for Fox's birthday in January 1798. J. Ann Hone, *For the Cause of Truth: Radicalism in London, 1796-1821* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1982), p. 39.
[21] *Révolutions de France et de Brabant. Par Camille Desmoulins* (Francfort: Keip, 1989), p. 526.
[22] *Public Advertiser*, 21 July 1790.

launched a fad for Bastille stones in London, probably exaggerating the impact of the dinner and the extent of pro-revolutionary sentiment in England at the time.[23]

A quarrel arose when John Horne Tooke opposed the prevailing mood of joy, and noted that a toast by Sheridan rejoicing "in the establishment and confirmation of liberty in France" should be more carefully worded. Tooke drew a distinction between French and British liberty, comparing them to two ships, one which needed building from the keel up, the other which needed minor repairs in the dock.[24] He had to withdraw his motion under the hissings of the assembly. The incident was soon patched up, but fed some polemics in the papers. By 1790, Horne Tooke was already a veteran reformer.[25] A former parson and bottle companion of the notorious John Wilkes, he had taken part in campaigns against general warrants, and in favour of broadening the suffrage and enlarging civil liberties in the 1760s. Some papers presented him as a trouble maker, as "the Arch Incendiary", who had just lost the Westminster election and represented a diversion in the Whig party.[26] Much of this hostility came from disgruntled partisans of Fox.[27] The incident later turned out to be more than a settling of scores among Whigs. During Tooke's trial for high treason in November 1794, the incident resurfaced, and Sheridan then testified that he remembered Tooke stating "that an unqualified approbation of the French Revolution, in the terms in which I had moved it, might produce an ill effect out of doors; that it might induce a disposition to revolution in this country."[28] Sheridan stated that he had tried to say that it was prudent to issue "a declaration of our attachment to the principles of our own constitution." The prosecution jumped at the phrase "disposition to revolution", and wished to interpret it straightforwardly. The Advocate General suggested "[t]hat it might produce a revolution", an interpretation that Sheridan rejected.[29] Admittedly, this is a retrospective reconstruction in the context of a treason trial, in a tense political context. But the judicial exploitation of the event in 1794, as well as the possibility of getting away with drinking "The Majesty of the People" in 1790, is a reminder of just how the range of admissible (in the sense of non-indictable) political expression had shrunk from 1790 to 1794.[30]

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[23] *Chronique de Paris*, 206, 25 July 1790, p. 966.
[24] *Public Advertiser*, 16 July 1790 ; Ghita Stanhope, p. 94.
[25] Christina Bewley and David K Bewley, *Gentleman Radical: A Life of John Horne Tooke, 1736-1812*, International Library of Historical Studies, 17 (London; New York: Tauris Academic Studies, 1998).
[26] *English Chronicle*, 13-15 July 1790.
[27] Goodwin, p. 123.
[28] Cobbett, *State Trials*, vol. 25, co. 390.
[29] Cobbett, *State Trials*, vol. 25, co. 390.
[30] On this topic, see : Barrell, *Imagining the King's Death*; Barrell, *The Spirit of Despotism*.

Albert Goodwin underlined the "significance of this festive occasion in the history of the reform movement."[31] It confirmed in Burke's eyes that Fox and his friends supported the French Revolution, while Burke himself clung to the principles of Chatham and Rockingham, bent on maintaining the constitution. It also placed 14 July as a new date on the political calendar, one that was to dethrone 4 November, because the Glorious Revolution was being eclipsed by the more exciting and more radical French one.

The dinner also demonstrated the problematic nature of any celebration of the French Revolution, though the full implications took time to emerge. The revolution-reformation nexus was the central issue. Tooke's prudence on 14 July 1790 foreshadowed strategies of self-censorship radicals were to adapt under constraint in the following years. He had touched central problems that the English friends of the French could not, or would not, see at this point. One problem was the possibility of stretching parallels between the two countries; another was the example given to the lower orders when celebrating a violent revolution. Self-proclaimed reformers were caught in a paradox when they celebrated revolution: for many in Britain, this signalled approval for revolution in Britain; by 1793, it was seen as a clear call to revolution that must be stopped by the courts or by coercion.

The guests were no revolutionaries, or only in the very limited sense that they worshipped the Glorious Revolution. They were not quite "reluctant revolutionaries", to take up the title of by W. A. Speck's study of the 1688 Revolution, but they thought they could reform Britain by legislative work, not violent overhaul.[32] *The World* depicted the dinner as a partisan affair, a conspiracy led by Stanhope and manipulated by the devious Lord Lansdowne.[33] The paper located the event within power struggles inside the Whig party, Lansdowne being a presumed influence because of his patronage of the Rational Dissenters.[34] Fox's absence led to speculation about his stance over the French Revolution and his alignment with Burke or Sheridan, as the rift among the Whigs was widening.[35]

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[31] Goodwin, p. 124.
[32] William Arthur Speck, *Reluctant Revolutionaries: Englishmen and the Revolution of 1688* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1988).
[33] *World*, 15 July 1790.
[34] William Petty, marquess of Lansdowne from 1784, was a Chathamite. On Rockingham's death, he was Prime Minister from June 1782 to February 1783, and negotiated the treaty of Paris. He was the patron of Price and Priestley. He was often perceived as hypocritical and untrustworthy and was caricatured as "Malagrida". For a positive view of Lansdowne and his "Bowood circle", see: Aston and Orr.
[35] *Public Advertiser*, 16 July 1790.

A cognate issue was the private or public nature of the dinner and personal endorsement and responsibility for toasts drunk and opinions expressed during the meeting. Again, the 1794 treason trials brought this to the force. The Crown and Anchor was routinely used for private events; booths and private rooms afforded some privacy.[36] But tavern talk became increasingly policed and treated as public speech, as a string of prosecutions for seditious toasting and speaking in taverns were to reveal.[37] In July 1791, there was some pressure for publishing the list of the guests and the toasts drunk during the evening. *The World*, again, reported that the organizers refused to publish a toast list guaranteed by the chairman's signature, Tooke in particular having opposed such a demand.[38] There was a contradiction between the staging of a well-advertised dinner in a highly visible tavern and the refusal of taking responsibility and publishing an official account of the meeting. Such reluctance only encouraged hostile reporting and rumours.

Outside London, there is evidence of only one celebration, at Cambridge. "Several members of the University" gathered to celebrate the Revolution. Most of the seventeen toasts published in *The Times* were in the same spirit as those drunk in London, starting with "The cause of Liberty throughout the world".[39] Toasts to the National Assembly and to French luminaries, Sieyès, La Fayette, Mirabeau, Necker, Talleyrand, "Rabaut St Etienne the first protestant President in the National Assembly", testify to an optimistic reading of the revolution as a triumph of rights. More radical was the homage to "the conquerors of the Bastile", those men who had stormed the fortress and were honoured by the French people and authorities alike as *vainqueurs de la Bastille*. The most audacious was the last but one: "To the memory of Milton, Locke, Montesquieu, Helvetius, Rousseau, Voltaire, and other philosophers, who by their writing prepared the minds of the Franks for this revolution." Lumping together two idols of the English Commonwealthmen, with the respected Montesquieu, and notorious deist or materialist thinkers, the Cambridge celebrants created a surprising, and daring genealogy of Enlightenment leading to Revolution. Such an assemblage suggests the presence of the politically radical William Frend, who was later expelled from the university for his heterodox Unitarian beliefs. Because the toast list was shocking, there was a demand for the publication of the guest

[36] See a sophistical analysis of that tavern, its layout, uses, and connotations, in: Ian Newman, *The Romantic Tavern*, chap. 2.
[37] James Epstein, 'Equality and No King'; Barrell, *The Spirit of Despotism*.
[38] *The World*, 22 July 1790.
[39] *The Times*, 23 July 1790.

names: hostile pressure was brought to bear on Bastille Day dinners, only to intensify in the next year.[40]

Celebrations in Scotland in 1790 and 1791

During the summer of 1790, the Whig Club of Dundee, alone in Scotland, also celebrated the Glorious Revolution, first sending an address to the National Assembly on 4 June 1790, and then giving toasts during a dinner held on 27 August. On 20 September 1790, the *Caledonian Mercury*, described by a historian as "a moderate "Revolution Whig" newspaper", published a rather favourable account of the dinner.[41] For the Dundee Whigs, presided by the MP George Dempster of Dunnichen,[42] the French Revolution was no less than "[t]he triumph of liberty and reason, over despotism, ignorance and superstition", a "renovation […] effected without a civil war". To this outpouring of "sentiments of admiration and delight", Treilhard, the President of the National Assembly, answered with a gracious letter on 31 July. In keeping with the dominant mood prevailing in France, he prophesied the abolition of barriers between England and France and the advent of universal brotherhood. The letter also presented Britain as a stable, orderly and prosperous nation, implying that it did not need a revolution. The toasts were loyal, though "Great Britain, and its happy Constitution", preceded the King and royal family. Whig principles, enshrined in the respect of the Glorious Revolution, were paramount: the third toast paid homage to "the glorious and immortal memory of William the Third." Another one called for the abolition of all religious tests. The *Edinburgh Advertiser* published a toast against slavery and two radical ones omitted from other papers: "May all Despotisms soon meet with the fate of French despotism"; "Rights of Man, and an equal representation to the people".[43]

The 27 August dinner gives more clues about the political outlook of the Dundee Whigs. Though the meeting was not advertised as a French Revolution dinner, it partook

[40] *Public Advertiser*, 2 October 1790.
[41] H. W. Meikle, *Scotland and the French Revolution* (Glasgow: Maclehose, 1912), p. 287. The same text appeared in *Scots Magazine*, 52 (September 1790), p.458-459.
[42] By 1790, Dempster was inactive in Parliament; he last spoke in 1789 on famine relief for France. He was a landowner and an independent, somewhat restive parliamentarian: Andrew M. Lang, "Dempster, George, of Dunnichen (1732–1818), Agriculturist and Politician", *ODNB*.
[43] Bob Harris, 'How Radical a Town? Dundee and the French Revolution', in *Dundee : Renaissance to Enlightenment*, ed. by Charles McKean, Bob Harris, and A. Whatley (Dundee: Dundee University Press, 2009), pp. 186–215 (p. 190).

of this character to some extent, for three reasons. Treilhard's answer was read out on that occasion. Secondly, some of the toasts referred to the Revolution. Thirdly, and more tellingly, "[t]he Members appeared with the National Cockade." A few toasts concerning France (the National Assembly, "the memory of the demolition of the Bastille" and a few others) and echoing the universalism of the French (peace, the end of conquest wars) coexisted with a more traditional British patriotism centred on imperial victory and economic prosperity ("May the arms of Britain always prevail, when she is forced into a war."). The Dundee Whigs welcomed the French Revolution as a replica of the Glorious Revolution of Britain, in a unionist North British version of the events that elided the protracted Williamite war in Scotland and Jacobite opposition.[44]

On 14 July 1791, celebrations were also held in Edinburgh, Glasgow and Paisley.[45] The geographical spread suggests a need for supporters of the French Revolution to make a public stance, or perhaps because of hardening opposition to revolution and reform in Scotland. The dinners were held by the opposition Whigs, who felt increasingly isolated as Henry Dundas, then managing Scotland to the benefit of the Pitt administration, was increasing his influence. The same ideology pervaded all four celebrations, with a radical edge in Paisley. The dinners revealed the limits of fellowship with French revolutionaries, in the context of official displeasure and mounting public criticism. The toasts were very similar, though not identical, to those drunk in London a year before. This came from the large degree of integration of the Scottish Whigs in British circles, many of them pledging their loyalty to Fox.[46] Another reason for such continuity is that the reformers clung to the hope the French Revolution heralded universal liberty. The events since July 1790, especially Louis XVI's flight to Varennes and its fallout in the form of rising republican sentiment, and violence, as well as Pitt and Dundas's hardening stances, dented the hopes of some Scottish Whigs.

The Dundee Whigs' enthusiasm for the French Revolution was in retreat.[47] They honoured the King, royal family, constitution and William III in good loyal Hanoverian

[44] Colin Kidd, 'North Britishness and the Nature of Eighteenth-Century British Patriotisms', *Historical Journal*, 39 (1996), 361–82.
[45] John Brims, 'The Scottish Democratic Movement in the Age of the French Revolution' (University of Edinburgh, 1983), pp. 76–89.
[46] On the difficult survival of opposition Whigs in Scotland in the early 1790s : Emma Vincent Macleod, 'The Scottish Opposition Whigs and the French Revolution', in *Scotland in the Age of the French Revolution*, ed. by Bob Harris (Edinburgh: John Donald, 2005), pp. 79–98 (pp. 79–82).
[47] *Edinburgh Evening Courant*, 21 July 1791.

fashion. They also wished for "Stability to the New Constitution of France" and an end to revolutionary ebullience. Two toasts conveyed Whig liberal positions on current issues in Parliament, in the wake of William Wilberforce's antislavery campaigns and the Dissenters' campaigns for the repeal of the Test and Corporation Acts. Given the loyalism permeating some toasts, "Rights of Men, and an equal Representation to the People" involved no support to Paine's iconoclastic republicanism, or to democracy. The Dundee Whigs were taking an opposite trajectory: by late 1792, they had deserted the cause of parliamentary reform; the club's chairman helped the authorities to fight Paine's doctrine and the club purged itself of suspected Jacobins.[48]

The *Scots Magazine* noted with satisfaction, given the carnage that occurred in Birmingham, that "no disturbances took place" at Edinburgh and Glasgow.[49] Expectations of violence were afloat before the 14th of July, and like many government supporters, the Lord Advocate of Scotland, Robert Dundas, took a stern view of French Revolution dinners.[50] He had received an invitation to the dinner at the Crown and Anchor in London, and though the invitation mentioned that domestic politics would not be discussed, he vented his indignation and tried to prevent the Edinburgh dinner. He had the Lord Provost James Sterling forward the list of guests to him. Stirling tried to reassure him that the dinner was harmless.

In Edinburgh, the company assembled at Fortune Tavern, under the chairmanship of Robert Fergusson of Craigdarroch, a country gentleman, advocate and county reformer. The report sent to Dundas counted seventy-three guests, including thirteen students, ten advocates and a sprinkling of merchants, shopkeepers, and farmers. The ticket, priced at 2/6d in Edinburgh as well as in Glasgow, excluded the poor.[51] The report did not include toasts, but the press listed them. As with the 1790 Crown and Anchor dinner, the list started with "The Majesty of the People" and "The Rights of Man", though the loyal toast most probably came first.[52] There was just one direct reminder of revolutionary violence involved in the Storming of the Bastille, which formed the ultimate occasion for the meeting: "Arne, the grenadier, who first mounted the walls of the Bastile." Another daring

[48] Bob Harris, 'How Radical a Town?', p. 190.
[49] *Scots Magazine*, vol.53 (July 1791), p.360.
[50] The rest of this paragraph is based on: Brims, pp. 76–77; National Records of Scotland, RH 2/4/62, fo. 321: Robert Dundas to unknown correspondent. Stirling's letter is fo.344-345.
[51] Brims, p. 80; *Caledonian Mercury*, 11 July 1791. The full list of guests is at NAS, RH 2/4/62, fo. 346-347.
[52] *Caledonian Mercury*, 16 July 1791. See also *Edinburgh Herald*, 15 July 1791.

gesture was toasting Mackintosh, Paine and Priestley. Mackintosh, whose whiggish *Vindiciae Gallicae* was an acclaimed reply to Burke, was safe enough (though Scottish radicals soon adopted it); but Paine and Priestley were already notorious.[53] Reference to Paine and the Bastille, however, came from a general, loose commitment to liberty, certainly not to democracy. There was no talk of the socio-economic consequences that French liberty could entail. Some of those who attended, and certainly the president, held rather conservative views as regarded the need in Britain for a balanced constitution guaranteed by men of property. In the 1780s, and still in 1792, Fergusson campaigned for the lowering of the country franchise to give the vote to lesser landowners, but he did so to restore the balance of the constitution, and he opposed universal suffrage.[54]

In Glasgow, "a very numerous and respectable body of gentlemen" met at the Tontine Tavern. The meeting was chaired by a man of property, Colonel Dalrymple of Cleland, and John Millar assisted him as croupier. Dalrymple was an advanced reformer; he was to play a central role in the Friends of the People from 1792 (the Scottish Friends of the People, aggregating Foxite Whigs, dissenting ministers and artisans, were closer in social composition and ideology to the London Corresponding Society than to the English Friends of the People, who were patrician Whigs).[55] Millar, who had been Professor of Civil Law since 1761, was accused of leading a democratic faction in the University; among this set of enlightened reformers, George Jardine and Thomas Reid also attended the dinner.[56] Contrary to many, Millar did not recant: in 1796, he set out his views in the anonymously published *Letters of Crito*, which defended the Revolution, criticized the war against France, and absolved the French of charges of economic levelling, though he found the theoretical bent of the French excessive.[57] On 14 July 1791, the company toasted the French

[53] There is much evidence Mackintosh was admired in Whig circles, but he was also adopted by radical circles. The Edinburgh Friends of the People tried to enlist the spy Robert Watt by lending him Paine's *Rights of Man*, Mackintosh's *Vindiciae Gallicae* and Benjamin Flower's *The French Constitution; with Remarks on Some of Its Principal Articles*… (1792): Robert Watt to Robert Dundas, 31 August 1792, NAS, RH 2/4/64, fo. 302.

[54] Brims, pp. 52–53.

[55] The King cashiered Dalrymple from the army for his involvement in reform politics (Bob Harris, *The Scottish People and the French Revolution* (London: Pickering & Chatto, 2008), p. 97.)

[56] Bob Harris, *The Scottish People and the French Revolution*, p. 25. Millar's politics was aligned with the opposition Whigs, not with democratic reformers, though, as Harris notes, he influenced Thomas Muir and other Scottish and Irish radical reformers. See also Ronnie Young, 'Thomas Muir at Glasgow: John Millar and the University', in *Thomas Muir of Huntershill: Essays for the 21st Century*, ed. by Gerard Carruthers and Don Martin (Edinburgh: Humming Earth, 2016), pp. 112–40.

[57] Emma Macleod, 'Revolution', in *Scottish Philosophy in the Eighteenth Century. Volume I, Morals, Politics, Art, Religion*, ed. by Aaron V. Garrett and James Anthony Harris, A History of Scottish Philosophy (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015), pp. 361–403 (pp. 386–89).

Revolution before the loyal toast: "May the glorious Revolution be as productive of happiness to the French nation as it now promises to be."[58] The Whigs still saw 1789 as a replica of Glorious Revolution, not as a rebellion or the advent of democracy. The toasts also took up the symbolism of light and shade that was so prominent the year before: "May the dawn of liberty on the continent be soon followed by its meridian splendour." In a more practical strain, toasts included the classic "religious and civil liberty" and "trade and manufactures be unrestrained by the fetters of monopoly", a sentiment redolent of Adam Smith's principles.

At Paisley, the dinner was no rendezvous for the liberal gentry and men of property as in Edinburgh and Glasgow, but a raucous affair. On the School-hill, "a motto, in large capitals, Universal Liberty" was installed, visible to a numerous assembly, and "a battery of four six pounders was erected and three salutes discharged". "At every salute a grand chear was vociferated. Liberty! Liberty! Universal Liberty!"[59] Such a ceremony, punctuated by many toasts to French liberty, abolition of slavery, religious emancipation and French heroes, suggests that such Whiggish, reformist feelings could have a wider audience than the select few assembled in other cities. It is however impossible to determine how far down the social scale they reached, and how deeply they were held.

All four meetings expressed a commitment to international cooperation and wishes for a spread of liberty worldwide. The Dundee meeting was still committed to a concept of universal liberty, toasting "Emancipation to Spain and the other enslaved nations of Europe."[60] All four meetings toasted Poland, expressing the wish that the recent (3 May) Constitution would solve the problems of a kingdom riddled with an anarchical nobility and dependence on Russia. The Polish constitution was a promising triumph of enlightened liberty. The Glasgow Whigs toasted: "May the British, Irish, American, French, and Polish nations, unite against the enemies of the liberties and rights of men",[61] taking in the four free nations the French were to honour in their flag festivals. Here was a remarkable political alignment, perhaps explainable by links between merchants of Bordeaux, Nantes, and Glasgow.

[58] *Edinburgh Evening Courant*, 18 July 1791.
[59] "Extract from a letter from Paisley, July 14", *Aberdeen Journal*, 18 July 1791.
[60] *Edinburgh Evening Courant*, 21 July 1791.
[61] *Edinburgh Evening Courant*, 18 July 1791.

There was pressure brought to bear on reformers: coming out as an organizer of a Bastille Day dinner came at a cost. Though none in Scotland suffered like Priestley in Birmingham, retribution came in the form of abuse and harassment. A draft letter by Thomas Reid, written within a month after the Glasgow dinner, is revealing. The Aberdonian philosopher of Common Sense explained his motives for attending:

> I have been very long perswaded, that a Nation, to be free, needs onely to know the Rights of Man. I have lived to see this Knowledge spread far beyond my most sanguine hopes, and produce glorious Effects. God grant it may spread more and more & that those who taste the Sweets of Liberty may not turn giddy but make a wise and sober Use of it.[62]

Though Reid echoed Price's optimism about the direct relationship between political enlightenment and effective liberty, he also warned a cautionary note, wishing the Revolution did not plunge into horror.[63] He still had some confidence in the course of the Revolution, praising the National Assembly for its magnanimous treatment of Louis XVI after Varennes. However, dramatic events ruled out any rosy optimism.

> [U]pon the Sollicitation of some friends in the College & others, I permitted my Name to be used, for a meeting of Friends to the French Revolution on the 14 of July, upon the Condition & promise of my fellow Stewarts that no unfavourable Reflection direct or oblique either on the Constitution or present Administration, of Great Britain, was to be heard. I meant nothing more, than to own my self not ashamed to be thought a friend to the French Revolution, & thought no Mortal needed to take offence at this. But I have within this four and twenty hours received an Anonymous letter in a feigned hand professing friendship, and great Surprize *that my Name should appear at the bottom of an Advertisement calling together a set of politician Madmen and Blackguards; and acquainting me that the time is fast approaching when I and some of my brethren will repent the steps we have taken.*[64]

Despite this pressure, the guests in all Scottish cities got away scot-free. The *Historical Register*, an oppositional paper who later published scurrilous material on Henry Dundas,

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[62] Thomas Reid, Draft letter to unknown recipient, July or August 1791: Thomas Reid, *The Correspondence of Thomas Reid*, ed. by Paul Wood, The Edinburgh Edition of Thomas Reid, general ed. Knud Haakonssen; Vol. 4 (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2002), p. 223.
[63] Compare with the end of the *Discourse of the Love of Our Country*: Price, *Political Writings*, p. 195.
[64] Thomas Reid, p. 224.

could not find any objectionable toast: "no one could be supposed to reflect, in the smallest degree, on the present government of Britain."[65] The *Caledonian Mercury* also noted the "moderation and propriety", which consisted in both applauding French emancipation and "the blessings enjoyed by all ranks in these kingdoms, in consequence of our own glorious constitution."[66] Celebrating the French Revolution was still acceptable, provided one did not criticize the Pitt administration or the Hanoverian polity.

The *Caledonian Mercury* was rather open to liberal causes. In 1782-1783, it had supported parliamentary reform and published Thomas McGrugar's *Letters of Zeno*, which advocated burgh reform; before the French Revolution, its column occasionally voiced radical criticism of the political order, and in 1790 it published excerpts of Burke's *Reflections* as examples of beautiful rhetoric but without endorsing his views. By 1793, however, it saw massacres in France as evidence of the danger of overturning established institutions .[67] The *Caledonian Mercury*'s stance on the 14 July 1791 dinners reveals a certain moderation in liberal-minded commentators, probably based on a wait-and-see attitude towards the French Revolution.

The conveners of the Bastille dinners did not want a revolution in Britain. Their subsequent conduct makes it impossible to interpret their support to Paine as adherence to republicanism: nearly all of them stopped their endeavours for reform by 1792.[68] The analysis of Scottish dinners in 1791 brings out several features of the movement in general. First, the pan-British scope of dinners: the toast lists suggest a high degree of political integration with England. This may be due to the nature of the ideology displayed on 14 July, which emphasized universal values and international brotherhood, at the expense of local specificities. It may also have to do with the truncated nature of the evidence, which comprises general toasts also drunk in London and elsewhere in London, but not the speeches, which presumably applied to Scottish matters. Secondly: a continued strong commitment to the French Revolution was mitigated with wishes for the stability of France, the optimism of July 1790 giving way to sobering reflections. Thirdly: the rise of

[65] *The Historical Register, or, Edinburgh Monthly Intelligencer: Being a complete and authentic account of the most important transactions throughout the different parts of the world,* vol.1, n°1. July 1791, p.37. The London press also praised the "regularity" and "decorum" of the Edinburgh and Glasgow dinners: *Whitehall Evening Post*, 21 July 1791; *Public Advertiser*, 22 July 1791. On the Historical Register, see Brims, pp. 79, 160.
[66] *Caledonian Mercury*, 16 July 1791.
[67] Brims, p. 65; Bob Harris, *The Scottish People and the French Revolution*, pp. 19, 42, 57.
[68] Only the President and Vice-President of the Glasgow meeting continued to strive for reform for a time : Brims, p. 87.

conservative opinion, even before the wave of popular loyalism, placed reformers on the defensive. Though they could still hold their dinners, with the major exception of Birmingham, they faced a barrage of criticism and intimidation.

The Crown and Anchor dinner, 14 July 1791

French Revolution supporters assembled at the Crown and Anchor, and in several provincial cities. As soon as the news spread, the Birmingham riots overshadowed all celebrations. The *Leeds Intelligencer* listed them. "Many of the principal inhabitants of Liverpool, Manchester, Norwich, Derby, Glasgow, and several other places, met to commemorate the Anniversary of the French Revolution. Order, harmony, and patriotism ruled the assembled parties."[69] The radical *Chester Chronicle* reported favourably on proceedings in Manchester. "A large and respectable assemblage of gentlemen attended [the dinner of the Constitutional Society of Manchester], amongst whom were several foreigners of various nations."[70] Such snippets of information could not counterbalance the chilling effect of the news from Birmingham.

Though Birmingham stole the limelight, the London dinner prompted a great mass of commentary, which casts interesting light on the reception of the French Revolution and of Whig sociability.

The dinner was mired in controversy. Contention started as soon as the stewards issued an advertisement stating that "no cockade, or other badge of distinction, is intended to be worn at the said meeting",[71] and that British politics would not be discussed. The stewards sent the invitations very widely, even to men not known to be favourable to the French Revolution, like Robert Dundas, who commented acidly: "I presume every Man in Scotland whose name appears in a Scots Almanac is honoured with a similar Invitation."[72] The stewards' attempts at defusing political tension failed. Edward Tatham, the Rector of Lincoln College at Oxford, who had penned a defence of Burke's *Reflections* before it became fashionable, published a blistering letter to the Crown and Anchor stewards in the

[69] *Leeds Intelligencer*, 26 July 1791.
[70] *Chester Chronicle*, 22 July 1791. See also on Derby and Liverpool: *Norfolk Chronicle*, 30 July 1791; *Morning Herald*, 19 July 1791.
[71] "To the Stewards of the Anniversary of the Revolution in France, to be holden on the 14th of July next," *Morning Post*, 11 July 1791, quoted in Ian Newman, *The Romantic Tavern*, p. 80.
[72] Robert Dundas to Mr Hepburne, 27 June 1791, NAS RH 2/4/62, fo.431.

St. James's Chronicle.[73] Tatham wrote he would not attend the dinner, because the stewards were trying to insinuate themselves in domestic politics under the cover of a celebration of France. Interestingly, Tatham's short letter discussed revolutions: while the stewards presented the French Revolution as "glorious", he argued that it was "*inglorious*", and was based on diametrically opposite principles as the 1688 Revolution, which the organizers had also misunderstood.[74] Tatham had in mind Price's *Discourse,* which was the prime target of Burke's attack on English revolution-mongering radicals. Tatham accused the stewards of wishing a revolution – and the next step would be conspiring to spark one off: "when you call yourselves *the Friends of Liberty in England*, and yet commemorate, as a subject of exultation, the Revolution in France, you more than indirectly insinuate that you wish England to follow its example." This was precisely the charge of revolutionary ulterior motives that Horne Tooke had vainly tried to warn against on 14 July 1790.

The main object of contention in Tatham's letter was that the Crown and Anchor meeting was "an illegal and unconstitutional Act." Rejoinders to Tatham brought forward the notion of English tavern conviviality and the fundamental English liberty to gather together to dine and drink. Ian Newman notes that, while such liberties had hitherto been general, Tatham had brought his opponents on the terrain of legality and the possibility of "braking laws, specifically laws pertaining to libel, sedition or treason."[75] In retrospect, the debate anticipates Pitt's Two Acts of December 1795, which clamped down on liberty of association and made such meetings impossible. Tatham's letter was an indignant call for the government to interfere and punish revolutionary offenders.

The ministerial press was busy peddling rumours about possible violence unleashed by the dinner, in the form of riots or an assault on Newgate to set the prisoners free, or even a French-style revolution. A letter by Theophilus Lindsey, written nearly two months before the purported dinner, expressed the London Dissenters' fears, providing a significant testimony, given the role of religious prejudice in the build-up to the Birmingham Riots. Lindsey, a prominent London Presbyterian active in the Revolution Society, reported "the panic fears that are entertained by many at the West end of the Town of Dissenters,

[73] *St. James's Chronicle,* 30 June-2 July 1791. The letter was republished in the provincial press (*Manchester Mercury and Harrop's General Advertiser*, 12 July 1791) and as a single sheet (ESTC T33950). Tatham's *Letters to the Right Honourable Edmund Burke on Politics* were dated April 1791. Tatham went on to justify the Birmingham rioters. Robert Hole, "Tatham, Edward (*bap.* 1749, *d.* 1834)", *ODNB.*
[74] *Morning Post*, 21 July 1791.
[75] Ian Newman, *The Romantic Tavern*, p. 81.

Unitarians, favourers of the french revolution, as if the like was to be brought about in the same way, and that particularly the meeting to celebrate the anniversary of the french Revolution, the 14th of august, [sic] is the time assigned for the commencement of it, and a confederation at home. Those who invent these things I suppose have their views in to serve their own purposes, but they often contribute to raise the ferment they wd pretend to allay".[76]

An exchange of letters between the Scottish writer and diarist James Boswell and another Presbyterian divine, Andrew Kippis, points to possible negotiations of the denominational conflict thanks to notions of civility and respect. Boswell was brought up a Scottish Presbyterian but by 1790, he had long turned to the Anglican form of worship. On 11 July, he wrote to Kippis to dissuade him from attending the 14 July dinner. "No man is a warmer and more determined foe to despotism and oppression than I am", but when "let loose the wild fury of a multitude […] produced all the horrors of a barbarian anarchy, it appeared to me that the change was infinitely for the worse." Instead, he invited Kippis to dine at home: "I am too liberal-indeed a toastmaster to load *your* bumper with *church*. But I am sure you will cordially join in drinking the health of our most excellent *King* who shows himself the *Father* of his Subjects of all denominations."[77] Kippis declined politely but firmly, setting forth his "Moderation and Candour" in dissenting from the Church of England, and explaining that he felt bound to dine at the Crown and Anchor, since he had recently praised the French Revolution in his funeral oration of Price.[78] Perhaps tellingly, Kippis's letter evinces no more enthusiasm for the dinner than did Thomas Reid's, who felt "not ashamed" to profess his attachment to the French Revolution.[79] This suggests that ties of friendship, and belonging to church and chapel were dominant factors, perhaps influencing ideology and overriding individual choice.

While coaxing Kippis away from the dinner, Boswell was also busy publishing a satirical paragraph in the *Times* of 13 July, wherein the organizers of the Crown and Anchor dinner requested "the company of Lord G----- G----- at dinner on that glorious day, Thursday, July 15." The organisers held the celebration "in the yet undestroyed jail of

[76] Theophilus Lindsey, *The Letters of Theophilus Lindsey (1723-1808)*, ed. by G. M. Ditchfield, Church of England Record Society, 15, 19, 2 vols (Woodbridge (UK); Rochester, NY: Boydell, 2012), II, p. 124.
[77] Beinecke Boswell Collection GEN MSS 89, Box 26, folder 622, Beinecke Rare Books Library, Yale University. A fuller citation is in Marlies Danziger, '"Horrible Anarchy": James Boswell's View of the French Revolution', *Studies in Scottish Literature*, 23.1 (1988), 64–76 (p. 69).
[78] Deborah Kennedy, *Helen Maria Williams and the Age of Revolution*, p. 79.
[79] Thomas Reid, p. 224.

Newgate."[80] Boswell conjured up the spectre of George Gordon, the notorious rabble-rouser who had provoked destructive riots in 1780, which all Londoners remembered with dread.[81] The Gordon Riots offered a prime rhetorical tool to frighten the readers with the awful destructive power of the mob. But ironies and allusion were multi-layered. Boswell presented Gordon as a victim of "arbitrary power", and the dinner would take place in the Newgate prison, which he had almost destroyed. The ruins of the Bastille, so central to eulogies of the Federation, became linked to Newgate, only partially destroyed in 1780. The reference to Gordon and religious incitement to rioting reminded readers of the dangers of infidelity and Catholicism, which were believed to go hand in hand. In the 1780s, churchmen like Beilby Porteous and lay conservative thinkers blamed the riots on Voltaire and French philosophy, which led to uncontrolled passion, and, ultimately, anarchy and riot.[82] The linkage between Bastille and Newgate made cultural sense within those conservative tropes, which were to flourish in loyalist tracts from 1792 on.

There was some relief that, despite rumours of disorder, the dinner was remarkably peaceful, even with over a thousand guests. At midnight, some two hundred remained; they were "very loyally disposed" and sang God Save the King.[83] Contemporary estimates of the number of diners varied between 600 and 1400.[84] Only the largest room of the Crown and Anchor could accommodate them. No revolutionary mob, the diners were, as in 1790, from the middling sorts, with a sprinkling of aristocracy and gentry. The reformist Whig nexus was still dominant. The philosopher and novelist William Godwin was present, and he noted in his diary the presence of several dissenting reformers.[85] Yet some absences were conspicuous. Thomas Paine, in poor health, could not accept the Revolution Society's invitation.[86] Several stewards found it prudent to absent themselves to the countryside, perhaps for fear of a riot or of political backlash. Fox was absent. The London press relished

[80] Danziger, pp. 68–69. See a similar squib in *Public Advertiser*, 13 July 1791: mock invitations issued by the stewards, with refusals by aristocratic guests.
[81] On the riots, see: *The Gordon Riots: Politics, Culture and Insurrection in Late Eighteenth-Century Britain*, ed. by Ian Haywood and John Seed (Cambridge; New York: Cambridge University Press, 2012).
[82] Susan Matthews, '"Mad Misrule": The Gordon Riots and Conservative Memory', in *The Gordon Riots: Politics, Culture and Insurrection in Late Eighteenth-Century Britain*, ed. by Ian Haywood and John Seed (Cambridge; New York: Cambridge University Press, 2012), pp. 226–42 (pp. 234–39).
[83] *St James's Chronicle*, 14-16 July 1791.
[84] The figure of "a thousand" or over is in many London papers and *Gentleman's Magazine* 61 (1791), p.673; for the lower estimate: *Edinburgh Herald*, 18 July 1791.
[85] "Crown & Anchor: Rous & Merry: B. Hollis, Shore, Barbauld, Disney, Jennings, Rees, Morgan, Lindsey, Lewis. Fawcet". William Godwin's Diary, entry for 14 July.
<http://godwindiary.bodleian.ox.ac.uk/diary/1791-07-14.html>
[86] Lounissi, p. 104.

speculations, suggesting that the Prince of Wales convinced Sheridan to stay away.[87] Somewhat embarrassingly, Lord Stanhope, who was supposed to chair the meeting, absented himself too. He had defended the Revolution Society at length in his *Letter to Burke*, but had resigned from the society in August 1790, prompting much satirical comment.[88] The moderate reformer and former MP George Rous officiated as chairman.[89]

Many newspapers and periodicals reported on the meeting, printing toasts and the main song of the evening, Robert Merry's *Ode for the Fourteenth of July*. Very famous for his poems published in the fashionable newspaper *The World* under the pseudonym of Della Crusca, Merry had also penned an address to the King on his recovery, stressing the conditional nature of allegiance.[90] The first stanza of the 14 July Ode became a classic of Whig dinners:

> Fill high the animating glass,
> And let the electric ruby pass
> From hand to hand, from soul to soul,
> Who shall the energy control,
> Exalted, pure, refin'd,
> The health of humankind.

As the *Edinburgh Herald* noted on 18 July:

> The two concluding lines of the Ode;
>
> Assert the hallow' rights which nature gave,
>
> And let your last best wish be FREEDOM or the GRAVE,
>
> Were sung as in chorus, and afterwards given as a toast."

The song turned into a toast, and in the process of communal singing and drinking, acquired the quality of an oath, echoing as it did the French motto "Liberty or Death" and its

[87] *London Chronicle*, 12-14 July.
[88] Charles Stanhope Stanhope, *A Letter from Earl Stanhope, to the Right Honourable Edmund Burke : Containing a Short Answer to His Late Speech on the French Revolution* (London: Printed by George Stafford, for P. Elmsly, in the Strand: and sold by J. Debrett and J. Stockdale, Piccadilly, 1790), pp. 23–24. See 'JERRY SNEAK failing to attend a Revolutionary Society dinner', published 1 August 1791 (BM 7895; George, *Catalogue*, vol. 6, p. 813). Stanhope had resigned his membership in the Revolution Society on 12 August 1790, because he refused a resolution rendering any member responsible of the opinions expressed by the others (Ghita Stanhope, p. 97).
[89] Rous sat in Parliament from 1776 to 1780; by 1778 he opposed the American War: <http://www.historyofparliamentonline.org/volume/1754-1790/member/rous-george-1744-1802>.
[90] Mee, *Print, Publicity, and Popular Radicalism in the 1790s*, chap. 3.

forebears of the American Revolution. The guests were binding themselves on the values of the natural rights of man. Jon Mee has stressed the "heady blend of poetry and radical politics". The metaphor of electricity, favoured by radicals, gave Merry's ode a more radical turn than his earlier politics.[91] Conservatives contested the metaphor, appropriating or mocking it. On 17 July 1792, the ministerial *Oracle* threw a barb at Joseph Priestley's work on electricity on the occasion of the 14 July gathering at the Shakespeare tavern. "We suppose Dr PRIESTLEY furnished the *electrical* FLUID of their *Sympathy*." Merry's convivial metaphors, however contested, served to bond men in exuberant homosocial conviviality.[92] Like wine, liberty became a fluid passing from man to man, conjuring up a democratic vision of human relationships, at least among men. Harriet Guest, conducting a gender-based analysis of the diners, cogently wrote of "a politics that is both homosocial and potentially egalitarian".[93]

The twenty-one toasts honoured liberty ("Perfect Freedom, instead of Toleration, in Matters of Religion", freedom of the press, trial by jury), without any precise commitment, vagueness serving as a lower common denominator among Whig tendencies. Several toasts addressed liberty lovers across the world, including "Ireland and her band of patriots", a reference to the Volunteers who had defended their island in arms and wrested legislative sovereignty from Westminster during the American Revolution. The toasts situated France within a cluster of revolutions, including Poland and America. This was bound to be controversial: toasting "General Washington, and the liberty of North America" a few years after a humiliating defeat was provocative, but perhaps less so than: "May Revolutions never cease till despotism is extinct." This ominous warning to despots contrasted with the peaceable sentiments delivered by M. du Couedic, the president of the Nantes Jacobin club, who assured his hearers of France's good dispositions and peaceful nature. He was enough of a diplomat to note that the meeting's homage to the new French constitution did not diminish the respect owed to that of Britain.[94]

Though the meeting did nothing to advance Whig fortunes, or to restore the degraded image of France, it made a significant contribution to the culture of British radicalism, adding Merry's song and several toasts to a growing stock of references. Those

[91] Mary Fairclough, *Literature, Electricity and Politics, 1740-1840: 'Electrick Communication Every Where'*, Palgrave Studies in Literature, Science and Medicine (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2017), p. 113.
[92] Mee, *Print, Publicity, and Popular Radicalism in the 1790s*, p. 50; Guest, pp. 45–46.
[93] Guest, p. 45.
[94] *Morning Chronicle*, 14 July 1791.

toasts and songs sustained radicals, including the artisans of the LCS and the Scottish Friends of the People, all the way to the post-Waterloo radicals, kept up their morale, underpinned their sociability and diffused their ideas.

Satire and the 14 July 1791 Crown and Anchor dinner

The dinner raised a storm of opposition. Edmund Burke articulated the most cogent criticism, objecting not just to a single dinner, but to the concept of celebrating revolutions. Published in August 1791, *An Appeal from the Old to the New Whigs* refined the case presented in *Reflections* and vindicated Burke's conduct against that of "new" Whigs, Fox and Sheridan, guilty of drawing criminal principles from Paine's *Rights of Man*. "The subversion of a government, to deserve any praise, must be considered as a step preparatory to the formation of something better".[95] The "greatest amateurs, or even professors, of revolutions" – the new breed of economists and sophisters that received a fillip in 1789 – had to prove that a revolution was the sole solution to solve France's problems, which Burke of course denied. He reproached supporters of the Revolution with arguing *a priori*, without any reference to the actual evils it brought about, and which Fox and other optimists brushed aside as regrettable distractions. To the 14 July diners, Burke retorted that "[e]very revolution contains in it something of evil", which "never can be defined."[96] While the Crown and Anchor's muster of revolutions created a sense of a worldwide revolutionary movement unfolding towards universal liberty, Burke saw discrete, unconnected rebellions.[97] The revolution is Poland was much superior to that in France, as it peacefully established a constitutional monarchy without the bloodshed and anarchy devastating France.[98] The reformers' predilection for France and indifference to Poland – Burke ignored they also toasted Poland – was evidence of sinister views. This exploded the conceit of the "four free nations". While Burke wrote that estimating a revolution was "a calculation" of the things lost and created in the process, he also recognized the conflict went much deeper than accounting. Seeing a king degraded provoked intense grief. "With such things before our eyes, our feelings contradict our theories, and when this is the case, the feelings are

[95] Edmund Burke, *Appel des Whigs modernes aux Whigs anciens. An Appeal from the New to the Old Whigs*, ed. by Norbert Col (Rennes: Presses Universitaires de Rennes, 1996), p. 38.
[96] Burke, p. 40.
[97] Burke, p. 26.
[98] Burke, p. 184.

true, and the theory of false."[99] The diners at the Crown and Anchor experienced no conflict between feeling and theory: Burke's opposition and his conclusion on the prevalence of feeling would be incomprehensible to men like Paine or Godwin. To them, Burke was a corrupt man with the wrong feelings and a distempered imagination. Even before the *Appeal*, Paine had already sealed the case for Burke's compassion for the privileged in the first part of *Rights of Man*: "[h]e pities the plumage, but forgets the dying bird".[100]

Burke exerted a great influence on critics of the Bastille Day dinner, not through his philosophical reflection and the passages just quoted from the *Appeal*, but through the literary imagery and historico-political references he had used in *Reflections*. Opponents to the dinner deployed two dominant tropes. The attack on Puritanism, sometimes through the prism of the Miltonic, or Shakespearean, sublime, and often mediated by the *Reflections*, was dominant. A secondary set of attacks represented revolution as mayhem, especially in the form of riots, crime, and the Newgate underworld. Critics also used any available means, including time-hallowed Francophobic slurs.

Parallels between revolutionary France and Cromwellian England existed before *Reflections*' publication in November 1790 (on 16 October, the *St. James's Chronicle* published "England during the Usurpation; and France at Present. In what they are like and unlike", a satirical comparison running on two columns). But journalists and caricaturists took their cue from *Reflections*. The ministerial press hesitated between dismissing the dinner and denouncing it as a threat to national stability.[101] The *Times* affected to think the dinner was a mere outgrowth of English sociability. John Bull would indifferently drink at "a feast to settle the poor's rates, or to rejoice in the good fortune of a duel, or the revolution of an Empire."[102] The *Times* published many snipes at Presbyterians. In one of several extended mock accounts of the 14 July dinner, Mr. Leveller takes the Chair, and there follow speeches by Mr. Equalization, Mr. La Liberté, Mr Freeborn, Oliver Cromwell, Jack Cade and Wat Tyler. La Liberté petitions that the inmates of the debtors' prisons should receive a part of the dinner, while Freeborn introduces "[t]he PETITION of the numerous Bodies of COAL-HEAVERS, CHIMNEY-SWEEPS, and HOD-MEN" who claim to be

[99] Burke, p. 38.
[100] Thomas Paine, *Rights of Man* (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1985), p. 51. For an alternative vision of Burke as a progressist Whig, see: Suzy Halimi, 'La Notion de progrès dans *Reflections on the Revolution in France* d'Edmund Burke', *Études Anglaises*, 42 (1989), 55–67; Richard Bourke, *Empire and Revolution. The Political Life of Edmund Burke* (Princeton, NJ; Oxford: Princeton University Press, 2015).
[101] Guest, p. 46.
[102] *The Times*, 13 July 1791.

admitted to the dinner in the name of the rights of men.[103] All the orators follow "the new system of equalization" and "the same levelling principle" allegedly applied in France. The article warns against economic egalitarianism, in remarkable anticipation of much of the loyalist discourse denouncing Paine and the French as peddlers of economic levelling.

The *Times* parody also debunked the reformers' historical pantheons: where they celebrated Milton, Sidney, and other Commonwealthmen, the parody lined up Cromwell – a name the radicals could not resolve themselves to quote approvingly, because he had scuttled English liberty[104] – and a hotchpotch of notorious medieval ringleaders (Cade, Tyler) and generic bandit names (Tom Firelock). These aspersions on the patriot pantheon are in line with a long tradition of struggles over the content of patriotism and its incarnations, coming from Tory and Court Whig critics.[105] Tellingly, the title of the article was "Revolution Society", as if this club was behind the Bastille Day dinner. In fact, a broader reforming coalition had joined forces to organize the event, but the *Times* wished to target the Revolution Society and the Dissenters. In *Reflections*, Burke had written of "[t]he gentlemen of the Society for Revolutions";[106] the *Times* continued the artful slip, suggesting the stewards of the dinners were organizing political and economic revolutions.

The *Times* became expert at anti-Dissenting parody, publishing a series of four articles chronicling the dinner as a demise and funeral of "Presbyterean democracy".[107] The parodies struck all out at the cultural references of revolutionary politics, including Paine and experimental science (with a philosophical apparatus grinding the constitution down, just as Priestley's air-pump could bring down a church). The satire juxtaposed Caesar's assassination and pickpockets, Voltaire and Paine sawing off the English constitution to fit

[103] "Revolution Society", *The Times*, 14 July 1791.
[104] Blair Worden, *Roundhead Reputations: the English Civil Wars and the Passions of Posterity* (London: Penguin, 2002), pp. 217, 225. Despite an underground sympathy for Cromwell, late eighteenth-century radicals tended to follow the historian Catharine Macaulay and considered Cromwell as a patriot marred by ambition, which turned him into a despotic ruler.
[105] See a small article in *Morning Herald* (2 July 1791) announcing that: "Some of the promoters of the *Commemoration Dinner*, on the Anniversary of the FRENCH REVOLUTION, are making active researches, in order to discover, if possible, the exact period when *Jack Cade* and *Wat Tyler* were born, that an *annual feast* may be appointed, to celebrate the birth of those *memorable* but unfortunate *patriots*."
[106] Edmund Burke, 'Reflections on the Revolution in France', in *The Writings and Speeches of Edmund Burke*, ed. by Leslie George Mitchell, William Burton Todd, and Paul Langford (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1989), VIII, 53–293 (p. 61).
[107] *Times*, 26 July, 27 July, 29 July, 30 July 1791. On 14 March 1789, the *Times* had published a similar anti-Whig parody: "Funeral Procession of Mrs Regency".

it into the inflexible framework of the rights of men.[108] The use of parody, with titles such as "Epithalamium" or "a Republican Pindaric", suggests the conservatives wished to retain the high moral and cultural ground, the classical humanities, and denigrate the new, supposedly low forms of the 14 July diners. Such cultural (broader than just partisan-political) gatekeeping anticipates the parodies of "Jacobin" poetry in the *Anti-Jacobin* in 1798-1800.[109]

For the *Times*, as for Burke, the French Revolution was a cultural climacteric. Parody and humiliation were ways of safeguarding established values and institutions. But parody, if it does not always pay homage to what it mocks, offers at least some acknowledgment.[110] Accounts of French Revolution dinners with songs and toasts had become a genre and the fact they could be parodied signalled they were recognizable as such.

Many other squibs in the press used Cromwell and the Puritans as barbs against the dinner organisers, reformers and Dissenters. They were based on already established associations, as graphic caricature shows. In the 1780s, several prints cast leading Whigs, including Fox, Lansdowne and Horne Tooke, as Cromwell, in other words as would-be king-killers, because their overblown ambition led them to conspire against the King's prerogative.[111] A prime example of a caricature using associations with Cromwell, the 1649 regicide, Jack Cade and Wat Tyler is *Revolution Anniversary or, Patriotic Incantations* by William Dent.[112] Published on 12 July, the print represents Priestley, Fox, Sheridan and Towers dancing around a bubbling cauldron of "French spirits", and chanting like the Macbeth witches. The cauldron and allusion to Macbeth came directly from Burke, who had called Price's 4 November 1789 a "cauldron" containing "porridge" of miscellaneous opinions.[113] Neither Fox, Sheridan, nor Priestley (who was of course in Birmingham)

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[108] The last theme is reminiscent of Gillray's *Fashion before ease;--or,--a good constitution sacrificed for a fantastic form*, showing Paine forcing Britannia into a tight corset.

[109] On conservative poetry in the *Anti-Jacobin*, see : Graeme Stones, 'Parody and the Anti-Jacobin', *The Wordsworth Circle*, 24.3 (1993), 162–66; Pierre Labrune, '"The Progress of Man" et "The Loves of the Triangles" de l'Anti-Jacobin, entre parodie politique de poésie didactique et nonsense avant l'heure', *XVII-XVIII: Revue de la Société d'Études Anglo-Américaines des XVIIe et XVIIIe Siècles*, 73 (2016), 267–84.

[110] On toasting as a genre, see Waldstreicher, pp. 32–33.

[111] On Fox as Cromwell: *The Mirror of Patriotism* (1784, BM 6380), on Shelburne (from 1784 Lansdowne) taking Cromwell's advice: *Malagrida & conspirators, consulting the ghost of Oliver Cromwell* (1782, BM 6006); on Horne Tooke: *A would-be Cromwell Tooke Horne mad attempting to disperse the short Parliament, Decr. 1790* (1790, BM 7691).

[112] BM 7890. See George, *Catalogue*, vol.6, p.808-809.

[113] Burke, 'Reflections on the Revolution in France', VIII, p. 61.

attended the London dinner. But Dent's print suggests that the dissenting-Whig nexus threatened a revolution on Britain. Closely mimicking lines from *Macbeth*, speech bubbles calling for a seditious overthrow of the constitution make the regicidal fantasy of the scene very clear. The cauldron, standing in lieu of the punchbowls frequent in conversation pieces, e.g. by Hogarth, suggests that Foxite sociability was contagious and deadly. Following Burke, graphic satires, newspapers and pamphlets cast the British sympathisers of the French Revolution as heirs to the Puritans.

Two other prints drew on the satanic imagery of *Paradise Lost*: Gillray's *Alecto and Her Train, at the Gate of Pandaemonium:–or–The Recruiting Sarjeant Enlisting John Bull, Into the Revolution Service*, and *The Hopes of the Party, Prior to July 14th*.[114] Cristina Parolin and, more recently, Ian Newman, have shown how those caricatures portrayed the Crown and Anchor, the fashionable tavern on the Strand, as a centre of revolutionary infection, Whig sociability threatening to overthrow the constitution. The *Hopes of Party*, with its vivid vision of George III's neck about to be hacked, nurtured fantasies of regicide, a topic whose centrality to the mid-1790s the work of John Barrell has well established.[115]

Another line of attack targeted the foreign, unnatural sociability of the dinners. In the *Public Advertiser*, a "SONG To be sung round an OX ROASTED WHOLE, and *garnished with* BUTS of BEER *on the 4th of July*", to the patriotic tune of "The glorious first of August", warned:

> LET those who abhor all Kings and Priests,
> Remember the French Federation.
> Let those who abhor good old English feasts
> Remember the French Federation.

The song pits "Church and King" and "wooden walls" against "the sneaking dogs […]

> Who loathe roast beef, and feed on frogs,
> In honour of the French Federation."[116]

This gastronomic Francophobia must be situated within a broader play of reciprocal Anglo-French perceptions (and self-perceptions through the imagined gaze of the enemy other). The French press had also imagined Francophile revolution dinners, in a mildly ironic

[114] *Alecto and her Train…*: BM 7889 (George, *Catalogue*, vol. 6, p. 807); *The Hopes of the Party*: BM 7892 (George, *Catalogue*, vol. 6, p. 810).
[115] Parolin, *Radical Spaces: Venues of Popular Politics in London, 1790-c. 1845*, chap. 4; Ian Newman, *The Romantic Tavern*, pp. 83–89; Barrell, *Imagining the King's Death*.
[116] *Public Advertiser*, 13 July 1791.

mode. In December 1789, *Le Moniteur* reported that on listening to Dr Price's letter to the National Assembly the Revolution Society "gave anglo-gallic toasts and drank floods of champagne, burgundy and claret". The French played on the stereotype of British drunkenness and the élites' taste for high-end French wines.[117] Symmetrically, the *Edinburgh Herald* published a mock account of the 14 July 1791 dinner as reported in a French republican paper.[118] In the parodic French report, the Crown and Anchor were two distinct hotels; the populace took down their emblems (here the article shares the visual symbolism of graphic caricature also showing the downfall or reversal of monarchical emblems) and thousands of Londoners revelled in fraternity with France. The Scottish paper imagined the French imagining Bastille Day as a popular entertainment on the model of the British King's Birthday. The irony was multifaceted, targeting French ignorance, or wilful misrepresentation, of English realities, but also the Whig's pretence of a "popular" festival while their dinner was an élite affair cut off from ordinary Britons' loyal feelings.

The Crown and Anchor dinner also enabled satirists to indulge in imagining what a popular uprising would be like in Britain. They made much of the trope of the world upside down. Exploiting the tendency to excess (inebriation and violence) involved in massive drinking in a homosocial setting, pro-government satire presented the Crown and Anchor dinner as a site of a fantasy of élite masculinity tumbling into amoral libertinism.[119] Two examples, one a loyalist satire addressed to Paine, the other a pro-revolutionary ballad, suggest the richness of the cultural production prompted by the dinner, but also some political indeterminacy.

John Wolcot, writing under the pseudonym of Peter Pindar, lashed at Tom Paine, deploying mock-heroic similes to denounce his hubristic ambition in *Odes to Mr. Paine, Author of "Rights of Man;" on the Intended Celebration of the Downfall of the French Empire, by a Set of British Democrates, on the Fourteenth of July*. Paine is great in his very degradation, because he dares to strike at royalty and commit treason; he is ready to kill the king to achieve his democratic vision of mayhem in Britain. The odes warn against a revolutionary transmission across the Channel: a mob is ready to rise in London, the *poissardes*, the notorious Paris fishwives, having a "sisterhood in Billingsgate".

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[117] *Moniteur*, n° 128, 28 December 1789, vol. 2, p. 489, commented in Roger, p. 306..
[118] "ANTICIPATED PARISIAN ACCOUNT OF THE LONDON REVOLUTIONARY DINNER. As it will appear in LE REPUBLICAIN", *Edinburgh Herald*, July 18, 1791.
[119] Mee, *Print, Publicity, and Popular Radicalism in the 1790s*, pp. 50–52.

Paine shall their leader be, and boast;

PAINE, GORDON, and REBELLION, shall shake hands.[120]

Contrary to other characterizations of revolutionary contagion focusing on shabby élite dealings in upscale taverns, Wolcot conjures up a popular revolution, based on the October Days, with their scenes of market women demanding bread, and *sans-culottes* parading aristocratic heads on pikes. The traumatic remembrance of the Gordon Riots, seen as the uprising of the criminal underworld, serves to denounce the spectre of democracy as mob rule. So far, the odes have little to do with the dinner, the ostensible occasion of the poem, but the last canto, "Song, by Mr. Paine", reads as a parody of Merry's fraternal *Ode*:

Come good fellows all – Confusion's the toast
And success to our excellent Cause: –
As we've nothing to lose, lo, nought can be lost,
So, perdition to Monarchs and Laws![121]

This time, Paine, a daredevil leader cheers his followers on; the drinking song establishes good fellowship in crime, the goal being to complete Gordon's work and ravage England. The Whigs may well attempt revolution because they have "nothing to lose", with no prospect of the Prince of Wales dragging them from their state of disgrace before years. Wolcot satirized Paine, and his popular, democratic writing style, but also the new Whigs, his second fiddles. However, Wolcot's track record casts doubts on his loyalist commitments. In 1792, he would satirize Burke in turn, and critics have suggested that his barbs against Paine may come from his hatred of all things French, more than his loyalty to monarchy.[122] Once a writer of anti-monarchical, anti-ministerial satire, he agreed to write odes in support of the administration.[123]

The same scepticism should inflect any reading of another poem. "A Ballad of the French Revolution", sung to the tune of *Ça ira* and signed "14th July, 1791" but with no mention of author or printer, is a conspicuous exception to the general denigration of Bastille Day. Its use of French revolutionary symbols, and the dating, suggest that Bastille

[120] Peter Pindar, *Odes to Mr. Paine, Author of "Rights of Man;" on the Intended Celebration of the Downfall of the French Empire, by a Set of British Democrates, on the Fourteenth of July. By Peter Pindar, Esq*, A new edition (London: printed for J. Evans, 1791), pp. 3, 4.
[121] Pindar, p. 8.
[122] Gary Dyer, *British Satire and the Politics of Style: 1789-1832*, Cambridge Studies in Romanticism, 23 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), p. 36.
[123] William R. Jones, "Wolcot, John [*pseud.* Peter Pindar] (*bap.* 1738, *d.* 1819)", *ODNB*.

Day was not a commemoration of a distant revolution, but a signal for one, here and now. The ballad is a satirical defence of the French Revolution. It dwells on the evil influence of Marie-Antoinette, who tyrannizes over Louis XVI, reduced to a puppet, then traces the progress of the Revolution until the flight to Varennes in June 1791. The author exploited the French queen's unpopularity in Britain and the widespread news of her financial and sexual incontinence.[124] The satire adopts a pro-French Revolution stance on the privileged order, draws parallels between France and Britain on taxes, the excise being as hard on the English poor as any tax in France. The ballad dismisses violence as "some broken bones and arming": "liberty makes all amends, / And nothing happen'd very alarming." The final stanza is most daring, explaining why the writer remained anonymous:

> And, faith! Like bold and clever fellows,
> They've carried ev'ry object sheer:
> May wisdom also blow the bellows,
> If such a fire should happen here.

The balladeer imagines a British Revolution and hopes for as much moderation as the French exerted in theirs. The ballad hailed Bastille Day as a day of jubilation and hope for a British revolution. The tone, however, is strikingly similar to Pindar's "Song, by Mr Paine". For lack of supplementary evidence, it is difficult to say whether the song should be taken at face value.

The Birmingham Riots

The established narrative of the London dinner of a Whig, Dissenting, criminal, plot against King and Constitution confirms some recent interpretations of the Birmingham Riots, which emphasize denominational hatred. The Birmingham Riots dominated the news and resurfaced in public discussion until the Spring of 1792, because of claims, prosecutions and a motion for a parliamentary inquiry.[125] While some Tory Anglicans rejoiced, many were shocked at reports of a mob on the rampage for four days, selectively burning down the houses and property of prominent Dissenters. The victims stemmed from the prosperous middling ranks, the industrialists and merchants who dominated trade and

[124] Only in 1792 did she become an object of pity. She was viewed as a mother and a martyr during her confinement in the Temple prison before her execution. See Barrell, *Imagining the King's Death*, pp. 55–57.
[125] "Debate on Mr. Whitbread's Motion respecting the Riots at Birmingham" (21 May 1792), *Cobbett's Parliamentary History of England*, vol. 29, co. 1421-1464

industry. They had managed to influence the court leet, but the Test and Corporation Acts excluded them from national and local office. Joseph Priestley had led a fierce new campaign for the repeal of those acts in 1789. Unsurprisingly, the Anglican establishment clung to its privileges, because repeal would have enabled the Dissenters to bid for control of the local government.[126]

The facts, timing and statement of damages are well established, on the basis of the court depositions and claims for damages. Priestley and other victims also narrated their versions of the events.[127] Modern accounts have told the story in detail.[128] On 11 July, the reformers published an announcement inviting "any Friend of Freedom" to the dinner. Meanwhile, a handbill circulated in Birmingham; its use of French phraseology ("the second year of Gallic Liberty"), its violent attacks on all authorities in church and state and threatening tone made it prime incendiary material.[129] The loyalists were so incensed that they pasted posters marked "Down with Presbyterians". The organizers maintained the dinner despite the swelling rumours of violence, because they were told they would be safe if they finished early. Priestley's friends deterred him from attending. On Thursday, July 14, from eighty to ninety men met at Thomas Dadley's Hotel in Temple Row, while the Crowd assembled outside the hotel. The guests sat down to dinner around three o'clock and proceeded to eat and give toasts and speeches until five. The chairman was the Scottish-born chemist James Keir, a friend of Priestley. The diners dispersed about five o'clock. The mob assembled around the hotel started its depredations around half past nine, destroying New Meeting House entirely, Old Meeting partially, and then Priestley's house later at night. In the evening, Priestley and his wife Mary took refuge nearby in the house of friend and ally, banker, industrialist, and chairman of the New Meeting congregation, William

[126] John Money, *Experience and Identity: Birmingham and the West Midlands 1760-1800* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1977); Ditchfield, 'The Parliamentary Struggle over the Repeal of the Test and Corporation Acts, 1787-1790'.

[127] Joseph Priestley, *An Appeal to the Public: On the Subject of the Riots in Birmingham. To Which Are Added, Strictures on a Pamphlet, Intitled 'Thoughts on the Late Riot at Birmingham.'* (Birmingham: printed by J. Thompson; sold by J. Johnson, No. 72, St. Paul's Church Yard, London, 1791), pp. 2–45; S. H. Jeyes, *The Russells of Birmingham in the French Revolution and in America, 1791-1814*, (London: George Allen & Company, 1911), pp. 13–38; Caroline Hutton, *The Life of William Hutton, F.A.S.S.: Including a Particular Account of the Riots at Birmingham in 1791, and the History of His Family* (London: Baldwin, Cradock, and Joy, Paternoster Row; and Beilby and Knotts, Birmingham, 1816), pp. 151–213.

[128] R. B. Rose, 'The Priestley Riots of 1791', *Past & Present*, 18 (1960), 68–88 (pp. 72–76); Robert Edwin Schofield, *The Enlightenment of Joseph Priestley: A Study of His Life and Work from 1733 to 1773* (University Park, PA: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1997), pp. 284–88. The rest of the paragraph is mainly based on Schofield.

[129] The handbill is reprinted in Priestley, *An Appeal to the Public: On the Subject of the Riots in Birmingham*, pp. 129–30. See a manuscript version in British Library, Add MS 52281 fo. 22.

Russell. While the destruction went on, under the gaze of inactive Tory justices of the peace, the Priestleys fled, reaching London in several stages. Having sown devastation in a ten-mile radius around the city, the mob dispersed only when troops marched into town in the afternoon of the 17th.

Numerous witnesses testified that the rioters made a careful choice of houses, a fact which led them to speculate that the mob might be a cover for a gang of purposeful arsonists. Three classes of persons were targeted: the reformers who attended the Bastille dinner, Dissenters, and the Birmingham members of the Lunar Society, the scientific club of which Priestley was a member, alongside with Keir, the manufacturer Matthew Boulton, his partner in trade the engineer James Watt, and the physician William Withering.[130] In total, twenty buildings were seriously damaged or destroyed.[131] The rioters burnt down Priestley's house and laboratory, destroying rare scientific apparatus and a wealth of manuscripts representing years of work. Priestley's friends and associates particularly suffered, including William Russell and the historian William Hutton, also a prominent Dissenter and friend of Priestley's, who had not attended the dinner.[132]

"The significance of the Priestley Riots is not easy to assess", as the historian David Wykes recognized.[133] Ever since 1791, commentators and historians have pondered over their causes. Priestley and the English Dissenters thought the riots were religiously motivated and believed in the implication of the authorities and the local Tory party.[134] Priestley suspected the government, and William Tayleur believed that Burke's *Reflections* "contributed [...] to kindle the present flame".[135] R. B. Rose exonerated the central government, but there is a historiographical consensus that local magistrates bore some responsibility, at least by conniving in inaction. Rose, on the basis of the social gap between the artisan rioters and the middling-ranking victims, saw the riots as "an explosion of latent class hatred".[136] By 1791, Priestley enjoyed the comfortable lifestyle of a well-established

[130] Rose, p. 76.
[131] David L. Wykes, '"The Spirit of Persecutors Exemplified" : The Priestley Riots and the Victims of the Church and King Mobs', *Transactions of the Unitarian Historical Society*, 20.1 (1991), 17–39 (p. 18).
[132] C. R. Elrington, "Hutton, William (1723–1815), historian", *ODNB*.
[133] Wykes, 'The Spirit of Persecutors Exemplified', p. 31.
[134] See e.g. Theophilus Lindsey to William Tayleur, 16 July 1790, quoted in G. M. Ditchfield, 'Priestley Riots in Historical Perspective', *Transactions of the Unitarian Historical Society*, 20.1 (1991), 3–16 (p. 10).
[135] Lindsey, II, p. 143.
[136] Rose, p. 84. E.P. Thompson accepted the interpretation : *The Making of the English Working Class* (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1980), p. 74.

clergyman.[137] Class hatred was probably one ingredient, as was resentment at the civil power exerted by some individual Dissenters as local magistrates. "It is the opinion of many", Priestley himself recognized, "that envy of the prosperity of Dissenters was one considerable stimulus to the mischief".[138]

Since the 1990s, historians have dismissed simple economic determinism and stressed the influence of the sectarian conflicts between Dissenters and Anglicans, in Birmingham and elsewhere in England, in the context of a renewed campaign or the repeal of the Test and Corporation Acts.[139] Grayson Ditchfield, recognizing that social and religious causes were often mingled, examined the popular and élite perceptions of Unitarians.[140] He praises John Money for proposing a multi-factor explanation of conditions for mob activity,[141] which helps moving beyond the unproductive economic/religious alternative. The socio-economic and the denominational arguments are not mutually exclusive; on the contrary, religious affiliation and politics were co-dependent variables. It is also easy to imagine multiple motivations: Tory-Anglican magistrates could enjoy, or direct, attacks on Dissenters, for religious reasons, while the mob had its own reasons, either religious or economic. But the main feature of all models presented is the absence of the French Revolution, the ostensible cause of the dinner. However, it is difficult to rule out political reasons altogether, because of a strong correlation between political and religious radicalism.[142]

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[137] See the inventory drawn up for compensation: Maxine Berg, *Luxury and Pleasure in Eighteenth-Century Britain* (Oxford New York: Oxford University Press, 2005), p. 3.

[138] Priestley, *An Appeal to the Public: On the Subject of the Riots in Birmingham*, p. 103.

[139] Wykes, 'The Spirit of Persecutors Exemplified'; Ditchfield, 'Priestley Riots in Historical Perspective'; David L. Wykes, '"A Finished Monster of the True Birmingham Breed": Birmingham, Unitarians and the 1791 Priestley Riots', in *Protestant Nonconformists and the West Midlands of England: Papers Presented at the First Conference of the Association of Denominational Historical Societies and Cognate Libraries*, ed. by Alan P. F. Sell (Keele: Keele University Press, 1996), pp. 43–69.

[140] Ditchfield, 'Priestley Riots in Historical Perspective', p. 3.

[141] The model includes economic causes (unemployment), conflict over local government; sectarian differences including anti-Catholicism, the impact of the American War and clashes over natural philosophy and diverging worldviews. Ditchfield, 'Priestley Riots in Historical Perspective', p. 6.

[142] There is debate on this nexus. J. C. D. Clarks notes the theological underpinnings of political radicalism, while E .C. Bradley pointed out sociological factors, the Dissenters' exclusion from civil office pushing them into radical positions. J. C. D. Clark, *The Language of Liberty, 1660-1832: Political Discourse and Social Dynamics in the Anglo-American World* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994); James E. Bradley, *Religion, Revolution and English Radicalism: Nonconformity in Eighteenth-Century Politics and Society* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990). See also A. M. C. Waterman, 'The Nexus between Theology and Political Doctrine in Church and Dissent', in *Enlightenment and Religion : Rational Dissent in Eighteenth-Century Britain*, ed. by Knud Haakonssen (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), pp. 193–218.

To a great extent, the current dominant interpretation reproduces that offered by Priestley and his friends. In a manuscript written within three months of the events, William Hutton listed as causes of the riots the repeal campaign, religious controversy in Birmingham, the inflammatory handbill and the public dinner. This "inoffensive" but "ill-timed" meeting "ought to have been omitted", given the state of alarm and divisions in town. "We may rejoice with any society of men who were bound and are set free; but the French revolution is more their concern than ours. I do not approve all its maxims, neither do I think it firmly fixed." For him, the French Revolution was gloriously non-violent: echoing Priestley, he went as far as arguing that "more mischief was done in the Birmingham riots, than in the overturning the whole French government."[143] Those remarks aside, Hutton was concerned with the local situation in Birmingham. He played down the significance of the French Revolution, as a simple context inflaming tempers, in a tone of regret and disengagement with France. This suggests his account might have been altered after July 1791, because it sounds typical of a later phase of retreat from politics and French affairs.

The controversy over the Birmingham Riots: fighting the Puritan Revolution again

While confirming the impact of denominational hatred foregrounded by recent historiography, this section seeks to offer a fresh contribution by suggesting that, in the context of the 14 July celebrations in London, the Puritan Revolution of the seventeenth century provided a link between the French Revolution and the riots. It is because the French Revolution was experienced as a repetition of the Puritan Revolution that Dissenters became victims. The prime motivation of the riots may well have been religious hatred, but the riots were not a mere sectarian scoring of accounts. Since the Dissenters bore the stigma of regicide and saintly and Cromwellian dictatorship, a Church and King mob equated the Bastille dinner with "revolution" in the sense of a Puritan onslaught leading to regicide. An examination of the arguments used in the controversy over the riots in pamphlets, press and caricatures, suggests that in July 1791, conservative forces were casting Dissenters as Puritans bent on a "revolution", which was not so much French as seventeenth-century English.

[143] Hutton, pp. 159–63 quotations p.162-163.

Priestley, Keir and Russell were uncommonly vocal victims; they knew how and when to publish, and the press and pamphlets lent their testimonies an audience that very few victims of riots ever enjoyed. In the hours following the riots, they started to write narratives of the events and vindicatory addresses to the public. Though unable to change the general tone of loyalist papers, they could insert corrections and additions. Priestley drafted his address *To the Inhabitants of Birmingham* shortly after arriving in London on July 18. As early as the 20th, William Russell, freshly arrived in London too, wrote to the editor of the *Morning Chronicle*, and William Keir set the record straight in a letter to the *Birmingham and Stafford Chronicle*.[144] Several provincial newspapers inserted their letters as part of their account of the events.[145]

Beginning with the *Morning Chronicle* on 20 July, many papers published Priestley's *Address to the Inhabitants of Birmingham*.[146] Priestley argued that his "late Townsmen and Neighbours" had been "misled" by the "gross and unprovoked calumnies" of their "superiors", who presented Dissenters as disloyal to their country. He complained of the destruction of his library, scientific apparatus and manuscripts. As for the "celebration of the French Revolution", which he reminded readers that he did not attend, "the company assembled on the occasion only expressed their joy in the emancipation of a neighbouring nation from tyranny, without intimating any thing more than such an improvement of our Constitution, as all sober citizens, of every persuasion, have long wished for." Typically for a man who had a talent for making enemies, Priestley could not stop there and adopted a threatening tone, warning that even if the church and king mob got rid of him, others would rise in his stead, so that the Church would still be threatened.

Priestley preached and wrote enthusiastically about the Revolution,[147] but were all the fellow diners equally committed? Interestingly, he gave another motive than the obvious one of support to the French Revolution. In his justificatory *Appeal to the Public*, he asserted that many people in Birmingham thought the dinner would "be a right and a wise measure, in order to conciliate the French nation, and to promote a friendly and

[144] Priestley, *An Appeal to the Public: On the Subject of the Riots in Birmingham*, pp. 134–41.
[145] *Norwich and Bury Post*, 27 July 1791; *British Chronicle, or Pugh's Hereford Journal*, 27 July 1791. On 25 July, the *Morning post and Daily Advertiser* published a letter by James Keir, protesting, as Russell as done, that their toasts were loyal.
[146] E.g. *General Evening Post*, 21 July; *Lloyd's Evening Post*, 21 July; *World*, 21 July.
[147] Joseph Priestley, *Letters to the Right Honourable Edmund Burke: Occasioned by His Reflections on the Revolution in France* (Birmingham, 1791).

commercial intercourse with him."[148] They felt it necessary because, with the 1786 Eden Treaty unpopular in France, they would keep up good relations by showing their goodwill through a Bastille dinner. If Priestley is right, the Birmingham manufacturers shared the same motivations as the Nantes traders a year before: all needed stability in both countries, peace and good relations. The celebration was worthwhile in itself, but also because it would be advertised abroad. If there is an economic factor behind the Birmingham dinner, it may lie in the diners' mercantile afterthoughts rather than in class hatred.

Since the controversy hinged on the Dissenters' loyalty, it naturally focused on the toasts, which expressed the assembly's loyalties. For the *Times*, the riots "solely sprung from the loyalty of the people" because the first toast was "Destruction to the present government – and the king's head upon a charger!" [149] Then, "LOYALTY swift as lightning shot through their minds, and a kind of electrical patriotism animated them to instant vengeance. They rushed into this conventicle of treason". The *Times*'s phraseology mixed seventeenth-century references – conventicles were illicit, seditious, Puritan chapels – with the metaphor of electricity, also present in Merry's ode. For Priestley, this was one of several malevolent rumours that circulated before the dinner in Birmingham.[150] Russell wrote a letter to the *Morning Chronicle*, protesting against the *Times*'s "most flagrant falsehood" and stating that: "The toast had in fact been "The King and Constitution."" [151] As for the "king's head in a charger", it was only a "medallion of his Majesty, encircled with a glory, on each side of which was an alabaster obelisk, one exhibiting Gallic Liberty breaking the bands of Despotism, and the other representing British Liberty in its present enjoyment."[152] (This is the only source on the decoration, suggesting a respectable neo-classical symbolism.)

Russell felt obliged to provide a list of seventeen toasts. A few honoured France; the second one was "The National Assembly and Patriots of France, whose virtue and

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[148] Priestley, *An Appeal to the Public: On the Subject of the Riots in Birmingham*, p. 25.
[149] *Times*, 19 July 1791. Priestley republished the article in Priestley, *An Appeal to the Public: On the Subject of the Riots in Birmingham*, pp. 133–34. Similarly, the *Evening Mail* (20 July 1791) published the forged handbill and explained that the rioters' only motive was "the LOYALTY of the people, and the utter abhorrence in which the principles of a REPUBLICAN SYSTEM OF GOVERNMENT."
[150] Priestley, *An Appeal to the Public: On the Subject of the Riots in Birmingham*, p. xxxi.
[151] Stuart Andrews, *Unitarian Radicalism: Political Rhetoric, 1770-1814* (Basingstoke; New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2003), pp. 122–23. The letter appeared in other papers, like the *Lloyd's Evening Post*, 20-22 July 1791. The *Times* article and Russell's letter are reproduced in: Priestley, pp. 134–37.
[152] Priestley, *An Appeal to the Public: On the Subject of the Riots in Birmingham*, p. 137. William Hutton claimed he knew the spy who told the people the Dissenters had placed the king's head on the table: Hutton, p. 209.

wisdom have raised twenty-six millions from the mean condition and subjects of despotism, to the dignity and happiness of freemen". The list also included "New Constitution of France", the United States and Poland, parliamentary reform, "perpetual friendship" between Britain, Ireland and France. This is very similar to toasts drunk in London, and elsewhere in England and Scotland. Despite William Russell's protestations of loyalty, other toasts were more ambiguous. Toasts to Hampden and Sidney, two figures of the English republican pantheon, harked back to the Good Old Cause and lent some credence to the churchmen's accusations of Puritan extremism. Loyalists could construe two other toasts as seditious. "The Majesty of the People" acknowledged popular, instead of royal or parliamentary, sovereignty. The sixth toast, "The Rights of Man. May all nations have the wisdom to understand, and the courage to assert and defend them", could be read as an invitation to worldwide revolution, and as an endorsement of Paine's first part of *Rights of Man*, published earlier in 1791. Such an interpretation gained in credibility given Priestley's apocalyptic predictions of world revolution in his sermons.

Russell's list of toasts, then, did not silence critics. While the *Times* admitted, on July 21, that some of its information was inaccurate, five days later, the *Star* published a further list of toasts including some allegedly omitted by Russell. The "king's head upon a charger" inspired the most memorable commentary on the dinner, Gillray's engraving *A Birmingham Toast, as Given on the 14th of July, by the – Revolution Society*.[153] A very topical work published on July 23, it represents six men behind a table covered with a punchbowl, decanters and glasses, drinking a toast. Priestley, standing, in clerical black, holds up a communion plate, saying "The – Head here!" Often caricatured as "Doctor Phlogiston", he was by then one of the most recognizable figures in caricatures.[154] Other familiar figures comprise Fox, Sheridan, and Horne Tooke. None was good churchmen; Fox was reputed to be a libertine, and Horne Tooke was a former parson. Sanctimoniousness mingled with sacrilege. The print offers a scene of satanic communion, religious imagery serving to perform regicide, and overturned vessels connoting moral disorder. It is also reminiscent of the meetings of the mythical Calves' Head club, which allegedly kept up a cult of Cromwell and the regicides earlier in the century.[155] While

[153] BM 7894 ; George, *Catalogue*, vol. 6, p. 812.
[154] See e.g. *Doctor Phlogiston, the Priestley Politician or the Political Priest*, 1 July 1791, BM 7887, George, *Catalogue*, vol. 6, p. 806. Richard Clay, 'Riotous Images: Representations of Joseph Priestley in British Prints during the French Revolution', *History of Education*, 37.4 (2008), 585–604.
[155] On "secret feasts celebrating the death of Charles I", see Jenny Uglow, *The Lunar Men: The Inventors of the Modern World, 1730–1810* (London: Faber & Faber, 2011), p. 766.

Priestley calls for the king's head on his plate, his other hand holds up a chalice dripping with blood, itself the colour of sherry, as if some transubstantiation had taken place or as if the guests drank blood. Theophilus Lindsey and a crowd of dutifully chanting Dissenters stand next to a picture on the wall representing St Paul's cathedral converted into a pigsty. Gillray denounced the alliance of Dissent and infidelity.

The controversy went on, and Priestley's *Appeal* further inflamed critics. The riots, Priestley wrote, outdid French *lettres de cachet*, the Bastille, and Charles I's persecutions of Puritans; they were "the mad triumph of bigotry, and such as was seldom exhibited even in the ages of acknowledged barbarity". The true cause of the riots was religious bigotry "and not the commemoration of the French Revolution".[156] To support this claim, he presented varied evidence of anti-Unitarian prejudice in the form of papers, handbills, scrawls on walls, children's cries, sermons, pamphlets and rumours. The riots were the result of a plot; the dinner was a pretext. "With the dinner itself I had, in a manner, nothing to do."[157] Such claims would sound disingenuous to many observers, who suspected him, rightly, of conducting political business in Birmingham.[158]

Beyond Priestley's closest allies, defences poured in from two quarters: scientific academies and Jacobin clubs in France, and dissenting chapels and revolution societies in England. Given the rapid growth of popular loyalism, and political policing of the public sphere in 1792, Priestley was the last radical to receive so much conspicuous support. Those publications were the last to defend the legality, and even necessity, of celebrating the French Revolution in Britain. Several newspapers and magazines published the letter from the Jacobin club of Paris and condolences from Condorcet on behalf of the French Academy of Sciences.[159] The French considered him a martyr of Pitt's counter-revolutionary intolerance. In the autumn of 1792, Pitt's persecution of Priestley, but also Thomas Paine, Cooper and Watt was to serve in the National Convention as "a diplomatic weapon to justify the outbreak of hostilities".[160]

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[156] Priestley, *An Appeal to the Public: On the Subject of the Riots in Birmingham*, pp. xxiv, 59.
[157] Priestley, *An Appeal to the Public: On the Subject of the Riots in Birmingham*, p. 25.
[158] Not long before the dinner, he had set up a Warwickshire Constitutional Society, which advocate peaceful, but somewhat radical, principles: E. Robinson, 'New Light on the Priestley Riots', *The Historical Journal*, 3.1 (1960), 73–75.
[159] Priestley listed the institutions that sent him support: Priestley, *An Appeal to the Public: On the Subject of the Riots in Birmingham*, p. xxvi.
[160] Rachel Rogers, *Friends of the Revolution*, p. 91.

Priestley had his uses for the French, but also for the Dissenters. In November 1791, the Revolution Society was still able to publish a letter in the fashionable *Gentleman's Magazine*.[161] The society shared Priestley's understanding of the event as an act of "licentious mobs" manipulated by "Civil and Ecclesiastical Tyranny", and "as Friends to the general rights of human-nature," it reiterated its unwavering support to "the late just, necessary, and glorious Revolution in France".[162] The riots, the Revolution Society claimed, originated in a benighted, bigoted part of the population that would soon be enlightened by the example of France. At their yearly 4 November dinner, the society toasted: "Dr Priestley, and may reason and philosophy ever prevail over fanaticism and ignorance."[163] Pulpits and pamphlets also defended Priestley and the right to celebrate the French Revolution. In Exeter, Timothy Kenrick preached a Glorious Revolution sermon defending the Birmingham reformers; he stressed the right "to commemorate the French Revolution (an Event in which it is the Duty of every Friend to human Nature to rejoice)".[164] Taking up Priestley's own rhetoric in the *Appeal*, his supporters framed the Birmingham Riots in terms of religious hatred, intolerance, and persecution. Helen Maria Williams denounced the "savages of Birmingham" and evoked the exiles of the Huguenots.[165] Despite the obloquy cast at Priestley throughout his life, his reputation rose in the nineteenth century, and this interpretation of the riots contributed to his "near canonization" by the 1830s.[166]

Meanwhile, Tory-Anglican critics gloated. The Pitt government shielded the local magistrates from criticism and prosecution, even if Dundas had his own reservations. The King thought Priestley had suffered by the doctrines he propagated.[167] Many others must have felt that the mob had meted out too harsh a punishment, but it was a consolation to

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[161] "Letter to the Rev. Dr. Priestley from the Committee of the Revolution Society", *Gentleman's Magazine*, November 1791, p.1022-1023. The *Scots Magazine* published this letter as well as Condorcet's: *Scots Magazine* 53 (October 1791), p.482. On the Jacobin club, see e.g. *Whitehall Evening Post*, 23 August 1791.
[162] "Letter to the Rev. Dr. Priestley from the Committee of the Revolution Society", *Gentleman's Magazine*, November 1791, p.1023.
[163] *London Gazette*, 5 November 1791.
[164] Timothy Kenrick, *The Spirit of Persecutors Exemplified: And the Conduct to Be Observed towards Their Descendants. A Sermon, Delivered at George's Meeting-House, Exeter, November 5th, 1791. To Which Are Prefixed, Some Observations upon the Causes of the Late Riots at Birmingham. By T. Kenrick* (Exeter: printed by T. Brice; and sold by J. Johnson, ST. Paul's Church-Yard, London, 1791), p. viii.
[165] Helen Maria Williams, *Letters from France: Containing a Great Variety of Interesting and Original Information Concerning the Most Important Events That Have Lately Occurred in That Country, and Particularly Respecting the Campaign of 1792*, 2 vols (London: printed for G. G. and J. Robinson, Paternoster-Row, 1793), IV, p. 147.
[166] David L. Wykes and Isabel Rivers, 'Introduction', in *Joseph Priestley, Scientist, Philosopher, and Theologian*, ed. by David L. Wykes and Isabel Rivers (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008), pp. 1–19 (p. 14).
[167] Adrian Randall, *Riotous Assemblies: Popular Protest in Hanoverian England* (Oxford; New York: Oxford University Press, 2006), p. 317.

think they would be a powerful deterrent for would-be revolutionaries. In the end, the victims of the riots were awarded small compensations, and the trial of rioters ended in acquittals, leaving the victims unprotected and ignored by the state.[168]

From Birmingham to 14 July 1792: loyalism and self-censorship

The riots had serious long-term consequences, David Wykes argues, because they kindled latent Church and King sentiment, well beyond Birmingham.[169] Mobs harassed and abused Dissenters through a myriad of more or less serious acts of violence for months after the riots, until the Royal Proclamation of May 1792 and the rise of a government-sponsored loyalist campaign took over and brought harassment to a new pitch of violence. When loyal associations, instigated by the propertied classes to stem revolution, developed in the winter of 1792, the Unitarians were "among the main victims, because of their unpopular religious opinions and their support for France and reform."[170] David Wykes's argument is confirmed by the bulk of conservative attacks on Dissenters in the context of the London dinner. There was a sense, before 14 July 1791, that violence must break out somewhere. Though it was widely predicted to occur in London, it did in Birmingham, and it may be the extent of the violence, rather than its eruption, that surprised many.

Edward Tatham published a second letter, denouncing the treachery involved by each toast drunk in London and in Birmingham. He warned the Dissenters that they had deserved the punishment by a loyal mob: "if ye should attempt another such anniversary, instead of a second monitory letter, I will call upon the public magistrate, and take care the call shall be obeyed, to put in use the 1st of Geo. I. Stat 2. chap.5".[171] Loyalists were calling for the use of the law to restrict liberty of association and liberty of speech before the treason trials of 1793 and the Two Acts of 1795 granted their wishes. Tatham and other enemies of French Revolution celebrations employed tropes of suspicion, unmasking, denouncing and punishing in the name of loyalty and morality, which anticipated the

[168] Jonathan Atherton, ''Nothing but a Birmingham Jury Can Save Them': Prosecuting Rioters in Late Eighteenth-Century Britain', *Midland History*, 39.1 (2014), 90–109.
[169] Wykes, 'The Spirit of Persecutors Exemplified'.
[170] Wykes, 'A Finished Monster of the True Birmingham Breed', p. 57.
[171] "*Dr. TATHAM'S LETTER* TO THE DISSENTERS, to GEORGE ROUS, Esq. PRESIDENT, and *To the* PATRONS *of the* ANNIVERSARY *of the* FRENCH REVOLUTION, *holden at the Crown and Anchor Tavern, on the 14th of July*", *Public Advertiser*, 9 August 1791.

systematic campaigns of 1792. To give just one typical example from the *St James's Chronicle* (13-15 July 1791):

> There has been for many years in this country a lurking, dissatisfied party; who, affecting a constitutional impartiality are alike averse to all administrations; and who, since the French Revolution commenced have been privately issuing the most dangerous sentiments against this country. It is the duty of good citizens to be prepared against such assaults.

Such slurs in the press, added with daily boycotting, insults, and mistreatment in courts, made for a harrowing experience. No wonder the Dissenters in Birmingham and the Midlands renounced giving a 14 July dinner in 1792.[172]

Even in London, reformers felt they could no longer celebrate the French Revolution so publicly. The *Times* gloated because the owner of the Crown and Anchor, and all other tavern keepers, refused to let their premises for a celebration on 4 August 1791.[173] This aborted anniversary gave the paper an occasion to speak on behalf on an allegedly loyalist people. "The people of England don't want any Revolution. They are happy under their present form of Government, and above all other tyrannical systems, detest the idea of Republicanism. Whatever oppressions or errors there may be occasion to complain against – are exotics, – they grow not out of the Constitution." The present law can remove them. "Let us not therefore have the peace of the public disturbed by tavern introductions of any reform copied from the French." For the newspaper, taverns and celebrations became the site of sedition and had to be silenced.

In London, unadvertised smaller parties replaced the massive Crown and Anchor dinner of 1791. Both the fledgling London Corresponding Society and the reviving Society for Constitutional Information gave up a formal celebration.[174] Only a few low-profile dinners took place.[175] While the *World* taunted radicals for their cowardice, the *British Chronicle* praised the reformers for not giving a pretext for tumult and for "quietly drinking

[172] Wykes, 'A Finished Monster of the True Birmingham Breed'; Wykes, 'The Spirit of Persecutors Exemplified', p. 24.
[173] *Times*, 5 August 1790. This was the anniversary of the French National Assembly's abolition of feudal and church privileges on 4 August 1789.
[174] Goodwin, p. 238.
[175] *Morning Chronicle*, 10 July 1792.

the Rights of Man and the two Revolutions of 1688 and 1789."[176] A party of about two hundred met at the Shakespeare Tavern, with Horne Tooke in the chair. Guests comprised notable reformers James Mackintosh, of *Vindiciae Gallicae* fame, the American poet Joel Barlow, and the Unitarian Thomas Christie, but not Thomas Paine.[177]

Corresponding societies staged more radical celebrations. That of Sheffield insisted on political corruption; its radicalism also stemmed from a belief in transnational revolutionary politics, linked to French universalism, and the professed wish of French military victory. The Sheffield dinner insisted on Fourteenth of July as the anniversary of the Fall of the Bastille, "as a day to be remembered – as a day which our children should be taught to reverence with the utmost affection – as a day to be for ever consecrated in the hearts of freemen".[178] The celebration by the "Aldgate Society of Friends of the People, associated for the Cultivation and Diffusion of Political Knowledge" at the Mitre Tavern in Aldgate is also well documented.[179] The society, which corresponded with the Society for Constitutional Information, demanded reforms of the judiciary ("extinction of hereditary judges", "trial by Jury in all criminal cases"), and "an equal and real Representation of the People". In this case, this must have approximated universal suffrage, given their social agenda in favour of the poor: "the abolition of Tythes and the Game Laws". This celebration focused on the downfall of the French ancien régime and listed equivalent grievances in England, eschewing the traditional Whig smugness about British superiority. The classic toast "Equal representation," vague enough for both advanced and tamer reformers to drink, received a social interpretation – votes for the poor – that went well beyond the limited Whig reform. This celebration was probably the most radical of those cast in the classic mould of dinners with speeches, songs and toasts. The publication of the proceedings in the North of England suggests both the efficacy of networks of corresponding societies, and perhaps a certain prudence on the part of London papers.

The newspaper coverage abated considerably, and the few other extant sources document celebrations in Scotland and in Belfast. In Edinburgh, "no less than four different public companies, each of them numerously attended" met,[180] while in neighbouring East

[176] *World*, 11 July 1792 (see also *Public Advertiser* on the same day); *British Chronicle, or Pugh's Hereford Journal*, 18 July 1792.
[177] *Diary or Woodfall's Register*, 16 July 1792.
[178] *Manchester Herald*, 28 July 1792.
[179] "Celebration of the French Revolution", *Manchester Herald*, 21 July 1792. On the correspondence and reception of books from the SCI, see *Leeds Intelligencer*, 30 July 1792.
[180] *Star*, 18 July 1792. See also, on Edinburgh and Glasgow: *Edinburgh Evening Courant*, 16 July 1792.

Linton, the toasts to Fox, the Earl of Lauderdale and other Scottish lords, and various liberal causes, denote a Whig meeting, without any apparent link to the burgeoning radical movement of the Scottish Friends of the People.[181] Bastille Day offered the beleaguered Scottish Whigs an opportunity to make a show of strength and reassert their principles publicly, at the dinner and in the press. Glasgow was another place were the Foxite Whigs could assemble and celebrate reform. The *Glasgow Advertiser* published an account of a dinner at Grinton's tavern, which evinced the convergence of reform movements in the town (borough reform, parliamentary reform and abolitionism). The toasts listed honoured Sheridan (for his support for Scottish borough reform at Westminster), "The speedy Abolition of the Abolition of the African Slave" and parliamentary reform.[182] Fox and his supporters were also toasted. The meeting was ready to endorse French symbolism. The last toast was:

> 28. May the Fourteenth of July be ever a memorable in the Kallander [*sic*] of Freedom.
>
> During the entertainment was exhibited, the Cap emblematic of Freedom, whereon was the motto,
>
> "LIBERTY WITHOUT LICENTIOUSNESS."[183]

The best publicized celebration is that of Belfast, where the Volunteers assembled and issued a declaration to the people of Ireland, expressing their support to the principles of the French Revolution, despite the acts of violence and other temporary deviations from the overall glorious course of events in France. Celebrations of the French Revolution, were controversial and divisive among the Irish Volunteers (but so were Williamite ceremonies).[184] A long account of the celebration, complete with speeches, toasts and songs, was published in Edinburgh by the radical bookseller John Thompson, a sure sign of the constant circulations between the two islands at a time of ebullience on both sides.[185]

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[181] *Caledonian Mercury*, 28 July 1792.
[182] Alex Benchimol, 'The "Spirit of Liberal Reform": Representation, Slavery and Constitutional Liberty in the *Glasgow Advertiser*, 1789–1794', *The Scottish Historical Review*, 99.1 (2020), 51–84 (p. 70).
[183] *Glasgow Courier*, 17 July 1792.
[184] Jacqueline R. Hill, *From Patriots to Unionists: Dublin Civic Politics and Irish Protestant Patriotism, 1660-1840* (Oxford; New York: Clarendon Press, 1997), p. 226.
[185] *An Account of the Belfast Review and Celebration of the French Revolution: In a Letter to a Friend* (Edinburgh: printed for, and sold by J. Purves, St. Patrick's Square, and J. Thomson, front of the Royal Exchange, 1792). On Thompson: Bob Harris, *The Scottish People and the French Revolution*, p. 80.

Another account described the long procession involving hundreds, with elaborate imagery and bonfires.[186]

The dynamics of celebrations suggest that by mid-1792, the Birmingham Riots had frightened English Whigs, while radicalism was in full development and the London Corresponding was recruiting hundreds of members. The riots did not seem to have tamed radicals in the North of England, and still less in Ireland. Meanwhile, in Scotland, whiggism held out against growing loyalism, but the radical Friends of the People were too weak to stage their demonstrations and assume a visible role in the public space.

November 1792: the celebration of military victories

Large-scale tavern dinners in support to the French Revolution had become impossible. As the pressures of loyalism deterred many in the élites from acknowledging "French principles", open celebrations became the hallmark of disenfranchised political outsiders: the plebeians inside or outside the burgeoning societies, in the North of England and in Scotland, and, on the other hand, a radical expatriate colony in France. These are two widely different groups, in terms of social standing, education, and organization. But each in their own ways, they celebrated the French military victories of the autumn of 1792, and the government perceived them as forming an overarching plot in the context of an insurrection scare. The first French republic was proclaimed following the fall of the monarchy during the Days of August and the September massacres, after the victory of Valmy had repelled the counter-revolutionary invasion. Late November 1792 celebrations, then, were republican in ideology and style. They sharply diverged from earlier, whiggish, dinners. The autumn of 1792 was a moment of heightened strain for the British élites. Convinced of the existence of a conspiracy, the government called out the militias in ten counties and stepped up surveillance measures to prevent a looming insurrection.[187] While historians have tended to believe that Pitt overreacted due to misplaced fears, in this context, the French Revolution celebrations must appear seditious. The actions of the French added credence to the conspiracy thesis. The victories at Valmy (20 September) and

[186] *Belfast Politics: Or, a Collection of the Debates, Resolutions, and Other Proceedings of That Town, in the Years M,DCC,XCII, and M,DCC,XCIII. With Strictures on the Test of Certain of the Societies of United Irishmen: Also, Thoughts on the British Constitution* (Belfast: printed by H. Joy, and Co, 1794), pp. 52–72.
[187] Clive Emsley, 'The London "Insurrection" of December 1792: Fact, Fiction, or Fantasy?', *Journal of British Studies*, 17.2 (1978), 66–86.

Jemappes (6 November) had repelled the Austrian threat. The opening of the Scheldt (16 November) and the 18 November "Edict of fraternity" threatened Britain with invasion or a French-led revolution. In that context of French expansion, the rhetoric of universal brotherhood was a threat. The adoption of French songs, symbols and phraseology appeared as a call for invasion.

The Banquet at White's, 18 November 1792

The expatriates' dinner took place at White's Hotel in Paris on 18 November 1792, just between the two edicts.[188] It was organized by a group of a few dozen British and Irish residents in Paris, who met at White's. This group, often dubbed the "British Club" by historians, was not purely British and comprised Irish members; it had constituted a *Société des Amis des Droits de l'Homme (SADH)*.[189] On 18 November, there were over a hundred guests, many of whom did not formally belong to *SADH*. The *Manchester Herald* listed "Prussian, Austrian, Italian, American, French, Holland, and English, who were assembled on this joyful occasion."[190] It is not known whether the *Manchester Herald* had a correspondent at the dinner. However, Thomas Cooper, barrister and chemist, and one of the owners of the paper, was a member of the *SADH*; he was apparently not present but could easily have received information from others who attended the banquet.[191]

The dinner was "a true gathering of the European revolutionary and republican galaxy."[192] The chairman was John Hurford Stone (1763-1818), an English entrepreneur who possessed a chemical plant in France, and who allied business acumen with revolutionary politics. By 1792, he was Helen Maria Williams's lover; like him, she attended the dinner and was a central figure in White's sociability. Distinguished guests

[188] In addition to the following references, see also on this dinner : John Goldworth Alger, 'The British Colony in Paris, 1792-93', *English Historical Review*, 13.52 (1898), 672–94; David Vorse Erdman, *Commerce Des Lumières: John Oswald and the British in Paris, 1790-1793* (Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 1986), pp. 177–81; Roe, pp. 81–82; Rachel Rogers, *Friends of the Revolution*, pp. 68–70.

[189] The phrase "British Club" was coined at the turn of the twentieth century; it was used by David Erdman and other historians. Rachel Rogers has abandoned it because of Irish involvement in the society, preferring to use the name the group gave itself: *Société des Amis des Droits de l'Homme* (*Friends of the Revolution*, p. 7.)

[190] "English Civic Feast in Paris", *Manchester Herald*, 1 December 1792. The following toasts are taken from this article.

[191] His name is not on the list of the address sent on 24 November, which is reproduced in Rachel Rogers, *Friends of the Revolution*, p. 263.

[192] Mathieu Ferradou, '"Un Festin patriotique" at White's Hotel, 18 November 1792: The "Secret" Origins of Irish Revolutionary Republicanism', *History Ireland*, 24.3 (2016), 5 (p. 26).

included Thomas Paine, Robert Merry of "Della Cruscan" fame, Sir Robert Smyth, MP, the Scots colonel and radical activist John Oswald. (William Wordsworth's presence is not documented; though he knew and admired Williams, there is no evidence he ever frequented White's.) The presence of Irishmen was also conspicuous, in particular that of Lord Edward Fitzgerald, an ebullient military man, a younger son of the Duke of Leinster, who went on to plot in United Irishmen circles and died while resisting arrest on treason charges on the eve of the 1798 rising.[193]

The sixteen toasts drunk and the songs – *La Carmagnole, Ça Ira* and the recently composed *Marseillaise* – testified to the guests' attachment to the values, achievements and prospects of the French republic. Historians have disagreed on the significance of the event. "The toasts drunk at this dinner were chivalrous, egalitarian and treasonable", Albert Goodwin sneered.[194] By contrast, Jonathan Israel gave the moment enormous symbolic importance, opening his intellectual history of the French Revolution with a detailed analysis of the dinner and each toast.[195] Feminists have similarly foregrounded the dinner, this time as evidence of the centrality of women writers in the 1790s. Two toasts were drunk to women, one to British writers Charlotte Smith and Helen Maria Williams, and the other to the *citoyennes* Fernig and Anselm, who served as officers in the French army. The toasts, following that interpretation, heralded no less than "a new era in which women's public roles—political, intellectual, and even military—were expanding, for the benefit of all."[196]

The *SADH* held indeed advanced ideas on democracy and gender relations. However, detailed investigation reveals ideological rifts among members. It is unclear that the toasts to Girondin politicians signal an unwavering, unanimous loyalty to this group. Admittedly, Helen Maria Williams identified as a Girondist in later volumes of *Letters*

[193] Robert Brendan McDowell, *Ireland in the Age of Imperialism and Revolution: 1760-1801* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1979), pp. 478–79.
[194] Goodwin, p. 249.
[195] Jonathan I. Israel, 'Prologue', in *Revolutionary Ideas: An Intellectual History of the French Revolution from the Rights of Man to Robespierre* (Oxford ; Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 2014), pp. 1–5. Israel used the accounts published in the French press. The list of toasts is similar, but in a different order, in *Manchester Herald*, 1 December 1792.
[196] *Rebellious Hearts: British Women Writers and the French Revolution*, ed. by Adriana Craciun and Kari Lokke, SUNY Series in Feminist Criticism and Theory (Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 2001), p. 4.

covering the years 1793 and 1794.[197] But in 1792, as the partisan divide was widening, her salons hosted future Girondin and Montagnard leaders. Rachel Rogers has also shown that some members of the *SADH* elaborated a republican democratic ideology originating in the Cordeliers club and the Montagne, not the Gironde; some, like Robert Merry, were difficult to categorize.[198] This weakens Israel's neat inclusion of the dinner in the good radical, Girondin, Enlightenment.[199] The toast list, then, gave the lowest common denominator of toastable politicians, but not a definitive list of allegiances, especially in a critical moment of flux.

Some toasts, like the abolition of nobility titles in England, clearly drew their inspiration from the French Revolution. Others worked by insinuation: "Perpetual union between the free People of England, France, America and the Low Countries, and may they soon add other freed nations to the alliance." The old toast to the "four free nations" changed significance and became a frightful (or sublime) eventuality, with the French army in a position to invade the Low Countries. The concept of a universal republic (cherished by Paine) dominated by France implied the republicanization of Britain. Perhaps more enigmatic is "The approaching National Convention of Great Britain and Ireland". The word "Convention", reminiscent of the French assembly, was a bugbear for British loyalists, who interpreted as republican sedition any talk of an English, or British, convention. The *SADH* must have known, perhaps through Oswald or Fitzgerald, about the impending Scottish Convention and its links with the United Irishmen.[200] The toast may have been a wish for a sweeping revolution, with England, Ireland, and Scotland, as republics without any internal hierarchy, involving full independence for Ireland. It may also have meant, more modestly, a politics of conventions, popular assemblies restoring purity of election, in the time-hallowed tradition of anti-parliaments.[201] The toasts sent mixed signals about the desirability of revolution in Britain. "May Revolutions never be

[197] Helen Maria Williams, *Letters Containing a Sketch of the Politics of France : From the Thirty-First of May 1793, till the Twenty-Eighth of July 1794 : And of the Scenes Which Have Passed in the Prisons of Paris* (London, 1795).
[198] Rachel Rogers, *Friends of the Revolution*, chap. 7. On the Club des Cordeliers: Hammersley, *French Revolutionaries and English Republicans*.
[199] Mathieu Ferradou, 'Histoire d'un « festin patriotique » à l'Hôtel White (18 novembre 1792): les Irlandais patriotes à Paris, 1789-1795', *Annales historiques de la Révolution française*, 382, 2015, 123–43 (p. 125).
[200] The first Convention of the Scottish Friends of the People was held from 11 to 13 December in Edinburgh, summoning 170 delegates from 79 societies (Brims, pp. 296–307).
[201] T. M. Parssinen, 'Association, Convention and Anti-Parliament in British Radical Politics, 1771-1848', *The English Historical Review*, 88.348 (1973), 504–33.

made by halves!" stood contradicted by: "may Government profit by the example of France, and Reform prevent Revolution."

The dinner gave rise to alarmist rumours in the British press. The *London Chronicle* reported: "One hundred and twenty persons, mostly Irish, are forming a plan of an intended Republican system for Great Britain at White's Hotel in Paris. Paine and General Santerre are alternately Chairmen."[202] The government feared republican plotting enough to station a spy at White's, Munro. In fact, the *SADH* was a small group in a precarious position in revolutionary France.[203] Its existence was short-lived, reaching its peak in late 1792 and early 1793, and withering away by October 1793, when British and other foreigners were rounded up and imprisoned. The *SADH*'s proximity with French political power had as much to do with self-protection as with ideological congruence. White's enjoyed a central position, near the hub of French trade and politics. It was located passage des Petits-Pères, a short way from the Palais Royal, then the centre of commerce, news, gossip, publishing and prostitution: a prime locale to follow the currents of trade and politics, and seize opportunities when they came up. The *SADH* cultivated good relations with the Convention and local sections, sending addresses asking for the British and Irish residents to be welcomed as guests in the name of fraternity, and be spared the harsh provisions of the Law of Suspects.[204] The society also served as a sociability and business network for men like Hurford Stone, who believed in free trade and saw no contradiction between republicanism and the pursuit of profit.

The *SADH* was no conspiratorial den. It could hardly have threatened the British state. The 18 November dinner was remarkable for another reason. It was a unique product of the specific British expatriate sociability in Paris. It shared traits of both British radical, and French, sociability. It followed the British alternation of songs, toasts and speeches, but it also included women, and honoured them specifically as was customary in France. This suggests the influence of a more inclusive, feminine sociability on the French model, which Williams, who held her weekly *salon*, and other expatriates in Paris, enjoyed. This serves to qualify feminist interpretations seeing the dinner as the advent of a new age for the rights of women: the toasts to female writers were very new in *British* context, but drunk as they were in Paris, they reflected the influence of a French model of sociability

[202] *London Chronicle*, 1-4 December 1792, p.530.
[203] Rachel Rogers, 'White's Hotel'.
[204] Irish resident Robert O'Reilly presented an address signed by fifty individuals to the Convention on 24 November 1792: Rachel Rogers, *Friends of the Revolution*, p. 70.

that was more open to women and recognized their literary and artistic talents. The dinner is also revealing in its bicultural references (e.g. toasts to French politicians and English writers), suggesting a specific Anglo-French culture which was born of the French Revolution and was already declining by 1793.

To some extent, the *SADH* grew out of genteel radical circles in London. Members of the society travelled across the Channel. Williams mediated between different groups, including those involved in London celebrations of Bastille Day. For instance, at a *soirée* at her London home on 21 April 1791, Robert Merry, Samuel Rogers, a close friend of Richard Price, and others discussed Paine's *Rights of Man.*[205] Williams's Parisian salon also enabled British well-wishers to the Revolution to meet with French politicians of all hues, except counter-revolutionaries. Hurford Stone was another go-between, setting up financial ventures and arranging for Talleyrand to meet Priestley, Fox, and Sheridan in his house in Hackney.

The middle-class identity of the *SADH* members, their frequentations of Whig élites, their adoption of a sociability mixing élite British dining and French salon culture, raise the question of the social dimension of their democratic ideology. They believed in free trade and, for all their egalitarianism, did not intend to level conditions or use plebeian manners themselves. Their deportment was revolutionary – they wore cockades, celebrated the Revolution, respected revolutionary laws –, but also distinctly bourgeois. Frances Burney's sister Charlotte found Williams "superfinely affected".[206] The 18 November 1792, for all its fiery rhetoric, had it in common with the Bastille Day dinners that it kept the poor away. Politics was made in their name, not by or with them.

The celebration of French victories in Sheffield

The dinner at White's and the popular effusions of joy in Sheffield and Scotland both celebrated recent French military victories. Valmy was a transnational event; it aroused the hopes of republicans and democrats throughout the Atlantic world, and was fêted throughout France, in Boston and at least six other American cities, and, in England,

[205] Jon Mee, 'The Magician No Conjuror: Robert Merry and the Political Alchemy of the 1790s', in *Unrespectable Radicals? Popular Politics in the Age of Reform*, ed. by Michael Davis and Paul A Pickering (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2008), pp. 41–56 (p. 44).
[206] Deborah Kennedy, *Helen Maria Williams and the Age of Revolution*, p. 26.

in Sheffield and nearby Rotherham.[207] The 1 December issue of the *Manchester Herald* published the English residents' address to the Convention congratulating France on its victories (dated *L'an premier de la République Françoise*), on page two, and on the next page, a call for a subscription for the widows and orphans of French soldiers, and a detailed account of the "civic fete" held in Rotherham on November 26, and in Sheffield on 27.

The Sheffield festival combined features of popular rejoicings with elaborate revolutionary symbolism.[208] Sheffield was an active centre of artisan radicalism, with a lively Society for Constitutional Information in brisk correspondence with its more famous London namesake.[209] Joseph Gales, editor of the *Sheffield Register* from 1787 to his emigration during the state trials of 1794, and of the short-lived biweekly *The Patriot* (1792-1797), was a vocal advocate for reform. On 31 March 1792, the London SCI coopted him and other members of the Sheffield Constitutional Society.[210] In the autumn of 1792, artisans and more genteel reformers had already expressed their support to France and defiance to Pitt on two occasions. On 15 October 1792, an effigy of the "Duke of Brunswick filled with combustible matter" was fired on and burnt, and the toast to "the Sovereignty of the People" preceded that of the King.[211] The celebration of the Glorious Revolution at the Tontine Tavern in Sheffield on 5 November was marked by toasts expressing anti-monarchical sentiment and support for the French Convention and its armies.[212] The 27 November festival was a much grander demonstration of strength for local radicals. Thousands of men and women turned out for the festival. Banners fixed on long poles crowned with caps of liberty bore inscriptions predicting the French would vanquish tyrants and bring "Liberty and Reason" all over the world. A "large painting" comprised a "caricature" representing Britannia prostrate on the ground, with a figure riding upon a hog symbolizing the "swinish multitude". The Home Secretary Henry Dundas appeared in a shape half ape, half man, "dressed in a Scotch plaid and bonnet" and crying out "Wha wants me?" Above, an angel rescued a copy of *Rights of Man* from ruin. This iconography was

[207] On American celebrations: Simon P. Newman, *Parades and the Politics of the Street*, pp. 122–25; Simon P. Newman, 'La Révolution française vue de loin: la célébration de Valmy à Boston, en janvier 1793', *Revue d'histoire moderne et contemporaine*, 58.1 (2011), 80–99.
[208] The following description and quotations come from *Manchester Herald*, 1 December 1792. John Stevenson reproduced the article in *Artisans and Democrats: Sheffield and the French Revolution, 1789-97*, Sheffield History Pamphlets (London: The Historical Association, 1989), pp. 59–60.
[209] The Sheffield Corresponding Society had 2,000 members, but an anti-war petition gathered 10,000 signatures in May 1793 (E. P. Thompson, *The Making of the English Working Class*, p. 131.).
[210] BL, TS11/962/3508, fo. 56, 117.
[211] Stevenson, *Artisans and Democrats*, p. 19.
[212] *Manchester Herald*, 17 November 1792.

steeped in the political culture of the time, in which the textual and the visual responded. All reformers harped upon the Burke's phrase from *Reflections* "swinish multitude". Like other radicals advocating poor people's rights, the Sheffield crowd reclaimed the insult to claim its dignity.[213] They turned their social inferiority into pride, but also expressed their Englishness, because the reference to Burke inserted them into the English revolutionary controversy. They were English swine, not French *sans culotte*, though they might feel for them. The Dundas figure also evinces knowledge of recent political speeches. The Scottish garb mocked the supposed authoritarianism of the Scots secretary (like that of other Scots like Bute and Mansfield earlier), while the nickname "Wha Wants Me" originated in a parliamentary speech from 1792.[214] The symbolism showed the high degree of literacy and knowledge of current political controversies and symbols.

The participants understood the French victories both in terms of English politics and as an international war for freedom. The national cockade, bearing the Jacobin motto "Liberty or death", was prominent. There is no toast list, but those drunk in Rotherham expressed clear support for the French Revolution, its general and armies, the abolition of priestcraft and feudalism, and the repeal of the Test and Corporation Acts, understood as a local declension of the rights of man. Also significant was the practical rejection of aristocratic patronage. Across Britain, traditional festivities were occasions for aristocracy and gentry to show their munificence by distributing meat and drink to the poor, and by late 1792 they were harnessed to the loyalist cause. The landowning élites staged their paternalist power and justified by gifts of food and drink the claim that Britain was a land of plenty, while France was starving.[215] But the patrons of the Sheffield fête were the local reformers: "a very fine ox, purchased by the subscription of the friends of freedom" was roasted on two large fires, and the crowd walked in procession with cannon and banners to distribute the meat cuts to the poor and the prisoners in the gaol. (In revolutionary France, a *fête* would involve distribution of meat to the poor as well, and the banquet would be offered by the municipality, or by a club by subscription.) This treatment of food turned

[213] Burke mentioned "a swinish multitude" in a frightful evocation of learning "cast to the mire" and trodden under (Burke, VIII, p. 130). The phrase inspired many radicals, e.g. D. I. Eaton's magazine *Hog's Wash, or a Salamagundy for Swine*... (1793), Thomas Spence's *Pigs' Meat; or, Lessons for the Swinish Multitude*...(1794), and caricatures representing Englishmen as pigs.

[214] The verbal and visual elements employed in Sheffield were already present in Gillray's *Wha Wants Me?* (BM 8103). For the political background, see George, *Catalogue*, vol. 6, p. 914.

[215] Among many examples, see e.g "a letter reporting loyalist ritual in the town of Aberystwyth" from December 1792, and festivities for the coming of age of Sir Watkin Williams Wynn in Löffler, *Welsh Responses to the French Revolution*, pp. 110–13.

around the increasingly conservative uses of "the roast beef of Old England" (and the song of the same name). In Sheffield, there was a sense of orderly rejoicing, of a victory over the forces of conservatism that had predicted mayhem. The account also describes the soundscape of the celebration, full of bell-ringing, "the roar of cannon, and the thunder of applause". The reformers had taken over the town from the morning to mid-afternoon, involving an "immense concourse of people". The Sheffield and Rotherham fêtes mixed traditional English festivals and French revolutionary ideology, expressed symbolically in the English idiom of toasts and visual caricature, and practically through ox-roasting. It is evidence of the continuing of popular political practices, pertaining to James Epstein's "constitutional idiom", to forward new, unprecedented demands encouraged by the Revolution.[216] It was a far cry from the Whig Bastille Day celebrations; closer in ideology to the dinner at White's, it was nevertheless very different in its open-air setting, inclusive participation and concern for the "swinish multitude."

Plebeian celebrations of French victories took yet another form in Scotland, but again they were rooted in pre-existing popular celebrations. In Perth and in Dundee, crowds planted a tree of liberty with great ceremony and illuminations celebrated General Dumouriez's entry into Brussels. In Perth, the crowd cried "No Dundas – No Bishops – and no King. Nothing but a Republic for us."[217] The authorities were concerned, but those riots were not the most serious; the Edinburgh King's Birthday riots, on 4 June 1792, had been destructive and worrying. Other forms of popular demonstration celebrating French victories included the burning in effigy of the Duke of Brunswick and of the pope in London on 5 November 1792.[218]

It is delicate to ascertain the significance of such popular festivals. For Edward Thompson, the Sheffield festival and other gatherings of artisans struck fear into the heart of the government, because the common people were claiming general rights, not just voicing sectional grievances.[219] The political motivation of the demonstrations makes no doubt; the tree of liberty had become a symbol of republicanism, and the slogans in Perth indicated a clear rejection of the ruling élites as well. Bob Harris remains very cautious, noting the disconnection of the Scottish riots from the local radical movement, and posing

[216] James Epstein, *Radical Expression*, chap. 1.
[217] Bob Harris, 'Political Protests in the Year of Liberty, 1792', in *Scotland in the Age of the French Revolution*, ed. by Bob Harris (Edinburgh: John Donald, 2005), pp. 50–78 (p. 65).
[218] Goodwin, p. 248.
[219] E. P. Thompson, *The Making of the English Working Class*, pp. 113–14.

the problem of the agency and autonomy of the crowd. For Harris, the true significance of the riots lay in the strengthening of the loyalist reaction in the teeth of a perceived threat of mob revolution in Scotland.[220] In Sheffield, the sophistication of the symbolism and careful rendering in the press suggests some organization by the local Corresponding Society, and a balance of forces that was more favourable to the reformers than in either Scottish town. The Sheffield, Dundee and Perth manifestations were remarkable in their ideology combining international republicanism, defiance to authorities, and articulation of local grievances.

It is very difficult to know if those festivals evinced a lasting revolutionary, or republican, tendency in the people. The same problem concerns the motivations behind the Birmingham Riots. Popular festivals, and their traditional forms – bonfires, processions, effigies and illuminations – were a contested terrain, and even where "Jacobin" festivals took place in late 1792, loyalist parades, including presentations of the colours to volunteer troops, and burnings of effigies of Tom Paine, multiplied soon after. The burning in effigy of the Duke of Brunswick and the Pope on Guy Fawkes' Night, 1792,[221] is eerily similar to the Paine burnings, which started at that point on a massive scale. It also shows that the ideological meaning of calendar festivals was contested, a theme the next chapter will expand on. Puzzlingly, the same people might well have taken part in both sets of manifestations. H. T. Dickinson noted that participants in loyalist parades must have assented to same extent, because the authorities could not have forced them to attend and participate in so great numbers.[222] Frank O'Gorman's suggestion is equally reasonable: the efficacy of loyalist ritual was short-lived, and Paine burnings could provoke dissenting expressions on rare occasions.[223] The governing élites trod a fine line, trying to encourage popular loyalism and action against radicals without losing control and letting the common people act on their own initiative.[224]

From the point of view of sociability, the Sheffield procession and the Scottish liberty tree demonstrations were open to all, contrary to the exclusive dinners held in London taverns and at White's, and they escaped official leadership. In this, their closest

[220] Bob Harris, 'Political Protests in the Year of Liberty, 1792', pp. 68–70.
[221] Goodwin, p. 248.
[222] Dickinson, 'Popular Conservatism and Militant Loyalism 1789-1815'.
[223] Frank O'Gorman, 'The Paine Burnings of 1792-1793', *Past & Present*, 193.1 (2006), 111–55 (p. 152).
[224] Emma Vincent Macleod, 'British Attitudes to the French Revolution', *Historical Journal*, 50.3 (2007), 689–709 (p. 697).

equivalent in France was not the official grand *fête*. The Scottish riots adhered to the model of the liberty tree, which was a popular ritual throughout France, but already vivid in America during the Stamp Act crisis. The Sheffield procession was more akin to what Mona Ozouf called "the 'other' festival", which gave a central place to mockery. She describes a procession in a village, where "the figure of William Pitt, perched on a donkey, face toward the tail, was exhibited throughout the town."[225] This is rather similar to the caricature of Dundas paraded around Sheffield. The procession partook of such carnivalesque universe, but only to a certain point, because the radicals also displayed solemn banners and insisted they were serious reformers.

Conclusion

In only three years, celebrations reconfigured across Britain. It is now possible to propose a typology. There were three types: the large, metropolitan, tavern dinner, hegemonic until 1791; the more modest radical dinner; the popular festival, a Sheffield oddity with resemblances to Mona Ozouf's "other" festival. A fourth type, if the passion for classification may justify it, would be the *SADH* dinners at White's, hybrids of English and French sociabilities.

The reasons for celebrating the French Revolution were many. Besides agreement with revolutionary values, they involved the celebrants' sense of their own social identity and they had a pragmatic dimension, because celebrations sent a message to the British government and local authorities, and across the Channel. Adherence to the principles of the Revolution would seem an obvious reason, but this raised the question of interpretation, and it is fairly certain that the Whigs who congregated in fashionable taverns in 1790 understood "liberty" in a restrictive sense, certainly not in the sense of universal suffrage or "social rights" as contained in the Montagnard's law of the maximum, or even Paine's last, "social" chapter of *Rights of Man, Part II*. The Whigs' wishful alignment of 1789 with 1688 meant that their celebration of the French Revolution was an act of self-congratulation and vindication of their own principles. This was, of course, contested by another Whig, Burke, who also claimed to represent the true "revolution principles" of 1688. Some guests at the London Bastille dinners, like Price or Horne Tooke, certainly wished a massive

[225] Ozouf, *Festivals and the French Revolution*, p. 89.

overhaul of the British constitution, including a separation of church and state and broadening of the franchise. They went further than the Whigs, but recoiled before violence. Even if the war with France had not precluded celebrations, Whigs and the Revolution Society would perhaps not have celebrated 14 July 1793, after the events of the summer and autumn of 1792. As for the "plebeians" in Sheffield and Scotland, as far as can be ascertained, they wished the redress of longstanding local grievances like the game laws or denominational inequality, but they also asserted their dignity and their wish for a say in politics, be it universal suffrage or an opening of oligarchic local politics.

Besides ideological projections, the groups celebrating the Revolution expressed their sense of social self. The Whigs felt in sympathy with French law-making élites (until the August Days, that is); their cosmopolitanism was an aristocratic preserve long before 1789. Dupont de Nemours or the Duc de La Rochefoucauld-Liancourt were liberal and enlightened like themselves, but they could not control the Revolution, which engulphed them. It became more difficult for the Whig to support sans-culotte government, as countless caricatures of Fox showed. The British expatriates gravitating around White's used hybrid forms reflecting their cultural sophistication; they integrated French customs, especially regarding gender, while maintaining some English distinctiveness. They were politically and economically liberal, enlightened and cosmopolitan. Again, they could sustain such an identity until the repression of foreign suspects and the rise of the Montagnards. The "swinish multitude" of Sheffield made a bid for Englishness and inclusion in the political nation, in contrast with the cosmopolitanism of the Whigs.

The pragmatic dimension of dinners is evident in the Whigs' and Dissenters' correspondence with France, and appeal for peace in toasts and speeches meant to broadcast good intentions to the French executive and clubs. Other similar motives may have been at play in manufacturing towns. Priestley's remark on assuaging the French after the Eden Treaty sounds rather logical in view of the French festivals studied in the last chapter. Revolution dinners in Britain also served to show goodwill to French customers and business.

Those general properties must be understood in the context of the very rapid evolution of dinners, responding to the rush of events in France and the deterioration of Anglo-French relations. On 14 July 1790, the only major Bastille Day celebration was the grand dinner held at the Crown and Anchor. This type of celebration, gathering several

hundred of reformers belonging to a specific Whig-Dissenting nexus in a high-end metropolitan tavern, was short-lived. While it lasted, it was very conspicuous, involving the local Whig élites in high-end taverns at the heart of most large cities and towns in England and Scotland, its impact multiplied by the press that covered the proceedings. As early as 1791, such celebrations were hit by the backlash of the Priestley Riots and conservative propaganda. On 14 July 1792, no such grand dinners took place, and the activity moved to the North of England, Scotland and Ireland. The maintenance of celebrations in Scotland in 1792 is remarkable, in a country whose reputation for conservatism has been rightly criticized, showing the vivacity of radicalism and survival of moderate Whiggism.

Celebrations of the French Revolution in Britain were conspicuous in 1790-1791, and embattled by 1792. They involved few people, perhaps a few thousand in 1791. Even before the usually ascribed birth date of loyalism in the spring of 1792, loyalism, or a version of conservatism that led to it, was active. The July 1791 Birmingham Riots deterred further celebrations. The dinners carried a stigma, and became controversial in London and the Midlands. The pressure of loyalism progressively narrowed the range of admissible opinions, and the disappearance of open celebrations of revolution was part of the establishment of a blanket conservative patriotism. It is not legislation that killed off Bastille Day dinners, but harassment, and the outbreak of war in February 1793. No one openly celebrated the French Revolution from that date. The Two Acts of 1795 hardly mattered, because celebrations were already impossible. From 1793 on, a "celebration" of the French Revolution meant an indirect, slanted praise in speech or print. Self-styled "Jacobins" became adept at masquerading: John Thelwall, for instance, passed off political lectures as lessons in Roman history. "Ultra-radicals" drank outrageous toasts in their own alehouses, trying to resist repression and closures.[226] In Scotland, radical groups that survived or were recreated after the 1793 sedition trials clung to the ideals of the French Revolution. In August 1797, Dundas received a report on a meeting of Perth radicals on the fifth anniversary of the deposition of Louis XVI in 1797.[227] Such celebrations by tiny, minority radical groups were not specifically tied to the fourteenth of July. Other revolutionary dates could be fêted. In any case, those celebrations could not go public: not

[226] Steve Poole, *John Thelwall: Radical Romantic and Acquitted Felon*, The Enlightenment World, 11 (London: Pickering & Chatto, 2009); Iain McCalman, *Radical Underworld: Prophets, Revolutionaries and Pornographers in London, 1795-1840* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1998).
[227] Bob Harris, *The Scottish People and the French Revolution*, pp. 227–28, 305.

the press, but the home office archives or magistrates' correspondence can afford glimpses of such radical activities.

It is however possible to suggest other explanatory factors for the demise of Bastille Day dinners, which have to do with the celebrations themselves. There was a lack of a hero and positive identification figures. In 1790, there were too many; the rushing course of the revolution soon swept off stage characters like Siéyès, Bailly, or La Fayette; later, factional struggle and loyalist indoctrination precluded a cult of Danton or Robespierre. The adoption of French symbolism, and the relative absence of a homegrown, English symbolism, was another problem, lending credence to the accusation of imitation and treachery. There was no radical *Marseillaise*, no radical colours that could match the power of the tricolour cockade. Celebrations of the French Revolution looked and sounded foreign. As war loomed in November 1792, the Englishness of a roasted ox at Sheffield could not offset the impression given by the *Marseillaise*, a martial song sung at Valmy.

A striking feature of French Revolution celebrations is their progressive marginalization from places of socio-political centrality. The history of radicalism from 1789 to 1848 is, in large part, a struggle for recognition and access to meeting places and outlets for expression.[228] The story of the French Revolution dinner is one of eviction from central, prestigious venues and the emergence of smaller clusters in more marginal, less visible places. The Whigs and Dissenters who celebrated Bastille Day had no such difficulty. They staged their revelries in the heart of towns and cities. The contrast could not be greater with the plebeian radicals, who convened in alehouses and free-and-easies, and resisted loyalist pressures on landlords. By mid-1792, those celebrating the Revolution were socially inferior, and they did it on less socially valued locales, on the streets of Sheffield and Perth, or in alehouses outside the West End and the City, in the East End or the outskirts of London. White's is a special case. It was ideally situated and some of the British and Irish expatriates possessed enough money and social capital to have access to the upper echelons of French politics. Their position was nevertheless precarious, and they were aware of it. The November 1792 dinner at White's was an effusion of enthusiasm, but

[228] John Barrell, 'London and the London Corresponding Society', in *Romantic Metropolis: The Urban Scene of British Culture, 1780-1840*, ed. by James Chandler and Kevin Gilmartin (Cambridge; New York: Cambridge University Press, 2005), pp. 85–112; Navickas, *Protest and the Politics of Space and Place, 1789-1848*; Michael Rapport, 'Les Pubs, la politique démocratique et la métropole. La lutte pour le contrôle de l'espace à Londres au début des années 1790', in *Les Mondes britanniques, une communauté de destins?*, ed. by Jean-François Dunyach and Alban Gautier, Histoire (Rennes: Presses universitaires de Rennes, 2018), pp. 97–112.

it also gave proof of their commitment to the Revolution to a French government on which they depended for their survival.

After 1793, British celebrations of the French Revolution were subject to the stern gaze of the law, and the watchfulness of loyalist vigilantes. Yet, if formal dinners were henceforth impossible, the French Revolution invaded the political and cultural field, even when it was Celebrations of revolutions subsided, and a chasm opened; the French Revolution, remained a constant reference in British political culture. The blanket interdiction of praising the Revolution made it more appealing to some and transformed the value and use of revolutionary symbols in the early nineteenth century, as the next chapter will show.

Chapter 4.
Celebrating the first French Revolution from 1793 to the mid-1850s

On the face of it, British Bastille Day dinners during the French Revolution were dire failures. Three short years failed to make a mark on the commemorative political calendar. There were no dinners celebrating the French Revolution after the mid-1790s, until a revival attested in 1844. Nevertheless, the French Revolution was ubiquitous. Radicals often framed social problems in terms of political tyranny with revolutionary references, the most famous case being the hated "Bastiles" imposed by the 1834 New Poor Law. Historians have long known that the French Revolution cast a long shadow over the first half of the nineteenth century; two more revolutions in France in 1830 and 1848, and still others in continental Europe, constantly reminded the British public of the possibility of revolution at home. Contested historiographical interpretations of the French Revolution merged with concerns over national history, especially the English revolutions of the seventeenth century.[1]

This chapter contends that tropes from the French Revolution, and often from the Bastille dinners held in England from 1790 to 1792, informed sociability in the four following decades. This was the case of radical and Whig dinners, which appealed each in their own way to French Revolution principles, but also of dinners given by conservatives, who implicitly referred to the Revolution they gloried in defeating. This chapter examines the few celebrations of the French Revolution in the period, and many other dinners which alluded to it. Usually, the dinners discussed topical matters; hence, the discussion broaches nineteenth-century revolutions, preparing for fuller examination in the next chapters.

Sociable events produced a discourse on revolution which was central in the struggle over the appropriation of heritage discourse. The Tory-conservative glorification of victory at Waterloo and the virtues of the timeless constitution constituted what Laurajane Smith called an "authorised heritage discourse", a dominant version of the past that reflected the experience of the elites and marginalized other groups and other interests.[2]

[1] Hedva Ben-Israel, *English Historians on the French Revolution* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1968); Aude Attuel-Hallade, *T.B. Macaulay et la Révolution française: la pensée libérale whig en débat* (Paris: Michel Houdiard éditeur, 2018).
[2] Laurajane Smith had, *Uses of Heritage* (London; New York: Routledge, Taylor & Francis Group, 2006), chap. 1.

Radical dinners that praised foreign revolutions, were "dissonant" in that they presented alternative versions of history.[3] Using the theoretical framework of heritage studies, Matthew Roberts has shown how Chartists created their versions of history through material objects, literature, visual representations, and social practices. Dining and celebrations were part of the practices and modes of knowledge, the "intangible heritage" which, alongside material objects and spaces, "constitute[s] cultural heritage".[4] This chapter is concerned with the building of alternative heritage discourse on the French Revolution. The building and constant nurturing of tradition, whether for conservatives or radicals, mattered immensely to the maintenance and transmission of values and organizations. This chapter will map the uses of the Revolution in convivial celebrations, interrogating the meaning the actors may have attached to them.

The radicals' and Chartists' heritage discourse was increasingly characterized by what François Hartog called a "futurist" regime of historicity. "Speaking of a 'regime of historicity' is [...] simply a way of linking together past, present, and future, or of mixing the three categories".[5] Hartog argues that while the eighteenth century was past-oriented, a future-oriented regime took hold with the turn of the French Revolution. British celebrations of revolution are evidence of such a turn towards "futurism", as celebrations of the past gave way to celebrations of the French Revolution understood as inaugurating a new moment in which the actors lived and which was oriented by the notion of progress.[6]

Convivial sociability, this chapter contends, crucially contributed to this construction of heritage and perceptions of past, present and future. Dining, drinking, and toasting, were central to politics, in an age divided over reform, which increasingly recognized public opinion (itself a divisive concept) as a prime force in politics. Dinners instilled manners, moulded political inclinations and created shared histories, heritage and aspirations. Mark Philp has shown how dancing incorporated moral and political principles, social occasions such as balls enabling the inculcation of conservative dispositions.[7] Music and singing, as well, had a spellbinding force that both contemporaries and specialists today

[3] Rodney Harrison, *Heritage: Critical Approaches* (Abingdon; New York: Routledge, 2013), pp. 192–94.
[4] Matthew Roberts, *Chartism, Commemoration and the Cult of the Radical Hero*, p. xv.
[5] François Hartog, *Regimes of Historicity: Presentism and Experiences of Time* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2015), p. xv.
[6] Celebration is to be taken, as elsewhere in this book, as sociable celebration. Of course, the British "celebrated" their past, more than ever, during the Romantic Age, in literature and the arts.
[7] Mark Philp, 'Music and Movement in Britain, 1793-1815', *The Journal of British Studies*, 60.2 (2021), 403–15 <https://doi.org/10.1017/jbr.2020.247>.

have recognized.[8] Toasting, which supposedly generated unanimity with the lubricant of alcohol, was a potent force binding men together around shared values and loyalties. Thomas Paine denounced "those songs and toasts which are calculated to enslave, and operate to suffocate reflection".[9] This seldom quoted phrase suggests that Paine recognized that, below constitutional and legal provisions, tyranny or liberty also lurked in the minutiae of manners and sociability. He felt a free republican sociability should replace slavish monarchical etiquettes. The republican pamphleteer probably had in mind those conservative "songs and toasts", such as the king's (or loyal) toast that buttressed monarchical sentiment until it became subconscious. In a sense there was a general disciplining in British sociability, the alternation of speeches, toasts, and songs, in formal dinners, setting the pace, uniting the diners, and making it almost impossible for opposition or mere idiosyncrasy to manifest itself. In other words, dining was a process of political socialization, whose conservatism radicals and reformers criticized, and which they tried to use for their own ends.

This chapter is concerned with sociability, acknowledging that the influence of the French Revolution in the realms of history, ideology, literature or the arts, is already well charted.[10] Fabrice Bensimon has shown continuous engagement with the French Revolution in Britain, across the different media, long after the 1848 Revolution, which was an occasion for the resurfacing of memories, often in the form of clichés or Jacobin spectres.[11] This chapter mostly focuses on radicals, those who most emphatically celebrated the French Revolution, but conservative and Whig interpretations are also of interest. John Dinwiddy, in an important study,[12] argues that radicals' attitudes to the French Revolution changed much between the first and second quarters of the nineteenth century. At first, they avoided the topic, falling back on arguments based on English history, like the Anglo-Saxon constitution. Those who constantly invoked the Revolution were the Tories, to discredit

[8] Kate Bowan and Paul Pickering, '"Songs for the Millions": Chartist Music and Popular Aural Tradition', *Labour History Review*, 74.1 (2009), 44–63.
[9] Paine, p. 158.
[10] Among many references, see Ben-Israel; *The French Revolution and the Creation of Modern Political Culture*, ed. by Keith Michael Baker and others, 1st ed, 4 vols (Oxford: Pergamon Press, 1987); Roy Strong, *And When Did You Last See your Father? The Victorian Painter and British History* (London: Thames and Hudson, 1978); Bindman; Fabrice Bensimon, 'L'Écho de la Révolution française dans la Grande-Bretagne du XIXe siècle (1815-1870)', *Annales historiques de la Révolution française*, 342.4 (2005), 211–41; Matthew S Buckley, *Tragedy Walks the Streets: The French Revolution in the Making of Modern Drama* (Baltimore, MD: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 2006).
[11] Bensimon, 'L'Écho de la Révolution française dans la Grande-Bretagne du XIXe siècle (1815-1870)'.
[12] J. R. Dinwiddy, 'English Radicals and the French Revolution, 1800-1850', in *Radicalism and Reform in Britain, 1780-1850* (London; Rio Grande, OH: Hambledon Press, 1992), pp. 207–28.

any attempt at reform. The radicals did use the cap of liberty, but their white cap was reminiscent of Rome, not the Jacobin red cap. The Mediterranean revolutions of 1820, and the French revolution of 1830 provoked a sea change, because they proved that revolutions could be peaceful and provoke constitutional change without bloodshed, in consequence of which French revolutionary symbols felt less threatening and some Chartists, like Bronterre O'Brien, were left free to proclaim their admiration for Robespierre and the Jacobins.

This chapter endorses some of Dinwiddy's theses: earlier conservative fears of the French Revolution, the change around 1830, and the revival in Chartist circles. It also points out the continuing references to the French Revolution in reformist and radical circles, from the 1790s to the 1850s. The generational change around 1830 transformed the idea of celebration: earlier radicals nurtured a living memory, while later generations evoked history, events which they had not experienced at first hand but which they felt could guide their political ways. Here, Maurice Halbwachs's opposition between history and memory is useful. "Collective memory, he argues, is a more informal, group-specific and orally transmitted rendition of the collective past which presupposes a continuity of consciousness between past and present, while history is a more formal, systematic and usually written record premised on a rupture between the past and the present."[13] History, Habwachs contended, start where tradition dies out and writing becomes necessary because the group that bore the collective memory is no longer present.[14] Though this opposition between memory and history may explain shifts in the treatment of the French Revolution, it must be qualified because, first, rituals could stretch the life of memory by nurturing a community of remembrance even in the absence of direct witnesses of the 1790s; secondly, the historiographical progress had started as soon as the French Revolution began, since many actors and witnesses wrote their memoirs and histories of the events. Despite this reservation, there was a change in emphasis about a generation after the Revolution, the bugbear image propagated by loyalism receding in the 1820s. Chartist celebrations of the French Revolution, in this respect, formed a sharp contrast with earlier radical ones. French revolutionary symbols were still frightening and provocative to conservatives, but, from the mid-1840s until the aftermath of the 1848 Revolutions, they served Chartists as a galvanizing inspiration.

[13] Matthew Roberts, *Chartism, Commemoration and the Cult of the Radical Hero*, pp. 63–64.
[14] Maurice Halbwachs, *La Mémoire collective*, Bibliothèque de sociologie contemporaine (Paris: Presses universitaires de France, 1968), pp. 67–68.

Dinners were one major form that kept the memory of the French Revolution alive. They were multidimensional, as a textual, as well as a physical and social, phenomenon. We would know little about dinners, had not the actors so profusely written about them, had not visual caricature also represented them. This chapter uses the concept of "intermediality" to examine the way songs, toasts and speeches echoed each other during dinners and carried French revolutionary symbols and references across the different media. This concept is used in a broader sense than some recent historians did. Paul Pickering, in his study of the "political uses of God Save the King" in the nineteenth century,[15] writes of the "transmediality" of songs, understood as their availability across multiple platforms at the same time, as slip songs, radical newspapers, and songsters. This was important in disseminating revolutionary songs based on the national anthem, such as "God Save the Rights of Man". Specialists of eighteenth-century culture have used the word "intermediality" to study the relationships between text and image.[16] But reports on dinners, and collections of songs and toasts (songsters, toastmasters) also mediated between oral and written communication, not just the visual. Forms of orality have been the topic of excellent recent research: Christopher Reid's study of parliamentary oratory,[17] Jon Mee's work on the interplay between conversation and literature, Paul Pickering and Kate Bowan's coupling of history and musicology on radical songs in the nineteenth-century Atlantic world, or other studies on soundscapes and dance.[18] This chapter suggests that print mediated between the dinners and an audience that could sing the songs or drink the toasts again, adapting them to their own purposes and circumstances if needed, and thus disseminate the ideology in a festive way. Nor should the readers be assumed to be passive; on the contrary, they could also adapt or parody dining sequences, reinventing them for their own sociable and political purposes.

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[15] Paul A. Pickering, '"Confound Their Politics": The Political Uses of "God Save the King-Queen"', in *Cheap Print and Popular Song in the Nineteenth Century: A Cultural History of the Songster*, ed. by Paul Watt, Derek B. Scott, and Patrick Spedding (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2017), pp. 112–37 (p. 113).

[16] *Icons, Texts, Iconotexts: Essays on Ekphrasis and Intermediality*, ed. by Peter Wagner (Berlin; New York: De Gruyter, 1996).

[17] Christopher Reid, *Imprison'd Wranglers: The Rhetorical Culture of the House of Commons 1760-1800* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012).

[18] Mee, *Conversable Worlds*; Kate Bowan and Paul A. Pickering, *Sounds of Liberty: Music, Radicalism and Reform in the Anglophone World, 1790-1914* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2017); Ian Haywood, 'Pandemonium: Radical Soundscapes and Satirical Prints in the Romantic Period', *Republics of Letters: A Journal for the Study of Knowledge, Politics, and the Arts*, Special issue (2017); C. M. Jackson-Houlston and others, 'Music and Politics, 1793–1815: "You Heroes of the Day" : Ephemeral Verse Responses to the Peace of Amiens and the Napoleonic Wars, 1802–04', in *Resisting Napoleon: The British Response to the Threat of Invasion, 1797-1815*, ed. by Mark Philp (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2006), pp. 173–204; Philp, 'Music and Movement in Britain, 1793-1815'.

At this point, it is useful to summon Frank O'Gorman's supple definition of ritual as "a sequence of repetitive, patterned public and collective events, usually self-consciously theatrical, deliberate and exaggerated, even symbolic".[19] O'Gorman notes there were degrees of ritualization. In the case of dinners this meant there was a whole gamut of sociable possibilities from a grand formal dinner down to a meeting between a few friends. In this sense, there could be celebrations of the French Revolution in many social settings, from the formal radical dinner studied by James Epstein[20] to face-to-face encounters in groups of peers, for instance among followers of Thomas Spence.[21]

Ritual, however, could always fail if participants did not feel concerned, or if organizers lost control of the proceedings or misjudged the mood of the meeting. While rules of conviviality tried to ritualize social relationships and nurture common memories, building something like "identities" in consequence, the process was riven by rivalry and contention. Some dinners, songs or toasts caused scandal when published and released into the public sphere of print.[22] Even the attempt at controlling publication could raise hackles. Public dining presupposed an agreement on the part of the diners, and organizers usually tried to stifle and silence the very rare public expressions of dissent that were voiced in the dining room, as happened, for instance, when John Thelwall stood out and refused to drink a toast to the navy.[23] Though recent historiography has highlighted a few cases of disruption in the 1790s, their near-absence in later decades shows the prevalence of tendencies to disciplined order.[24]

This chapter first examines the recovery of radical-reformist sociability, after the loyalist blackout, from the 1790s to the 1820s. The next sections discuss the calendar of

[19] Frank O'Gorman, 'Political Ritual in Eighteenth-Century Britain', in *Political Rituals in Great Britain 1700-2000*, ed. by Jörg Neuheiser and Michael Schaich, Schriftenreihe des Arbeitskreis Deutsche England-Forschung, 55 (Augsburg: Wissner-Verlag, 2006), pp. 17–36 (p. 28).
[20] James Epstein, 'Radical Dining, Toasting and Symbolic Expression'.
[21] McCalman, 'Ultra-Radicalism and Convivial Debating-Clubs in London, 1795-1838'; McCalman, *Radical Underworld*.
[22] On the literary sphere: Jon P. Klancher, *The Making of English Reading Audiences, 1790-1832* (Madison, WI, London: University of Wisconsin Press, 1987); *Romantic Periodicals and Print Culture*, ed. by Kim Wheatley (London ; Portland, OR: Frank Cass, 2003); Ian Haywood, *The Revolution in Popular Literature: Print, Politics, and the People, 1790-1860*, Cambridge Studies in Nineteenth Century Literature and Culture, 44 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009); *The Oxford Handbook of British Romanticism*, ed. by David Duff, Oxford Handbooks, First edition (Oxford; New York: Oxford University Press, 2018), pt. 4 especially on censorship and legality.
[23] Ian Newman, 'The Anti-Social Convivialist: Toasting and Resistance to Sociability', in *British Sociability in the Long Eighteenth Century*, ed. by Valérie Capdeville and Alain Kerhervé (Woodbridge (UK); Rochester, NY: Boydell and Brewer, 2019), pp. 219–36; Marc Baer, 'Political Dinners in Whig, Radical and Tory Westminster, 1780–1880', *Parliamentary History*, 24 (2005), 183–206 (p. 183).
[24] James Epstein, 'Equality and No King'; Barrell, *The Spirit of Despotism*, chap. 2.

political celebrations and the symbolism of dinners, explaining how the French Revolution of 1789 came to replace the Glorious Revolution of 1688 as a reference, and how toasts and songs handled French revolutionary symbolism. Sections on symbolism, food, toasting, and songs review the fundamental parameters of dinners, in relation with the French Revolution. A case study of the French song *Ça ira* in Britain illustrates the multiplicity of uses, often oblique and satirical, that French revolutionary symbolism enabled. The middle section of the chapter deals with what came closest to a celebration of the French Revolution before Chartists times: the "trial by jury dinners", which celebrated the acquittals of members of the London Corresponding Society in 1794. Those dinners lasted for sixty years, but while the victory of constitutional liberty and trial by jury over Pitt's despotic tendencies remained central to their meaning, their partisan character shifted over the decades, as did the treatment of the French Revolution and discussions of revolution itself. Finally, the chapter discusses Chartist celebrations of the French Revolution, which sharply contrasted with earlier radical dinners. The chapter ends in the mid-1850s, a period which corresponds to the end of the "trial by jury" dinners (1854), and to the last documented celebrations of the French Revolution by Bronterre O'Brien.

Memory and sociability from the 1790s to the 1820s: bridging the chasm of loyalist repression

The late 1790s were barren years for radicals and reformers. They relished sociability all the more because it was not a given. Governments curtailed the liberty of assembly. A mere four days after a massive radical rally at Copenhagen House, a royal proclamation banned public meetings on 31 October 1795, and the ensuing Seditious Meetings Act (36 Geo.3 c.8) limited the size of public meetings to fifty persons, in effect cramping the activities of the London Corresponding Society and cognate radical societies. Large reform dinners remained possible, however, and electioneering also gave vent to French revolutionary symbolism, to the dismay of loyalists. The Seditious Meetings and Assemblies Act 1817 (57 Geo. III c. 19) again forbade meetings of more than fifty persons, ironically interrupting the meetings of Pitt Clubs as well.[25] Even smaller assemblies faced harassment as publicans suffered strong pressure for refusing radical meetings on their premises. The late 1790s, in particular, were a period of retreat and estrangement. In the

[25] Keisuke Masaki, 'Within the Bounds of Acceptability: Tory Associational Culture in Early-19th-Century Britain', *Parliamentary History*, 37.3 (2018), 389–414 (p. 410).

aftermath of the Two Acts, Coleridge, Wordsworth and Thelwall left the bustling world of London for solitude and isolation in the country; even in Wales, Thelwall suffered from loyalist harassment.[26] Oppositional sociability was hampered by government spies, pressure brought to bear on publicans, and various legal means which shut off private spaces and restricted the use of public space. Katrina Navickas has demonstrated that a large part of the radical fight aimed to find spaces and outlets for utterance and public protest.[27] The Whigs were in the opposition until 1830, with the brief exception of the Ministry of All the Talents in 1806-1807; they also needed to maintain their status and networks but had much ampler opportunity to do so.

Still, despite this blackout on revolutionary expression, there are examples of individuals toasting the French Revolution in private, and even in public. "Seditious" literature circulated; Paine's *Rights of Man* found its way into the Scottish Highlands and remote northern Lancashire.[28] Evidence of revolutionary toasting in the West Riding of Yorkshire includes the case of "a Huddersfield man, John Taylor", who "was reported to Joseph Radcliffe for toasting 'Success to Buonaparte and his undertakings' in front of recruiting parties in a public house in Huddersfield." Sympathy for the French continued through much of the first decade of the 1800s. In 1800, James "Citizen" Gledhill of Battyeford, also in the West Riding, composed "A patriotic song for the 14th of July 1800 being the anniversary of the French Revolution."[29]

Such individual utterances do not make up the warp and woof of sociability, but a few politicians and activists were able to pull the threads together. Francis Burdett's election in Middlesex in 1802 was the occasion of a boisterous parade and dinner replete with French revolutionary symbolism.[30] The years following Pitt's 'Terror' in the mid-1790s were marked by a revival of a political sociability, centred around dinner parties. The publication of articles on dinners with toast lists was essential, especially for the opposition. Dinners celebrating the anniversary of Charles James Fox (deceased in 1806)

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[26] E. P. Thompson, 'Hunting the Jacobin Fox', *Past & Present*, 142, 1994, 94–140; Nicholas Roe, *Wordsworth and Coleridge: The Radical Years* (Oxford; New York: Clarendon Press ; Oxford University Press, 1988); Kenneth R Johnston, *Unusual Suspects: Pitt's Reign of Alarm and the Lost Generation of the 1790s* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013); Penelope J. Corfield, 'Rhetoric, Radical Politics and Rainfall: John Thelwall in Breconshire, 1797-1800', *Brycheiniog*, 40 (2008).

[27] Navickas, *Protest and the Politics of Space and Place, 1789-1848*.

[28] Katrina Navickas, 'The Cragg Family Memorandum Book : Society, Politics, and Religion in North Lancashire in the 1790s', *Northern History*, 42.1 (2005), 151–62. On Paine in Gaelic, and the Highland's apparent immunity to radicalism: Bob Harris, *The Scottish People and the French Revolution*, p. 81.

[29] *Writings of the Luddites*, ed. by Kevin Binfield (Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2004), p. 61.

[30] *Caledonian Mercury*, 2 August 1802.

sustained and developed party networks, while maintaining the autonomy of local Whig groups.[31] This is not to say that dinners were only means to keep up Fox's memory and heritage after 1806. The cult of Fox took various forms, including poetic tributes such a Richard Payne Knight's *A Monody on the Death of the Right Honourable Charles James Fox* (1806), paintings and sculptures, often casting him as orator of the Antiquity like Demosthenes.[32] Holland House, standing in the middle of Holland Park, gathered a brilliant coterie of Francophile intellectuals and politicians; the cult of Fox and Whiggism was politely performed in Elizabeth Vassall, Lady Holland's salon.[33] The political was enmeshed with the cultural, and sociability was tied to the public sphere of print, in this case essentially the influential *Edinburgh Review*. Historians have noted that the cult of Fox was not meant to appeal to the masses,[34] and "Fox dinners" gathered elite men. Yet, more modest men, though unable to visit Holland House, could nevertheless share a newspaper to participate in the dinners by proxy. Through their toasts, songs, speeches and scenery, dinners promulgated party ideology and consolidated allegiance. Communal drinking and singing had an integrative function, enabling new attendees to imbibe the party's values and find a place within a shared, collective identity. Press reports served to give respectability and publicize principles and men's stances outside the small circle of party intimates.[35]

The Whigs resisted the Tory sledgehammer of the mid-1790s better than could be expected. Even in Scotland, Emma Macleod showed the Whigs' continued resilience against the near hegemony of Henry Dundas, after the 1792 split over the French Revolution and the rallying of most Whigs to Pitt and war policies.[36] There is reason to believe that a sociability of sorts, including dining, singing and toasting, fuelled this resilience (among factors such as the press, petitioning, and family connections, Macleod mentions the annual Fox dinners on 24 January as rallying points). In Scotland, Fox dinners

[31] Keisuke Masaki, 'Posthumous Cult and Memory of Charles James Fox: Whig Associations in the 1810s', *Leaves*, 12 (2021). On the reconstruction of the Whig party: William Anthony Hay, *The Whig Revival, 1808-1830*, Studies in Modern History (Houndmills, Basingstoke, Hampshire ; New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005).
[32] N. B. Penny, 'The Whig Cult of Fox in Early Nineteenth-Century Sculpture', *Past & Present*, 70.1 (1976), 94–105.
[33] Susanne Schmid, *British Literary Salons of the Late Eighteenth and Early Nineteenth Centuries* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013), chap. 5; C. J. Wright, 'Holland House set (act. 1797–1845)', *ODNB*.
[34] J. R. Dinwiddy, 'Charles James Fox and the People', in *Radicalism and Reform in Britain, 1780-1850* (London; Rio Grande, OH: Hambledon Press, 1992), pp. 1–18 (pp. 12–15).
[35] Peter Brett, 'Political Dinners in Early Nineteenth-Century Britain: Platform, Meeting Place and Battleground', *History*, 81.264 (1996), 527–52 (p. 528); T. E. Orme, 'Toasting Fox: The Fox Dinners in Edinburgh and Glasgow, 1801–1825', *History*, 99.337 (2014), 588–606.
[36] Emma Vincent Macleod, 'The Scottish Opposition Whigs and the French Revolution'.

performed the same functions as in England, but may have been more important given that the electoral system gave less opportunity for public speeches at hustings.[37] Some individuals managed to keep up sociable networks and their longevity made them into bridges from one era to the text. Their presence and the honours paid to their memory after their decease helped to craft narratives of continuity, making the 1790s and 1800s appear as periods of setbacks before reconquests, rather than as a lacuna. The lawyer Archibald Fletcher (1746–1828) had expressed sympathy for the Americans during the War of Independence in his twenties; after engaging in the burgh reform in the early 1780s, he participated in Bastille Day dinners in the early 1790s, and served as unpaid counsel to the defendants in the treason trials of 1793.[38] At 72 years of age, he was cheered at a reformist meeting held in 1818 when the cause of reform stirred again after Waterloo. No less important was Archibald's wife, Eliza, whose salon in Edinburgh, and trips across Britain, kept alive the flame of Foxite Whiggism. Toasting Fox was a way of nurturing memories and hopes among like-minded Whigs, if not in public, at least with friends at home.[39] Similarly, Professor John Millar, who had officiated as croupier at the 14 July 1791 dinner in Glasgow, was prominent among the Fox dinners held in that city after 1801; he was one of those honoured in toasting, alongside heroic figures of the English and Scottish past, and his memory served to build a genealogy of heroes. The cult of Fox was flexible enough to allow other Whigs to partake of Fox's glory, creating a progressive sense of the part and building a "British Whig mythology."[40] Another Scottish Whig who can be more robustly linked to dinners in favour of foreign revolutionaries is Sir James Gibson Craig. He took part in Bastille Day dinners in the early 1790s, and by 1835 he was active in supporting the Polish exiles, participating in at least one large fundraising dinner in Edinburgh.[41]

In England as well, several figures bridged the revolutionary chasm, like the London alderman John Waithman.[42] The most significant one was John Cartwright. Born in 1740,

[37] Orme, p. 593.
[38] Emma Vincent Macleod, 'Fletcher, Archibald (1746–1828), Advocate and Political Reformer', *ODNB*.
[39] Jane Rendall, 'Gender and the Practices of Polite Sociability in Late Eighteenth-Century Edinburgh', in *British Sociability in the Long Eighteenth Century*, ed. by Valérie Capdeville and Alain Kerhervé (Woodbridge (UK); Rochester, NY; Boydell and Brewer, 2019), pp. 163–82. On toasting and reminiscing about Fox, see Eliza Fletcher, *Autobiography of Mrs. Fletcher: With Letters and Other Family Memorials*, ed. by Mary Richardson, 2nd ed. (Edinburgh, 1875), p. 90.
[40] Orme, p. 602.
[41] Emma Vincent Macleod, 'Craig, Sir James Gibson, First Baronet (1765–1850), Lawyer and Politician', *ODNB*.
[42] J. R. Dinwiddy, '"The Patriotic Linen-Draper": Robert Waithman and the Revival of Radicalism in the City of London, 1795–1818', in *Radicalism and Reform in Britain, 1780-1850* (London; Rio Grande, OH: Hambledon Press, 1992), pp. 63–85.

he fought in the Seven Years' War, formulated a parliamentary reform programme in 1776 that some Chartists later recognized as an origin of the Charter's six points. After opposing the war against revolutionary France and keeping alive the flame of reform almost on his own, he gave a decisive fillip to the reformers' efforts by the founding of the Hampden Club in 1811. An important factor of Cartwright's credibility was his repudiation of Napoleon. A number of anti-war liberals could creditably become "patriotic", and dispute the loyalist monopoly on patriotism, once they became active in the anti-Napoleonic war effort.[43] Many radicals could oppose Napoleon while retaining at least aspects of their faith in revolutionary liberty, considering that Napoleon had betrayed it. By the late 1810s, Cartwright was celebrating the Spanish and South American liberals in speeches, toasts, and pamphlets.[44] His niece Frances canonized him in a two-volume biography in 1826, shaping the image of an upright patriot and defender of oppressed people in Britain and abroad.[45] Cartwright played an important role in legitimizing parliamentary reform, and was duly enshrined in a Pantheon of freedom fighters after he died. Such veteran figures played a key role in reform movements. Malcolm Chase noted that many Chartist gatherings in 1838, at the onset of the movement, "brought to the public eye veterans of earlier agitations", including octogenarians who had been members of the LCS in 1792.[46] Not only the dead, but the living, served to build genealogies of reformers which were so central to the radical and Chartist sense of self and historical purpose.[47]

By the 1820s, radical sociability had been consolidated by regular events; in addition to the "trial by jury" dinners, there were events organized around Cartwright, and the "purity of election" dinners that celebrated Sir Francis Burdett's return for Westminster. Whig sociability was also well established; Fox dinners in London and the provinces were supplemented by election dinners and various honorary occasions. It is precisely at that juncture of the post-Waterloo resumption of reformist energies in Britain, that armed insurrections in Spain and Italy in 1820, and in South America under the conduct of Simón

[43] J. E. Cookson, *The Friends of Peace: Anti-War Liberalism in England, 1793-1815* (Cambridge; New York: Cambridge University Press, 1982).
[44] H. T. Dickinson, *British Radicalism and the French Revolution, 1789-1815* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1985), pp. 69–75; N. C. Miller, 'Major John Cartwright and the Founding of the Hampden Club', *Historical Journal*, 17 (1974), 615–19; Alberto Gil Novales, 'Cartwright et l'idée de Commonwealth en Espagne', *Annales Historiques de la Révolution Française*, 66.296 (1994), 331–37; Rachel Eckersley, 'Of Radical Design: John Cartwright and the Redesign of the Reform Campaign, c.1800-1811', *History*, 89.296 (2004), 560–80.
[45] John Cartwright, *The Life and Correspondence of Major Cartwright: Edited by His Niece, F. D. Cartwright*, 2 vols (London: Henry Colburn, 1826).
[46] Chase, *Chartism*, p. 33.
[47] Matthew Roberts, *Chartism, Commemoration and the Cult of the Radical Hero*.

Bolívar, placed revolution in the spotlight. In the early to mid-1820s, then, "revolution talk" was rife in Whig and radical circles, even if it did not always show in reports in the press. The radical John Cam Hobhouse noted in his diary that, at the 1823 dinner celebrating Burdett's Westminster election, "Lushington was violent, and said we should have revolution before Reform."[48] This was revolution "talk" rather than discourse, which would suggest a constructed, elaborate ideology. Such heated dinners evinced sets of loyalty and principles, but perhaps more importantly a structure of feelings,[49] inchoate sentiments, a fuzzy ambiance which enabled all participants to agree on a lowest common denominator. In his classic analysis of a Chartist dinner, James Epstein emphasized "the importance of meanings that were expressed in terms of a highly ritualized field of political and symbolic practice rather than in terms of more formally articulated ideology, whether written or spoken".[50] Feelings and symbolic constellations, not "articulated ideology", bound diners together.

The revolution talk evinced in dinners was rarely revolutionary in the sense of a wish for revolution in Britain. Admittedly, there were revolutionary traditions: the Spenceans did dream to topple the monarchy and its evil system of 'landlordism'.[51] The Hampden Clubs agitated for an extensive constitutional overhaul, amounting to little short of revolution, though they would shrink from social and economic levelling. But overall, taken together as a mass, most dinners from the 1810s to the 1840s did not express any wish for revolution, but a heady brew of reformism at home, often accompanied by a sense that revolutions abroad were good, because they liberated other peoples. By the late 1820s, French revolutionary references are often difficult to disentangle from references to Spain, Portugal, Italy and Latin America. Rather than replacement of French references by more recent revolutions, there were combinations. There was a shift from celebration of the Glorious Revolution of 1688 to the French Revolution, and then to foreign revolutions of the nineteenth century, each new element adding a layer of reference and allusion. This shift is visible in the mutations of the calendar of political celebrations.

[48] Entry for Thursday, 3 May 1822, p. 34. 'Hobhouse's Diary', ed. by Peter Cochran <https://petercochran.wordpress.com/hobhouses-diary/>.
[49] Raymond Williams, *Marxism and Literature* (Oxford, 1977), pp. 128–35.
[50] James Epstein, *Radical Expression*, p. 149.
[51] McCalman, 'Ultra-Radicalism and Convivial Debating-Clubs in London, 1795-1838'; McCalman, *Radical Underworld*; Paul A Pickering and Michael T Davis, *Unrespectable Radicals? Popular Politics in the Age of Reform* (Aldershot, England; Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2008).

The calendar of political celebrations: from Glorious Revolution to French Revolution

The new celebratory regime was founded on the demise of the eighteenth-century politico-religious calendar which hinged on the 30th of January, appointed for the commemoration of Charles I's execution, and the fifth of November, celebrating the Glorious Revolution (precisely William of Orange's landing at Torbay). The Dissenters usually chose the date of 4 November to differentiate themselves from Anglicans. Richard Price's celebration of the French Revolution as the climax of liberal revolutions on 4 November 1789 disrupted this calendar. A new calendar replaced the Hanoverian cycle that had emerged after 1688. It was characterized by its fragmentation. There was no single celebration, no day that brought everybody together. While Whigs and Tories stood apart and celebrated the birthdays of Fox on 24 January, and William Pitt the Younger on 28 May respectively, even the camp of reform was split into constituencies celebrating Thomas Paine's birthday or the anniversary of Burdett's Middlesex election. In some areas and in some socio-political milieus, older patterns subsisted long into the nineteenth century: around the time of Peterloo in 1819, many clubs and communities in and around Manchester celebrated Royal Oak Day on 29 May (the anniversary of Charles II's accession at the Restoration).[52]

During the French Revolution, the traditional festival of 5 November stopped to be a significant focus of attention. Throughout the eighteenth century, it had been a flashpoint for politico-religious crises because parties and denominations invested the Glorious Revolution with their own interpretations and allegiances.[53] By the end of the century, a radical interpretation had emerged among Rational Dissenters like Price and Priestley. Price's 1789 sermon "on the love of our country" and Burke's *Reflections on the Revolution in France* centred the debate on the difference or similarity between 1688 and 1789, but Paine's *Rights of Man* promptly pushed the controversy forward, questioning the monarchy from a republican standpoint in 1791, denouncing the socio-economic bases of Hanoverian Britain in 1792. By 1791, the Revolution Society celebrated the French Revolution, rather than that of 1688, which it was instituted to worship; the last recorded meeting of the society was Francophile in tone.[54] The Revolution Society apparently ceased its activities, because

[52] Robert Poole, pp. 50, 53.
[53] H. T. Dickinson, H. T., 'The Eighteenth-Century Debate on the "Glorious Revolution"', *History (London)*, 61.201 (1976), 28–45; Kathleen Wilson, 'Inventing Revolution: 1688 and Eighteenth-Century Popular Politics', *Journal of British Studies*, 28.4 (1989), 349–86.
[54] Rémy Duthille, '1688-1789 : Au Carrefour des révolutions. Les célébrations de la Révolution anglaise de 1688 en Grande-Bretagne après 1789', in *Du Bon Usage des commémorations : histoire, mémoire et identité,*

its moderate members shrank away from it while the bolder ones flocked to the Society for Constitutional Information.

Celebrations of the 1688 Revolution no longer appealed to radicals and ceased to be moments of strife. In the early nineteenth century, it is difficult to find commentaries on 5 November celebrations in the press or in pamphlets (while they abounded in the eighteenth century). This does not mean that the Glorious Revolution was fading into oblivion. Thomas Paine's rhetorical violence against "a bill of wrongs, and of insult" suggests that the Whig sacred cow he was slaughtering was very much alive and kicking.[55] The continuous reference to "Revolution principles" in Whig discourse and the resounding success of T. B. Macaulay's *History of England*, published from 1848, prove that the post-1688 revolution settlement was an enduring reference. But the date of 5 November was no longer a major milestone on the political calendar; the 30th of January, long a privileged Tory moment, also lost prominence. This is not to say that seventeenth-century British revolutions faded away from view. Quite the contrary, the French Revolution provoked an upsurge in interest in Charles I, the regicide and seventeenth-century republicanism, on both sides of the Channel. French revolutionaries were haunted by the parallel between Louis XVI and Charles I; they usually considered Cromwell as a tyrannical villain, and found inspiration in English republican blueprints by James Harrington and others.[56] Counter-revolutionaries like Burke and Boswell, as we saw, viewed Dissenters through the prism of Civil War and regicide. In the wake of Walter Scott, the British seventeenth century offered immense imaginative resources to historians and artists, well into the Victorian age.[57] Celebrations of seventeenth-century events moved away from sermons and dinners into other symbolic fields: literature, historiography, the arts.

XVIe-XXIe siècle, ed. by Lauric Henneton and Bernard Cottret (Rennes: Presses universitaires de Rennes, 2010), pp. 107–20.

[55] Paine, p. 193.

[56] Roger Barny, 'L'Image de Cromwell dans la Révolution française', *Dix-Huitième Siècle*, 25.1 (1993), 387–97; Rachel Hammersley, *French Revolutionaries and English Republicans: The Cordeliers Club, 1790-1794*, Royal Historical Society Studies in History (Rochester, NY: Boydell Press, 2005); Rachel Hammersley, 'English Republicanism and the French Revolution', *History of European Ideas*, 38.2 (2012), 312–14; *European Contexts for English Republicanism*, ed. by Gaby Mahlberg and Dirk Wiemann, Politics and Culture in Europe, 1650-1750 (Farnham, Surrey; Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2013); *Le Voyage des républiques anglaises dans l'espace européen aux XVIIe et XVIIIe Siècles*, ed. by Luc Borot and Myriam-Isabelle Ducrocq, Philosophical Enquiries. Revue Des Philosophies Anglophones, 8 (Paris, 2017) <http://philosophicalenquiries.com/numero8sommaire.html>.

[57] *La Guerre civile anglaise des romantiques*, ed. by Tony Gheeraert, Claire Gheeraert-Graffeuille, and Sylvain Ledda (Mont-Saint-Aignan: Presses universitaires de Rouen et du Havre, 2017); Strong, pp. 136–51, 163–68 on the English Civil War, the Glorious Revolution and Jacobitism.

A new celebratory calendar emerged, this time hinging on modern revolutions, corresponding to a new "futurist" regime of historicity. The appropriation of the fifth of November is telling, because celebrations continued on that date, but this time their object was the acquittal of members of the London Corresponding Society on 5 November 1794. The date henceforth served to commemorate the radical fight for parliamentary reform; the deliverance from Pittite tyranny replaced deliverance from popery in earlier Glorious Revolution celebrations, while the underlying whiggish-progressive narrative of resistance and emancipation remained. Interestingly, Marc Baer gives another example of an "act of appropriation" in radical history: "the London and Westminster Working Men's Constitutional Association held their annual dinner on 19 May 1868, the same calendrical moment at which Burdett's followers had met" a generation earlier.[58] Such shifts in the meaning of dates reflected ideological and organizational rearrangements in the radical world. One section in this chapter will analyse the "trial by jury" dinners later. Now, it is useful to discuss the treatment of the French Revolution in the symbolism and cultural productions, toasts and songs, of the early nineteenth century.

The symbolism of dinners and the French Revolution

Dinners could display a number of different moods, depending on the occasion. Triumphal dinners were held for electoral victories. The deadly repression by the Manchester yeomanry of a peaceful mass meeting asking for voting rights on 16 August 1819 immediately became an object of remembrance and commemoration.[59] Funeral homages to martyrs were one component of the "trial by jury" dinners and they culminated in the cult of the Peterloo martyrs.[60] Yet, the post-Peterloo sequence was not all gloom: joy greeted Henry Hunt's entry into London on his release from gaol in 1819. Anniversary dinners in political clubs were of a different nature. Those élite gatherings provided a barometer of a given group's morale, priorities, and ideology over a number of years.

Ideally dinners could be seen as the image of a well-regulated liberal polity, a constitutional monarchy like Britain's, governed by universally accepted norms and ensuring the enjoyment of food and drink by citizens equal in dignity and endowed with

[58] Baer, 'Political Dinners in Whig, Radical and Tory Westminster, 1780–1880', p. 189.
[59] On Peterloo, see Robert Poole.
[60] Joe Cozens, 'The Making of the Peterloo Martyrs, 1819 to the Present', in *Secular Martyrdom in Britain and Ireland: from Peterloo to the Present*, ed. by Quentin Outram and Keith Laybourn (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2018), pp. 31–58 (p. 38) especially. See also funeral processions in Northern England in 1819: Navickas, *Protest and the Politics of Space and Place, 1789-1848*, pp. 90–91.

rights, including liberty of expression. Radicals valued dinners because the liberty of meeting was under threat. They also resisted Malthus's egregious metaphor of the "banquet of nature", at which paupers had no seat. In radical dinners, the whole "people" sat of right round homely English fare, if only symbolically. The question of inclusiveness is a thorny one because many people besides those who actually ate participated vicariously: not just the readers of the press accounts, but the women who adorned rooms before the dinner, and could be allowed a glimpse into the proceedings at dessert. They were regular toastees, but only hidden helpers, and occasional witnesses. Chartist women's involvement in preparing and organizing dinners was crucial; such an "extension of domestic responsibilities into the public arena", as Jutta Schwarzkopf argued, was the first step of their participation in public affairs.[61] Matthew Roberts added that those women became caretakers of the evening's symbolism and not just performers of a menial, domestic duty.[62] Before the Chartists, radicals and Corn Law repealers had also harnessed women's energies and skills to their cause. In 1840, the Anti-Corn Law League of Manchester tentatively invited ladies, providing them with a special gallery with its own entrance and no direct communication with the men's seating area. The Repealers preferred "the soirée or tea party, one of their many borrowings from the middle-class culture of the day", new forms that allowed of women's participation on decent terms.[63] The Chartists were to take over gender-inclusive forms inspired from Dissenting and teetotal circles. When it came to dinners, however, the absence of women was taken for granted. Their occasional presence was noted, as in many accounts of dinners in Chartist circles in the 1840s mentioning that "the fair sex" "graced" the dinner. However, the socio-political and gendered negotiation over toasts, food and decoration, is usually absent from accounts of dinners.[64]

The French Revolution was central, if negatively, to the identity of the Pitt Clubs. *The Pilot That Weathered the Storm*, the song composed by George Canning in 1802, nurtured the myth of William Pitt who heroically steered Britain through the revolutionary conflict. The proceedings of the Pitt clubs are known mostly through press coverage of their anniversary dinners, in London and the provinces. An account in the *Gentleman's Magazine* of May 1802 is typical of many other articles.[65] Some 850 guests celebrated the

[61] Jutta Schwarzkopf, *Women in the Chartist Movement*, Studies in Gender History (Basingstoke: MacMillan, 1991), p. 174.
[62] Matthew Roberts, *Chartism, Commemoration and the Cult of the Radical Hero*, p. 23.
[63] Paul A. Pickering and Alex Tyrrell, *The People's Bread: A History of the Anti-Corn Law League* (London; New York: Leicester University Press, 2000), p. 123.
[64] Matthew Roberts, *Chartism, Commemoration and the Cult of the Radical Hero*, pp. 72–73.
[65] *Gentleman's Magazine* 72 (May 1802), p. 391-392.

anniversary of Pitt's birthday at the London Tavern on 28 May 1808. After toasts to the King and the royal family, the toast to "Mr. Pitt", prefaced by a speech by Earl Spencer, gave rise to what the loyalist and anti-French paper called "sublime" huzzaing and clapping. Speeches, toasts and songs exuded counter-revolutionary fervour, peppered with pejorative references to the Revolution cast as "Gallic ambition, 'midst Anarchy's cry". Toasts to "The wooden walls of Old England", "The army, militia, yeomanry, and volunteers of the United Kingdom" honoured the armed forces at war against Napoleonic war. Other toasts offered a roll call of British victories, from the glorious 1st June 1794 to the Nile. Such songs, toasts and speeches both anchored Pitt's anti-revolutionary speech in the present (under the pressing Napoleonic threat) and burnished his statue for present and future remembrance. Post-Waterloo Pitt dinners still harked back to the French Wars, ensuring a continuing rejection of the revolutionary heritage.

Publication reached out to many who could not attend the dinner. Pitt dinners increasingly served to advertise Tory values through publication. Some Pitt clubs, especially in the provinces, published long accounts, revising those published in the press and adding *in extenso* speeches.[66] Reporting dinners (especially of political opponents) became a pretext for running commentaries on the state of politics; William Cobbett relished this practice in his *Political Register*; so did the freethinking republican Richard Carlile. Radicals very rarely parodied conservative dinners; they rather used sarcasm and often treated the dinners as pretexts for dealing with larger issues. In 1818, for instance, in Carlile's *Sherwin's Political Register*, an article entitled "Pittite Dinner" started from the report that Castlereagh and Canning stayed away from a Pitt dinner because other guests refused toleration. The two men supported Catholic Emancipation; others, who opposed it, had imposed the toast "Protestant Ascendancy", which had become a test of anti-Catholic sentiment. The article discussed presumed Tory religious hypocrisy rather than dinners.[67] The toast served to fight over Pitt's legacy, many Tories trying to present their hero, rather implausibly, as an opponent to Catholic Emancipation.[68] Similarly, a report of violence and rioting at a King's Birthday dinner enabled Carlile to criticize constables who let loyalists revel in rioting, but cracked down on imaginary instances of radical violence.[69] For a radical

[66] Michael Thomas Sadler, *The Anniversary Meeting of the Leeds Pitt Club: from a Revised Report of the Proceedings Published in the Leeds Intelligencer of May 31*. Leeds: Published by Order of the Club; Printed for Robinson and Hernaman, 1827.
[67] *Sherwin's Political Register*, 3 June 1818, p. 56-59.
[68] J. J. Sack, 'The Memory of Burke and the Memory of Pitt: English Conservatism Confronts Its Past, 1806–1829', *The Historical Journal*, 30.03 (1987), 623–40 (p. 636).
[69] *Sherwin's Political Register*, 17 June 1818, p. 90.

like Carlile, dinners were not just occasions for political swipes at opponents but an essential modality of liberty of speech and liberty of association. The public policing of dinners, unfairly favouring Tories, mattered gravely; it was an image of the more general state of repression in society.

Criticism of rival dinners reactivated categories inherited from the 1790s conflicts over the French Revolution, like "Jacobin", "Jacobinist" or "loyal". In exceptional cases, the press could answer criticism of dinners held years before and hark back to the conflicts from the revolutionary decade. This was the case in 1810, when Cobbett attacked the republication of the *Anti-Jacobin* of 1797, criticizing the loyalist magazine's strictures on "Mr. Fox's Birth Day" as "a string of scurrility".[70] Fox and his friends appeared "as the compeer of Robespierre and Collet [sic] d'Herbois", Cobbett complained: this "pretended account of the toast, speeches, songs, &c." presenting Fox as uttering seditious words only served to basely malign the Whigs. The republication of parodies from 1797 reignited radical-conservative conflict, revealing how entrenched struggles were and how mired in the opposition Foxite Whigs and radicals still were.

Real and symbolic food and drink

How significant were food and drink in the symbolism of dinners? The press reported speeches in increasing length and detail, so that by the 1840s dinner accounts could run to three or four pages, or be published in pamphlet form. But the press wrote very little on the physical conditions of dinners, the food and drink, or even the layout or decoration. Any detail released had socio-ideological significance, signalling the respectability and prestige of the meeting, or its partisan and ideological commitment. This is the *True Briton* on the first Pitt anniversary dinner in London on 28 May 1802: "A little after 6 dinner was served, and it was excellent in its kind. Turtle was in great abundance, and every delicacy which so large a company could expect."[71] Occasionally, a rival political outlet might rail at the quantity of food swallowed, as was the case in 1802 when the Whig-leaning *Morning Chronicle* harped on the Pitt Clubs. In this case, the Whigs were retorting to the Tories, who had taken to imitate the reformers' public dinners at the Crown and Anchor by setting up their own rival dinner at the London Tavern (which, according to a 1796 guidebook

[70] *The Anti-Jacobin, or Weekly Review*, vol. 1, p. 408 (29 January 1798); *Cobbett's Weekly Political Register*, vol. 17, no. 7 (17 February 1810), p. 234.
[71] I found this article reproduced in *Cobbett's Annual Register*, 2:26 (31 December 1802), co. 1024.

served the best food in London)[72]. The *Morning Chronicle* did not write that Tory gluttony was bad, but that all parties, including the opposition, had a right to drink bumpers of claret, without the government interfering to check them and promote the Tories.[73]

Sometimes, food and drink were vehicles for fanciful satirical attacks on alleged revolutionaries. On 15 January 1793, *The Times* caricatured one of the first Fox dinners as a "Sans Culotte Account of Mr Fox's Birth-Day":

> All was Frenchified. The Cooks were Sans Culottes ─ the Waiters Marseillois…
>
> The grace was *ca ira*…
>
> First Course
>
> At the top, a dish of *French Plaices,* stewed in the tears of Royalty […] In the centre, a large tureen of *Soup Societe,* thickened with Manchester Rat's bane, ─ Sheffield hemlock, and other exoticks, that constantly spring up from the root of the new Trees of Liberty.

Jacobinism was poison, but the jocular tone lacked the harshness found in Gillray's horrific rendition of anthropophagy in *Petit souper à la Parisienne*.[74]

For William Cobbett, food and food symbolism were deeply political. In 1814, in protest against the Corn Bill that would tax French corn imports, he noted that "our favourite national song, "*Oh, the Roast Beef of Old England*,"" cast the French as "*meagre*, pale and *lean*,"[75] while, in consequence of their revolution, the French were able to export so much food that British landlords felt they must shield themselves. Cobbett denounced both the Corn Laws and the conservative politics of songs, which whipped up a false sense of superiority to defend the interest of "Old Corruption" at the people's expense. Consequently, ghoulish conservative dinners – like those of the Manchester magistrates feasting after Peterloo – symbolized the injustice of corruption.

There was some disconnection between symbols used in the press and caricatures and actual practices. Anti-French politicians did not renounce French wine, for instance. Wine served in high-end dinners, and in provincial Pitt Clubs and Whig Clubs on formal celebrations, would follow the fashion in use among the middling and upper orders. By the

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[72] Ian David Newman, 'Tavern Talk: Literature, Politics and Conviviality' (University of California, Los Angeles, 2013), p. 102. See also Bryant Lillywhite, *London Coffee Houses: A Reference Book of Coffee Houses of the Seventeenth, Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries* (London: G. Allen and Unwin, 1963), pp. 338–41.

[73] 'The Pitt Club', *Morning Chronicle*, 2 June 1809; 'The Edinburgh Pitt Club', *Morning Chronicle*, 15 June 1809.

[74] BM 8122; George, *Catalogue*, vol. 6, p. 927-928.

[75] *Cobbett's Political Register*, 24 September 1814, vol. 26, co. 390.

early nineteenth century, claret was still present, but port was tending to replace it. Toasts would be drunk in port, or sherry from the 1820s on, following a new, post-war, 'softer' trend in masculine drinking.[76] Only the occasional deviation from the norm or some symbolic value ascribed to wine would find its way into print. For instance, at a Pitt dinner, in 1811, it was remarked there was no French wine on the menu, as a sign of hostility during the war.[77] This implies that there *was* French wine at other dinners, even in wartime. That was the case in private settings as well; James Boswell's late diaries show that, in the mid-1790s, it was possible to toast Pitt and military success against France in French wine.[78] This confirms James Ludington's contention that the long wars against France had never prevented Whigs or Tories from drinking French wine earlier in the eighteenth century.

Dinner prices varied widely, London being more expensive than the provinces. The 14 July dinners cost 7s 6d in London in 1790 and 1791, 6s in Norwich in 1791, but only 2s 6d in Glasgow.[79] A dinner of friends of 'Orator' Hunt at the Crown and Anchor in 1818 cost upward of 10s, while four years later, in Leeds, nearly two hundred radicals sat down to a larger, presumably more inclusive, dinner provided at 2s 6d each.[80] Price determined the social standing of the meeting, and the fare would be whatever the tavern could provide at a fixed price. Ralph Rylance's *Epicure's Almanack*, a listing of London restaurants in 1815, contains bills of fare that give an indication of types of food and prices.[81] The main course would consist of large pieces of roast beef or mutton as main course; lists never mentioned chefs' names or sauces, which were the basis of French, not English, cuisine.

Both conservatives and radicals insisted on the Englishness of their meals. On 24 December 1813, the *Liverpool Mercury* reported that, at a grand dinner at the Town-Hall, "[t]he tables were profusely supplied with the most substantial products of English Agriculture, as with every delicacy of the season, and the wines were excellent and abundant." This went with the patriotic imagery: a transparent represented Britannia leaning on her shield and holding the Trident with symbols of Commerce; another

[76] On the strategies of distinction and generational and social change in wine choice in Britain: Charles Ludington, *The Politics of Wine in Britain: A New Cultural History* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013), chaps 9–11.
[77] Keisuke Masaki, 'The Development of Provincial Toryism in the British Urban Context, c.1815-1832' (Edinburgh, 2016), p. 111.
[78] James Boswell, *Boswell, the Great Biographer, 1789-1795*, ed. by Marlies K. Danziger, The Yale Editions of the Private Papers of James Boswell (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1989), pp. 206, 265.
[79] *General Evening Post*, 8-10 July 1790; *Norfolk Chronicle*, 9 July 1791; Brims, p. 80; *Caledonian Mercury*, 11 July 1791.
[80] *Sherwin's Political Register*, 13 June 1818, p.68; *Black Dwarf*, 13 November 1822.
[81] Ralph Rylance, *The Epicure's Almanack Eating and Drinking in Regency London: The Original 1815 Guidebook*, ed. by Janet Ing Freeman (London: The British Library, 2012).

transparent showed a figure of Fame sitting on the Globe and displaying the colours of the anti-Napoleonic coalition. Compare this with a more modest dinner, a ball given at Manchester to celebrate the liberation of Henry Hunt from Ilchester Gaol in 1822: "the inhabitants regaled themselves after the old English fashion with roasted beef and mutton and good home-brewed ale".[82] The opposition between wine and beer, which had been political in the late seventeenth century, was socio-economic by the early nineteenth century.[83] Both the Liverpool loyalists and the Manchester radicals claimed their food was patriotic and traditional. Food, then, appeared as badge of patriotism. Since newspaper sources are mostly silent on food served at political dinners, it seems that celebrations of the French Revolution did not comprise French food, but the same kind of fare found at other dinners.

Toasting, allegiance, and violence

The toasts determined much of the ideological content of the meetings, lists published in the press expressing the principles of the diners. For that reason, stewards carefully negotiated toasts in advance for fear some guests refused to drink any. Toasts also mattered in the regulation of the evening, giving it structure and rhythm. They promoted order by tempering the alcohol intake, the toastmaster making sure that all guests drank the same amount at each toast. Toasts, often formulated in the optative mode starting with "May…", followed a rather codified syntax, which, nevertheless, was sufficiently fluid to allow for individual expression, and balance group cohesiveness with individual expression.[84]

Toasts were indexes to political allegiance, because no man would drink a toast he dissented with. James Epstein's remark on the 1830s was also true of the eighteenth century: "[t]he toasts to which one was willing to stand were crucial indicators of political allegiance, symbols of dissidence or loyalty".[85] The first toast, expressing allegiance to the supreme authority was essential. While the king's toast was first at all official venues and

[82] "Rejoicings in the Country on the Liberation of Mr Hunt," *The Black Dwarf*, 13 November 1822, p. 706.
[83] Angela McShane Jones, 'Roaring Royalists and Ranting Brewers: The Politicisation of Drink and Drunkenness in Political Broadside Ballads from 1640 to 1689', in *A Pleasing Sinne : Drink and Conviviality in Seventeenth-Century England.*, ed. by Adam Smyth, Studies in Renaissance Literature, 14 (Cambridge: D.S. Brewer, 2004), pp. 69–87.
[84] Rémy Duthille, 'Toasting and the Diffusion of Radical Ideas, 1780-1832', in *Radical Voices, Radical Ways : Articulating and Disseminating Radicalism in Seventeenth- and Eighteenth-Century Britain*, ed. by Laurent Curelly and Nigel Smith, Seventeenth- and Eighteenth-Century Studies, 1 (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2016), pp. 170–89.
[85] James Epstein, 'Radical Dining, Toasting and Symbolic Expression', p. 275.

in Tory and Pitt Club dinners, many reformers drank "The People" before "The King", or used qualifications to explain their position, as the celebrants of Sir Francis Burdett's electoral victory did in 1828:

> "The People, the only source of legitimate power."
>
> "The King – may he always recollect his declaration, that he holds the Crown in trust for the benefit of the People."[86]

Toasts strengthened the cohesiveness of the group, bonding it around common heroes and values; toast lists constructed genealogies of valiant ancestors and developed perspectives of future conquests, in radical as well as in Chartist dinners.[87] It is easy to see those toasts as flamboyantly futile. John Mee has evinced scepticism about the efficacy of toasting and individual revolt in a decade, the 1790s, when group disciplines weighed strongly on individuals.[88] But toasts certainly had a cathartic function, serving as outlets for violence, mediating the frustration born from the gap between belligerence and political impotence or the need of prudence and restraint.[89] Toasting was certainly a moment for emotional release, and there is evidence of toasting matches and games, involving competition and emulation in radical circles, especially the Spenceans, who vied for the most outrageous toasts.[90]

Accounts of public dinners with toast lists began to be published in the English press on the occasion of the French Revolution dinners of 1790; this comes rather late in the context of the British Atlantic world. Groups of political outliers and opponents to the Crown had started publishing toast lists as propaganda in the mid-1750s in Ireland and during the Stamp Act crisis in the mid-1760s in the American colonies.[91] Publication enabled clubs and societies to advertise their activities, which was particularly useful in contexts of strong partisan competition or in period of repression. For instance, the publication of announcements of reformist dinners in Scotland in 1792 gave visibility to the movement and could boost the morale of isolated individuals.

Newspaper accounts gave a consensual image of dinners, usually silencing any incident or sign of disunion. Toasts, however, could provoke, rather than restrain,

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[86] "PURITY OF ELECTION. – TRIUMPH OF WESTMINSTER." *Morning Chronicle*, 27 May 1828.
[87] Matthew Roberts, *Chartism, Commemoration and the Cult of the Radical Hero*, chap. 1 especially.
[88] Jon Mee, 'The Lamp-Iron in Parliament Street', in *Political Drinking in Britain, Ireland and Northern Europe, 1700-1850*, ed. by Rémy Duthille and Martyn J. Powell, forthcoming.
[89] Matthew Roberts, *Chartism, Commemoration and the Cult of the Radical Hero*, p. 67.
[90] McCalman, *Radical Underworld*, pp. 121–22.
[91] Powell; Duthille, 'Political Toasting in the Age of Revolutions: Britain, America and France, 1765-1800'.

violence.[92] Ideological and personal differences, disagreements over strategy or precedence could disrupt dinners. The necessity of drinking all the toasts meant that most of the time, malcontents would stay away for fear of having to drink toasts they objected to, as was the case when Castlereagh and other pro-Catholic Tories stayed away from dinners to avoid drinking "Protestant Ascendancy".

French revolutionary songs and English songs from the 1790s

The songs sung at dinners were usually the classic patriotic triad *God Save the King* (1744), *Rule Britannia* (1740) and *Britons Strike Home* (1695).[93] They expressed different shades of patriotism. *God Save the King/Queen*, performed at Drury Lane after the Young Pretender's defeat in 1745, expressed loyalty to the monarch. James Thompson and Thomas Arne's *Rule Britannia* extolled Britain's naval supremacy, imperialism and commercial expansion rather than king and monarchy.[94] *Britons Strike Home*, composed by Henry Purcell shortly before his death, fell into disuse by the mid-twentieth century, but by the early nineteenth century it had acquired radical overtones due to the agency given to the people in the lyrics. Besides those traditional patriotic songs, radical, and later, Chartist songs could fall into two categories: those composed for the occasion of a dinner, and those drawn from a corpus of classic songs dating back to the French Revolution. This last category is important: of the songs composed in the 1790s that were still sung two or three decades later, the majority were of English, not French, origin.

There is evidence that radicals played and sang French revolutionary songs, as the section on *Ça ira* will illustrate. At the dinner at White's given on 18 November 1792, Sir Robert Smith and Lord Edward Fitzgerald gave the toast: "May the patriotic airs of the German Legion (Ca ira, the Carmagnole, Marseillaise March, etc.) soon become the favourite music of every army, and may the soldier and the citizen join in the chorus."[95] British radicals, however, did not try to impose French songs in the 1790s. The *Marseillaise* had a special status; it was adapted to many libertarian causes in the mid-nineteenth

[92] Duthille, 'Toasting and the Diffusion of Radical Ideas, 1780-1832'; Ian Newman, 'The Anti-Social Convivialist'.
[93] Martha Vandrei, '"Britons, Strike Home": Politics, Patriotism and Popular Song in British Culture, c.1695–1900', *Historical Research*, 87.238 (2014), 679–702 (pp. 680–82) <https://doi.org/10.1111/1468-2281.12069> especially on the origins of the three anthems; Kate Horgan, *The Politics of Songs in Eighteenth-Century Britain, 1723-1795*, Poetry and Song in the Age of Revolution, 4 (London; Brookfield, VT: Pickering & Chatto, 2014).
[94] Colley, *Britons*, p. 11.
[95] Thomas Moore, *Memoirs of Lord Edward Fitzgerald* (Paris, 1835), p. 75.

century.[96] But in general, because there was no radical *Marseillaise* in nineteenth-century Britain, radicals preferred to subvert established English tunes, especially *God Save the King*, which was becoming the unofficial national anthem in the 1790s.[97] The reasons for such an appropriation were not just tactical – due to the lack of an iconic radical song, or meant to forestall loyalist criticism of the aping of French forms – but had to do with the "layers of associative meanings" that connected a tune with the historical past of England. Songs were part of what Kate Bowan and Paul Pickering called "the affective register of political life".[98] Setting words expressing hope in popular sovereignty and the values of liberty, equality and fraternity to familiar tunes was a way of spreading these values into everyday life and the common attitudes of the people. This made sense, moreover, to adopt traditional English tunes, given that radicals claimed their values, far from being a novelty imported from France, were eternal and bound to the English constitutional past. Thomas Spence wrote many such songs, advocating his egalitarian land plan in songs set to traditional English tunes.[99] The many parodies of the national anthem do not evince hostility or anti-monarchism, but often outlined versions of an ideal monarchy.[100] In the 1790s, loyalists also wrote their own versions of *God Save the King*, whose text they clearly did not consider as untouchable, for instance to denounce Paine.[101]

Radical songsters disseminated both ephemeral and more enduring songs born in the 1790s, for instance those published by Thomas Spence and Daniel Isaac Eaton. To give just one example, *God Save the Rights of Man*, published by Eaton in 1794, was in first position in the radical collection *The Wreath of Freedom, or Patriot's Song Book. Being a*

[96] Bowan and Paul A. Pickering, chap. 1.
[97] Michael Scrivener, 'Reading the English Political Songs of the 1790s', in *United Islands? : The Languages of Resistance*, ed. by John Monfries Kirk, Andrew Noble, and Michael Brown, Poetry and Song in the Age of Revolution, 1 (London: Pickering & Chatto, 2012), pp. 35–50 (p. 36).
[98] Bowan and Paul A. Pickering, pp. 17, 19.
[99] Paul A Pickering, '"An Evening of Pleasure Rather Than Business": Songs, Subversion, and Radical Sub-Culture in the 1790s', *Journal for the Study of British Cultures*, 12.2 (2005), 115–26; Joan C. Beal, 'Why Should the Landlords Have the Best Songs? Thomas Spence and the Subversion of Popular Song', in *United Islands? : The Languages of Resistance*, ed. by Michael Brown, John Kirk, and Andrew Noble, Poetry and Song in the Age of Revolution, 1 (London: Pickering & Chatto, 2012), pp. 51–62; Scrivener; Michael T Davis, '"Meet and Sing, and Your Chains Will Drop Off Like Burnt Thread": The Political Songs of Thomas Spence', in *Thomas Spence: The Poor Man's Revolutionary*, ed. by Alastair Bonnett and Keith Armstrong (London: Breviary Stuff Publications, 2014), pp. 109–25.
[100] P. A. Pickering, '"Confound their politics": the political uses of "God save the king-queen"', in P. Watt, D. B. Scott, and P. Spedding (eds), *Cheap Print and Popular Song in the Nineteenth Century: A Cultural History of the Songster* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2017), pp. 112–37.
[101] See e.g. "A new Loyal Song, for 1793, being the 104th Year of BRITON's LIBERTY", with adapted lyrics, and four "loyal toasts" in: *God Save the King, a New Loyal Song, for 1793, Being the 104th Year of Briton's Liberty. = God Save the Queen. A New Loyal Song, for 1793, Being the 104th Year of Britons Liberty* ([London], 1793).

Collection of Songs in Favour of Public Liberty (1820).[102] Songs composed in the 1790s formed the basis of the stable corpus of radical/oppositional songs in the early nineteenth century. The Bastille Day dinners of 1790-1792 were successful in bequeathing classics to be sung for several decades. Three songs in particular stand out: *The Day-Star of Liberty*; *Unfold, Father Time*, and *Fall, Tyrants, Fall*.

Two songs composed by William Roscoe, for Bastille Day in 1790 and 1791 respectively, became highly successful. *Unfold, Father Time! Thy Long Records Unfold*,[103] sung on 14 July 1790, immediately became a staple of radical meetings. It was performed on 5 November 1792 at the Revolution Society's dinner[104] and at the second "trial by jury dinner" in 1796.[105] On those occasions, the lyrics were published as slip songs, for the guests to have them in advance of the dinner and to further disseminate the text. This song, and others from the 1790s, may not have been sung continuously, but they were available for reuse and resurfaced during political crises. On 3 December 1831, the *Leicester Chronicle* published an adaptation, "England Be Free. [An old song, adapted by a few alterations to the present time.]", which transferred the praise of the Fall of the Bastille to the 1830 French Revolution. The new song suggested that the triumph of liberty was still in the future for Britain: "And Reason and Virtue have conquered at last", in the original, becomes "And reason and virtue will triumph at last". The 1831 song enjoins Britain to "break off our chains", where the 1790 version had "bids millions rejoice". The last stanza is different, urging Reform on the basis of "Magna Charta our motto – *Six Acts* our disdains" and ending with a wish the king may proclaim the emancipating decree of Reform. Under the title "The Standard of Freedom", another adaptation was published in the crucial period of May 1832 before the vote of the Reform Bill.[106] Again, the song resurfaced among the Chartists in March 1848, at the time of the French Republic.[107] The song, then, became a paean to liberty that kept a thematic link to the 1789 revolution but could be adapted to express hopes from subsequent French revolutions. This was a logical

[102] *The Wreath of Freedom, or Patriot's Song Book. Being a Collection of Songs in Favour of Public Liberty* (Newcastle-upon-Tyne: Printed and sold by J. Marshall, in the Old Flesh-Market, 1820).
[103] Henry Roscoe, *The Life of William Roscoe*, 2 vols (London, 1833), I, pp. 106–7.
[104] "Trial by Jury", *Telegraph*, 7 November 1796, p. 3-4; William Roscoe, *A New Song. Sung by Mr. Dignum. At the Anniversary of the Revolution of 1688, Held at the London Tavern, Nov. 1792. Tune, 'The Tear That Bedews Sensibility's Shrine.'* (London: Printed and sold by R. Dawes, 1792).
[105] William Roscoe, *Unfold, Father Time. Sung at the Crown and Anchor, Nov. 5, 1796* ([London]: s.n, 1796).
[106] *Reformers' Gazette*, 28 May 1832, vol. 2, p.407.
[107] *Northern Star*, 25 March 1848.

step to take because 1830 and 1848 were widely seen as pursuing the conquests of the first French Revolution.

Roscoe's other Bastille Day song, written for the 14th of July 1791, was *The Day-Star of Liberty*, starting with: "O'er the vine-cover'd hills".[108] The song presented the French Revolution as the star of hope shining above mankind; the favourite revolutionary metaphor of light and darkness was spun with a contest ending in the triumph of light and the extension of "equal rights, equal laws" worldwide. It was sung on later Bastille Day dinners, in 1792 at the Shakespeare Tavern in London, and by the Sheffield Society for Constitutional Information.[109] It remained popular in the 1790s,[110] enough so for a loyalist appropriation of the tune for the glorification of British naval victories in 1800.[111] The song seemed to have lost popularity after 1800; it becomes more difficult to trace after that date.

More often performed was *The Trumpet of Liberty*, first published in the *Norfolk Chronicle* on 16 July 1791.[112] It exemplifies the continuous performance of a song that emerged in the context of the French Revolution, and was still sung by reformers in the early and mid-nineteenth century. It predicts the triumph of liberty and possess a forceful chorus that caused emotional release:

The trumpet of Liberty sounds through the world,
And the universe starts at the sound;
Her standard Philosophy's hand has unfurl'd,
And the nations are thronging around.
CHORUS – Fall, tyrants, fall! fall! Fall!
These are the days of liberty!
Fall, tyrants, fall![113]

The song prophesies the downfall of despotism "[f]rom the East to the West". The trumpet of liberty frees slaves of all races and the song calls for Britons to attend the downfall of "priestcraft" and to share in freedom's triumph as Britons, and thus to "contend for the

[108] William Roscoe, *The Poetical Works of William Roscoe; Published in Honour of the Centenary of His Birthday. March VIII., MDCCCLIII* (Liverpool: H. Young, 1853), p. 76.
[109] *Manchester Herald*, 21 July, 28 July 1792.
[110] It was republished in *The Philanthropist*, edited by D.I. Eaton, no. 43, 25 January 1796.
[111] Charles Henry Wilson, *The Myrtle and the Vine; or, Complete Vocal Library ...With an Essay on Singing and Song Writing: To Which Are Added, Biographical Anecdotes of the Most Celebrated Song Writers* (London: Printed for West and Hughes, 1800), pp. 13–14. The original song was however reprinted p.131-132.
[112] John Taylor, *Hymns and Miscellaneous Poems. Edited, with a Memoir, by His Son E. Taylor* ([London]: Privately printed, 1863), p. 151.
[113] The song is reproduced on the Romantic Circles website: https://romantic-circles.org/editions/warpoetry/1794/1794_20.html, consulted on 29 June 2021.

rights of mankind". The song was the work of the hymn-writer John Taylor (1750–1826). According to the biographer of the Whig MP Coke of Norfolk, the song was first sung at Holkham when Coke gave a lavish festival for the centenary of the Glorious Revolution.[114] The song, then, preceded the French Revolution and was not composed for it, but in the 1790s, the radicals who sang it made the application. The song was sung on 14 July 1791 in Norwich and was published on that occasion.[115] The song became associated to the French Revolution, not the revolution of 1688, if only through its uplifting imagery and appeal to universal liberty. Daniel Isaac Eaton republished it as "The Tyrants' Downfal. A New Song."[116] It was also a classic of the "trial by jury" dinners. Richard Taylor, the composer's son, performed it at the Crown and Anchor in 1796 at the second anniversary of the acquittals, and it was published as a sheet on this occasion, for guests to have a copy for the dinner. The song was sung again in 1837 and 1838 at least.[117] Meanwhile, it remained a classic for the Norwich Whigs; it could be heard at major dinners, such as the widely reported Fox dinner held in January 1820.[118] It was anthologized in the *Wreath of Freedom or Patriot's Song Book* (1820). Later, it was harnessed to libertarian causes: the friends of Poland sung it at a dinner in 1831.[119] Chartist crowds of men and women sang it at the first Chartist Convention in the Spring of 1839, including in moments of tension when they faced the police. Newspaper reports, including from the Chartist *Northern Liberator*, called the song "the Chartist anthem".[120]

Even supposing that radicals and Chartists had forgotten the connection between the song and the French Revolution of 1789, loyalists were there to remind them of it. A parody from 1820, *Bawl, blockheads, bawl*, mocked Paine and his devotees, tarring reformers and radicals with the broad brush of Montagnard republicanism:

Burdett, Hunt, and Cobbett in transient sway,
May then be exalted on high:
So Robespiere, Danton, and Marat, had their day,

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[114] A. M. W. Stirling, *Coke of Norfolk and His Friends*, 2 vols (London; New York: Lane, 1912), II, p. 228.
[115] *Norfolk Chronicle*, 16 July 1791.
[116] Daniel Isaac Eaton, *Politics for the People, or, A Salmagundy for Swine*, 2 vols (London: Printed for D.I. Eaton, 1793), II, p. 124.
[117] *The Trumpet of Liberty. Sung at the Crown and Anchor, Nov. 5, 1796* ([London]: s.n., 1796); *London Dispatch and People's Political and Social Reformer*, 12 November 1837, 11 November 1838.
[118] *Times*, 26 January 1820; *Morning Chronicle*, 27 January 1820.
[119] "Revolution in Poland", *Times*, 10 March 1831, p. 5.
[120] Quotation from "Serious Riots at Birmingham", *The Champion*, 7 July 1839, p. 5, and "The Chartists", *Freeman's Journal*, 8 July 1839, p. 1; "Disturbances at Birmingham", *Northern Liberator*, 13 July 1839, p.3. See also "National Convention", *Freeman's Journal*, 6 July 1839, p.4; *Northern Star*, 13 July 1839; 26 March 1846.

Though now "dark and unlovely they lie."

Bawl, &c.[121]

It is interesting to see a conservative resurrecting a French revolutionary reference which was implicit in radical renditions. The parody was composed in 1820, a particularly divisive period following the Peterloo Massacre, marked by the Queen Caroline affair and riots that drove Britain on the brink of revolution.[122] The parody invoked 1793 and the Terror, not 1791 and constitutional monarchy, the song's original context. But by 1820, references to the French Revolution threatened terror and popular tyranny; the former phase of parliamentary monarchy was forgotten. This crude parody was typical of 1820, but things were changing. As John Dinwiddy showed, Whig and Romantic defences of the French Revolution undermined the Tory position. "By the late 1820s the crude use of the French Revolution as a blanket argument against any kind of change was no longer very compelling."[123]

English songs written for Bastille Day dinners were still sung. Later events, either foreign revolution or civil unrest in Britain, reactivated their revolutionary potential, which was exploited by conservatives, radicals and Chartists. Thus, the legacy of the French Revolution lived on. In that sense, English celebrations in the 1790s made a significant contribution to the political sociability of the first half of the nineteenth century.

English loyalists understood that singing was a powerful tool for enlisting the passions; it worked better on the common people than rational arguments found in pamphlets. The example of the French peasant armies rushing to battle while singing alerted them to the potential of singing for whipping up and keeping up spirits. A correspondent of the loyalist activist John Reeves complained that "the lower class of people" "are incapable of reading or understanding any good or serious address to set them right, but through the medium of Vulgar ballads, surely much instruction might be conveyed and much patriotic spirit awakened, witness *Ça Ira"*.[124] Loyalist writers were aware of the power of song, hence their attempts to drive radical songsters from the market and achieve hegemony in both print and taverns. They had to reckon with the efficacy of French songs, however much they might hate them. *The Patriotic Songster*, a collection of Protestant, Orangist songs published in Ulster in 1815, is a case in point. The preface

[121] Edward Giffard, *Poems, Political and Miscellaneous* (London, 1843), pp. 93–94 quotation p.94.
[122] Chase, *1820*.
[123] Dinwiddy, 'English Radicals and the French Revolution, 1800-1850', p. 212.
[124] Add. MS 16920, fo. 99 r, quoted in Mark Philp, *Reforming Ideas in Britain: Politics and Language in the Shadow of the French Revolution, 1789-1815* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013), p. 66.

highlighted the influence of songs on armies, quoting *Ça ira* during the French Revolution, and Lilliburlero goading Protestants in 1688.[125] While pamphlets distributed by Reeves's association are a familiar example of counter-revolutionary propaganda, songs and toasts were also potent channels.

Singing in defiance of authority: *Ça ira* and the potential of revolutionary symbolism

There remains to explain the singing of French revolutionary songs in dinners long after the 1790s, and especially the juxtaposition of such songs with classics of British patriotism like *God Save the King*. The example of *Ça ira* tells of the force of revolutionary songs. Radicals did not use it simply to signal ideological proclivities: even if they agreed on the goodness of the Revolution, they disagreed on its interpretation, for instance on economic egalitarianism. Rather, singing *Ça ira* meant adopting a posture of defiance in order to frighten the enemy. This was the case from 1793. During the 1848 revolution, *Ça ira* and the *Carmagnole* still retained their terrorizing power in the eyes of conservatives.[126] Chapters 1 and 3 have already evoked the earlier, pre-1793, British reception of *Ça ira*. It became popular during the preparations of the Federation in the summer of 1790; theatre managers included the song in the librettos of spectacles inspired by the Revolution. Helen Maria Williams wrote about innocently singing and dancing to that tune in 1791, whereas Watt and Cooper's evocation of an immense crowd in the spring of 1792 gave the song a sublime, frightening, grandeur. By 1793 the song had become firmly associated with the Parisian mob: a symbol of legal and economic egalitarianism for radicals, it was a harbinger of terror and massacre for loyalists. *Ça ira* became a tag meaning revolution and bloodshed for the loyalists, and as such was used in graphic caricature (most famously in Gillray's *A Democrat, -or- Reason & Philosophy*,[127] a satire on Fox as a sans-culotte) and brought up as evidence of French republicanism in trials. *Ça ira* had a specific association with mob action, the line "Les aristocrates à la lanterne" promising social war. It erupted from the dregs of the lower orders. On the contrary, the *Marseillaise* was tied to the French state and

[125] *The Patriotic Songster: Containing a Choice Collection of the Most Admired Loyal, Patriotic, and Constitutional Songs* (Strabane: Joseph Alexander, 1815), p. iv.
[126] Bensimon, 'L'Écho de la Révolution française dans la Grande-Bretagne du XIXe siècle (1815-1870)', p. 232.
[127] BM 8310, George, *Catalogue*, vol.7, p.16. See also Cruikshank's *A Right Honourable alias A Sans Culotte* (BM 8142, 20 December 1792), representing Fox cleft in two by the English Channel, saying "Ca Ira, Ca Ira, Ca Ira" on the left-hand, French side, and "God Save Great George Our King" on his right-hand side.

its military glory (especially after Napoleon), whereas some in the French élites considered *Ça ira* and the Carmagnole as "vulgar songs unfit for proper soldiers".[128]

From 1793 on, singing *Ça ira* was the ultimate sacrilege. As the nineteenth century wore on, the *Marseillaise*, heard in 1830 and 1848, lost its associations with destructive revolution, and many liberals, in both France and Britain, could cherish the *Marseillaise* and its lofty ideals while rejecting *Ça ira* as figuring the darkest, irredeemable part of the Revolution. From 1815, despite some tolerance from 1830 to 1835, the restored French monarchy and the July Monarchy banned the *Marseillaise* and other revolutionary songs. The ban lent them a subversive, provocative dimension.[129] The British, and especially radicals, knew about the French ban. On 10 October 1840, for instance, the *Northern Star* reported an incident at the Paris Opera where "[t]he revolutionary party" called for the *Marseillaise* before being rounded up by the police. British radicals must have felt the liberty of singing revolutionary songs all the more precious, and they decided to use it.

In the 1790s, adoption of the song meant adhesion to the French Revolution, and *Ça ira* had rich intermedial associations, in print, visual caricature, and various objects. Members of the London Corresponding Society would sing, or play, *Ça ira* at sociable evenings. There were no fixed lyrics (even in French, the tune evolved from 1790 to a bloodier version in 1793); translating the title was almost impossible, so it is probable that a band played the song, with the people joining in to sing the chorus. This was the case for instance on 2 May 1794, when some 300 persons celebrated the society's second anniversary at the Crown and Anchor. "During the dinner, and between the toasts, a numerous band played the popular tunes *Ca Ira*, the *Carmagnol*, the *Marsellois* March, the Democrat, and a new piece of music, called the "FREE CONSTITUTION.""[130] The dinner was replete with French revolutionary phraseology (a toast to Lord Stanhope was corrected to Citizen Stanhope). John Horne Tooke was known for his renditions of *Ça ira* at dinners,

[128] Laura Mason, *Singing the French Revolution: Popular Culture and Politics, 1787-1799* (Ithaca, NY; London: Cornell University Press, 1996), p. 94.
[129] Michel Vovelle, 'La Marseillaise: War or Peace', in *Realms of Memory: The Construction of the French Past*, ed. by Pierre Nora and Lawrence D. Kritzman, trans. by Arthur Goldhammer, European Perspectives, 3 vols (New York: Columbia University Press, 1996), III, 29–74; Rémi Dalisson, *Célébrer la nation: les fêtes nationales en France de 1789 à nos jours* (Paris: Nouveau Monde, 2009); Philippe Darriulat, *La Muse du peuple: chansons politiques et sociales en France 1815-1871*, Histoire (Rennes: Presses universitaires de Rennes, 2010).
[130] *The Trial of Thomas Hardy for High Treason, at the Sessions House in the Old Bailey, on Tuesday the Twenty-Eighth, Wednesday the Twenty-Ninth, Thursday the Thirtieth, Friday the Thirty-First of October; and on Saturday the First, Monday the Third, Tuesday the Fourth, and Wednesday the Fifth of November, 1794. ... Taken in Short-Hand, by Joseph Gurney*, 4 vols (London: sold by Martha Gurney, Bookseller, Holborn Hill, 1794), II, p. 119.

probably on private occasions rather than on LCS business.[131] The expression *Ça ira* entered LCS vocabulary, while Scottish societies also adopted French forms and styles. A first convention of delegates held in December 1793 became notorious for the use of words like "citizen", "sections", "honours of the sitting", etc. inspired from the French; "ça ira" was part of the repertoire.[132] The government took a stern view, indicting Thomas Muir for a seal bearing the words "Ca ira" found on his person.[133] He had also allegedly given money to an organist to play the tune. "All these circumstances go to prove incontestibly," the prosecution concluded, "that France and French principles were continually in his view, and that aimed at the destruction of the present government".[134]

Throughout the early nineteenth century, despite the best efforts of loyalists, *Ça ira* was part of the repertoire of radicals, who wielded it in acts of defiance against the ruling oligarchy. Here, sociability must be envisioned in broad terms, to encompass dinners but also street demonstrations and mass meetings like the ill-fated one of Peterloo. James Epstein argued that English radicals preferably used the "constitutionalist idiom", a set of references and practices drawn from English constitutional history, rather than the French revolutionary idiom.[135] However, French revolutionary symbols still served a function – they were a thermostat, or perhaps a barostat, turning heat and pressure up or down on the authorities. Here, Sophie Wahnich's reading is useful, showing that French revolutionary festivals regulated popular emotions, spurring the people of Paris into action or consoling them in hard times.[136] In Britain, *Ça ira* raised the heat, kept up morale, and projected aggression and conflict onto the enemies.

The provocative nature of *Ça ira*, due to its association with plebeian violence in 1793, turned it into a weapon. In 1802, Sir Francis Burdett's victory at the key popular constituency of Westminster, was a landmark. On the last day of the poll, 30 July 1802, he was chaired through the streets of Middlesex in a massive procession singing *Ça ira* and other songs on the street.[137] The chairing of the candidate was one of the few outlets left

[131] Bewley and Bewley, p. 123.
[132] National Records of Scotland, JC 26/280; Brims, p. 506.
[133] Meikle, p. 133.
[134] Thomas Muir, *An Account of the Trial of Thomas Muir: Younger of Huntershill, before the High Court of Justiciary, at Edinburgh. On the 30th and 31st Days of August, 1793, for Seditious Practices* (Edinburgh: printed for William Creech; and sold by T. Cadell, London. - Also by Dunlop and Wilson, J. Duncan, Brash and Reid, Glasgow. - Angus and Son, and A. Brown, Aberdeen, 1793), p. 98.
[135] James Epstein, 'The Constitutionalist Idiom', in *Radical Expression: Political Language, Ritual, and Symbol in England, 1790-1850* (Oxford; New York: Oxford University Press, 1994), pp. 3–28.
[136] Sophie Wahnich, 'Réfléchir les rituels pendant la Révolution française', *ethnographiques.org*, 33, 2016 <http://www.ethnographiques.org/2016/Wahnich> [accessed 9 September 2021].
[137] Bowan and Paul A. Pickering, p. 45.

open for political expression on the street following loyalist repression in the 1790s; chairings were special occasions when a degree of mayhem, disorder on the street was accepted as an inevitable display of boisterous English liberty (as can be seen, memorably, on the last plate of Hogarth's *Four Stages of an Election*). The procession featured revolutionary symbols, including a "No Bastille" poster and the (supposed) keys of the Bastille. "A band of music [...] played , "Ca Ira", "Rule Britannia", "The Marsellois Hymn, &c."[138] For radicals, the alternation of French revolutionary and British patriotic tunes was no contradiction, because their patriotism appealed to the English liberty and to cosmopolitan solidarity; for them, the values of the French Revolution did not contradict, but complement, loyalty to king and constitution, as they understood it. The loyalists were predictably aghast: "But who can hear, without horror, that this procession was led to the Palace of the Sovereign, before the gates of which a band of music was made to play the gallic revolutionary air – Ca ira! –".[139] What was at stake was the perennial problem of oppositional expression in the public space.

During the Napoleonic wars and in their aftermath, the conservative majority had put such stigma on revolutionary symbols that radicals were wary of using them; when they did, they could disclaim their French origins. Many radicals were ambivalent about French symbols, particularly in times of crisis, such as the late 1810s, which culminated with the massacre of Peterloo. Consider the conduct of Henry Hunt, the star radical orator of the day, at a meeting in Smithfield on 21 July 1819.[140] The radicals bore a red, white and green flag representing the union of England, Scotland, and Ireland. "Their enemies," Hunt declared, "would say it was the bloody tricoloured flag of the French revolution, it was no such thing, nor was it intended to convey any such meaning." As for the words on the flag, "Liberty or Death", Hunt would not say it was the motto of the Jacobin club. Hunt may have been more forthright at the meeting, but the writers of the report felt that prudence was necessary. However, revolutionary symbolism was in evidence at Peterloo, even if the French origins were not always acknowledged. Caps of liberty were ubiquitous: despite their impeccably classic origins, they were, as Robert Poole noted, "a provocative symbol, in terms of shock value the Regency equivalent of the hammer and sickle".[141] Women were

[138] *Caledonian Mercury*, 2 August 1802.
[139] John Bowles, *Thoughts on the Late General Election, as Demonstrative of the Progress of Jacobinism*, 2nd ed. (London: F. and C. Rivington, 1802), p. 45.
[140] *A Report of the Meeting Held in Smithfield, on Wednesday July 21, 1819, To Consider of the Best Means of Recovering Our Lost Rights : H. Hunt, Esq. in the Chair* (London: Printed and published by J. Onwhyn, 1819), p. 6.
[141] Robert Poole, p. 208.

conspicuous, and, tragically, became targets for the soldiers, because of their decision to dress in white, reminiscent of "the vestal virgins of ancient Rome but also of the women in white associated with the Festivals of Reason organized in revolutionary France in the mid-1790s."[142]

Like the cap of liberty, *Ça ira* was a revolutionary object whose meaning was largely indeterminate but whose use lay in its pragmatic dimension of defiant self-assertion, taunting and intimidation. "The decision to display the cap of liberty," James Epstein wrote, "was clearly a calculated gesture, making claims on the control of public space, asserting the right of free expression and assembly, testing the repressive resolve of government and local authority, and signifying more ambiguously revolutionary intent."[143] The same went for *Ça ira*. The song was associated with mob rule, positioning the group that sang it as unrespectable. It was therefore a poor choice when it came to highlighting the respectability of the unarmed people (as opposed to the armed mob). This is probably why the bands did not play *Ça ira* or the *Marseillaise* at Peterloo but, as Epstein pointed out, ironically reappropriated *God Save the King*, reclaiming patriotism and respectability for their own cause.[144] But radicals did sing *Ça ira* at dinners at the time of Peterloo, for instance when celebrating Hunt's triumphal entry into London following his release from gaol. On that grand occasion (13 September 1819), "the band played Ruled Britannia and Ca ira" and the French song was repeated after a crucial toast to radical reform: "The Universal Suffrage, Annual Parliaments, and Vote by Ballot – the undoubted right of every Briton."[145] It may well be that the organizers of the St Peter's Fields meeting refrained from playing French revolutionary songs, because they would be too provocative and would help loyalists characterize the crowd as a lawless mob (which they did anyway). Singing those songs in dinners sent a more muffled threat, since the dinner was semi-public, inside the Crown and Anchor tavern yet in communication with a large crowd outside the building.

This short analysis of *Ça ira* shows that, after a period of intense intermedial exposition in the mid-1790s, when the emblematic tag "ça ira" became omnipresent, the

[142] M. L. Bush, 'The Women at Peterloo: The Impact of Female Reform on the Manchester Meeting of 16 August 1819', *History*, 89.294 (2004), 209–32 (p. 212).
[143] James Epstein, *Radical Expression*, p. 74.
[144] James Epstein, *Radical Expression*, p. 82.
[145] *Peterloo Massacre, Containing a Faithful Narrative of the Events Which Preceded, Accompanied, and Followed the Fatal Sixteenth of August, 1819, on the Area near St. Peter's Church, Manchester, Including the Proceedings Which Took Place at the Inquest at Oldham ... to Which Is Added, an Accurate List of the Names and Places of Residence of Those Who Were Killed, Wounded and Maimed*, 3rd ed. (Manchester, 1819), pp. 92, 94.

song remained notorious, associated with rough popular justice and mob rule. Singing or playing *Ça ira* posed a threat to the authorities; like the cap of liberty, which radicals protested was an English tradition, it enabled radicals to threaten revolution without uttering indictable worlds, to say without saying. Such French revolutionary symbols belong to the vast class of non-verbal communication, together with sartorial and colour symbolism.[146] This suggests that the French Revolution, and the memory of radical dinners of that time, at LCS tavern meetings for instance, lingered on, and still mattered. *Ça ira* is a typical example of a ritual symbol found scattered in many dinners which did not ostensibly celebrate the French Revolution, but in some way referred back to that event and its values. Many examples can be found in the 1810s and 1820s, fewer in the 1830s, probably because the new generation, which had not experienced Pitt's "Terror" and the excitement, found the song less relevant. Memory had given way to history and a more distant engagement with this past. However, the reactivation of fears in February 1848 revealed the song's latent power.

The trial by jury dinners, or sixty years of reformist vagaries

The memory of the French Revolution also took a more systematic, institutional form in the dinners given from 1795 to 1854, to celebrate the acquittal of the twelve men accused of high treason in 1794.[147] The dinners show how, over a period of sixty years, the French Revolution had replaced the Glorious Revolution as focus of interest; how, from 1822, those dinners also expressed support for other revolutions in Europe and South America; and how this long series of dinners changed political orientation, from radical to Whig, while building up continuities and tradition at the same time. The support shown for foreign revolutions announces themes explored in the next chapter, because references to different revolutionary processes often interacted in a single social occasion. The long time-span makes clear the difference between the ebullience of the mid-1790s, with dinners steeped in radical culture and in contact with popular rituals, and, at the end of the period,

[146] Paul A. Pickering, 'Class without Words'.

[147] Thomas Hardy, John Horne Tooke, John Thelwall, John Augustus Bonney, Stewart Kidd, Richard Hodgson, Thomas Holcroft, Jeremiah Joyce, Thomas Wardle, Matthew Moore, John Baxter, and John Richter. On the trials, see *Trials for Treason and Sedition, 1792-1794*, ed. by John Barrell and Jon Mee (London: Pickering & Chatto, 2006); John Barrell, *Imagining the King's Death: Figurative Treason, Fantasies of Regicide, 1793-1796* (Oxford ; New York: Oxford University Press, 2000); Emma Macleod, 'The English and Scottish State Trials of the 1790s Compared', in *Political Trials in an Age of Revolutions: Britain and the North Atlantic, 1793—1848*, ed. by Michael T. Davis, Emma Macleod, and Gordon Pentland, Palgrave Histories of Policing, Punishment and Justice (Cham: Springer International Publishing, 2019), pp. 79–107.

orderly, mid-Victorian dinners. Despite the difference in mood and issues, celebrating acquittals made sense throughout the period, because radicals, and later Chartists, celebrated their own leaders' liberation from prison. From William Hone (1817), James Watson, Arthur Thistlewood, Thomas Preston and John Hooper (1817), Henry Hunt (1819), Mary Ann Carlile (1821) to Feargus O'Connor's release from York Castle in 1841, acquittals spelt victories for liberties (of the press, of conscience, of meeting) which occasioned dinners and resonated with the 1794 acquittals.

The "trial by jury" dinners took place on 5 November, the date of the first and most famous acquittal in 1794, that of Thomas Hardy, the founder of the London Corresponding Society (others followed, Thelwall's closing the rear on 5 December). The prosecution, at the government's behest, had tried to enlarge the scope of "treason" to encompass thoughts and intention, in a desperate attempt to prove the indicted men were "compassing the King's death".[148] Hardy's acquittal by a jury of twelve, especially in the wake of the harsh sentences meted out to Scottish and English reformers a few months before in Edinburgh, was an immense relief. When the verdict of "Not guilty" was announced in mid-afternoon, a gleeful crowd drew Hardy in a coach from the Strand to St James's.[149] Such a popular street parade celebrating both old English liberties and the French Revolution embarrassed the government. A quatrain appeared, summoning Hardy, a shoemaker, not to meddle about politics, in accordance with the Latin tag "Ne sutor ultra crepidam". The *Times* and other papers remained convinced that Hardy and his friends were "acquitted felons", in William Windham's memorable phrase.[150]

The acquittal became a cause of celebration for three generations of radicals, in both literary and sociable forms.[151] Articles in the press make it possible to trace the dinner almost every year except in the late 1790s and 1800s. While the first dinners attracted crowds of 700 to 800 in 1796, attendance dwindled to "upwards of 100 gentlemen" in 1810, stabilized around that number, leaping up on special years – "nearly 300" in 1837, perhaps due to Victoria's accession –, and further declined until only "a few friends" met in 1853,

[148] Barrell, *Imagining the King's Death*; Emma Macleod, 'The English and Scottish State Trials of the 1790s Compared'.
[149] Goodwin, p. 353.
[150] *Times*, 8 November, 11 November 1791; Barrell, *Imagining the King's Death*, p. 364; Marc Baer, *The Rise and Fall of Radical Westminster, 1780-1890*, Studies in modern history (Basingstoke; New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2012), p. 162. On Windham's "acquitted felons" tag, see Steve Poole, *John Thelwall*, p. 3.
[151] See Mary Tighe's unpublished sonnet "Written on the Acquittal of Hardy &c - Dec:r 1794", in Harriet Kramer Linkin, 'Reassessing Mary Tighe as a Lyrical and Political Poet: The Archival Discovery of Tighe's *Verses Transcribed for H.T.* (1805)', *Women's Writing*, 22.2 (2015), 189–208 (p. 203).

at which point they decided to terminate the dinner the next year.[152] The first dinners took place at the Crown and Anchor, famed for its Bastille Day celebrations. This tavern, however, escaped clear political labelling because it also housed John Reeves's anti-levelling association from 1792; it was rather associated with luxury conviviality.[153] Other premises were used: the Golden Lion in West Smithfield (1811-1813, 1831) and, from 1814 or 1815, Radley's Hotel in Bridge Street, Blackfriars.

The first celebration took place on 4 February 1795, three months after Hardy's acquittal. It was a grand affair, and an occasion for Foxite Whigs and radicals to voice their attachment to English (rather than French) freedom and opposition to Pitt. Earl Stanhope was prominent, and his long speech on trial by jury was published as a pamphlet. Toasts boasted of England's free native institutions, especially trial by jury, which had set free Hardy and his companions and checked Pitt's tyranny. Some toasts, against crimping in the army and mercenaries, were traditional; one against virtual representation dated back to the American War.[154] The speeches prolonged Erskine and Gibbs's courtroom defence of Hardy, negating revolutionary intentions and justifying the use of the word "citizen" in LCS meetings and documents as simply synonymous with "inhabitant". Stanhope's speech, and the dinner in general, were steeped in the rhetoric of English rights, Stanhope listing as essential conditions to freedom "free *and equal Representation* of the People" in the Commons, "*Annual Parliaments*", "the *Habeas Corpus Act*", "*Liberty of the Press*", and "*Trial by Jury*." During the dinner, Iolo Morganwg, the Welsh bard, sang a song of triumph celebrating trial by jury, which stressed its British origins, harking back to the ancient Britons.[155] The only sign of cosmopolitan attachment to revolution were the toasts "The cause of liberty throughout the world" and "The brave Kosciusko and the unfortunate Patriots of Poland."

This first celebration prolonged courtroom debates and was itself continued in print in the radical publishing sphere. Daniel Isaac Eaton published Iolo's song in *Pig's Meat*

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[152] *Morning Post*, 7 November 1796; BL, Add Mss 27,817, fo.97; *The London Dispatch and People's Political and Social Reformer*, 12 November 1837; *Manchester Times*, 12 November 1853.
[153] Ian Newman, *The Romantic Tavern*, chap. 2.
[154] *Substance of Earl Stanhope's Speech, Delivered from the Chair, at a Meeting of Citizens, at the Crown and Anchor, on the 4th of February 1795* (London: J. Burks, J. Smith, T. Spence, 1795), p. 3. See also "Celebration of the events of the late trials for high treason", *Chester Chronicle*, 13 February 1795, p. 4.
[155] I. Morganwg, *Trial by Jury, the Grand Palladium of British Liberty. A Song, Sung at the Crown and Anchor, Feb. 4, 1795, in Celebration of the Late Trials for High Treason, and Triumphant Acquittals of Thomas Hardy, John Horne Tooke, and John Thelwall; and in Honour of Their Counsel Thomas Erskine, and Vicar Gibbs.* ([London]: s.n., 1795), reprinted in Elizabeth Edwards, *English-Language Poetry from Wales, 1789-1806*, Wales and the French Revolution (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 2013), pp. 147–48.

and Thomas Spence was one of the publishers of Stanhope's speech, a clear sign of the porosity between high-end Whig dining and the London plebeian public sphere.[156] Another publication, a squib promising that Willy Pitto (William Pitt) "is to be executed in effigy" suggests the interplay, in radical political culture, between élite dining and popular Guy Fawkes rituals.[157]

The 5 November 1796 dinner had an unusually extensive size and press coverage. It was steeped in the intermedial revolutionary culture of the 1790s. This time the French Revolution came to the fore. Among the toasts, "The 80,000 incorrigible Citizens who are friends to Liberty, Humanity, Justice, and Peace; and who are on that account stated by Edmund Burke as being incapable of amendment" poked fun at a disparaging remark on 80,000 irretrievable Jacobins in Burke's *Letters on a Regicide Peace*. The company sang William Roscoe's Bastille Day classics *The Day-Star of Liberty* and *Unfold, Father Time*.[158] Two newspapers commented on the end of the dinner, the moment when guests were free to propose toasts and when conflicts could break out. Gustavus Vasa (the celebrated Black writer Olaudah Equiano, who had published his autobiography in 1789) apparently proposed a toast to the abolition of slavery, at which point General Tarleton, MP for Liverpool, felt obliged to vindicate his parliamentary conduct in favour of the slave trade.[159] This fleeting moment suggests that meanings of "liberty" were more problematic than was proclaimed in the official part of the dinner. Such an incident ties in with abovementioned links between London Rational Dissenters and the slave trade.[160]

5 November dinners rapidly shaped up into a stable arrangement. Nothing is known of the songs. By 1820, the order of the standing toasts (usually drunk "with three times three" and acclamations) had become fixed.[161] The "Sovereignty of the People", followed by a general speech on sovereignty and the kings and ministers' responsibility; "Purity of

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[156] On Iolo Morganwg's bardism, see Elizabeth Edwards and Mary-Ann Constantine, ''Bard of Liberty' : Iolo Morganwg, Wales and Radical Song', in *United Islands? The Languages of Resistance*, ed. by John Kirk, Andrew Noble, and Michael Brown, Poetry and Song in the Age of Revolution, 1 (London: Pickering & Chatto, 2012), pp. 63–76.

[157] *A Full, True, and Particular Account of the Birth, Parentage and Education, Life Character and Behaviour of That Most Notoriously Notified Malefactor Willy Pitto Who Is to Be Executed in Effigy ... on the 5th of November next Being the Anniversary of the Acquittal of Thomas Hardy* (London: Entered at Stationers Hall sold by J. Burks, bookseller, in Crispin Street, and Bishopsgate Church Yard, 1795).

[158] *Telegraph* 7 November1796; *Unfold, Father Time. Sung at the Crown and Anchor, Nov. 5, 1796...* ([London]: s.n., [1796]); Roscoe, *The Poetical Works of William Roscoe*, pp. 75–77.

[159] *Telegraph,* 7 November 1796; "Meeting of the Friends of Freedom", *Chester Chronicle*, 11 November 1796, p. 2.

[160] See above, p. 103-105, and Anthony Page, 'Rational Dissent, Enlightenment, and the Abolition of the British Slave Trade', *The Historical Journal*, 54.03 (2011), 741–72.

[161] This description comes from the 1823 dinner, a typical one described at length in "Constructive Treason – Purity of Trial by Jury", *Morning Chronicle*, 6 November 1823, p. 2.

Trial by Jury", followed by the health of the acquitted of 1794 (the list was more or less complete according to the years). Hardy then spoke first, followed by Thelwall, a more long-winded and polemical orator, and finally Baxter and Richter. The next toasts went to the deceased members of that group, to the LCS, and to "The Memories of Messrs. Muir, Palmer, Skirving, Gerald, and Margarot", drunk "in the most respectful silence". The "Scottish martyrs" who had been condemned to transportation at Botany Bay in 1793 were the object of a cult in Scotland,[162] and the Londoners made of point of honouring them. Toasts in favour of the liberty of the press and parliamentary reform occasioned speeches connecting the struggles of the past with the challenges of the present. Free end-of-dinner toasts often paid homage to foreign revolutionaries and politicians, or voiced specific grievances. Unfortunately, press accounts often leave them out: in 1833, the *Morning Chronicle* justified not reporting "several other toasts of little importance" because there would be a denial the day after.[163] It may well be that the stewards of the meetings wanted to control the publication of the official toasts, providing a list to the press, and disliked coverage of the free toasts at the tail end of the meeting.

In its early decades, the "trial by jury" dinner served as a moment of conviviality for men whose political identities were defined by support for the French Revolution. Many former members of the LCS attended, as Francis Place recalled in his autobiography. He had was present at the first anniversary in 1795 but did not return until 1822. "At this meeting I was recognized by no less than twenty four persons who had been delegates from divisions and members of the General Committee of the Society when I was chairman."[164] Place commented that those men had grown affluent, some even rich, thanks to the moral discipline and taste for education instilled by the LCS. This judgment was typical of his concern for respectability and his belief in society's uplifting virtues.

The "trial by jury" dinners self-consciously constructed a radical tradition. This process, through literature, the press, monuments and sociability, passed on the baton of radical heritage from one generation to the next. The "cult of the radical hero" that Matthew Roberts wrote eloquently about was not the only modality.[165] There was admittedly a degree

[162] Michael T. Davis and Alex Tyrrell, 'Bearding the Tories: The Commemoration of the Scottish Political Martyrs of 1793-94', in *Contested Sites: Commemoration, Memorial and Popular Politics in Nineteenth-Century Britain*, ed. by Paul A. Pickering and Alex Tyrrell, Studies in Labour History (Aldershot, Hants, England ; Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2004), pp. 25–56.
[163] "Trial by jury", *Morning Chronicle*, 6 November 1833, p. 3.
[164] Francis Place, *The Autobiography of Francis Place, 1771-1854*, ed. by Mary Thale (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1972), p. 199.
[165] Matthew Roberts, *Chartism, Commemoration and the Cult of the Radical Hero*.

of heroization, but the appeal of the dinner lay in the presence of the survivors of 1794, who appeared as ordinary Englishmen and victims of Pitt. Hardy, a soft-spoken, harmless old man, was a beloved figure; he was neither a leader nor a very fluent orator. His presence, as well as his companions', mattered. They always attended and gave speeches, even in old age. They were living examples of resistance to tyranny. They performed an important role as models passing on the radical message and reminding past tribulations and future goals. Dinners were also occasions for raising subscriptions for those veterans. At the 1825 dinner, Thelwall declared that Baxter had just died in poverty, and that relief was needed for his widow and family.[166] Thelwall, in 1834, was the last of the men of 1794 to die. In 1833, sensing this could be his last dinner, he reminisced about Hardy: they were "two remnants of the band that were foremost in dangerous times to resist slavery and bondage." He wished for the perpetuation of that spirit through the creation of a "Jury Club of 1794" that would attract young men. From the 1820s on, and especially after Thelwall's death, another surviving member of the LCS, though not one of those tried in 1794, Alexander Galloway (1776–1847), rose to prominence. In 1797, he had become "president of the LCS and a member of the revolutionary United Englishmen"[167] and spent some three years in prison due to the government crackdown of 1798. By the 1820s, he was a large employer and a London councilman. Because he had been a leader in the LCS's struggles and a victim of repression, his narratives kept alive the radical continuity. In 1835, for instance, the *Morning Chronicle* reported that Galloway "adverted at length to the persecutions of the Liberals in 1798."[168] The use of the anachronistic "Liberal" established this link between generations. Galloway's speeches, just as Hardy's and Thelwall's before, educated the young and outsiders in radical history, and remembered fond memories to others.[169]

Long after Thelwall's death, orators liked to remind their audiences that they had personally known the men of 1794,[170] but by the 1850s the trials were in the realm of history and written records rather than living memory. The collective memory, to take up Maurice Halbwachs's notion, that held the group together had vanished. In 1850, "[t]he Chairman said that were there no other reason for upholding that annual commemoration, this would be a valid one, that it was a rallying point for the veteran reformers of the generation that was passing away, and the rising reformers of the generation that was starting into political

[166] *Examiner*, 13 November 1825, p. 727.
[167] Michael T. Davis, 'Galloway, Alexander (1776–1847), radical and engineer', *ODNB*.
[168] "Trial by Jury", *Morning Chronicle*, 6 November 1835, p. 3.
[169] See e.g. Hardy giving "a statement of the Associations of 1780", *Examiner*, 12 November 1809.
[170] *Morning Chronicle*, 6 November 1847, p. 3.

life, and united them in oneness of principle and of feeling."[171] But the younger reformers stayed away, perhaps for lack of exciting libertarian causes. In 1852, the chairman said the trial was "a passage of history" which "a future Macaulay" could write.[172] In the same period, books like *Sketches of Reform and Reformers*, sometimes serialized in the press,[173] told the story of the trials as a page of history for the new generations.

Such statements suggest a smooth, linear progress. Steve Poole, however, has shown that the establishment Whigs in the post-war years had taken over a celebration that was full-blooded and Jacobin before, making the "trial by jury" dinner a prime example of the "fluidity of commemorative practices".[174] As the LCS veterans died off, chairmen increasingly refused to toast universal suffrage; the discontinuity of homages to Cartwright and other signs signalled a centring of the discourse. The dinner applauded the 1832 Reform Bill as a final settlement, not a step to universal suffrage. Such a political evolution was mirrored in the way the dinners dealt with the French Revolution and nineteenth-century revolutions.

The memory of the 1794 trials erased the cult of the Glorious Revolution. In 1795, the French Revolution's impact on Britain, in the form of Pitt's "Terror" and radical resistance, overshadowed the Glorious Revolution and the Gunpowder Plot. Those events, traditionally fêted on 5 November, were still present in the first years of the dinners, but they soon receded from view. In 1796, journalists wondered what the dinner exactly celebrated, because the first toast about "deliverance" could refer to William of Orange in 1688; yet the second one, "The Rights of Man", denoted both the French Declaration of 1789 and Paine's book. One song discarded the seventeenth-century associations of 5 November as "an old story":

> The landing of William is now an old story,
> Though it gave us great George, with a reign full of glory,
> Nor sing we of Jamie, and Gunpowder Treason;
> Our theme is far nobler – the triumph of reason,
> When Patriots encounter'd corruption's wild fury,

[171] "Trial by Jury", *Daily News*, 6 November 1850, p. 2
[172] "Trial by jury. Anniversary celebration of the acquittal of Hardy, Tooke, and Thelwall", *Daily News*, 6 November 1852, p. 2.
[173] Henry B Stanton, *Sketches of Reforms and Reformers of Great Britain and Ireland* (New York; London: J. Wiley, 1849). See an extract on the trials in *Manchester Times*, 15 December 1849.
[174] S. Poole, 'The Politics of "Protest Heritage", 1790–1850', in C. J. Griffin and B. McDonagh (eds), *Remembering Protest in Britain since 1500: Memory, Materiality and the Landscape* (Cham: Springer International Publishing, 2018), pp. 187–213 (pp. 197–200), quotation p.200.

By Virtue sustain'd, and the brave English Jury.[175]

John Thelwall declared that it was highly dubious whether the revolution of 1688 deserved praise, because not long after, "a daring, corrupt, and profligate Administration" was able to overthrow all constitutional safeguards and enslave Britons. He was rehearsing the radical Whig interpretation of the Revolution as a lost occasion, put in classic form by Catharine Macaulay in the 1760s. By 1811, the Glorious Revolution and the foiling of the Gunpower Plot were historical examples, not a legacy to be cherished. In that year, the chairman noted that in 1794, a heroic jury rescued English liberties. In the same way, "a foul conspiracy" had failed under James I, and "under the yet more ignominious reign of a Second James, the people were rescued by the glorious Prince of Orange from the no less fatal conspiracy of their government."[176] What mattered was the LCS's stand against Pitt. There was hardly any mention of the Glorious Revolution at later dinners. When there was, in the early Victorian period, it was to belittle it. In 1840, the chairman mentioned the Gunpowder Plot and the revolution of 1688, only to present "the second centenary of the meeting of the Long Parliament", as a better cause for celebration.[177] The Long Parliament of 1640, he went on, was ancestor of Habeas Corpus, judiciary reform, and ministerial responsibility; it employed the luminaries of the day. The rehabilitation of Cromwell and the Puritans at the time[178] served to further marginalize the Glorious Revolution.

The master narrative was that of the indicted men's heroic suffering leading to the triumph of liberty. The English institution of trial by jury, and the honesty of the twelve jurors, ensured the right verdict, and deterred the government from further tyranny. The songs placed Hardy and the other acquitted men in a British tradition of opposition to arbitrary rule, comparing them to patriotic opponents to the Stuarts, like William Russell. Beheaded as he was following the Rye House Plot against Charles II in 1683, he became a Whig "martyr" in the eighteenth century, and this identification of the LCS with Russell by implication equated Pitt, "the arch-fiend", with an evil Stuart king.[179] In 1839, there was an explicit mention of the radical tradition, on the occasion of "the forty-fifth anniversary (Wilkes's number)".[180] John Wilkes's struggle against general warrants when attacked by the King and his minions for publishing number 45 of the *North Briton* in 1763 was relevant

[175] *Morning Post*, 7 November 1796.
[176] BL, Add Mss 27,817, fo. 99.
[177] "Trial by Jury", *Morning Chronicle*, 6 November 1840, p. 1.
[178] Worden.
[179] "Song, Written by one of the Stewards for the Fifteenth Anniversary of the Acquittal of Messrs. Hardy, Tooke, Thelwall, &c." (1809). BL, Add Mss 27,817, fo. 95.
[180] *Freeman's Journal and Daily Commercial Advertiser*, 8 November 1839.

to the celebration, because Wilkes's cause involved the liberties of the subject and resistance to arbitrary government. The number 45 had acquired totemic status in the 1760s and was still remembered seventy years later.

Despite such homages to the English radical tradition, by the late 1830s, 1790s-style radicals lost their influence and the dinner became the preserve of middle-class reformers. By the 1840s, the Unitarian minister W. J. Fox had become an influential orator, occasionally presiding the dinner. Nonconformity was one of the backbones of English radicalism, and the evolution of the "trial by jury" dinner looked like a resurgence of the old Rational Dissent tradition in the guise of Victorian nonconformity applauding reform at home and political liberation abroad. Fox was the linchpin of South Place Chapel in London, a middle-class reformist community that voiced progressive ideas in politics and religion. Fox is a figure of interest in the history of celebrations of revolutions because he linked several constituencies, as the next chapter will show. He corresponded with an eclectic array of progressives, from Harriet Martineau, a devotee of liberal political economy, to the socialist Louis Blanc. Blanc (1811-1882), who will be mentioned later in this study with reference to French emigrants and the 1848 Revolution, was a major theorist of socialism. In the 1840s he also edited newspapers and published several books, including a history of the French Revolution. He was already known for his ideas on the organisation of labour based on cooperatives.[181] Fox was connected with middle-class internationalists who celebrated the 1848 revolutions, and helped the composer Eliza Flower, who contributed hymns celebrating revolutions.[182] Fox's influence was probably behind the opening of the dinners to international causes.

Though the standing toasts of the dinner were purely British, some pointed toward internationalism ("The cause of liberty all over the world"), and the speeches increasingly mentioned foreign countries. The free toasts following the dinner probably referred to liberty abroad, though this is only a matter of speculation. In 1822, at least, the following toasts were given:

[181] Jean Maitron, "BLANC Louis [théoricien socialiste]", *Maitron*.
[182] On middle-class internationalism and the revolutions of 1848-1849: Margot C. Finn, *After Chartism: Class and Nation in English Radical Politics, 1848-1874*, Past and Present Publications (Cambridge; New York: Cambridge University Press, 1993), pp. 70–71. On South Place and Flower: Bowan and Paul A. Pickering, pp. 231–35.

"The Constitutional Governments of Spain and Portugal, and may the traitorous endeavours of the Despots of the Holy Alliance to foment rebellion against them cause their own oppressed subjects to assume their proper station."

"The People of Greece and Italy, and the cause of Liberty all over the world."

"Lord Cochrane and the rest of our gallant countrymen who are fighting in freedom's cause."[183]

The allusions were to the Spanish revolution effected in 1820 to force the Bourbon king to respect the liberal Constitution of Cádiz. The leader of the mutiny that started off the revolution, Lieutenant Major Rafael del Riego y Nuñez (1785-1823), was very popular among English radicals. Greece's fight for independence against Ottoman rule was also a popular, emotional libertarian cause. In Italy, revolution in Sicily and Naples, following the Spanish example, imposed concessions on Ferdinand, king of the Two Sicilies. Revolution was on the ascendant in Europe, and in South America the war of liberation from Spain was going well. Lord Cochrane, the 10th Earl of Dundonald, was a naval commander whose prowess during the Napoleonic Wars and, later, at the head of the Chilean fleet, captured the imagination; he was very popular with the radicals.

The old toast "The cause of liberty all over the world" translated into sympathy for struggles abroad and for the United States. In 1825, the dinner paid homage to Bolívar and the Greek cause; a toast to Washington, Paine, and Franklin, placed Paine within a pantheon of founding fathers of the American Republic.[184] Snippets of speeches delivered on Paine during those dinners suggest that the radicals honoured him for his work for the American republic (*Common Sense* and the awakening of the cause of independence), but also as a philosopher and a teacher of politics. Alexander Galloway, who chaired the 1823 dinner, declared that "[h]e had from his boyhood been taught politics by Paine, as he had been taught mathematics by Euclid, and he knew not for which he felt the higher respect and veneration."[185] Readings of Paine in the LCS were indeed a classic training for many young men of his generation.

The second moment when the "trial by jury" dinner discussed foreign revolution is the aftermath of the 1848 Springtime of the Peoples. Homages to foreign freedom fighters and encomiums of the British constitution eclipsed the first French Revolution. The dinners

[183] BL, Add Mss, 27,817, fo.116.
[184] See also, in 1829: "The Memory of Washington, Paine, and Franklin, the founders of American independence." (*Morning Chronicle*, 6 November 1829).
[185] *Morning Chronicle*, 6 November 1823.

expressed both solidarity for foreign revolutionaries struggling for freedom, and a sense of British exceptionalism. This is most visible in the 1850 dinner, which paid homage to the German, Hungarian and Polish patriots. In response to a toast to "the memory of the Hungarians who fell in the maintenance of their liberties, and in vindication of the laws of their country", a Hungarian guest of honour, Count Pulski, explained that of the three pillars of English liberty – freedom of the press, trial by jury, and self-government –, his own country had only the third.[186] Foreign revolution, interestingly, introduced discussion about the British constitution and Britain's unique propensity to liberty. The *Leader* reported that a conversation took place about the notion that liberty was native to England, a notion "flattering to our vanity" but "weakening to our cause", because liberty was universal, and Scythian nations like Hungary were capable of freedom, just as Teutonic races were. The speeches at the dinner cast the Hungarian struggle for liberty in a British mould: the Hungarian patriots "fell in maintenance of their long-inherited liberties, and in vindication of the laws of their country"; those who broke the law were the Austrians.[187] Refusing constitutional changes imposed by Vienna, the Hungarians fell as "martyrs, not merely to liberty in the abstract, but to the cause of their country and its hereditary laws." Count Pulski felt that "Republicanism has become the only hope of continental nations". Hungary's fall showed to Italy, Germany and Poland that they had one interest, republicanism. For all that, the French Republic was not perfect as its legislature could tyrannize over local institutions. Pulski declared himself no republican; he professed his admiration for the "hereditary constitution" of England but recognized that Hungarian revolutionaries defended the nation rather than the monarchy. The 1850 dinner is revealing as it mediates between Britain's sameness to other European countries and its exceptional character. It was typical of post-1848 middle-class radical debates hinging on liberty and the principle of nationality. Liberty, orators argued, was universal, not a matter of race: like Britain, other European countries deserved liberty and could achieve it through patriotic struggle. Britain was special with unique institutions preserving liberty, while the Continent was destined to republicanism, a less satisfying fate.

The 1851 dinner evinced the same sense of British exceptionalism, while the French Revolution became a historical benchmark for weighing contemporary revolutions. The meeting welcomed Dr Karl Tausenau, a member of the German Action Committee, which

[186] "Trial by Jury", *Daily News*, 6 November 1850, p. 2. Pulski (in fact Ferenc Pulszky) was instrumental in the English cult of Lajos Kossuth: see below p. 344.
[187] *Leader*, 9 November 1850.

represented "the anti-socialist faction among the democratic-republican exiles".[188] The chairman, Dr Epps, commented on the excesses of the people, which education would rub off. But "their worst excesses, even during the first French Revolution, were as nothing compared to the cruelties now daily perpetrated in Austria, in Hungary, and in Italy."[189] The liberal discourse about the progress of popular education was matched with more conservative criticism of the "worst excesses" of the French Revolution, a phrase that anticipated Oscar Wilde's Lady Bracknell. By 1851, the first French Revolution was no matter for celebration for the guests of "trial by jury" dinners; it had passed into history and was overshadowed by more recent revolutions.

By the mid-1840s, the more conservative orientation of the dinners was visible. In 1851, the chairman could say with some smugness: "[a]bout a hundred gentlemen sat down to an excellent dinner, the good old English cheer of which showed that, whatever reforms our politics may require, our culinary affairs are in a high state of efficiency."[190] The plush surroundings of Radley's Hotel, the good food, the invitation of anti-socialist speakers like Tausenau were more than enough for Chartists to reject "trial by jury" dinners as middle-class. The Chartist George Julian Harney denounced the dinner as "a glorious exhibition of humbug" because trial by jury was for the bourgeoisie, the working class suffering military justice.[191] In this article addressed to "Brother proletarians", Harney denounced "the bit-by-bit reformers" who clung to paper proclamations while "[t]he liberty to live – the liberty to enjoy the fruits of one's own labour, unplundered by idlers – is the first of liberties".[192] Harney defended the social republic which the February Revolution had brought into existence in France; this was communist anathema for the more conservative reformers of the "trial by jury" dinner.[193] The Whigs had emasculated the promise of the French Revolution; their appropriation of the acquitted radicals of 1794 may well explain why, as Steve Poole suggested, the Chartists did not include the London Corresponding Society in its pantheon in 1845, when they celebrated the anniversary of the French republic of 1792.

The fate of the French Revolution in the "trial by jury" dinners is that of a declension, due to the political transformation of an "English Jacobin" celebration

[188] Christine Lattek, *Revolutionary Refugees: German Socialism in Britain, 1840-1860*, Routledge Studies in Modern British History (London; New York: Routledge, 2006), p. 87.
[189] "Trial by Jury", *Daily News*, 7 November 1851, p. 2.
[190] "Trial by Jury", *Daily News*, 7 November 1851, p. 2.
[191] *Northern Star*, 23 December 1848, quoted in Steve Poole, 'The Politics of "Protest Heritage", 1790–1850', p. 200.
[192] "To the Working Classes", *Northern Star*, 23 December 1848, p. 6.
[193] On antagonism between working-class and bourgeois radicals after 1848, see Margot C. Finn, chap. 2.

dominated by LCS orators into a mainstream Whig event. Though the idea of "revolution" was never absolutely disclaimed, it was progressively diluted into a glib narrative of the evolution, rather than revolution, of British liberties. The sixty-year course of the "trial by jury" dinners also provided an occasion to briefly review revolutions celebrated in early nineteenth-century Britain, and to consider how the same dinner could accommodate them, following the international news. The stewards invited hand-picked foreign patriots as guests of honour, people like Karl Tausenau, who would praise the British constitution. They celebrated foreign revolution, losing sight of 1789, through a moderate reformist ideological lens. Harney's rejection of such dinners reflects the gulf between liberal "reform" laying claim to revolutionary heritage and full-blooded Chartists.

Chartism and the French Revolution

From 1838 to 1848, Chartism constituted the most significant working-class movement in nineteenth-century Britain. Its goal, the establishment of the six-point Charter, was domestic. Historiography has stressed continuity with earlier radical patriotism steeped in popular constitutionalism. Still, there were internationalist elements within Chartist culture.[194] Research is starting to map Chartism's international connections.[195] Many emigrants that came into contact with Chartists had been expelled from France or Belgium, some for their involvement in a failed Parisian insurrection led by the *Société des saisons* in 1839. Those emigrants infused some revolutionary energy into Chartism, and passed across ideological traditions originating in the first French Revolution.

Chartist celebrations revived and reinterpreted the Jacobinism of 1793. In this respect at least, Chartism was original and different from earlier radicalism. The first difference, leaving the ideological content of celebrations aside, is the broad-ranging, inclusive nature of sociability. Chartist demonstrations, dinners, teas, and other events, and still more Chartist papers like the *Northern Star*, presented the French Revolution to more people, and people further away from the political nation, than did radicals before. Chartist

[194] Iorwerth Prothero, 'Chartists and Political Refugees', in *Exiles from European Revolutions: Refugees in Mid-Victorian England*, ed. by Sabine Freitag (London: Berghahn, 2003), pp. 209–33 (p. 210). On continuity with earlier constitutionalism: Gareth Stedman Jones, 'Rethinking Chartism', in *Languages of Class: Studies in English Working Class History 1832-1982* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1984), pp. 90–178; Margot C. Finn; James Epstein, 'The Constitutionalist Idiom'.

[195] F. Bensimon, 'Chartism in the British World and Beyond', in S. Barczewski and M. Farr (eds), *The MacKenzie Moment and Imperial History: Essays in Honour of John M. MacKenzie* (Cham: Springer International Publishing, 2019), pp. 311–35.

associational culture tended to encompass all aspects of a worker's life, and combined educational uplift and humorous, "recreational activities".[196] The Chartists built on existing social interactions, and centred their activities on locales of sociability such as pubs and cabarets. This built up a larger culture that included many activities and occupied dedicated spaces providing an immersive environment for workers. This created some tension between entertainment, the release of tensions, and on the other hand the austere task of educational uplift, a tension which had beset the LCS in the 1790s.[197] Rounds of toasting interspersed by songs, and recitations of poetry owed much to the conventions of radical dining, but Chartist events also included women and poorer men. Chartist dinners were cheaper than radical ones of the earlier decades: the celebration of the anniversary of the French Republic cost 2s at Highbury Barn Tavern, in Islington.[198] The Chartists also organized teas, which cost still less, and women, or couples, could attend for a fraction of the price.[199]

Secondly, as a consequence of the passing of a generation and of the revolutions of 1830 and 1848, the Chartists celebrated the French Revolution more clearly. This distinguished them from earlier radical dinners, with their covert prudence and ambiguities. Only Richard Carlile's 'Zetetic' anniversaries matched the Chartists in the open defence of the French Revolution, but they concerned much fewer people. The radicals had been hampered by the loyalist blackout on anything smacking of 'Jacobinism', but the fading of the French Revolution from living memory, and the effect of the 1830 revolution, a relatively peaceful one, facilitated identification with revolutionary leaders of 1793. Bronterre O'Brien, born 1805, worshipped Robespierre, while George Julian Harney, born 1817, dubbed himself 'L'ami du people', taking up Marat's pen name.[200]

The French revolution of February 1848 goaded the Chartists into action. In the run-up to the mass demonstration at Kennington Common (10 April), the Chartist press published material from the first French revolution, and compositions adapting French symbolism, such as the poem "The Chartist Tricolour", with green representing

[196] Chase, *Chartism*, p. 142.
[197] Rémy Duthille, 'Respectability vs Political Agency: A Dilemma for British Radical Societies', in *British Sociability in the Long Eighteenth Century. Challenging the Anglo-French Connection*, ed. by Valérie Capdeville and Alain Kerhervé (Woodbridge (UK); Rochester, NY: Boydell & Brewer, 2019), pp. 251–70.
[198] *Northern Star*, 21 September 1844.
[199] See prices for "a public tea in honour of Mr M'Douall" at Oldham: "men's tickets 1s. each, and women's 9d. each." (*Northern Star*, 22 August 1840).
[200] J. Epstein and D. Karr, 'Playing at Revolution: British "Jacobin" Performance', *The Journal of Modern History*, 79:3 (2007), 495–530 (p. 501).

insurrectionary Ireland. A new translation of the *Marseillaise* gave more urgency to the lyrics.[201] The French Revolution was indeed a repository of symbols for the Chartists to use. Mike Sanders relates how 'A Republican' wrote to the *Northern Star* to deplore the absence of a Chartist "Marseillaise" or a federative song, echoing earlier concerns about the lack of symbolism like the tricolour flag.[202] Though, like the radicals, the Chartists adapted traditional English tunes and Bastille Day songs from the 1790s,[203] they were original in that they used French emblems and songs directly, and manipulated historical references with more familiarity.

However, not all Chartists believed in the French revolutionary mystique. Mike Sanders argued that Chartists believed in the "myth" that revolutionary events had a fixed, obvious meaning "encoding a belief in the restorative effects of political violence."[204] But, as he notes, Chartists subscribed to it to varying degrees, and many delegates at the first Chartist convention of 1839 resented French phraseology and the word "Convention" itself, fearing the overtones of the French Convention of 1793.[205] "Moderate Chartists", Matthew Roberts noted, "damned their more radical colleagues by associating them with the excesses of the French Revolution".[206] When it came to imitating the 1789 Revolution, the Chartists disclaimed any such intention, though they also brandished the threat of revolution to the authorities.[207] While all Chartists knew of French revolutionary history and symbols, and would occasionally be ready to use them, only a minority celebrated the cult of 1793.

The French Revolution, its ideas and characters, were ubiquitous in Chartist political culture; speeches, iconography and various genres of print including press, poetry

[201] See Ernest Jones's translations of the *Marseillaise* and the *Chant des Girondins*, and Alfred Fennell's "The Chartist Tricolour" in *Northern Star*, 8 April 1848, p. 3. On the poem, see Mike Sanders, *The Poetry of Chartism: Aesthetics, Politics, History*, Cambridge Studies in Nineteenth-Century Literature and Culture, 62 (Cambridge; New York: Cambridge University Press, 2009), pp. 176, 180–82.
[202] Sanders, p. 81.
[203] See "Rule Britannia" in *Northern Star*, 2 March 1839; William Roscoe's "The Day Star of Liberty" in *Northern Star*, 11 March 1848; his "Song. – Written in 1789" ("Unfold, father Time, thy long records unfold") in *Northern Star*, 25 March 1848; E. P. Mead's "A New Chartist Song" parodying "The Pilot that Weathered the Storm" (Sanders, pp. 160, 272.).
[204] *Ibid.*, p. 89. Sanders took "myth" in Roland Barthes's sense.
[205] Josh Gibson, 'The Chartists and the Constitution: Revisiting British Popular Constitutionalism', *The Journal of British Studies*, 56.1 (2017), 70–90 (p. 84). The word had already been contentious in the Scottish Conventions of 1793.
[206] M. Roberts, 'Chartism, Commemoration, and the Cult of the Radical Hero, c.1770-c.1840', *Labour History Review*, 78:1 (2013), 3–32 (p. 28).
[207] See e.g. "Advantages of Having the Charter", *The Chartist Circular*, 9 May 1840, p. 133.

and narrative fiction made its main figures and ideas familiar.[208] The French Revolution represented a high point of republican virtue and enlightenment, a crucial period in the emancipation of mankind. The Chartists revered the now forgotten figure of Volney, whose *Ruins* (1791) conjured up the vision of an ideal polity without kings or priests. Voltaire, Rousseau, Robespierre and Marat formed the corpus of writers anthologized and commented in Chartist publications. Participants in teas, dinners and other sociable events knew those heroes that they would have read about or heard of before.

Matthew Roberts has shown that leaders and followers had a "shared custody" over the heroic pantheon.[209] The heroes were neither an emanation of wishes from below, nor an imposition by leaders above. Galleries of portraits in the press or statues and commemorative objects at home displayed heroic pantheons,[210] but banquets were the site of the ritual worship through toasts and speeches. A banquet given to the memory of Hunt at Ashton-under-Lyme in 1839 is exemplary of the roll-call of Chartist heroes, including "Emmet, Volney, Voltaire, Elihu Palmer (the American deist), Mirabeau, Robespierre, William Tell, Hofer, Washington and William Wallace."[211] Bolívar was another favourite. While the French Revolution was not properly the object of those celebrations, it was mentioned next to other foreign revolutionary movements. Earlier radicals did not name French heroes in their toast rounds, probably because there was no uncontentious figure embodying the Revolution; the fear of adverse publicity settled the matter. Only La Fayette was safe for Whigs and radicals, but more for his earlier role in America, and for his role as a liberal aristocrat in the early part of the French Revolution of 1789, and again during the French Restoration.[212] Some Chartists like O'Brien and Harney criticized him as a moderate, an equivalent of malevolent aristocratic Whigs.[213]

The Chartists were the first to celebrate the French Revolution in Britain after 1793, if one excepts French republican refugees, veterans of the 1832 and 1842 risings in Paris,

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[208] Jacob Dengate, 'Lighting the Torch of Liberty: The French Revolution and Chartist Political Culture, 1838-1852' (unpublished Ph.D., Aberystwyth University, 2017).
[209] Matthew Roberts, *Chartism, Commemoration and the Cult of the Radical Hero*, chap. 4.
[210] In George Jacob Holyoake's study, a bust of Robespierre juxtaposed those of Milton, Cromwell, Saint Just, Marat, Danton, Ledru-Rollin, and Garibaldi. Bensimon, 'L'Écho de la Révolution française dans la Grande-Bretagne du XIXe siècle (1815-1870)', p. 225.
[211] *Ibid.*, p. 6. Emmet was an Irish republican executed following a conspiracy in 1803; Andreas Hofer (1767-1810) was the leader of the Tyrolean rebellion against the Napoleonic invasion in 1809.
[212] For a toast to La Fayette given by a Whig (Francis Jeffrey) for his role in the American War, see "Dinner to Mr Brougham at Edinburgh", *Times*, 9 April 1826, p. 2.
[213] On Chartists and Lafayette: Matthew Roberts, *Chartism, Commemoration and the Cult of the Radical Hero*, pp. 85, 99.

who celebrated Bastille Day in London.[214] Two groups of Chartists were involved: Bronterre O'Brien and his followers, who organized tea-parties in the honour of Robespierre, and secondly the Fraternal Democrats (FD), a society that emerged in September 1845, during a banquet celebrating the first French Republic of 1792. O'Brien's following and the FD were two strands in the wider galaxy of Chartism. Though they were a minority, they gave the French Revolution an essential place within Chartist culture. There was some overlap and fluidity between the two groups; internationalists like Harney sometimes attended O'Brien's dinners for instance.[215] Historians have been divided over the significance to ascribe to those movements. The Fraternal Democrats play a significant role in the prehistory of the First International.[216] As editor of the unstamped *Poor Man's Guardian*, O'Brien was a central figure in English radicalism in the 1830s, but most historians have judged that he declined in importance from 1841 and then played a peripheral role in Chartism. Michael J. Turner has done much to rehabilitate him and stress his significance.[217] Though celebrations by O'Brien and the Fraternal Democrats are the best documented, there is also evidence of celebrations of Bastille Day elsewhere. This was the case for instance in 1850: radical groups were still active even after the summer of 1848 and the supposed demise of Chartism; Harney answered favourably to an invitation by Yorkshire radicals to celebrate 14 July.[218] The place, Blackstone Edge, was famous for a mass rally in August 1846 in the course of which some 30,000 pledged allegiance to the Charter. Such an example, however isolated, warns against any dismissal of the significance of the first French Revolution and its celebrations in Chartism and post-Chartism. French Revolution celebrations may not have been central in Chartism, but they are clearly original and path-breaking in the history of celebrations that this book retraces.

[214] Prothero, p. 216.
[215] Michael Turner argues that O'Brien had a formative influence on Harney: Michael J. Turner, *Radicalism and Reputation: The Career of Bronterre O'Brien* (East Lansing, MI: Michigan State University Press, 2017), pp. 132–33.
[216] F. Bensimon, 'The IWMA and Its Precursors in London, c.1830-1860', in F. Bensimon, Q. Deluermoz, and J. Moisand (eds), *'Arise Ye Wretched of the Earth': The First International in a Global Perspective* (Leiden ; Boston: Brill, 2018), pp. 25–9.
[217] Turner, *Radicalism and Reputation*, pp. 1–39.
[218] "To the Chartists of Yorkshire and Lancashire", *Red Republican*, 29 June 1850, p. 12.

Bronterre O'Brien and the cult of Robespierre

Bronterre O'Brien, a charismatic but divisive leader, considered that Robespierre had been maligned and tried to rehabilitate his reputation.[219] This is a leitmotiv in his many articles in his newspapers, and in works specifically written on the Incorruptible over a period of twenty years, from a biography in 1837-38 to two elegies in 1857 and 1859. In 1836, he published his translation of Filippo Buonarroti's *Gracchus Babeuf et la Conspiration pour l'égalité dite de Babeuf*. He also published many short newspaper articles and serialized his books and pamphlets in parts at two- or three-pence each.[220] Many Chartist working men would know about Robespierre through cheap publications and communal newspaper readings, even if they had not read O'Brien's books.

In the preface to the biography, O'Brien stated he aimed at justice to Robespierre, rehabilitating democracy from the "obloquy" that false history cast on it, and he evinced "a desire to create a new public opinion".[221] This virtuous public opinion would protect his own character and that of his fellow-democrats during the war which the working class would have to wage against the aristocracy. Historiography served O'Brien to vindicate democracy.[222] The biography also had a monitory function, warning English reformers against the dangers that had beset Robespierre and the French democrats. O'Brien presented Robespierre as a philanthropist and evacuated his responsibilities in the Terror: "we shall find him uniformly evincing the utmost repugnance to blood, except on those fatal occasions when counter-revolutionary plots or the rage of parties rendered the shedding of some guilty blood indispensable".[223]

O'Brien drew inspiration from the 1796 Conspiracy of Equals initiated by Gracchus Babeuf, a planned coup that O'Brien considered as the logical outcome of the Revolution's egalitarian goal.[224]. O'Brien took up Babeuf's theses on equality, mediated by Buonarotti.

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[219] Turner, *Radicalism and Reputation*, pp. 37, 97, 102, 125–6; M. J. Turner, 'Revolutionary Connection : "The Incorruptible" Maximilian Robespierre and the "Schoolmaster of Chartism" Bronterre O'Brien', *The Historian*, 75:2 (2013), 237–61.

[220] Gwynne Lewis, 'Robespierre through the Chartist Looking-Glass', in *Robespierre*, ed. by Colin Haydon and William Doyle (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), pp. 194–211 (p. 198); Alfred Plummer, *Bronterre: A Political Biography of Bronterre O'Brien, 1804-64* (London: Allen & Unwin, 1971), p. 59; see an advertisement published on the front page of the *Northern Star* on 24 March 1838.

[221] James Bronterre O'Brien, *The Life and Character of Maximilian Robespierre. Proving by Facts and Arguments, That That Much-Calumniated Person Was One of the Greatest Men, and One of the Purest and Most Enlightened Reformers, That Ever Existed in the World: Also Containing Robespierre's Principal Discourses, Addresses, Reports, and Projects of Law, &c., in the National Assembly, National Convention, Commune of Paris, and the Popular Societies; with the Author's Reflections on the Principal Events and Leading Men of the French Revolution, Etc., Etc., Etc.* (London: J. Watson, 1837), p. 3.

[222] Matthew Roberts, *Chartism, Commemoration and the Cult of the Radical Hero*, p. 61.

[223] O'Brien, p. 10.

[224] Plummer, pp. 59–66.

He believed that Robespierre wanted to change the social and political order, and credited him for trying to create a virtuous republican citizenry.[225] He ascribed Robespierre's downfall to domestic factionalism, war and foreign intervention, and a conspiracy of anti-democratic, anti-revolutionary forces (the "shopocrats") that triumphed under the Directory. Britain after 1832, O'Brien felt, was like France in 1795: the poor masses smarted under the lash of a middle-oligarchy that had confiscated a popular revolution. O'Brien made a fluid, selective appropriation of Robespierre to whom he sometimes attributed his own ideas, writing very problematically that Robespierre wanted the subversion of the established economic order. O'Brien's constructed a usable past to serve as a guide for future conduct, in this case advocacy of a non-violent attack on the propertied classes, with violence legitimated in case of resistance.

O'Brien defended Robespierre in commemorative dinners, such as the public festival" held in February 1849 for Paine's birthday in the presence of 1500 persons.[226] Responding to the toast "Robespierre and the other martyrs to social progress", he said Robespierre's constitution embraced all six points of the People's Charter. After the demise of Chartism in 1848, O'Brien continued to agitate for Robespierre's reputation, creating his own institutions in 1849-1850, the National Reform League for the Peaceful Regeneration of Society and the Eclectic Institution in Soho, a venue that offered classes for adults and served for him to speak "several times a week on politics, religion, education, and currency and credit."[227]

O'Brien staged annual events to celebrate Robespierre's birthday.[228] They are documented in the late 1840s and early 1850s. A leaflet has survived, advertising "a tea party and public meeting" to commemorate "the illustrious Robespierre" on 13 April 1853 (see fig. 3, p. 377). The event took place at the Eclectic Institution in Soho, the centre of O'Brien's militant activities. The orators included an array of popular Chartist leaders and European leaders in exile like Alexandre Ledru-Rollin, Louis Blanc and the Hungarian Lajos Kossuth.[229]

In 1849, the dinner celebrated "the martyr, Maximilien Robespierre", and leaders of the two French revolutions of 1789 of 1848.[230] The article in the *Northern Star* used the

[225] Lewis.
[226] Turner, *Radicalism and Reputation*, pp. 140–41.
[227] *Ibid.*, p. 85.
[228] *Ibid.*, p. 124.
[229] See chapter 6 for developments on those politicians and the reasons for their exile in London.
[230] "Birthday of Maximilien Robespierre", *Northern Star*, 14 April 1849, p. 2.

language of class struggle: the chairman was a "staunch proletarian", and the toasts and speeches pitted the revolutionary working class against the oppressive middle class. The toasts included "The sacred memory of Maximilien Robespierre, the incorruptible champion of the rights and happiness of the people"; "The memories of Marat, St Just, Couthon, Babeuf, and all the apostles, heroes, and martyrs of the French Revolution"; "Honour to Barbès, Albert, Raspail, Louis Blanc, Caussidière, and all the proscribed and suffering victims of the fatal policy of 'moderation' and the perfidy and cruelty of the ever-infamous bourgeoisie." The toasts listed the most radical, left-wing leaders of the three French revolutions. Armand Barbès had taken refuge in London after leading an unsuccessful insurrection in 1839. Raspail was among the first to proclaim the republic in February 1848; he was a candidate in the 1849 presidential election; Louis Blanc and Marc Caussidière were also leading figures of the 1848 Revolution. All had been were being sidelined, imprisoned, or exiled by the government. O'Brien's history served to explain the parallel between 1789 and 1848 in terms of the confiscation by the bourgeoisie of a working-class democratic revolution.

In April 1852, O'Brien presided a "public Tea Party and Musical Soirée" on a Wednesday evening at the Eclectic Institution.[231] Among the guests were Étienne Cabet, the promoter of a form of utopian communism and author of an untranslated four-volume *Histoire populaire de la Révolution française, de 1789 à 1830* (Paris, 1839-1840). Both O'Brien and Cabet eulogized Robespierre, Cabet presenting him as a Christ-like figure who was murdered for "his love for the poor and the oppressed". An important toast was "the Solidarity of the Peoples, as the only means to achieve the fraternity of Nations". O'Brien adhered to internationalist values defended by the Fraternal Democrats, who had also celebrated Robespierre's birthday two days before.[232] Separate dinners were not a sign of disagreement. The FD had also celebrated Robespierre on 5 April 1850; O'Brien was present and gave a toast to the chairman, Harney. Though they held separate celebrations, O'Brien also adhered to FD internationalist values, and some guests attended events organized by both groups.

Though ostensibly a revolutionary, O'Brien did not revolutionize sociability. Like other Chartists, he organized teas and soirées because they were cheaper than public-house dinners and enabled workmen to bring their female relatives with them.[233] Such a pragmatic

[231] "Anniversary of the Birthday of Maximillian Robespierre", *Northern Star*, 10 April 1852, p. 2.
[232] "Birth-Day of Maximilian Robespierre", *Democratic Review* (May 1850), p. 463.
[233] Schwarzkopf, p. 180; Turner, *Radicalism and Reputation*, p. 11.

approach was frequent, because of the need to organize events despite money problems and the opposition of middle-class authorities that could close off some venues. O'Brien did not comment on Robespierre's important March 1794 report on civic festivities, strangely enough given Robespierre's pedagogical views and O'Brien's emphasis on popular education (hence his nickname of "schoolmaster of Chartism"). O'Brien's only comment on festivals is that the 1790 Federation was "the anniversary of what the middle classes affected to call the nation's deliverance." Typically, he promised unveil its "true character" and revise mendacious bourgeois history.[234] The allegorical processions of the French Revolution were never an inspiration to the Chartists. Rather, they stuck to the English platform, or evolved new forms from British, not French, forms of sociability.

However, O'Brien's rehabilitation of Robespierre was, by itself, a break with the radical tradition; it was divisive among the Chartist movements. His heroization of the Montagnards, presented as leaders of the working-class (not a socially neutral "people") against middle-class oppressors, confirms the salience of class in Chartism, and its break from radicalism. This element adds credence to Matthew Roberts's rejection of Gareth Stedman Jones and the "currents of radicalism" historians, who emphasized continuity and presented the Chartists as constrained within radical parameters.[235]

Amidst such continued opprobrium poured on the Jacobins, even among the Chartists, Bronterre O'Brien, then, was innovative in rehabilitating Robespierre and in his project of popular education. His modes of conveying his ideas were less original and remained within the classical parameters of Chartist publishing and sociability; they had nothing Robespierrist about them.

The Fraternal Democrats, the French Revolution, and working-class internationalism

Because the French Revolution served as a guide for conduct, and as a hermeneutic tool to make sense of current events, it is difficult to disentangle the French Revolution from revolutionary moments in the 1840s. Margot Finn noted that celebrations involved European émigrés following the demise of the 1848 revolutions, and that the ideological

[234] O'Brien, pp. 372, 376.
[235] Matthew Roberts, *Chartism, Commemoration and the Cult of the Radical Hero*, pp. xiii–xiv, 83–84. The opposite view is presented in Stedman Jones; *Currents of Radicalism: Popular Radicalism, Organised Labour and Party Politics in Britain, 1850-1914*, ed. by Eugenio F. Biagini and Alastair J. Reid (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991).

references, to Irish nationalists, "the Red Republicans of the Continents" and French Montagnards, were international and at the crossroads of several revolutionary traditions.[236]

The Fraternal Democrats (FD), officially born in September 1845 at a celebration of the first French Republic, typify this entanglement. The French Revolution was for them a model of proletarian, democratic internationalism. The FD stemmed from contacts between English Chartists and revolutionary émigrés.[237] The *Société démocratique française*, a neo-Babouvist group committed to radical egalitarianism, had contacts with Chartists like Peter McDouall, and took an interest in the Newport rising and insurrectionary politics. A group of German refugees, structured around the artisans Karl Schapper and Joseph Moll, formed the *Deutscher Bildungsverein für Arbeiter* (German Workers' Education Society), which became the *Communisticher Arbeiter-Bildungsverein* (CABV) or Communist Workers' Educational Society. This German association in fact "actually included Dutch, Flemish, Russian, Scandinavian and Turkish members".[238] They met at the Red Lion, a pub in Soho, which became a meeting place for English and refugee left-wing activists. Soho, despite its shady reputation, was the neighbourhood of choice for French exiles, as it offered them many opportunities for work; their sociability revolved around cafés and restaurants, and the Red Lion was thus a typical place for political refugees to meet.[239]

The Fraternal Democrats were a grouping of organisations from several countries. Its solemn declaration of principles claimed membership from "Great Britain, France, Germany, Scandinavia, Poland, Italy, Switzerland, Hungary".[240] The manifesto upheld "human brotherhood" as the supreme value and rejected all distinctions of caste and all economic exploitation. Though not all FD members were communists, the manifesto made clear that proletarian of all countries had common interests and must fight their bourgeois oppressors, rather than one another in "bloody wars" fomented by kings. The "Objects and Rules of the Association of Fraternal Democrats", under the motto Equality–Liberty–Fraternity, stated as the object of the association "the brotherly union of the Proletarians of all countries."[241]

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[236] Margot C. Finn, pp. 122–24.
[237] Fabrice Bensimon, 'Continental Exiles, Chartists and Socialists in London (1834-1848)', *History of European Ideas*, 47.2 (2021), 271–84 (pp. 275–81).
[238] Chase, *Chartism*, p. 287.
[239] On French exiles in London, see Aprile, *Le siècle des exilés*, chap. 8 p. 153, 155 in particular.
[240] *British Working Class Movements: Select Documents, 1789-1875*, ed. by George Douglas Howard Cole and A. W. Filson, Papermac, 104, Reissued (London: Macmillan, 1965), pp. 402–3.
[241] *Democratic Review* (November 1849), p. 240.

The Fraternal Democrats celebrated Bastille Day and the republic of 1792, born following the Tenth of August amidst the din of war against the allied monarchs of Europe. The dinners were decidedly multilingual: at a meeting in support of Poland in December 1845, "[t]he speeches were delivered in English, French, German and Polish"[242]. The FD paid homage to the revolutionary traditions of France, Germany, Italy and Poland. Bastille Day celebrations pre-dated the foundation of FD. Though there is no trace of the earlier dinners, 14 July 1844 was announced as the sixth edition of an annual event.[243] This dinner already displayed tendencies that hardened at later FD events. The guests comprised "the natives of different European nations". The "numerous patriotic addresses pronounced in the principal European languages" developed the topics of the reconciliation of the peoples, and the advent of harmony after the waning of national prejudices. Phrases like "true cosmopolitans" and the "cordiality and fraternity of sentiments displayed by the natives of nations but recently considering themselves enemies" were reminiscent of the early 1790s ideology of the revolutionary breakdown of borders and universal brotherhood. But the mention of "so many working-men" introduced an element of class typical of Chartism and FD rhetoric. The evening ended with a collection for Spanish refugees.

The celebration of the first French Republic on 23 September 1844 attracted more than 500 male and female guests at Highbury Barn Tavern, Islington.[244] Future leaders of the FD were prominent. Toasts gave rise to exchanges of speeches and compliments between Englishmen and refugees, for instance when Jacques Chilmann supported the Chartist William Lovett after the toast to the first French Republic. Chilmann,[245] a founder of the *Société démocratique française*, who was in exile in London after a term in prison under the July Monarchy, explained that revolutions failed due to excessive power in the hands of the military. The people must be united and fight despots. Chilmann then sang the *Marseillaise*, "the whole audience joining chorus" and falling to "loud and prolonged cheering". Typically, in this dinner the French Revolution appeared as the matrix of other revolutions. Toasts were drunk to "the Scotch and Irish heroes, Wallace, Emmett, &c."; "the Greek war song", a legacy from the 1821-1829 War of Greek Independence, also contributed to the sense of revolutionary brotherhood.

[242] "The Polish Revolution. Important Fraternal Meeting", *Northern Star*, 13 Dec 1845, p. 7.
[243] "Anniversary of the Storming of the Bastille", *Northern Star*, 27 July 1844, p. 6.
[244] "London. – Liberty, Fraternity, Equality. – Grand Banquet, to Celebrate the Anniversary of the French Republic", *Northern Star*, 28 September 1844, p. 1.
[245] Michel Cordillot, Jacques Grandjonc, "CHILMANN Jacques, Robert, Frédéric (père) ", *Maitron*.

The 1845 celebration of the foundation of the French Republic did not differ from previous celebrations; the creation of the FD only gave an official sheen to a group that visibly existed before.[246] Toasts constructed a revolutionary genealogy linking America (Washington and Franklin) and France ("the honest republicans of 1792"), the Swiss hero William Tell, the Tyrolean patriot Andreas Hofer, and several Chartists, including George Shell. This young Chartist died of wounds inflicted by soldiers during the Newport Rising in 1839; he became a secular martyr for the Chartists, who honoured his grave. George Julian Harney gave a rousing speech in favour of equality and against "constitutionalist" politicians like La Fayette, who only kept oppression going. French history was a usable past, that illumined present contests. The celebrations contributed to the cult of the Chartist pantheon; the homage of the 1792 Republic and especially the presence of many foreign refugees gave a heightened emphasis on revolutionary action and martyrdom.

Friedrich Engels, who helped in the preparations but did not attend the dinner, wrote a long review of the event in a German paper.[247] His extended analysis contrasts with the dry, factual, account in the *Northern Star*. He naturally interpreted the French Revolution as class warfare, and hailed the commemoration as "fraternisation of nations" in a political, but also a social sense. Engels presented the Chartists as advanced proletarians, as republicans and communists (though he had reservations in private).[248] He gave four justifications for celebrating the French Revolution in 1845 (something the English Chartists never did): 1° the nations that fought against France owed it an apology; 2° the European social movement was playing the second act of the drama that started in Paris in 1789; 3° it was good to remember the courage of the Frenchmen of 1793 in our cowardly bourgeois times; 4° international fraternization had now "a purely social significance," and the peoples were "really beginning to fraternize under the banner of communist democracy." Of the four reasons, Chartists would accept the third, many speeches paying homage to French valiance in 1792 or 1793. FD members would generally accept the idea of working-class fraternization, though many would shy away before communism.

[246] "Commemoration of the French Republic", *Northern Star*, 27 September 1845, p. 5.
[247] *Rheinische Jahrbücher zur gesellschaftlichen Reform*, II (Bellevue-bei-Constanz, 1846), 1-20. See English translation with introduction and notes in *Marx-Engels Collected Works*, online at <https://wikirouge.net/texts/en/The_Festival_of_Nations_in_London>.
[248] Henry Weisser, 'Chartist Internationalism, 1845–1848', *The Historical Journal*, 14.1 (1971), 49–66 (pp. 59–60).

The celebrations continued in 1846 and 1847,[249] involving the same group: the English Chartists Ernest Jones and George Julian Harney, the French Berrier-Fontaine and Michelot (an informer for the French police), the Germans Karl Schapper, Joseph Moll, and Heinrich Bauer, and the Polish officer Ludwik Oborski. On 14 July 1846, Ernest Jones prophesied that the fraternity of nations would supersede that of tyrants and priests. The French Revolution has taught tyrants that the peoples will not use arms for their service but in their own defence and rights. Harney insisted on the necessity of easing Anglo-French tensions, and reconciling the peoples. France and England together could free other countries. Karl Schapper looked up to France to "raise again the banner of liberty and equality". In 1847, Ernest Jones further developed the internationalist theme, commenting on European affairs and the immoral behaviour of monarchies, and attacking emigration as a "desertion" from the necessary work of liberation at home. He commented on the international situation, reminding his audience of Austria's oppression of Italy and Louis-Philippe's attempts to prevent a republic in Switzerland. England, he announced, would help all countries, especially Poland, and lead a league to abolish the white slavery as well as the black. Harney was voicing a wish shared by many Chartists of a generous, interventionist British foreign policy that would help the peoples rather than maintain a balance of power.

Some aspects of the dinners harked back to the 1790s and traditional radical arguments. Harney's contention, in 1846, that France and Britain could make peace and liberty reign worldwide was reminiscent of the optimism of 1790, when Price had aired the idea of an Anglo-French alliance to end wars and liberate oppressed countries. More aggressive speeches held at FD dinners were more in line with the French war of liberation, in keeping with the ostensible object of commemoration, the First Republic.

For all that, FD dinners were new in their more open advocacy of violence and their international focus. True, some speeches remained in the prudent line of radicals: Jones, in 1847, did not advocate outright revolution, but warned that the people would use their legitimate right of resistance if the monarch became tyrannical.[250] But many orators just fell short of calling for immediate revolution, leaving the impression that revolution was

[249] "Commemoration of that Glorious Lesson to Tyrants, the Destruction of the French Bastile by the Brave Parisians. July the 14th, 1789", *Northern Star*, 18 July 1846, p. 8; "The Fraternity of Nations. Democratic Festival", *Northern Star*, 26 September 1846, p. 7; "The Fraternal Democrats", *Northern Star*, 25 September 1847, p. 7.

[250] See the argument at the very end of Richard Price's 4 November 1789 sermon: Price, 'A Discourse on the Love of Our Country', p. 196.

inevitable and they would be eager to take part in it. Many of the guests had been involved in insurrectionary politics, such as Moll and Schapper, who were expelled from France after taking part in the failed uprising of the *Société des Saisons*.[251] Peter Murray McDouall, who chaired the September 1844 dinner, was "a foremost advocate of physical force".[252] The FD dinners were the most favourable to armed revolution of all the French Revolution commemorations since the 1790s.

Compared with other Chartist meetings, including those chaired by O'Brien, FD celebrations were remarkable for their focus on foreign affairs, and the panoramic view given on revolutionary movements across Europe. It is therefore fair to say that the FD broadened the horizons of Chartism, opening it to international questions.[253] This influence went beyond dinners; under Harney's editorship, the *Northern Star* opened its columns to more international news.

Revolutionary though the Fraternal Democrats were, they maintained barriers in terms of nation and gender. They extolled internationalism but made sure that each country was represented by an orator and a toast or a song during the dinner, thus maintaining rather than dismantling national barriers. The presence of women is well attested, but an apparently customary "Toast to the Ladies" given with much success in 1844, as well as the absence of female orators, suggests that some men, community leaders, spoke, while women listened.

O'Brien and the FD were original and demarcated themselves from earlier Whig and radical dinners. In that respect at least, they provide arguments against the thesis of radical-Chartist continuity. Of course, the analysis of a few dinners given by Chartists who did not represent the majority of the movement is not enough to disprove this view, but it provides three arguments. First, the very existence of French Revolution commemorations (but many other cultural artefacts and references could be added) shows that Chartism had other sources than English radicalism, in particular the French Revolution. Chartism, then, was not exclusively derived from English radicalism.

Secondly, Gareth Stedman Jones affirmed that the Chartists, like radicals since the 1760s, ascribed economic problems to a parasitic class monopolizing power; they had a political, not a socio-economic, reading of society.[254] However, the French Revolution

[251] Jacques Droz, 'MOLL Joseph', *Maitron*.
[252] David Goodway, 'M'Douall [McDouall], Peter Murray', *ODNB*.
[253] Bensimon, 'Continental Exiles, Chartists and Socialists in London (1834-1848)', p. 280.
[254] Stedman Jones, p. 168.

dinners provide many examples of a class rhetoric, showing that the dividing line was economic, not always moral and political as Stedman Jones claimed. In 1847, Oborski gave the toast "The emancipation of Labour, and may the Proletarians of all lands work unitedly to effect their social salvation!"[255] Though Marx and Engels wished the FD had stressed class war more than they did, and found them unrevolutionary and insular,[256] some Chartists did express at a FD dinner the idea that workers must unite against employers, not foreign workers. They voiced the ideal of revolution steadfastly, contrary to radicals who were still concerned with constitutional reform.

Thirdly, it is necessary to broaden the notion of "language" beyond the parameters of Stedman Jones's analysis; historians have included literature and visual, aural, and much non-verbal symbolism.[257] Considering the context of sociability, it is clear that Chartist ceremonies addressed far more men and women than radical dinners, with cheap pricing and especially massive reprints in the press. There was a qualitative as well as a quantitative difference between radicalism and Chartism.

Conclusion

The Bastille Day dinners of the 1790s diffused many symbols, slogans, and songs which were taken up by three generations of radicals. Some songs endured for over fifty years in reformist circles. The Bastille Day dinners, then, left a lasting legacy, despite the reformers' difficulties in the teeth of loyalist opposition.

Despite the absence of direct celebrations of 1789, not to mention 1793, the presence of the French Revolution hovered over dinners of all political hues. Some Whigs harked back to the 1790s, a defining era in Fox's political trajectory. The Pitt Clubs inevitably conjured up the remembrance of the Revolution. In this fraught political context, symbols were fluid, often ambivalent and available for appropriation, as the "trial by jury" dinners showed. In 1796, the LCS radicals ravished the date of 5 November from 1688-worshipping, establishment Whigs, but the Whigs claimed it back in the course of the 1820s. The "trial by jury" dinner started as a celebration of the 1789 Revolution at one remove, focusing on the resilience of the British radicals; it ended in complacency but saluted foreign revolutions while holding Britain up as a constitutional model.

[255] "The Fraternal Democrats", *Northern Star*, 25 September 1847, p. 7.
[256] Weisser, 'Chartist Internationalism, 1845–1848', p. 59; Henry Weisser, *British Working-Class Movements and Europe: 1815-48* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1975), pp. 144–50.
[257] For an early criticism of Stedman Jones along these lines: Paul A. Pickering, 'Class without Words'.

French revolutionary symbols remained dangerous to wield, and John Dinwiddy's argument about avoidance of French tropes in the first quarter of the century is true, with the notable exception of agonistic uses of caps of liberty and songs by radical crowds, at Peterloo and in other meetings and dinners. James Epstein's "constitutionalist idiom" was not hegemonic and some radicals used French revolutionary symbols. The partial indeterminacy of French symbols and risks of prosecution resulted in distancing rhetorical ploys, disclaimers, the use of English, rather than French, tunes. The analysis of the uses of *Ça ira* suggest the 'thermostatic' function of French symbols, whose pragmatic, illocutionary force heated up conflict without articulating a clear ideology.

The Chartists were different, more direct, both in the audacity of their cult of Robespierre, Marat, and other Montagnard bugbears, and in their internationalism. There were no celebrations of the French Revolution of 1789 as such until Bronterre O'Brien staged his own dinners in the late 1830s: this, in itself is a break from the past. Chartist celebrations were not just belated, extreme, radical get-togethers. Their dinners made sense in the global Chartist cultural environment, which also transmitted positive images of the French Revolution in print, portraits, singing, speeches and toasts.

Some Chartist dinners had international dimensions, in their composition and organization, as well as in the topics of discussion and celebration. The Fraternal Democrats co-organized events with revolutionary émigrés, and some of their dinners celebrated the first French Republic of 1792, developing themes of international brotherhood and linkages between revolutions in several countries. Such organizational and ideological traits show the limits of discussing of the reception of the French Revolution in Britain in isolation. It is not possible to discuss the French Revolution, and nineteenth-century revolutions, absolutely independently, because references were enmeshed as arguments, tropes, and symbols transferred from one revolution to another. This chapter has already evoked toasts and references to revolution in Spain, Bolívar, the role of European exiles in the 1840s, the presence of foreign orators and references to 1848 continental revolutions, as well as the transnational flux of news, for instance in Engels's journalism. The next two chapters examine British supporters of contemporary, early nineteenth-century revolutions.

Chapter 5.

The 1820s and 1830s: celebrating Iberian and North American revolutions

Early nineteenth-century revolutions came in three waves.[1] The first wave, from 1820 to 1824, was centred on the Mediterranean, affecting Spain (1820), then Naples (1820) and Greece (1821). This was concomitant with the liberation wars and independences in Spanish America. The second wave, from 1830 to 1834, started off in the streets of Paris and affected much of Europe west of Russia. The third series of revolutions broke out in 1848. The main sources for this chapter, accounts of celebrations published in the British press, bear testimony to the transnational nature of revolutionary processes brought to light by recent research.[2] Not only was the period marked by intense drafting, imitating and borrowing of constitutions;[3] the press, in Britain and in continental Europe, received accounts from different European capitals, conflated them and built narratives of international revolution.

This chapter and the next one examine British celebrations of revolutions from 1820 to 1848. The first area is British North America: the American Revolution was invoked in sociable events, and the Canadian rebellions of 1837-1838 was a colonial conflict that reactivated some of the same issues. The other revolutions examined are the Spanish *pronunciamiento* of 1820 and the subsequent liberal experience, South American independences, the French and Polish revolutions of 1830, and the French revolution of 1848. France, the United States and Canada, the Iberian world and Poland were retrained for their association with dinners and other forms of sociability, and for the cultural and political-intellectual production attached to them. Taken together, they illustrate the wide range of sentiments and moods that British sociability could accommodate.

[1] Hobsbawm, pp. 139–41.
[2] Aprile, Caron, and Fureix; Aprile, 'Voices of Exile'; Diaz and Meltz.
[3] 'Can Constitutions Be Translated? The Case of the Cadiz Constitution in German', in *Translations in Times of Disruption: An Interdisciplinary Study in Transnational Contexts*, ed. by David Hook, Graciela Iglesias Rogers, and Horst Dippel, Palgrave Studies in Translating and Interpreting (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2017), pp. 21–43; Linda Colley, *The Gun, the Ship, and the Pen: Warfare, Constitutions, and the Making of the Modern World* (New York, NY: Liveright, 2021).

The exclusion of other countries, and especially Greece, requires some explanation. Greece is exceptional in term of artistic impact and importance to liberalism. No other revolution, with the partial exception of South American liberation wars perhaps, received the aura of myth produced by Byron's involvement and tragic death. The main reason for leaving Greece out is the existence of a large body of research.[4] The dinner reports used in this study, which did not come from the philhellene movement but from dinners not mainly concerned with Greece, suggest that Greece had a special place as a representative of the highest virtues and achievements of Europe as opposed to the East, which was presented as alien and barbaric. The 1826 anniversary of Sir Francis Burdett's Westminster election was a case in point. In his long speech, Burdett held forth on Greece, "a place – the spot of all others in Europe – endeared to us not only as Englishmen and Christians, but as persons interested in the cause of humanity."[5] His religious toleration extended no farther than Christianity: "when he said that all religions were good, he meant all sects of the Christian religion. – (Applause)."[6] He constructed the Ottomans as the absolute other, opposing their "barbarities", cruelty and utter disregard for liberty to the Greeks holding the torch of European civilization. Greek atrocities, told in lurid detail, allowed sensational rhetorical effect.

The philhellenic movement must be evoked here because of its paradigmatic status. In terms of sociability, the Greek cause gave rise to dedicated organizations and to many dinners, which shaped later movements. After Germany and Switzerland, which organized in the summer and autumn of 1821, in immediate reaction to the news of the Greek uprising, Britain, with France, was in the second wave that started in December 1821 with the creation of an ephemeral first committee in London.[7] In January 1823, the Quakers set up another committee that relaunched the movement and found imitators in Paris, Marseille and in the United States. The third wave started with the creation of the Paris committee in

[4] Frank Rosen, *Bentham, Byron, and Greece: Constitutionalism, Nationalism, and Early Liberal Political Thought* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1992); William St. Clair, *That Greece Might Still Be Free* (Cambridge: Open Book Publishers, 2008); Denys Barau, *La Cause des Grecs: une histoire du mouvement philhellène, 1821-1829*, Histoire culturelle de l'Europe, 10 (Paris: Honoré Champion, 2009); Andrekos Varnava, 'British and Greek Liberalism and Imperialism in the Long Nineteenth Century', in *Liberal Imperialism in Europe*, ed. by Matthew P Fitzpatrick (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2012), pp. 219–40. For a short introduction to the London supporters of the Greek cause, see Frank Rosen, 'London Greek Committee (act. 1823–1826)', *ODNB*.

[5] "Dinner of the Electors of Westminster", *Cobbett's Weekly Register*, 3 June 1826, co. 606-632, quotation co. 625.

[6] Co. 613.

[7] St. Clair, p. 58; Barau, pp. 38–39.

1825 and rekindled the movement in German-speaking countries and Scandinavia. Britain appears as an "intermediary" position, both in terms of temporal sequence and of diplomatic, cultural and political mediation between belligerents and between different countries. Similarly, British supporters of other revolutions established international links and hoped the Foreign Office would intervene. In terms of sociability, the social and ideological composition of the London committee is well known: a strong aristocratic contingent, members of the business world, and a few academics.[8] There was much overlap between philhellenism and support of other liberal causes. Several members of the London committee, including its secretary Dr John Bowring, friend of Bentham and editor of his works, were also present at a dinner in favour of the French Revolution of 1830. Other revolutions gave rise to attempts at organisation, though with less success and sophistication than in the Greek case.

Apart from Greece, this study leaves aside several other revolutions. In 1830, Belgium, the Netherlands, and Switzerland gained advanced, democratic, constitutional polities. Portugal, Italian and German states, Scandinavia, each provide singular scenarios. Haiti is a major revolution that now receives the attention it has long lacked, and studies of the British reception of the Haitian revolution and Toussaint Louverture are now available.[9] I have not excluded those countries because they are in any way "small" or secondary – they are not, but because events in those areas did not inspire so many sociable events in Britain, certainly not to the extent presented in the case studies retained here. The amount and diversity of press coverage makes it possible, indeed worthwhile, to write articles on the British reception of revolutionary events in those areas.[10] Together, such a body of scholarship could contribute to integrate Britain into a transnational history of the 1830-1834 revolutions, which would somewhat decompartmentalize British historiography.

Before proceeding to examine the case studies, it is important to stress the unity behind the apparent diversity of movements and places. Examining several revolutions in succession may leave the impression of disparate, discrete sets of celebrations. In fact, there

[8] Barau, p. 47; Rosen, pp. 229–43.
[9] D. Geggus, 'British Opinion and the Emergence of Haiti, 1791-1805', in J. Walvin (ed.), *Slavery and British Society, 1776-1848* (London: Macmillan, 1982), pp. 123–49; G. Pierrot, '"Our Hero": Toussaint Louverture in British Representations', *Criticism*, 50:4 (2009), 581–607; D. A. Bell, *Men on Horseback: The Power of Charisma in the Age of Revolution* (New York, NY: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2020), chap. 4.
[10] On the initially partisan, increasingly positive reception of the Belgian reception, see P. François, 'Belgium – Country of Liberals, Protestants and the Free: British Views on Belgium in the Mid Nineteenth Century', *Historical Research*, 81:214 (2008), 663–78.

were interconnections, and constant influences. Contemporaries were well aware they were living in a flux and in an age of revolutions. Celebrations had some stability in time and space: anniversary dates provided points of anchorage for several years in succession, and some outdoor public places, like Copenhagen Fields, and taverns, remained classic places of rendezvous year after year. The Crown and Anchor, famed for its Bastille Day dinners in the early 1790s, hosted a celebration of the revolutions in Naples, Spain and Portugal in October 1820; dinners for Greece followed in 1823, and for Poland in the 1840s.[11] In addition to dinners given for a specific cause, many toasts and speeches also bore on foreign revolution. Thus, radical and Whig dinners usually honoured several revolutions in the course of the same evening, typically Greece, Spain and Portugal in the early 1820s, or France and Poland in 1831. Transnational borrowing abounded; toast and pamphlets, songs and pantheons of heroes straddled oceans and cultures. Another theme underpinning many celebrations across time is diplomacy. Many meetings tried to inflect the British position, which was determined by the Treaty of Vienna and the general principles of states' sovereignty and non-interference. Monster dinners were supposed to bring pressure to bear for diplomatic intervention, or war. Dinners often included foreign guests, reflecting Britain's welcoming policy toward refugees. The country took in refugees of all political persuasions and did not expel a single one after 1823: "her policy of asylum", Bernard Porter commented, "remained an inviolate feature of Britain's national life, and one of her most distinctive freedoms" and a source of great national pride.[12] Those themes – structural continuities, diplomacy, transnational travel and ideological references – underlie this and the next chapter.

This chapter centres on the first wave of the 1820s; it is concerned with Spain, Spanish America and North America. It starts with discussion of ultra-radical criticism of the international order born at the Congress of Vienna, and their festive celebrations of universal revolution. It proceeds to examine the celebrations of the American Revolution by radicals and Chartists, and the Canadian rebellions of 1837-1838. The Spanish Revolution of 1820 constitutes a third moment, marked by dinners in the London radical sphere. Dinners in favour of South American independences and the cult of Simón Bolívar

[11] Parolin, *Radical Spaces: Venues of Popular Politics in London, 1790-c. 1845*, p. 154.
[12] Bernard Porter, *The Refugee Question in Mid-Victorian Politics* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1979), p. 2.

provide many points of comparison with Spanish dinners. The next chapter will examine the reception of the 1830 and 1848 revolutions.

Criticisms of the post-1815 international order

In the 1815-1830 period, sympathy for foreign revolutions stemmed largely from opposition to the diplomatic order imposed at the Treaty of Vienna and refined at four subsequent international congresses.[13] The imposition of the principle of legitimacy over France, and Britain's participation in the Quadruple Alliance, with the authoritarian states of Russia, Austria and Prussia, shocked Whigs and radicals. This foreign context and the domestic dominance of a repressive-minded Tory elite shaped the political sociability of London.

Conservative dinners celebrated British military victories and generals, especially Wellington, even before the final victory hailed the return of dethroned monarchs. When the Tories mentioned peoples, it was to restate the principle of legitimacy and wish for the restoration of monarchs ousted by Napoleon, as was the case in a thanksgiving dinner given in Liverpool on 17 December 1813.[14] A toast called Wellington "The Hero of the Peninsula – who put the French Eagles to Flight before the Lines of Torres Vedras, and planted the British Standard under the Walls of Bayonne". On that occasion, the Tories toasted princes in exile, like Ferdinand VII of Spain, whom Napoleon had kept prisoner in Fontainebleau, or John VI of Portugal, who had taken refuge in Brazil with his court in 1808.

Whigs and radicals denounced the post-1815 "concert of nations" in more straightforward fashion than they had denounced the war and Napoleon. Dislike for Napoleon's tyranny at home and imperial ambitions abroad had rallied many radicals to the cause of the war. Holland House was notorious for sympathies for Napoleon; Fox's enemies in Parliament and caricaturists relentlessly exploited his ambiguities. Fox's nephew Henry Holland famously refused the French Restoration and protested in the Lords against the exiling of Napoleon to St Helena, to the deep embarrassment of the Whigs.[15]

[13] On the Congress of Vienna and the "concert of nations" that resulted from it, see, among many other narratives, a short account: Franklin L. Ford, *Europe, 1780-1830*, A General History of Europe, Second edition (London: Longman, 1993), pp. 274–87.
[14] *Liverpool Mercury*, 24 December 1813.
[15] Linda Kelly, *Holland House: A History of London's Most Celebrated Salon* (London ; New York: I. B. Tauris, 2013), chap. 10.

Some Romantic writers, like William Hazlitt, were fascinated by Napoleon and defined their own *oeuvre* with regard to the great Corsican's achievement.[16] Yet, attitudes were complex, some radicals having responded to loyalist hysteria with what Stuart Semmel called "anti-anti-Napoleonism".[17] The Napoleonic Wars constructed Napoleon as Britain's prime enemy and occasioned an unprecedented popular mobilization. For many Britons, however, fighting was not based on absolute belief but conditional on the elites' respect of morality and basic rights,[18] which partly explains the resumption of radical grievances after the peace.

Leaving apart the literary ambiguities and recantations, many radicals criticized the international order during the war, and after, for the same libertarian reasons. As late as 1801, John Cartwright wrote privately that "to the indelible dishonour of our Country," British ministers decided "to join in the War against French Freedom, in conjunction with all the despots of Europe." It "was a War against English Liberty".[19] But while he deplored the ideology and aims of the war, he insisted that the war should be strictly defensive and he sent projects of army and navy reform to ward off an invasion of England.[20] For Cartwright, the war years and their aftermath were a moment for elaborating celebrations of British victories. None of his blueprints was ever realized. Cartwright felt the need to respond to both Napoleonic propaganda and British state festivals like the 1809 jubilee or the pageants glorifying Nelson.[21] After the war, he logically continued to devise memorials for the people fighting for their liberty.

Many other radicals were torn during the war between a patriotic urge to defend the country against Napoleon and the agonizing belief that the war served the corrupt few, not the many. Such long years of enforced military unanimity and blackout on oppositional

[16] Simon Bainbridge, *Napoleon and English Romanticism*, Cambridge Studies in Romanticism, 14 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006).
[17] Stuart Semmel, *Napoleon and the British* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2004), p. 2.
[18] *Resisting Napoleon: The British Response to the Threat of Invasion, 1797-1815*, ed. by Mark Philp (Aldershot, England ; Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2006).
[19] Christopher Wyvill, *Political Papers, Chiefly Respecting the Attempt of the County of York, and Other Considerable Districts, Commenced in 1779 and Continued During Several Subsequent Years, to Effect a Reformation of the Parliament of Great-Britain*, 6 vols (York: Printed by W. Blanchard, 1794), VI, 6 volumes (p. 241).
[20] J. Cartwright, *England's Ægis; or, the Military Energies of the Empire* (London: Richard Phillips, 1804); J. Cartwright, *The Trident : Or, the National Policy of Naval Celebration…* (London: Published, at the Oriental Press, in Wild-Court, by Wilson and Co. For S. Johnson, St Paul's Churchyard; J. White, Horace's Head, Fleet-Street; and T. Payne, Mews-Gate, Castle-Street, 1802).
[21] Radicals contested the loyalist message on both occasions: Timothy Jenks, 'Contesting the Hero: The Funeral of Admiral Lord Nelson', *Journal of British Studies*, 39.4 (2000), 422–53; Semmel, 'Radicals, Loyalists, and the Royal Jubilee of 1809'.

expression, followed by the imposition of a reactionary hegemony at Vienna explain the radicals' welcome of revolutions that broke out across Europe, because each uprising was a blow to the unjust international order that mirrored the illegitimate political order at home. In his *Memoirs*, published after Peterloo and his bitter experience of opposition and imprisonment, Henry Hunt recalled that the war had been a system to enslave the Britons. In his view, the privileged did not lead Britain to war to defend liberty:

> I, for one, sincerely rejoiced at the return of peace; for I had long been convinced that the war was carried on, not to preserve this country from the horrors of the French revolution; that it had never been waged for any of its avowed purposes; that it had from the beginning been a war against the principles of liberty, established by the revolution in France, which had been attacked by every despotic power in Europe; every one of which powers the French troops had, under the banners of liberty, defeated over and over again.[22]

Radicals and reformers immediately saw the treaties as a conspiracy of princes to oppress their peoples and keep them in ignorance. They denounced a system – Cobbett's 'Old Corruption' – that both maintained the power of a corrupt aristocracy and unelected plutocrats at home and imposed oppressive 'legitimate' tyrants abroad. In particular, Whigs and radicals denounced the 1792 Alien Act, which was enforced until 1826 and threatened to expel foreign patriots in exile, as part of that conspiracy of governments against people.[23] Calls to resist the British government and reform parliament, and arguments about the right to liberty of peoples enslaved in absolute monarchies were mutually reinforcing. The radicals singled out for criticism the principle of "legitimacy" justifying the return of the Bourbons in France and other dethroned kings elsewhere. Hazlitt and others mounted complex attacks pointing out the inconsistency for the Hanoverian Kings to enforce the principle of legitimacy abroad whereas they owned their kingship to their ancestors' breaching the principle at the Glorious Revolution.[24] Thus, radical discourse wove together criticism of the international order and arguments on the British constitution and history, turning Tory arguments on their head.

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[22] Henry Hunt, *Memoirs of Henry Hunt, Esq., Written by Himself, in His Majesty's Jail at Ilchester, in the County of Somerset*, 3 vols (London, 1820), I, p. 540.
[23] Juan L. Sánchez, 'Robert Southey and the "British Liberales"', in *Romanticism, Reaction and Revolution : British Views on Spain, 1814-1823*, ed. by Bernard G. Beatty and Alicia Laspra Rodríguez, Cultural History and Literary Imagination (Frankfurt-am-Main: Peter Lang, 2019), pp. 67–68.
[24] Semmel, *Napoleon and the British*, pp. 175–99, 243.

Richard Carlile and the post-war call to world revolution

Throughout the Napoleonic wars and the post-1815 period of restoration of legitimate princes, the idea of world revolution flourished among the "ultra-radical" sphere.[25] For three decades, those men kept alive the hope of revolution central to Thomas Paine's deism and Thomas Spence's agrarian utopianism. The rhetoric of world government pervaded the columns of the ultra-radical press. Activist journalists like Henry Hetherington and T. J. Wooler enthused over the Mediterranean, South American, and French revolutions; they felt that the unstamped press, printed and sold in defiance of the English "boroughmongering" oligarchy, fought the same fight for liberty, democracy and free expression as revolutionaries abroad. They used "a language of revolution, […] a set of stock phrases and metaphors"[26] drawn from the Enlightenment and the French Revolution and found throughout "Jacobin" pamphlets by D. I. Eaton or John Thelwall in the 1790s: the progress of reason, the electric fluid, the meridian sun of liberty, the volcano, the thunder purifying the air. There was no causal explanation for the spread of revolution, except the self-evident imitation, the example of one liberated people electrifying other peoples into action. Many articles enumerated revolutions across the world to prove the ineluctable march of reason, progress and liberty, in an emphatic, accumulative style heavily punctuated by exclamation marks.[27]

This section discusses the topic of foreign revolutions as developed in the dinners and the publications of Carlile's environment. One dinner could celebrate many revolutions, past, present, and imagined ones: revolutions made sense as a network of references. Thus, this section will approach the American Revolution, the Spanish Revolution of 1820, and South American independence, which will be more thoroughly investigated in further sections.

[25] McCalman, *Radical Underworld*. See also Malcolm Chase, *'The People's Farm': English Radical Agrarianism, 1775-1840* (Oxford; New York: Clarendon Press; Oxford University Press, 1988).
[26] Weisser, *British Working-Class Movements and Europe*, p. 16.
[27] For an example of this style, see "Letters of the Black Dwarf", *Black Dwarf*, 21 March 1821, p. 402-408.

The polemicist, republican and freethinker Richard Carlile (1790-1843) was one of the main apostles of revolution.[28] He married and moved to London in 1813, and soon imbibed the democratic radicalism prevalent there. In 1817, he entered into a business partnership with William T. Sherwin. As editor of *Sherwin's Weekly Political Register*, he published some provocative material, including religious parodies, which earned him a trial and six years in prison from 1819 to 1825. He was repeatedly prosecuted for publishing Paine's *Age of Reason* and other deistic and atheistic material. He managed to operate his papers from gaol but still suffered from the Six Acts, the legislation that the Liverpool administration passed following Peterloo to gag the popular press. Through his publications and the commemorative dinners he held in London, Carlile ensured the survival and transmission of the deist, republican tradition of the Enlightenment associated with French *philosophes*, English freethinkers, and Thomas Paine. His journal also advocated feminist principles.[29] In London, he took up the Rotunda in 1830, a lecture hall on the southern edge of Blackfriars Bridge, and made it into a beehive of radical activity where himself, and orators like William Cobbett and Henry Hunt spoke to the crowds.[30] The Rotunda was to host many dinners in favour of revolutions abroad. Organizations sprang up in support in Edinburgh, London and in the provinces. Scotland had a network of clubs active in nine localities, whose proceedings could also be covered in Carlile's London papers. The Zetetic associations frequently celebrated revolution in dining and toasting and disseminated Carlile's freethinking republicanism, though they were clearly a small minority within English and Scottish radicalism. After 1824, the government abandoned prosecutions, which could turn Carlile and other republicans into martyrs and bring publicity to their cause.[31]

Richard Carlile borrowed his concept of world revolution, like much else, from the author of *Rights of Man*. Paine had given one of the most provocative, and criticized, toasts of the period on 4 November 1791, at the Revolution Society's annual dinner at the London Tavern: "The Revolution of the World". The club was fired up by the French Revolution and Paine stressed its world-shattering impact. Loyalists like George Chalmers, the author

[28] On Carlile and his circle: E. P. Thompson, *The Making of the English Working Class*; Joel H. Wiener, *Radicalism and Freethought in Nineteenth-Century Britain: The Life of Richard Carlile* (Westport, CT: Greenwood press, 1983); James Epstein, *Radical Expression*, chap. 4; McCalman, *Radical Underworld*.
[29] James Epstein, *Radical Expression*, p. 10.
[30] For the Rotunda, see *ibid.*, pp. 133, 139–46; C. Parolin, *Radical Spaces: Venues of Popular Politics in London, 1790-c. 1845* (Canberra: ANU E Press, 2010), chap. 7.
[31] Pentland, *Radicalism, Reform, and National Identity in Scotland, 1820-1833*, pp. 31–34.

of a venomous, successful biography, interpreted the toast as evidence of a Jacobin conspiracy against English liberties.[32] They were not far off the mark, for Paine certainly wished for a revolution in Britain, and expected others, writing in the second part of *Rights of Man* (published in February 1792): "As revolutions have begun […], it is natural to expect that other revolutions will follow."[33] In 1797, he wrote to James Madison that he would like to be present there should it break out; his writings mentioned the American and French Revolutions regularly, bust also Ireland, South America and Haiti among others.[34] In Carlile's circles, the celebration of Paine's birthday was the yearly occasion for reviving the memory of the French Revolution, and the hope of other revolutions. They praised Paine's transatlantic life and career were transatlantic, his role as a professor of Revolutions. The French Revolution was one among many past, present, and expected, revolutions in Europe and the Americas (the Carlilites never mentioned Asia or Africa).

Carlile and his disciples took up Paine's commitment to world revolution and honoured his role in sparking them off. An orator of Ashton-under-Lyme articulated the common knowledge of the group: "it is evident, that the important changes that have taken place on the continents of Europe and America have had their origin in those principles so clearly developed by Paine."[35] Carlile did not theorize on the basis of Paine's pronouncements. It would have been difficult to do so: in the second part of *Rights of Man*, Paine distinguished between "passive revolution", made "to avoid or get rid of some great calamity" and active ones, "to obtain some great and positive good", but he did not follow that train of thought.[36] Further on, he wrote: "As reforms, or revolutions, call them which you please, extend themselves among nations"[37] as if the difference between reform and revolution was merely nominal. Such difficulties in Paine's texts were beside the point. Paine's significance lay in his big ideas, and the impact they had on the world. Yet, he was not idolized; some orators at the birthday dinners often criticized his deism as falling short of atheism.

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[32] George Chalmers, *The Life of Thomas Pain: The Author of the Seditious Writings, Entitled Rights of Man. By Francis Oldys, A.M. of the University of Pennsylvania*, The sixth edition, corrected (London: printed for John Stockdale, Piccadilly, 1793), p. 23; John Bowles, *The Real Grounds of the Present War with France: By John Bowles, Esq. The Fourth Edition: To Which Is Added a Postscript Suggested by Recent Events* (London: printed for J. Debrett, Opposite Burlington-House, Piccadilly, 1793), p. 6.
[33] Paine, pp. 160–61.
[34] N. Caron, 'Thomas Paine et l'éloge des révolutions', *Transatlantica*, 2, 2006, n. 3.
[35] "Celebration of the 29th of January, 1822. The Anniversary of the Birth of Thomas Paine", *The Republican*, No. 10, vol. V, 8 March 1822, p.304.
[36] Paine, p. 269.
[37] *Ibid.*, p. 270.

Paine would spread the revolutionary cause eastward, America regenerating old Europe with New World virtue. Revolution in Carlile was more multidirectional; he hailed liberation movements wherever they appeared. *Sherwin's Weekly Political Register*, continued as *The Republican*, is the best source for his revolutionary internationalism. A letter to the editor, entitled "Reflections on Revolution" is significant of the vision of revolutions of a post-war radical. The correspondent rejected ancient history because the Greeks and Romans, despite their wisdom, did not know the system of political representation.[38] The American Revolution was the "most glorious event" "since the creation", a victory of freedom over tyranny, over the system of boroughmongering stretching from pole to pole. It established the best representative government and, more important for Britain, it started an irresistible movement against monarchies, which Napoleon checked momentarily but could not reverse. To those referring to the evils of the French Revolution, Carlile retorted that the 1791 Polish Revolution was bloodless and perfect, until the country was partitioned by "a set of depots".[39] At the Congress of Vienna, a pack of English "boroughmongers" agreed with Russia, Austria, and Prussia, the invaders of Poland. The Swedish coup which dethroned Gustavus IV in 1809 proved that boroughmongers could sacrifice a legitimate prince and confirm a usurper like Bernadotte. As for the Spaniards,[40] who had started a heroic war of liberation against Napoleon and given themselves a liberal constitution in 1812, they were betrayed and the "borough-ruffians" restored the cruel Ferdinand VII, with the Inquisition and torture in his train. When three Spanish heroes found refuge at Gibraltar, Britain handed them over to Ferdinand. Napoleon's return from Elba proved that the revolutionary spirit was not dead; his return in the Hundred Days was "a victory over all the old corrupted Governments in Europe – it was a triumph of those principles which were produced by the American Revolution […]. Here then, is a bloodless revolution, although a French one."[41] (In Carlile's logic, Napoleon's return, a dictator but a self-made-man, was better than the forcible imposition of Louis XVIII.) The article ended with the prediction of a universal revolution that would set the world ablaze and regenerate it. "I say the day is fast approaching when Europe shall be revolutionized from the Baltic to the Mediterranean, and from the Bay of Biscay to the Bosphorus, when the standard of Universal Freedom shall be planted on the

[38] "To the Editor of the Political Register. Reflections on Revolutions", *Sherwin's Weekly Political Register*, Vol. III, No. 24, 17 October 1818, p. 373-380, at 374.
[39] *Ibid*., p. 377.
[40] *Ibid*., p. 379.
[41] *Ibid*., p. 380.

ruins of Despotism and Priestcraft; when every one who shall draw his sword in the defence of oppression and corruption, shall be considered traitors to their country and rebels to their God!"[42]

This article is typical of the discourse on revolutions in Carlile's papers. It is remarkable for its rich store of examples, even at the early date of 1818, and supposes some knowledge of Sweden, Spain and Poland on the reader's part. "Paineite allegiance", James Epstein noted, "was typically cosmopolitan and presentist."[43] Themes were presentist in the sense that references to people and events concerned the contemporary period. Yet, Carlile's discourse was not "presentist" in François Hartog's specific sense: his experience of time can be best characterized as "futurist", dominated as it was by the horizon of progress, with little sense of continuity with the past: "the viewpoint of the future shall prevail. It is an order that presents itself as constantly accelerating. History is made in the name of the future, and it must be written in the same way".[44] Carlile's repertoire of allusion, comparison, and celebration, was definitely modern and did not go back beyond 1776: he had no truck for an Alfred, or a John Lilburne, still less a Brutus. Carlile's disciples celebrated not only past and present, but especially future, revolutions: "May the Patriots of the next revolution in Europe, proclaim a Republic, and succeed in establishing one."[45]

The concept of revolution was somewhat hazy; in Carlile's publications, the word applied to any regime change in the liberal side, not just to sweeping changes in structure and mentality. He systematically linked foreign events and English socio-political situations. The word "boroughmongers" (exploiters of the unreformed parliament) expresses the typical radical view that explained popular hardship and grievances by political exploitation by a greedy few, not by economic exploitation of workers by employers. The final sublime image of a pan-European revolution comes from Paine's vision of global revolution; it brings out the conclusion that Britain should have its own revolution.

Carlile is interesting for the interplay between sociability and publishing. His many publishing ventures advertised his followers' sociable activities. Toasts, songs, and speeches migrated from dinner tables to periodicals' pages. Despite the seriousness of

[42] *Ibid*., p. 380.
[43] James Epstein, *Radical Expression*, p. 121.
[44] F. Hartog, *Regimes of Historicity: Presentism and Experiences of Time* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2015), p. 107.
[45] "Birmingham Paine Club. Third Anniversary", *The Republican*, No.6, vol. IX, 6 February 1824, p.183.

Carlile's commitment to revolution, the dinners were sociable events with their share of mirth and laughter. The guests knew how to introduce comic relief and avoid high seriousness with toasts like: "May Turkey be well roasted by the fire of liberty, and basted by Greece!"[46] This did not detract from the seriousness of the Greek cause.

Dinners usually featured toasts to several revolutions. Carlile's partisans celebrated the Fourth of July in 1822 in Manchester and "in the vicinity of London".[47] On those occasions, the toasts paid homage to America and her liberty, made a roll call of American worthies (Thomas Paine, William Penn, Benjamin Franklin, George Washington, Thomas Jefferson, President James Monroe), "Civil and Religious Liberty all over the World", then proceeded to toasts relative to Carlile, his circle, against religious hypocrisy, and for the release of those "Imprisoned for supporting the principles of Civil and Religious Liberty".[48]

Fourth of July dinners, however, did not mean full endorsement of the United States and its socio-political model. Carlile's disciples saw the American Revolution as the triumph of liberty, the establishment of a "representative system"[49] and the result of Paine's republican principles. But Carlile's periodicals did not have much to say about America; they contained no history of the American Revolution, and the letters to the editors, followed by rebuttals by Carlile, developed sometimes contradictory arguments about America, especially about the influence of religion on morality and civic virtue. Contrary to other radicals, Carlile did not stress religious liberty and the separation of church and state because he was against all religion. He criticized the United States as "a *cheap monarchy*", an imitation of the British government, with too much religion in it: it did not embody the atheistic republic he favoured.[50]

The most remarkable series of dinners is that given in the honour of Thomas Paine on 29 January in London, the industrial North, and Scotland in the early 1820s. Carlile was in Dorchester goal during this heyday of infidel sociability; he and Thomas Paine were the two great absents that the disciples toasted. *The Republican* published substantial accounts of those dinners, treating them as political material in their own right, not as padding. In 1822, it reported celebrations of Paine's birthday in London, Edinburgh, Birmingham, Manchester, Stockport, Stokesley, Ashton-under-Lyme, and Leeds. At Bolton in 1823, the

[46] "Celebration of Paine's Birthday", *The Republican*, No. 7, vol. IX, 13 February 1824, p. 231.
[47] *The Republican*, No.9, vol. VI, 26 July 1822 p. 273-280; No. 10, vol. VI, 2 August 1822, p. 308-309.
[48] *The Republican*, No.10, vol. VI, 2 August 1822, p.308-309.
[49] *The Republican*, No. 5, vol. VI, 28 January 1822, p. 147.
[50] "To Mr William Fitton, of Royton, Lancashire", *The Republican*, No. 26, vol. VII, 27 June 1823, p. 827.

toasts included "The Immortal Memory of George Washington, and American Independence", "May revolutions never cease whilst tyranny exists", "The immortal Memory of Mirabeau, Voltaire, Volney, and Helvetius; may their writings become as universally read as the works of bigotry and superstition."[51] Volney, now largely forgotten, was a celebrated philosopher at the time; English and Scottish radicals often quoted him in the 1790s. Chapter 15 of his *Ruins*, a daring vision of a priestless republic, was particularly popular and circulated as Painite propaganda.[52] Carlile's disciples went on to toast "Simon Bolivar, Thomas Cochrane, commonly called Lord Cochrane, and the patriots of South America." They "agreed to commemorate the Anniversary of American Independence" and appointed a committee – a sure sign that there was an organization that aimed at giving the Paine birthday dinner some stability.[53]

Many toasts and songs honoured Paine. There was some inventiveness in devising new ones for each occasion. Paine's role in the American Revolution, as a defender of popular sovereignty and popular rights, and his religious views were the main themes. This is a specimen from a celebration of Paine's birthday in London in January 1824:

> His 'Common Sense'
> When tyrants their vile schemes began,
> Across th'Atlantic wave;
> Paine quickly form'd the glorious plan,
> America to save.
> His 'Common Sense'
> Soon drove them thence;
> And set Columbia free;
> Each despot's slave
> Soon found a grave,
> Or perished in the sea.[54]

This stanza bore on *Common Sense*; the next ones praised Paine's role in the French Revolution in *Rights of Man* and his anti-Christian revolution in *The Age of Reasons*. This was the classic triad – one dare not say Trinity – of Paine's teaching. But some guests went

[51] "Celebration of Paine's Birth-Day at Bolton", *The Republican*, No. 10, vol. VII, 7 March 1823, p. 301.
[52] Thompson, *The Making of the English Working Class*, p. 107; A. Cook, 'Reconstructing Ruins and Revolution : Towards a History of the Volney Vogue in England', in C. Charle, J. Vincent, and J. M. Winter (eds), *Anglo-French Attitudes: Comparisons and Transfers between English and French Intellectuals since the Eighteenth Century* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2007), pp. 125–46; A. Cook, '"The Great Society of the Human Species": Volney and the Global Politics of Revolutionary France', *Intellectual History Review*, 23:3 (2013), 309–28.
[53] "Celebration of Paine's Birth-Day at Bolton", *The Republican*, No. 10, vol. VII, 7 March 1823, p. 302.
[54] "Celebration of Paine's Birth-Day", *The Republican*, No. 6, vol. IX, 6 February 1824, p. 164.

further and criticized him: "Mr. Paine was not free from superstition or something he called religion".[55]

The toasts, speeches and songs constructed a pantheon of heroes in which revolutions echoed one another, without a sense of hierarchy or precedence. The French Revolution appeared mostly through the list of French enlightenment thinkers and revolutionaries. Sometimes, it was evoked indirectly through the remembrance of the Scottish reformers who fell victims of Pitt. In London in 1824, one toast was "The immortal memory of Muir, Margarot, Gerald, and the other victims of Scottish law, in 1793."[56] Carlile's circle did not toast Thomas Hardy and the other LCS veterans, probably because the more moderate "trial by jury" dinner had monopolized their memory.

The Iberian world was a favourite. Many toasts were drunk to Simón Bolívar, other officers, and South American republics.[57] The Carlilites did not present the South American revolutions as secondary, peripheral or derivative from the American, or the French, Revolution: they could serve as models in their own right. On 29 January 1823, the Manchester dinner comprised the following toast in fourth position: "Simon Bolivar, and Thomas Cochrane, and may the great bulwark of Republican principles which they have erected in South America, never be erased, but continue to be imitated by every nation upon the habitable globe."[58] Richard Carlile also ascribed international significance to the Spanish experience. The liberal *trienio* rose and fell in 1820-1823, a period of intense journalistic activity for Carlile. James Epstein noted the millenarian nature of Carlile's reaction to the Spanish uprising.[59] He dedicated Volume 8 of *The Republican* "To the Spaniards in exile". Carlile was so enthusiastic about Rafael del Riego's *pronunciamiento* and the establishment of a liberal Cortes that he started dating his articles in a new Spanish revolutionary calendar: "Dorchester Gaol, Jan. 21, Year 3, of the Spanish Revolution".[60] It was as if the French Revolution, its abolition of feudal time, and radical restarting of human history were happening again. (Carlile later again played with the calendar, wondering

[55] 'Celebration of Mr Paine's Birth-Day at Leeds', *The Republican*, No.10, vol. VII, 7 March 1823, p. 302, 304.
[56] "Celebration of Paine's Birth-Day", *The Republican*, No. 6, vol. IX, 6 February 1824, p. 166.
[57] *The Republican*, vol. V, p. 99, 241, 307, 394, vol. VII, p. 282, 296, 302, vol. IV, p. 180, 184.
[58] "Paine's Birthday", *The Republican*, No. 10, vol. VII, 7 March 1823, p. 296.
[59] James Epstein, *Radical Expression*, p. 122.
[60] *Republican*, No. 4, vol. V, 25 January 1822, p. 33; see also p. 97.

about the consequences in Britain and in the United States of using an anti-Christian dating like "4th of February, in the Year 1822, of the Carpenter's Wife's Son"[61]).

The discourse on revolution, however, is not homogenous in the *Republican*. Articles disagree on the hierarchy within the revolutionary pantheon, and on the status of violence. On the first subject, articles on "Celebrations of Paine's Birth-Day" are all cast in the same mould of dinner reports; toasts to various revolutions put them on the same footing. Another homogenizing feature is the frequent use of antonomasia: "with the energy, the ability, and the activity of a Buonaparte, he [the Spanish general Mina] combines the patriotism of a Washington, a Bolivar, and a San Martin!"[62] Similarly, Carlile loved enumerations, a typical feature of radical and Chartist pantheons of heroes. Carlile sometimes gave them an atheistic, blasphemous tweak: "William Tell, George Washington, Simon Bolivar, and San Martin, are so many real Saviours Anointed, so many real *Jesus Christs*! I hope Spain will find a *Jesus Christ* in this crisis".[63] But other articles deny the homogeneity created by toast lists. In 1822, it was said: "Simon Bolivar has eclipsed all the Republican heroes that have gone before him. The name of Washington dwindles into insignificance before that of Bolivar. […] Bonaparte was a fool, a rogue, and a despot when compared with Bolivar. His name will not deserve mention in the same page of history with the latter."[64] Carlile added a list of toasts he advised to drink at the next Paine birthday dinner. Besides toasts to Bolívar, the republicans of Spain and Portugal, and the Greek cause, he included: "The French Revolution, and may the next be free both of a Robespierre and a Buonaparte." So, there *was* a hierarchy of revolutionaries, at least some contributors stated one. Carlile's hostility to Washington might explain itself by Paine's 1796 pamphlet *Letter to George Washington*; possibly also by the relative political and religious conservativism that set in during Washington's presidency.

Contradictory positions also coexisted on violence as a means of revolutionary transformation. There was clearly much sympathy for violent action; guests at a Paine dinner at Leeds toasted "The Memory of the brave but imprudent Thistlewood and his unfortunate companions" who were involved in the Cato Street conspiracy, an attempt to

[61] *Republican*, No. 4, vol. V, 25 January 1822, p. 234, see also p. 100, 117.
[62] *Republican*, No. 23, vol. VII, 6 June 1823, p. 708.
[63] *Republican*, No. 23, vol. VII, 6 June 1823, p.728.
[64] "To the Sir Honourable Mr Justice Bailey", *Republican*, No. 4, vol. V, 25 January 1822, p. 97, 98.

assassinate the Cabinet and seize power.[65] Carlile's supporters were among those "many men who applauded the idea of a rising"[66] in 1820. Other passages in Carlile's papers, however, suggest he was an adherent of moral force. In 1824 he defended popular elections, instruction and "free discussion" as the only means of effecting popular happiness.[67] Displacement induced by censorship is probable: Carlile expected a violent uprising and would have fought in it with his disciples; hence the hints, such as toasts about basting the Turkey, or about inflicting on "Priests" "Patience and Long-Suffering".[68]

The Paine birthday dinners given by Carlile's disciples reveal how sociability expressed a marginal group's commitment to revolution through toasts, songs, and speeches published in the periodical press. Revolutions past, present, and hoped for, coexisted in the festive occasions. It is time now, for the sake of analysis, to examine the different revolutions one by one, keeping in mind that references to several revolutions were often conflated or interlaced. The next section examines the American Revolution, the earliest modern revolution usually celebrated, followed by the Canadian Rebellion of 1837, which is best discussed in the continuity of the United States.

Celebrations of the American Revolution, c.1815-c.1835

British radicals invoked the principles of the American Revolution, as often as they did the French Revolution. Several historians have shown that the "outsiders" of British politics were the most enthusiastic commentators and celebrators of America.[69] Apart for the Carlilite 4 July dinners, there seemed to have been no dedicated celebrations of the American Revolution. Rather, American republican symbolism was present in many festive occasions in the form of toasts, flags, banners, songs, and in speeches. Radical periodicals often published paeans to American independence and republican institutions,[70] but the

[65] "Celebration of Mr Paine's Birth-Day at Leeds", *The Republican*, no.10, vol. VII, 7 March 1823, p. 305. On the Cato Street conspiracy see E. P. Thompson, *The Making of the English Working Class*, pp. 769–79.
[66] *Ibid.*, p. 771.
[67] *The Republican*, No. 4, vol. IX, 23 January 1824, p. 104.
[68] *The Republican*, No. 10, vol. V, 8 March 1822, p. 307.
[69] Gregory Claeys, 'The Example of America a Warning to England? The Transformation of America in British Radicalism and Socialism, 1790-1850', in *Living and Learning: Essays in Honour of J. F. C. Harrison*, ed. by Malcolm Chase and Ian Dyck (Aldershot: Scolar, 1996), pp. 66–80; Paul Crook, 'Whiggery and America : Accommodating the Radical Threat', in *Radicalism and Revolution in Britain, 1775-1848 : Essays in Honour of Malcolm I. Thomis*, ed. by Michael T. Davis (Basingstoke; New York: Macmillan; St Martin's Press, 2000), pp. 191–206 (p. 192); Emma Macleod, *British Visions of America, 1775-1820: Republican Realities*, Enlightenment World, 27 (London: Pickering & Chatto, 2013), chap. 6.
[70] See e.g. "Hymn. – American Independence", in "Occasional Poetry", *Sherwin's Weekly Political Register*, No. 24, vol. III, 17 October 1818, 399-400.

United States was not their preserve. The liberal Whigs, while levelling some criticism at American society and culture, were also deeply interested in the republican institutions, especially the limitation of the executive power. The United States served the radicals to defend the benefits of popular sovereignty, but enabled Whigs to criticize it and defend a more hierarchical society. When it came to the American Revolution proper, only the radicals really celebrated it, the Whigs taking a nostalgic view, regretting the separation and blaming the political corruption and absence of reform in Britain for it.[71]

The French Revolution, as the previous chapter showed, was an embarrassment for radicals. Those who constantly harked back to Robespierre and his tyranny were the conservatives. The American Revolution offered an alternative model, because the orderly ratification of the federal constitution and the Washington administration had proved the viability of a regime born of revolution. American stability became key to liberal and radical discourse after the violence of French Revolution. Emma Macleod has shown that, because the French Revolution became "an increasingly dangerous model to promote and a disappointment to many radicals", they displaced their hopes onto America, and could use arguments from American stability to counter arguments against Jacobinism.[72]

Both liberal Whigs and radicals saw in America the model of society that they wanted to see, but Macleod distinguished some naïve enthusiasts and those who kept silent on unsavoury truths, making a rhetorical and ideological use of the American model.[73] When it comes to celebrations, it should be remembered that toasts, banners and other symbolic objects simplify issues, and that participants may have a range of opinions that the symbols do not reflect. A toast to Franklin or a "No taxation without representation" banner does not imply wholesale adhesion to all aspects of American society and politics on the part of all present. Using the symbols indicates some core adhesion, a lowest common denominator; sometimes, speeches or editorial comments in reports on dinners can add some qualifications.

By the 1820s, the American Revolution had receded into history; men in their thirties, like Richard Carlile, were born after the Independence War. The United States was an ally of Britain and there were therefore diplomatic, conservative uses of toasts to the Founding Fathers. George Washington had become heroized and had lost his radical edge,

[71] Emma Macleod, *British Visions of America, 1775-1820*, pp. 107–10.
[72] *Ibid.*, p. 129.
[73] *Ibid.*, pp. 110, 131, 136, 144.

which is why a toast like "The Immortal Memory of Washington, the founder of the American Republic" could be routinely given at gentlemanly dinners, for instance during the visit of the Whig MP Joseph Hume to Hereford in 1821.[74]

Given those conservative uses of American figures, the radicals had to rekindle the revolutionary flame by inserting the American Revolution within their own historical vision, by linking it with the French Revolution and with British radical figures. The links between the French and American Revolutions in radical celebrations took several forms according to time and context. On 14 July 1790, the Whig-reformist dinner at the Crown and Anchor presented the French Revolution as the consequence of the American one. The assembly had drunk the toast "General Washington, and the liberty of North America."[75] A long song that constructed a genealogy of heroes from ancient Greece to Puritan England contained a stanza on the recently deceased Benjamin Franklin and American officers killed in battle during the Independence War.

> Transatlantic spirits bend,
> Pleas'd our festives [sic] rites to see
> Franklin, Freedom's ablest friend!
> Warren and Montgomery.[76]

Such a homage was logical given that the Whigs ascribed the secession of the American colonies to misgovernment and corruption in Britain. In the first stages of the French Revolution, British reformers linked the American and the French revolutions, noting that French officers had imbibed notions of liberty while fighting for the Insurgents.[77]

Such a simple causal relationship could not resist the radicalization of the French Republic. British radicals preferred to talk of another continuity, that of Tory oppression from 1775 to 1815. In 1818, the London radical Robert Waithman could tell his friends at a large tavern dinner: "In 1793, a war was commenced, the same in principle as the American war; it was a war to support taxation without representation."[78] While radicals

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[74] *The Proceedings in Herefordshire, Connected with the Visit of Joseph Hume, Esq., M.P and a Detail of the Speeches Delivered at the Public Dinner, Held at the Hotel in the City of Hereford, on Friday, December 7, 1821, for the Purpose of Presenting That Gentleman with a Silver Tankard and a Hogshead of Cider (Purchased by Voluntary Subscription of One Shilling Each), in Approbation of His Parliamentary Conduct: With an Appendix of Documents Referred to by Mr. Hume and Elucidatory of the Important Statements in His Speech* (Hereford: Published and sold by J. Allen, 1822), p. 32.
[75] See above, p. 147.
[76] *Gazetteer and New Daily Advertiser*, 15 July 1790. General Warren died at the battle of Bunker Hill on 17 June 1775; General Montgomery died in the attack on Quebec on 31 December 1775.
[77] Emma Macleod, *British Visions of America, 1775-1820*, p. 108.
[78] "Mr Waithman's Dinner", *Times*, 9 July 1818, p. 3.

wielded Jacobin symbols (*Ça ira*, "Liberty or death" banners) to frighten their opponents, references to America tended to be few and more respectable. The slogan "No taxation without representation" was ubiquitous, in toasts, on banners, and in countless quotations in speeches and pamphlets. The phrase was embedded in a language of rights that circulated throughout the British North Atlantic. It had suffused the English reform movement since James Burgh's *Political Disquisitions* (1774-1776) and John Cartwright's *Take Your Choice* (1776).[79] It also circulated across Scotland and Ireland. In 1793, William Drennan and Archibald Hamilton Rowan took it up in the *Address from the Society of United Irishmen in Dublin to the Delegates for Promoting a Reform in Scotland*.[80] Examples could be multiplied. In the nineteenth century, the principle was presented as a maxim or a political axiom, but was rarely ascribed to its American source. The reformers, however, could revive the revolutionary origin of the phrase. This happened at Peterloo: a frightened witness wrote to the Home Office that the people had paraded "a large Flag on a Black Ground with on one side "no Borough Mongering, Taxation Without Representation is Unjust and Tyrannical" and on the reverse "Unite and be Free, Equal Representation or Death.""[81] The banner conjoined the two revolutions, with a variation of "Liberty or Death" (a motto of both the American and French Revolutions, in slightly different forms), reinjecting some radicality into well-worn American phrases. Banners reading "Taxation without representation" were a regular feature of marches in the North of England in the aftermath of Peterloo. The context of protest against the massacre, the volatile tension between crowds and authorities, and the meaning of the other banners inflected the sense of the American motto, making it a customary right and a motive for collective action for restoring rights. Among the banners enumerated by the *Times* at the Leeds meeting on Monday, 20 September 1819, just over a month after Peterloo, one read "Taxation without representation is contrary to the spirit of the English constitution".[82] The principle was felt to be English and customary, not American and revolutionary.

"No taxation without representation" resurfaced during the Reform crisis of 1830-1832 in marches of the Political Unions. The Birmingham Political Union, founded in September 1829 and revived by Thomas Attwood in early 1830, was a single-issue

[79] On the doctrine in Lord Camden and Cartwright: H. T. Dickinson, *Liberty and Property: Political Ideology in Eighteenth-Century Britain* (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1977), pp. 216, 227.
[80] *Belfast Politics*, p. 99.
[81] James Epstein, *Radical Expression*, p. 75. See a photograph of the controversial banner in Robert Poole, p. 175.
[82] "Public Meeting at Leeds", *Times*, 23 September 1819, p. 3.

organization uniting middle- and working-class to demand the suffrage. The unions used the tactic of extra-parliamentary groups: "meetings, speeches, newspaper publicity and their most salient feature, parliamentary petitions".[83] On 13 October 1832, a week after the Lords had rejected the first Reform Bill, the radicals of Bath marched in procession, parading a banner reading "The United Trades – We are all agreed – The Bill and nothing else" and on the reverse "Taxation without representation is cruel and unjust".[84] The American phrase became a practical threat in the context of the middle classes' refusal to pay taxes and an attempted run on the banks. The American Revolution, then, was implicit in the radical-reformist use of "No taxation without representation": the principle was held to be English and customary, and the United States served as the proof that it was feasible and desirable to put it in practice.

John Cartwright (1740-1824) has already been mentioned for his contribution to the continuity of radicalism. His work and celebrations of his memory served, not just to memorialize a radical tradition, but to integrate the motto, and the American Revolution, within a narrative of popular fight for English rights. Cartwright's exceptional longevity knit together the American Revolution of his youth and the South American revolutions of his old days. His last book, published a year before his death, *The English Constitution Produced and Illustrated* is a somewhat baffling performance mixing Saxon references and demands for advanced democracy. Cartwright praised what he called "the *Anglo-American* system", an ideal transatlantic polity inspired by the principles of King Alfred.[85]

Besides those writings, the celebrations he presided over, and, after 1824, dinners in his memory, constructed the same narrative. The extensive press coverage of dinners might well have reached a wider public than his writings could. As a living example of a patriot who had supported the Insurgents in 1776, Cartwright was a valuable asset in dinners. He frequently held forth on his fight against Tory absolutism and his personal sacrifices (he retired from the army rather than fight against America in the 1770s), his defence of the radical programme at the time and his steadfastness throughout the French Wars. After his death, commemorative dinners revived Cartwright's associations to the American Revolution. In 1833, a toast presented him as "the able, firm, consistent, and

[83] Nancy LoPatin, *Political Unions, Popular Politics and the Great Reform Act of 1832* (London: Macmillan, 1999), p. 27.
[84] *Ibid.*, p. 12.
[85] John Cartwright, *The English Constitution Produced and Illustrated* (London: Printed by R. Taylor, 1823), p. 248.

persevering advocate of universal suffrage, equal representation, vote by ballot, and annual Parliaments". "Major Cartwright was the enemy of all monopoly; no taxation without representation was his maxim." The people must become active and "follow the American example by obtaining universal suffrage and vote by ballot".[86] An American barrister present at the dinner affirmed that Cartwright was known and respected in the United States as an early supporter of independence. Cartwright's career and writings enabled radicals to summon the American Revolution and its principles as parts of English constitutional history, while passing over the French Revolution.

The American Revolution bequeathed a number of principles, popular sovereignty, checks and balances (especially the limitation of the executive), the separation of church and state and the absence of a state church. Those principles became incorporated in British radical and reformist discourse, with or without acknowledgment of their American actualization in the United States. The presence of the American Revolution in celebrations was relatively discrete; there were few toasts to the Founding Fathers, with the exception of Washington. The main trope that British reformers took up is "No taxation without representation" and its variants, because voting rights were so central in radical demands. The point was that the Americans obtained the vote and that the British shared the same rights, the same tradition of liberty, and should enjoy the vote as a consequence.

Chartist celebrations of the American Revolution

The Chartists idealized the United States, rehearsing many arguments found in radical discourse earlier. They shared an overwhelmingly positive vision of American society, with some criticism of commercialism, exploitation, inequalities, and especially slavery. American figures and symbols featured in books, pamphlets, papers, and the many objects crafted by the Chartist movement, from banners and portraits to plate and statuettes. Historians, though, have warned that America was a complex projection of many ideologies and desires.[87] It could even turn into an anti-model: Gregory Claeys has charted the "emergence of a *negative* model of America as a commercial society", a vision he claims

[86] "Reform. Anniversary Dinner of the Cartwright Club", *Cobbett's Weekly Political Register*, 27 July 1833, co. 209-223, quotations co. 217, 219, 220.
[87] James A. Epstein, '"America" in the Victorian Cultural Imagination', in *Anglo-American Attitudes: from Revolution to Partnership*, ed. by Fred Marc Leventhal and Roland Quinault (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2000), pp. 107–23.

became mainstream in the 1840s.[88] Some Owenites and the practitioners of the new social political economy posed a challenge to the Chartists, their view of the primacy of politics and their vision of virtuous, republican America. Indeed, the evidence of poverty in the United States proved that the nature of the political regime, republican or monarchical, did not matter much and that economic exploitation and inequality still existed in republics.

Despite this criticism, references to America in Chartist discourse were overwhelmingly positive. They concerned the contemporary United States, especially the socio-economic aspects of Jacksonian democracy. The American Revolution was not a major theme, but it was broached in newspapers that published articles on its history, and portraits of its leaders. Some leaders, like Bronterre O'Brien, thought that Chartism was based on principles established by the American Revolution.[89] Washington was famous and popular. George Lillibridge wrote that radical workers celebrated his birthday with toasts like "The United States – may her republican institutions be imitated all over the world".[90] Michael J. Turner notes that on those occasions, "they displayed the U.S. flag and read out the Declaration of Independence".[91] Washington was the major hero of the American Revolution that the Chartists revered, though they also admired Franklin and Paine. Those heroes were usually discussed in group rather than individually. The Glasgow-based *Chartist Circular*, for instance, started its first issue with "An Address to the People of Scotland", invoking Washington as a saviour figure: "the vivid imagination beholds a Wallace, a Tell, a Hampden, and a Washington, leading on their heroes to the rescue of their country."[92] What mattered was not the specificity of the American Revolution, but the international roll-call of heroes, including the Scotsman Wallace of course.

Apart from Washington, the other symbol of the American Revolution was the slogan "No taxation without representation". The Chartists constantly used the argument, because the workers were not represented and paid taxes to finance an unaccountable state that did not respond to their needs, or even passed adverse legislation. The motto appeared on banners with symbols from the French Revolution, biblical quotes and the text of the

[88] Claeys, p. 67.
[89] Turner, *Radicalism and Reputation*, p. 193.
[90] George D. Lillibridge, *Beacon of Freedom: The Impact of American Democracy upon Great Britain, 1830-1870.* (Philadelphia, PA: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1955), p. xiii. See also p. 42 for toasts to Washington and Andrew Jackson.
[91] Michael J. Turner, *Liberty and Liberticide: The Role of America in Nineteenth-Century British Radicalism* (Lanham, MD; Boulder, CO; New York: Lexington, 2014), p. 5. Neither Lillibridge nor Turner provides sources, and I have been unable to verify their claims.
[92] *Chartist Circular*, no. 1, 28 September 1839.

Charter, in typical syncretism, as at the Kersal Moor mass meeting on 24 September 1838 and again on 25 May 1839.[93] Like the radicals earlier, the Chartists felt that "No taxation without representation" was an ancient right rather than an American revolutionary discovery.

What distinguished most Chartists from radicals was the discussion of emigration as a practical and moral evil; the discussion was carried out in papers and pamphlets, but also at sociable events. This reflects the shift from political-constitutional to economic concern noted by Claeys and by Jamie L. Bronstein.[94] The United States had been a refuge for artisans and for political outliers since the 1790s. By the 1840s increased travel and exchanges made the Chartists aware that emigration was not always met with success in America.[95] British emigrants warned Chartists at home that America was not the paradise they imagined. There were many reasons for emigration, and political disillusionment with American political and economic conditions was not rare among Chartist emigrants.[96] Discussion of emigration spilled over into dinners, including those celebrating revolutions. For instance, at a dinner celebrating Robespierre's birthday in 1849, Julian Harney drank to Charles Keen and his family, who were about to emigrate to America. The toast wished the union of agrarian democrats in Britain and the US.[97] Keen was a "physical force" Chartist close to Julian Harney. The historian Ray Boston considered that he left for America voluntarily, although he had pressure from the authorities on his shoulders. Keen extolled America's freedoms and "far western prairie" in a letter from America published in Harney's *Democratic Review*.[98] Conversely, at the annual dinner of the Fraternal Democrats in 1847, Ernest Jones warned against the twin dangers of emigration and "a fragmentary splitting of our strength at home".[99] The emigrants were often the strongest in the community, he wrote (usually because they could be leaders or organizers, and their

[93] "Great Radical Demonstration at Colne", *Northern Star*, 27 October 1838, p. 6. See also M. Roberts, 'Chartist Banners in the Manchester Region, 1838-1843', https://www.matthewowenroberts.com/resources, consulted on 8 December 2021. See also a banner at the 21 May 1838 demonstration on Glasgow Green welcoming a delegation of the Birmingham Political Union: Chase, *Chartism*, p. 1.
[94] Jamie L. Bronstein, 'From the Land of Liberty to Land Monopoly: The United States in a Chartist Context', in *The Chartist Legacy*, ed. by Owen Ashton, Robert Fyson, and Stephen Roberts, Chartist Studies, 1 (Rendlesham: Merlin, 1999), pp. 147–70.
[95] See e.g. the example of Richard Pilling, a Chartist who sailed to America in August 1848 in Chase, *Chartism*, p. 234. On emigration, see also M. J. Turner, 'Chartism, Bronterre O'Brien and the "Luminous Political Example of America"', *History*, 97:325 (2012), 43–69 (pp. 46–7).
[96] Ray Boston, *British Chartists in America* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1971).
[97] "Birthday of Maximilien Robespierre", *Northern Star*, 14 April 1849, p. 2.
[98] Ray Boston, *British Chartists in America*, pp. 27–28; p.28 for the quotation from Keen's letter in the *Democratic Review* from April 1850.
[99] "The Fraternal Democrats", *Northern Star*, 25 September 1847, p. 7.

departure would harm the movement locally). Emigration was selfish, Jones continued: "I look on every Chartist who emigrates, as a deserter from the army of the people." The Chartists must fight in their own country. Such discussions of emigration in the context of celebratory dinners were typical of Chartists. The issue mattered to them because emigration among the working-class rank and file had taken off; the guests of earlier radical dinners were less directly concerned with emigration.

The Canadian rebellions of 1837-1838

The Canadian rebellions of 1837-1838 revived the principles of the American Revolution, because the two conflicts bore on local autonomy and imperial control, and involved the principle of 'no taxation without representation'.[100] In the autumn of 1837, rebellion broke out in Lower Canada (present-day Quebec province) and was brutally suppressed by the British troops, causing some 150-200 deaths. A second uprising the next year led to few casualties but to strong judiciary repression, involving hangings and transportations to Australia. Radical reformers in Upper Canada attempted to take Toronto. The repression cast a shadow over Queen Victoria's incipient reign and convinced many radicals that the Whigs were not just indifferent to the people's interests, but downright hostile to them and bent on crushing English liberties at home and in the empire.

Canada was replaced by new issues from 1839, following the failure of the rebellion, the Newport Rising and Parliament's dismissal of petitions. Yet, Malcolm Chase considered the Canadian rebellion "had a formative influence" on infant Chartism, increasing militancy, making Chartists ready to contemplate armed resistance against a tyrannical government (not just indulging theoretical discussions of constitutional right of resistance), and showing the need to fight the Whig party.[101] While in a sense, the Canadian Rebellions replicated the American Revolution, the English and Scottish Chartists also understood them in the context of the whole Whig policy, which included the Poor Law amendment and other legislation inimical to workers. Their identification with the Canadian rebels was intense, because of the identity of language and customs, and close links between the colony and the metropolis. The Chartists linked repression in Canada with instances of Whig 'tyranny', like the deportation of Dorset rural labourers in 1834 (the

[100] Paragraphs on the Canadian rebellion are largely based on : Malcolm Chase, '"Brothers under Oppression": Chartists and the Canadian Rebellions of 1837-38', in *The Chartists : Perspectives & Legacies*, Chartist Studies, 13 (London: Merlin, 2015), pp. 28–46.
[101] *Ibid.*, p. 36.

'Tolpuddle martyrs'). The plight of the Canadians was of special interest for the Scottish Chartists, given the multiple links and steady stream of emigration linking the two countries. All three Scottish Chartist papers presented repression in Canada as an instance of a large Whig liberticide policy. "The *True Scotsman* grouped the American Revolution, Canada's rebellions and the plight of working-class Scots as gross examples of taxation without representation."[102] The *Scottish Patriot* published a fiery address to the Chartists of Scotland, denouncing "the recent cold-blooded massacres—the executions and burnings in Canada;—scenes so diabolical, that they would disgrace the most barbarous ages of antiquity".[103] Despite the high-flown rhetoric, the paper called for a petitioning campaign, since the people could not win an armed conflict. British suppression of liberty in Canada also appeared in the very first article published in the *Chartist Circular* in September 1839, in a catalogue of wrongs committed by the Whigs, which included the Tolpuddle martyrs.[104] The Scottish Chartists' discourse on Canada did not seem very different from that of their English counterparts. Across Britain, radicals and Chartists equated the plight of the Canadians with that of the workers, and felt that the Whig government would be ready to use force against a workers' uprising.

The British radical press covered the Canadian rebellions extensively, denouncing British atrocities and paying attention to the leaders, Papineau and Mackenzie, but also the followers, the "people" pitted against the British troops. As antagonism mounted between the Francophone assembly of Lower Canada and the province's executive, which was accountable to London, British radicals identified with the Canadians, complaining that the principle of 'no taxation without representation' was breeched because of the executive in Quebec had independent money-raising powers, and because most of the population was deprived of the vote in the United Kingdom.

The Chartists convened meetings and sent petitions to Parliament. Early in the conflict, on 14 April 1837, the Leeds "Radical Club" met for its quarterly meeting; the dinner was followed by business involving the signing of a petition asking Parliament to reverse its repressive policy in Canada. The *Leeds Times* noted the low subscription, the harmony between "the gentleman, the tradesman, and the mechanic" as well as the

[102] *Ibid.*, p. 34.
[103] "To the Chartists of Scotland", *The Scottish Patriot,* 3 August 1839, reprinted in C. Auer, *Scotland and the Scots, 1707-2007: A Reader* (Presses universitaires de Strasbourg, 2013), p. 135.
[104] "Appeal to the People of Scotland", *Chartist Circular*, 28 September 28, 1839, p. 2.

democratic ideology of the club: "[t]he principle of universal suffrage and complete responsibility of the legislature to the people".[105] Toasts and speeches also highlighted the colonial dimension of the Canadian rebellion, for instance at a reform dinner at Stockport honouring Richard Cobden and the local MP Henry Marsland. Marsland saw the Canadian rebellion as a symptom of Whig dictatorship in the metropolis and in the empire:

> The same aristocratic party which here taxes us for the maintenance of an army under the pretence of defending our foreign possessions, has converted that army abroad into an engine for oppressing and plundering those very colonies. Listen to the cries from the Canadians, the Maltese, the inhabitants of the Cape, the apprentices of Jamaica – all proclaim with one voice that aristocratic misgovernment has taken deeper root even in our colonies than at home.[106]

Many dinners were occasions for protests against the Whigs' Canadian policy. Chartists and radicals used their repertoire of expressive action on the Canadian cause, invoking it in speeches, toasts, and a few meetings like ones in Bradford and Huddersfield in January 1838.[107] The Working Men's Association, founded in 1836 by William Lovett, Henry Hetherington, and other ultra-radical artisans, sent an address to the Canadian people, and received an answer from Louis Papineau. The LWMA placed the Canadian rebellion within an internationalist class interpretation extolling universal brotherhood. It went on to write an address to the working classes of Belgium, America, and Europe.[108] The Canadian rebellions gave rise to a few commemorative events, but in general they inspired toasts and speeches comprised in meetings devoted to other issues.

The American Revolution was an important historical precedent and illustration of the feasibility of radical demands. In the realm of sociability, this translated into references to Washington, 'No taxation without representation' and many allusions and references in toasts. I have found no 4 July dinners, except a few given by Carlilite ultra-radicals. Yet, the principles of the revolution informed British radical politics, but so much so that they were felt to be British, or universal, rather than American. The Canadian rebellions of 1837-1838 bore some similarities with this pattern: few events were specifically dedicated to

[105] Radical Club, *Leeds Times*, 22 April 1837, p. 3.
[106] "Great Reform Dinner at Stockport", *Manchester Times*, 18 November 1837, p. 4.
[107] Chase, '"Brothers under Oppression": Chartists and the Canadian Rebellions of 1837-38', pp. 34–35.
[108] On the LWMA, see Prothero, p. 211.

them, and the rebellions raised the issue of taxation without representation again. However, the Canadian rebellions did not produce any slogan, or a lasting popular figure in Britain. Still, they stimulated English political thought on nationality and democracy,[109] and thus cannot be considered as just a distant offshoot of the American Revolution.

British celebrations of the Spanish *trienio liberal* (1820-1823)

The Spanish *trienio liberal* (1820-1823) and its British supporters

Spain was an object of political and cultural interest in Britain in the Romantic era.[110] Rafael del Riego's coup brought down the absolute monarchy, ushering in three years of liberal rule (*Trienio liberal*). The Spanish coup triggered other uprisings in Portugal, Naples, and Piedmont, reverberating throughout the Mediterranean region.[111] Liberal experiences ended in all three countries in 1823. A liberal international emerged; it was linked by common ideological references, the similar experiences of the Iberian Peninsula, Italy, and Greece, a shared political idiom, and the transnational circulation of men and translated literature.[112] London was home to liberal writers publishing in Spanish, like Blanco White, while some British sympathisers spent time in Spain, like John Bowring, who was to edit Bentham's works. British radicals and liberals supported the Spanish experiment in constitutional monarchy.

Britain was a source of ideas and inspiration for Spanish and other Mediterranean revolutions. However, the British model of moderate constitutional monarchy competed with the French republican tradition. France was steeped in the prestige of the 1789 revolution, while London offered a gradual, liberal model of emancipation.[113] Elites from

[109] Anna Plassart and Hugo Bonin, 'Democratic Struggle or National Uprising? The Canadian Rebellions in British Political Thought, 1835–1840', *Global Intellectual History*, 2020, 1–19.
[110] D. Saglia and I. Haywood (eds), *Spain in British Romanticism: 1800-1840* (Cham: Springer International Publishing, 2018); B. G. Beatty and A. Laspra Rodríguez (eds), *Romanticism, Reaction and Revolution : British Views on Spain, 1814-1823* (Frankfurt-am-Main: Peter Lang, 2019).
[111] For an overview of the history of the Mediterranean from 1780 to 1840, see: M. Philp and J. Innes, 'Introduction', in J. Innes and M. Philp (eds), *Re-Imagining Democracy in the Mediterranean, 1780-1860* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2018), pp. 1–22 (pp. 8–18) and chapters on the different areas.
[112] Juan Luis Simal, 'Letters from Spain: The 1820 Revolution and the Liberal International', in *Mediterranean Diasporas: Politics and Ideas in the Long 19th Century*, ed. by Maurizio Isabella and Konstantina Zanou (London: Bloomsbury Academic, An imprint of Bloomsbury Publishing Plc, 2016), pp. 25–41.
[113] Jean-Claude Caron, 'Mouvements insurrectionnels et internationale libérale dans les années 1820', in *La Liberté guidant les peuples : les révolutions de 1830 en Europe*, ed. by Sylvie Aprile, Emmanuel Fureix, and Jean-Claude Caron, Époques (Seyssel: Champ Vallon, 2013), pp. 43–50 (p. 48).

the New World and emerging European nations could draw on either on both models. Mediterranean elites were more familiar with the French language and French constitutional thought, because of France's cultural clout, and because the French, like themselves, had to work out post-revolutionary political principles and institutions.[114] Many exiles, the Spaniards (and the Poles) in particular, chose Paris over London, out of attraction with that model, and for practical, linguistic, and cultural reasons. The United States represented an alternative republican model, which could be aligned with France's first revolution, as Lafayette's 1824-1825 tour of the United States showed.[115] Networks of societies and printing in support of European and South American liberal movements were polycentric and transnational. London was one major node, not the absolute centre.

The origins of the Spanish Revolution go back to 1808, when a crowd forced Charles IV to abdicate in favour of the Prince of Asturias (Ferdinand VII). The so-called Tumult of Aranjuez in effect destroyed the ancien regime and started the war of independence against France. Napoleon obtained Ferdinand's abdication. The French invasion involved Britain in the protracted Peninsular War, provoking a wave of enthusiasm for the Spaniards fighting to shake off Napoleon's yoke.[116] The Spanish councils (*juntas*) which administered regions were "revolutionaries in spite of themselves".[117] In 1812, patriots summoned the nation to a Cortes, which drafted the Constitution of Cádiz, a key legislative document that became a template for liberal policies elsewhere in the Mediterranean and in South America.[118] The constitution declared Spain a hereditary monarchy and enshrined principles of national sovereignty, separation of powers, right of property, legal equality; it fell short of proclaiming religious liberty and declared Catholicism the state religion. The Spanish liberals spoke an idiom that British

[114] Philp and Innes, p. 19.
[115] Jonathan Israel, *The Expanding Blaze: How the American Revolution Ignited the World, 1775-1848* (Princeton; Oxford: Princeton University Press, 2017), p. 507.
[116] Praise of Spanish patriots was contentious: the publication of the "Don Cevallos" article in the *Edinburgh Review* alienated Tory readers and provoked the establishment of the rival *Quarterly Review*: Gordon Pentland, *The Spirit of the Union : Popular Politics in Scotland, 1815-1820*, The Enlightenment World, 21 (Brookfield, VT: Pickering & Chatto, 2011), p. 9.
[117] Raymond Carr, *Spain: 1808-1975* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1982), p. 90.
[118] Gregorio Alonso, 'Cádiz Reprised: The Liberal Triennium in Spain and Spanish America, 1820–1823', in *The Rise of Constitutional Government in the Iberian Atlantic World: The Impact of the Cádiz Constitution of 1812*, ed. by Scott Eastman and Natalia Sobrevilla Perea, Atlantic Crossings (Tuscaloosa, Alabama: The University of Alabama Press, 2015); Gian Luca Fruci, 'Democracy in Italy. From Egalitarian Republicanism to Plebiscitarian Monarchy', in *Re-Imagining Democracy in the Mediterranean, 1780-1860*, ed. by Joanna Innes and Mark Philp (New York: Oxford University Press, 2018), pp. 25–50 (pp. 39–41); Mark Philp and Eduardo Posada-Carbó, 'Liberalism and Democracy', in *Re-Imagining Democracy in the Mediterranean, 1780-1860*, ed. by Joanna Innes and Mark Philp (New York: Oxford University Press, 2018), pp. 179–204 (p. 187).

Whigs and radicals would recognize: against visions positing British, or Anglophone, discourses centre stage and Mediterranean countries as recipients, it is worth noting that the use of *liberal* and *liberalism* in English stemmed for the Spanish *liberales*.[119] Among the sources of inspiration of the Cádiz Constitution and Spanish liberalism were French revolutionary principles and Bentham's philosophy.[120] The Spanish controversies around 1810 could be fruitfully compared with the 1790s "revolution debate" in Britain, a moment when fundamental political issues like constitution, natural rights, secularism, came to the fore, and the lexicon of modern politics became current. In 1814, Ferdinand restored absolute monarchy in Spain and declared the work of the Cortes null and void. The conflict between traditional, Catholic, Spain, and liberals, was entrenched. Engaged in conspiracies with freemasons, the liberals started several unsuccessful *pronunciamientos* (military coups tied with popular insurgency). Raymond Carr commented that those officers took immense personal risks, and became romantic heroes: "failure meant death and entry into the liberal calendar of martyrs."[121] On 1 January 1820, Major Rafael del Riego successfully led a *pronunciamiento* with young officers and Masons, and proclaimed the 1812 Constitution at Cabezas de San Juan. The mutiny was itself the result of the crisis of empire: the mutineers refused to be sent to reimpose colonial rule on South America. Both the Spanish revolutionaries and their British supporters connected the two libertarian causes, constitutional freedom in the peninsula and the independence of Spanish America.[122] In March, Ferdinand agreed to call the Cortes, and consented to the restoration of the Constitution. The liberals now in power soon split into moderate men of property and urban radicals (*exaltados*). The *trienio* was an experiment in liberalism against the odds. Until 1822, the liberals had to rule against in the face of the king's open hostility. Spain plunged into civil war in 1822 as the *exaltados* took over the government in Madrid while an absolutist Regency settled in Catalonia. The forces of the Holy Alliance were bent on restoring order and absolute monarchies. As early as 1821 the Congresses of Troppau and Laibach allowed Austria to quash the liberal revolutions in Naples and Piedmont. At Verona (October-December 1822) all powers but Britain gave France a mandate for a military expedition in Spain. On 7 April 1823, the French forces, Louis XVIII's "Hundred Thousand Sons of Saint Louis", entered Spain to restore Ferdinand in his full powers; the

[119] D. Hay, 'Liberals, Liberales and The Liberal: A Reassessment', *European Romantic Review*, 19:4 (2008), 307–20; Sánchez, 'Robert Southey and the "British Liberales"'.
[120] Raymond Carr, pp. 96, 130.
[121] *Ibid.*, p. 126.
[122] On the *trienio* as a window of opportunity for South American independences: Alonso.

war lasted until the end of the year. By December the defeat of the constitutional liberals was complete; Riego was tried for suspending the King and executed in November.

1819-1820 was one of those junctures when England, and no less Scotland, escaped revolution. The 1820-1823 *trienio* started during a period of effervescence among the British oppositional groups, who supported the Spanish liberals in the guise of banquets and advice in letters and pamphlets, and later in the more tangible forms of donations and military engagement. Calls to insubordination and millenarian prophecy multiplied in Scotland, to the authorities' dismay. A radical address posted across Scotland on 2 April read: "Turn your eyes toward SPAIN, and there behold the happy effects resulting from the UNION of Soldiers and Citizens."[123] The British Cabinet felt that the Spanish events and the precedent of a successful military coup they set added fuel to an explosive situation in Britain. But Canning was committed to non-intervention, and at the Congress of Verona in 1822, Britain refused to back the Holy Alliance and to give France a mandate to restore absolutism in Spain.[124]

Support for Spanish liberalism went beyond radical circles; the Whig press expressed much sympathy too. Radicals routinely toasted Spanish heroes along with South American independence, because they perceived the causes to be linked: they were triumphs of liberty and warnings to current and potential tyrants everywhere, including in Britain. The friends of Spain usually associated the names of the their two heroes, Riego and Colonel Antonio Quiroga (1784-1841), the highest-ranking officer in the conspiracy.[125] The Spanish revolution posed the specific problem of the monarchy's legitimacy: liberal Whigs argued that Ferdinand must understand that his reign would be more secure if it rested on public opinion and an elected parliament, rather than on force.[126] The Whigs called the Spanish revolution "glorious", alluding to the 1688-1689 revolution and the establishment of a parliamentary monarchy in Britain. On 6 April 1830, at the dinner following the chairing of Burdett and Hobhouse, who were returned for Westminster, toasts included "Lord Cochrane, the intrepid Champion of South American Independence, and the Cause of Liberty over the World", followed by "The glorious Revolution of Spain, and

[123] Pentland, *Spirit of the Union*, p. 98.
[124] Harold William Vazeille Temperley, *The Foreign Policy of Canning, 1822-1827* (London: G. Bell and sons, 1925), pp. 1–102 on Canning's policy in Spain.
[125] Richard Stites, *The Four Horsemen: Riding to Liberty in Post-Napoleonic Europe* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014), p. 64. See p. 28-119 on Riego.
[126] *Morning Chronicle*, 3 April 1820, p. 2.

may her example convince despots of the futility and wickedness of relying on the force of arms to repress the force of public opinion."[127] For Whigs and radicals, the Spanish revolution was further validated by the liberal insurrections that broke out later in the year in Portugal, Sicily, Naples and Piedmont.[128] The multiplication of revolutions abroad gave more salience to the standard Whig toast "May the example of one Revolution prevent the necessity of another." It was duly drunk at Fox's birthday dinner in January 1821, with other toasts such as "The Cortes of Spain and Portugal, and the Parliament of Naples". The Whigs drank another toast, which the *Morning Chronicle* presented as "[t]he last and characteristic toast of the Club": "The Cause of Liberty all over the World".[129] On that occasion, Fox explained that Spain had treated South America as Britain had treated its own American colonies. The Whig interpretive frame was still very potent; precedents from George III's reign, even after the king's decease, served to make sense of conflicts and revolutions at home and abroad.

British celebrations of the Spanish *trienio liberal* (1820-1823): the major dinners

Grand dinners celebrating the Spanish constitutional experience took place at its beginning, in April and October 1820, and towards its end, in the spring of 1823. A prestigious dinner "in honour of the restoration of Spanish Liberty" was given at the Albion Tavern on 26 April 1820. The splendour and sophistication of that somewhat whiggish event went much beyond what the City radicals could muster and denoted the patronage of the City merchants.[130] The decoration of the room comprised a "large transparency, containing three ovals, surrounded with laurel. On the top of the middle one was the word Constitution, from which rays of light were seen descending on the Spanish arms, and underneath, Ferdinand. On the two side ones were inscribed the names of Quiroga and Riego, surrounded with rays of light. The transparency was supported by two beautiful Spanish flags, and opposite was a flag bearing the Arms of the City of London and the Union Jack. In the four corners of the room were flags bearing the names of Arco-Aguero,

[127] "Chairing of the Westminster Members", *Morning Chronicle*, 7 April 1820.
[128] The *Liverpool Mercury* congratulated itself on the Spanish revolution and "similar efforts of the military in Naples and Portugal": "Retrospect of Last Year," *Liverpool Mercury*, 5 January 1821, p. 8.
[129] "Anniversary of Mr Fox's Birthday," *Morning Chronicle*, 29 January 1821, p. 3.
[130] "Spanish Liberty", *Examiner*, 30 April 1820, p. 279-280.

Mina, Acevedo, and Agar, each surrounded with a wreath of laurel."[131] Everything was Spanish (except the food presumably): the banners with names of battles on the tables, the music, the president, "an eminent Spanish merchant", and his supporting officers, three "patriot exiles". All the speeches were in Spanish, except one by Sir Thomas Dyer.[132] The merchants of London had displayed a quasi-ambassadorial symbolism involving national and City flags. Despite the formality of setting and symbolism, and the language barrier, the article described reactions to speeches as "rapturous" one of "tumultuous excitement". An orator drew a parallel between the emerging Spanish polity and "the time of William III", suggesting that the toasts they were giving to Spanish generals were as enthusiastically drunk as healths to Sidney and Russell under William.

The next dinners were more complex and resulted from the radical and Whig engagement with Spain. In the weeks followings Riego's *pronunciamiento*, several English radicals made contacts with Spaniards and drafted projects of constitution and legislation. Jeremy Bentham, the most famous of them, spent the better part of two years, from April 1830 to April 1822, writing about the affairs of Spain and attempting to influence policy and legislation there.[133] Another radical that turned his attention to Spain was John Cartwright. His pamphlets on constitutional matters published in Spanish for Spanish expatriates are now largely forgotten but provide a significant coda to his long life.[134] His ideas, even if couched in eccentric form sometimes, were common to many radicals. He felt the struggle for liberty to be universal: he sent advice to the Greeks on legislation, considered reviving the Olympic Games as a festival of nations, and was busy devising architectural and sculptural memorials of liberty. Cartwright's writings developed the teacher-pupil relationship so present in commemorative dinners: Saxon democracy was a template that the Spaniards could use; heroic Spain, in return, was a source of inspiration. Besides Bentham and Cartwright, the English radical press found the Spanish revolutionaries' ideas congenial, because they spoke a common liberal idiom of constitutional monarchy with British influences. This could paradoxically reinforce

[131] "Spanish Liberty", *Examiner*, 30 April 1820, p. 279. The others were officers who fought France in the independence war from 1808-1814.
[132] Sir Thomas Dyer was an officer in the Peninsular War. He was commissioned to Madrid in 1814, but asked to leave the service because the Spanish government had abrogated liberties.
"Sir Thomas Dyer," *Morning Post*, 11 October 1814, p. 2.
[133] Jeremy Bentham, *Colonies, Commerce, and Constitutional Law: Rid Yourselves of Ultramaria and Other Writings on Spain and Spanish America*, ed. by Philip Schofield (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1995).
[134] Novales; Rachel E. Eckersley, 'The Drum Major of Sedition: The Political Life and Career of John Cartwright (1740-1824)' (unpublished Ph.D., University of Manchester, 1999), p. 102.

negative stereotypes. The English agreed with projects of national regeneration founded on the Spaniards' own perception of their country's decline from greatness since the sixteenth century. The discourse of national regeneration, already found in France in 1789, revived traditional tropes. "We see Spain, the proverbial abode of sloth, monkery, and slavery, rising like a giant refreshed with wine, and displaying all the vigour and maturity of unfettered intellect."[135] The radicals found their own countrymen remiss in comparison. Ideas of regeneration, political awakening, constitution-making, popular sovereignty, parliamentary monarchy, and emulation between countries in the race to freedom, all appeared in commemorative dinners.

The diary of John Cam Hobhouse (1786-1869) sheds light on sociable dinners for Spain in radical circles.[136] In 1820, Hobhouse was returned as MP for Westminster as Burdett's colleague; he spoke in Parliament on a variety of liberal causes. He followed the conflict in Spain and frequented Spaniards and South Americans. The entry for 9 July 1820 is informative about networks of sociability and the international circulation of news; it also reveals that radicals celebrated revolutions in private dinners, choosing their own symbolic occasions.[137] Hobhouse was "going to dine with old Cartwright to celebrate [the] meeting of [the] Spanish Cortes. Did dine with Cartwright. Met a Spanish liberal, Captain Williams, George Dyer, a poet, and a lady or two – an agreeable day rather." (Cartwright wrote that on that occasion: "We did not fail to drink to the Cortes, and the healths of Quiroga and Riego, in sound Spanish wine."[138]) The diary went on: Cartwright showed Hobhouse one of his pet architectural projects, and the Spaniard informed him of Spanish politics, telling him the Cortes were chosen originally by universal manhood suffrage. On the same day, Hobhouse received a letter from Bentham's disciple Edward Blaquiere, who wrote from Madrid about "the present spirit of freedom throughout Spain" (but "the English are hated"); Hobhouse received another letter from Alexandria informing him of Turkey. Blaquiere, who stayed in Madrid from 22 June to mid-July, met prominent Spanish liberal writers and was a regular correspondent of Bentham's.[139] Hobhouse's correspondence and

[135] *Black Dwarf*, No. 6, vol. VI, 7 February 1821.
[136] I have used Peter Cochran's edition: *Hobhouse's Diary*, edited from BL Add MS 56540 and 56541. <https://petercochran.files.wordpress.com/2009/12/28newgate-and-westminster-18201.pdf>, henceforth "Hobhouse, Diary" followed by the date and page number. On Hobhouse: Peter Cochran, 'Hobhouse, John Cam, Baron Broughton (1786–1869),' *ODNB*.
[137] Hobhouse, Diary, 1820, p. 772.
[138] John Cartwright, *The Life and Correspondence of Major Cartwright*, 2 vols (London: Henry Colburn, 1826), II, p. 184.
[139] Bentham, p. xxvi sqq.

round of sociable activities show the prominence of foreign revolutions in radicals' minds in the early 1820s, as well as the connections they made between those revolutions.

The English radicals eagerly read accounts from Spain and other countries undergoing liberal revolution. In September 1820, they were still confident that the march of revolution would be irresistible. "Spain moves majestically", Richard Carlile wrote in an article entitled "The Progress of Revolution Cheering to the Lover of Liberty."[140] Still, they knew that reactionary forces endangered revolution from inside and from outside. The idea of a public dinner in honour of Spain apparently originated in the summer of 1820 with Blaquiere, who communicated it to Bentham, who in turn judged that Hobhouse would be the best organizer. The dinner, however, soon revealed rifts among radicals.[141] Hobhouse's diary reveals negotiations in advance of the 3 October 1820 dinner. It illuminates difficulties stewards had organizing dinners. Hobhouse asked the Duke of Bedford and his son Lord Tavistock; neither he nor Burdett could find an aristocrat to chair the meeting.[142] He then learnt that another dinner was afoot, and that Cartwright wanted to pass "huge resolutions".[143] In early September, he agreed with Sir Robert Wilson to "try to get up a Spanish dinner"; Wilson was to take the chair if Tavistock refused, and to "prevent old "Prosy" from passing his resolutions."[144] Wilson was a fervent supporter of the Spaniards (he was to go to Galicia in 1823 to fight with the liberals; the radical press covered his activities there).[145] The unceremonious treatment of Cartwright ("Old Prosy") contrasted with public eulogies; this says something of the rivalries and tensions in radical circles. Cartwright was objectionable not just because of his verbosity, but for political reasons: his anti-aristocratic, republican ideas threatened to antagonize the Whigs. Bentham wanted to choose all the stewards "from the friends of Sir Francis Burdett, to the exclusion of Major Cartwright, and the small number of his supporters. The object of this, was to get as many titled men, and other leading Whigs, as possible"[146] because those leaders of

[140] *The Republican*, Vol. IV, No. 1, 1 September 1820, p. 6.
[141] Christiana Brennecke, *Von Cádiz nach London: spanischer Liberalismus im Spannungsfeld von nationaler Selbstbestimmung, Internationalität und Exil (1820 - 1833)*, Veröffentlichungen des Instituts für Europäische Geschichte Mainz Abteilung für Universalgeschichte, 222 (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2010), pp. 91–93.
[142] Hobhouse, Diary, 18 August 1820, p. 784.
[143] Hobhouse, Diary, 25 August 1820, p. 786.
[144] Hobhouse Diary, 8 September 1820, p. 794. Wilson was an officer, and "a relatively radical whig" as MP for Southwark; in 1821 he lost his commission for interposing to prevent bloodshed during Queen Caroline's funeral (R. H. Vetch, revised by Gordon L. Teffeteller, 'Wilson, Sir Robert Thomas (1777–1849)', *ODNB*).
[145] See e.g. "Spanish Affairs", *Black Dwarf*, 4 June 1823, p. 805-812.
[146] 'Jeremy Bentham to José Joaquín de Mora, Tuesday, 26 September 1820' (Bodleian Libraries, University of Oxford, 2019). *Electronic Enlightenment*, consulted on 8 February 2022.

opinion would stay out if Cartwright presided. It was finally settled to admit Cartwright as a steward but to entrust the list of resolutions and toasts to the Whigs.

The stewards of the dinner, then, were a coalition of different strands of radicalism. Wilson chaired. Hobhouse served next to Cartwright, the Whig MP Henry Grey Bennet, the Scottish philosophical radical Joseph Hume (a political economist and disciple of Bentham, David Ricardo and James Mill),[147] Sir Gerard Noel, an unpredictable man and an ex-Foxite,[148] and Alderman Wood, "one of the chief friends and counsellors of Queen Caroline".[149] As Malcolm Chase noted, all were "Queen's men"; they supported Caroline in her trial, a longstanding political conflict that crystallized opposition to the Regent.[150] Caroline and Spain were issues loosely linked around the defence of liberty and protest against a despotic king. The radicals seized the opportunity of the Mediterranean revolutions to show their strength, warn the King and Cabinet to respect liberties, and build a reform momentum. For Carlile, the dinner would serve "to convey the sentiments of the different counties to each other, and concentrate the general will and opinion as to the present government in this country."[151] Through the dinner, the people would raise their voice, almost as a vote or a petition aggregates the Rousseauvian "general will".

That "Spanish dinner" included some features common to most dinners to foreign revolutions in the next thirty years. It was an ebullient event; newspaper accounts report contradictory passions from the public. As sometimes happened, the last orator, a Roman Catholic priest, threw the meeting in turmoil with a longwinded proposal for reconciling Catholics and Protestants.[152] Domestic concerns often came to the fore, in this case the Queen Caroline affair, in the contrast between the "applause and hisses" meeting the loyal

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147 David R. Fisher, *The History of Parliament: The House of Commons 1820-1832*, ed. D. R. Fisher, 2009. <https://www.historyofparliamentonline.org/volume/1820-1832/member/hume-joseph-1777-1855>.

148 Simon Harratt, "NOEL, Sir Gerard Noel, 2nd bt. (1759-1838*)," The History of Parliament: The House of Commons 1820-1832*, ed. D.R. Fisher, 2009. < https://www.historyofparliamentonline.org/volume/1820-1832/member/noel-sir-gerard-1759-1838>.

149 Anita McConnell, 'Wood, Sir Matthew, first baronet (1768–1843), druggist and politician', *ODNB*. Wood was elected Lord Mayor twice. "In 1817 Wood was elected MP for the City of London and held the seat until his death".

150 Chase, *1820*, p. 168.There is an extensive literature on the Queen Caroline affair. See Jonathan Fulcher, 'The Loyalist Response to the Queen Caroline Agitations', *Journal of British Studies*, 34.4 (1995), 481–502; Chase, *1820*; James Grande, *William Cobbett, the Press and Rural England: Radicalism and the Fourth Estate, 1792-1835*, Palgrave Studies in Nineteenth-Century Writing and Culture (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2014), chap. 5; Anna Clark, *Scandal: The Sexual Politics of the British Constitution* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2004), chap. 8.

151 "Public Dinner to Celebrate the Several Revolutions on the Continent," *The Republican*, Vol. IV, No. 5, 29 September 1820, p. 150-151.

152 "Spain, Naples, and Portugal," *Morning Chronicle*, 3 October 1820, p. 3; *Black Dwarf*, Vol. V, No. 14, 4 October 1820, p. 465-475.

toast, and the "loud and continual applause" welcoming the toast to the Queen. Parliamentary reform inevitably cropped up: an orator contrasted rising Spain with the wicked British administration and asked for "a full, fair, and free representation".

Like Carlile and the ultra-radicals, the philosophical radicals and the Whigs believed that liberty in one country strengthened liberty elsewhere and helped others to recover it. In Sir Robert Wilson's words, they must "hail the establishment of a Constitutional system in every other country – a system which was not only essential to the well-being of the natives, but an additional safeguard to our own liberties." This belief led to continuous comparisons. The teacher-pupil theme which was so prominent in the early years of the French Revolution, and which Cartwright developed in his pamphlets, also permeated the dinner. Britain have given lessons in liberty to all other countries, but was now likely to follow Spain and Portugal. The orators had a hierarchy of political regimes in mind: for Wilson, Russia was "a Scythian government", Austria "a semi-barbarous Government [...] at least 250 years behind". Hobhouse's homage to Spain, Portugal and Naples, comprised an ambivalent hint at their backwardness: "We have had great and memorable lessons taught to us by nations from which we could not have expected so much". The *Black Dwarf* noted a toast addressing England's sluggard defence of liberty: "Old England: As among the nations not the least; so, at Freedom's goal may she not be last!"[153] The teacher-pupil relationship was always at risk of inversion.

Other features commonly found in revolution dinners were the homage to heroes, and reference to the French Revolution. The heroes of the day were officers, as often in such dinners. The speech introducing the toast to Quiroga and Riego, however, did not much to heroize them, suggesting that they were excitable men suited to a time of crisis (perhaps implying they might not qualify as wise legislators). The reference to the French Revolution was prompted by a toast to Lafayette, a leading liberal in Restoration France: in his speech, Hobhouse distinguished between "the crimes of Robespierre" and the virtuous Roland; in typical Girondin fashion, he retained the principles of 1789 and rejected the "vortex of passions" unleashed in 1793. Hobhouse was then a moderate reformer; he became increasingly conservative with age.

Another issue found in later dinners concerns practical questions of precedence and honour, as well as mutual comprehension and translation between Britons and foreign

[153] *Black Dwarf*, Vol. V, No. 14, 4 October 1820, p. 470.

refugees. Many fine points had to be arranged before dinners, especially when the guests of honour were also in financial dependence; sources are unfortunately usually silent over such negotiations. An article on a celebration of the revolutions of Spain, Naples and Portugal provides a rare testimony on rules of politeness:

> The Meeting was honoured with the presence of several Foreigners, but from some accident or other they were obliged to content themselves with a situation near the door, where they could not possibly hear any of the speakers. It may have been impossible for the Stewards to secure better seats for them; but accidents of this kind, which may admit of a construction unfavourable to the national courtesy, are always to be regretted.[154]

Despite such a misstep, the dinner was well attended and could be considered a success, but the Whigs failed to exploit it (just as they were unable to transform the Queen Caroline affair into a sustained reform campaign). The dinner provoked adverse reactions from the radical camp. Cobbett criticized the presence of noblemen and the unnatural alliance with Whigs as detrimental to the cause.[155] In *The Black Dwarf*,[156] T. J. Wooler launched an attack on political dining itself, noting that "[t]he customs of the country" dictated dining and drinking when the dire state of the nation would impose sobriety. He denounced the elitism of the dinner, its price (14 shillings), and the attempts to pack the organizing committee with aristocrats and MPs. The nobility kept away, he argued, because the Spanish Revolution was more than they could accept. Wooler also criticized the stewards, who had used a chilling tone and arranged to water down the resolutions arranged before the dinner; this suggests an ideological split between a larger body of men who were consulted before the dinner and the more elitist stewards. Wooler also blamed the stewards for never mentioning parliamentary reform: the chairman had praised revolution abroad but kept silent on reform at home, not even mentioning "our domestic martyrs".[157] Wooler went as far as publishing the toasts and resolutions that were originally intended and that are not to be found in accounts of the actual dinner. This material includes a declaration to be given to the Spanish, Portuguese and Neapolitan ambassadors, praising the Spanish constitution, the heroic soldiers, and the harmony between army and people.[158] This project anticipates

[154] "Spain, Naples, and Portugal," *Morning Chronicle*, 3 October 1820, p. 3.
[155] *Cobbett's Weekly Political Register*, Vol. 37, No. 12, 7 October 1820, co. 821-823.
[156] *Black Dwarf*, Vol. V, No. 14, 4 October 1820, p. 465-475.
[157] *Black Dwarf*, Vol. V, No. 14, 4 October 1820, p. 471.
[158] *Black Dwarf*, Vol. V, No. 14, 4 October 1820, p. 468-472. The resolution is printed p. 469-470.

the quasi-diplomatic dinners given to South American envoys, and the declarations sent to France in 1830 and 1848.

Wooler found the dinner too Whig, but forgot that a dinner to Spain, with a broad basis of English reformers and a diplomatic dimension, involved choosing the lowest common denominator: hence, vague talk of "freedom" and "justice" and the absence of any specific measure of reform. Radicals loved to impersonate "the people" and talk on behalf of the nation; this raised the frustrating issue of their own minority and powerlessness each time a dinner was held on a broader basis that would include Whigs, let alone Tories. Staunch radicals, then, were bound to be disappointed by the October 1820 "Spanish dinner". On the other side of the political spectrum, the government was not impressed. In Parliament, Hobhouse and the Whigs appeared weak and were at pains to counter government arguments on the necessity of large armies to face the insurrectionary threat.[159]

No regular pattern of celebration emerged from that dinner. In 1820-1823, countless dinners comprised toasts to Spain, Italy and Portugal, but the *pronunciamiento* never became an annually celebrated anniversary, contrary to the outbreak of the French revolutions of 1830 and 1848, and the Polish uprising of 1830. Factors present in the French and Polish cases did not operate then. While France and the Polish exiles celebrated their foundational revolution, there was no interest in Spain to celebrate Riego's coup, nor was there a sizeable Spanish colony in London that could organize dinners as the Poles did in the 1830s. British radicals might also have been reluctant to celebrate a mutiny; the Spanish constitution was a worthier object of celebration but did not correspond to a precise date. A least one event was attempted in January 1824, a joint benefit dinner, whose proceedings would be split between the Greek Committee and the Spanish Committee which was formed the year before. The request that toasts should avoid any political allusion, to avoid irking the Tories,[160] again shows the perennial necessity of negotiating and finding minimal agreements.

Large dinners resumed in the spring of 1823, as France was preparing its expedition to restore absolutism. The Cabinet was still unwilling to intervene in Spanish affairs. On 7 March 1823, London merchants and metropolitan reformers gave a sumptuous dinner to the Spanish and Portuguese ambassadors, and the Duke of San Lorenzo, the former Spanish

[159] Chase, *1820*, pp. 168–69.
[160] Rosen, p. 232.

ambassador in France.[161] The 350 guests filled the great room of the City of London Tavern. The mercantile interests were represented by the City of London's two MPs, the Vice-President of the Bank of England and many merchants. The guest list published in the *Morning Chronicle* was a roll call of Whig noblemen and MPs, including the Duke of Somerset, Lord John Russell, and the Marquess of Tavistock; also present were eminent radicals like Burdett and Hobhouse, and the intellectuals Sir James Mackintosh and Ricardo. The chairman, Lord Bentinck, identified as a Pittite but his commitment to reform sometimes strained his relations with Tories.[162] The ambassadors and the Duke of San Lorenzo marched into the room accompanied by the Duke of Sussex, a member of the royal family known for his reformist leanings.[163]

The dinner was a lavish declaration of support to the Iberian liberal monarchies. The room was adorned with Spanish flags and ornaments; bands played Spanish "national music" during the dinner. The *Times* also published the lyrics of a song starting "Spain awaked from slavery's trance", to the tune of *Scots wha hae*.[164] The press noted the presence of Guglielmo Pepe, a Neapolitan general who took refuge in London after the Austrian army crushed the insurrection in 1821.[165] The evening's keynote was support for constitutional Spain and Portugal, especially against French interference and the "odious principles" of Bourbon legitimacy. Orators denounced the family compact between the French and Spanish monarchies, which subordinated the latter to the former. Speeches were repetitive, all insisting on Anglo-Spanish solidarity and national independence, singing the blessing of peace without asking for any British intervention in Spain.

Compared with other revolution dinners, orators voiced economically liberal, socially conservative principles. As Hobhouse noted in his diary: "it was so arranged that there should be no 'radical' politicians brought forward – this was wise enough, I think".[166] The head of the Baring banking house assured the Iberian guests that the presence of

[161] The description of the dinner and all quotations are taken from: "Grand Public Dinner to the Spanish and Portuguese Ministers, and the Duke de San Lorenzo", *Morning Chronicle*, 8 March 1823, p. 2-3. There were other long accounts: "Grand Spanish Dinner", *Times*, 8 March 1823, p. 3; "Dinner to the Spanish and Portuguese Ambassadors, and the Duke de San Lorenzo", *Examiner*, 9 March 1823, p. 163-164.
[162] Douglas M. Peers, 'Bentinck, Lord William Henry Cavendish [known as Lord William Bentinck] (1774–1839)', *ODNB*.
[163] Prince Augustus Frederick, sixth son of George III and Queen Charlotte (1773-1843), supported progressive policies, including parliamentary reform and repeal of the Corn Laws (T. F. Henderson, revised by John Van der Kiste, 'Augustus Frederick, Prince, duke of Sussex (1773–1843)', *ODNB*).
[164] "Grand Spanish Dinner", *Times*, 8 March 1823, p. 3.
[165] On Pepe, see: Stites, chap. 3.
[166] Hobhouse, Diary, 7 March 1823, p. 18.

members of the Royal Family, noblemen and merchants offered "an example of the harmony with which all classes agreed". Orders and distinctions were "the best means of preserving" liberty. He gave the toast "The extension of Commerce and Civilization to every part of the Globe." The toast masked a major subject of disagreement between the Cortes, bent on keeping the colonies, and the City and the radicals, who defended the independence of the American colonies and free trade. The Whiggism of the dinner was clear in some toasts and in Hobhouse's compliment to the chairman. Hobhouse stated that Bentinck was "a descendant of a friend of William III" (he was indeed the great-grandson of Hans Willem Bentinck, confidant of William of Orange and first earl of Portland) and that the aggressor of Spain, Louis XVIII of France, was "a descendant of Louis XIV". In typically Whig fashion, Hobhouse saw the Spanish Revolution as a repetition of England's Glorious Revolution. Such genealogical linkages were also made in later aristocratic dinners, especially some in favour of Poland. It is interesting to note that noblemen sometimes referred to real genealogy and their ancestors' historic role, while plebeian radicals and Chartists invented pantheons based on ideological, not biological, kinship.

What were the effects of the dinner? The *Morning Chronicle* stated that an "immense crowd" outside the tavern cheered as the diners returned to their coaches and shouted "Spain for ever!" – "The Spanish Cause!" – "Down with the Holy Alliance!" – "Manuel for ever!" – "No Bourbons!"[167] The Whig paper wished to convey a sense of unanimity and popular support for Whiggism, Spain and against Bourbon, absolutist politics. Hobhouse's diary was more reserved. The dinner was good, but when the Spanish ambassador said his country needed gold and guns, the guests sniggered.[168] The City, the Whigs and the radicals raised subscriptions, but only later in the Spring, when it was probably too late. A week after the dinner, Samuel Fores published a print, *The Patriotic Dinner. British Zeal in the Cause of Spanish Liberty or a Hint to Legitimate Despots* (BM 14513, 15 March 1823). It represented diners, with speech bubbles representing toasts and cries. The characters are not caricatured but rather sympathetically portrayed, the decanters and glasses on the table bearing none of the marks of debauchery present in so many prints of dinner scenes. For Ian Haywood, "the print implies that such expressions of sympathy

[167] "Grand Public Dinner to the Spanish and Portuguese Ministers, and the Duke de San Lorenzo," *Morning Chronicle*, 8 March 1823, p. 3. Jacques Manuel was a French liberal deputy who was expelled from the lower chamber for allegedly defending regicide; he had protested against the Spanish expedition.
[168] Hobhouse, Diary, 7 March 1823, p. 18.

and outrage can easily decline into self-congratulatory political rituals."[169] Yet, Fores's positive portrayal contrasts with the savage rendition of radical, or crudely partisan Whig or Tory dinners, and suggests a consensus for Spain. Yet, the dinner sowed discord: on the day Fores issued his print, Cobbett published a long, virulent reply to Mackintosh. Cobbett felt that promises of support to Spain were misleading because no help would be forthcoming. He accused Mackintosh of betraying Spain by arguing for peace, and quoted the precedent of the November 1792 "Edict of Fraternity" and war with France to lambast Mackintosh's apostasy from Foxite, revolutionary principles.[170] Again, a carefully planned dinner revealed rifts in the opposition, in Parliament and out of doors.

In the spring of 1823, when France was sending troops to Spain, it is notable that the British supporters of liberal Spain had apparently no contacts with the French liberal opposition, which vigorously protested against Spanish expedition.[171] The French liberals based themselves on Canning's 18 March speech in the Commons, which stated that Britain could intervene if a long, bloody war proved that France was acting against the Spaniards' wishes.[172] The British supporters of Spain were in touch with Spanish exiles, but not with the French liberals who shared their opposition to Bourbon absolutism.

The Cabinet remained neutral and gave France full rein. Canning scored a personal triumph when, on 30 April, the Commons approved his policy of neutrality by a large majority.[173] In the spring of 1823, a "Spanish committee" emerged; it was less structured and smaller than the Greek Committee. It prepared a fundraising dinner that was held on 13 June 1823. Again, Hobhouse's diary reveals difficulties in mustering the support of noblemen: Lansdowne, Grey and Ellenborough declined to attend because they felt the Spanish cause was hopeless.[174] Lord William Bentinck finally agreed to take the chair. The meeting started tumultuously, because in Bentinck's absence, Henry 'Orator' Hunt had taken the chair "amidst a storm of hisses and huzzahs". Hobhouse restored order.[175] Whig orators – Mackintosh, Brougham – came to the fore. The meeting passed five resolutions

[169] I. Haywood, 'The Spanish "Revolution" in Print and Image', in D. Saglia and I. Haywood (eds), *Spain in British Romanticism: 1800-1840* (Cham: Springer International Publishing, 2018), pp. 215–40 (p. 238).
[170] "To Sir James Mackintosh, On the Dinner-Fight, at the City of London Tavern, on Friday, 7 March 1823," *Cobbett's Weekly Register*, Vol. 58, No. 11, 15 March 1823, co. 664-693; co. 668-680 for the French revolutionary precedent.
[171] On the French liberal opposition to the war: Emmanuel Larroche, *L'Expédition d'Espagne: 1823, de la guerre selon la Charte*, Histoire (Rennes: Presses universitaires de Rennes, 2013), pp. 29–88.
[172] *Ibid.*, pp. 156–7.
[173] Temperley, p. 87.
[174] Hobhouse, Diary, 10 June 1823, p. 47. By 20 June 1823, only half a dozen men regularly attended (p. 53).
[175] Hobhouse, Diary, 13 June 1823, p. 50.

affirming all nations' right to absolute legislative independence, proclaiming everlasting gratitude to Spain, whose heroism from 1808 contributed to victory over Napoleon, and condemning the French intervention. The meeting also accepted Britain's neutrality but asked Britons to express their abhorrence of France's proceedings.[176] The meeting centred on Spain, given that the revolutions had been crushed elsewhere, but still an element of universality remained, when orators reminded the audience of the despotism oppressing German states. A committee was duly elected to manage the subscription; five of the twelve members were MPs. Wide publication of lists gave visibility to the subscribers and showcased the cause and the generosity of its supporters.[177]

British celebrations of the Spanish *trienio liberal* (1820-1823): defeat and memory

The committee forwarded money and weapons to Spain, but the fight of British volunteers like Sir Robert Wilson could not prevent France's relentless advance. Iberian, European, and North American liberals were left with the legacy of revolutionary failure. They had to confront conservative interpretations that variously blamed the failure of the liberal experiment on the lack of popular support among Spaniards, the regime's intolerance of criticism, its divisive policies such as the expropriation of monastic lands, failure to tackle the American question and infighting among radicals.[178]

The memorialization of Riego was one major way of making sense of this past and preparing for future fights. His theatrical, cruel, execution on 7 November 1823 shocked many in Britain.[179] Toasts to his memory multiplied.[180] A cult of Riego had developed since 1820; at first, Quiroga was always associated, but Riego progressively won the ascendency. A passage in the *Examiner* on the eve of the major October 1820 "Spanish dinner" was typical of the interest in Riego's physical and moral identity, the international circulation of print and the use of portraits:

> We have just seen a print of his General, published in Spain, in which he is drawn with a frank, eager, and spirited countenance, a little tending to the fiery, – which

[176] "Meeting in Aid of the Constitutional Government of Spain", *Morning Post*, 14 June 1823; "Public Meeting in Behalf of Spain," *Black Dwarf*, 18 June 1823, p. 891-895.
[177] John George Lambton gave £1,000, Burdett £500. See lists e.g. in *Morning Post*, 14 June, *Times*, 16 June, 22 June 1823.
[178] Stites, p. 113.
[179] *Ibid.*, pp. 115–20, 334.
[180] See e.g. "Belfast Second Annual Reform Dinner," *Morning Chronicle*, 27 November 1823, p. 1.

> we should take to be his character; QUIROGA (who is in the same print) has regular handsome features, with a more reflecting, though not less sincere expression.[181]

Punning on the "civility" of the two officers, the *Examiner* added that hopefully the Spanish military would accept the "ascendancy" of the civilian power, implicitly recognizing the danger of charisma when possessed by military leaders. Portraits of Riego circulated by the end of 1820. In October 1820, the English satirist William Hone drew four profile portraits of "QUIROGA, RIEGO, AGUERO, AND BANOS, the Four distinguished Founders of the Spanish Revolution."[182] Riego obtained a martyr's aura after his death. Other portraits were published on this occasion; narratives of his last campaign, memoirs, and especially the song *Himno de Riego* kept his memory alive.[183] "Laurels continued to fall on Riego's memory through the nineteenth century",[184] more in Spain than in Britain. *Himno de Riego* became the national anthem of the Spanish Second Republic (1931-1939); the song featured in songbooks for British Labour activists and volunteers in the Civil War.[185]

If Riego's memory was finally appropriated for the republican cause, nobody fully controlled it in the 1820s; as usual, there were competing visions of secular martyrs and revolutionary struggles.[186] Carlile's followers continued to celebrate Spain after the demise of the *trienio*. At a celebration of Paine's birthday in February 1824, the toast to "General Mina, and the Patriots of Spain" provoked a long, heated argument when John Gale Jones asked "who were the Patriots?"[187] Projects of memorialization emerged as early as

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[181] *The Examiner*, 1 October 1820, p. 630.

[182] William Hone," QUIROGA, RIEGO, AGUERO, AND BANOS, the Four distinguished Founders of the Spanish Revolution," 26 October 1820. Museo Nacional del Romanticismo, Madrid, Reference number CE5722: <http://ceres.mcu.es/pages/ResultSearch?txtSimpleSearch=Bishop&simpleSearch=0&hipertextSearch=1&search=simpleSelection&MuseumsSearch=MNR%7C&MuseumsRolSearch=17&listaMuseos=[Museo%20Nacional%20del%20Romanticismo>, consulted on 8 December 2021.

[183] See e.g. a portrait "Published by H Berthoud Regents Quadrant Novr 1823", BM Registration number 1927,0216.4; another one "Published Dec.r 13.1823 by G. Smeeton, Arcade, Pall Mall", BM Registration number 1874,0613.1532. On the sphere of print: Simal.

[184] Stites, p. 336.

[185] The Working-Class Movement Library, Salford has a copy of *Himno de Riego: Spanish Republican Anthem*, published by the Workers' Music Association, another one published c. 1938; the song is also in the Cambridge University Labour Federation's *Songs of the People* and *Pioneer Song Book: 1844-1944: To Commemorate the Centenary of the Rochdale Pioneers* (1944).

[186] On rival appropriations and memorial conflicts: Pickering and Tyrrell, *Contested Sites*; *Secular Martyrdom in Britain and Ireland: from Peterloo to the Present*, ed. by Quentin Outram and Keith Laybourn (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2018).

[187] "Celebration of Paine's Birthday", *Republican*, Vol. 9, No. 6, 6 February 1824, p. 167; Brennecke, pp. 175–76.

December 1823, just after Riego's execution. Wooler noted the universal worth of Riego's values and appealed to the precedents of Greece and Rome:

> When she [Nature] thus produces one of her master-pieces, the hero belongs not merely to the country which has the honour of his birth, or the infamy of his death, but to the world at large.[188]

Cartwright too paid homage to Riego. He was deeply affected by his death, because of its political import and because he knew his brother well. He vainly tried to set up a subscription for a memorial, which would have shown the Spanish patriot expiring in the arms of Fame; Cartwright's internationalism was visible in the inscriptions in Spanish, English, Latin, French and German he had devised.[189] Official bodies did not accede to such demands.[190] The London Common Council refused to grant money for a memorial to Riego, but in February 1825 it appropriated £500 for Spanish and Italian exiles, and later organized benefit concerts.[191]

Riego's coup was the earliest revolution that shook the post-1815 international order. The Spanish revolution provided a template for Mediterranean uprisings. When it comes to British sociability, it also set some patterns. Though it was Greece, not Spain, that from 1821 provided the model for future relief committees, the Spanish revolution was an early example of ideals and problems that were to characterize later dinners. A short phase of early enthusiasm and unanimity soon gave way to disputes and rivalries, in the fissiparous logic of British radicalism, while Tories and conservative Whigs usually kept away. The organization of dinners – finding venues, selecting chairmen, stewards and orators, drafting toasts and resolutions – raised practical and ideological problems. The sources documenting such events usually include one or two friendly reports of proceedings in papers like the *Morning Chronicle*, which contrast with another set of sources criticizing dinners, comprising outlets from rival radical groups and unpublished material like private correspondences and diaries. Ian Newman usefully warned that newspaper reports should be complemented by manuscript sources because they idealized dinners and elided

[188] *The Black Dwarf*, 3 December 1823, quoted in Brennecke, p. 168.
[189] Cartwright, II, pp. 249–50.
[190] However, a Riego street was laid out in Edinburgh in 1817 and appears on a map from 1825. The street still bears the same name. "The Derivation of Edinburgh's Street Names", <http://www2.ebs.hw.ac.uk/edweb/STREETS/part1/r.htm>, consulted on 3 June 2020.
[191] Brennecke, pp. 264–65.

conflicts.[192] This caveat should be qualified, because the line does not so much divide published and unpublished material, but "authorized" versions and a medley of rival publications and "off the record" utterances.

The 1820-1823 Spanish dinners form a small series that set many parameters of later dinners to foreign fighters. They were part of the broader revolutionary wave that engulphed the Mediterranean and South America. The early 1820s were also a moment when sociable events multiplied in support of the independence of Spanish colonies: such dinners took up and amplified themes central in the Spanish dinners, in particular liberty and the cult of the foreign hero.

Celebrations of South American independence

A British cult of Simón Bolívar?

Simón Bolívar was one of the most popular heroes in Britain in the early nineteenth century. He was unknown when he visited London in 1810 as a young man, on a mission to get help for Venezuelan independence. In the 1820s the daring and success of his military expeditions across the South American continent earned him massive popularity in Europe and the United States. He was a charismatic leader, one of those "men on horseback" that David Bell showed were worshipped in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries because they founded a new order in politics and society.[193] Bolívar had all the qualities typical of nineteenth-century charismatic leaders. He was a military hero, noted for his victories, physical courage, and stamina. He was a redeemer who arose in the midst of a frightful crisis and saved his people from destruction. Thirdly, he was a founder who brought a new nation into being (though his vision of a united continent did not come to materialize). There was clearly a cult of Bolívar in France and in the United States.[194] This is less obvious in Britain, but there too Bolívar had a following. The new technologies underpinning the expanding public sphere – the media, engraving, the novel, memoirs and other literary

[192] I. Newman, 'The Anti-Social Convivialist: Toasting and Resistance to Sociability', in V. Capdeville and A. Kerhervé (eds), *British Sociability in the Long Eighteenth Century* (Boydell and Brewer, 2019), pp. 219–36.
[193] Bell, chap. 5.
[194] Pierre Vayssière, *Simón Bolívar: le rêve américain* (Paris: Payot, 2008), pp. 309–36; Quentin Revillot, ' 'La Bolivar-mania'. Pénétration culturelle et appropriation française d'une figure de l'émancipation hispano-américaine dans la société de Louis XVIII', *Bulletin de l'Institut Pierre Renouvin*, N° 51.1 (2020), 89–101; Fitz, chap. 4.

genres – presented Bolívar as familiar and approachable. A number of memoirs presented his intimate habits to an eager public steeped in the "culture of celebrity".[195] In David Bell's words, many accounts "included detailed physical descriptions of Bolívar and highlighted personal traits such as his incessant womanizing and his absolute detestation of tobacco smoke."[196] He was all the more idealized because he was absent and far away: the real man could never deflate the myth. However, Bolívar had contacts and envoys who managed his fame in Britain; in that respect, he differed from Garibaldi in mid-nineteenth century Australia, who was an icon so utterly malleable as to become meaningless.[197] Bolívar was both extraordinary and very approachable, an embodiment of heroism, liberty, and democratic leadership.

An interesting feature of narratives of Bolívar's life was the way they dramatized South American sociability in ways that were familiar to Britons, yet somewhat exotic and hyperbolic. Travels narratives comprised dinner scenes showing Bolívar drinking toasts, thus providing a kind of mirror image of the Britons toasting him at home. The following example is taken from Charles Stuart Cochrane's *Journal of a Residence in Colombia*. Captain Cochrane was a naval officer who became an opposition MP; his fight with the Colombians fuelled popularity with radicals and some Whigs.[198]

> At a magnificent public dinner given to Bolivar at Bogota, one of the company, when called upon for a toast, gave— 'Should at any time a monarchical government be established in Colombia, may the liberator, Simon Bolivar, be the Emperor.' Another of Bolivar's officers retorted with another toast, crying out that if Bolivar was declared Emperor, 'may the blood flow from his heart in the same manner as the wine now does from my glass,' – he poured the wine out of his glass upon the floor'. Bolivar sprang up and effusively embraced him, telling him Colombia's liberty and independence were safe with such men. [199]

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[195] On that concept, see A. Lilti, *The Invention of Celebrity: 1750-1850*, trans. L. Jeffress, English edition (Cambridge, UK ; Malden, MA: Polity, 2017) and the introduction to Bell.
[196] *Ibid.*, p. 192.
[197] Paul A. Pickering, 'Garibaldi in Australia', *The Historical Journal*, 64.4 (2021), 988–1008 (pp. 1007–8).
[198] 'COCHRANE, Thomas, Lord Cochrane (1775-1860), of Holly Hill, Titchfield, Hants', ed. by R Thorne, *The History of Parliament: The House of Commons 1790-1820* <http://www.histparl.ac.uk/volume/1790-1820/member/cochrane-thomas-1775-1860> [accessed 8 December 2020]. Andrew Lambert, 'Cochrane, Thomas, tenth earl of Dundonald (1775–1860), naval officer', *ODNB*. The Concentric Society of Liverpool, a Whig circle, also toasted him: *Liverpool Mercury*, 16 April 1819.
[199] *Journals of a Residence and Travels in Colombia, during the Years 1823 and 1824* (London: Henry Colburn, 1825), 2 vols.

This anecdote presented Bolívar as a generous, likeable character; the context of toasting, one familiar setting of British sociability, was reassuring and furthered the emotional bonding with the public. The scene was slightly foreign with its exaggerated gestures and sentiments, but Bolívar appeared as a trustworthy liberal leader. The meaning was clear: although he had been granted dictatorial powers over Venezuela during the liberation war, he would not be a tyrant. The anecdote presented in an enjoyable form Bolívar's repeated formal promises, made for instance at the Congress of Angostura in 1819,[200] which justified comparison with Washington (though an authoritarian streak dominated his later years). Sociability enabled a more vivid political portrayal of Bolívar than a dry pamphlet would.

Bolívar was a fit hero for those who wanted to celebrate liberty and looked for embodiments of its spirit. His adherence to the British model of government is a moot point; recent historiography has contended that the British model of elite-led, liberal reform appealed to Spanish Americans more than republican models from the American or French Revolutions.[201] Bolívar may have been committed to a "dual revolution", in which Britain provided the economic model to change the world, while France furnished the ideas.[202] In fact, the Libertador was probably a pragmatist rather than an ideologue; he turned toward Britain because he had little choice.[203] But Britons were aware of signs of goodwill, even "deference toward the British crown", for instance when in 1826 Bolívar drank a toast to the King, and then to Canning.[204] His writings were not well-known in Britain and his name allowed for various appropriations. He stood for "liberty". The final victory at Ayacucho in December 1824, which prompted the evacuation of Spanish troops from the continent, happened after the restoration of absolutism in Spain. This timing could turn Bolívar into the prime focus of renewed liberal hopes for independence and constitutional rule.

Yet, political liberty did not exhaust Bolívar's appeal. The charm of his dashing personality and his exploits made him popular beyond radical circles. Its name stood for

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[200] Bell, p. 187.
[201] K. Racine, '"This England and This Now": British Cultural and Intellectual Influence in the Spanish American Independence Era', *Hispanic American Historical Review*, 90:3 (2010), 423–54; G. Verdo, 'Les Britanniques et les indépendances hispano-américaines', in A. Enders and F. Bensimon (eds), *Le Siècle britannique : variations sur une suprématie globale au XIXe siècle* (Paris: PUPS, 2012), pp. 307–36.
[202] John Lynch, *Simón Bolívar: A Life* (New Haven, CT; London: Yale University Press, 2007), p. 30. Lynch recognizes that such a model does not account for the complexities for Bolívar's enterprizes.
[203] *Bolívar y Europa en las crónicas, el pensamiento político y la historiografía: siglos XIX y XX*, ed. by Alberto Filippi, 3 vols (Caracas: Ediciones de la Presidencia de la República, 1986), I, p. 386. See also Colley, *The Gun, the Ship, and the Pen*, p. 235.
[204] R. Cole Heinowitz, *Spanish America and British Romanticism, 1777-1826: Rewriting Conquest*, Edinburgh Studies in Transatlantic Literatures (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2010), p. 186.

many things, as can be appraised by a full-text search in Gale's British Library Newspapers database. Bolívar appeared in the advertisement sections as the name of a South American mining company and several racehorses. People bet on Bolívar because the name meant luck to the man, the stock or the horse. Many merchants supported Bolívar, because trade with South America was brisk and promising. Latin American independences would open up promises of fruitful economic exchanges for generations to come. Such hopes were fanned by a series of publications by South Americans who had been praising the subcontinent's progressive potential since 1808.[205] The radicals cherished national independence for its own stake and welcomed anything that would weaken reactionary monarchies like Ferdinand's. They projected their own wishes on Bolívar, like Carlile's followers who toasted at a Paine anniversary dinner: "Simon Bolivar, and the Republicans of Columbia, may they abolish Priestcraft as well as Kingcraft."[206] He was many things to many people in the 1820s and 1830s. There was the romantic soldier, an exotic version of a Walter Scott hero. There was the liberal politician freeing his people and liberating the economy, opening promising vistas to middle-class entrepreneurs. There was the radical iconoclast who tore down tyranny in church and state and promised universal liberty. The idea of heroism in the service of liberty was common to all those visions.

Innumerable dinners honoured Bolívar, but he was one among other heroes, a kind of *primus inter pares*. British fighters in South America like Cochrane had some prestige too. British formal dinners, it may be suggested, checked any cult of the personality because they were not structured around the worship of a single hero. Explanations in terms of British political culture include the refusal of personal power, ingrained habits of parliamentarianism and collective deliberation, and the memory of Napoleon's dictatorship. However, there were strong cultural forces pulling in the direction of hero-worship: the cult of Romantic hero, and the celebrity some foreign freedom fighters acquired in Britain through literature and memorabilia. There was a pragmatic reason for one might call the "limited heroization" of Bolívar in British sociability. The heroization of one man was difficult, because the multiplicity of toasts encouraged reciprocity, and the inclusion of many men. Pre-dinner arrangements resulted in consensual toasts (hopefully),

[205] Karen Racine, 'Newsprint Nations: Spanish American Publishing in London, 1808-1827', in *The Foreign Political Press in Nineteenth-Century London: Politics from a Distance*, ed. by Constance Bantman and Ana Cláudia Suriani da Silva (London: Bloomsbury Academic, 2017), pp. 15–32 (pp. 19–20).
[206] *The Republican*, No.4, vol. V, p.99 (25 January 1822), No.8, p.241 (22 February 1822), No.10, p.307 (8 March 1822), No.13, p.393 (29 March 1822).

and not in worship of a particular hero. The multiplicity of toasts was conducive to the celebration of pantheons of heroes rather than individuals.

South American dinners: a para-diplomatic function

Castlereagh, and his successor Canning from 1822, felt that Spain could not retain its American colonies and wished to advance British interests in the region. The Cabinet waited until 1825 to recognize the independence of Colombia, Mexico and Rio de la Plata. Although the government introduced a bill against British soldiering in South America to assuage Spain in 1819, the law was laxly enforced and British volunteers fought for Bolívar. Castlereagh extended British neutrality to other European powers, forbidding them from helping Spain suppress the colonial revolutions. Though love of Latin American liberty mattered probably less than the wish to prevent France from controlling Spanish colonies, Castlereagh's and Canning's policies did contribute to Latin American independences. South American dinners may well have been fewer than Spanish dinners in 1820-1823, because liberty faced less of a threat in America as in mainland Spain, as it became increasingly clear that Spain was incapable to reconquering its colonies. What was at stake, then, was Britain's stance to the lands freed of Spanish rule: Castlereagh and his successor Canning wanted European powers to recognize *de facto* independence, before some Congress of European powers would recognize them *de jure*. James Mackintosh and other supporters of Latin American independences shared Canning's ultimate goals and were impatient at his delays, which were due to needs to placate Spain and manoeuvre other European powers.[207]

Given this consensus on the ultimate goal, dinners to South American envoys had a semi-official quality, which was a far cry from radical, oppositional, dinners. For instance, on 14 February, 1820, the Dublin *Freeman's Journal* devoted column space to the London dinner John Devereux (1778–1860), an Irish army officer in the service of Colombia, gave to the deputies from Venezuela, New Granada, and Buenos Ayres (present-day parts of Venezuela, Colombia and Argentina). Bolívar symbolically presided over the meeting, through a portrait hanging over a fireplace and a toast to "The Supreme Chief, Bolivar". Devereux was giving his final leave because he was about to depart for South America to

[207] On British recognition of South American republics: Temperley, chap. 6; Verdo, pp. 314–17.

fight with the Irish legion. The formality of the proceedings and presence of envoys (who, of course, had no titles of minister plenipotentiary since they represented countries still fighting for independence) lent the dinner a para-diplomatic quality. Those men were engaged in informal diplomacy, bypassing the Foreign Office to bestow unofficial recognition on Latin American countries.

In 1822, London merchants and Whig MPs launched a campaign for British recognition of South American republics, a move that would break down the tottering mercantilist restrictions imposed by Spain, boost trade, and open up an immense continent to British trade. Dinners in the honours of South American revolutions and their leaders reflected those mercantile hopes, as shown in this article from the *Liverpool Mercury*:

> *Colombian trade*. – The mercantile gentlemen of Newcastle-upon-Tyne, trading with South America, gave a grand dinner on Wednesday se'nnight to Edward Campbell, Esq. their townsman, as a compliment to him for the able manner in which, during a period of trouble and danger, he had managed their interests in the Colombian States. Upwards of forty gentlemen sat down to dinner. The healths of Generals Bolivar, Santander, Paez, Arismenda, and Montillo – and of the enlightened minister of the Republic, M. Zea, were severally drunk with great enthusiasm.[208]

Dinners and speeches from one English seaport would be reported in the local paper of another port; arguments, names, toasts, and formulas circulated and built up a campaign in taverns, in the press, and in petitions, culminating in Parliament.

The most important dinner for the South American cause was that given to the Colombian ambassador Francisco Antonio Zea on Wednesday, 10 July 1822.[209] As in the case of the 7 March 1823 Spanish dinner, many MPs and merchants attended, but the dinner to Zea was not organized by the same set of men. A few guests, like Sir James Mackintosh, Sir Robert Wilson, and the Duke of Somerset, were stewards or speakers at both events,

[208] *Liverpool Mercury*, 17 May 1822, p. 362.
[209] "Public Dinner to Don Francisco Antonio Zea", *Times*, 11 July 1822, p. 3. *Times* article was reprinted with additions in Alexander Walker, *Colombia: Being a Geographical, Statistical, Agricultural, Commercial, and Political Account of That Country*, 2 vols (London: Baldwin, Cradock, and Joy, 1822), II, pp. 728–47.

but other guests at the Colombian dinner were Tories, like Wilberforce, or had disliked the Whig agitation around Caroline, like Marryat.[210]

Commerce and liberty were the evening's two keywords. The Duke of Somerset hailed Colombia as "rising empire", saluted the fight for independence and expressed wishes of "friendly communication" and "amity" between Britain and Colombia. Zea asked for Britain to be the first power to recognize Colombia's independence. "Our desire is to be at peace with all the world." They were ready to receive from Europe manufactures, "productions of science and of art", in return for Colombia's "boundless resources, those rich productions of nature". Mackintosh called for the development of commerce, not just understood as trade but also in the eighteenth-century sense of "the free intercourse of mind and of opinion, the influence of which must end in giving to those vast countries a degree and station amongst nations, for which nature and Providence clearly intended them." Mackintosh's arguments that free trade's benefits outweighed the old monopoly system were also present in Bentham's *Rid Yourselves of Ultramaria* (privately circulated in 1822), and had been voiced by Adam Smith in the *Wealth of Nations* (1776). Mackintosh also affirmed Spain's irretrievable decline and its absolute incapacity of acting as custodian of colonies. Those arguments were part of an intellectual context that justified independences and the departure from the mercantilist-absolutist nexus.[211] Anti-slavery was part of this new anti-imperial political economy. William Wilberforce, true to his lifelong struggle, toasted "The entire and speedy abolition of the slave-trade, and thanks to the Congress of Columbia for its efficient exertions towards that object."

Music was composed expressly for the dinner. A M. Smith sang "O! remember when first Oroonoko's broad stream".[212] The title alluded to Bolívar's heroic campaign along the river Orinoco in 1817-1818 that led to the capture of Caracas. The music, by the versatile Irish singer, instrumentalist and composer Thomas Simpson Cooke (1782-1848) was stately ("moderato e maestoso") and the burden evoked heroism and exoticism:

Oh! Remember when first Orinooco's broad stream

[210] A self-made man and an independent, Joseph Marryat felt that demagogy could lead to revolution. "MARRYAT, Joseph I (1757-1824)," *The History of Parliament: The House of Commons 1820-1832*, ed. D. R. Fisher, 2009. <http://www.histparl.ac.uk/volume/1820-1832/member/marryat-joseph-1757-1824>.
[211] Gabriel Paquette, 'The Intellectual Context of British Diplomatic Recognition of the South American Republics, c. 1800–1830', *Journal of Transatlantic Studies*, 2.1 (2004), 75–95.
[212] T. Cooke, *Oh! Remember When First Orinooco's Broad Stream, a Patriotic Song, Sung at the Dinner Given to the Columbian Envoy, Senor Zea* (London: Clementi, 1825).

Saw the banner of liberty wave,

When Alphonso, awakened from pleasure's fond dream,

Rush'd forward his country to save.

Cooke composed patriotic pieces, and many operas and songs based on Romantic literature, including Walter Scott novels; he also furnished clubs and organizers of sociable events with many circumstantial pieces.[213] In 1817, he had composed a "triumphal march" for Bolívar.[214] The publication of the score prolonged the impact of the dinner and responded to the public's thirst for Bolívar-themed cultural objects. Cooke's songs provide interesting examples of a continuity between the private and public spheres (Poland furnished other opportunities, as we will see). The publication of the score and the account in the *Times* are evidence of the interpenetration between the sphere of print and the dinners.

The dinner made a good impression of order, reasonableness and liberal feelings. The *Times* highly approved: it was an unprecedent step, but a rational one that the government should heed. The paper suggested that ministers in Europe would have to yield to rational public opinion and recognize the South American republics.[215] However, the campaign dragged on for another two years. The dinners were in absolute convergence with petitions of merchants from London, Liverpool and Manchester, and with Whig-radical arguments for free trade in the Commons. Though in the opposition, Mackintosh reconciled himself somehow with Canning's policy of neutrality toward Spain and its colonies, but still urged diplomatic recognition. On 15 June 1824 he presented to the Commons a petition of London merchants to that effect. He delivered an eloquent speech insisting on the civilizing force of commerce: free trade would ensure political liberty and preserve South America from the nefarious Holy Alliance.[216] Mackintosh's speech was much applauded, but neither brilliant dining and toasting, nor fine oratory, translated into immediate political victory. Only on 31 December 1824 did Canning announce Britain would recognize three South American republics.[217]

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[213] See his bibliography at: B. Carr, 'Cooke, Thomas Simpson', *Grove Music Online* (Oxford University Press, 2001).
[214] T. Cooke, *Bolivar's, Triumphal March, Composed & Arranged for the Piano Forte* (London: Clementi, 1819).
[215] *Times*, 11 July, p. 4.
[216] Jane Rendall, 'The Political Ideas and Activities of Sir James Mackintosh (1765-1832): A Study of Whiggism between 1789 and 1832' (unpublished Ph.D., University of London, 1972), pp. 250–53. For Mackintosh's motion, see Hansard, House of Commons Debates 15 June 1824 vol. 11, co.1344-406.
[217] Temperley, pp. 148–51.

South American dinners shared with Spanish dinners the exaltation of a hero, and a broad commitment to "liberty", a blanket term which meant different things to different men. Bolívar enjoyed a wider, certainly a longer, popularity than Riego: he pleased middle-class opinion, while Riego was a radical icon, too much of a hothead and an anticlerical for many people's taste. Bolívar, and other South American officers and liberties were staple toasts in the 1820s. On the other hand, there were few South American dinners. The dinner to Zea is exceptional in its splendour, and its bipartisan appeal. The *Times* was not quite right to note the absolute novelty of merchants assembling to influence British foreign policy: Bastille Day dinners in 1790 and 1792 were attempts, among other things, to weigh on the Cabinet and maintain friendly terms with France. But the dinner to Zea, contrary to those dinners of the early 1790s, reflected a broad consensus. It shows that celebrating foreign revolution in nineteenth-century Britain was not always a revolutionary act; it could be aligned with the policy of a conservative government (which was cautious but liberal-minded in its foreign policy, however).

Spanish and South American dinners were part of a nexus of sociability; the difficulties of getting up large formal dinners meant that of those which were projected, few were realized, and only after a process of negotiation. The dinners reflected in the pithier form of toasts, songs, and speeches arguments that were presented in Parliament and in the sphere of print. Publication in the press itself contributed to further sociability, as it confirmed codes of behaviour, and disseminated toasts, songs, and symbolic references in decoration or expression, that could be imitated in turn.

The major dinners organized for Spanish revolutionaries and Colombian envoys had a political dimension, representing the voice of the "people", or rather those who felt authorized to speak in its behalf: the opposition, radicals, mercantile interests. They also had what I called a "para-diplomatic" quality, in the sense that the dinners honouring foreign envoys placed the diners in a position of authority expressing Britain's goodwill and amity, as if signing an informal treaty of friendship between the peoples, in defiance of court and Cabinet policies. Dinners simply addressing another nation, with no ambassador in attendance (as some Spanish dinners did) were less obviously para-diplomatic, but this dimension was still present anytime contacts with foreigners assumed any official guise. At least, they could be so perceived, but comments will depend on context. Burke inveighed against the Revolution Society's contacts with French Jacobin clubs in 1790, but South American dinners during Canning's ministership were less

contentious because they expressed sentiments the Cabinet might share but could not voice so loudly.

Conclusion

This chapter has expanded and illustrated some themes already established with respect to the French Revolution. Celebrations of revolutions showed the high degree of continuity between sociability, the public sphere of print, the material culture of memorabilia, and musical production. Circulations between public and private spheres can be inferred, for instance from the sale of sheet music played at formal dinners or the transferability of toast from home to tavern, as diaries attest. This private-public blurring has inferences for gender, which do not clearly appear in the cases explored here, but will be more salient in the next chapter. The presence of women was not attested at celebrations, nor were ladies toasted or acknowledged in speeches as political actors, or even spectators, contrary what happened in later decades. The dinners, and the material culture of portraits, busts, and memorabilia celebrated military officers whose womanizing, in cases like Bolívar's, established strong manly credentials. The 1820s were a manly decade when it came to celebrations.

The place of hero-worship in dinners might appear problematic to us in dinners that usually demanded democratic reforms, the broadening of the franchise and more power to the people. Dinners honoured leaders, phalanxes of heroes, *and* a whole people – say, the valiant Spaniards, the gallant Portuguese, the brave Neapolitans – without a sense of contradiction. Dinners in the 1820s clearly celebrated charismatic authority, a form of power, which, to adapt Max Weber's typology, contrasted with the traditional authority of the likes of George IV, Louis XVIII and the Bourbons, and on the other hand with the bureaucratic authority of the modernizing state.[218] Clearly, the worship of Bolívar (or, more rarely, Napoleon) suggests that some radicals looked up to saviour figures, waiting for a Moses to liberate the people or a Lycurgus to set the law. Yet, actual dinners, and even more the glimpses we have of their negotiated elaboration, made it possible to honour special guests or absent heroes, but the mechanics of toasting and the political coalitions underpinning a large formal dinner excluded any simple hero-worship. No single hero

[218] See Max Weber, *Economy and Society* (1922), summarized in Bell, pp. 236–37.

usually dominated proceedings. While Bolívar was central to perceptions of the South American wars, Riego shared celebrity with other officers and soon became a martyr figure; he was no longer a charismatic hero. Pantheons comprising dead and living heroes were more essential to dinners, at least among radicals and Chartists, than were charismatic heroes, because they legitimized the movement by connecting it to historical roots.[219] Those heroes were not essential to British dinners to revolutions: the Canadian rebellions had no obvious hero, even if figures like Louis Papineau got their share of toasts. It might seem at first sight as if the absence of a hero precisely explains the relative paucity of Canadian dinners: but the next chapter will show that dinners to the Polish insurrection of 1831 were popular for decades without focusing on any hero, dead or alive.

Turning the focus on the celebrants rather than the celebrated heroes, it might be asked whether groups could be defined by their participation in dinners celebrating revolutions. Comparison with the loyalist craze of the early 1790s suggests that after 1815 there was no particular stigma attached. No one denied or justified their presence at a dinner, or demanded guest lists to be published and scrutinized, as happened with Bastille Day dinners in 1791. Accusations of attending dinners did not concern the object of the dinner, but the unworthiness of the guests: noblemen who took part in Spanish dinners for instance. The newspapers engaged in rows and criticized dinners, but did not start witch hunts. Besides dedicated dinners, toasts probably expressed sympathies rather than define extremely solid commitments. Countless toasts to Bolívar must have been drunk without much thought: the Libertador was an object of admiration and curiosity; he was not attached to precise ideas since his writings were largely unknown. The American Revolution did not define a precise constituency, because most men, except some dyed-in-the-wool Tories, would subscribe to at least *some* principles of the American Insurgents. Toasts to Washington could have a conservative-diplomatic dimension, or become reinvigorated with revolutionary fervour, depending on context. On the other end of the spectrum, ultra-radicals could be defined as those who were ready to defend any revolution against the established order in church and state. Some toasts were so outrageous that they selected their public. The Paine birthday dinners and their republican, anticlerical toasts defined a community, so stringent were the ideological conditions to join. The Spanish case was different. The "Spanish dinners" in fact celebrated also Portugal, and Naples; the stewards

[219] On pantheons and cults of heroes: Matthew Roberts, *Chartism, Commemoration and the Cult of the Radical Hero*.

and orators, and presumably the guests, were drawn from several Whig and radical groupings.

In the 1820s, dinners had a real, but relatively limited, international dimension. Networks of diplomats, pamphleteers and politicians were in the making, but dinners did not display a fully-fledged internationalism, which would involve for instance joint organisation of dinners by Britons and foreign exiles. The British supporters of liberal Spain were in correspondence with Spaniards; a journalist and polemicist like Blanco White published letters in Spanish from London, but the incipient liberal international was not fully structured. This is not to say that contacts were non-existent: the French Restoration (1814-1830) was the golden age of a certain kind of liberal French travel to Britain; peers and *grand bourgeois* discovered British parliamentarianism and English customs, including dining and toasting, and integrated them in their own political practices, in the Chambers and in city dinners.[220] For all that, there is a sense of an archipelago of Whig and radical constituencies staging events in support of foreign revolutions, without the connections that would turn their initiatives into a large movement. The next chapter examines the celebrations of the 1830 and 1848 revolutions, essentially in France and Poland, showing many continuities with themes established in this chapter, and new developments regarding gender, musical production, and internationalism in particular. The celebrations of the 1830s and 1840s built on the patterns set in the previous decades and reconnected with the legacy of the French Revolution.

[220] Emmanuel de Waresquiel, 'Le "Moment anglais" de la Restauration: quelques voyages outre-Manche', in *Penser la Restauration: 1814-1830* (Paris: Tallandier, 2020), pp. 367–86.

Chapter 6
Celebrations of the revolutions of 1830 and 1848

This chapter examines the revolutions of 1830 in France and Poland, and the revolutions of 1848, with a focus on France and briefer developments on other areas. The celebrations of the 1830s and 1840s built on the patterns set in the previous decades and reconnected with the legacy of the French Revolution. This chapter delves further into the topics of Anglo-French perceptions, cultural production celebrating foreign revolution, and transnational networks.

Cultural production features in this chapter through poetry, narrative writing, and musical composition. French revolutionary singing and songs in the honour of South American heroes have already been evoked. The 1830 and 1848 revolutions both revived the musical heritage of the first French Revolution, and prompted new compositions. The repetition of revolutions in France had a slightly comic air that *Punch* exploited in 1848:

> Revolutions come and go in France, and each leaves behind it a song. Thus, for the first Revolution, France was endowed with the Marseillaise.
> For the Second she received as a legacy the Parisienne.
> For the Third she has come into possession of Mourir pour la Patrie.

As a result, "France has had three Revolutions, and she has three songs to show for it. […] It must now be called 'Le pays des Chansons et des Révolutions'."[1] This book does not make the extreme claim that *Punch* was right. In fact, the French revolutions bequeathed songs to the British too, but they did not merely take up French tunes; musical composition also afforded opportunities for political participation and creativity.

Internationalism is a particularly salient feature of the celebrations of the 1830 and 1848 revolutions. Dinners were *not* marked by one ideology advocating international contacts and cooperation. The celebrations of 1848 involve Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels, whose calls for the worldwide unity of the proletariat is transnational in essence. This is not to say that all British celebrations of foreign revolutions were informed by a full theory of workers' international cooperation. Rather, there were structures of feelings, sympathies for oppressed peoples abroad and calls for fraternization rather than crystallized

[1] "Fighting for a Song", *Punch* XIV (1848), p. 155.

ideologies or a philosophy of history leading to the unity of workers from all countries. Organizers and guests of celebrations of foreign revolutions must have believed in the blessings of political liberty at home and abroad; some must have been ready to defend closer political, though perhaps not economic, cooperation. The word "internationalism" may also be used – though "transnationalism" would be more accurate – to describe the networks, the growing presence, and involvement in practical and ideological matters, of non-Britons: foreign guests of honours, refugees from continental revolutions or fleeing persecution. There is a contrast between the "Spanish dinners" of 1820, which gathered hundreds of Englishmen and half-a-dozen Spaniards in a London tavern, and the Chartist dinners, or even the Polish balls and dinners, where a variety of nationalities were represented among the guests and a variety of languages could be spoken.

Such celebrations took place in a diplomatic context where Britain tried to maintain peace and a balance of power, containing France and Russia in particular. Neither the police nor the government obstructed celebratory proceedings. The country took in refugees of all political persuasions. This friendly stance facilitated travels; it also meant that Britain was often the last refuge for exiles who were expelled from Paris or Brussels, as happened to Karl Marx and many Germans and Poles. That is not to say that revolutionary celebrations were the preserve of tiny communities of exiles in Britain, cut off from the general population. The question of the extent of celebrations is raised, though of course press reports may not be reliable about the popularity of dinners, and are mostly silent on the social or gender composition of meetings. Despite such insufficiencies, compiling events, pamphlets and addresses, identifying organizers and societies, goes some way towards mapping revolutionary celebrations and evaluating the dynamics of celebrations, if not their precise scale. This chapter renews the vision of some well-known events like the 1848 Revolution by placing them in perspective with other revolutions.

This chapter first examines British reactions to the French Revolution of 1830. The topic deserves some in-depth analysis, because of relative historiographical paucity, and secondly, because the 1830 revolutions tend to be overshadowed by 1848, and their importance must be reaffirmed. The middle sections of the chapter deal with dinners celebrating the Polish Uprising of 1830; again, they deserve some substantial developments due to their popularity and their ideological and cultural richness. Because Polish dinners lasted into the 1850s, the impact of the Springtime of the Peoples on those dinners will conclude the parts on Poland and lead to the examination of celebrations of the 1848

Revolutions. The last sections on 1848 are shorter, this time because an abundant historiography has described British reactions to the French events in great detail. The focus is on the sociability of meetings celebrating 1848, especially on lesser-known later celebrations that ended in the mid-1850s.

Responses to the revolutions of 1830

The Polignac ministry's decision to issue four ordinances dissolving the chamber of representatives, restricting the suffrage and curbing the liberty of the press, sparked off the Parisian uprising. Causing hundreds of casualties, the "Three Glorious Days" of 27, 28, and 29 July 1830, resulted in Charles X's flight to England and the establishment of a more liberal regime, the July Monarchy under Louis-Philippe of the Orléans branch of the Bourbon dynasty.[2] The revolution in France was the first one in a cycle that swept across Belgium first, then Poland, Germany and Italy. This revolutionary impetus lasted until around 1834, a year marked by repression of various popular movements in Paris, Lyon and other French cities, and diplomatic consolidation of existing arrangements. While national historiographies have given fragmented views of events, historians are now trying to connect revolutions, to show the transnational logic of public opinion and revolutionary activity. They have suggested that the revolutions of 1830, like those of 1789 and 1848, deserved an analysis of transnational forces, especially because they opened up a pan-European space for the emergence of public opinion and expression.[3]

This raises the question of unrevolutionary Britain's status within revolutionary Europe. Though it is difficult to fully integrate Britain, it was no bulwark of stability amidst the storm. Dangerous uprisings occurred that struck fear into the hearts of government and public opinion. The constitutional crisis over Catholic Emancipation and parliamentary reform was attended with violence peaking in rioting, arson and destruction at Derby, Nottingham and especially Bristol in 1831. The early 1830s were a period when contestation multiplied in Britain, with Luddism in industrial districts and the 'Swing' riots in rural areas of southern England. 1834, the date used to close off the revolutionary cycle

[2] On the July Revolution and its aftermath: David H. Pinkney, *The French Revolution of 1830* (Princeton, N.J: Princeton University Press, 1972); Pamela M Pilbeam, *The 1830 Revolution in France* (London: Macmillan, 1994); Sylvie Aprile, *La Révolution inachevée: 1815-1870*, Histoire de France (Paris: Belin, 2014), pp. 51–81.
[3] Aprile, Caron, and Fureix.

in continental Europe, was also, in Britain, the year of the New Poor Law, a piece of Whig social control that happened at a time when traditional elites regained control on the continent.

At the time and in retrospect, many English people acknowledged a fear of revolution. Rev. Sydney Smith later remembered a "hand-shaking, bowel-disturbing passion of fear", but Boyd Hilton advised critical caution here, warning that reformers agitated revolution and played on fears.[4] Historians have debated the influence of the July Revolution over the political history of Britain, wondering in particular whether the Reform of 1832 was not a reaction to French events. Roland Quinault credited the moderate French revolution with the upsurge of interest for reform; Norman Gash replied that news of the July revolution came too late to affect the outcome of the elections of summer 1830 and the prospects of reform.[5] Britons took part in transnational debates, though they preened themselves on their constitutional stability and their earlier, more secure, enjoyment of liberty which set them apart from other Europeans. Liberals wished other countries could share in the blessings of liberty, best preserved under a benevolent constitutional monarchy, while working-class radicals sympathized with the Parisian workers.[6]

The following sections detail British reactions to two revolutionary movements of this 1830-1834 cycle, first in France, then in Poland, highlighting the forms of sociability deployed to welcome emigrants and voice their grievances. These are two very contrasted cases, which show the variety of forms of solidarity, both symbolic and concrete, as well as the rich cultural production inspired by foreign revolutions. The following sections discuss general responses the French Revolution of 1830; immediate dinners and addresses sent to Paris in the summer of 1830s; radical lecturing and pamphleteering in favour of the Revolution; and finally, the disappointment characterizing the anniversaries of 1831 and

[4] Boyd Hilton, *A Mad, Bad, and Dangerous People? England, 1783-1846* (Oxford; New York: Oxford University Press, 2006), p. 426. The quotation is from a letter from Sydney Smith to Bishop Blomfield, 5 September 1840, in *The Letters of Sydney Smith*, ed. Nowell C. Smith (Oxford, 1953), II, 709. On fear of revolution, see also F. Bensimon, 'Le Royaume-Uni: entre réforme et révolution', in S. Aprile, E. Fureix, and J.-C. Caron (eds), *La Liberté guidant les peuples : les révolutions de 1830 en Europe* (Seyssel: Champ Vallon, 2013), pp. 91–5 (p. 82).

[5] Norman Gash, 'English Reform and French Revolution in the General Election of 1830', in *Essays Presented to Sir Lewis Namier*, ed. by Richard Pares and Alan John Percivale Taylor (London: Macmillan, 1956), pp. 258–88; Roland Quinault, 'The French Revolution of 1830 and Parliamentary Reform', *History*, 79.257 (1994), 377–93.

[6] For thesis of the growth of working-class consciousness expressed in English radicalism, see Weisser, *British Working-Class Movements and Europe*, pp. 32–47.

1832 and the longer-term legacy of the 1830 French Revolution in British political discourse.

British reactions to the Three Glorious Days: the prism of historical precedent

The general outlines of the British reception of the 1830 revolution are well known. Many Britons rejoiced in the downfall of the hated Bourbons. The press was overwhelmingly favourable to the Revolution. The revolution, however, was divisive and often read through the lens of the first revolution of 1789, or the Terror. This reception was also distorted by a strong Anglo-French mirror effect: commentators on both sides of the Channel read the French Revolution through the prism of the seventeenth-century English revolutions, especially that of 1688-89.

A Whig-Tory divide was evident in the immediate aftermath of the revolution. For some conservatives, 1830 was a repetition of 1789 and portended the horrors of 1793. This is Archibald Alison, editor of *Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine* in September 1830: "REVOLUTION! – French Revolution! – Dread watchword of mystery and fear! – Augury of sorrow to come! – Record of an Iliad of woes! – Is it then indeed true that another French Revolution has dawned?"[7] Warning against democratic republicanism, Alison feared that the 1830 revolution would start over the horrors of the first French revolution.[8] *The Age*, a Tory, sensationalist paper, exclaimed: "Ca ira, as the Jacobins used to say", as if the Terror and the guillotine were back.[9] The paper, characterized by dishonest practices of libellous gossip and extorsion, enjoyed a high circulation of 8,000 to 10,000 in the mid-1830s.[10] On the 1830 revolution, it held essentially the same position as that of the Duke of Wellington, who felt the 1830 Revolution would lead to European War, and refused any reform lest it unleashed revolution. *Blackwood's* was countered, on the Whig side, by an enthusiastic

[7] "French Revolution", *Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine*, September 1830, p.542. T. C. Smout presents *Blackwood's* as the "equivalent newspaper" of the Tory *Quarterly Review*, founded in 1809 to answer the Whig *Edinburgh Review* ('Scotland as North Britain: The Historical Background, 1707-1918', in *The Edinburgh History of Scottish Literature. Volume Two, Enlightenment, Britain and Empire, 1707-1918*, ed. by Ian Brown and others (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2007), pp. 1–11 (p. 10).)

[8] Michael Michie, '"On Behalf of the Right": Archibald Alison, Political Journalism, and Blackwood's Conservative Response to Reform, 1830–1870', in *Print Culture and the Blackwood Tradition*, ed. by David Finkelstein (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2006), pp. 119–45 (p. 119).

[9] *The Age*, 1 August 1830, p. 244. See also *John Bull*, vol. X, no. 505, 16 August 1830, p. 260 (*John Bull* was a conservative, anti-Catholic weekly, prone to sensationalism).

[10] David Haldane Lawrence, '*Age* (1825-1843)', ed. by Laurel Brake and Marysa Demoor, *Dictionary of Nineteenth-Century Journalism in Great Britain and Ireland* (Gent: Academia Press, 2009), p. 8.

apology by Henry Brougham in the *Edinburgh Review*.[11] Francis Place, ex-member of the LCS and apostle of respectable radicalism, noted in his diary the frantic reception of news from Paris among Whig MPs as well as "the middle classes" and "the common people".[12] For the Whigs, the French Revolution of 1830 was similar to the 1688-1689 Revolution and was due to produce a stable constitutional monarchy. Both British and French commentators struck parallels with seventeenth-century England and used the term "Glorious Revolution" to refer to the French events of 1830.[13] Such a parallel between two short, bloodless revolutions ushering in parliamentary regimes, could easily confirm smug assurances that England had been free a century and a half before France.

The radicals felt encouraged in promoting reform.[14] They admired the French but wished revolution could be avoided in England. Liberals felt flattered to see France tread in Britain's footsteps.[15] Reformers and radicals drew strength in French popular agency, in the actions of the Parisian working class, and hoped that the example might impel Britons to recover their liberties from the illegitimate parliamentary class. The dinners and addresses to France that multiplied after the Glorious Days of June reflected this ambivalent, perhaps utopian, wish for radical revolution that would be bloodless like 1688, yet popular and transformative like 1789.

Dinners and addresses in response to the French Revolution of July 1830

Many meetings took place in August and September 1830. They reflected differences in political interpretation. The Whigs and different constituencies of radicals staged each their own London dinner; large northern cities and Belfast also held celebrations.[16] In London, the coexistence of several dinners signalled the rivalries and unfriendliness between various radical factions. William Cobbett, in particular, had nothing but scorn for the Benthamite radicals like John Cam Hobhouse who were so prominent in

[11] Henry Brougham, "The Late Revolution in France", *Edinburgh Review*, 53 (October 1830), 1-24.
[12] Francis Place and James Alan Jaffe, *The Affairs of Others: The Diaries of Francis Place, 1825-1836*, Camden Fifth Series, 30 (Cambridge; New York: Cambridge University Press for the Royal Historical Society, 2007), p. 325.
[13] Pinkney, p. 53; Borot and Ducrocq; Gheeraert, Gheeraert-Graffeuille, and Ledda.
[14] Quinault, pp. 377–81.
[15] Bensimon, 'Royaume-Uni', pp. 182–83.
[16] On Belfast, see "French Revolution – Belfast Meeting. (Abridged from the Northern Whig)", *Freeman's Journal* (Dublin), 4 September 1830.

Burdett's dinner; he also despised the Whig reformers who formed the bulk of yet another meeting.

Cobbett, the successful radical publicist, was the first to organize a meeting on 16 August, the anniversary day of Peterloo. He had reached the peak of his popularity in the post-war years, when his cheap version of the *Political Register* sold between 40,000 and 70,000 copies a week.[17] When the French Revolution broke out he had just published his *Rural Rides*, the crowning achievement of a long period of denunciation of political corruption, Whig and Tory boroughmongering, and the devitalization of the countryside under the nefarious influence of 'the Thing'. The events of France rekindled his hopes of successful reform in England. James Grande has demonstrated the intensity of his involvement in the French Revolution of 1830.[18] Cobbett inserted a paragraph in the 30 July edition of the *Political Register*, as soon as news from the Paris uprising arrived. He made clear the linkage between revolution in France and reform in England, writing on 7 August: "the *tri-coloured flag* is enough for me; if that flag keep up, *reform in England is inevitable"*.[19] He also set up "a subscription for the wounded of Paris", and chaired a dinner on 16 August to raise money and agree on an address and a deputation to Paris. The reformist press covered the event, especially the *Examiner*, a high-brown radical led by Leigh Hunt and his brother John, and the *Observer*, Britain's oldest Sunday paper, which had inched towards supporting parliamentary reform in the 1820s.[20] The *Observer* reported that "some 150 persons [...] all of respectable appearance" attended, ensuring both numbers and "respectability", key notions to legitimize the event.[21] They wore tricolour ribbons on their breasts, a symbolic reversal, they felt, of the days of the Bourbon Restoration in 1814 when the English aristocrats flaunted white cockades. The tricolour flag suspended over the chairman's seat was a strong symbol that the English public immediately recognized. The subscription for the French wounded of July produced a goodly £120 in the course of the evening. At this dinner, Cobbett "sent his Norfolk friend Sir Thomas Beevor […] to Paris as the 'Ambassador of the Reformers of England'. Beevor carried an 'Address from

[17] John Stevenson, 'William Cobbett: Patriot or Briton?', *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society*, 6 (1996), 123–36 (p. 125).
[18] Grande, chap. 7.
[19] "Letter II. To the King of England", *Cobbett's Political Register*, 7 August 1830, co. 181.
[20] Leora Bersohn, '*Examiner* (1808-1881)'; John Richard Wood, '*Observer* (1791-)', ed. by Laurel Brake and Marysa Demoor, *Dictionary of Nineteenth-Century Journalism in Great Britain and Ireland* (Gent: Academia Press, 2009), pp. 596–97.
[21] "Public meetings to commemorate the Revolution in France", *Observer*, 22 August 1830, p. 4; "Meetings in Approbation of the Meetings in France", *Examiner*, 22 October 1830, p. 532.

the Radical Reformers of England to the Brave People of France' and was accompanied by Cobbett's son James."[22]

Beevor left for Paris the day after the dinner and delivered the address on 23 August. Cobbett published the address and a speech by his son in the *Political Register*.[23] The address, read out in English in Paris, "speaks the sentiments of millions of my fellow-countrymen" who admired "the deeds of bravery and generosity which have been lately performed by the citizens of Paris". James Cobbett, who spoke next, appears as "Mr. Cobbett" on the page of the *Political Register*, as if it was William speaking.[24] James served as a stand-in for his father, voicing his sentiments. He assured the Parisians that the English people supported them, and, in his typical radical separation of people and oligarchy, he distinguished between the nobility and the sovereign people: "[w]e who really form a part of the people of England". The rhetoric of Englishness ("every honest Englishman") and avoidance of the word "Britain" are all typical of William Cobbett's Scottophobic English patriotism.[25] Comparisons with 1789-1790 show differences and continuities. Beevor apparently had no difficulty travelling to Paris, while radicals in the French Revolution, found it impossible to send delegations (while many individual travellers did visit Paris). But the rhetoric of the 1830s addresses was reminiscent of that used in 1790. Beevor exalted the "conduct of the French people" as "beyond all praise" and "unparalleled in the annals of history" and Cobbett constructed France and Britain as two rival nations discovering their friendship in recovered liberty. The twin themes of liberty and reconciliation already dominated the halcyon days of 1789-1790. In both cases, no concrete help, or even proposals of cooperation, accompanied the hyperbolic professions of love and admiration.

Besides Cobbett's dinner, a long article in the *Observer* listing five "Public meetings to commemorate the Revolution in France" (22 August 1830) in London and the provinces left an impression of massive support for the revolution. On 17 August, moderate Whig reformers met at the great room of the London Tavern, to consider "an Address from the Citizens of London to the Inhabitants of Paris on their great achievement in the cause of freedom, and to enter into a subscription for the relief of the sufferers".[26] Several MPs

[22] Grande, p. 169.
[23] "To the Reformers Who dined at the London Tavern, on the 16th of August last", *Cobbett's Political Register*, 11 September 1830, co.341-345.
[24] *Cobbett's Political Register*, 11 September 1830, co. 342-345.
[25] Stevenson, 'William Cobbett'.
[26] "Public meetings to commemorate the Revolution in France", *Observer*, 22 August 1830.

attended, as well as J. W. Fox, a leading convener of the "trial by jury" dinners. The meeting reflected the interrogations of the time on reform, and revolution as a possibility if reform was denied. The chairman, the Whig MP Thomas Warburton, imagined a British revolution paralleling that of Paris:

> If, he asked, the King of England should dissolve a Parliament before it was assembled, because he thought it too liberal, – should establish a censorship of the press, and disfranchise half the electors, would not the people have recourse to arms, and fight out the good fight of freedom? *(Cheers.)* He was sure they would. The French had done only what every honest Englishman would have done if the case had been his.[27]

Warburton dared discuss the conditions of legitimate revolution, a topic which for Burke must never be approached. This Whig meeting was daring and not quite in the line of the more conservative core of the party. The dinner was notable for the absence of grandees like Lord Charles Grey, and of "the great merchants and monied men of the City (with a few exceptions)".[28] One guest noted that the dinner, just like the revolution of 1688, did not follow precedent. The French Revolution of 1830 had clearly excited some Whigs enough to go to (for them) revolutionary lengths in dining and speechifying.

Ironically, the next elections would (indirectly) bring the Whigs in power, confronting them with revolutionary threats in the position of the government. This example suggests that, rather than looking for a putative "influence" of the French Revolution of 1830 on the Reform Bill, it may be best to say, more prudently, that the French events nurtured political reflection in Britain, inspiring new imaginary vistas, suggesting opportunities which included revolution and violence, but also perhaps negotiation or other forms of avoidance of violence.

Francis Burdett chaired another dinner at the Crown and Anchor; three hundred guests sat down at Freemasons' Hall to celebrate the "Triumph of Freedom in France".[29] The loyal toast was cheered because William IV, the new king, was popular. The second toast was "The health of the King of the French"; then Burdett gave "The health of the King of the people of France", noting that the phrase implied the principles the radicals fought

[27] "Meetings in Approbation of the Meetings in France", *Examiner*, 22 October 1830, p. 533.
[28] *Ibid*.
[29] "Public meetings to commemorate the Revolution in France", *Observer*, 22 August 1830; "Meetings in Approbation of the Meetings in France", *Examiner*, 22 October 1830, p. 533-534.

for, without naming popular sovereignty in so many words. Burdett praised the courage and moderation of the French, signalling a moral and political maturing in the French character. He expressed a wish of friendship between the two countries and paid homage to "the generous, the brave and the human La Fayette", who was popular with Whigs and most radicals. The general, commander of the National Guard, was then 72 and had a mythical stature in France as well as Britain for his role in the American and French Revolutions. According to a provincial paper, an officer under La Fayette in 1792 "addressed the company in French", praising the revolution yet cautioning them "that civilization should always have precedency of liberty."[30] The presence of the officer counted symbolically as a representative of French valour and liberty. The meeting was given additional importance by the reading of letters from Lord John Russell and others. Dealing in wishes rather than hard facts, the toasts were variations on the theme of concord between King and people in France. The radical paper *The Examiner* noted the presence of ladies filling up the galleries during the whole dinner, and the French symbolism. "Many of the company wore tri-coloured cockades and other decorations of like kind. In the course of the evening tri-coloured flags, or pocket-handkerchiefs made to resemble them, were displayed by several individuals. There were many foreigners present – among Englishmen and strangers but one feeling predominated throughout the entire of the proceedings."[31] The songs displayed the familiar coexistence of British classics and the *Marseillaise*: the anthem became consensual, it was no longer the battle-hymn of Peterloo.

On 27 September, the largest radical meeting took place in the open air, on Kennington Common, after Henry Hunt called "the middle and working classes of London" to address the French and "to address his Majesty on the present distressed state of the country."[32] French symbols were present, as was the case on the platforms of the Peterloo days; Hunt arrived on a cart decked out with cockades and received a tricolour bonnet from the hands of women reformers. The press lost sight of France, noting the partisan nature of the event, the *Morning Post* calling it "a most miserable failure" to revive radical meetings and a personal publicity stunt for Hunt.[33] The papers were also interested in the petition to the King, which expressed usual grievances: taxes, the past liberticide wars against

[30] "French Revolution", *Bury and Norwich Post*, 25 August 1830.
[31] "Meetings in Approbation of the Meetings in France", *Examiner*, 22 October 1830, p.533-534.
[32] "Meeting on Kennington Common", *Standard*, 27 September 1830, p.3.
[33] "Meeting on Kennington Common", *Morning Post*, 28 September 1830, p. 3.

America and France, and unfair parliamentary representation.[34] Hunt had taken up the occasion of the French Revolution to revive the radical campaign on domestic issues, probably also to relaunch his own popularity since he went it alone.

Meetings also took place in large cities in the English provinces,[35] in Scotland and in Ireland. In Paisley, a socially mixed, but largely middle-class meeting sent £22 and an address to Lafayette.[36] In Glasgow, a large meeting, followed by a visit by Joseph Hume, kept the French Revolution in the limelight. The Scottish press, both stamped and unstamped, expressed the feeling that the Revolution would further the cause of reform and the example of the Parisian workmen enlighten their British counterparts.[37] Leeds and Liverpool, the mayor refused to call the meeting and "respectable inhabitants" had to organize it themselves.[38] There did not seem to be so much opposition in Edinburgh, where some Tories attended, "to whom not merely revolution, but popular assemblies were abhorrent."[39] The Birmingham meeting was peaceful; the *Sheffield Independent* commented that the contrast with the 1791 Priestley Riots was evidence of the march of the intellect.[40]

All meetings shared overall praise of the French and the cause of liberty, certainty (or buoyant hopes) they would be wise enough to stabilize their new monarchy, and distinction between the French Revolution of 1789 and that of 1830, which could not plunge into violence like the former because of the political maturity of the French. Attitudes varied from prudent optimism to enthusiasm. Different discourses were voiced at meetings: a Whig discourse of liberal, moderate liberty, and radical calls for universal suffrage. A journalist reporting on a meeting in Newcastle spoke for many other cities:

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[34] "Important Meeting at Kennington Common on Monday", *Freeman's Journal* (Dublin), 30 September 1830, p. 4.
[35] On Manchester and Liverpool: "Public meetings to commemorate the Revolution in France", *Observer*, 22 August 1830. An address was signed in Coventry: *Leamington Spa Courier*, 11 September 1830, p. 3.
[36] On a meeting in Paisley: Archibald Leitch, 'Radicalism in Paisley, 1830-1848 and Its Economic, Political, Cultural Background' (unpublished MLitt(R), Glasgow, 1993), p. 57. On Belfast: "Town Meeting", *Belfast News-Letter*, 3 September 1830, p. 1; "French Revolution – Belfast Meeting", *Freeman's Journal*, 4 September 1830, p. 4.
[37] Fiona Ann Montgomery, 'Glasgow Radicalism 1830-1848' (unpublished Ph.D., University of Glasgow, 1974) <http://theses.gla.ac.uk/1857/> [accessed 25 February 2022].
[38] "Meeting in Liverpool relative to the French Revolution", *Liverpool Mercury*, 13 August 1830; "Meeting on the French Revolution", *Leeds Mercury*, 25 August 1830, p. 3.
[39] Henry Cockburn, *Memorials of His Time*, ed. K.F.C. Miller (Chicago, 1974), p. 435, quoted in Quinault, p. 382.
[40] "Birmingham Meeting", *Sheffield Independent*, 21 August 1830, p. 4.

> The town of Newcastle has ever been noted for the liberality of its opinions, and we rejoice that on this occasion it fully maintained its former character. […] Yielding to none in our admiration of the conduct of the French, we will not attempt to conceal that we exult at the impression which the recent events in Paris seem to have produced on the public mind in this country – especially on the middle classes of society, the true sinews of our national strength. It has been one of the happy consequences of the late revolution that, unattended with the anarchy and bloodshed that disgraced its predecessor, it has shown to the people of England, and the whole world, that the greatest and most salutary changes can be made in the government of a country without violence and with perfect safety to all mankind.[41]

There was some room for regional variation: the diners felt that the French Revolution echoed their own local preoccupations. In Leeds, a Mr Whitworth claimed the operatives of France had done the revolution, and defended the idea of a workers' revolution because France offered "an example worthy of the imitation of the English Operatives."[42] Another orator, Mr Smithson, pleaded for conciliation between middle- and working-class, and drew a parallel between the French fight against slavery and British abolitionism, because a meeting had just been held at Leeds to petition against slavery. Taking up topics recently broached by Richard Oastler in his crusade against "Yorkshire slavery", the orator denounced the "slavery" existing in "the factories of Leeds" due to "the lamentable ignorance of the working classes". The solution was to "oppose a moral force to the corruptions of the present day" by "a system of conciliation and education" in a peaceful cooperation between middle- and working-classes.[43] The French Revolution served to vindicate ideological agendas and local crusades.

The theme of industrial relations was central to the largest dinner of all, one with some 3,700 guests, given by the Birmingham Political Union on 11 October 1830.[44] The printed proceedings detailed the gigantic nature and professionalism of the whole affair.

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[41] *Durham Chronicle*, 11 September 1830, p. 4.
[42] "Meeting on the French Revolution", *Leeds Mercury*, 25 August 1830, p. 3. The journalist claimed not to understand his speech.
[43] John Smithson, *The Substance of a Speech Delivered at a Public Meeting Held in the Leeds Court-House, on Thursday, September 23rd, 1830, to Consider the Propriety of Addressing the French People on the Subject of Their Recent 'Glorious' Revolution*, 2nd ed. (Leeds: J. Smithson, 1830), pp. 5, 8.
[44] *Report of the Proceedings at the Dinner of the Political Union Held at Mr Beardsworth's Repository, on Monday, October 11, 1830, to Commemorate the French Revolution of July 1830* (Birmingham: William Hodgetts, 1830). The dinner was naturally reported in the press, e.g. *Leicester Chronicle*, 16 October 1830, p. 2; *Sheffield Independent*, 16 October 1830, p. 3; *Freeman's Journal* (Dublin), 16 October 1830, p. 4; *Examiner*, 17 October 1830, p. 10-11.

The dinner took place in a private venue in Birmingham. A consistent Anglo-French symbolism was adopted, with matching flags and a toast to Louis-Philippe following that to William IV. The speeches naturally paid homage to the heroism and wisdom of the Parisian revolutionaries. The toasts were similar to those given elsewhere. One is worth noticing because it negotiates the social identities of the Union members: "The working classes of the city of Paris, who have nobly redeemed the errors of the first revolution, and given glorious proof that tyrants can be humbled without the aid of an aristocracy."[45] The toast celebrated the "working classes" and as such was a remarkable one to drink for middle-class Union members; but it also exorcized the violence of the Terror, the maximum and therefore communism. The toast promised a respectable behaviour on the part of the working class, making possible the union with the middle classes and the possibility of joint political action "without the aid of an aristocracy". Also of interest in the leaflet published on the occasion are the lyrics of "Songs sung in the course of the day's proceedings", which connect French and English struggles for freedom. They include the *Marseillaise, The Trumpet of Liberty*, "Our Chartered Rights" (which hails Frenchmen and asks for "Our chartered rights and liberty"), and two songs of the organization: the "Union Hymn" and "The Gathering of the Birmingham Union." The last song was composed by Eliza Flower. This female contribution is notable in a celebration that was officially, in all the published reports, a masculine, even virile, celebration. Flower is notable for two reasons in this context: her song, a classic of radical and reformist movements, remained anonymous; secondly, Flower also composed for the Polish revolution in the same period, as will be seen later.[46]

The BPU insisted on cross-class collaboration amidst a wave of industrial riots, strikes and machine-breaking that hit the Midlands and the North in the summer of 1830.[47] Such a contrast between the Birmingham Union and working-class mobilization suggests that the French Revolution of 1830 was many things to many people. While the BPU saw it as a revolution of "the people", uniting rich and poor against a tiny oppressive aristocracy in a great constitutional design of liberty, the Northern radicals, and the public that flocked to the Rotunda to listen to Hunt or Carlile viewed the French Revolution as a triumph of

[45] *Report of the Proceedings at the Dinner of the Political Union…*, p. 6.
[46] K. Bowan, 'Eliza Flower's and Harriet Martineau's The Gathering of the Unions: From the Radical Salon to the Monster Meeting', *Leaves*, 12 (2021).
[47] George Rudé, 'English Rural and Urban Disturbances on the Eve of the First Reform Bill, 1830-1831', *Past & Present*, 37, 1967, 87–102 (pp. 91–92, 97).

the working class over its oppressors, which included rich masters and factory owners. Regional differences were in evidence here. In Birmingham, an artisan-based economy made cooperation with the middling orders possible, but the division between capitalists and operatives precluded it in the large manufacturing towns like Manchester. The competition and stridency of radicalism in London also prevented cooperation.

Several addresses drawn up by London parochial bodies were duly presented at a ceremony at the Hôtel de Ville on 28 August.[48] In the presence of General La Fayette standing in the uniform of the national guards, the Prefect of Paris received the addresses and a bundle of English papers from the hands of John Bowring, this friend of Jeremy Bentham who had been active in the Greek Committee and celebrations of the Spanish *trienio*. The speeches were an exchange of compliments for France's and England's struggles for liberty on the model of *don-contre-don*. Those ceremonies are comparable to the symbolic gestures Britons made at the beginning of the first French Revolution.

The communication seems to have been fluid enough, thanks to the language skills of both British and French actors. A French officer could address the crowd at the Crown and Anchor in his own language without impropriety. Most guests probably understood; some did not but what mattered was the man and they cheered; possibly those sitting in the back heard little, so language hardly mattered. In Paris, Beevor felt he could address the French in English because he thought they understood the language.[49] There was no need for translators, as had been the case when the delegates from Nantes spoke at the Crown and Anchor on 14 July 1790, or as would happen later, but in more plebeian meetings. Some familiarity of French in the reading public is also suggested by the publication of French songs in the press, for instance "La Parisienne, Marche Nationale, par Casimir Delavigne".[50]

Perhaps radical celebrations were about France, after all. The symbolism of cockade and ribbons, the presence of foreigners, hyperbolic praise of France and professions of reconciliation were reminiscent of 1789-1790. But the diplomatic context was different. A meeting at Liverpool in August considered expressing support for the French Revolution because Wellington's policy, contrary to Canning's, was hostile to resistance to despotism.[51] This was nugatory, since the Wellington administration recognized the new

[48] "Private Correspondence", *Times*, 31 August 1830, p. 2.
[49] *Times*, 27 August 1830, p. 2.
[50] In the radical-leaning *Chester Chronicle*, 22 October 1830, p. 4.
[51] "Meeting in Liverpool relative to the French Revolution", *Liverpool Mercury*, 13 August 1830.

French government immediately and worked with it to ease tensions in Belgium. The point of the meetings was not so much to influence British foreign policy as it had been in 1790. Cobbett, Hunt, and Burdett each hoped to revive the cause of reform at home, but the dispersal of their efforts showed the disunion of the radical cause.

Lecturing and publishing in favour of the 1830 Revolution

Besides meetings and addresses, British support for the 1830 Revolution came in many forms. Gestures include the display of the tricolour flag at the Rotunda, Richard Carlile's theatre, and a "republican funeral" in 1832.[52] French tricolour symbolism pervaded the funeral of Joseph Pitkin, a "real republican", "*In the parish of St Matthew, Bethnal-green, by the members of the Union of the Working Classes of the Tower Hamlets*". The *Cosmopolite*, a radical weekly advocating universal suffrage described it:

> First, a tri-coloured banner; motto "The voice of the people is the voice of God." Borne by two members, and supported by four other members.
>
> Second, a tri-coloured little flag with tri-coloured tassals,[sic] at the front of the corpse. Borne by two members with tri-coloured sashes across their breast, and white hats.
>
> Next, the corpse, borne by four members; six pall-bearers, with white hats, and tri-coloured sashes across their breast."[53]

The article concluded that kingcraft was nearly finished. The funeral, an isolated event apparently, suggests how far the French Revolution had revived the hopes of radical reformers. For them, it had vindicated democracy: commenting on the celebration of the second anniversary of the Three Glorious Days, the paper evoked "the French Revolution in 1830, in which the glorious triumph of the *many* was established upon the ruins of the despotism of the few."[54] This is remarkable given that the revolution led to a new, more liberal, form of monarchy, not to a republic: republicanism lay in the power of the people rather than in a particular institutional arrangement.

While advanced democrats used French symbolism, there was also a process of commercialization, as had happened in the summer and autumn of 1790. There was enough curiosity about the cockade for papers to publish explanatory paragraphs.[55] Many

[52] J. Epstein, *Radical Expression: Political Language, Ritual, and Symbol in England, 1790-1850* (Oxford; New York: Oxford University Press, 1994), p. 199, note 121.
[53] "Republican Funeral", *Cosmopolite*, 29 September 1832.
[54] "Second Celebration by the Working Classes of the Anniversary of the French Revolution in 1830, at Copenhagen gardens", *The Cosmopolite*, 4 August 1832, p.1-2.
[55] See e.g. "Origin of the Tri-Coloured Cockade", *Manchester Mercury*, 30 August 1830.

Englishmen from all walks of life, from workers at radical meetings to gentlemen at Brighton, sported tricolour ribbons:

> Tricolour watch-ribbons, guards, &c. are now worn here by many gentlemen, and we are told that a large quantity has already been sold. One of the Brighton pleasure-boats also displays the flag, probably with the view of attracting notice.[56]

At the Kennington common meeting, "an ingenious Frenchman" sold cockades and flags.[57] But at the second anniversary of the revolution in August 1832, the publisher Hetherington sold himself at the wholesale price the ribbons that guests were required to wear.[58]

The French Revolution of 1830 provoked an outpouring of prints to satisfy the perceived curiosity of the public, especially compilations of sources and cheap leaflets.[59] Many caricatures were published; most initially supported the revolution, though some lampooned it when it started to spread abroad in the autumn.[60] *The Royal Menagerie, a Collection of the Best Caricatures Which Have Appeared in Paris since the Late Revolution*, published in London in 1831, illustrates how the cultural transfer of caricatures diffused the image of a bloodless, happy revolution to a middle-class public who had a smattering of French.[61]

Addressing working-class public this time, radical publishers like William Hone and William Cobbett also tried to instil a sense of familiarity with the French. Two defences of revolution stand out. Hone (1780–1842) had achieved notoriety when he was tried, and acquitted, for blasphemy and sedition in 1817. He lampooned Castlereagh and

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[56] *The Standard*, 27 August 1830 ; on radicals: E. Fureix, 'Les Trois Glorieuses: jeux d'échelles et inscription transnationale', in S. Aprile, E. Fureix, and J.-C. Caron (eds), *La Liberté guidant les peuples: Les révolutions de 1830 en Europe* (Seyssel: Champ Vallon, 2013), pp. 61–71 (p. 67).

[57] "Meeting on Kennington Common", *The Standard*, 27 September 1830, p.3. Estimates ranged from "6,000 to 10,000, among whom were many females" ("Meeting on Kennington Common", *Chester Chronicle*, 1 October 1830, p. 3).

[58] *Poor Man's Guardian*, 28 July 1832, p. 480.

[59] For instance William Carpenter, *Anecdotes of the French Revolution of 1830* (London: William Strange, 1830); *Brief Account of the French Revolution of 1830; Comprehending Every Occurrence Worthy of Record, Which Transpired at Paris ... July 27, 28, & 29. To Which Is Added an Appendix, Containing the Ordinance of Charles X. ... the New Charter ... and Many Interesting Anecdotes. Also a Memoir of the Duke of Orleans* (Glasgow: Printed for the proprietor, by M. Ogle, and W. R. McPhun, Glasgow; Charles Tilt, Fleet Street, London, Daniel Lizars, Edinburgh; R. M. Tims, Dublin, 1830).

[60] F. Bensimon, 'English Caricature and the French Revolutions', in R. Reichardt and P. Kaenel (eds), *Interkulturelle Kommunikation in der europäischen Druckgraphik im 18. und 19. Jahrhundert = The European Print and Cultural Transfer in the 18th and 19th Centuries = Gravure et communication interculturelle en Europe aux 18e et 19e siècles* (Hildesheim: Olms, 2007), pp. 437–62 (pp. 440–5).

[61] *The Royal Menagerie, a Collection of the Best Caricatures Which Have Appeared in Paris since the Late Revolution* (London: Ch. Tilt, 1831).

the establishment in the best-selling *The Political House that Jack Built* (1814).[62] His *Full Annals of the Revolution in France, 1830* was a compendium of various sources and anecdotes interspersed with pro-revolutionary editorial comment.[63] Technological advances had enabled to include engravings in mass-produced books. This new possibility, which had been unthinkable in 1789, now offered to the wider public vivid images of revolutionary scenes and popular agency, like "The people hoisting of the red flag on Porte St. Denis" (p. 24) or "Attack of the Hotel de Ville by the people" (p. 28).

Hone presented the revolution of 1830 as the continuation of that of 1789. In the 1790s, "FRENCH PRINCIPLES were frustrated in their progress", some defenders of the Declaration of the Rights of Men having been guillotined during

> a reign of terror which subdued order and virtue, and deluged France with blood. The individuals perished, but their principles survive.
>
> FRENCH PRINCIPLES have worked, are working, and *will* work."[64]

This Girondin reading, extolling the men of 1791 and blaming Robespierre, followed essentially the same logic that had informed Helen Maria Williams's *Letters Written in France*; this time, Williams's hope of a rescue of the ideals of 1789 seemed fulfilled with the Revolution of 1830. By French standards, reluctance to accept 1793 would not entitle Hone to the name of full-blooded revolutionary; in England, he was extremely daring.

As for Cobbett, he provided a running commentary on the course of the revolution. He wove together the revolutionary events in Paris, the agitation in London and the Swing Riots, which he called "Rural War". His journalism in 1830 aimed to function as an intermediary between England and France, "shuttling between" the two countries "to place current events within a long narrative of oppression."[65] Cobbett published many articles based on the reports sent by his two sons, James, then William, who acted as Paris correspondents for him. Ever the consummate publicist, Cobbett tried to distribute his *Political Register* in France. He made efforts to link English radicalism and the course of

[62] Philip W. Martin, 'Hone, William', *ODNB*.
[63] William Hone, *Full Annals of the Revolution in France, 1830* (London: Thomas Tegg, 73, Cheapside; R. Griffin and Co., Glasgow; and J. Cumming, Dublin, 1830).
[64] *Ibid.*, p. 111.
[65] Grande, p. 181.

the French revolution in a series of articles addressed to French readers on the state of England in English and French translation.

Cobbett targeted a popular readership by cheap reprints of articles of the *Political Register*, but he also addressed the two kings of France and England, and the élites. He bore the voice of "the people" to warn the high and mighty and call them to account. Cobbett felt that the Paris revolution had made reform in Britain inevitable and told William IV so in an open letter. He also published a series of letters (in English with French translation) to Talleyrand, saluting the Revolution but mocking his correspondent's political versality, and to the new French king Louis-Philippe, warning him against the dangers of the English system of public debts.[66] Cobbett's letter to the Duke of Wellington "On the necessity of Parliamentary Reform, in order to prevent any dangers to the English Government from the recent Revolution in France" (21 August 1830) is interesting because it takes up an argument developed by John Cartwright and others in the 1790s and 1800s, namely that parliamentary reform, in the context of revolution abroad, was necessary to avoid revolution in Britain by giving way timely to demands that might become revolutionary and violent.[67] Thus, international crises revived hallowed arguments from the times of the French Wars.

From September 1830 on, Cobbett addressed the working classes, especially through lectures and cheap publications derived from them. At the height of the Swing Riots, he compared the French Revolution and the situation in rural Sussex.[68] He lectured at the Rotunda on Blackfriars Bridge, Richard Carlile's theatre. The price of admission was a low two-pence, and the profits would be given to "the fund for the widows and orphans of Paris."[69] The title of the published lectures, *Eleven Lectures on the French and Belgian Revolutions, and English Boroughmongering*, tied reform at home and revolution abroad together.[70] The lectures were separately paginated and could be bought as a volume or separately for 3 pence each (twopence for the first one). Cobbett also published and advertised other cheap material, such as a translation of the *Marseillaise* and anecdotes.[71]

[66] *Cobbett's Political Register*, 13 November 1830, co. 684-695; 2 October 1830, co. 428-432.
[67] "Tableau de l'Angleterre en 1830", *Cobbett's Political Register*, 28 August 1830, co. 257-270.
[68] Grande, pp. 180–81.
[69] "Lecture", *Cobbett's Political Register*, 28 August 1830, col. 285. See *Ibid.*, p. 178. Cobbett later opened a subscription for the widows of the Belgian revolution: *Political Register*, 9 October 1830, co. 478.
[70] William Cobbett, *Eleven Lectures on the French and Belgian Revolutions, and English Boroughmongering: Delivered in the Theatre of the Rotunda, Blackfriars Bridge* (London, 1830).
[71] Advertisement taken from the back cover of the seventh lecture.

Cobbett's ventures, and inexpensive memorabilia like portraits of Louis-Philippe, indicate the presence of artisan or working-class customers with an interest in politics.

Cobbett inserted in his text the interruptions and comments from the crowd, conveying the excitement of the public meeting. This is the opening of the fifth lecture, delivered on 16 September, when Belgium was in revolution, and Poland on the brink of it:

> Gentlemen,
>
> Every time we meet here, we have the happiness to congratulate ourselves that there has been another revolution, that there has been another blow given to some tyrant or other. (Great cheering.) And, gentlemen, if the French revolution go thus round the world – for already it is all over the Continent – do you believe that WE shall much longer suffer ourselves to be trampled upon by the boroughmongers? (Loud cheers, and cries of, No, no.)[72]

Cobbett tried to show "the effects which I think the Revolution recently achieved in France will produce, and, indeed, ought to produce, in this country."[73] Cobbett's leitmotiv in the lectures was that the French Revolution illustrated the power of the masses: the working classes, not the middle class, had made the revolution, and this proved what could be achieved if the English people had won universal suffrage. Often straying from the French and Belgian revolutions of 1830, Cobbett rehearsed his usual attacks on the Britain's corrupt political system.

Cobbett deployed a discourse on revolutions, those of 1830 (but there is little on Belgium), seventeenth-century England and a possible English revolution. He rejected the Whig reading of the 1830 Revolution as the French equivalent of the Glorious Revolution, which had been an aristocratic coup opening the reign of self-electing parliaments.[74] When it came to imitating the French and having a revolution in England, Cobbett dodged the issue; he would not admit the necessity of revolution unreservedly but played with the notion of reform, noting that a fully-fledged reform would revolutionize the constitution by

[72] Cobbett Lecture 5, p.1.
[73] Cobbett Lecture 1, p.1.
[74] Cobbett Lecture 1, p.3-4.

setting it right again. The sword of Damocles of a libel for sedition and the anti-Jacobin hysteria inherited from the 1790s clearly hung over his head:

> When I ask for parliamentary reform, he declared on September 6, they say I mean a REVOLUTION. That is very odd; but the answer I give is this. One of your own body has stated, that 154 peers return a majority of the whole House of Commons. You call yourselves the representatives of the people, and yet one of yourselves offers to prove that you are nothing but the representatives of the peers and the ministers. Now, surely, it is not very revolutionary, not very impudent, to say, We want you TO BE what you SAY YOU ARE – our REPRESENTATIVES. But the moment I say this, I am a revolutionist – a jacobin – I want to turn every thing topsy-turvy! Well, and suppose I did want this? What then? We had one revolution, and we call it a GLORIOUS revolution – with how much propriety I had the honour to show you the last time I was here – but if a revolution may be *glorious* one time, why not another? Surely, we can't have too much of a good thing. (Laughter, and cheers.) Besides, it comes only once in 140 years. (Chears). […] I DO want a revolution. (Renewed cheering.) And now, what is a revolution? The word means change: nothing more; and used of as it generally is in politics, it means a great and a general change. Now, then, I want a revolution.[75]

Cobbett's addresses to the working classes reveal the aporias of radical discourse, which enabled the advocacy of revolution provided it was vaguely defined, or redefined as reform, knowing that radical reform, especially universal suffrage, would not be forthcoming without force since the elites would not grant it spontaneously. No wonder "Home Office correspondents had been urging prosecution since the Rotunda lectures in September." (In 1831 Cobbett was prosecuted, and acquitted, for another matter, an article in the *Political Register*).[76]

Cobbett was soon disappointed by the course of the French revolution. By October 1830, he was already complaining about the new regime, because it maintained in force Charles X's laws restricting the liberty of the press, a grievance Cobbett harboured against the British government as a journalist naturally, and because French taxes still fed into the hateful system of national debt that enriched fundholders. Thus, "if Louis-Philippe, Roi-

[75] Cobbett Lecture 2, p.6.
[76] Grande, p. 190.

citoyen, though he be, do not take off a large part of the taxes, he will be no better than" Charles X.[77] Louis-Philippe's France was too much of an absolute, hereditary monarchy. Cobbett dared write to the King of France: "until France be a *real republic*, whether her chief magistrate be *a king* or not, she will never know tranquillity".[78] The French chamber "is, in fact, like another body that I could name, the representative of none but the rich".[79] Cobbett's disillusionment mirrors that of French advanced republicans, who felt betrayed because the people was shoved aside soon after the Glorious Days of June, and the new July Monarchy was not much different from Charles's regime. A silk-weavers' uprising in Lyon was brutally repressed in November-December 1831; this, and the general clampdown on social and political unrest, showed the liberal phase of the revolution had been of short duration and had given way to an authoritarian regime.

A legacy of disappointment? Radicals, Chartists and the 1830 Revolution

The two celebrations of the French Revolution in 1831 and 1832 show that many radicals shared Cobbett's disappointment. Long reports were published in the *Poor Man's Guardian*, an unstamped paper published by Henry Hetherington. On 1 August 1831, members of the National Union of the Working Classes met at the tea gardens of Copenhagen Fields, a place with radical antecedents like the October 1795 mass-meeting in protest of the Gagging Acts.[80] *The Cosmopolite* gave a detailed description of the impressive parade, providing precious examples of mottoes inscribed on flags, like "Arise, awake, or be for even fallen" on a Union Jack, and "The sovereignty of the people" on a tri-coloured flag.[81] The meeting was replete with French symbolism and honoured the French Revolution, but also Poland, with a banner mourning its fate. A white flag fringed with crepe bore two lines expressing mourning for Poland – a sign of the widespread popularity of the Polish cause, but also of a feeling of international solidarity and the

[77] *Cobbett's Political Register*, 9 October 1830, co.478.
[78] "Letter II. To Louis-Philippe, King of the French", *Cobbett's Political Register*, 13 November 1830, co. 689.
[79] "Foreign Affairs. France", *Cobbett's Political Register*, 1 January 1831, co. 57.
[80] "Second Anniversary of the French Revolution", *Poor Man's Guardian*, 4 August 1832, p. 482-483. The Union of the Working Classes had splintered from the cross-class Unions like the BPU when the 1832 Reform Act left the working class disenfranchised: Nancy D. LoPatin, 'Ritual, Symbolism, and Radical Rhetoric: Political Unions and Political Identity in the Age of Parliamentary Reform', *Journal of Victorian Culture*, 3.1 (1998), 1–29 (p. 22).
[81] "Second celebration by the working classes of the anniversary of the French Revolution in 1830, at Copenhagen gardens", *The Cosmopolite*, 4 August 1832, p.1-2.

cumulative impact of foreign revolutions on British freedom. The *Cosmopolite* highlighted the strong presence of women, and reported on a rousing speech to "Republican Brothers and Sisters" by "the Lady of the Rotunda", Eliza Sharples Carlile.[82] She presented a petition for the relief of the families of imprisoned sellers of unstamped newspapers. Beside the *pro domo* advocacy, her speech was remarkable in positioning Britain within the European revolutionary movement. She applauded the "republican spirit of France" that had made monarchy henceforth impossible. Yet, she claimed, revolution was unnecessary in Britain; the voice of the people, issuing from the Rotunda, Carlile's radical beehive, had changed the Tory ministry for a Whig, reformist one. Eliza Sharples's speech is significant in resisting the dominant narrative that saw Britain as a happily unscathed citadel of sound conservatism, and in placing it within the pan-European revolutionary movement, while maintaining its distinctiveness, the "spirit of liberty, the spirit of the Rotunda" enabling the people to raise its voice without resorting to arms.

Henry Weisser hailed this meeting as "a working-class affair", the first event attended, and especially, led, by workers, celebrating foreign revolution; he considered it contributed to form working-class consciousness.[83] The revolution of 1830 certainly encouraged wider political participation among the disenfranchised poor. The orators and addresses, indeed, exalted the working class, but the classic radical opposition between the people and a financial aristocracy (rather than manufacturers or employers) was also voiced at the meeting. In the wider context of celebrations of 1830, this working-class dinner coexisted with cross-class BPU and radical gatherings, which casts some doubt on the thesis of a forthright growth of class consciousness following the 1830 revolution. Nevertheless, it offered a distinctly working-class interpretation of the revolution. The orators conflated "the people" with "the Working Classes" and praised "the Working Classes of the people of France who were the principal actors in that great event." The celebrations displayed a political optimism, not to say, millenarianism already vented in 1790-1791 in English Whig and radical circles: France and Britain united could establish liberty. But with a novelty: the condition was the unity of the working-class. The 1830 Revolution had ended in disappointment: the French "were betrayed by the *juste-milieu* men – the *Whigs* of that country". Replacing Charles X with Louis-Philippe "was like

[82] Eliza Sharples (1803-1852) was the editor of the freethinking journal *Isis*; she wrote many articles with her partner Richard Carlile, and ran his shop and various ventures while he was in gaol. Edward Royle, 'Carlile, Elizabeth Sharples', *ODNB*.
[83] Weisser, *British Working-Class Movements and Europe*, pp. 35–36.

turning out the lion to put in the tiger". A noted orator who was elected president, Julian Hibbert, toyed with the idea of a workers' revolution: "if – which Heaven forbid – there should be a revolution in this country. (laughter) [...] he hoped the Working Classes would keep the power in their own hands."[84] Many in the meeting, however, might have favoured a "moral revolution" through education.

In 1833, some 2000 persons marched in procession bearing the tri-colour flag, the green flag of English radicalism, composite allegorical figures, a portrait of Thomas Paine, the harp of Erin and other symbols.[85] The banners and symbols displayed a value system similar to Carlile's atheistic republicanism. One of the resolutions praised "the artizans of Paris" for their victory, but also deplored that "the crafty middlemen and loan and money-jobbers of Paris" had robbed them of their victory, so that Britain and France were much on a par, leaving America as the only "example" of "good and cheap government".[86] The radicals translated French woes into their own idiom.

The two anniversary celebrations evinced a strong feeling of betrayal, both with French events and with the Whigs' rejection of universal suffrage. It is hardly surprising anniversary meetings stopped after two years, the conservative turn of the July Monarchy leaving nothing to celebrate. In 1832, the press reported on the French festivities in terms reminiscent of the conservative tropes disparaging *fêtes révolutionnaires* in the 1790s:

> From France we only have details of the fetes which were taking place in Paris on Friday and Saturday, in commemoration of the revolution in July, and throughout which, as far as we have yet learned, there appears to have been much more of parade than popular enthusiasm. It is satisfactory, however, to perceive that the fears expressed of some disturbances being intended for that occasion have proved unfounded, for hitherto the festival has been conducted in the midst of the most undisturbed tranquillity.[87]

This is not to say that celebrations of the 1830 French Revolution were barren ground for British radicals. Discussions of peaceful or armed revolution must have played a part in the formative phase of Chartism. Henry Hetherington, who was present at the anniversary

[84] "Second Anniversary of the French Revolution", *Poor Man's Guardian*, 4 August 1832, p. 482.
[85] "National Union of the Working Classes", *Poor Man's Guardian*, 3 August 1833, p. 248-249. Another celebration in a public house in Lambeth was advertised: "Second French Revolution", *Poor Man's Guardian*, 27 July 1833, p. 244.
[86] "National Union of the Working Classes", *Poor Man's Guardian*, 3 August 1830, p. 248.
[87] *Morning Herald*, 1 August 1832, p. 2.

meetings and published accounts of them, was to become a leading figure of the moderate wing of Chartism. Another orator at the first meeting, the publisher John Cleave, was one of the early signatories of the People's Charter in 1837. Those two men, together with William Lovett, formed the leadership of metropolitan working-class radicalism in the 1830s. Without reading Chartism back into the anniversary celebrations, it must be noted that the 1830 Revolution provided a context for discussing issues which came to the fore later in the decade. This pleads for a transnational understanding of Chartism and its prehistory.

This brief overview of largely favourable reactions to the French Revolution of 1830 gives weight to Roland Quinault's argument that the relatively moderate events in France made reform and sea change in politics palatable for the British public.[88] The revolution acclimatized revolutionary symbols like the tricolour or the *Marseillaise*, though they could still be agitated as scarecrows in 1848. France determined neither the election, nor the Reform Act, but its example weakened Wellington's argument that reform would bring revolution.

The revolution roused the interest of both the working class and the middle-class reading public. Two divergent interpretations emerged as early as 1830. Who made the revolution? Despite La Fayette's popularity, the revolution had no ostensible hero for the British. The divergence lay in the ascription of agency to either the "people" as a socially undefined constitutional entity, or to the common people, the workers of Paris. Middle-class liberals viewed the French middle classes and the workers, as the main actor of the Three Glorious Days; they could be satisfied with Louis-Philippe's bourgeois regime. In the radical reading, the working classes had made the revolution, and they were betrayed by the rich. Disenchantment set in with regard to a monarch who clamped down on the press and reigned in the interest of a minority. In this view, France suffered from the same political woes as England with its unreformed parliament.

The French Revolution of 1830 raised the issue of political violence. The different agitations were too disparate and disconnected – urban workers, farmhands and "Swing" rioters, Reform agitations – to ever join in one revolution. Cobbett toyed with the dream of revolution in convoluted speeches. In the longer term, it would be misleading to say that radicals and reformers only saw the revolution of 1830 as a missed opportunity, the mere

[88] Quinault, pp. 392–93.

replacement of a tyrannical king by another. As Malcolm Chase has shown, the Charter drawn by the French Chamber of Deputies, a liberal constitution of sorts, was important for Chartists. It was published in London and the Metropolitan Political Union proposed it as the basis for a constitutional reform in Britain.[89] There also lingered a memory of the people's agency, and 1830 became one of the references, albeit perhaps a minor one, in the radicals' and Chartists' genealogy of freedom. The revolution enshrined the people's right to arm in self-defence and bring down an oppressive government. In 1839, members of the Chartist Convention attacked "the hypocritical and unprincipled nature of the [Whig *Morning*] *Chronicle*'s attack upon the Chartists" by republishing extracts from the *Chronicle* approving of revolutionary working-class violence in Paris in 1830.[90]

The Chartists toasted the revolution of 1830 on occasion. That was the case for instance at a large gathering, a massive procession followed by an open-air lunch in Birmingham after the liberation of William Lovett and John Collins from Warwick gaol in July 1840.[91] Lovett and Collins had been imprisoned for seditious libel for denouncing the dispersal by police of Chartist meetings. Lovett, the secretary of the London Working Men's Association, was the main "moral force" Chartist. John Collins was a Birmingham tool-maker and "the main link between the midlands and the North"; he had toured Scotland in 1839 on behalf of the Birmingham Political Union.[92] At three in the afternoon, an open-air "banquet" of cold meat was given to "eight hundred respectable working men and their wives".[93] It was "respectable" but more inclusive than formal Whig and Tory dinners. The toast to "The glorious revolution of 1830" followed toasts to the Charter and to the released prisoners. This revolution was a fit one to celebrate given the Chartist principle of "[t]he sovereignty of the people", the first toast of the day. The second toast was: "The Queen, her rights, and nothing more; the people their rights, and nothing less". The 1830 revolution, then, was not a failure; that it did not install a republic hardly mattered; what did was the people's agency in punishing and replacing a domineering king. Revolutionary violence remained a divisive issue, however. At a Chartist meeting on the day after the banquet, a delegate pointed out that "[h]e did not like, and would not advocate, such bloody

[89] Chase, *Chartism*, p. 8.
[90] "Is It the Right and Duty of the People to Arm?", *Northern Star*, 6 April 1839, p. 7.
[91] "Entry of John Collins into Birmingham", *Morning Chronicle*, 28 July 1840; fuller account in *Northern Star*, 1 August 1839, p. 8.
[92] Chase, *Chartism*, p. 7 quotation p. 31.
[93] "Entry of John Collins into Birmingham", *Morning Chronicle*, 28 July 1840.

revolutions as that", because they could divert the people from the only worthwhile objective, the Charter.[94]

Political and social unrest in France constantly reminded the public of the 1830 Revolution, and the prospect of further revolutions. In May 1839, the *Société des Saisons*, a republican group headed by Auguste Blanqui and Armand Barbès, led an unsuccessful rising.[95] The conspiracy revived ideas of insurrectionary politics. The *Northern Star* warned its readers against such temptation. "The people [...] saw that the glorious Revolution of the Three Days, like the glorious Reform Bill of England, was a delusion and a mockery. They saw that they, like ourselves, had merely changed the domination of one tyrant for that of another." In 1844, the *Northern Star* greeted the French King's visit to England with a vitriolic article denouncing his apostasy.[96] The main point was the unchanging nature of tyrants; the paper remained prudent on the question of the danger or desirability of revolutions. There was no single discourse within Chartism on the Revolution of 1830, or on revolutionary action in general. Admiration for revolutionary feats coexisted with a strong "moral force" tendency that called for education and peaceful agitation and rejected violent action as counter-productive diversion. In the 1830s and 1840s, the Revolution of 1830 still informed political debate in Chartist circles, but did not help to decide between revolution and reform.

British celebrations of the 1830 Polish Uprising

France did not exhaust the significance of the 1830 revolutions. Poland, in fact, became a more potent cause that rallied diverse groups around notions of liberty and independence. It gave rise to many dinners, in conservative, Whig, radical and Chartist circles. A brief outline of the Polish revolution is necessary to present its reception in Britain.

The Polish Revolution was a revolt against Russia which ended in military defeat and harsh Russian repression.[97] The Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth had been divided

[94] "Release of Lovett and Collins (Concluded from our eighth page)", *Northern Star*, 1 August 1839, p. 1.
[95] "Insurrection in France, and Symptoms of a Like Insurrection in England", *Northern Star*, 18 May 1839, p. 4. On the 1839 insurrection: Pamela M. Pilbeam, *Republicanism in Nineteenth-Century France 1814-1871*, European Studies Series (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1995), pp. 135–38.
[96] "A Welcome to Louis Philippe", *Northern Star*, 12 October 1844, p. 6-7. See also "Departure of Louis Philippe", 19 October 1844, p. 4-5.
[97] John Dunn, '"The November Evening": The Warsaw Uprising of November 1830', *The Journal of Slavic Military Studies*, 16.3 (2003), 126–35; Norman Davies, *God's Playground: A History of Poland*, 2 vols (New York: Columbia University Press, 2005), II, pp. 232–43.

between Russia, Prussia and Austria in 1795. A semi-independent Duchy of Warsaw was recreated during the Napoleonic Wars, and the Congress of Vienna sanctioned the creation of a Kingdom of Poland united with the Russian Empire. Growing dissatisfaction with Russian rule in Poland, and hopes aroused by the Western European revolutions of 1830 led to the November Uprising on 29 November 1830. After a military campaign pitting Polish militias against the tsarist army, Russia restored order and imposed policies of Russification, provoking the so-called "Great Emigration" to Western Europe.

A small Polish colony, never exceeding 700 individuals, arrived in Britain from 1832, often after a stay in France or Belgium. Compared with other revolutions, there was surprising unanimity in Britain on the goodness of the Polish cause, and little hostility against Polish exiles, at the moment and for the next three decades. Critical voices were few. *The Age* might well write in 1832 that "[t]he Liberals of Poland are of course, with few exceptions, Jacobins",[98] but the Polish revolution, made by aristocracy and army with no social or egalitarian dimension, was safe for property-worshipping Whigs and Tories. "The majority of the émigrés came from the lower strata of Polish nobility and served in the Polish Army before and during the November Uprising. They were all well-educated men with upper-class background, but with very limited resources, who faced many difficulties in finding any employment in exile."[99] In the 1830s, Parliament, under both Whig and Tory majority, regularly voted grants for the Poles, with little or no opposition. Private charity soon organized itself through the Literary Association of the Friends of Poland, a society which operated until the twentieth century but whose golden age stretched from the 1830s to the 1850s.[100]

In the 1830s discussion of Poland was brisk, and it was enmeshed in a buoyant sociability. The Literary Association, and Polish exiles, made it sure Poland was repeatedly discussed in Parliament and in the press. They informed public opinion in Britain, France, and the United States, by publishing histories of their country, and by inserting material on

[98] *The Age*, 1 July 1832, p. 212.
[99] Milosz K. Cybowski, 'A Less Eligible Country for a Pole: Britain and the Polish Refugees in the Early Victorian Period (1837–1847)', in *International Migrations in the Victorian Era*, Studies in Global Social History, 33/11 (Brill, 2018), pp. 331–55 (p. 333).
[100] The society stopped its activities in 1923, after the independence of Poland had made them nugatory: Literary Association of the Friends of Poland, *Ninetieth Report, 1922-1923* (London, [1924]), British Library General Reference Collection 08282.a.81.

Poland in the periodical press.[101] In 1832, the Literary Association edited a magazine, *Polonia*, which advertised meetings, activities and new societies in the North of England and in Scotland, which, in turn, occasioned literary productions.[102] Commemorative dinners were part of a repertoire of action in favour of Poland, that included commentaries in the press, parliamentary speeches, very limited diplomatic initiatives, charity and funding, a little military assistance, literature, publication of informative literature and the reception of refugees.[103] The nexus of sociability was broader and more lasting than those involved in the Spanish and South American revolutions.

Commemorations of Poland were transnational, because Polish exiles participated in them, often initiated them, and also in the sense that European liberals gave dinners to Poland elsewhere, especially in Paris, with symbols, toasts and accounts circulating from one country to another. In this respect, the reception of the Polish uprising had more in common with that of the 1848 revolution than with the 1820-1823 revolutionary wave. An important point that was common with the 1830 French revolution but different from the Iberian revolutions, is that the Polish uprising lacked a hero. For the obvious reason that Poland suffered military defeat in 1830, the only available Polish hero was Tadeusz Kościuszko, who was active in the 1790s. Even Edmund Burke admired the 1791 Polish constitution; the memory of that event had lingered and could now be reactivated. The only other candidate to heroization, Prince Adam Jerzy Czartoryski, was the leader of a faction, as will soon be seen, not a universal focus of allegiance. His aristocratic title magnetized some, repelled others. The transnational circulations and heroization involved in the reception of Poland are exemplified in an article from the *Morning Post*, republished from *Galignani's Messenger*, the Paris-based Anglophone gazette, on a celebration of the Polish Rising of 1830.[104] The Paris dinner had displayed the intertwined Polish and French flags, and the portraits of the President of the Polish national government, Czartoryski, and of "the illustrious Generals, Washington, Kosciusko, and Lafayette". The British reader would instantly understand the symbolism, those men forming a pantheon of glory in Britain too.

[101] Feliks Napoleon Żaba, *Lectures on the History of Poland, from the Earliest Period Down to the Present Time* (Edinburgh, 1834); Józef Hordyński, *History of the Late Polish Revolution and the Events of the Campaign, by Joseph Hordynski*, Second edition (Boston: Printed for Subscribers, 1833).
[102] See e.g. "Stanzas Written on Hearing of the Formation of the Glasgow Polish Association. By Dugald Moore, Treasurer of the Society", *Polonia*, no. 2 (September 1832), p. 300-301.
[103] Norman Davies, 'L'Écho anglais de l'insurrection polonaise de novembre', in *Pologne: l'insurrection de 1830-1831, sa réception en Europe*, ed. by Daniel Beauvois, Travaux et recherches, 9 (Lille: Université de Lille III, 1982), pp. 227–38 (pp. 228–29).
[104] "Foreign Intelligence", *Morning Post*, 15 April 1831, p. 4.

Everyone pitied a nation under the Russian jackboot. Beyond this emotional element, Poland was also a space for projecting political visions of a desirable society and politics. It gave rise to conflicting interpretations, due to the structure of Polish emigration and ideological differences in Britain. Two types of dinners took place on 29 November, reflecting ideological divisions both in Britain and among émigré Poles. The Literary Association gave its dinner in the West End; it was a gathering of British middle-class Whigs and conservative Poles. The association was first chaired by the poet Thomas Campbell, a prominent advocate of Poland. Lord Dudley Coutts Stuart (1803-1854), Liberal MP for Arundel and supporter of reform in 1832, soon became the dominant figure as a prime organizer of sociable events. On 29 November, British radicals staged rival celebrations with Polish democrats at the Crown and Anchor. From the outset of the movement in 1838, the Chartists also celebrated the Polish cause; so did the Fraternal Democrats, devoting their first public dinner to Poland in 1846.

The small Polish community was politically fractured and it aligned with different groups in Britain. Krzysztof Marchlewicz identified four tendencies in the 1830s.[105] Despite the complicated, shifting patterns of émigré Polish politics, there was a polarization. On the right were the followers of Prince Adam Jerzy Czartoryski, who resided at the Hôtel Lambert in Paris. They were those who held annual celebrations in the West End, duly covered by *The Times* and most papers. They wanted the independence of Poland in its borders before the 1771 First Partition, and an English-style constitutional monarchy leaving power in the hands of the nobility. The rival celebration at the Crown and Anchor was organized by British radicals and Chartists and members of the Polish Democratic Society, a large emigrant society founded in 1832 in Paris which advocated a democratic republic with universal suffrage, state education and other measures, but no collectivist economy. A splinter group of the PDS, the "Polish People's Commune", was active in Britain and defended a utopian communist programme. Relationships were fraught between the Polish Democratic Society and the British radicals, who doubted the reformist credentials of the PDS leader, General Dwiernicki, and resented the support the hated Whigs gave to Poland.[106] From 1839, Major Bartłomiej Beniowski became the leading

[105] K. Marchlewicz, 'Continuities and Innovations: Polish Emigration after 1849', in S. Freitag (ed.), *Exiles from European Revolutions: Refugees in Mid-Victorian England* (London: Berghahn, 2003), pp. 103–20 (pp. 110–1). For a fuller picture of Polish exile politics and links with British radicalism: Henry Weisser, 'Polonophilism and the British Working Class, 1830 to 1845', *The Polish Review*, 12.2 (1967), 78–96.
[106] Prothero, p. 214.

figure of the PDS and played a significant role in Chartism; he contributed to newspapers and was elected to the second Chartist Convention in 1842.[107]

Conservative Whig dinners and the Literary Association

The Association presented itself as a purely charitable institution. A note in the *Times* stated that it "pretends to no political propagandism", "excites to no revolt" and does not employ foreign missionaries or secret service money.[108] The presence of MPs at some events confirms its closeness to Whig middle-class circles. The "Conservative Whig" label is justified because the Association imagined an independent Poland as a constitutional monarchy with equal laws and religious toleration tempered by strong social hierarchies and a refusal of any socialist, egalitarian measures.

The Literary Association developed a round of activities that received abundant press coverage, especially in the *Times*. In May, they celebrated the Polish constitution of 1791; this was an occasion for a meeting preparing for social events. The 1791 constitution made it possible to link the Polish cause with a good, benign enlightenment constitution that had nothing in it of the radicalism of the French Revolution. In 1791, an orator claimed in 1833, there happened in Poland a peaceful revolution, in the course of which the nobility and clergy divested themselves of their privileges.[109] The most visible events were the Polish ball, and, after 1842, a concert at Stafford House on 15 July. This section discusses the anniversary dinners, then the Polish balls.

The high proportion of aristocrats and army officers among the Polish exiles of this tendency was reflected in the strongly nationalist content of speeches and toasts at commemorative dinners. Admittedly, the first public dinner, given in March 1831 to many Polish and foreign guests, located the Polish insurrection within the general movement of the 1830s, through toasts to La Fayette and France, Italy, Belgium, Spain, Portugal, and speeches in praise of the French Revolution and Belgian independence.[110] This pan-European revolutionary reference was dropped from later celebrations, which concerned a smaller public that was interested in Poland primarily; the focus narrowed to Poland and

[107] Emma Harris, *Bartłomiej Beniowski, 1800-1867: Cosmopolitical Chartist and Revolutionary Refugee* (Warsaw, Poland: Wydawnictwa Uniwersytetu Warszawskiego, 2019).
[108] *Times*, 30 May 1833, p. 2.
[109] "Polish Association", *Times*, 7 May 1833, p. 7.
[110] "Revolution in Poland", *Times*, 10 March 1831, p. 5.

Anglo-Polish friendship. Dinners exalted the great institutions of state, monarchy, army, and nobility, and never mentioned trade, agriculture or the lower classes. In 1832-1833, the pro-Polish movement coalesced, partly on grounds of military comradeship and aristocratic ties. Blood ties were a bond linking the aristocratic Poles and their English and Scottish counterparts. One of Lord Dudley Stuart's motivations for working with Prince Czartoryski was his discovery of family connections in 1832.[111] At a May 1831 dinner, a Polish marquess declared that "[i]n the records of his family, he had found that an ancestor of his had been ambassador from Sigismond III of Poland, to James I of England."[112]

Later dinners involved Polish officers and aristocrats, who would start the commemorative day with mass at a Catholic Chapel served by a Polish priest followed by dinner at the rooms of the Literary Association of the Friends of Poland, in Duke Street, St James. Some years, for instance in 1841 and 1842, the meeting was purely Polish.[113] Speeches were repetitive. Year after year, orators praised Polish bravery and achievements, thundered against Russia, and invoked Anglo-Polish friendship. Calls for Britain to intervene on behalf of Poland mingled with regret it had not stepped in in 1815, or in 1830, when diplomatic action was allegedly possible.

Diplomatic lobbying and transnational noble ancestry meant the nationalism of the conservative Polish émigrés went along with international networks. The Literary Association's celebrations were more international than radical ones. They were in constant relation with the Paris-based supporters of Czartoryski. The press made this international dimension visible to the public, in ways that the Chartist press was to do in the next decade. In 1835, the *Times* republished accounts of a large and distinguished anniversary meeting from the *Galignani's*; it also announced other meetings in Brussels.[114] In the mid-1840s, when internationalism was ascendant in the Chartist movement, the *Northern Star* also reproduced foreign accounts from *Galignani's*,[115] which shows that this practice of quoting celebrations abroad drawn from foreign papers was not a monopoly of the radicals. The

[111] Krzysztof Marchlewicz, 'Stuart, Lord Dudley Coutts', *ODNB*.
[112] "Revolution in Poland", *Times*, 10 March 1831, p. 5.
[113] "The Anniversary of the Polish Revolution", *Times*, 1 December 1841, p. 3; "The Anniversary of the Polish Revolution", *Times*, 1 December 1842, p. 5.
[114] *Times*, 3 December 1835, p. 4 (Paris); *Times*, 4 December 1835, p. 2 (Brussels). See also 2 December 1837, p. 4, for Paris, and other papers, like *Morning Post*, 2 December 1839, p. 4 on celebrations in France.
[115] "The Polish Revolution", *Northern Star*, 7 December 1844, p. 1.

conservative nationalist Poles also had their transnational networks, and in this case used the same Parisian paper as a conduit.

Dinners given to Prince Czartoryski during his trip to Scotland in 1835 make it possible to appraise the Literary Association's negotiation of foreignness and sense of socio-political hierarchies. There were two dinners in Edinburgh: one given by the Scottish nobility, and on the next evening, a "Trades' soiree".[116] The distinction suggests the elitism of the Prince's British supporters, and their wish to treat him as a statesman in exile with a quasi-state dinner. The Scottish nobility, led by the Duke of Breadalbane, entertained the Prince and a delegation composed of two counts and two senior officers in the Assembly Rooms on George Street, in the fashionable New Town.[117] Many orators were Whig reformers, like the recently appointed Lord Advocate John Murray (1778–1859), or Sir James Gibson Craig (1765-1850), lawyer and politician, "a leading member of the Foxites or liberal Whigs in Scotland" (he had had taken part in Bastille Day dinners in 1790).[118] This charity dinner for the relief of Polish refugees was socially very elitist but open to women. "Upwards of 300 gentlemen were present, and a gallery for ladies was erected at the west end of the room, of whom about 100 were present."[119] On the next evening, the city's main tradesmen offered the Prince a "trade's soirée" in the Calton Convening Room.[120] Although the two worlds were not water-tight (the Convener of the Trades of Edinburgh was a croupier at the main, aristocratic, dinner), there was clearly a hierarchy in dignity between nobility and trade reflected in separate events.

There was a strong Scottish, though not nationalist, dimension to the speeches and toasts, which were peppered with allusions to Scottish worthies. Czartoryski compared the Scottish and Polish nobilities, playing on caste fellow-feeling. This can be ascribed to a sense of shared history and affinity between European nobilities and officer corps. As a Scottish MP declared during the dinner, "the duty of resistance to foreign aggression" the Poles were carrying out "had nerved the arm of a Bruce and a Wallace" – but it had also

[116] Lord Dudley Coutts Stuart, *Address of the Literary Association of the Friends of Poland: To the People of Great Britain and Ireland* (London: E. Detkens, 1846).
[117] *Report of the Speeches at the Public Dinner in Aid of the Polish Refugees* (Edinburgh: Printed by M. Aitken, sold by A. & C. Black, 1835).
[118] Emma Vincent Macleod, 'Craig, Sir James Gibson, first baronet (1765–1850), lawyer and politician', *ODNB*.
[119] "Polish Dinner", *Caledonian Mercury*, 10 December 1835.
[120] *Report of the Speeches at the Public Dinner in Aid of the Polish Refugees*, p. 39.

actuated the barons at Runnymede.[121] The long report of the proceedings constantly used the idiom of Britishness ("Britain", "the generosity of Great Britain" on the first page only). Many Scots were prominent in the Polish cause, not least Lord Dudley Coutts Stuart, the judge Robert Cutlar Fergusson, or the poets Thomas Campbell and William Edmonstoune Aytoun (1813–1865), whose mother ran a literary circle in Edinburgh and was friends with Walter Scott. Clearly Scottish élites did not want to be outdone by London, and the dinner, in the prestigious New Town setting, asserted the Scots' generosity, their independence, and Edinburgh's status as a capital within Britain.

In 1846, Lord Dudley Coutts Stuart was to provide a striking example of Linda Colley's thesis that opposition to France, at least with some people, forged "Britishness".[122] In an *Address* of the Literary Association, he asked his readers to imagine Britain under French domination: Scots and English would rally around the British king and army.[123] The campaigns and dinners for Poland suggest the strong British identity of the Scottish elites: a sense of distinctiveness mixed with a strong involvement in the Association's central office in London. The Scottish dinners followed the script of conservative elite sociability, while also displaying a suppler aspect, the modulation of Scottish, British, and aristocratic, identities.

Next to such a quasi-dinner of state, the Polish balls were the Association's most prestigious events, held as they were in the London Guildhall, in the presence of the Lord Mayor, aristocrats and socialites. Such a setting testified to the political and social clout of the Literary Association and its prime mover, Lord Dudley Coutts Stuart. The Polish balls were exclusive and expensive. The lady patronesses, who had a central role in managing the event, repeatedly raised ticket prices, to bring in more money, but especially to avoid overcrowding. A soirée in the late 1840s cost 21/- for a lady and gentleman, 15/- for a gentleman, and 10/6 for a lady. The patronesses had to attract the right people, the fashionable set of aristocrats whose names would be included in the papers; they must deter the others. Every year, the *Times* and other papers would report on the lavishness of the proceeding. The charity dinner was a social, rather than a political, event. The press noted the symbolism (e.g. Polish and British coats of arms and flags), the quality of the music, the performance of star singers and musicians, fancy costumes, and guests. In 1842, toward

[121] *Ibid.*, p. 22.
[122] Colley, *Britons*.
[123] Stuart, p. 16.

the acme of the society's activity, there were 38 Poles dependent on the association, or 2 more than the previous year. The fête yielded £876.[124]

Polish balls fell into decline in the 1840s, yielding less profit; thereafter, interest in Polish refugees (and their numbers) declined.[125] Criticism of Polish balls as misapplied charity mounted in the 1840s. The *Times* was particularly hostile to charity to exiles, though this does not reflect the whole spectrum of opinion. Readers complained that the English poor were more deserving of private charity and that Parliament already voted annual grants for the Poles.[126] Criticism also compared the lavishness of the ball with the destitution of the Poles: "Poland, say the committee who are getting up the ball, is blotted out of the map of Europe, therefore let us dance; her liberty was cloven down on the bloody field of Ostrolenka, and buried in the reeking breaches of Warsaw, therefore let us fiddle and frisk."[127] Articles in the *Times* never questioned the justness of the Polish cause, but felt the English poor should have a prior claim for charity. Only one correspondent of the *Times* pointed the many horrors the Polish army had perpetrated in 1830, in particular against the Jews.[128] To this criticism focused on charity, not politics, Lord Dudley Coutts Stuart always answered, somewhat feebly, that the people supporting the Poles also bestowed their charity on the English. Besides the *Times*, philanthropic charities complained of the lack of provision for the English. In 1847, the *Poor Man's Guardian* published a frontpage picture of the lavish Polish ball surrounded by images of paupers lying on wooden boards in grimy workhouses.[129]

The meetings of the Literary Association had a cultural dimension, which was to be found in other quarters as well. The organizers of balls and dinners liked to blend Polish and British national symbols. Performances of Polish poems, songs and music served as evidence of the country's vitality despite Russian oppression. In 1833, the *Times* reported a recitation of a poem by Goszszynski, "White Eagle", representing the Polish eagle torn by three black eagles representing Prussia, Russia, and Austria. The three partitions of

[124] "Literary Association of the Friends of Poland", *Times*, 6 May 1842, p. 9.
[125] Cybowski, pp. 344–49.
[126] E.g. "The Polish Ball. To the Editor of the Times", *Times*, 8 November 1843, p. 6; another letter by "Anglicus" on 11 November 1843, p. 3. Dudley Coutts Stuart answered on 13 November, p. 3. See also "Destitute Englishmen versus Destitute Poles", *Times*, 17 November 1843, p. 5; "A Ball for the Distressed English", *Times*, 20 November 1843, p. 3.
[127] *Times*, 28 October 1850; see also "The Polish Ball", *Times*, 2 November 1850, p. 3.
[128] *Times*, 27 May 1848, p. 4.
[129] *The Poor Man's Guardian*, 18 December 1847. The paper was published by a philanthropic society instituted in 1846, and had no link with Hetherington's unstamped paper of the same title.

Poland paralleled the passion of Christ. There followed remarks on the Christocentric patriotic of Polish poetry, oratory flights against czar Nicholas, "the Herod of the North". The national air "Glory to Poland, Glory" was sung to the tune of *God Save the King*.[130] Polish balls were the occasions for musical performances. Chopin played at the 1847 ball, though not in the main hall.

Other writers and musicians broached themes developed by the Literary Association. Lurid tales of massacres and children deported to Siberia appealed to the Romantic imagination.[131] The cultural production associated with Poland gave some women opportunity to engage in the political public sphere through cultural achievements.[132] A prominent intellectual stemming for the milieu of Norwich Unitarianism, known, *inter alia*, for her tales popularizing classic political economy, Harriet Martineau penned "The Charmed Sea", a tale that drew from conversations in circles of Polish exiles in London.[133] Female composers seem to have been particularly inspired by Poland. The most enduring work is Augusta Holmès's symphonic poem *Pologne* (1883). Earlier tributes to Poland include a collaboration between Martineau and the composer Eliza Flower. The *Hymn to the Polish Exiles by the Siberian Sea*, published in 1833, was a gesture of support for Polish exiles in London. Kate Bowan and Paul Pickering showed how such musical compositions straddled the boundaries between private and public by politicizing drawing-room singing, and how Flower's authorship was submerged, the 'anonymous' song finding its way into later Labour party songbooks.[134] Female agency was potent because a song created by two women could politicize drawing rooms, and energize public meetings; yet only Martineau's role was acknowledged. The *Hymn to the Polish Exiles* is also notable for it "bleak", "somber and proud", "funereal" mood analysed by Bowan and Pickering. This is also characteristic of another song illustrating Martineau's tale, "Our Poland Mourns, the Song of the Polish Exiles",

[130] "Anniversary of the Polish Revolution", *Times*, 4 December 1833, p. 1.
[131] Thomas McLean, *The Other East and Nineteenth-Century British Literature: Imagining Poland and the Russian Empire* (Houndmills, Basingstoke; New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2012).
[132] The same can be said for the Greek cause. See e.g. the collaboration between poet the Felicia Hemans and the composer Frances Arkwright: Frances Arkwright, *The Greek Exile: A Ballad, by Mrs. Hemans; the Music by Mrs. Robert Arkwright* (Printed & sold at Chappell's Musical Circulating Library, 1845).
[133] Wojciech Jasiakiewicz, 'Harriet Martineau and "The Charmed Sea": Polish Travel Experience in Siberia', in *Travel and Identity: Studies in Literature, Culture and Language*, ed. by Jakub Lipski (Cham, Switzerland: Springer, 2018), pp. 21–38.
[134] Bowan and Paul A. Pickering, pp. 235–37. Eliza Flower also composed the classic reform song *The Gathering of the Unions*; Kate Bowan recently established her authorship: Bowan.

composed by a Mrs G. Clayton.[135] Besides the male Literary Association, female networks were busy supporting Poland; those middle-class women harnessed the Polish cause for political reform, in the case of Martineau, for charity for Ireland in Mrs Clayton's. The sadness of their music and the private drawing-room performances starkly contrasted with the merry polkas and mazurkas played at Polish balls: in this case, female agency was also very present, but widely publicized and commented. Martineau's activities fall besides the opposition between conservative and radical commemorations, an opposition that did not encompass all forms of pro-Polish political and cultural activities.

Radical commemorations of the Polish Uprising

Radical commemorations of the Polish Uprising can be discussed more rapidly, given previous discussions of radicalism and the volume of existing literature.[136] They insisted on the country's right to liberty and independence, and on the need to preserve liberty abroad to prevent encroachments by despotic powers, meaning Russia. For radicals, Poland became a potent symbol of all oppressed countries, including Britain, because of the maximal force of oppression coming from benighted tsarist Russia. Like the conservative Whigs, the radicals appealed to sympathy, asking their followers to imagine themselves in the Poles' steads.

Without tracing the sinuous history of Polish exile politics, it is worth noting that 29 November dinners provided meeting points between radicals and future Chartists and refugees for all Europe, not just Poland. Arrived in London in 1836, Beniowski, a "cosmopolitical Chartist" for his biographer Emma Harris, bridged the worlds of radical Polish emigrants and English Chartists in London; his quick comprehension of English conventions made him an efficient organizer and he taught his countrymen the English conventions governing meetings.[137] By the mid-1830s, there was an incipient internationalism, and discussions of international and British revolution. In 1835, at a

[135] G. Clayton, *Our Poland Mourns, the Chant of the Polish Exiles, in The Charmed Sea, A Tale, by Miss Martineau, The Music Composed by Mrs G. Clayton, and Dedicated to Her Grace The Duchess of Beaufort, Sold in Aid of Funds for the Support of Scripture Readers in Ireland* (London: Welsh, 1833), Aberdeen University Library: SH Mus 139.25. See fig. 4, p. 378.
[136] Peter Brock, 'Polish Democrats and English Radicals 1832-1862: A Chapter in the History of Anglo-Polish Relations', *The Journal of Modern History*, 25.2 (1953), 139–56; Weisser, 'Polonophilism and the British Working Class, 1830 to 1845'; Henry Weisser and others, 'The British Working Class and the Cracow Uprising of 1846', *The Polish Review*, 13.1 (1968), 3–19.
[137] Emma Harris, pp. 330–31.

Crown and Anchor dinner "very numerously attended both by the Polish refugees and their friends in this country", Feargus O'Connor inveighed against the tsar; "two Polish gentlemen" talked in English with "considerable eloquence and power". Resolutions of support and "strongest sympathy" were passed. The utopian communist Étienne Cabet[138] spoke in French, deploring apathy in Europe for the Polish cause, but exculpating England on behalf of the agitation for "the Reform Bill, which he looked upon as being as complete a revolution as that of France and Poland". This dinner illustrates both the internationalism and the revolutionary discussions current in radical circles by the mid-1830s. The speakers' nationalities, the languages they spoke, but above all the European context of analysis and projected action, made those dinners transnational events. Polish dinners served as a forum to discuss a British revolution in the aftermath of the 1832 Reform Act, which was an unfinished business for the radicals. The Fraternal Democrats used the 29 November dinners as a platform for internationalism. In 1847, Karl Schapper introduced "Dr Charles Marx". Karl Marx spoke in German, exhorting the British Workers to obtain the six points of the Charter, which would free the whole world. Friedrich Engels spoke essentially on Poland but called for the unity of "the working classes of all nations".[139] Poland had become one part of the larger cause of international working-class emancipation.

Poland kept international matters in the limelight because it was widely reported in the radical and Chartist press; it must have fostered a consciousness of foreign affairs among workers, as Henry Weisser contended (whether it forged a working-class identity is more debatable).[140] A sociable arena of societies and dinners brought together British working men and refugees, leading to cooperation and fellow feeling. How far this was the case outside London, where most refugees stayed, remains to be determined.

Comparing and assessing radical and conservative dinners

There were major differences between the Crown and Anchor dinners and those of the Literary Association, corresponding to antithetical visions of the future of Poland: a republic with universal suffrage, provision for education and policies in favour of the poor, or a traditional, hierarchical, monarchy dominated by the aristocracy. The radicals insisted

[138] François Fourn, "CABET Étienne", *Maitron*.
[139] "The Polish Revolution", *Northern Star*, 4 December 1847, p. 1.
[140] Weisser, 'Polonophilism and the British Working Class, 1830 to 1845', p. 96.

that "[t]he Polish revolution was essentially a democratic one", as a member of Lovett's London Working Man's Association asserted at the 1836 dinner: "although the ostensible object of the revolution was to free Poland from Russian despotism, it was no less the object of the real patriots to destroy the Polish aristocracy."[141] In this interpretation, the revolution had failed because the aristocrats betrayed the people.

The rift gaped wide open after the Cracow uprising of 20-21 February 1846. Revolution in Cracow, a small independent republic formed in 1815 and long a hub for exiles, led to a democratic experiment and the issue of a Manifesto; the Austrians crushed it in early March.[142] The Polish democrats in London called to manifestations of support. The *Northern Star* feverishly published news from other reform-minded papers on the continent, and reported on meetings by the German Democratic Society and the Fraternal Democrats. The FD organised a dinner in support of Poland in their crowded room at the Red Lion, Great Windmill Street. The meeting passed resolutions of support to foreign freedom fighters, and served to elect six secretaries, "British, German, French, Slavonian, Scandinavian, and Swiss."[143] The Fraternal Democrats continued to express support of the Cracow manifesto after the suppression of the movement.[144] Support for the Cracow uprising also led to the creation, during a FD meeting, of another association, the Democratic Committee for Poland's Regeneration, which was active in 1846-1847.[145] It was headed by George Julian Harney, a central figure of the FD, and the most committed to internationalism among Chartist leaders. On the other hand, the Literary Association issued a declaration disclaiming any support for the insurgents. Stuart felt it necessary to reassure his donors that Poles were naturally conservative and not "addicted to violent doctrines or extreme opinions"; he warned against those who spoke at popular assemblies in France and England.[146] The Scots also distanced the revolution of 1830 from the Cracow uprising: at the Edinburgh dinner on 29 November 1837, an orator declared the Polish

[141] "The Expatriated Poles", *London Dispatch*, 4 December 1836, p. 92.
[142] Davies, II, pp. 248–49.
[143] "The Polish Insurrection", *Northern Star*, 21 March 1846, p. 1. On the Fraternal Democrats and Cracow, see Weisser, *British Working-Class Movements and Europe*, pp. 140–50.
[144] "The Fraternal Democrats", *Northern Star*, 11 April 1846. The paper had published the manifesto on 28 March.
[145] Fabrice Bensimon, 'Au Cœur d'une association politique. Le registre du Comité démocratique pour la renaissance de la Pologne (Londres, 1846-1847)', *Revue d'histoire du XIXe siècle*, 62.1 (2021), 230–49.
[146] Stuart, p. 34.

Revolution "was not produced by the prevalence of any speculative theories in politics", which distinguished it from the French Revolution of 1789.[147]

Yet radical and conservative commemorations shared certain characteristics. Henry Weisser explained the popularity of the Polish cause among the British working class partly by hostility to Russian autocracy, and romanticism, because the chivalric quality of Polish resistance appealed to the imagination.[148] The same motives played a part among conservative Whig circles. Despite the dissemination of brochures and Polish courses, there is no evidence of a very deep understanding of Polish culture in Britain. Orators on both sides drew on the same stock of clichés, evoking shivering children in Siberia to draw tears from their audience. Russophobia was a central issue in both sets of dinners. The *Northern Star* multiplied attacks on Russia and sometimes went in the same strains as conservative supporters of Poland, "[a] country which, having, during ten centuries of a glorious existence well deserved of Christendom and of Europe, was robbed of her independence".[149]

Even in terms of policy expected from the British government, the distance between radicals and conservatives was so not great as it would seem, because of the very small room for maneuver. Both the Literary Association and the Crown and Anchor resolutions demanded that Britain and France jointly made diplomatic efforts to procure the restoration of Poland, as a guarantee for the liberty and peace of Europe.[150] They felt that threatening war would frighten Russia, but they would not be ready to fight for Poland, rhetorical flourishes notwithstanding. The Literary Association insisted on the Treaty of Vienna, but the difference was in emphasis, since they, like the radicals, recognized the notion of a right to national independence founded in God and nature.

Polish dinners and the Springtime of the Peoples

The 1848 Revolution did not end dinners commemorative of Poland, but lessened their interest for the general public. The absence of commemorations on 29 November 1848, at least the absence of reports in the press, suggests that the Literary Association

[147] "Anniversary of the Polish Revolution", *Caledonian Mercury*, 30 November 1837.
[148] Weisser, 'Polonophilism and the British Working Class, 1830 to 1845', pp. 80, 89.
[149] "Poland and Nicholas", *Northern Star*, 15 June 1844, p. 8.
[150] Stuart, pp. 9–15. See the Crown and Anchor dinner: "The Expatriated Poles", *London Dispatch*, 4 December 1836, p. 92.

preferred to abstain from commemorating an uprising after a year of European revolution. As for the Crown and Anchor radicals, they had newer, more exciting revolutions to celebrate. In 1848, the Poles contributed to revolution abroad, more than at home;[151] several inconclusive uprisings in Poland, against Prussia more often than Russia, did not amount to a revolution. It made little sense to celebrate the 1830 Rising in November 1848, in the context of pan-European revolution.

After 1848, commemorative dinners continued, but their character changed, first because of the influx of Polish exiles of poorer social background from 1849, and because the cause of Poland became diluted due to the emergence of several independence movements, from Italy to Hungary and other Central-Eastern European countries. In 1848, the Chartists invoked Poland and other nations oppressed in Austria-Hungary to advance the cause of Ireland.[152] Lajos Kossuth, Hungarian liberal politician and protagonist of the short liberation war against Austria in 1849, became a hero by the time he arrived in England in October 1851. Some of his supporters, like Ferenc Pulszky, who was active in radical and Whig sociability in London, had stoked his popularity beforehand.[153] Kossuth was everywhere. He spoke to several publics and was also lionized at Polish balls, whose funds went partly to the Hungarians.[154] He became the star orator at 29 November dinners, which henceforth honoured the Poles and Hungarians, two nations struggling against mighty empires. Kossuth's stature enabled him to play the role of the charismatic revolutionary hero, something no Pole could possibly do at the time. He also used the Polish dinner as a platform, being a practitioner of "modern methods of public relations and political marketing, as public addresses".[155]

By the mid-1850s, the international, revolutionary character of the dinner was visible. The 1854 dinner, the first one held after Lord Dudley Stuart's decease, is a case in point.[156] St Martin's Hall was overcrowded and some people could not gain admittance. Chartists like Ernest Jones and many foreigners attended. The secretary read letters by radicals, ex-Chartists like Thomas Duncombe and Thomas Perronet Thompson, the liberal

[151] Davies, II, p. 252.
[152] Dorothy Thompson, *The Dignity of Chartism: Essays by Dorothy Thompson* (London; New York: Verso, 2015), p. 156.
[153] Zsuzsanna Lada, 'The Invention of a Hero: Lajos Kossuth in England (1851)', *European History Quarterly*, 43.1 (2013), 5–26.
[154] "The Polish Ball", *Times*, 14 November 1851, p. 5.
[155] Tibor Frank, 'Lajos Kossuth and the Hungarian Exiles in London', in *Exiles from European Revolutions: Refugees in Mid-Victorian England*, ed. by Sabine Freitag (London: Berghahn, 2003), pp. 121–34 (p. 126).
[156] "Anniversary of the Polish Insurrection: Speech of M. Kossuth", *Observer*, 3 December 1854.

Whig W. T. Thompson, representatives of pre-1848 sociability, but also Giuseppe Mazzini. The Italian patriot had struck friendships with English radicals like William Linton and William Lovett during his first exile in the 1830s; in 1849 he had convened a *Comité démocratique central européen* comprising Ledru-Rollin, the German Arnold Rugge, Kossuth, and the Rumanian Dumitru Bratianu.[157] Such transnational political links meant that the Polish meeting served to discuss, not just the fate of Poland as in the 1830s, but European politics and the concert of nations. In 1854, in the midst of the Crimean War, Kossuth electrified the crowd with martial discourse, replete with Biblical and ancient references familiar to all Europeans. Britain, Kossuth argued, needed a free Poland to win the war against Russia. This was the perennial call for Franco-British intervention in favour of Polish independence, this time in war context.

This suggests that anniversaries of the Polish anniversaries, from a battleground between conservative-aristocratic and radical dinners in the 1830s, had evolved into a gathering of English radicals and foreign patriots devoted to the principle of nationality that was proclaimed, then defeated, in the Springtime of the Peoples. Engagement for Poland continued in the 1850s. Mazzini agitated for it in his Young Europe movement, and William Linton, an ex-Chartist engraver, endlessly defended Poland in the press.[158] The Polish balls went on, but progressively went out of fashion with the wealthy.

Three periods emerge in the history of pro-Polish sociability. From 1831 to 1845, two rival sets of commemorations vied over incompatible political visions of Poland's future, and by extension Britain's. A sequence of high-pitched internationalism quickly follows, from 1845 to 1848, the Fraternal Democrats anchoring the Polish cause to working-class internationalism on the eve of the 1848 Revolutions. From 1849, the failure of independence movements provoked calls for Polish independence, but this time in the context of the Europe of nations, in a sociability dominated by European exiles. By the mid-1850s, Polish dinners had become tribunes for other libertarian causes. The radical paper *The Examiner* complained:

> It is lamentable that a cause so excellent as that of Poland should constantly be discredited by being mixed up with matters that have no connection with it. Cannot

[157] Marchlewicz, p. 115. On Mazzini: Maurizio Isabella, 'Italian Exiles and British Politics before and after 1848', in *Exiles from European Revolutions: Refugees in Mid-Victorian England*, ed. by Sabine Freitag (London: Berghahn, 2003), pp. 59–87.
[158] John Murdoch, 'Linton, William James', *ODNB*.

> the gentlemen who wish to discuss the merits of Lord Palmerston and the Emperor Napoleon, or the expulsion of French refugees from Jersey, find any other occasion for the purpose than a Polish meeting? Those who seek to make the Polish cause a stalking-horse to cover attempts directed against the French alliance and the only English statesmen who are disposed to carry on the war against Russia with vigour, may be valuable members of the Peace party, but are certainly no true friends of Poland.[159]

Poland was so popular a cause that it became a pretext for voicing other concerns.

In the end, it is easier to demonstrate the range in moods, ideology, and organization of pro-Polish events than to assess the extent of support for Poland. Norman Davies suggested that true "Polonophiles" were few – they were essentially the Scots of the Literary Association – and that conservatives were always suspicious of the Polish refugees, given their links with Paris, a hotbed of "Jacobin" activity.[160] Such a view is perfectly plausible. Still, the Polish cause must have schooled many radical workers in international relations, as Henry Weisser contended.

The Polish cause was more open to women than other revolutionary celebrations. It provided an outlet for political expression, albeit sometimes covert or anonymous, for women like Martineau and Flower. Newspapers commented on the strong presence of women in Polish dinners, both those of the Literary Association and the radical ones. One reason might be that working-class sociability had opened up to women; there were admitted to dinners by the time of Peterloo, though they could not speak. Moreover, Poland was culturally more feminized than other causes. Contrary to Spain, South America, and some other national movements, support for Poland did not centre on a hero but on a nation, conceived as a martyr figure and sometimes feminized and presented as tortured, or martyrized by Russia. Mourning, hope and prayer, so central in the Polish cause, corresponded to expected female roles. A stronger reason was the Polish cause was not immediately partly-political; it was felt to be a moral issue that women could feel about. The strong contingent of women in middle-class fundraising dinners and Polish balls comes from this perceived non-partisan character and from women's established role as charity organizers. Elite women could be approved for organizing Polish balls, because this activity

[159] "The Anniversary of the Polish Revolution", *Examiner*, 1 December 1855. On the expulsion of French exiles from Jersey, see below note 223 p.362.
[160] Davies, p. 232.

prolonged their traditional household and sociable duties, and they did not step out of the sphere deemed proper for them. Still, though there might well be gender-conservative reasons for admitting women, those women present at dinners did hear speeches and songs with some political content. If not a fully-fledged induction into citizenship, dinners provided some initiation. The cases of Flower, Martineau, and female working-class activists show that a broad spectrum of roles was available, more or less breaking with expectations of female demeanour.

Compared with responses to other revolutionary movements, then, Poland attracted a larger constituency of men and women from varied political persuasions. The 1848 revolutions changed the nature of the celebrations, from a focus on one martyr-nation to a celebration of the Europe of nations. Such a transformation is a manifestation of the strong internationalization provoked by the French revolution of February 1848 and its repercussions.

Celebrations of the 1848 French Revolution: the first flurry of addresses

British reactions to the French Revolution of 1848 are known in great detail.[161] The Parisian uprising of 22-25 February, sparked off by the government's repression of the opposition banquet campaign, roused enthusiasm in many quarters, encouraging dozens of meetings in support of France across Britain. A monster meeting at Lambeth adopted a motion against interference of the British Cabinet in French affairs and sent a Chartist delegation of three to Paris. Other delegations followed, so keen was the desire to offer congratulations to the Provisional Government and to visit Paris in revolution.[162] In England and Scotland, addresses to the Provisional Government multiplied in March and April. Demonstrations mingled French republican and British symbolism, as on a banner in Glasgow bearing the tricolour with "'The Charter and Repeal' on one side and 'Liberty, Equality, Fraternity' on the other."[163] The Chartists hailed the Provisional Government's social programme, which included the right to labour, and demanded free education, old age pensions and sickness benefits. They ramped up pressure on the government,

[161] F. Bensimon, *Les Britanniques face à la Révolution française de 1848* (Paris: L'Harmattan, 2000), pp. 100–16; Chase, *Chartism*, pp. 294–303. On the events in France : Maurice Agulhon, *1848 ou l'apprentissage de la République: 1848-1852*, Nouvelle histoire de la France contemporaine, 8, New ed. (Paris: Seuil, 2002).
[162] Bensimon, *Les Britanniques face à la Révolution française de 1848*, p. 103.
[163] On Glasgow: William Hamish Fraser, *Chartism in Scotland* (Pontypool: Merlin, 2010), p. 159. See also p. 152 on Aberdeen and Edinburgh.

organizing mass rallies and demonstrations, openly discussing physical force and insurrection. The movement reached its peak at the fateful 10 April 1848 demonstration on Kennington Common, which was planned to end with a mass procession bringing a reform petition to Parliament. The failure of the demonstration did not spell the end of Chartism, as many later celebrations testify to continuing Chartist networks and hopes. Many addresses were sent from Ireland too, where the situation was explosive; the French Revolution inspired the Young Ireland nationalist insurrection in the summer.[164] The British government faced the triple threat of Chartism, the example of the February Revolution, and insurrection in Ireland; officials never lost their nerve and displayed an impressive array of administrative and physical force to contain contestation. Thousands of special constables were sworn in for the10 April demonstration: the mobilization of the middle classes was crucial in deflating the Chartist threat.[165]

Celebrations of the 1848 French Revolution did not displace other revolutions; rather, a new cycle emerged, while older celebrations remained. The 1848 French Revolution, and other European revolutions of different periods, were often celebrated on the same occasion. In the sphere of print, juxtaposition was the norm. The radical and Chartist press was full of news of celebrations, unfolding events on the continent, and literary and historical vignettes. For instance, page 3 of the 26 February 1849 issue of the *Northern Star* contained a translation of the *Marseillaise*, a scene from Alexandre Dumas's historical novel *Memoirs of a Physician* involving Louis XVI, Rousseau, and Marat, and an article on the Democratic Committee for Poland's Regeneration's commemoration of the 1836 Cracow Insurrection, which paid homage to other revolutions and ended with toasts to Chartist and Polish leaders, and "three terrific groans for Nicholas, Metternich, Louis Philippe, Guizot, and all the other tyrants".

The February Revolution was inevitably read through the lens of the first two French revolutions. In the mid-1840s, symbolism from the first French Republic was the preserve of Bronterre O'Brien and the Fraternal Democrats. At the Fraternal Democrats' dinner on 14 July 1846, Ernest Jones had exhorted the audience to replace "the fraternity of tyrants", priests and kings by "the fraternity of nations", hailing the advent of a European revolution.[166] The 1848 revolutions fulfilled their expectations but also, ironically, emptied

[164] C. Kinealy, *Repeal and Revolution: 1848 in Ireland* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2009); Bensimon, *Les Britanniques face à la Révolution française de 1848*, chap. 6.
[165] Saville.
[166] "Commemoration of That Glorious Lesson to Tyrants, the Destruction of the French Bastile by the Brave Parisians. July the 14th, 1789", *Northern Star*, 18 July 1846, p. 8.

the society of its foreign members, who sped home to participate in continental revolutions. The Fraternal Democrats continued after 1848 under Harney's leadership; then the society "was composed entirely of Englishmen."[167] O'Brien saw 1848 as an opportunity for making good the promises of 1793, which had been crushed by the aristocrats and the rich. His 1849 Robespierre anniversary dinner glorified the leaders of the two French revolutions of 1789 of 1848.[168] Not all radicals, however, were ready to see 1848 as a simple re-enactment, or continuation, of 1789. Some who saluted the 1848 revolution still saw the 1790s as a period of frenzy leading to empire and dictatorship.[169]

The fervid springtime enthusiasm soon gave way to more guarded feelings. Observers hostile to revolution and republicanism noted the resurgence of revolutionary symbols and songs like *Ça ira* and the *Marseillaise*. Alphonse de Lamartine, the head of the Provisional Government and Minister of Foreign Affairs, announced that France would not wage wars as it did in 1793, reassuring the British Cabinet and conservative opinion. Reactions to 1848, were, as in 1789, 1793 or 1830, litmus tests of Britons' political opinions. The national workshops, set up under the direction of Louis Blanc, socialist theorist of cooperation, and member of the Provisional Government, divided opinion. While the *Times* and most middle-class opinion was appalled by state intervention and deviation from classical economy, the Chartists looked at the experiments with interest but were disappointed by France's conservative drift. The government provided guarantees to the Parisian workers in the persons of Blanc and Albert, a worker and leader of a secret society; but it became increasingly clear that Blanc and Albert were marginalized. The 23-24 April elections returned a conservative majority. The demonstration of 15 May obliged Blanc to leave Paris. Following a large demonstration in favour of Poland, a crowd swept into the Palais-Bourbon which housed the Chamber of Deputies. Blanqui and other orators implored the crowd to retire, to no avail. Modern historians find it difficult to account for this episode, but rule out the hypothesis of a far-left coup.[170] Blanc was accused by the conservatives and, in August, he left for Brussels, then London.[171]

Meanwhile, the June Days constituted another milestone in France's road to conservatism. From 22-26 June 1848, the government repressed a working-class insurrection protesting against the closure of the national workshops, causing several

[167] Weisser, *British Working-Class Movements and Europe*, p. 164.
[168] "Birthday of Maximilien Robespierre", *Northern Star*, 14 April 1849, p. 2. See p. 228.
[169] Bensimon, *Les Britanniques face à la Révolution française de 1848*, p. 274.
[170] Agulhon, pp. 72–74; Aprile, *La Révolution inachevée*, pp. 304–7.
[171] Agulhon, p. 74; Aprile, *Le siècle des exilés*, p. 107.

thousand deaths, and meting out sentences of prison and deportation. The election of Louis-Napoléon Bonaparte as President in December confirmed the end of the democratic phase of the republic.[172] By the summer of 1848, the Chartist press sympathized with French republicans in exile, no longer with the government. By September, it used expressions suggesting that reaction had effectively stifled revolution: "the most brutal persecution", according to the *Northern Star*, "is still being waged in France by the bastard BUONAPARTE against the leaders and writers of the Socialist-Democrats".[173] While working-class radicals looked up to France, middle-class reformers took more interest in the liberal national revolutions of Germany, Italy and Hungary.[174] Diverging national patterns of revolution diffracted British perceptions along class lines.

The history of celebrations charts this downward arc of disappointment. In the space of a year, joyful celebrations gave way to commemorations, almost funeral gatherings lamenting the betrayal of ideals and venting hopes for a democratic renewal. The first news of the revolution gave rise to the only impromptu celebration of revolution in the whole period discussed in this book. The Fraternal Democrats were in the midst of one of their monthly meetings on 24 February 1848 when news of the Parisian revolution came in. Historians like to quote Thomas Frost's retrospective testimony:

> The effect was electrical. Frenchmen, Germans, Poles, Magyars sprang to their feet, embraced, shouted, and gesticulated with the wildest enthusiasm. Snatches of oratory were delivered in excited tones, and flags were caught from the walls, to be waved exultingly, amidst cries of 'Hoch! Eljen! Vive la République!' Then the doors were opened, and the whole assemblage descended to the street, and, with linked arms and colours flying, marched to the meeting-place of the Westminster Chartists, in Dean Street, Soho. There another enthusiastic fraternisation took place, and great was the clinking of glasses that night in and around Soho and Leicester Square.[175]

Frost's testimony matters as a unique occurrence of a humdrum dinner turning into a celebration of revolution. It contrasts with all the carefully planned dinners. The only historical analogue for this FD celebration would be the spontaneous popular parties that took place outside the 1790 Federation in Paris. Frost's testimony is also notable for its

[172] Agulhon, pp. 65–69, 78–85, 94.
[173] "Letters to the Working Classes. LVII," *Northern Star*, 1 September 1849, p. 5.
[174] Margot C. Finn, p. 73.
[175] Thomas Frost, *Forty Years' Recollections: Literary and Political* (London: S. Low, Marston, Searle, and Rivington, 1880), pp. 128–29.

break with middle-class decorum. The decidedly impolite, disjointed, almost pathological, behaviour of the revellers contrasted with other testimonies of responses to revolution, which were composed and sedate.[176] The Chartist leader Julian Harney also welcomed the French Revolution with glee. In a letter to Friedrich Engels written on the anniversary date, 23 February 1894, he remembered the same sense of urgency and enthusiasm as democracy seemed to be on its way to triumph:

> The *old time*! and this is the 23rd of February and to-morrow is the 24th – when, seeing *the news* placarded at Charing Cross I ran like a lunatic and pulled the bell at Schapper's like a bedlamite; at some corner, on my way, knocking over an old woman's apple-basket (or it may have been oranges!) I was going too quick to hear her gentle cursing. I could 'go' on my legs then! – And then believed, what, alas! to my bitter sorrow, I cannot believe now – believed in 'the sovereign people'.[177]

Harney's reminiscences half a century after the event show both the rapidity and immediacy of news in the mid-nineteenth century, and the long memories left by revolution. If repetition and resurgence was a pattern of radicalism, so were the longstanding continuities of memory, writing and other commemorative and memorial practices.

Support for France usually took the form of meetings convened to send an address to the French Provisional Government.[178] Mostly, they were town meetings convened on requisition, sometimes against the wishes of the mayor. Before discussing them, it is worth noting an early celebration by European refugees in London, that gave them opportunity to discuss the international situation and affirm their commitment to liberty, and to achieve, perhaps, some citizenship by proxy. A large "republican banquet" of Frenchmen living in London took place in late March. Among the "nearly 400" guests were "a large number of Germans, a considerable body of Englishmen, and numerous natives of Switzerland, Spain, Italy, Poland, Russia, and the Scandinavian countries."[179] They met to send a deputation to Paris to convey adhesion of the French residents in London to the Republic. The room was adorned with familiar tricolour symbols. Some elements were reminiscent of 1789. A Frenchman claimed that the people fraternized with the clergy in planting a tree of liberty. A priest declared he rallied the republic without any "*arriere pensée*". The French refugees also wanted to mark their approbation of England and its government, possibly because

[176] See e.g. Francis Place on the radicals' reception of the July 1830 revolution: Place and Jaffe, p. 325.
[177] Julian Harney to Friedrich Engels, 23 February 1894, in *The Harney Papers*, ed. by Frank Gees Black and Renée Métivier Black (Assen, Netherlands: Van Gorcum, 1969), p. 355.
[178] Bensimon, *Les Britanniques face à la Révolution française de 1848*, pp. 100–2; Finn, *After Chartism*, pp. 63, 69.
[179] "Republican Banquet", *Northern Star*, 1 April 1848, p. 8.

they wanted some recognition to advance their interests. A toast "Au Peuple Anglais" "was hailed with loud and protracted applause". Addressing the issue of riots that were breaking out in parts of France against British workers, a French citizen deplored the expulsion of the English workmen from France: it was "a mistaken combination of some French workmen against the English workmen". At the time, "[t]he British press was indignant about the expulsions, which were blamed on the Revolution and the Republic."[180] Eager to ease Anglo-French relations, the meeting expressed protestation, noting that the French Provisional Government also deplored the expulsions.[181] Peace and union were the order of the day. A Captain Ackersley answered in French that the fraternity of France and England was the best pledge for "stability for the whole human race" and "the preservation of the peace of the world". Clearly, the celebration was meant to assuage English public opinion and the Cabinet that the French refugees were harmless and loyal, and that the budding French republic was not hostile to Britain.

The Chartists took advantage of enthusiasm for France to try to revive the movement. The radical revival of 1848 encouraged the multiplication of Chartist papers, and some of which, like Julian Harney's *Red Republican*, G. J. Holyoake's *Reasoner: A Weekly Journal, Utilitarian, Republican, and Communist*, or G.W.M Reynolds's very successful *Reynolds's Newspaper*, covered the addresses to France in 1848 and anniversary celebrations of the February Revolution from 1849.[182]

Meetings of English subjects expressed a range of ideological positions, from liberalism to socialism. Sheffield was an extreme example, compared with accounts from London.[183] Much against the mayor's wishes, a large meeting dominated by Chartists was held in Paradise Square on 13 March to approve an address to the French Provisional Government. Some 12,000 men and women attended, according to the chairman, Isaac Ironside. Ironside presented France as the place where the "final struggle" between justice and the "old system" was taking place. He enumerated eight principles reminiscent of Thomas Spence's radical utopianism, an interesting similarity given that 1840 was the end

[180] Fabrice Bensimon, 'British Workers in France, 1815-1848', *Past & Present*, 213.1 (2011), 147–89 (p. 181). Riots broke out in some parts of France against British workers, who were in some cases compelled to leave.
[181] "Republican Banquet", *Northern Star*, 1 April 1848, p. 8.
[182] On the new Chartist papers created in the wake of the 1848 revival, see Margot C. Finn, pp. 108–10.
[183] *Sheffield and Rotherham Independent*, 18 March 1848. The address is discussed in Bensimon, *Les Britanniques Face à La Révolution Française de 1848*, p. 102.

date of Malcolm Chase's classic study of Spenceanism.[184] "The earth is the common mother." The Republic should owe the land, value it, then rent it out and secure a life-rent to everybody. "Society owes to every individual permanent remunerative employment, according to choice, capacity, and the public necessity. It owes him succour in the event of sickness, and education of his children; support in old age, in that degree of ease, wealth, and honour, earned by the services of his life." This address from Sheffield stands out as an example of a social philosophy.[185] Other addresses were blander statements of admiration for France and wishes for good relations and, sometimes, international cooperation. In the North, the meetings reported in the press were dominated by Chartists. Everywhere, leaders exhorted the masses to remain orderly and within the bounds of legality. They displayed an optimistic mood, a sense of political and social improvement one generation after Peterloo. An orator at a meeting in Leeds "expressed a hope that the time was coming when soldiers would not fire upon the people who demanded their rights."[186] Some meetings voted an address to France, then a petition to Parliament in favour of the Charter.

Provincial celebrations testified to the transnational nature of revolutions in 1848 and to the radical dinner organizers' high degree of information and political literacy. In Loughborough, it was decided "[t]o hold a tea meeting and ball, on Shrove-Tuesday, in commemoration of the French Revolution."[187] "The Socialists and Republicans" of Nottingham sat down to "a substantial supper".[188] "Every person present wore a red riband at his button-hole." Toasts were given to the brave Parisians who overthrew the Bourbons, and "Ledru Rollin and the whole of the Mountain party of France". The meeting aligned with the left-wing opposition to the French government. The Nottingham radicals did not accept the abandonment of the February Revolution's social ideals. The celebration broadened to encompass the European Springtime of Nations. Toasts honoured Mazzini and the Roman Republic, which had overthrown the Pope's power, the Polish general Henryk Dembiński, who led the Hungarian army against the Austrians, the American republicans, Ernest Jones, and the Austrian patriots who fell in the defence of liberty. At Portsea, near Portsmouth, a branch of the Fraternal Democrats had "a democratic convivial

[184] Chase, *People's Farm*.
[185] Bensimon, *Les Britanniques Face à La Révolution Française de 1848*, p. 102.
[186] *Leeds Times*, 18 March 1848, p. 3.
[187] *Northern Star*, 2 February 1849, p. 1.
[188] "Public Meetings. Commemorations of the French Revolution", *Northern Star*, 3 March 1849, p. 5.

meeting" and toasted, *inter alia*, "The French Revolution" and "The Democrats of all Nations".[189] "Eighty Democrats" celebrated the February Revolution in an inn in Birmingham. The *Northern Star* report mentions only the songs, comprising a Chartist song, the *Marseillaise* and a classic of the 1790s, "Fall, Tyrants, Fall."[190]

On 2 March, a meeting of London Chartists appointed Julian Harney, Ernest Jones and Philip McGrath to visit Paris to deliver a congratulatory address of the National Charter Association. Other radical groups also held large meetings in East End working-class districts. The *Reasoner*, a 16-page weekly launched and edited by the secular activist G. J. Holyoake, devoted column space to such reports. The paper presented itself as "Communistic in Social Economy – Utilitarian in Morals – Republican in Politics – and Anti-theological in Religion".[191] A "Grand Meeting" was held on 10 March "at the Eastern Institution, Commercial Road, to Congratulate the French Republicans". In a hall crowded with 3,000 persons, orators praised the national workshops and discussed the implementation of "communistic principles" in France. A mixed choir sang the *Marseillaise* at the beginning and end of the meeting.[192] Meetings served to send off delegations, but also to welcome them back. An address of thanks to the French had been approved at a meeting at National Hall, Holborn as early as 28 February; the meeting sent W. J. Linton and Collet Dobson Collet to Paris.[193] On 9 March, another meeting was held at the same place to receive them on their return, and a grand-sounding, but small, Committee of Observation of the French Revolution was appointed. The *Reasoner* published Collet's impressionistic, optimistic account of revolutionary France.[194]

Other similar working-class meetings took shape mere weeks after the Parisian events. New ideological trends were visible in celebrations that used well-tried symbolism. Both syntax and lexicon of revolutionary celebration were readily available; the orators commented on general principles and on fresh news from France. The symbolism was mostly French, with the tricolour and the *Marseillaise* in evidence. The speeches and addresses partly harked back to earlier, 1790-style, fervour about universal peace and

[189] *Ibid.*
[190] *Ibid.*
[191] Laurel Brake and Mark W. Turner, 'The Reasoner (1846-1860)', ed. by Laurel Brake and Marysa Demoor, *Dictionary of Nineteenth-Century Journalism in Great Britain and Ireland* (Gent: Academia Press, 2009), pp. 459–60.
[192] *The Reasoner*, Vol. IV, No. 95, p. 230.
[193] "To the Brave French Nation, from the Working Men of London", Vol. IV, No. 95, p. 231-232.
[194] *The Reasoner*, Vol. IV, No. 94, p. 215-219.

reconciliation, but with a new emphasis on the notion of Europe, which was absent in 1790. If not the influence of Giuseppe Mazzini's Young Europe, at least the presence of refugees from several countries must have awakened some European consciousness. Much of the ideology was new compared to 1789 or even 1830. Socialism, cooperative solidarity, and the union of the working-classes against common oppressors were salient themes that were unheard of even in 1830.

Here one should pause to reflect on the apparent easiness with which working-class groups sent delegates over to France in 1848. In 1789-1790, the London Revolution Society, mostly composed of well-off Dissenting clergymen and merchants, was unable to muster any delegation to France. When they wrote to the President of the National Assembly, they were addressing a perfect stranger, and had to use Lord Stanhope's intermediary: there was indeed a chasm between Richard Price and Jean de Dieu-Raymond de Boisgelin de Cucé, archbishop of Aix. Price and his friends were unable to travel to Paris for the Federation. In 1792, Thomas Cooper was already in France on a business trip when he contacted Robespierre and other French legislators on behalf of the Manchester Constitutional Society, and his and James Watt's "embassy" provoked an outcry in conservative circles. In 1848, in contrast, many Chartists and Fraternal Democrats knew Blanc and other socialist refugees personally, and they crossed the border without any difficulty. Blanc could address London crowds in French: meeting organizers found ways to translate and get the message across. This testifies to half a century of internationalization, the multiplication of contacts through societies and press outlets, often resulting in personal familiarity or friendship.

After 1849: celebration and bitterness

In February 1849, it was evident that the French Revolution of 1848 was a matter for celebration. This proved, first, that revolutions were now routinely celebrated, secondly, that European refugees and British radicals felt that the revolution was still going on and its conservative drift could be reversed. Teas, dinners and meetings were the most common forms. Radical papers contributed by providing information for celebrants. On 24 February 1849, the *Northern Star* devoted a full page to translations of French songs (the *Marseillaise* and *Mourir pour la patrie*) and "a recital of the principal events of the ever-

memorable days of February".[195] Those anniversary celebrations, in 1849, 1850 and 1851, were characterized by the presence of many refugees. The failure of the revolutions of 1848-1849 drove thousands of Poles, Frenchmen, Hungarians, Germans, and Italians into exile in Britain. There, they met with little xenophobia, but mostly lived in poverty, the British public often withholding charity from able-bodied men.[196] They were present in many celebrations of revolution, newspaper accounts usually quoting the nationalities involved.

In 1849, celebrations took place in London, Portsea, Nottingham and Birmingham.[197] The Fraternal Democrats naturally proposed to celebrate the French Revolution "by a public dinner, soirée, or meeting, on, or about the 24th of February next […] for the purpose of paying homage to the heroes of the 'three days of February,' and the principles which were defeated but not conquered in the 'four days of June'"[198] – in other words the *république démocratique et sociale*, the social component having been crushed with the closure of the national workshops and the repression of the workers in June. This anniversary celebration was the "democratic festival, to consist of Tea, Concert, and Ball" that the *Northern Star* announced for 26 February 1849 at the Literary and Scientific Institution.[199] The advertisement reveals the affordable prices and mixed-sex sociability of the event: "Tea on the table at Six o'clock; Dancing at Nine o'clock. Tickets admitting to Tea and Ball - Double, 2s.6d.; Single ditto, 1s.6d. Tickets to the Ball [admitted at half-past Seven]-Double, 1s.6d.: Single, 1s." The report of the evening confirmed that "the fair sex muster[ed] in strong force".[200] Under Julian Harney's chairmanship, an array of prominent Chartists and radicals, including G. J. Holyoake and Bronterre O'Brien spoke to the toast: "To the Sovereignty of the People, and the fraternity and unity of the Proletarians and Democrats of all nations." The Chartist Thomas Clark tried to make sense of the failure of the French revolution. The lack of education was the clue; it was "possible to have power, and still lack the necessary intelligence to make proper use of it".

[195] "The Three Days of February", *Northern Star*, 24 February 1849, p. 3. *Mourir pour la patrie* is in fact the burden of *Le Chant des Girondins*, the anthem of the Second Republic.
[196] Porter, chap. 4.
[197] "Public Meetings. Commemorations of the French Revolution", *Northern Star*, 3 March 1849, p. 5.
[198] *Reasoner*, Vol. VI, No. 138, p.45.
[199] *Northern Star*, 17 February 1849, p. 4.
[200] "Public Meetings. Commemorations of the French Revolution", *Northern Star*, 3 March 1849, p. 5. The square brackets are in the original. Quotations are taken from this article. See also "Commemoration of the French Revolution", *The Reasoner*, Vol. VI, No. 146. p.175.

The speeches, by Holyoake, O'Brien and notable Chartist leaders, tried to elucidate recent history and build genealogies of heroes. Such endeavours, as Matthew Roberts showed, were essential to the Chartist movement.[201] Julian Harney paid homage to French Enlightenment thinkers, in particular Rousseau, whom he presented as "more than rivalling Grecian heroism and Roman patriotism". The revolutions of 1789, 1830 and 1848 formed a historical cycle oriented towards a democratic future. The revolutionary *journées* were the turning points, and Harney used a messianic tone and religious vocabulary to conduct the worship of past and present heroes:

> We pay homage to the Revolution victorious on the 14th of July – triumphant on the 10th of August – proclaimed dominant on the 22nd of September – subverted on the fated 9th Thermidor – re-asserted on the 29th of July – again victorious on the 24th of February – at this moment obstructed in its march by Royalist and Bourgeois conspirators, but destined to have a final and glorious triumph. (Prolonged applause.) We are here also to pay honour to whom honour is due – the dead and the living; the famous, and the nameless Apostles, heroes and martyrs, who, by their labours and sufferings, have rendered the French revolution so pre-eminently glorious.

François Hartog's "futurist" regime of historicity regulates Harney's litany of homages to radical French politicians from Marat to Blanc, leading to praise of the *république démocratique et sociale*. Harney was setting a mission, a path into the future. Britain's role in Europe was defined in two toasts, one to revolutionary peoples, assorted with wishes that Britain helped the Roman republic, and the other presenting the Charter as the equivalent to the democratic-social republic: "To the speedy adoption of the People's Charter – the means to the establishment of the reign of justice – political and social. To all who have suffered and are suffering in the cause of liberty in this and every other land." This toast drew on the French revolutionary tradition while still presenting the Charter as an alternative, peaceful, way to a democratic polity fulfilling working class aspirations.

The anniversary was an occasion for Chartists to reaffirm their central goals and identity, but it also showed rifts within radical circles. The announcement in the *Reasoner* had mentioned the principles of the June Days, leading to a controversy in several papers

[201] Matthew Roberts, *Chartism, Commemoration and the Cult of the Radical Hero*.

between the Fraternal Democrats and Collet.[202] Harney, in the *Northern Star*, wrote that the workers revolted to defend the democratic and social republic; he found such a revolt warrantable even against a parliament elected by universal suffrage. Collet, in *The Spirit of the Age,* refused to admit the right of insurrection against a democratically elected government. Controversy over the significance of 1848 in France, a revolution with contrasting phases, revealed philosophical disagreement over the value of democratic vote and the right of insurrection to defend natural rights; divisions existed also over class-based arguments and search for cross-class harmony.

By early 1850, the French Republic had lost its lustre. No evidence of celebrations in Britain were found. The Fraternal Democrats could not find a suitable place to hold a public dinner, and instead published an address "to the democracy of all countries".[203] The FD still hailed the revolution as an onslaught on class domination and hoped it would "inaugurate the fraternity of nations – the brotherhood of all mankind, without distinction of clime, colour, speech, or creed." The revolution was not finished, they asserted, because the people had been cheated of its conquests. At a time when revolutionary movements were embattled and the forces of reaction gathered strength, the FD wanted to reassure themselves that "better days will come."[204] The same post-revolutionary drabness is present in the few British papers that covered the festival in Paris. The anniversary naturally served to take stock of the situation in France. The conservative press revived tropes used to disparage revolutionary festivals in the 1790s. The *Standard*, which presented itself as "old Tory" and opposed parliamentary reform and Catholic emancipation, had worried about public disturbances, but "there was little to arrest public notice" in this "quiet holiday".[205] The *Liverpool Mercury* concluded that the French must be "singularly unfit for self-government": their constitution was more democratic than that of England and yet they lived under a military despotism.[206]

A tell-tale sign of rival memories and appropriations was the variability in the celebration dates. In 1850, the FD published articles to commemorate the June Days rather

[202] "On the Definition of Democratic Government", *Reasoner*, vol. VI, No. 147, p. 186-187. Collet went to Paris as a Chartist delegate with W. J. Linton; on his return, he agitated against Feargus O'Connor: Miles Taylor, 'Collet, Collet Dobson (1812–1898)', *ODNB*.
[203] "Anniversary of the French Revolution of February, 1848. The Fraternal Democrats", *Democratic Review* (March 1850), p. 388-390, quotation p. 389.
[204] *Ibid.*, p. 389.
[205] *Standard*, 26 February 1850, p. 2. On this paper, see: John Richard Wood, 'Standard (1827-1916)', ed. by Laurel Brake and Marysa Demoor, *Dictionary of Nineteenth-Century Journalism in Great Britain and Ireland* (Gent: Academia Press, 2009), pp. 596–97 (p. 596).
[206] "The Fete-Day of the Revolution", *Liverpool Mercury*, 26 February 1850, p. 136.

than the February Revolution. Harney's *Red Republican* voiced the FD interpretation of the events. A series of articles were penned by "Citizen Louis Menard, late editor of the 'Peuple'". In 1849, Ménard had taken refuge in England, and joined Blanc and his circle, after he was condemned for publishing in Proudhon's paper, *Le Peuple,* a narrative of political events from February to June 1848, *Prologue à une revolution*.[207] Harney published a translation of Ménard's *Prologue,* which presented the June Days as class war. Ménard conceded that "the ordermongering [sic] faction are triumphant, not in France only, but throughout Europe" but he still hoped against hope. Again, the notion of a continuity between the French revolutions built a future-oriented narrative of progress: the social revolution of February 1848, Ménard contended, started where Thermidor had cut off the first revolution.[208]

Celebrations resumed in 1851. The word "commemoration", used by contemporaries, was more apt as it denoted the sad, almost mournful, tone of an event evoking lost liberty. Rival events in London revealed fissures within the radical community. *The Friend of the People,* which Harney edited in continuation of *The Red Republican,* noted that the London refugees celebrated the 24th of February by two banquets at the John Street Institution and at Highbury Farm.[209] English democrats were present at both events. Harney would have preferred one banquet rather than two and deplored divisions. He published an address by each group of celebrants.[210] The article is informative for Harney explains why the English should attend: to declare "[t]heir admiration of the heroes and martyrs of the (European) Revolution", "[t]heir sympathy for the multitude of victims", "[t]heir protest against the calumniating journalists" who slandered the revolution, "[t]heir hostility to the criminal league of tyrants", and "[t]heir adherence to the principles of the Revolution" which he defined as universal suffrage, the republic, the abolition of classes, and the sovereignty of labour.

Both meetings featured a French star, and other foreign and English orators; Julian Harney spoke at both meetings; everywhere English radicals mixed with European expatriates. The meeting at the Institution gathered anti-socialist republicans close to Mazzini, who could not attend.[211] The account in the *Reynolds's Newspaper*, a paper with

[207] "Ménard Louis", *Maitron*.
[208] "February and June, 1848. The Prologue of a Revolution", *Red Republican*, 22 June 1850, p. 6. See also 29 June 1850, p. 14, 6 July 1850, p. 22, 13 July 1850, p. 30.
[209] "The Society of Fraternal Democrats. To Their French Brethren Assembled to Commemorate the French Revolution of the 24th of February, 1848", *The Friend of the People*, 8 March 1851, p. 98.
[210] *The Friend of the People*, 15 March 1851, p. 106-107.
[211] "Meetings: And Democratic Intelligence", *Reynolds's Newspaper*, 2 March 1851, p. 14.

a very large circulation providing "a mixture of radical politics, practical advice, and gossip",[212] suggests the public enjoyed the power of oratory, even in French. Caussidière[213] electrified a public of some 600 by this "thrilling" narrative of the 1848 revolution, "that grand episode in the world's history." "Citizen Ledru-Rollin" also gave a "splendid speech" provoking "incessant outbursts of enthusiastic feelings on the part of his audience". Theirs was a narrative and political reading of the 1848 events, viewed as the birth of the republic and political and civil freedom.

French socialists were at the instigation of the other meeting, at Highbury Barn, which, still according to *Reynolds's*, gathered nearly a thousand participants. Louis Blanc was the hero of the night. Socialist expatriates and the London communists must have formed the bulk of the audience. While the tricolour adorned the other hall, this meeting displayed the red flag and portraits of Robespierre, Marat and other revolutionary leaders. The emblems were carefully selected. "Black crape was entwined upon the poles of the red flags, as emblematical of the dark cloud at present gathered over the liberties of the world." Addresses by groups of expatriates of several nationalities were read out. Harney read a letter by the Fraternal Democrats, who counted several members among the orators, like the German Karl Schapper, who gave "The victory of the proletarians". A French lady sung the *Marseillaise*. The highlight of the evening was Louis Blanc's rousing speech on the advantages of the socialist organization of labour.[214]

By 1851, commemorations of the 1848 republic were confined to socialists and radicals. Only a few papers covered them in England. They served to settle scores and advance positions in complex struggles of influence among refugee socialist societies. The Highbury Barn banquet became especially contentious because it precipitated splits among rival German socialist factions over the issue of cooperating with the middle-class or

[212] Michael Shirley, '*Reynolds's Weekly Newspaper* (1850-1851); *Reynolds's Newspaper* (1851-1967)', ed. by Laurel Brake and Marysa Demoor, *Dictionary of Nineteenth-Century Journalism in Great Britain and Ireland* (Gent: Academia Press, 2009), pp. 540–41 (p. 541). Reynolds was a prolific novelist and an active Chartist journalist. "*Reynolds's Weekly Newspaper: a Journal of Democratic Progress and General Intelligence* (1850–1924) […] quickly became the leading working-class paper in England, especially in the north, with a weekly circulation in 1872 estimated as over 350,000." (Louis James, 'Reynolds, George William MacArthur (1814–1879)', *ODNB*).

[213] Marc Caussidière (1807-1861) fought on the barricades in February 1848; the Provisional Government was named him administrator of the Seine government. As head of the Parisian police, he managed to maintain order, but had to resign following a demonstration in May 1848. He went into exile in England after being accused of complicity with the June Days rioters, alongside with Blanc (Jacques Grandjonc, Jean Risacher, Jean Maitron, "Caussidière", *Maitron*).

[214] It is paraphrased in *Reynold's Newspaper*. See also a translation in: "Speech of Louis Blanc", *The Friend of the People*, 15 March 1851, p. 105-106.

forging exclusively working-class movements.[215] Marx and his followers opposed the Fraternal Democrats, Karl Schapper and August Willich,[216] who dominated the Communist League. A scuffle took place during the dinner when the *Marseillaise* was played; two spies sent by Marx were forcibly thrown out, which gave Marx opportunity to lambast his enemies in the press. The fullest description of the 24 February 1848 is to be found in a French paper edited in Jersey and catering for the political exiles. Ledru-Rollin's short-lived *La Voix du proscrit* covered the London celebration.[217] The Chartists Julian Harney and George W. M. Reynolds (editor of *Reynolds's Newspaper*) attended; W. J. Linton sent apologies. The celebration was cosmopolitan, with a member of the Polish committee, Rugge for Young Germany, Montecchi from the "comité italien", and a Hungarian.

Louis-Napoléon Bonaparte's coup on 2 December 1851 put an end to the Second Republic and curtailed the liberties won in February 1848. Celebrating the revolution no longer made sense for the British Chartists and socialists, who had been looking abroad for inspiration and encouragement. The Chartist movement was in decline. Radical patriotism in the 1850s, however, still conjoined internationalism and appeals to the English libertarian tradition.[218] As for French exiles in London, they continued to commemorate the anniversary on 24 February. In 1852, "a strong muster of French refugees took place at the National Hall, High Holborn", a place already used for such a celebration before, which therefore provided some continuity and an apt space for a recurrent ritualized event.[219] In 1852, two moods coexisted. While Gustave Macquet, ex-editor of *Le Peuple Souverain*, inveighed against "Napoleon the Little", Blanc, popular as ever, vowed to continue the contest because "France was not dead". Evidence is very scant. An article in *Reynolds's Newspaper* suggests that French exiles continued to celebrate the anniversary in 1857.[220] Reynolds, who had attended the 1851 anniversary as *La Voix du proscrit* reported, must have been one of the few Chartists interested enough in French exile politics to devote it column inches: happily for the French, *Reynolds's Newspaper* had one of the largest circulations among radical papers. Orators included English radicals (Ernest Jones), and

[215] Lattek, pp. 107–8.
[216] August Willich (1810-1878), a member of the Communist League (like Schapper), emigrated to Britain after the failure of an uprising in Baden in 1849.
[217] "L'Anniversaire du 24 février, à Londres", *La Voix du proscrit. Organe de la République Universelle*, No. 19, 2 March 1851, pp. 267-269. The paper started on 27 October; censorship stopped publication in the autumn of 1851 (Aprile, 'Voices of Exile', p. 150).
[218] Margot Finn, '"A Vent Which Has Conveyed Our Principles": English Radical Patriotism in the Aftermath of 1848', *The Journal of Modern History*, 64.4 (1992), 637–59; Margot C. Finn.
[219] "Anniversary of the Revolution of 1848", *Northern Star*, 28 February 1852, p. 4.
[220] "Commemoration of the French Revolution of 1848", *Reynolds's Newspaper*, 1 March 1857, p. 7.

French republicans Martin Nadaud and Félix Pyat.[221] The French speakers extolled men of the first French Revolution like Robespierre, and commented on British politics, praising the Italian patriot Orsini's attempt on Napoleon's life. On that occasion, the exiles bitterly recognized British exceptionalism and justified their own recourse to violence: "Englishmen may congratulate themselves on having another method of accomplishing a revolution than that of force; but the victims of despotism have no such choice." *Reynolds's Newspaper* also published a speech by Victor Hugo delivered at Jersey on 24 February 1854.[222] French exiles in Jersey also celebrated revolutionary anniversaries. Dates comprised 24 February, in remembrance of 1784, 22 September, the date of the first Republic in 1792, but also the Polish Revolution and the anniversary of the Italian revolution (8 March 1854). The celebrations were covered in the exile press, in particular in *L'Homme*, a weekly, four-page paper edited by Charles Ribeyrolles (a staunch republican, of Ledru-Rollin's social-democratic tendency) in Jersey from 1853, then in London from 1855 after the expulsion of French refugees from Jersey.[223] French exiles' newspapers were short-lived, even the leading *L'Homme*, which survived the expulsion from Jersey by only a few months; the readership was confined to French exiles and a few sympathizers in Jersey, Guernsey, London and Brussels, with no communication and exchange of news and republications with the British press. British readers, in other words, could not know of the culture of revolutionary celebration in exile unless they personally knew French exiles, which was the case of a few exceptionally committed men, essentially in London radical circles. The anniversary was now the preserve of French republican exiles, and the British press hardly ever covered it, as there did not seem to be much relation between British newspapers and the French exiles' press.

[221] Félix Pyat was elected deputy in the Legislative in 1848; he left France after the 13 June 1849 demonstration, a failed insurrection of left-wing republicans protesting against the French government's military intervention against the Roman republic ("PYAT Félix", *Maitron*). Martin Nadaud, a mason, also took part in the 13 June demonstration, but escaped detection. He was arrested just after Napoléon's coup (Jean Maitron, "NADAUD Martin", *Maitron*).

[222] "The Anniversary of the Twenty-Fourth of February", *Reynolds's Newspaper*, 5 March 1854, p. 16.

[223] The Lieutenant-Governor of Jersey expelled the staff of *L'Homme* after they published a letter by Pyat to Queen Victoria; Victor Hugo and some thirty exiles who protested were in turn expelled. Thomas C. Jones, 'Rallier la République en exil. *L'Homme* de Ribeyrolles', in *Quand Les Socialistes Inventaient l'avenir: Presse, Théories et Expériences, 1825-1860*, ed. by Thomas Bouchet and others (Paris: La Découverte, 2015), pp. 348–60; Aprile, 'Voices of Exile', pp. 150–55.

Beyond France: Kossuth's celebrity and the context for appropriating revolution

While the French Revolution of 1848 gave rise to several events, involving thousands of participants, and covering a wide ideological arc, it was not the only revolution celebrated. There was a vibrant radical sociability in London after 1848 and in the 1850s.[224] Radical activists would typically attend events in favour several libertarian causes. In 1850, Bronterre O'Brien celebrated Robespierre, protested against treatment of Irish prisoners, and raised funds for Polish and Hungarian exiles.[225] The most noticeable fact is that, while the British saw the 1848 French Revolution as an achievement of the people, they found in Lajos Kossuth a hero that several ideological constituencies tried to appropriate. His fate in the media resembled Bolívar's, because he was many things to many people, and was steeped in the culture of celebrity that somehow depoliticized him. In March 1848, Kossuth had attacked the Habsburg monarchy and presented the case for Hungarian independence in the widely diffused speech at the Diet of Pressburg.[226] A year later, he was part of the Hungarian revolutionary government that abolished serfdom and made provision for the election of a parliament on a restricted franchise. Kossuth rose to prominence and acquired a mythical stature as a rousing orator, and quasi-dictatorial powers in his conduct of the war against Austria and Russia.[227] The *Northern Star* supported several gatherings in the summer of 1849, when the Hungarian liberation army seemed in a good position to achieve total victory (ironically, they were crushed by Austrian and Russian forces in August). In August 1849, Harney published in the *Northern Star* an address asking that the British recognize the independence of Hungary, intimate "the Russian and Austrian despots, to withdraw their armies from Hungary", and be prepared to repel "Cossack" aggression with military force if needed.[228] Meetings convened in Birmingham, Derby, Manchester and Exeter to draw addresses asking the government to recognize the independence of Hungary.[229] The paper stoked Kossuth's popularity, advertising a portrait on the same day. Yet, as the example of the "trial by jury" illustrated, the Hungarian revolution was also a bone of contention between working-class radicals and middle-class reformers, each vying with many celebrations in diverse localities in the

[224] Margot C. Finn, chap. 1.
[225] Plummer, pp. 202–3.
[226] Michael Rapport, *1848, Year of Revolution* (London: Little, Brown, 2008), p. 60.
[227] P. Jones, *The 1848 Revolutions* (Routledge, 2013), pp. 69–74, 125.
[228] "To Those Who Earnestly Desire the Triumphant Establishment of Hungarian Freedom", *Northern Star*, 18 August 1849, p. 5.
[229] "Independence of Hungary", *Northern Star*, 18 August 1849, p. 5-7.

second half of 1849 to appropriate Kossuth's patriotic heritage.[230] Bourgeois reformers promoted an economically liberal, socially reassuring, interpretation of nationalism, likening the Hungarian experience to Britain's bloodless revolution of 1688.[231] Like Bolívar, Kossuth became the theme for several musical pieces.[232]

Kossuth's example shows that no single group in Britain arguably controlled the political meaning and project of foreign revolutions. They were contested terrain. A few exiles, like Kossuth, could be fêted on the right and on the left, because they represented the "national principle" cherished by Victorians and had liberal leanings. Many exiled leaders, however, were republicans, or worse, socialists, and could therefore gather a smaller, if enthusiastic, following. The conservative press poured invectives Blanc and Ledru-Rollin.[233] Publishing *De la Décadence de l'Angleterre* in 1850, the latter compounded his crimes by ingratitude to his host country. Such opprobrium did not prevent French exiles from integrating into London life.[234]

Conclusion

The three revolutions examined in this chapter illustrate the diversity of moods, ranging from the hectically joyful to deep mourning. Accounts of celebrations, songs, poetry and narrative prose written on revolution, especially on Poland, constitute a rich repository for the study of Romantic emotions.

No less diverse were the organizers and audiences, spanning the ideological spectrum from communists to Tories, and crossing classes from working-class and artisan radicals to the middle class and the nobility. Of course, those different people celebrated different things, read contradictory meanings into events. It is impossible to ascribe any stable, definitive political meaning to any of those revolutions. The very rapid dynamic of the events changed interpretations; disappointment set in after only a year in the case of the

[230] Porter, p. 73. See above discussions of the 1850 "trial jury" dinner (p. 217) and of Kossuth's presence at Polish balls (p. 331).
[231] Margot C. Finn, pp. 98–99.
[232] Charles d'Albert, *Kossuth Polka* (London, 1850); C. C. Wambey, *The Kossuth Quadrilles* (London, 1850); M. Dumartine, *Kossuth's Grand Hungarian March for the Piano-Forte* (London: Shepherd & Jones, 1850). See fig. 5, 6, p. 379-180.
[233] Porter, pp. 76–77.
[234] Sylvie Aprile, *Le Siècle des exilés: bannis et proscrits de 1789 à la Commune*, CNRS histoire (Paris: CNRS Éditions, 2010), p. 194 on *De la Décadence*, p. 151 on Blanc's integration and intellectual friendship with Englishmen including John Stuart Mill.

two French revolutions. The Polish revolution led to relatively stable interpretations in time, but only because nothing happened: Russian policy continued, Polish exiles stayed on, and Britain and France failed to intervene. Various groups projected their own visions of society and politics on Poland, a relatively unknown country that could serve as a *tabula rasa*. France could also serve for socio-political projections, for opposite reasons: because of the rich heritage of two revolutions and longstanding contacts and familiarity with French people which had generated received ideas.

In the end, the French Revolution of 1848 was the most contentious of the continental revolutions. France's closeness to Britain, its established revolutionary tradition and precedents, and the daring social experience of the national workshops, made the policies of the Provisional Government particularly dangerous for the British government and the elites. British radicals felt Blanc and Albert were engaged in exciting innovations: conservatives and believers in classical political economy saw terrible socialist schemes threatening catastrophe, and feared contagion to Britain. Once the initial effervescence had subsided, only radicals and Chartists celebrated this revolution, and then, they did so from the viewpoint of the French republican opposition that felt that the "real" revolution of February was being betrayed. In other words, February 1848 formed an ideal that was never truly realized, except perhaps sketchily for a few months in the Spring. British radicals soon aligned with the French opposition, not the increasingly conservative governments of the Second Republic. The anniversary dinners did not worship the actual state of France, not in 1849, and much less in 1851, but the ideal of February that French socialists and left-wing republicans cherished, but French voters apparently repudiated. In that sense, celebrating the 1848 French Revolution was very much an experience in disillusionment and bitterness, repeating a pattern established in 1830, and earlier with the downfall of the Spanish *trienio*, not to mention the painful readjustments to Robespierre and Napoleon after the efflorescence of the early 1790s.

Conclusion

From 1789 to the years immediately following the 1848-1849 revolutions, many celebrations of foreign revolutions were held in Britain. Arguably, every upheaval, insurrection or full revolution in foreign parts became the object of some dinner or celebration, including little remembered episodes like the 1846 Cracow uprising or the 1837 Canadian rebellions. Far from displaying increasing indifference towards revolutionary movements, British public opinion took a sustained interest in them, as can be seen through the press coverage and the organization of sociable events. This is not to say that there ever was a consensus, except perhaps on the liberation of the South American colonies. Generally speaking, no one liked the monarchs or the authorities that were toppled – a Russian autocrat oppressing Poland, arch-conservative Bourbons in France and Spain – and there was a broad agreement on the principle of legitimate resistance to tyranny. For all that, the revolutionaries, their actions and their policies were naturally divisive. The more radical the political and social revolutions were, the more limited constituencies they appealed to in Britain. Political revolutions that attacked property, the church, and the monarchy, were divisive: this was the case of the Spanish *trienio* and especially the French Revolution of 1848. The social revolution of 1848, which empowered workers, was possibly as divisive as the French Revolution in its Montagnard phase in 1793-1794. Reactions to revolutions served as a litmus test of how far every socio-political constituency in Britain was willing to go.

Yet, this is not to say that all foreign "revolutions" heralded a violent, disruptive agenda. The most popular revolutions were national struggles against a foreign oppressor: hence the broad appeal of Poland and South America. Poland enjoyed broad support across the political spectrum, for several decades. It was the only revolution that Tories wholeheartedly applauded. The Polish cause was so popular because all constituencies could project their own model of society and politics on it. In that sense, it could be compared to South America, which many radicals viewed as a *tabula rasa*, a template for possible utilitarian policies, or for free trade principles. Besides, the Polish exiles were not in power, and therefore did not have to take responsibility or blame for hard choices. By contrast, the liberals of the Spanish *trienio* pursued controversial policies of spoliation and curtailment of privileges, opposing the Church, the nobility and other vested interests. The

Spanish became more popular in the face of invasion in 1823. The Spanish example, as well the Second French Republic, exemplify how early revolutionaries, once in power, tended to lose in sympathy both at home and abroad.

The question of popularity is one very general aspect of the British reception of revolutions. An important feature was the relative continuity in the "revolutionary sociability" outlined in the introduction to this study. There was a practical régime of sociability that started in the early 1790s and remained stable until the 1830s. This is a two-tier model in which élite men took an active part in dinners, while, in a connected, secondary sphere, a growing public, including less well-off or less well-connected men, and some women, participated vicariously thanks to the development of the press and to activities taking place around the dinner, in gendered practices ranging from adorning dining halls, chinking glasses to cheering outside on the street. While continuing the routine of toasts, songs and dinners, the Chartists broke away from this model by adding new forms of sociability that were more inclusive and democratic in terms of class and gender. They tended to break the two-tier system and integrate the public on the outside ring into the process. In this sense, they took up the mission the London Corresponding Society had ascribed to itself, the constitution of a democratic public sphere with inclusive rituals and decision-making processes. Through celebrations of Robespierre and other Montagnard leaders, the Chartists developed a more inclusive sociability and referred to the French Revolution more directly than radicals did before them. They could do so because the stigma attached to the French Revolution had lessened, as living, burning memory had given way to more sedate history. Reactions to the French Revolution of 1848 showed, however, that revolutionary symbols could still be frightening and retained some of their agonistic potential.

Resurgence, then, was a key modality of relations between the revolutions of 1789, 1830 and 1848. British celebrations of those three revolutions display a remarkably similar pattern. There were always positive reactions at first, especially passionate addresses developing topics of universal brotherhood, the downfall of national barriers and the advent of peace. The development of transports and means of communication, as well as the precedents of former revolutions, meant that reactions and addresses were more and more rapid. Nobody in Britain reacted to the Storming of the Bastille in July 1789, but in 1848, it took only two days after the start of the February Revolution on 22 February, for the Fraternal Democrats to stage an impromptu celebration. Enthusiasm translated into a series

of meetings, the sending of addresses and a flurry of para-diplomatic activity. Foreign revolution was then an occasion for British radical orators (demagogues, their opponents would say) to revive their fortunes, and often, to settle scores with rival factions. In 1830 as well as in 1848, meetings convened to congratulate the French served to advance the British agenda of democratic reform. The same ideological constituencies were involved in both cases. While Price and the Revolution Society hoped to drag the Whigs along, in 1830 and especially in 1848, after the Reform Bill, the rift between radicals and Whig was too wide for such an alliance to be realistic. The flurry of para-diplomatic activity followed the three French Revolutions, the 1820 Spanish Revolution, and to a lesser extent, the Polish 1830 uprising. Each time, religious Dissenters and reformers – people with some influence but disenfranchised and marginalized from the centre of power – tried to weigh on the British Cabinet, asking for recognition of new regimes and assurances of peace, or for intervention to salvage revolution. In all cases, dinners advertised and reported in the press served to launch addresses bypassing King and Cabinet, assuring foreign countries in revolution that the "people", if not the "court", were friendly and wanted peace. This also meant, that Burke's foundational criticism of the Revolution Society dinner in *Reflections on the Revolution in France* in November 1790 was still valid, and could serve as a classic statement of the dignity of traditional statesmanship attacked by meddling, would-be revolutionaries and foreign accomplices.

An important dimension in the early reception of revolution was mimetism: just as French Jacobin clubs, in 1790-1792, vied to honour Britons, a logic of emulation drove radical leaders to jostle for attention and celebrate revolutions which seemed to promise reform in their train. Foreign revolution often confirmed entrenched English self-perceptions as a free country fighting a corrupt establishment: French revolutions were for radicals like Cobbett no textbooks in politics or occasions to learn, but mere examples of popular force for England to follow. The enthusiastic, speechifying, para-diplomatic phase was short-lived and followed by anniversaries, featuring toasts and songs, again building from earlier revolutions. The 1789 revolution was important in bequeathing a stock of classic songs and toasts for two generations of reformers to take up. But then, a year or two after the outbreak of revolution, such revolutionary pageantry often served to keep up spirits because reality was less glorious than expected. The themes of betrayal, confiscated revolution, and counter-revolution were typical of 1831 and 1849; British dinners then gathered smaller groups of radicals who were committed to an ideal revolution.

Celebrations ended silently, leaving no records of their end; this silence was a sad testimony of disillusionment and may signal that radicals went underground or discontinued their activities, until new events could allow a resumption of the struggle. Laurent Curelly and Nigel Smith described early-modern British radicalism as temporary occurrences bursting out in resurgences rather than apparent continuities.[1] After 1789, radicalism can hardly be said to be "radicalism"; even under conditions of harsh repression, the London Corresponding Society operated for seven years, and Chartist built a solid infrastructure, despite strong variations in activity over the years. The notion of resurgence, so central to early-modern radicalism, still matters, but discontinuity gave way to more stable, continuous activity. Foreign revolutions were one major trigger of radical activity; each time, the same disheartening pattern of enthusiasm and disillusionment ensued. The construction of tradition and the custody of political remembrance built long-term, multi-generational continuities, keeping ideas and networks alive in lean years.

All three French revolutions of course prompted criticism in Britain. Conservative journals viciously carped at the Festival of the Federation, the reception of which reveals rifts in opinion by mid-1790. This lays to rest older narratives presenting English public opinion as composed of a few radical Dissenting hotheads saluting the revolution, and a wait-and-see majority finally jolted awake by Burke in November 1790. The French Revolution established conservative tropes in Britain, particularly visible in the coverage of festivals; those motifs of boredom, constraint, automatic motions of a populace suffering under administrative tyranny, resurfaced in 1830 and 1848, serving to castigate several widely different political regimes. A study of counter-revolutionary discourse in the press would most probably show the establishment of a systematic idiom over the first half of the nineteenth century. Opposition to revolution is a constant in the period, which the topic of this book has of necessity relegated to the backdrop. However, it clearly appears that the loyalist reaction to the first French Revolution was extreme, and that later revolutions met with less opposition. At least, celebrations could be held without the harassment typical of 1791-1792. The Birmingham Riots of 1791 were an isolated, yet symptomatic and emblematic outburst; no similar event took place after.

[1] Laurent Curelly and Nigel Smith, 'Introduction', in *Radical Voices, Radical Ways: Articulating and Disseminating Radicalism in Seventeenth- and Eighteenth-Century Britain*, ed. by Laurent Curelly and Nigel Smith, Seventeenth- and Eighteenth-Century Studies (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2016), pp. 1–37 (pp. 6–8).

Parallels can be drawn about celebrants of revolution, opponents, and their discourse, from 1789 to 1848, but internationalization changed the game in that period. Bastille Day dinners from 1790 to 1792, and dinners honouring Iberian revolutions in the early 1830s involved British Whigs and radicals, with a sprinkling of foreign guests of honour, less than half a dozen perhaps in London dinners, usually none elsewhere. Celebrations of later revolutions tended to be different, truly transnational affairs. Dinners to the revolutions of the early 1830s, and, still more, 1848, included foreign guests as co-organizers; they resulted from a much brisker circulation of men and writings. The possibility of sending not several rival celebrations, was evident in 1830. Migrations from many continental European countries resulted in the presence of many political exiles, transforming dinners into transnational events. Ironically, many of those political exiles rushed home to participate in the continental revolutions in 1848: it was easier to muster a roster of international guests during the lean years of exile than in time of revolution.

This remark leads to more general considerations on the absence of revolution. Celebrating revolution implies that revolution is *absent*: it is past, or happening elsewhere. Those who are making a revolution do not celebrate it at the same time – or perhaps they do: as Mona Ozouf reminded the French while the 1989 bicentenary was in preparation, the revolutionaries were highly self-conscious and celebrated themselves to tell posterity about their glory.[2] But in Britain, a country that experienced no French-style political revolution, celebrations of foreign revolutions reflected this absence and difference. This often involved comments about this deficit of revolution in Britain, sometimes with a sense of inferiority. Not so at the beginning: the London Whigs who celebrated Bastille Day in 1790 felt they had been enjoying liberty for a good century before France, and that they had the upper hand in the teacher-pupil relation. The Glorious Revolution was a wholesome model. Yet, as its aura waned, some sense of inferiority sometimes crept in, for instance when Cobbett wished the English imitated the French in 1830. Without calling for revolution straightforwardly, radicals felt the passivity of the people depressing. True, many nineteenth-century celebrations expressed the idea that the English did not need revolution because the "voice of the people" was enough to frighten the government out of its despotic schemes. Precedents of the Cromwellian Revolution – not the sanitized, Whig,

[2] Mona Ozouf, 'Peut-on Commémorer La Révolution Française?', *Le Débat*, 1984.26, 161–72 (p. 162).

revolution of 1688 – suggested that the people still had rights and could act in a revolutionary way.

One last remark on the absence of revolution concerns the very form of the main source used in this study, the press articles of dinners celebrating revolution. In the general introduction, and at various points in several chapters, the trustworthiness and documentary value of such sources was discussed. It is now time to suggest that newspaper accounts performed a certain function, "representing" revolution, both in the sense of symbolizing (acting as a symbolic substitute of revolution), and of speaking on behalf of revolution, replacing it. The dinners, the dominant form of revolutionary sociability, replaced the violence of revolution with the orderly ritual of toasts, speeches, and songs. This form gave order and shape to the revolutionary process, which in fact was violent and could veer out of control. It may be suggested that optative toasts in "May…" were apotropaic formulas, words destined to ward off disaster and retain control, as if by magic, over the course of revolutionary events. The comparison of revolutionary leaders with past leaders and heroes, and the alignment of foreign revolutions with British precedents, and even with foreign revolutions, was a way of ordering baffling, uncertain, disorderly experience into known patterns of experience and morally certain conclusions. Dinners, then, straightened out revolutions. Press accounts of dinners added another layer of orderliness by formatting the often boisterous, or contentious, dinners into neatly aligned lists of toasts, speeches, and songs. The implication is not so much that press articles are misleading sources of poor documentary value. Rather, the form of the source itself had an agency: it served to bond groups together, proclaim this agreement, and suggest that men's actions controlled events and shaped the world – this was quite an optimistic view in the Age of Revolutions.

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MRF 1992-2: English earthenware cream pot (15cm high) bearing thte inscription "VIVRE LIBRE OU MOURIR / LA CONSTITUTION OU LA MORT / LA NATION LA LOI ET LE ROI" with French royal symbolism, surrounded by female genies bearing pikes and Phrygian caps. (The museum cannot date it more precisely than 4th quarter of 18th century.)

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