Joint Crisis Committee

The Paris Commune Uprising of 1871

Joint Crisis Committee Study Guide

European Union Simulation in Ankara (EUROsimA) 2023

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LETTER FROM THE SECRETARY-GENERAL

Dear participants,

Hello, my name is Toprak Sezgin. I am a junior student of International Relations at the Middle East Technical University, and I am the Secretary-General of the European Union Simulation in Ankara (EUROsimA) 2023. I would like to start off my letter by wishing you all well. It truly is a great honour to be standing before you and it feels amazing having the opportunity to welcome you to the conference that I, alongside the rest of the team, spent many sleepless nights preparing.

EUROsimA 2023 has truly been a team effort. In this sense, I would like to thank Ms Shukria Malek Zada first and foremost for her inspired leadership of the Organisation Team and unwavering support throughout this conference's preparation phase. Similarly, I would like to commend the Organisation Team for their hardworking attitude and the efforts they have put into EUROsimA 2023.

As for my team, the Academic Team, I believe that I do not really have the words to truly express how highly I think of all of them individually. Not only have they done an utterly fantastic job in preparing their committees, but they have also demonstrated exemplary behaviour as the members of a team. Individually, each and every member is amazing, but I believe we truly caught lightning in a bottle here and it pains me to know that this will be the last time that we will all be together, banding around EUROsimA. Irrespective of this, working with this team was truly a pleasure that I would not trade with anything else.

I do not know if it was fate or if it was because of a more logical reason, but I have always somehow found myself in historical committees and crises committees more often than not. In this sense, those types of simulations have always been near and dear to me. And what other people to organise the best possible Joint Crisis Committee out there, but Under-Secretary-General Mr Alkım Özkazanç and Academic Assistants Mr Aykut Küçükyıldız and Mr Uğur Ozan Baygeldi? This has frankly got to be the most rigorous work I have seen done in a committee of this kind so far in my model simulation career, which started back when I was in 8th grade. I really have no other words to describe the quality of the Study Guide and the committee that you are about to enjoy, but I can say for certain that the friendships these three gentlemen have offered has been impeccable.

Without further ado, I would like to leave you alone with the letter by the Under-Secretary-General and the Study Guide. It is imperative that, in order to enjoy this conference and truly learn something from it, you read this Study Guide well and do further preparations if necessary. Although this may seem daunting, I assure you that the qualified nature of these Study Guides and the love and care put into them will make the reading process an easy breeze for you. Welcome again and see you in EUROsimA 2023!

Kind regards,

Toprak Sezgin

Secretary-General of EUROsimA 2023

LETTER FROM THE UNDER-SECRETARY-GENERAL

Highly esteemed participants,

Welcome to the 19th annual session of EUROsimA. My name is Alkım Özkazanç and I am a second-grade Political Science and Public Administration student at Middle East Technical University. I will be serving as the Under-Secretary-General responsible for the JCC: The Paris Commune Uprising of 1871. Vigorous efforts have been put into the planning of this committee to ensure that it keeps in line with EUROsimA's JCC tradition by sustaining a high degree of quality.

The committee takes place in the Spring of 1871, when a commune created through the cooperation of the National Guard and Parisian workers challenged the authority of the young French Third Republic. Surrounded by an environment of political novelty, instability, and uncertainty, the delegates will be given the opportunity to promote their cabinets' interests and change the course of history by simulating the eminent politicians of the time.

As the turmoil of 1871 was the result of an intricate network of social, economic, and political conditions stretching back to the French Revolution of 1789, it is important for the participants to understand how exactly the conditions evolved in that direction. The participants should thus read the study guide to get a holistic understanding of the situation, which is necessary for coming up with policy proposals. The participants are also encouraged to think outside the box and come up with creative ideas while creating policies that serve the benefit of their respective cabinets; the study guide and the handbook will provide great inspiration for coming up with creative ideas in my opinion. I believe that being creative and informed of the context will assist the delegates in blending with the atmosphere and enjoying the experience.

I would like to end my letter by expressing my gratitude toward my team members. I would first like to thank our Secretary-General Mr Toprak Sezgin for entrusting me the control of this committee and showing close interest in the committee planning process. I would also like to thank our Director-General Ms Shukria Malek Zada for her appreciable efforts in overseeing the logistics and organisation of our conference. I think, however, that my academic assistants Mr Aykut Küçükyıldız and Mr Uğur Ozan Baygeldi deserve a special congratulation. Their responsibility for being punctual and producing quality work has made me utterly happy since I know that their behaviour directly reflects their level of commitment to this committee. I am also very pleased to say that both of them frequently helped me in coming up with ideas pertaining to the conduct of the committee. Their presence has truly been a blessing to me.

Before you dive into the study guide, I would like to wish you a great experience again and remind you that you can reach me at **alkim.ozkazanc@metu.edu.tr**.

My greatest regards,

Alkım Özkazanç

Under-Secretary-General Responsible for JCC: The Paris Commune Uprising of 1871

I. POLITICAL HISTORY OF FRANCE DURING THE AGE OF REVOLUTION (1789-1852)

A. French Revolution of 1789

In July 1789, the **Estates-General**, the French King's advisory assembly, convened for the first time since its last meeting in 1614; the long delay was because the assembly was rendered redundant by the absolutist rule that dominated 17th and 18th century France. However, **King Louis XVI** of the **House of Bourbon** was forced to convene the Estates-General in order to provide public support for new taxes and enforce new financial reforms amid an intense financial crisis (Popkin 2001, 36).

The King's call raised questions about the representation of three traditional estates[1]: the **clergy (**The **First Estate**), the **aristocracy** (The **Second Estate**), and the **Third Estate** (the commoners). Controversy arose on how the meetings would be conducted: the aristocracy and the clergy demanded that each estate be given a separate chamber, whereas the Third Estate advocated for a unicameral assembly[2] (Thiers 1850, 26). The First Estate's stance could be attributed to its concern that the two other estates would block any reform attempts in pursuit of preserving their privileges shall they convene in separate chambers. Therefore, the Third Estate decided that they would not take any action if the King did not approve their demands. Soon after, the representatives of the Third Estate declared themselves the **National Assembly**, which was proclaimed the sole body able to represent the French people (State 2010, 154).

Political instability continued to escalate as the people of Paris founded a committee to govern the city as a reaction to the increasing food prices, which shows that they had become hostile toward the political regime. (State 2010, 155). They gathered arms from military

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[1] Estates refer to pre-modern social groupings that defined the position of a person within the society.
[2] Unicameral assembly is an assembly with a single chamber.

buildings around the city and stormed the Bastille Prison (known for housing political convicts) on the 14th of July; a move which demonstrated the militant stance of the French people.

In October 1789, a large group marched from Paris to the Versailles Palace, where the King was residing. The mass consisted of Parisian men and women who broke into the Palace and demanded bread from the King. They brought the royal family to Paris from Versailles, where the King and his court lived, isolated from the people of Paris (Price 2003, 440). Popular participation in politics proved to be effective after this incident, which led to the establishment of many political clubs, like the **Jacobin Club** in Paris (Popkin 2001, 42-43).

Meanwhile, the National Assembly introduced reforms that fundamentally changed political and social structures in France. The privileges of the aristocracy and the clergy were curtailed, the powers of the King were limited, and popular participation in politics was safeguarded through these reforms. The **Declaration of Rights of Man and Citizen** issued by the National Assembly was also an important document in this regard as it reinforced the Revolution's egalitarian appeal. Egalitarianism was accompanied by the assertion of the **national sovereignty** concept which gave the responsibility of defending the country and enforcing the law to the French people. The **citizen army** and the **National Guard** (a law enforcement organisation consisting of middle-class armed men) were two important institutions established with the aim of undertaking these responsibilities (Bertraud & Palmer 1988, 102-104; Clifford 1990, 850-851).

Although the National Assembly consolidated power and curtailed the King's authority, the relations between the Assembly and the King quickly soured due to suspicions about the King and the Queen's anti-revolutionary activities, such as pleading with foreign monarchs to intervene against the Revolution (Popkin 2001, 44). Thus, Parisians stormed the palace and captured the King and the Queen, who were later indicted with treason and tried before a

criminal court as common men. Both were later executed by guillotine. Soon after, the **First French Republic** was proclaimed in September 1792 (Pelz 2016, 47-48).

B. Reign of Terror
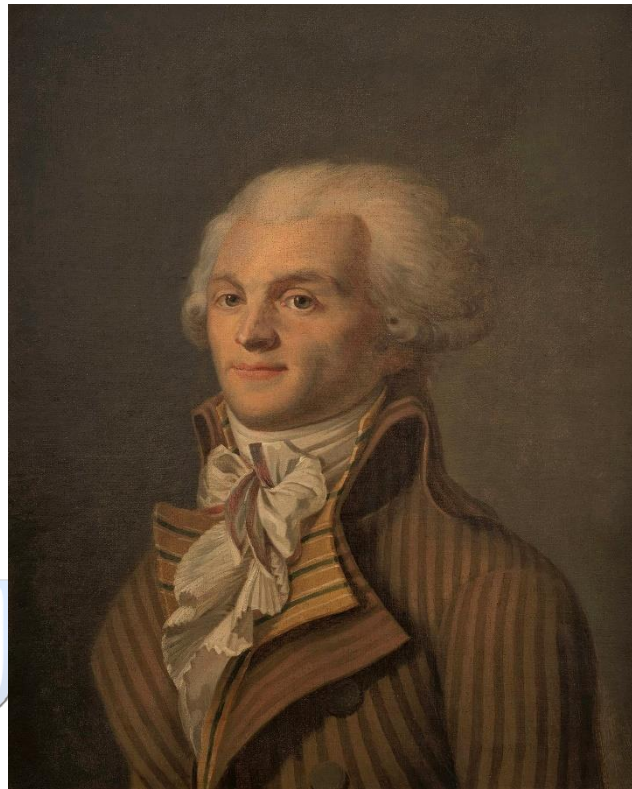
Figure 1: Maximillien Robespierre (Public Domain)

The young republic commenced the conscription of the common people for the army in the face of growing foreign aggression; the **Committee of Public Safety** was subsequently established in April 1793 to command the war against the hostile European powers,most notably, Austria and the United Kingdom (UK) (Pelz 2016, 48). Meanwhile, the National Assembly was replaced by the **National Convention**, the members of which were elected through universal male suffrage. The National Convention was quickly dominated by the Jacobins (headed by **Maximillien Robespierre**, the President of the Committee of Public Safety), who advocated for radical measures such as a grand dechristianisation campaign and mass executions to enforce the revolutionary ideals. Robespierre became increasingly powerful,

as the Committee surmounted the Convention, and initiated a period known as the **Reign of Terror.** The period saw the execution of many alleged [3] and lasted until Summer 1794 (Dawson 1972, 73-74).

In 1793, the Committee declared *levée en masse* (mass mobilisation), obliging every French male citizen to contribute to the war either as a soldier or an equipment producer. This helped the creation of the first citizen army in European history. Moreover, it helped to spread revolutionary ideals to the countryside and to the foreign lands invaded by France (Popkin 2001, 56). Even though the revolutionary ideals continued spreading, the growing extremism of Robespierre eventually caused him to be deposed and executed in Summer 1794 (Popkin 2001, 59).

C. Rule of Napoleon Bonaparte

Following the Reign of Terror, France was ruled by a five men council called the **Directorate** from 1794 to 1799. However, this time period was more notable as a constant period of war during which **Napoleon Bonaparte**, an artillery officer from a petty aristocratic family, gained political influence. Following his military victories in Italy, he negotiated a peace agreement (without the approval of the Directorate) with Austria in 1797, in which Austria recognized French control over Northern Italy (Popkin 2001, 63). Napoleon's popularity was further reinforced by his Egypt campaign in 1798. (State 2010, 176-177). France also fought on fronts where Napoleon was not present, like the Rhine or Belgium. France achieved significant victories in these fronts as well, and sister republics were established to spread French influence and revolutionary ideals to the invaded lands. (Popkin 2001, 63).

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[3] Those who opposed to the Revolution and advocated the re-establishment of the *ancien régime*.

On 9 November 1799 Napoleon staged a successful takeover (known as the **18th Brumaire Coup**) against the Directorate upon the invitation of an eminent politician. A new executive body called the **Consulate** (made up of three **Consul**s) was subsequently established to replace the Directorate. Napoleon was named the **First Consul** of this new body and started consolidating power in his hands. In 1802, he was assigned the First Consul for life. Two years later, he declared himself the **Emperor of the French**[4], establishing the **First French Empire** (State 2010, 178-180).

As the Emperor, Napoleon continued to fight against a coalition of European powers (which included Austria, Prussia, the UK, and Russia among others) during his ten-year reign. The **Coalition Wars** resulted in large parts of Europe being invaded by the French armies. Napoleon also established the **Continental System**, an arrangement that prohibited any European nation from trading with Britain, to challenge Britain's immense naval and economic power. During the Russian Campaign, French armies were even able to hold Moscow for a short time, however, they had to retreat because of the harsh conditions of the Russian winter, which killed nearly 90% of the French army (Popkin 2001, 76). Napoleon was forced out of France in 1814, and Louis XVIII of the Bourbon Dynasty was subsequently reinstalled. Still, Napoleon managed to seize power again for a hundred days in 1815 before his ultimate defeat at Waterloo (Popkin 2001, 79-80).

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[4] The difference between the Emperor of France and the Emperor of the French is that while the Emperor of France title implies that the emperor takes his legitimacy from the God to rule the land, the Emperor of the French emphasises that the legitimacy of the emperor's rule comes from the people.
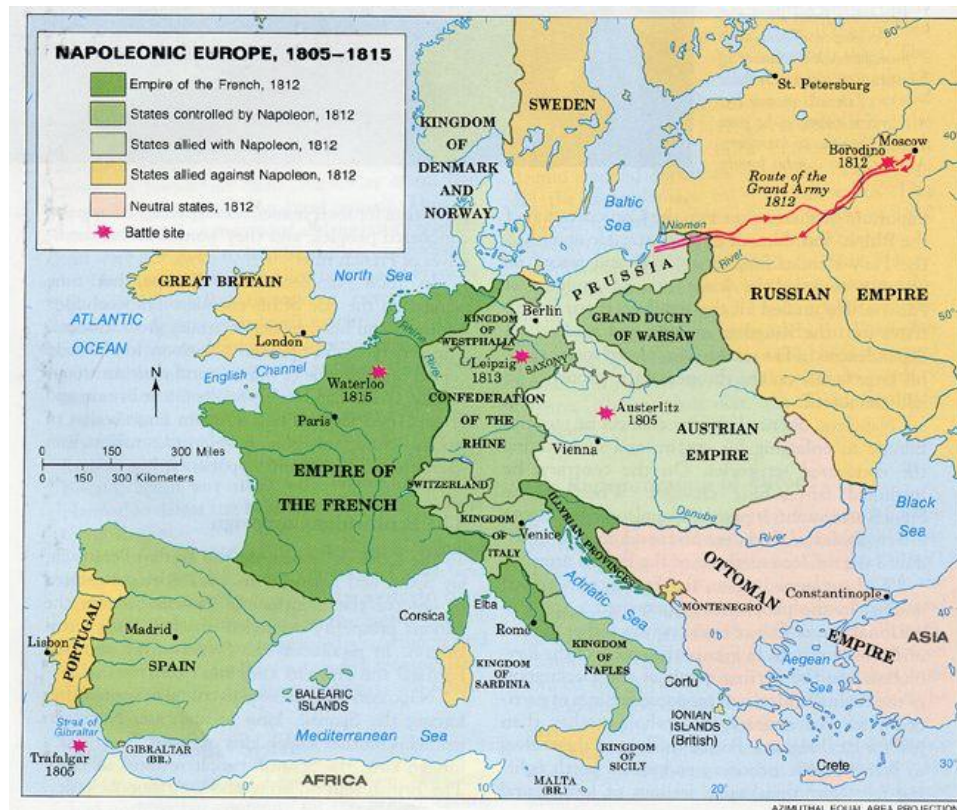
Figure 2: Map of Napoleonic Wars (Public Domain)

In the field of domestic politics, Napoleon addressed many controversial issues that emerged after the Revolution, mostly caused by the debate on relations of state and religion. He recognised Catholicism as the religion of the majority in France and reversed the anti-Christian practices formulated by the previous revolutionary governments in exchange for the loyalty of the clergy (Popkin 2001, 71). Furthermore, Napoleon drafted a new civil code called **Code Napoléon**, which promoted the achievements of the Revolution such as equality before the law and religious toleration while favouring the rights of property holders (State 2010, 178-179). Code Napoléon remained in effect long after the fall of Napoleon even though it was amended many times (Légifrance n.d.).

D. Bourbon Restoration

After his ascendance to the throne, Louis XVIII ratified the **Charter of 1814**, which designated France as a **constitutional monarchy** wherein the King's power was limited by a

bicameral assembly. The **Chamber of Peers** (the upper chamber) had hereditary membership, while the deputies[5] of the **Chamber of Deputies** (the lower chamber) were elected to office. Louis XVIII was cognizant of the fact that the reestablishment of the old regime was impossible. Therefore, he preferred to keep some rules and institutions instated by the Revolution and the Napoleonic system such as centralised bureaucracy and the Code Napoléon (State 2010, 191-192).

Surprisingly however, a radical royalist faction called the **Ultra Faction** became the dominant faction in the Chamber following the 1815 legislative elections. The Ultras strongly rejected revolutionary accomplishments and advocated for a return to the old regime. Even though the King distanced himself from the extreme ideals of the Ultra faction, he was eventually forced to appoint one of their prominent members as the head of the government. The new government adopted many authoritarian practices, such as press censorship and a biased electoral system, in the name of maintaining order (Popkin 2001, 81).

Louis XVIII died in 1824 and his brother **Charles X** succeeded him as the King. Unlike his brother, Charles X did not exercise much caution in demonstrating his absolutist tendencies. His coronation, conducted in the Reims Cathedral, resembled medieval coronation ceremonies (State 2010, 193). The King's policies further exposed his longing for the political order before the 1789 Revolution. For example, he provided compensation to the aristocrats whose lands were confiscated during the revolution. Moreover, the King took measures to silence the liberal opposition against the growing influence of the church along with many other measures favouring the Ultras (State 2010, 194). Finally, he assigned a fanatic Ultra, **Jules de Polignac**, as the head of the government in 1829. De Polignac, ignoring the opposition coming from the

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[5] Deputy is a member of parliament.

press and the people, tried to suppress popular movements opposing the King. However, his actions triggered the Revolution of 1830 instead of being successful (Popkin 2001, 85-86).

Figure 3: Coronation of Charles X (Public Domain)

E. Revolution of 1830 and the July Monarchy

Charles X was dethroned in July 1830 following a three-day revolution staged by the discontented masses. The revolutionaries, some of which initially advocated for the establishment of a republic, proceeded by installing **Louis-Philippe** from the **House of Orléans** on the throne. The new regime (called the **July Monarchy**) was designated a constitutional monarchy that adopted a more liberal political position and acknowledged the principles of the revolution. For example, Louis-Philippe brought back the tricolour flag of the revolution instead of using the Bourbon flag, accepted the principle of **national sovereignty**[6], and agreed to have his authority constrained by a constitution (Popkin 2001, 88). Furthermore, unlike the Bourbon monarchs, he did not claim to be a divine king superior to the peoples. As a result, he was declared "**citizen king**" and was enthroned as the **King of the French**, not as the King of France (State 2010, 195).

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[6] The principle of national sovereignty refers to the notion that the right to rule arises from the nation's will

However, the replacement of the dynasty through a popular movement caused the French monarchists to be divided into two camps: **Legitimists** stayed loyal to the House of Bourbon and favoured more conservative policies (though the Ultra faction faded away) while the **Orléanists** stayed loyal to the House of Orléans and supported the liberal policies of the July Monarchy. On the other hand, a republican movement advocating against any form of monarchy persisted (Popkin 2001, 87-88). Although politically challenged, the July Monarchy achieved great success in terms of the economy: French industry grew during the July Monarchy as a result of certain policies, and France witnessed the construction of railroads across the country. This economic development also helped the middle-class obtain more political power (Popkin 2001, 99).

Fêtes de Calais. — Bénédiction du Chemin de fer.
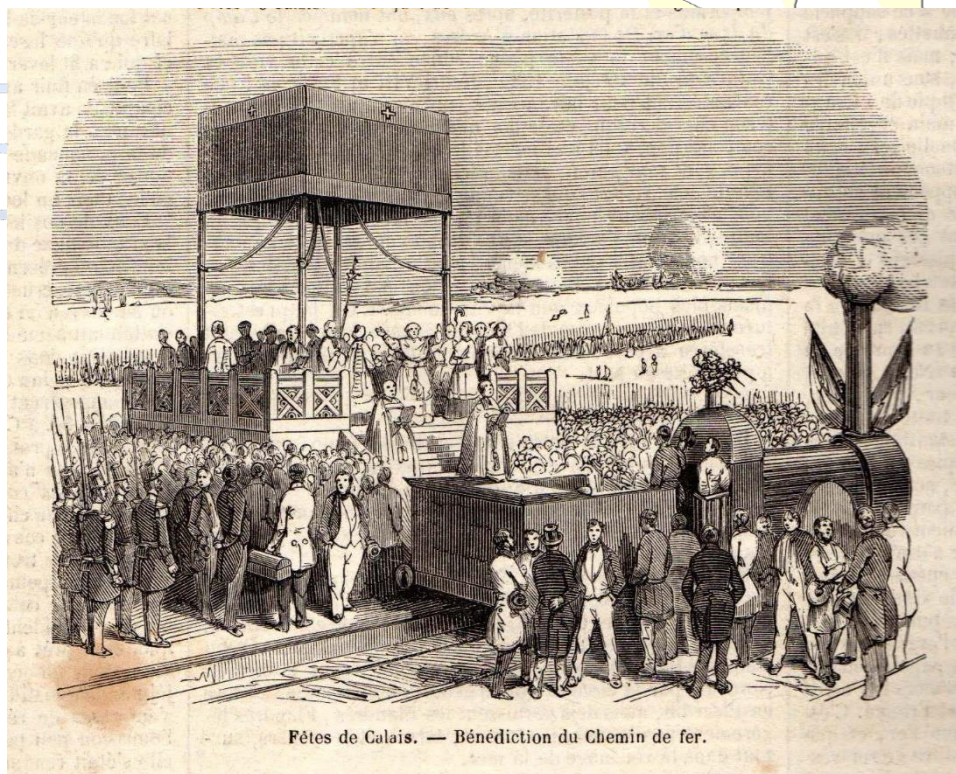
Catholic priests blessing a locomotive in Calais (Public Domain)

However, the July Monarchy's inability to formulate a proper social policy triggered class conflict in France. The workers were not given the right to organise against their employers, and the employers were favoured over their employees during disputes (Pinkney

1963, 123-128). Growing disparities between the wealthy and members of the lower class began to fuel movements criticising the July Monarchy and the politicians advocating for the preservation of socioeconomic status quo, including the notorious minister **François Guizot**.

F. The Revolution of 1848

Even though the 1840s were mostly stable, opposition to the regime started to take root toward the end of the decade. It could be claimed that the emergence of this opposition was mainly related to the socioeconomic structures in France, the political importance of which had been growing since the 1789 revolution (Tipp 1986). Put simply, even though the July Monarchy had been intended to distribute political power to the middle classes, sometimes also referred to as the **bourgeoisie,** (Tipp 1986), it did not yield the intended results. Louis-Philippe's reluctance towards being reduced to a mere figurehead and Guizot's insistence on formulating policies aimed to only benefit a limited portion of the middle-class (namely, large business owners) prevented a true dispersion of power (Flower et. al 2023). The most notable indicator of this was the extensive limitation put on suffrage: only 240 thousand people (who were either wealthy aristocrats or very affluent bourgeois) were allowed to vote, limiting the political power of the workers and a large portion of the middle-class (Tipp 1986).

This problem, coupled with an economic depression that affected France after 1845, led a group of deputies[1] and notable bourgeois to campaign for electoral reform to extend suffrage. After the campaign failed in the parliament, the group instead opted to organize political meetings (labeled "banquets" to circumvent legal obstacles) with the aim of mobilizing the people. The meetings quickly became popular among the populace, especially with the gradual admission of artisans and workers to those meetings (Popkin 2001, 107-108).

The government's decision to cancel a grand banquet scheduled for 22 February 1848 caused public outrage. Large demonstrations demanding the reversal of the decision quickly

turned into an uprising against the policies of Guizot and the regime. The National Guard's (the soldiers in which were mostly from a middle-class background) unwillingness to fight the demonstrators led the uprising to quickly become uncontrollable as barricades started to appear in working-class neighborhoods. Unable to appease the demonstrators, King Louis-Philippe, hoping to prevent a bloodbath, abdicated, and fled Paris on 24 February 1848 (Popkin 2001, 108).

The "February Revolution" had hitherto taken a course like the Revolution of 1830. However, the greater involvement of the working class entailed a different outcome (Tipp 1986). Immediately after the abdication of the king, rioters broke into the proceedings of the Chamber of Deputies and demanded a republic (the Second French Republic) be proclaimed. They were successful, and a provisional republican government was formed under an 11-men commission headed by Alphonse de Lamartine, a deputy and a poet known for his eloquent oratory. The commission decided to hold elections with universal suffrage for a constituent assembly[2] in April (State 2010, 200). In the meantime, socialist components within the provisional government convinced it to secure the **right to work** as a means of preventing social unrest. Consequently, state-operated *ateliers nationaux* (national workshops) were founded to employ laborers for public works. Additionally, the **Luxembourg Commission** was established as a medium wherein government representatives held public hearings for the worker representatives to voice workers' problems (Tipp 1986; Popkin 2001, 110).

The Revolution of 1848 (Public Domain)

The April elections resulted in favour of the moderate republicans[3], who obtained the largest number of seats. They were followed by conservatives (monarchists), who had temporarily united under the banner "**Party of Order**" to counter the threat of a workers' revolution. Socialists and radicals were only able to obtain about one-tenth of the seats, mostly since rural voters were dissatisfied with the national workshops due to the extra taxes imposed to fund them and a fear of workers' revolution. The new moderate government soon reversed many of the "socialist-like" laws and policies enacted by the Provisional Government, most notably by closing the national workshops. This incited a workers' uprising in Paris on 22 June 1848 (known as **June Days**) as the workers set up barricades and tried to capture government buildings. However, the National Guard, commanded by **General Cavaignac**, suppressed the uprising, resulting in the death of 3 thousand people and the arrest of 15 thousand (Popkin 2001, 111-112; Flower et al. 2023). The enaction of some repressive measures on the press thereafter (Popkin 2001, 112) shows that the new political regime was not friendly towards the workers' political movements and actively sought to limit the workers' influence.

The constituent assembly started working on a new constitution in June and approved it in November. Just like the previous constitutions of France, the 1848 Constitution emphasized the separation of powers and respected essential democratic institutions such as universal male suffrage and civil rights. As a result, a single-chamber legislature, called the ***Corps Législatif*** and elected for three years, was established (State 2010, 212). However, the constitution also sought to uphold order, given the country's turbulent political history over the last 60 years, and consequently fostered a strong executive branch (Popkin 2001, 112). The executive branch consisted of a President who was to be elected by universal suffrage for a single four-year term and be accountable to the assembly. (State 2010, 212)

The subsequent presidential elections scheduled for 10 December saw five main candidates running for the office, with General Cavaignac being the initial favorite of the parliamentary majority. However, one particular candidate quickly surpassed him in popularity: **Louis-Napoléon Bonaparte**. The nephew of Napoléon Bonaparte, Louis-Napoléon had attempted two minor but unsuccessful coups in 1836 and 1840 and had returned from his exile in Britain after the February Revolution (Euler 2023). Bonaparte presented himself to be a person above party struggles as he managed to appeal to a wide section of the population: the legacy of his uncle and his remarks on reestablishing order allured many conservatives, while his previous essays on the problems of the lower-class attracted many workers, and the frustration of the people with prominent politicians made Bonaparte a preferable candidate. He also attracted some support from the other politicians as they considered Bonaparte to be a "compliant" figure (Popkin 2001, 113; Price 2001, 14-15). Bonaparte was elected president with 74% of the votes (Price 2001, 15).

G. The Presidency of Louis-Napoléon Bonaparte

An intense political agenda, birthed by significant political divisions, dominant France throughout Bonaparte's presidency, which lasted until 1851. The most significant political rivalry at the time existed between the groups located at the two ends of the political spectrum. Of those, *démoc-socs* consisted of a group of united leftist deputies advocating for a socialist republic formed through democratic means. Its rival, the **Party of Order**, consisted of a group of monarchist conservatives that had internal divisions regarding the most suitable candidate for the French throne but stayed united in their commitment to "order" as they feared a revolution staged by the leftists. Even though both factions increased the number of their deputies from 1848 to 1851, the Party of Order had a considerably larger number of deputies and was thus able to influence governmental policies (Popkin 2001, 113-114; Price 2001, 16-17). Consequently, the laws and policies of this period reflect a tendency toward re-establishing order and curtailing the power of the leftist movements.

From 1848 to 1851, the government led three notable initiatives reflecting the aforementioned tendency, which will be summarized in chronological order. First, a widespread workers' demonstration in June 1849 was used as a pretext to arrest many leftist leaders, thereby weakening the leftist movement. The Party of Order then focused its efforts on "re-establishing" social order and consequently enacted an education law in March 1850 (known as **Falloux Law**, to be elaborated upon later) which extended the church's rights over the control of education as a means of fortifying clerical influence and respect for the law (State 2010, 212-213). The most significant among them, however, was the election law enacted in May 1850. The law introduced further requirements to be registered as a voter, thereby lowering the number of voters from 9.6 million to 6.8 million. A majority of the excluded voters, called "the vile multitude" by the conservatives, were supporters of the leftist political movement and this

drastically reduced the possibility of démoc-socs obtaining control of the government via electoral means (Popkin 2001, 114).

Despite initially complying with the policies formulated by the Party of Order, Bonaparte steadily distanced himself from their sphere of influence and assumed a more noticeable role in politics. For example, he did not seek extensive parliamentary approval for appointing ministers starting from 1849 (Popkin 2001, 113). Even though Bonaparte did not comply much with the parliamentary majority, this dispute should not be understood on the sole basis of ideology. Bonaparte was sympathetic to the monarchist legacy (though his "Bonapartist" strand of monarchist legacy was not particularly appealing to the Party of Order), he emphasized the importance of authority as protection against the left, and his close position to the church led to him to send soldiers to Rome in order to protect the Pope from Italian Republicans (Popkin 2001, 113-114). Bonaparte simply did not desire to be "controlled" by the non-Bonapartist monarchists of the Party of Order and did not want to be limited by the four-year term limit introduced by the constitution. With this motivation, he first endeavored to build legitimacy (both for himself and for his aspiration) among the population by publicly advocating for universal suffrage after it had been repealed by the legislature. In 1851, he campaigned for a petition to amend the term-limit provisions in the constitution and more than 1.6 million signatures endorsed the petition (Palacios Cerezales, 2020). Still, the legislature's reluctance prevented the constitution from being amended and forced Bonaparte to seek another route: to stage a coup d'état.

Bonaparte started executing his plan by first appointing trusted personnel to key positions and by securing the support of the army, which had stayed out of politics since 1799 (Price 2001, 18; State 2010, 213). With its groundwork having been laid, the coup took place on the morning of 2 December 1851. Posters justifying Bonaparte's decision were hung on walls, deputies in opposition to Bonaparte were arrested, the subsequent weak resistance

provoked by staunch republicans such as Victor Hugo was quickly suppressed, and large-scale repression of démoc-socs ensued. The weakened position of the left, the President's popularity, his promise to immediately restore universal suffrage, and his justification of the coup by blaming the divided legislature for failing to sustain order[4] all could be uttered as the reasons why the coup became successful without major disruptions. The aspirations of Bonaparte were codified into a new constitution, accepted by 92% of the votes given in the plebiscite held on 20 December (Flower et al. 2023) The new constitution increased the presidential term to 10 years and curtailed the powers of the legislature, now divided into two houses and stripped of substantial opposition (Popkin 2001, 116).

Louis-Napoléon Bonaparte, circa 1848 (Public Domain)

Shortly after, Bonaparte (having assumed the title "Prince-President") adopted a series of measures that effectively turned the state into a police state where censorship/extensive regulation of the press and the surveillance of political dissidents became the norm[5] (Price 2001, 22). Bonaparte later held another plebiscite for a constitutional amendment that would turn France into a hereditary empire. In his campaign for the plebiscite, he remarked that empire would mean order and peace, and claimed the imperial endeavors would be directed towards public works instead of conquests (Popkin 2001, 117). The amendment was approved in the

plebiscite by an overwhelming majority and Bonaparte (now named Napoléon III[6]) was proclaimed the **Emperor of the French** on 2 December 1852, replacing the only four-year-old Second French Republic with the **Second French Empire** (Flower et al. 2023).

II.   THE EMINENT SOCIAL CONDITIONS AND DYNAMICS IN THE SECOND FRENCH EMPIRE

Social conditions had an overwhelming influence on how political conditions came to be in 19th century France and how they eventually culminated in the proclamation of the Paris Commune. This chapter aims to provide the delegates with an overview of the social phenomena that existed in the Second French Empire (1852-1870, the period immediately preceding the Commune). As many social phenomena in this period had their roots stretching back to the late 18th and early 19th centuries, this chapter is going to briefly elaborate on that timeframe also.

A. State – Religion – Society Relations in the 19th Century

i.   The Position of the Church during the 18th Century

Together with the monarchy, the Catholic Church was the most powerful institution in France under the *ancien régime*[1]. Since it presented itself as the institution which could guide the people into eternal salvation in the afterlife, the Catholic Church was an indispensable part of life for an overwhelming majority of the French. Moreover, it performed many notable social functions along with its religious functions; those social functions like registering births, organizing baptisms and marriages, delivering education, distributing charity, and holding annual confessions on Easter helped entrench the church's and local parish[2] priests' influence over the communities in France (Llewellyn and Thompson 2020a; Kselman 2002, 65-66). Hence, religion and the church remained integral components of French culture and traditions.

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[1] **Ancien Régime** refers to the political and social system of France before the French Revolution
[2] In the Christian Church, "parish" denotes a small administrative district typically having its own church and a priest or pastor.

However, the Catholic Church did not limit itself to those roles and actively partook in political affairs by maintaining an alliance with the monarchy. It legitimized the monarchs by claiming they ruled through divine will, and high-ranking clergymen often served as political advisors to the king (Kselman 2002, 65-66). In turn, the church and the clergy benefited from extensive privileges. Clergymen were exempted from taxation and military service, and they could only be tried in ecclesiastical courts instead of civil courts (Guerlac 1908, 260). Moreover, the Catholic Church was endowed with the privilege to collect its own taxes (e.g., tithes) and it owned about one-tenth of all land in France (Llewellyn and Thompson 2020a). Simply put, both the Catholic Church (as an institution) and the high-ranking clergymen were immensely affluent and powerful compared to the commoners. However, it should be noted that neither the church nor the state was able to subordinate the other in full terms.

The corruption among the clergymen and the hampering of equality by the privileges granted to them became a notable concern among French thinkers (like **Voltaire**) in the late 18th century, breeding a fierce criticism of the church. The wave of anticlericalism gained strength during the French Revolution with the church being subjected to new limitations over time. The church tithes were abolished in 1789, all church lands were nationalized in 1790, a new constitution for the clergy (that altered traditional authority structures and subordinated the clergy to the state) was accepted in 1791, and all religious orders were outlawed in 1792 (Doyle 2017); the church opposed many of the latter reforms. The revolutionaries' distrust of the church eventually led to large-scale repression of the church and a dechristianization campaign in 1793-94, after which the church's power and its ability to function properly considerably decreased (Kselman 2002, 70-71). The anticlerical components of revolutionary sentiment were sustained into the 19th century.

ii.   State-Church Relations in the 19th Century

The legal system defining the state-church relations in France during the 19th century was created during the consulship of Napoleon Bonaparte and called the **Concordat régime**. It was based on two legal documents: **The Concordat** (1801), a bilateral treaty between Napoleon and the Pope, and the **Organic Articles** (1802), a unilaterally drafted law regulating the conduct of the church (Guerlac 1908, 260). With those two documents, Napoleon agreed to restore the Catholic Church (along with the religious orders attached to it) as a legitimate and influential religious institution allowed to retain most of its social functions. However, he was careful in defining Catholicism as the religion of the "majority of the French", but not of the "state". Napoleon saw the church as an important instrument through which social order and authority could be reinforced for the benefit of the central government, but he did not seek to let the church intervene in political affairs (Doyle 2017).

The Signing of the Concordat in 1801, the person sitting on the chair is Napoleon Bonaparte (Public Domain)

In reality, the Concordat régime empowered the central government with the right to heavily regulate the administration of the church. The French clergymen were turned into

governmental employees receiving their salaries from the government, and the government started to appoint the bishops (though subject to papal approval) instead of the Pope (Guerlac 1908, 261). Many of the important functions exercised by the church were exercised under the tutelage of the government, a concise list of which was written by Guerlac (1908):

"No papal bull could be published in France, no assembly of bishops could be held, no new holidays established, no new church opened, no parish created, no new liturgy written, without the **consent** of the government."

The institutions of the Protestant and Jewish faiths were also regulated by laws enacted during the Napoleonic Era, thus considerably extending these faiths' rights. The Concordat régime continued to serve as the framework for the state-religion relations in France until 1905 (Guerlac 1908, 260). It still recognized religious institutions as autonomous entities but allowed the state to supervise how those entities' enormous influence was being exercised.

All the political regimes that came after Napoleon's fall chose to secure an alliance with the Catholic Church within the framework put forth by the Concordat régime, though the extent of its implementation changed over time. During the Bourbon Restoration (when Catholicism was reasserted as the state religion), the church continued to promote the monarchy, and many priests preached aggressively under the **revival of Catholicism** trend, which aimed to eradicate the surge in religious indifference following the revolution. Though the importance of the church as an overarching social institution had diminished[3], many French (including many intellectuals) still treated Christian traditions as an important part of their culture. Religious orders, which were growing in membership, also gained influence during the Restoration Era as they were granted some rights in the field of education, a very vital instrument for exercising social control. However,

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[3] The church had also lost many components of its political and economic power, the most notable being their inability to reacquire the assets they lost in 1790 because of their position under the Concordat régime.

the ultraloyalist tendencies of the church created suspicion among the liberal circles and caused the church to be targeted in the Revolution of 1830. Thus, the church adopted a less aggressive stance and started supporting the "liberal" July Monarchy after the Revolution (Kselman 2002, 71-75; Doyle 2017; Popkin 2001, 83-84; Baisnée 1937, 188).

The 1848 Revolution became a turning point; the church, which initially sought friendship with the workers, quickly displayed hostility towards the prospect of disorder carried by the workers and strengthened its alliance with the conservative faction. This alliance resulted in the enaction of the **1850 Falloux Law** (Baisnée 1937, 189-190). The law was intended to place the church in a position that could easily rival public education institutions, especially due to the conservatives' fears that public schools were prone to being centers of (leftist) revolutionary indoctrination. The law permitted private schools to be opened up at any level below the university and extended the obligations of primary schooling for girls. Hence, the Catholic Church was allowed to extend its schooling system and the Catholic schools started outcompeting public schools & secular private schools. Moreover, the policies implemented after 1850 entrenched many religious elements in public schools and facilitated clerical interference in public education to an extent (Doyle 2017; Bainée 1937, 190; Popkin 2001, 114).

Napoleon III's era was perhaps the era in which the church-state alliance was reinforced the most. Even though he was not very religious, Napoleon III shared his uncle's views that an alliance with the church is key for sustaining order, loyalty to the regime, and allegiance to the state. Thus, he ensured that the clergy stayed in a reputable and materially well-doing position. Napoleon also provided military protection for the Pope to please the Catholics. Napoleon III even refrained from implementing some (but not all) provisions of the Organic Articles in order to sustain good relations with the clergy (Plessis 1987, 135-136; Goyau 1907). During the Second

Empire, therefore, the church was in a position in which it exercised great social influence and was engaged in notable political alliances but was unable to surmount the secular institutions (such as the government) fully.

iii.   Religious Movements During the 19th Century

The 19th Century was also a time when different religious doctrines and factions persisted across France. Within the Catholic Church (which is usually thought to be monolithic), three main movements could be identified: **Gallicanism**, **Ultramontanism**, and **Liberal Catholicism**. The Gallican faction advocated for the limitation (but not the cancellation) of the papal interventions in ecclesiastical and temporal matters, and for the autonomy of the (Catholic) Church of France. Thus, Gallicanism was mostly in accordance with the principles brought by the Concordat régime (Britannica 2018). The Ultramontanist faction advocated for the exact opposite and sought to assert the superiority of the pope, especially concerning his position vis-à-vis the Church of France. Even though Napoleon III distanced himself away from the Ultramontanist faction in his later years, the Ultramontanes triumphed in 1870 as the **First Vatican Council** formally declared an ultramontane position (Britannica 2018; Kselman 2002, 66).

Liberal Catholicism, on the other hand, was pioneered by a priest called **Félicité de Lamennais**, who championed liberties such as the liberty of association, the liberty of the press, the liberty of teaching, and the liberty of conscience. Even though Lamennais broke with the church after the Pope condemned his proposal to introduce a more liberal administrative system for the church, his ideas continued to influence many French clergymen (and even the Church of France to some degree) and political activists; the liberal influence culminated during the 1840s. (Bainée 1937, 188; Popkin 2001, 91). However, the church increasingly became more conservative

and antimodernist after the 1848 Revolution due to various papal declarations condemning liberal ideas and the growing popularity of ultramontanism (Popkin 2001, 128).
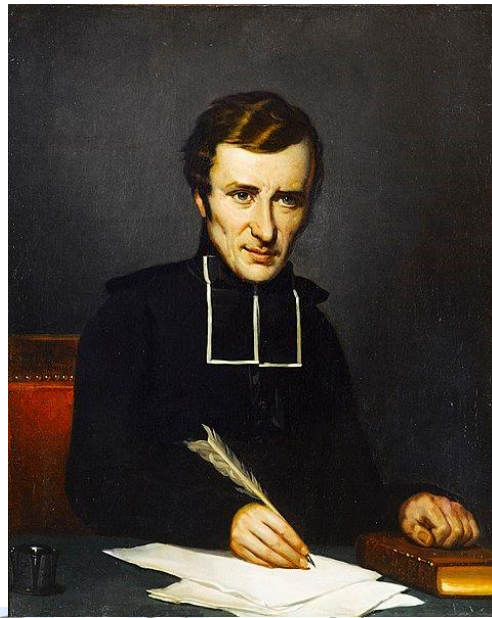
Felicité de Lamennais (1782-1854) (Public Domain)

The multitude of religious movements extended beyond the Catholic Church. Many cults and religions, some related to Christianity, started to spring up and proliferate in France during the 19th century; **Spiritualism**, **Masonic Lodges**, the **Religion of Positivism** (founded by **Auguste Comte**), and the **Saint-Simonian Cult** are notable examples. **Atheism** also started to proliferate among a portion of the elite during the second half of the century (Kselman 2002, 83-86).

B. **The Story of the Second Estate: Nobility in 19th Century France**

Like the clergy, the 18th century nobility held a privileged and affluent position, which placed them in the higher ranks of the social hierarchy and allowed them to remain an influential stratum well into the 19th century. The nobles' privileged position can be traced back to their relationship with feudalism during the *ancien régime*. In the 18th century, most nobles (especially

the **immemorial nobles**[4]) owned large agricultural estates where many peasants were employed for agricultural work; collectively, noble-owned lands constituted 25% of all French lands. Consequently, most French nobles held enormous amounts of wealth (Popkin 2001, 11). However, the aristocrats' influence did not merely originate from their wealth. They enjoyed significant amounts of prestige through the **hereditary titles** that signified their prestigious family lineages and endowed them with their legal status. Most importantly, however, the majority of aristocrats (except some more liberal ones) believed themselves to have an innate talent to rule, thus representing authority and being distinct from even the wealthiest bourgeois. This belief characterized the conduct of French public and military administration since many high-ranking offices could only be held by the nobility irrespective of their talents (Llewellyn and Thompson 2020b; Higgs 2019, 217). Also, they were given privileges such as not being entitled to pay certain taxes and being permitted to collect certain fees from the peasants, along with other honorific privileges (Popkin 2001, 11).

Aristocratic privileges became a central point of concern for the revolutionaries during the French Revolution as a social hierarchy built upon privileges confronted the notion of egalitarianism. Moreover, the nobles' attempts to counter the revolution quickly antagonized them and led to the abolishment of the aristocratic privileges in 1789, followed by a total abolishment of the nobility (and hereditary titles) in 1790 (State 2010, 158). The ensuing persecution of nobles led many to leave their estates and emigrate, causing a 20% reduction in noble-owned lands by 1814 (Pilbeam 2002, 57). Nevertheless, the imperial ambitions of Napoleon Bonaparte led to the restoration of hereditary titles, which automatically reinstated the legal status of the nobles;

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[4] Immemorial nobility refers to the nobility that existed before normal records of noble title. They were not designated as nobles by the sovereign, as opposed to the ennobled nobility.

however, they were stripped of their pre-revolution privileges due to the Napoleonic regime's determination to sustain egalitarianism. Napoleon also created a new group of nobles by awarding his preeminent civil and military personnel with newly created titles. This new group of (imperial) nobles, who owed their new titles to their talents and service, quickly integrated into the old nobility through marriages; they also formed bonds with the bourgeoisie (State 2010, 180-181; Petiteau n.d.).

The French nobility continued to exert great influence over social, economic, and political life through the Bourbon Restoration, July Monarchy, Second Republic, and the Second Empire. In the economic sphere, the nobles preserved most of their lands and their wealth. As France was still a primarily agricultural country during the first half of the 19th century, land ownership asserted the economic supremacy of the nobility. However, an increase in the number of bourgeois landowners and the expansion of novel economic sectors meant that a greater challenge was posed to this supremacy over time (Pilbeam 2002, 58; Plessis 1987, 79-80). Still, the nobility clearly had the upper hand with regard to their social standing. Nobles perceived themselves to be the representatives of traditional authority & civic order through their "admirable" traits. Literary movements further helped spread such an image of nobility among other classes. Even the wealthy bourgeois admired the nobility and looked up to the nobles for shaping their own manners and ideologies (Higgs 2019, 217-220; Accampo 2002, 103). Suffice to say, 19th century nobles held significant influence with the help of their reputation.

The nobility also preserved a notable amount of its political power, though now shared with the other classes. Their political power was mostly felt in the rural areas, where the memories of feudalism placed the nobles as the most prominent members of their communities. This often led them to be selected as local leaders and deputies; in the 1840s, more than 30 per cent of the

French deputies were still aristocrats (Pilbeam 2002, 57-58). They also continued to serve as administrators and hold important governmental positions though those positions were not specifically reserved for the aristocracy. However, the nobility by no means acted as a monolithic group. Their inability to convene under a single body and their opportunistic political stances prevented them from controlling the government in their collective interest though nearly all of them stayed committed to the preservation of order and social hierarchy (Higgs 2019, 217-218).

However, mid-19th century saw a decrease in the number of nobles and an increase in **anti-aristocratic sentiment**; the sentiment proliferated among the egalitarian republicans and temporarily led to the abolition of hereditary titles from 1848 to 1852 (Higgs 2019, 23). In contrast, Napoleon III, known for his devotion to preserving order and social hierarchy, reinstated hereditary titles. As he longed to secure the nobility's loyalty to him and his regime, Napoleon III introduced measures that provided protections for the legal status of the nobles, and partly succeeded in his venture. Still, the strengthening republican rhetoric and the growing influence of the bourgeoisie jeopardized the position of the nobility toward the end of the Second Empire (Higgs 2019, 23 & 154-155; Plessis 1987, 79-80).

Prince (*Prince*)

Duke (*Duc*)

Marquess (*Marquis*)

Count (*Comte*)

Viscount (*Vicomte*)

Baron (Baron)

Knight (*Chevalier*)
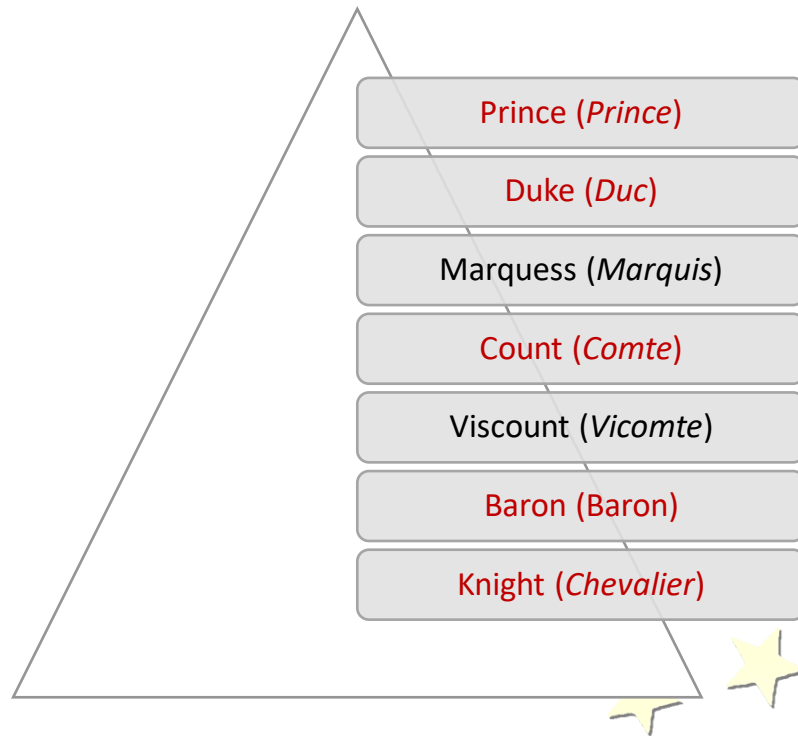
The titles of the French nobility listed in a hierarchical order; the ones written in red are the ones that were kept after Napoleon's reinstatement of the nobility.

C. The Industrial Revolution and Industrial Social Stratification

The Industrial Revolution fundamentally changed French society as the new economic conditions introduced by industrialization recreated the social world. More precisely, the old stratification scheme composed of "**estates**" yielded to a new scheme composed of "**classes**". This subchapter will elaborate on the emergence, conduct, and attitudes of those classes in the context of industrialization.

i. The Industrial Revolution in France

Even though some technological developments in production processes were scored in France before 1830, they did not prove to be efficient in kickstarting a complete mechanization process or mass production because they were not aimed to replace the traditional production

methods (Searching in History 2015; Popkin 2001, 83). Thus, historians usually place the start of the French Industrial Revolution around the year 1830. In the 1830s, the use of machinery started to proliferate in the production processes, reducing production costs and increasing production speed & output as a result. The textile industry saw the benefits of industrialization the most and became the primary industry in France since an abundance of raw materials and workers helped it grow quickly; textile production doubled between 1830 and 1860. The period was also notable for the steady emergence of urban industrial centers, settlements that were quite suitable for industrial production due to various natural and economic conditions. Many of these early industrial centers were in Northern France and Alsace-Lorraine, including the cities of **Rouen**, **Lille**, and **Mulhouse**, causing these regions to be wealthier compared to the rest of the country in the long term. (Searching in History 2015; Popkin 2001, 95-96; Plessis 1987, 102-103).

However, the extent of industrialization during the first half of the 19th century was not much, and France remained a predominantly agricultural country through this period (Searching in History 2015). Even though mechanization was involved, most of the production was still done by independent artisans[5] or subcontracted artisans in workshops; the production process in workshops was mostly conducted using traditional methods and conveniences, unlike the large factories. The French industrialists usually established small or medium-sized factories in this era, and they chose to divert their savings into more traditional forms of investments[6] instead of expanding their factories. The pieces of machinery used in France were not of the finest quality either. All these factors limited production output, prevented full industrialization in France, and caused the country to lag behind Britain in industrial production (Accampo 2002, 108; Popkin

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[5] An artisan is a worker in a skilled trade, especially one that involves making things by hand.
[6] Such as buying valuable land.

2001, 96). This was partly due to there being no concerns regarding foreign competition, a key to industrial growth, among the French industrialists since they were protected by high tariffs (Popkin 2001, 83).

Still, the policies of the July Monarchy helped foster industrial development across France. As mentioned earlier, political reasons (including the espousing of liberalism) led the July Monarchy into promoting the interests of the **bourgeoisie**, a class that covered the industry owners (Wergeland 1905, 436). Thus, the government aspired to satisfy the interests of the industrialists by keeping industrial regulations loose and facilitating the transportation of goods[7]. The latter was realized in the 1840s through a grand scheme of railway[8] expansion, carefully planned by the authorities before being conditionally subcontracted to private enterprises. The grand network of railways helped larger industrial enterprises emerge as mass production became more economically feasible, thereby initiating an economic boom during the mid-1840s. The railways also triggered substantial development in various industrial sectors (such as ironmaking) and initiated a shift from small industries to **heavy industries** (Popkin 2001, 96-97). The shift was also caused by the growing share of profits being invested in industrial development (Popkin 2001, 118).

The phenomenon of industrial development became more visible during the Second Empire when artisan production was balanced by the production of large industries (Accampo 2002, 115). During this period, economic growth furthered the expansion of factories and industrial production. Moreover, mechanization was now complemented by technological

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[7] The easy transportation of goods was vital for industrial growth as mass production requires large amounts of raw materials to be transported to the factories and large amounts of manufactured goods to be transported out of the factories.

[8] The first railway line in France was also constructed during the July Monarchy, in 1832 (Searching in History 2015).

innovations that increased industrial efficiency. This meant that the operation of heavy industries (like the iron, steel, coal, and mineral chemical industries) became significantly more profitable, resulting in the rapid expansion of the said industries. Simultaneously, traditional sectors (reliant on artisan production) still preserved their significance; they supplied 70 per cent of total production. Some of them also experienced small improvements (such as mechanization) but their preeminence continued to weaken vis-à-vis large industries (Plessis 1987, 88-93). French industries were one of the most critical components of the economy during the Second Empire; thus, a more elaborate portrait of them will be presented in the 4th chapter.

Looking from a social perspective, however, the economic structures associated with the Industrial Revolution led to the formation of two new classes: the **bourgeoisie** and the **working class**. These classes were distinguished from each other inter alia by their wealth, working and living conditions, lifestyles, culture, and political stances. Repeated social interactions within a class led to intraclass unity and the formation of a class consciousness[9], which helped a class distinguish itself from other social groups. The continuous growth of the wealth gap between the two aforementioned classes through the century furthered the solidification of intraclass unity and class consciousness, eventually breeding **class conflict**. (Fleck and Choy n.d.a).

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[9] Class consciousness refers to the awareness of one's place in a system of social class.
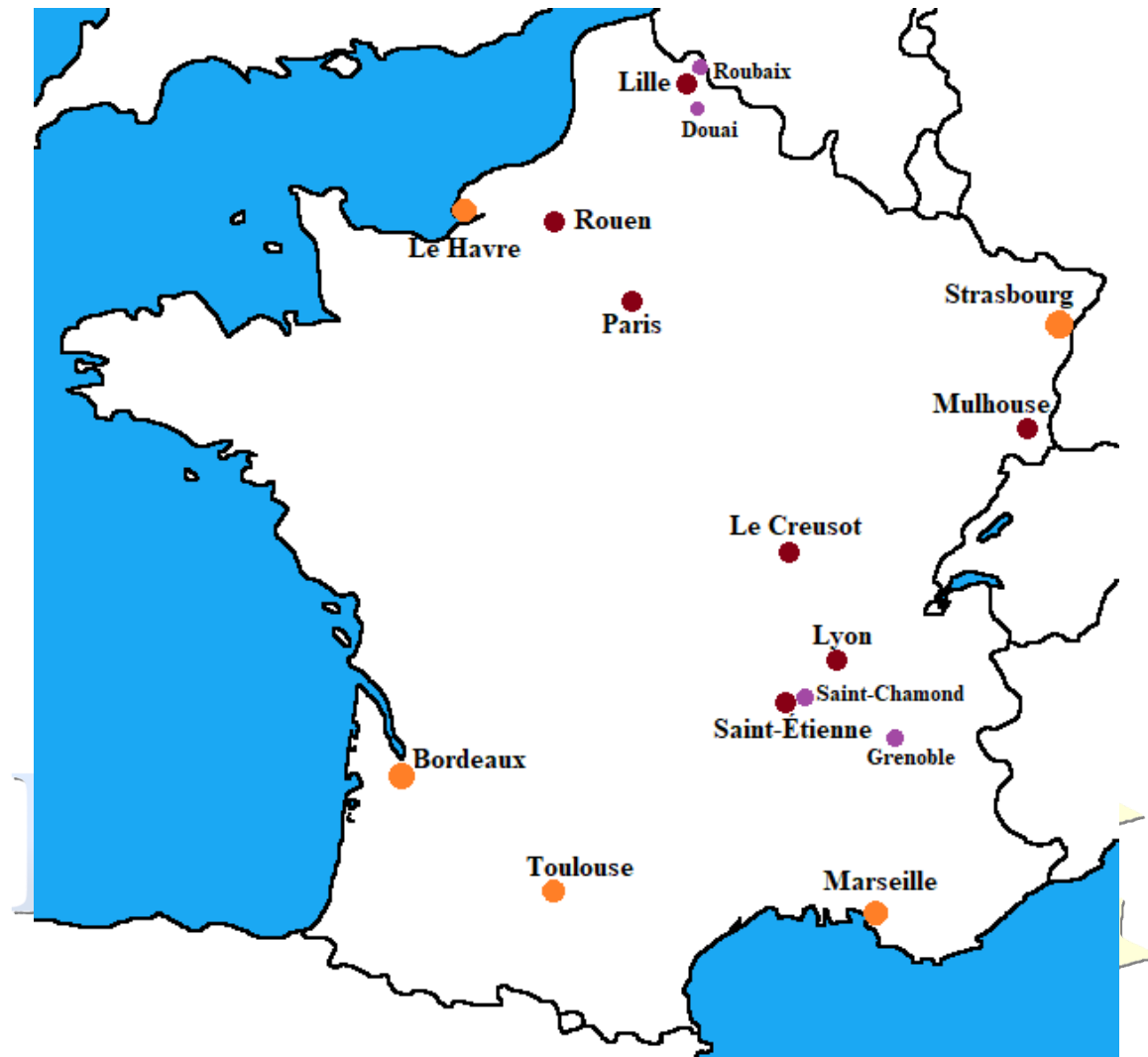
A map showing the notable industrial centers in France around mid-19th century. The red cities were the major industrial centers, the purple cities were minor industrial towns, and the orange cities were major trading towns where industries did not develop much.

ii.   Bourgeoisie

The Industrial Revolution caused substantial development in the sectors of trade, finance, and manufacturing, which are notable for allowing talented newcomers to climb up. The bourgeoisie can be defined as a class whose wealth derives from those sectors (Accampo 2002, 103); thus, we can date the proper emergence of the bourgeoisie around the early 19th century.

Even though those sectors had existed before, no class consciousness had developed among the bourgeois[10] by the 1810s, especially since the dominancy of the aristocratic culture prevented a distinct cultural identity from being formed among the newly rich. However, the decreasing influence of the aristocrats and the growing wealth of the bourgeois in the following decades eventually led to the formation of a distinct culture and class consciousness among the bourgeois. This culture became influential in French society as the July Monarchy actively imitated and promoted bourgeois values (Popkin 2001, 97-99).[11] There are no fixed classifications for who exactly counted as a member of the bourgeoisie in the 19th century, especially since the term was sometimes extended to include the members of the nobility or was regarded to be the same thing as the middle class. Still, we can broadly identify two main (yet somewhat distinct) subclasses within the bourgeoisie: **Haute Bourgeoisie** and **Petty Bourgeoisie**, though many of the properties attributed to the bourgeoisie were more intensely observed within the earlier group.

The **High** (*Haute*) **Bourgeoisie**[12] was composed of affluent businessmen like bankers, industrialists, and wholesalers, along with prestigious lawyers, magistrates, and high-ranking government officials. This group gradually came to inhabit the governing circles of France and formed a political elite group, due to being affluent enough to vote in the elections, around the mid-19th century (Popkin 2001, 97-99). The high bourgeoisie eventually intermingled with the wealthy nobility, resulting in the formation of an **upper class**[13]. The upper class was characterized

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[10] While **bourgeoisie** refers to a specific class/group, the word **bourgeois** refers to a member (or the members) of that group.

[11]

[12] The group was sometimes also called as *bonne* (good) *bourgeoisie.*

[13] The "upper class" had no clear delimitations either. Moreover, the term "high bourgeoisie" was used in a manner such that it also included the nobles near the end of the century.

by a desire to demonstrate distinctiveness by carefully adhering to a set of scripted social behavior, often causing its members to be ridiculed by others (Fleck and Choy n.d.b).

On the other hand, the **Petty** (*Petite*) **Bourgeoisie** (also labeled as the **middle class**) was a more modest group as many of its members came from a rural or working-class background by experiencing social mobility. The membership of this group expanded considerably through the century as novel social and economic conditions required greater employment in the service sector (Fleck and Choy n.d.c). Danita Fleck and Linda Inson Choy (n.d.c) provide us with a comprehensive account of middle-class occupations in 19th century Paris:

"(…) the middle class generally included the white collar occupations: (…) doctors, dentists, engineers, architects, chemists, accountants, surveyors, managers of private and public institutions (businesses, academies and hospitals), manufacturers, teachers, nurses, merchants and shopkeepers (owners of *l'atelier* [workshops] and *la boutique* [boutiques], or managers of newly created department stores, mail order houses, retail cooperatives, and chain stores), bookkeepers, salesmen, and clerks."

Despite the growth of industrialism, the petty bourgeoisie still held a vital importance for French society as more than 70 percent of production firms were either domestic operators, independent master artisans (who were usually regarded to be at the lower boundary of the bourgeoisie), or family enterprises. A notable share of the retail sector was also controlled by this group as many people opened small shops in growing urban centers to match the growing demand for food and groceries. The petty bourgeois' desire to differentiate themselves from the workers and the growing competitive pressure exerted by large enterprises eventually led them to be class conscious and establish associations to promote solidarity and agitate for political power (Fleck and Choy n.d.c; Popkin 2001, 99).

The bourgeoisie also developed a distinct cultural identity characterized by the display of a luxurious lifestyle. They owned large houses (usually apartments) in cities, decorated with elegant furniture and staffed by domestic servants, where remarkable dinners for guests were served frequently. Cafes, ballrooms, and parks were common places for gathering as the demand for leisure and recreational activities rose. Cultural works like concerts, theatre plays, and books also saw an increase in demand, causing the rise of mass entertainment. Despite the wave anticlericalism among the petty bourgeoisie, the high bourgeoisie increasingly valued religiosity after 1848 partly as a reaction to the mobilization of the lower class (Fleck and Choy n.d.a; Plessis 1987, 125-127; Popkin 2001, 121-122). The bourgeoisie was also notable for its unique attitude towards social life. As opposed to many nobles, the bourgeois aspired to sustain a reputation through their hard work instead of heavily engaging in a life of pleasure (Accampo 2002, 104). A bourgeois man was expected attend educational institutions (such as the *lycées*[14] and *grandes écoles*[15]) to accumulate technical expertise and cultural capital[16] before pursuing a career as a businessman and engaging in public affairs. A bourgeois woman, on the other hand, was expected to maintain the household and dedicate herself to her family (Popkin 2001, 99-101).

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[14] A *lycée* is the French equivalent of a high school.

[15] *Grandes écoles* were highly reputable French universities characterized by specialization in specific fields.

[16] Cultural capital is defined as familiarity with the accepted cultural norms within a society.

A 19th century Parisian Café (Public Domain)

In the political sphere, the bourgeoisie (especially the high bourgeoisie) stood against anything that could threaten the power of money or business success like war, high income taxes, infringement of property rights, and most importantly, disorder. Hence, a large portion of the high bourgeoisie supported Napoleon III for his sustainment of stability. Napoleon III himself sought good relations with the bourgeoisie too and did not discriminate between the nobility and the bourgeoisie in terms of social recognition. Near the end of the Second Empire, however, industrial expansion curtailed the possibility of **social mobility** (from the petty bourgeoisie to the high bourgeoisie) as competing with large bourgeois dynasties had gotten very hard for small businesses. The diminishing possibility of social mobility and the growing wealth gap, and the conformist nature of the high bourgeoisie, caused criticism and furthered the alienation of the bourgeoisie from the lower class (Popkin 2001, 120; Plessis 1987, 126-128).

iii.   The Working Class

a.   The Emergence of the Working Class

As mentioned before, production was conducted by **artisans** (who were manual laborers) until the proliferation of industrial technologies during the early and mid-19th century. The Industrial Revolution brought notable novelties regarding the conduct of manual labor and caused the old-style and new-style manual laborers to merge into a new social class called the **working class** (sometimes also called the **lower class**[17]).

Urbanization was the most influential phenomenon that contributed to the formation of the working class. Around the 1830s and 1840s, when the internal migration controls were being loosened, the spread of industrial forms of mass production in urban centers sustained demand for industrial labor. Thus, many rural workers immigrated to the industrial centers around the country to work in industries, causing industrial cities' populations to grow noticeably. However, urbanization was not only caused by the influx of industrial workers. The rise of the bourgeoisie also created a labor demand in newly emerging or growing nonindustrial sectors (like domestic service), causing trading towns (like Bordeaux and Marseilles) to expand as well. Overall, migrants were drawn to the cities by a greater opportunity for work and leisure activities, higher wages, and the premise of social promotion. The attractiveness of the cities in many regards caused the migrant worker population to skyrocket in urban centers. Paris was a good example of this as 61 per cent of its population came from out of the city as of 1866 (Fleck and Choy n.d.a; Popkin 2001, 101; Plessis 1987, 118-119; Wergeland 1905, 445).
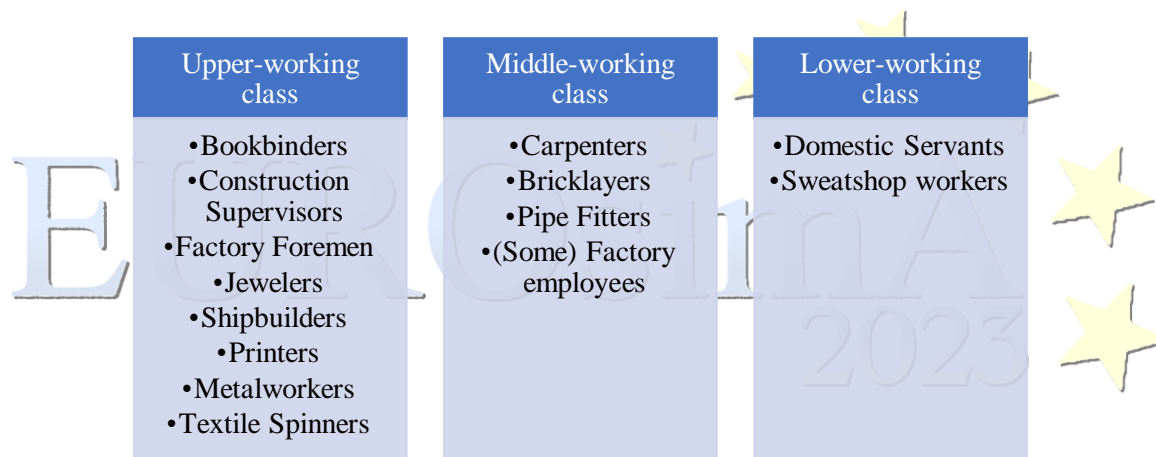
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[17] When the term **lower class** is used, rural farmers and members of the underclass (such as the beggars) were sometimes included as their living conditions did not differ much from that of the industrial workers (Fleck and Choy n.d.d).

The urban working class constituted about 30 per cent of the entire French population during the Second Empire (Plessis 1987, 113), but it was by no means a homogenous group. A basic scheme that consists of three subclasses will perhaps be more efficient in providing an overview of the working class: the **upper-working class**, the **middle-working class**, and the **lower-working class**. The upper-working class encompassed a wide range of artisans, crafters, and highly skilled industrial workers. The members of this group worked in urban workshops (except for the industrial workers), received occupational education or had apprenticeships, lived in fine conditions, had families, and possessed a certain amount of cultural capital. Many artisans viewed their skills as a form of patrimony, causing production to remain primarily a family business across the nation (Accampo 2002, 110). The members of this subclass are notable for emulating the bourgeois lifestyle and culture to an extent, especially through seeking education for their children. The lower-working class, on the other hand, consisted of unskilled laborers such as domestic servants and workers in sweatshops and some factories. Most of them had recently migrated from the countryside (thus were not able to accumulate skills required for jobs with better wages), did not own property, and had to endure very unfavorable living conditions. The middle-working class remained more a mix of the other two subclasses as it encompassed semi-skilled workers such as some artisans (e.g., carpenters) and some better-doing factory employees (Fleck and Choy n.d.d; Plessis 1987, 113).

The working class could also be grouped in itself with regard to geographical distributions. **Rural workers** usually held multiple jobs and were imbued with (rather conservative) peasant traditions. Similarly, the workers in small cities had more diversified activities but were still attached to a notion of traditional communal unity. Yet, the workers in large urban centers (Paris and Lyon being notable examples) lived surrounded with new social conditions, causing an

attachment to **republican** and **socialist** ideas among many (Plessis 1987, 113-114). In the meanwhile, the workers of heavy industrial sectors (like metal production) usually congregated in towns dominated by a single, large-scale enterprise (Accampo 2002, 109); **Le Creusot** (famous for its ironmaking plant) is an example of such towns.

Lastly, the working class stood more heterogeneous in terms of gender as low wages usually forced lower class women to work as a means of ensuring subsistence for themselves or for their families. In 1866, women constituted 34 per cent of the labor force engaged in manufacturing (Accampo 2002, 115-116).

Upper-working class	Middle-working class	Lower-working class
•Bookbinders •Construction Supervisors •Factory Foremen •Jewelers •Shipbuilders •Printers •Metalworkers •Textile Spinners	•Carpenters •Bricklayers •Pipe Fitters •(Some) Factory employees	•Domestic Servants •Sweatshop workers

A diagram showing which occupations were regarded as a part of which subclass of the working class.

b. Working Conditions, Living Conditions, and Culture

(Please note that this section overwhelmingly focuses on the conditions of the **lower-working class**, which was the most populous among the three subclasses during the Second Empire)

In the 19th century, most French workers, many of whom worked in large factories, endured numerous hardships in the workplace. Even though mechanization became commonplace, most enterprises did not take the necessary safety measures needed to secure a healthy workplace environment, mostly due to the employers' reluctance to lose profits while trying to implement

safety measures and the lack of state inspections. As a result, workplace accidents occurred frequently. Such accidents could easily condemn workers to a major worsening of life quality as their injuries usually led them to be fired by their employers and made it noticeably harder to find a new job. Moreover, the workers usually did not receive any compensation as the employers blamed the accidents on them and the economically liberal policies of 19th century governments did not provide the workers with any substantial form of social security (Traugott 1993, 17-21; Plessis 1987, 116). Still, overall working safety tended to increase through the century (Dunham 1943, 133). The working hours were very long, with an average worker working around 13 to 15 hours a day during the Second Empire[18]. Long working hours decreased workplace safety as engaging in heavy labor for so long caused fatigue for many (Plessis 1987, 115-116). Child labor was also problematic during this time as low wages often led many workers to force their children to work in factories and prevent them from receiving an education. However, the problem was not as acute compared to other industrialized nations and a law passed in 1841 did a mostly successful job in eliminating child labor (Dunham 1943, 133-134).

The living conditions of the working class were similarly unfavorable due to low wages, and they improved a little until the 1860s as the increase in prices usually matched the increase in wages.[19] (Plessis 1987, 114-115). Accommodation was especially a large problem, as immigration to cities caused a housing shortage and the prices skyrocketed regardless of the quality of accommodation[20]. So, many migrant workers had to cluster in poorly built, unhealthy, tiny hovels with their families to reduce the rents as much as possible. These dwellings were poorly lit, poorly ventilated, and did not have any form of heating (Traugott 1993, 17-21; Wergeland 1907, 441).

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[18] The 10-hour working day was proclaimed in 1848 but was quickly abolished thereafter (Wergeland 1907, 442).
[19] Prices especially rose during the 1850s and 1860s as an increase in global gold supplies caused inflation.
[20] Lille, Rouen, and Mulhouse experienced the worst of housing crisis in France.

Shared accommodation was also a common option preferred by the recent migrants, though they were also poorly built and usually lacked access to running water; shared accommodation is thought to have facilitated the formation of working class solidarity (Faure 2006, 761-765). The rapid population growth led some sections of urban centers to transform into slums, and cities like Paris started to expand rapidly (and without proper planning) into the surrounding areas (Popkin 2001, 101-102; Fleck and Choy n.d.a).

Nominal and real wages (index 1900 = 100)

	1852	1856	1869
Nominal wage	49	55	72
Cost of living	81	114	101
Real wage	60	48	72

It could be said that no substantial increase in real wages were achieved during the reign of Napoleon III (Plessis 1987, 115)

Consequently, significant problems regarding public health and safety arose in working class neighborhoods. Lack of sanitation and medical services frequently caused diseases and increased the mortality rates among workers; cholera (a disease spread by a waterborne microbe) epidemics occurred in 1832, 1849, 1866, and 1867 due to the inadequate purification of water (Traugott 1993, 17-21; Popkin 2001, 102-123). The unfavorable living conditions also led to social breakdown in the lower class neighborhoods where alcohol abuse, crime, and prostitution became commonplace, which led the bourgeoisie to view the lower classes as "**dangerous classes**" (Popkin 2001, 102). Fortunately, though, nutrition did not pose a grave problem for the workers

as high agricultural productivity kept food prices low and allowed workers to be sufficiently fed except during the time of economic crisis[21] (Traugott 1993, 17-21; Wergeland 1907, 441).

The working class nevertheless developed a distinct social attitude and culture. Watching popular theater shows and spectating sporting events became popular activities among the workers. Some activities normally associated with the bourgeoisie such as reading and travelling to the countryside also slowly spread to the working class, though with limitations. The most popular activity for the workers, however, was socializing in the taverns as drinking served as a remedy for working fatigue (Fleck and Choy n.d.d). In this regard, taverns held key importance as the social environment in the taverns eventually led to the spread of **socialism**, **republicanism**, and **religious indifferentism** (which was also caused by the inability of the workers to attend churches) in the working class (Plessis 1987, 116). Some historians suggest that the spread of moral failings mentioned in the paragraph above could be linked to the popularity of the tavern culture (Wergeland 1907, 440). Despite its politicization, the working class was not able to exert much influence as workers were largely excluded from the political processes, especially before 1848 (Fleck and Choy n.d.d).

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[21] Lille and Mulhouse were exceptions (Dunham 1943, 132).
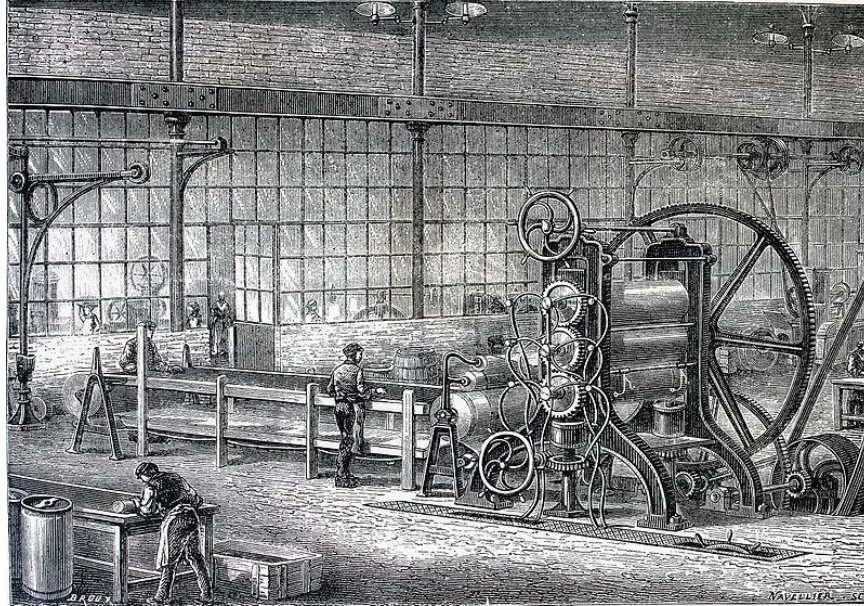
An illustration of a French factory, 1873 (Public Domain)

c. Class Consciousness

The formation of class consciousness among the French working class during the 19th century carries vital importance as class consciousness ultimately became one of the main factors leading the Parisian workers to proclaim the Commune in 1871. Before the Industrial Revolution, tradesmen and artisans usually became members of traditional guilds and corporations founded to protect the common interests of the holders of a certain profession. However, these organizations were banned by the **Allerde Law** and the **Le Chapelier Law** of 1791. The laws reflected the economically liberal characteristic of the French Revolution and aimed to promote individual initiative by abolishing the restraints put by corporations. Hence, the association of more than twenty people without authorization by the government was forbidden as a means of preventing the formation of unions, which the workers could use to collectively represent their economic interests. Striking was also prohibited. These limitations could be said to have significantly slowed

the development of the French workers' movement (Accampo 2002, 101; Dunham 1943, 143-144).

Until 1830, class consciousness remained mostly contained within the artisans, many of whom were affected by the legacy of corporations, who illegally sustained local craft organizations to create the solidarity necessary for opposing masters and merchants. Class consciousness was also reinforced by a strong rhetoric centered on acquiring the **dignity of labor** through the control of labor; this could be viewed as a reaction to the spread of industrial working conditions which seemed to reduce the power, dignity, and social standing of workers (Accampo 2002, 109-120). However, the workers did not engage in any large-scale protests during this period, except for a strike organized by the Parisian chair workers in 1820 (Traugott 1997, 17-21).

The French workers' movement gained considerable momentum after 1830 due to a number of reasons. The economic reason could be uttered simply as the rapidly growing numbers of urban and industrial workers displeased with harsh working and living conditions. Political reasons such as the July Monarchy's failure to enact adequate labor legislation and to provide any substantial form of social security increased the discontent among workers, who were also denied political representation. Lastly, the cultural reason was the growing literacy rates among the workmen (reaching 52 per cent by 1840) since social and political literature increased class consciousness (which now included compassion towards the workers of other sectors) among workers. In fact, the 1840s saw many intellectuals (including **Louis Blanc**, **Étienne Cabet**, and **Joseph Proudhon**) write about the issues related to the organization of work (Dunham 1943, 141; Wergeland 1907, 143; Accampo 2002, 112).

The most popular workers' associations at the time were the **mutual aid societies** where the members contributed to a joint fund used to aid the sick & unemployed and to cover funeral

expenses. Even though the government tacitly let these societies (which remained illegal in law) operate, they usually did little more than foster short-term cooperation though they served as a basis of collective agitation in a few cases (Traugott 1997, 17-21; Popkin 2001, 102). A number of **cooperative workers' associations[22]** were also founded during the July Monarchy, with the first being opened in Lyon in 1835. Even though they were founded to serve as enterprises without employer exploitation, legal restraints put on enterprises and their inability to handle trade led many to become bankrupt (Popkin 2001, 102; Wergeland 1907, 440-445). The strengthening of class consciousness and workers' organizations eventually led some workers to assume militancy; this was demonstrated by the **1831 and 1834 Canut Revolts** born out of the strikes organized by the silk workers of Lyon (Accampo 2002, 112). Militancy provided some benefits for the workers, an example being the wage increases following the labor disturbances in Paris in 1843 (Fleck and Choy n.d.d), even though militant activities remained local.

The Revolution of 1848 became a turning point for working class consciousness. The workers initially allied with the republican bourgeois, actively engaged in physical conflict against the authorities, and managed to keep the provisional government responsive to their interests. However, a large portion of the (high) bourgeoisie had started to view the workers' movement as dangerous and many decisions against the interest of the workers were taken during the Second Republic (detailed under the first chapter) (Wergeland 1907, 443). Around this time, the development of industries meant that the wealth gap continued to grow, and the wealthy bourgeoisie came to see the workers as "rented machines" (Plessis 1987, 117-118). Under these political and social conditions, the workers were convinced that they were a coherent group

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[22] A **cooperative (association)** is an autonomous association of persons united voluntarily to meet their common economic, social and cultural needs and aspirations through a jointly owned and democratically controlled enterprise.

alienated from the rest and hostility toward the bourgeoisie grew. After 1848, class conflict, not harmony, came to dominate French society (Popkin 2001, 120; Accampo 2002, 113).

The situation only got more intense throughout the reign of Napoleon III despite the adverse effects created by legal barriers and countermeasures such as the arrest of many workers' leaders. Strikes still occurred occasionally; Parisian gas stokers were famous for striking annually from 1855 to 1870 and thereby securing a 210 per cent rise in wages (Kulstein 1967, 357; Berlanstein 1992, 674). Moreover, the workers' movement obtained an international identity following the convention of the **International Workingmen's Association** (its founders included a Frenchman called **Eugène Varlin**) in London in 1864, though the organization was paralyzed because of internal ideological divisions (Wergeland 1907, 447-448). Napoleon III tried to appease the growing workers' movement through several social reforms and legal modifications. Still, most workers, except for a pro-regime minority, displayed no permanent gratitude and remained indifferent toward the regime at best. Their indifference had turned into hostility by 1870 due to the preservation of socioeconomic status quo and the government's failure to meet their expectations, leading to the eruption of a strike wave that year. (Wergeland 1907, 444; Kulstein 1967, 371-373; Plessis 1987, 167-168).

The military intervention in the strike of the workers of Le Creusot, January 1870 (Public Domain)

D. Social Policies of the Second French Empire

The Second Empire is usually credited with being the first French regime to recognize the new social conditions and needs arising from the formation of an industrial society; thus, it undertook a coherent social policy (Séguin 1990, 311). This was mostly the result of the initiatives taken by Napoleon III, who had acknowledged the fact that a regime needs to address the needs of the lower class even before he was elected President. However, many argue that his interest in undertaking a social policy primarily arose from his desire to obtain a broad base of political support. Unsurprisingly, Napoleon's social policy was frequently used as the subject matter of state propaganda wherein Napoleon was portrayed as the "friend of the poor" (Séguin 1990, 318; Plessis 1987, 32 & 134; Ford n.d).

Consequently, most components of the social policy implemented during the 1850s were mostly of a paternalistic[23] nature, though those policies were continued into the 1860s. New soup kitchens were built for the destitute, religious personnel were employed to service the poor on their deathbed, and housing projects were subsidized. Price controls on bread were discarded, freedom of trade was granted to bakeries, and a compensation fund was created, all in order to protect the lower class from fluctuations in bread prices (Séguin 1990, 312-313; Plessis 1987, 11). Measures regarding working conditions and workers' health were implemented, too. A number of asylums and clinics were founded with the purpose of caring for the sick and injured workers so that their employment prospects were not risked. Similarly, a fund was established in 1866 to serve as an insurance mechanism for the workers disabled by accidents and for the widows of the workers who died in accidents (Séguin 1990, 313-315). Napoleon III also displayed some sympathy toward workers' organizations provided those organizations did not plan public disturbances. He contributed to the mutual aid societies and workers' co-operatives, and he even assumed the patronage of a workers' delegation sent to the 1862 London Exhibition (Ford n.d.; Plessis 1987, 160-161).

The social policy also consisted of a series of legal modifications intended to regulate the working conditions and to expand workers' rights. Suspension of work on Sundays and holidays, and limitation of working hours were guaranteed through decrees published in 1851. Following an 1854 decree, the employers were no longer allowed to store their employees' **worker booklets** (*livret d'ouvrier*), which contained a workers' employment record and the possession of which was compulsory, nor to write comments in them. Legal equality of the worker and the employer

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[23] Paternalism is action that limits a person's or group's liberty or autonomy and is intended to promote their own good. It was usually espoused by the conservatives in a political context.

was further reinforced through the proliferation of impartial arbitration boards and the repealment of **Article 1781 of the Civil Code**, which had asserted the primacy of the employer in labor disputes (Séguin 1990, 314-317; Euler 2023).

The legal modifications were extended into the field of labor organizations in the 1860s as the growing political opposition against the government forced the Emperor to enact new modifications apart from the already existing paternalistic measures. Thus, the **Ollivier Law** was promulgated on 25 May 1864 (Plessis 1987, 161). The law amended the French Criminal Code so that the formation of coalitions (i.e., workers' organizations/unions) and going on strikes were no longer regarded as criminal offences. A subsequent law published in 1868 furthermore decriminalized public gatherings, allowing the trade unions to gather under certain conditions. Even though the laws still put many restrictions on how strikes and labor organization can be conducted, it nevertheless helped the workers' movement gain considerable movement toward the end of the Second Empire (Ford n.d.; Séguin 316-317).

Some improvements were also made in the field of education during the Second Empire. Aware of the benefits provided by the July Monarchy's successful campaign of spreading education institutions all across the country, the government preferred to continue in its predecessors' steps. Even though the government supported religious schools (which most pupils attended), many new schools were also built by municipal councils. The number of schoolmasters and the salaries of public educational personnel also saw an increase. Consequently, the schooling rate rose from 55 per cent in 1851 to 70 per cent in 1866 (Plessis 1987, 99-100). The efforts of **Victor Duruy**, Napoleon's Minister of Public Instruction, are also worth a mention since a law first proposed by him facilitated the spread of free schooling in public schools and extended secondary education to girls in 1867 (Plessis 1987, 163). Duruy is also notable for enabling the

foundation of ***École Pratique des Hautes Études***, an institution notable for providing famous

scholars with resources to conduct their studies (Fox 1958, 69).

A worker booklet ("Le livret ouvrier", image, Historyweb, accessed March 11, 2023, https://historyweb.fr/le-livret-ouvrier/)

However, Napoleon's social policies did not help him much with boosting his political

popularity. The working class was not fully satisfied as some restrictions on their right to strike

and to organize still prevailed and no massive improvement occurred in their material conditions.

Instead, the Emperor's social policy caused resentment among the bourgeoisie, who argued that

the expansion of workers' rights would cause greater disruptions to industries and viewed

Napoleon's policies as "utopianism" (Ford n.d.; Plessis 1987, 161; Euler 2023).

E. The Transformation of Paris

i.   Urbanization and Suburbanization

As it was the capital city of France, Paris was undoubtedly the most developed and the most (politically) important city in the entire country. Thus, the large industrialization wave of the 19th century fundamentally altered the Parisian urban landscape and society. The railway network constructed during the July Monarchy placed Paris at the center of all major railway lines, thereby asserting the economic dependency of the provinces[24] on Paris since the majority of trade was now done with Paris. Easy transportation to and from Paris via railway travel attracted many migrants (especially from underdeveloped regions such as Brittany and Auvergne) seeking work and entailed a rapid growth in Paris' population; most of these migrants joined the ranks of the working class (Sieffert 2013a; Sieffert 2013b; Stovall 1990, 19).

The growth of population induced a growth of the built-up area; Paris started expanding into its surroundings. Consequently, the suburbs saw the fastest growth; in fact, the population increase in the suburbs was three times that of Paris proper from 1861 to 1866. Suburbanization occurred mostly due to the lack of affordable housing for the workers in the city center[25], and the inflation of land prices by speculation (Stovall 1990, 19-25). Eventually, the government acknowledged the trend of suburbanization and took measures accordingly. New city fortifications were built from 1841 to 1845 to encircle the growing suburbs. The suburbs in proximity got incorporated into Paris city limits on 1 January 1860, doubling the surface area of the city and increasing the number of *arrondissements* (administrative districts) from 12 to 20 (Plessis 1987, 119). Furthermore, low land prices and the availability of water & rail transportation prompted

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[24] The term "provinces" refer to any part of France outside Paris.
[25] Construction companies usually did not construct housing for workers since it was unprofitable compared to other construction projects.

large-scale chemical, textile ,and metallurgical plants (which had become the city's dominant industrial enterprises after 1870) to be founded in the suburbs; **Saint-Denis** was arguably the most important among these suburbs. However, an overwhelming majority of the workshops remained in the city center (Stovall 1990, 19-27).

The population of Paris (within the city limits of 1860)

	Absolute figure (in thousands)	Annual % growth rate
1846	1,234	3.99
1856	1,500	2.14
1861	1,668	1.54
1866	1,800	2.0
1870	1,980 (?)	

(Plessis 1987, 119)

ii.   Haussmann's Renovation of Paris
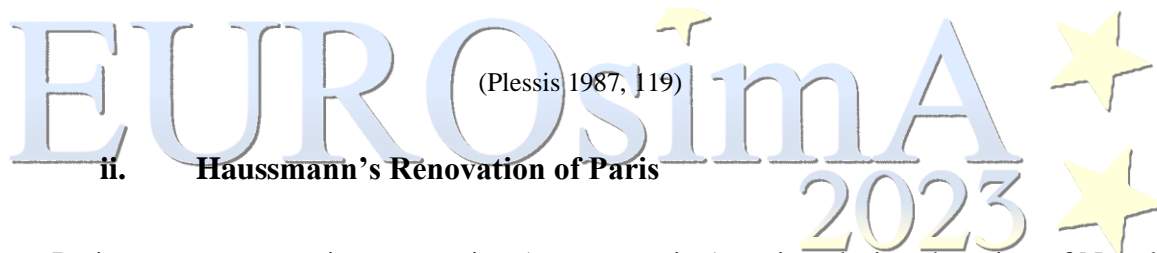
Paris oversaw a massive renovation (reconstruction) project during the reign of Napoleon III, which stripped the city of its crammed, medieval atmosphere and transformed it into a modern European capital. Napoleon III had a special interest in renovating Paris and is known to have regularly gotten involved in the planning process; in fact, the renovation is sometimes regarded as his biggest legacy. There are several reasons why the renovation took place, the most notable ones being Napoleon's desire to facilitate the control of insurrections[26], assert Paris as a prestigious European capital, and satisfy the needs of the industrial and business bourgeoisie[27]. To execute the renovation scheme, Napoleon III hired **Baron Georges Haussmann**, who served as the **prefect[28]**

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[26] As demonstrated by the Revolution of 1848, it was very hard for the military to intervene in the insurrections in old quarters where the streets were very narrow.

[27] As mentioned before, mass production (and mass consumerism) required larger buildings and decent transportation networks.

[28] A prefect is a French regional governor that governs a department.

of the Seine Department (which contained Paris) from 1853 to 1870 and oversaw the transformation of the city. Though planning and expropriations were carried out by the government, the construction work was subcontracted to private companies (Popkin 2001, 119; Plessis 1987, 120-122).

During the renovation process, many old quarters and cramped slums of the city were demolished to strip the city of its medieval character and to clear space for upcoming construction projects. A notorious example, **Île de la Cité** (a crammed neighborhood at the center of the city) was completely razed and its 14 thousand residents were evicted. Hausmann was notable for building numerous boulevards, which usually cut across crammed neighborhoods, throughout the city to serve as the main arteries of transportation. Not only did these boulevards ease traffic congestion, but they also gave the city a novel, characteristic appearance as they were lined with apartment buildings that were at least four storeys high and looked very similar to each other. The boulevards affected the economic structure of the city as well since large-scale retailers opening on the boulevards squeezed out small retailers on back streets. The construction of spacious boulevards was accompanied by the construction of many spacious city parks, a notable one being **Parc Monceau** (Fleck and Choy n.d.a; Plessis 1987, 120).

Haussmann furthermore wanted to ensure that the city was endowed with the infrastructure necessary to meet basic needs and eliminate health hazards. Consequently, the drinking water supply was improved through the construction of projects like aqueducts that brought water from the rivers in the surrounding countryside. Underground storm sewers and water pipes were installed (especially in the newly developing regions) to prevent flooding and facilitate sanitation (Popkin 2001, 119; Plessis 1987, 120). The construction of an extensive gas supply network helped illumination spread in streets and public interiors; Paris gained the nickname "the City of Lights"

due to its glowing streets. Furthermore, a new central market called **Les Halles** was opened to facilitate food distribution and prevent famine. The market served as a point where the farmers would sell their goods to the wholesalers (Fleck and Choy n.d.a; Sieffert 2013a).

Even though the renovation became mostly successful and served as a model for the renovation of other major French cities during the same period, it was not without its limitations. First of all, the act was left incomplete as some crammed neighborhoods still remained intact by the time Haussmann left the office. More importantly, however, Haussmann failed to address the social challenges brought by the renovation. Since old (and relatively low quality) houses were all replaced by apartment buildings, housing prices escalated. Unsurprisingly, this led to a housing crisis as the old inhabitants (mostly workers) struggled to afford housing in the renovated neighborhoods. The housing crisis eventually prompted many workers to move to the suburbs (which had poorer infrastructure compared to the center), causing social segregation to intensify and the classes to get further distanced from each other. The atmosphere in the predominantly working class suburbs in eastern, northern, and southern Paris sharply contrasted with the predominantly bourgeois neighborhoods in the west. Haussmann himself was notorious for his corrupt practices during the scheme's execution, such as sustaining relationships with real estate speculators, and had become the subject of intense political controversy. Hence, Napoleon III fired him in 1870 in an attempt to dissociate his regime's image from the corrupt image of Haussmann (Popkin 2001, 119-120; Plessis 1987, 120-125; Fleck and Choy n.d.a).
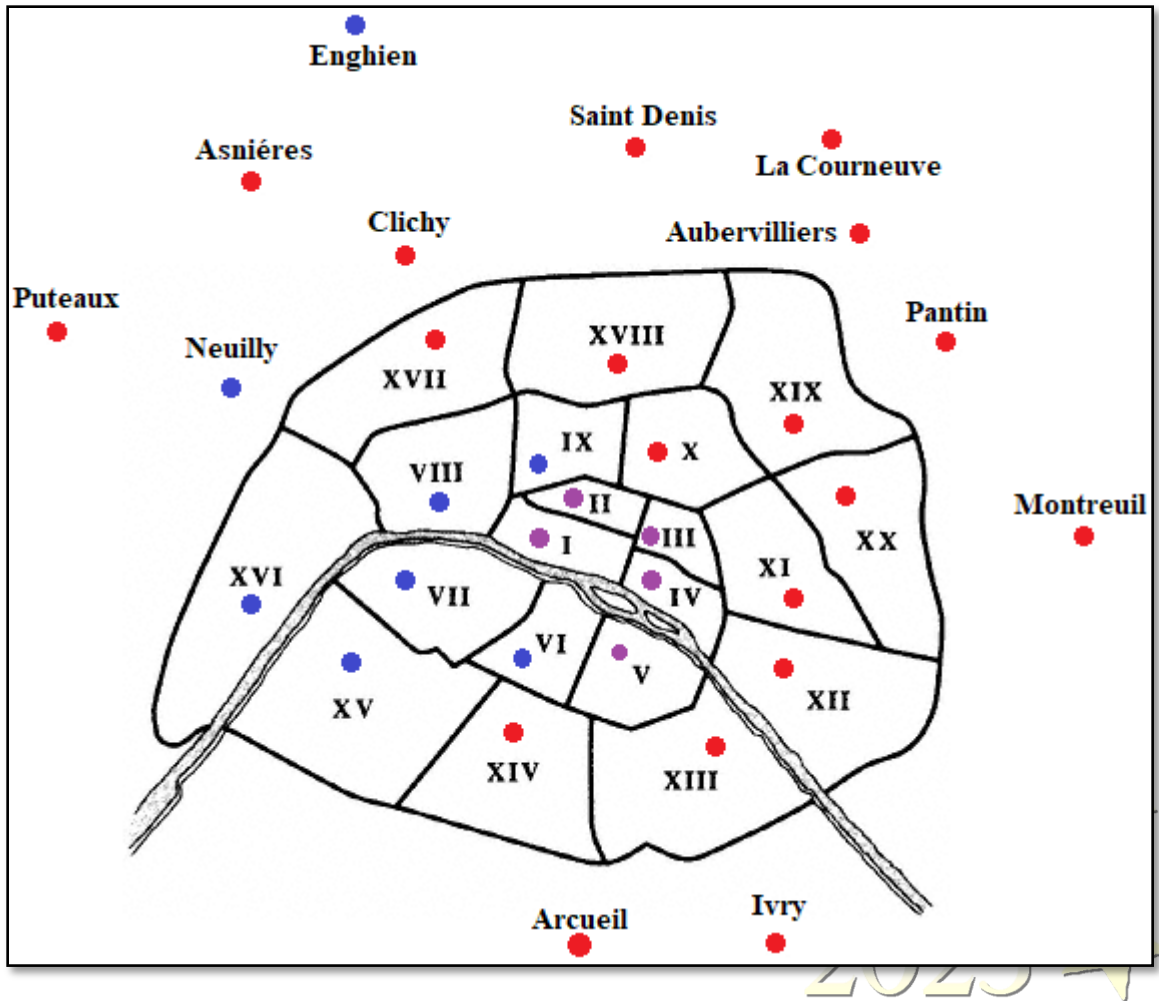
A map showing the distribution of social classes in *arrondissements* (denoted by their numbers, from the 1st to the 20th), and in the surrounding settlements. Red denotes working class neighborhoods, blue denotes upper class neighborhoods, and purple denotes central neighborhoods which were mostly inhabited by the bourgeoisie and were the centers of commerce.

III. POLITICS AND ADMINISTRATION IN THE SECOND EMPIRE

A. Eminent Political Movements and Ideologies

This subchapter aims to introduce the eminent political movements and ideologies in the Second Empire by elaborating on the historical development and main principles of those ideologies. Please note that not all ideologies were mutually exclusive as some were merely concerned with constitutional and political arrangements (like **Monarchism** and **Republicanism**) while some were concerned with the overall organization of the social, political, and economic order (like **Liberalism**, **Conservatism**, and **Socialism**). Thus, it was common to observe political movements and politicians espousing more than one ideology.

i. Liberalism

Liberalism is an ideology that is usually accepted to have emerged in 17th century England and scored substantial developments in the 18th and 19th centuries through the works of European and American thinkers. Though the different strands of liberalism come with their peculiarities, some central principles could nevertheless be identified within (classical) liberal thought. The liberals heavily advocated for the protection of the **rights & liberties** of individuals to the largest extent possible in economic, social, and political matters. They argued this would generate the greatest welfare for society itself since society was fragmented into equal-born individuals with differing interests. So, any attempt to arbitrarily restrain individual rights & liberties by the government or by some social group (which was the norm during the ancient régime) would be harmful to society by blocking individual development. Consequently, concepts like the freedom of expression & press, the freedom to engage in economic activity, religious freedom, freedom from arbitrary arrest, and especially the right to own property were championed by the liberals (Ball et al. 2023a; Boaz 2014).

Liberalism posited that the government and public authorities were still necessary for sustaining societal order, in which individual development can be achieved, but it robustly stood against the arbitrary acts of the government that limited individual rights & liberties. Thus, the liberals advocated for **democracy** (in the form of parliamentary representation) to keep the government responsive to the interests of property-holding individuals[1]. Still, they called for additional measures to prevent the government from violating individual rights & liberties such as the subordination of governmental actions to the constitution and the laws (known as the **rule of law**). They furthermore called for the institution of a **checks and balances**[2] system, a system in which the three branches of government (the executive, the legislative, and the judiciary organs) regulated and reviewed the actions of one another, to prevent the emergence of **authoritarianism**[3]. The component of liberalism focusing on such concerns was known as **political liberalism**. Another significant component of liberalism, called **economic liberalism**, called for governmental non-intervention in the economy & markets on the grounds that free competition would maximize economic efficiency and keep the prices low (Ball et al. 2023a; Boaz 2014).

In France, liberalism first gained eminence during Enlightenment Age when it was promoted by renowned philosophers such as **Voltaire**, **Rousseau**, **Diderot**, and **Montesquieu**, all of whom influenced the revolutionaries partaking in the French Revolution. The revolutionaries' progressive desires to constrain the monarch's power and to create a society in which individual liberties and legal equality were safeguarded converged with the main principles of liberalism.

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[1] The special emphasis on "property" was due to the liberal belief that the right to property was the most important right to be protected from the encroachment of the government. As a result, the possession of property remained an important criterion for political enfranchisement until 1848.

[2] **Checks and balances** is the principle of government under which separate branches are empowered to prevent actions by other branches and are induced to share power.

[3] Authoritarianism is a political system characterized by the rejection of political plurality, the use of strong central power to preserve the political status quo, and reductions in the rule of law, separation of powers, and democratic voting.

The Declaration of Rights of Man (issued by the revolutionaries in 1789) underlined many of those principles and explicitly affirmed **liberty**, **property**, **security**, and **resistance to oppression** as fundamental rights. Consequently, many decisions taken during the first years of the revolution, such as the modifications regarding the clergy and the aristocracy, were of a liberal character. Some principles of liberal thought thus became a part of the legacy of the Revolution (Boaz 2014).

Liberalism solidified into a more coherent form during the Restoration years. Even though the Ultra faction requested a return to the *ancien régime*, they were confronted by a group upholding some principles of the political and economic legacy of the revolution. The group, named the ***Doctrinaires***, was liberal in the sense that it insisted on protecting the Charter of 1814 since the Charter safeguarded fundamental liberal principles such as **parliamentary representation**, a checks and balances system, and the protection of individual rights without disturbing social order. Similar views were later expressed by the famous political scientist **Alexis de Tocqueville**. (Popkin 2001, 80-81 & 105).

Alexis de Tocqueville (Public Domain)

The emergence and empowerment of the industrial bourgeoisie around the first half of the 19th century empowered political and economic liberalism. Thus, the July Monarchy instituted by the 1830 Revolution was widely recognized as a "(Orleanist) liberal monarchy" wherein the king agreed to be further constrained by the parliament & law while placing fewer restrictions on the freedom of expression. The July Monarchy was also notable for heavily promoting economic liberalism as an influential minister of the time, named **François Guizot**, implemented a policy of governmental non-intervention in the domestic economy[4] while trying to enhance the **equality of opportunity**[5] through education reforms (Popkin 2001, 126-129).

French Liberalism lost its coherence around the time of the 1848 Revolution (Kelly 1987, 475). It had been divided into two loose groups, namely the **moderates** and the **radicals**. The moderate liberals were mostly supported by the bourgeoisie, whose interest in social progress had faded. Thus, they adopted a stance similar to that of Guizot's by supporting (parliamentary) monarchy and prioritizing economic liberalism over political liberalism; they increasingly put an emphasis on stability as it was jeopardized by the growing socialist movement and the prospects of revolution it brought. The **radicals**, on the other hand, prioritized political liberalism over economic liberalism and advocated for large-scale societal change with an anticlerical influence; radicalism was popular among the petty bourgeoisie. The radicals eventually came to espouse socialism and/or republicanism, and radicalism quickly got incorporated into these ideologies at the cost of losing its "liberal" label; in fact, radical deputies became a part of the *démoc-soc*

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[4] Tariffs continued to place indirect restrictions on international trade and the economy during this period.
[5] Economic liberalism stressed the claim that any person working hard enough can improve their economic position. Thus, the government should not intervene in the economy/market to obtain economic justice but should simply ensure people are given equal opportunities to develop themselves.

parliamentary group during the Second Republic (Britannica 1998; Price 2001, 38 & 55; Smith 1985, 234-236).

The proclamation of an authoritarian empire in 1852 caused French liberalism to weaken significantly as the government placed many restraints on individual rights & liberties (such as the freedom of press) and undermined the principle of parliamentary representation. Some liberals retreated to the opposition while some left politics altogether. However, the liberalization wave that started around 1860 saw many restraints thawed and parliamentary powers enhanced. Napoleon's subsequent political reforms caused liberal political opposition to flourish as it became less risky to criticize the government. However, some moderate liberals reconciled with the regime following the liberalization wave and joined the government even though the radicals remained hostile to Napoleon. The most notable among them was the former opposition deputy **Émile Ollivier**, who was appointed the Prime Minister in 1870 (Price 2001, 39-41; Britannica 2022a).

ii.   **Conservatism**

Conservatism as a political ideology first emerged during the 18th century as a response to the ideas propagated by Enlightenment thinkers, many of which converged with the tenets of liberalism. Unlike the liberals, conservatives believed that the individuals were not rational enough to score beneficial social progress and that their passions made them prone to creating disorder and harm if they are not supervised by an authority. Thus, the conservatives advocated for the conservation and the prioritization of a number of "old" institutions that helped protect authority in society, such as the church, family, and government. Furthermore, the conservatives stood against attempts to radically alter (or reform) the authority of those institutions and the overall composition of the society using the justification that the traditional way of societal organization would be the most effective one in preserving order. Conservatism was rather a loose political

ideology in the sense that it was defined only by a desire for the conservation of old traditions/institutions; thus, it was not seen as a distinct ideology and was generally used as a label to describe the social policy preferences of the monarchists and the moderates. (Ball et al. 2023b; Price 2001, 55)

In France, conservativism entered the political stage during the Bourbon Restoration. Members of the **Ultra** faction displayed a very conservative attitude by requesting a complete return to the *ancien régime* and the complete reversal of all the progressive and liberal accomplishments of the French Revolution. They argued such a reversal would restore order in France by reinforcing the authority of the monarchy, the aristocracy, and the church. Even though the political influence of extreme conservatism faded away after the 1830 Revolution, conservative values remained popular among the clergy, the aristocracy, and the peasantry for many years afterward. This was especially due to the July Monarchy not displaying hostility towards those groups and opting to implement a rather conservative social policy that limited the scope of social reforms (Popkin 2001, 80-81 & 92; Ball et al. 2023b).

As explained in the earlier chapters, the growth of radicalism and socialism caused conservativism to increase its political influence during the Second Republic. Consequently, deputies of various political dispositions (such as the Legitimists and the Moderate Liberals) coalesced into a parliamentary group called the **Party of Order**, the chief political ideology of which was simply "conservatism", and reversed many accomplishments of the 1848 Revolution (State 2010, 212-213). Hence, it is possible to state that radicalism and socialism acted as the antagonists of conservatism in post-1848 French politics while moderate liberals sought compatibility with conservative values.

Even though not being Bonapartists, most conservatives welcomed the seizure of power by Napoleon III as his promises to restore order and stability against the "reds" seemed to support the conservative cause (Price 2001, 23). Napoleon's friendly attitude toward the Catholic Church and the aristocracy further secured conservative support, though his decision to help the Italian revolutionaries at the cost of straining relations with the Pope caused a small wane in this support. Even though Napoleon's liberal reforms after 1860 were not particularly well received by all conservatives, the growth of radical and republican movements nevertheless caused a broad conservative alliance in support of imperial authority to be formed near the end of the decade[6] (Price 2001, 53-55). Mike Hawkins (2005) explains the motives for the formation of the conservative alliance, which persisted well into the year 1871:

> There was a consensus among the French right that a fundamental task of any government was to protect key institutions against subversion and to maintain law and order. They were equally agreed that the republicans constituted a grave threat to this order due to the principles they espoused and the moral defects which rendered them unfit to govern.

iii. Socialism

Socialism first emerged in France around the end of the 18th century when the primal forms of mass production industrial capitalism started to flourish. Socialists opposed the vision of an individualistic & competitive society articulated by Enlightenment thought and entrenched in French society following the French Revolution (Popkin 2001, 85). They argued that such a form of societal organization would produce massive economic and moral inequalities that pretty much constrained the freedom of certain classes such as the workers. Hence, socialism advocated for the

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[6] This alliance, which was right-wing, included inter alia moderate liberals and members of the clergy.

public control (or ownership) **of the resources** that generated wealth and prosperity, especially the means of agricultural and industrial production[7]; socialists argued true freedom and equality could only be achieved under such conditions (Ball and Dagger 2023). Different strands of socialism, all agreeing on the principles mentioned above, existed (and sometimes competed) in 19th-century France. These strands of socialism, which had overwhelming influence over the organization and the governance of the Paris Commune, will be briefly explained for the rest of this sub-sub chapter.

a. Utopian Socialism

The ideas formulated by the pioneers of French socialism were collectively called **utopian socialism**. Utopian socialists primarily focused on the moral problems caused by a competitive & capitalistic society as they argued that the concept of competition itself is unnatural and provokes social disorder. Thus, utopian socialists devised plans for creating "scientific" societies characterized by the presence of harmony between individuals and social groups. In fact, the emphasis on "social harmony" and its peaceful course of action prevented utopian socialism from being a source of fear for the affluent but instead prompted some of them to become supporters of utopian socialism. Utopian socialism also tended to cross over the liberal movement as both shared the vision of a more just, humane, and equitable social order. (Brooks 2020, vol 3. chap. 3).

One of the first utopian socialists was an aristocrat named **Henri de Saint-Simon**. Saint-Simon believed that it was necessary to establish a communitarian society that would work together for the common good to replace the society dominated by the landowners' and investors' pursuit of self-interest. He argued that this ideal society should be organized on the basis of the

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[7] The **means of production** refer to the tools used to produce products, notable examples being land, labor, machinery, and financial capital.

common control (but not the ownership) of resources and production, where scientists, industrialists, and engineers would be involved in a centralized planning process (Popkin 2001, 85; Pilbeam 2002, 54). Saint-Simon proudly claimed this system to be more efficient than its predecessors, **feudalism** and **capitalism**, in bringing prosperity. Even after Saint-Simon's death in 1825, his followers successfully continued to promote his ideas (including his religious teachings about "True Christianity" [Kselman 2002, 85]) through forming organizations. They even managed to partly influence the course of industrial development in France (Ball and Dagger 2023; Brooks 2020, vol 3. chap. 3).

Charles Fourier was also a prominent utopian socialist of the early 19th century. Similar to Saint-Simon, Fourier focused on the misfortunes caused by the social organization based on competition, along with other traditional institutions. He argued that these conditions condemned people to a frustrating life spent engaging in repetitive labor, usually in fields not compatible with their nature. Thus, Fourier envisaged ideal communities (of 1620 people) called *phalanges* where the division of labor would be organized based on people's interests and wealth inequality will be limited by obliging the ownership of private enterprises to be shared among its members (Ball and Dagger 2023; Brooks 2020, vol 3. chap. 3). Fourier also advocated for a more radical societal organization in phalanges, where women would be emancipated through the disappearance of traditional marriage and the nuclear family (Pilbeam 2002, 54). The Utopian socialist tradition was carried out into the 1840s by **Étienne Cabet**, an author who managed to establish a workers' organization that attracted up to 100 thousand workers. Similar to Fourier, Cabet envisaged a self-sufficient ideal community (of one million people) named *Icaria*, where industry and farming will be combined to build a perfect society based on the common ownership of property (Ball and Dagger 2023; Pilbeam 2002, 55).

However, Utopian socialism weakened near the year 1850 as the utopian socialists' attempts to establish ideal communities in America failed a few years after their initiation. The "peaceful, optimist, harmonious" conception of socialism disappearing after the 1848 Revolution dealt a final blow to Utopian Socialism (Brooks 2020, vol 3. chap. 3)

b. Socialism during the 1840s and the Second Republic

A strand of socialism that directly focused on addressing the exploited workers' needs within the existing socioeconomic system became dominant in the 1840s; unsurprisingly, the mass engagement of the working class in socialism first started in that period (Popkin 2001, 105). This strand was headed by a historian named **Louis Blanc**, who published a book about the organization of labor in 1839. Similar to his predecessors, Blanc opposed the inequality created by the pressure of competition and hoped to resolve the infamous **social question**, which refers to the problem of unemployment and poverty that became prevalent in mid-19th century France (Pilbeam 2002, 54-55). He argued that the solution lay in the merging of common interests for common good. This approach was summarized by his famous proverb "from each according to his abilities, to each according to his needs" (Encyclopedia of Marxism, s.v. "Blanc, Louis (1811-1882)," accessed April 1, 2023, https://www.marxists.org/glossary/people/b/l.htm). However, Blanc insisted that this environment of common good should be directly built by the state authorities to ensure efficient coordination, thus earning his conception of socialism the nickname **state socialism**. According to him, establishing state-sponsored/financed workshops and workers' cooperatives would be efficient in eradicating unemployment and kickstarting the transformation into a socialist society. Blanc also advocated for the institution of universal suffrage as he viewed it as a precious tool that led the government to be responsible toward the workers' needs (Brooks 2020, vol 3. chap. 3; Ball and Dagger 2023; Popkin 2001, 105). Simultaneously, other influential socialist

thinkers assisted in the establishment of workers' cooperatives and workers' unions across France (Pilbeam 2002, 55).
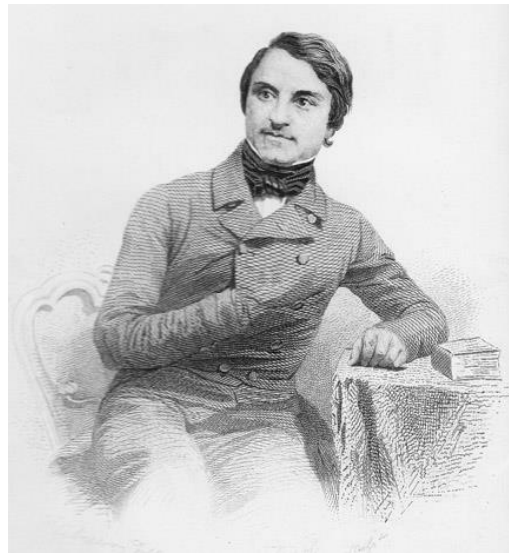
Louis Blanc (Public Domain)

The Revolution of 1848 created an environment that was very suitable for the proliferation of socialism. Prominent socialist thinkers started running workers' clubs in Paris. Moreover, Louis Blanc was able to enter the provisional government and formulate policies based on his ideas in an attempt to resolve the social question. However, the implications of Blanc's policies proved to be extremely dissatisfactory for the conservatives, the affluent, and the peasants; the incompatibility of the interests eventually resulted in the June Days Uprising (Pilbeam 2002, 54-55; Popkin 2001, 110). Hence, the uprising became a turning point for socialist thought in France; the hopes of achieving class collaboration, social harmony, and peaceful change yielded to the conception of a society characterized by **class conflict** between the bourgeoisie and the working class. Consequently, many socialist thinkers started promoting **militancy** (i.e., confrontational tactics including violence) as the tool to be used in building a better society (Brooks 2020, vol 3.

chap. 3). Socialism thus started threatening "order", became a source of fear for the bourgeoisie & nobility, and asserted itself as the greatest rival of conservatism and moderate liberalism.

The socialist deputies elected in the 1848 Parliamentary Elections coalesced with the radicals to form a coherent parliamentary faction called the ***démoc-socs*** (democratic socialists), which held approximately 10% of the seats within the parliament. The faction argued that the newly established democratic republic should resolve the social question but strove to propagate its ideas through democratic and nonviolent means, though militant socialism did not simply vanish (Popkin 2001, 111-113; Liebman 1980, 42). The faction, supported by most urban voters and some rural voters, increased its political power during the following elections but was subjected to a series of disempowering measures by the ruling party. However, the faction was disbanded following the 1851 Coup, and socialists became targets for state repression thereafter (Popkin 2001, 113-115; Price 2001, 21-23). Consequently, the socialist movement stayed weak until its regrouping in the 1860s (Pilbeam 2002, 56) but different strands of socialism (which will be elaborated below) nevertheless continued to be influential during this period.

c. Proudhonism and Anarchism

Pierre-Joseph Proudhon's distinct strand of socialist thought was first articulated around 1840 but gained substantial popularity among workers only during the Second Empire. Proudhon managed to create an extensive social theory[8] that depended both on philosophical analysis and his own working experience as a printer (Noland 1967, 314). According to him, a society could be built thanks to the benefits provided by **collective action**, which wouldn't have been possible if only individual actions were taken. Thus, he portrayed individuals as being interdependent on each

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8 Social theories are analytical frameworks used to study and interpret social phenomena.

other for achieving progress under the guidance of a collectively formed mentality. Since all individuals are mutually dependent on each other, Proudhon declared them all to be equals, as each individual owes his/her development to collective action that had hitherto contributed to social development (Noland 1967, 317-325).

Pierre-Joseph Proudhon, circa 1865 (Public Domain)

Proudhon built his political ideas upon his social theory and claimed that his suggestions tried to fulfill what human nature had been intended to fulfill, an attribute which he criticized did not exist in the ideas presented by some of his contemporaries such as Louis Blanc (Noland 1967, 317). He argued that society, which already works on the principle of mutual dependence, should be reorganized into an entity wherein autonomous individuals or small workers' cooperatives would own and use the resources required to make a living (i.e., practicing their professions). These people and cooperatives would then exchange products with one another through mutually satisfactory contracts; this form of social organization was thus called **mutualism** (Ball and

Dagger 2023). Proudhon argued that profits originating from mutual contracts should be equally shared between the workers without any prospects of inequality; in fact, he had already denounced the possession of resources by the unproductive and thus declared property to be "theft" if it was obtained through exploiting others (Brooks 2020, vol 3. chap. 3). Most importantly, however, Proudhon believed that an efficiently functioning mutualist society would do away with the necessity of state intervention, which Proudhon believed to be an inherently oppressive action, and render the state a redundant organization. Proudhon consequently became a pioneer of **anarchist** thought (Popkin 2001, 121; Brooks 2020, vol 3. chap. 3) and later came to adopt the belief that the liberation of the workers must be their own task without them getting involved in politics (Woodcock 2023; Musto 2020). Lastly, Proudhon was renowned for his denunciation of religion on the grounds that it was not compatible with the collectivist tendency inherent within the individuals; his famous words "God is Evil" reflects his stance against religion (Noland 1967, 313 & 324).

Proudhon was elected a deputy in 1848 when he was working as a journalist; he loosely aligned himself with the *démoc-socs* though his anarchist and mutualist ideas caused disagreements shortly after. He was not an appreciator of workers' militancy and violence either, though he sympathized with the ultimate goals of the militants. Around the same time, Proudhon devised a scheme to help achieve the mutualist organization of society. In 1849, he established a popular bank (named *Banque du Peuple*), that would provide credit to cooperatives at a very low interest rate, as a means of fostering the spread of cooperatives; the bank failed eventually despite having more than 10 thousand adherents. Proudhon was arrested a few years later due to his opposition to Louis Napoleon, though he later came to appreciate some of Napoleon's concerns and reforms regarding the social question (Vincent 2004). Proudhon's ideas became influential

among French workers and other anarchist intellectuals (most notably, **Mikhail Bakunin**); Proudhonism was one of the most popular ideologies among the members of the International Workingmen's Association founded in 1864 (Brooks 2020, vol 3. chap. 3; Musto 2020).

d. Blanquism

The political theory of **Louis Auguste Blanqui** prioritizes the conception of a society characterized by class conflict. Blanqui argued that the rich landowners/employers were engaged in conflict with the workers, who formed a large majority of the population, as the workers were not compensated enough with regard to the value of the products they produced with toil. This meant that the "idle" elite (the rich) systematically exploited the efforts of the toiling laborers (the **proletariat**), turning the rich into aggressors that prevented societal development in Blanqui's eyes. The social conflict extended into the political sphere as the elite in charge of the government vehemently refused to end this order based on exploitation (Hallward 2017; Bruhat 2023; Pilbeam 2002, 44). Thus, Blanqui claimed that the only way to end this conflict would be to topple the system entirely via a **revolution** whereby the social, economic, & political systems would be entirely reconstructed, and societal development would be enabled. He described his ideal revolution using the following words in 1852 (Neudorf 2022):

> The destruction of the existing order, founded on inequality and exploitation, the ruin of the oppressors, and deliverance of the people from the yoke of the rich.

Blanqui also described what the revolution should aim for and how it should proceed in extensive detail; he even authored a manual for an urban uprising in 1868[9]. Drawing from the conduct of the Jacobins following the 1789 Revolution, he stressed the importance of centralized

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[9] Blanqui was renowned for his handling of even the smallest of details. He reportedly devised and drew a scheme explaining how a proper barricade should be erected.

leadership during the initial stages of the revolution; he has been labeled a **Neo-Jacobin** by some as a result (The Blanqui Archive 2017; Musto 2021). According to him, revolutionary organizations are always prone to be undermined by state repression; thus, revolutionary activities shall be carried out by small, secretive societies staffed by extremely disciplined worker-conspirators (Encyclopedia of Marxism, s.v. "Blanqui, Louis-Auguste (1805-1881)," accessed April 1, 2023, https://www.marxists.org/glossary/people/b/l.htm). After overthrowing the government, this small group of conspirators, also called the **vanguard party**, shall establish a temporary dictatorship focused on protecting the revolutionary institutions from hostile actors such as the wealthy. The dictatorship is thus expected to confiscate the property of the wealthy and establish state control of major industries (Ball and Dagger 2023).
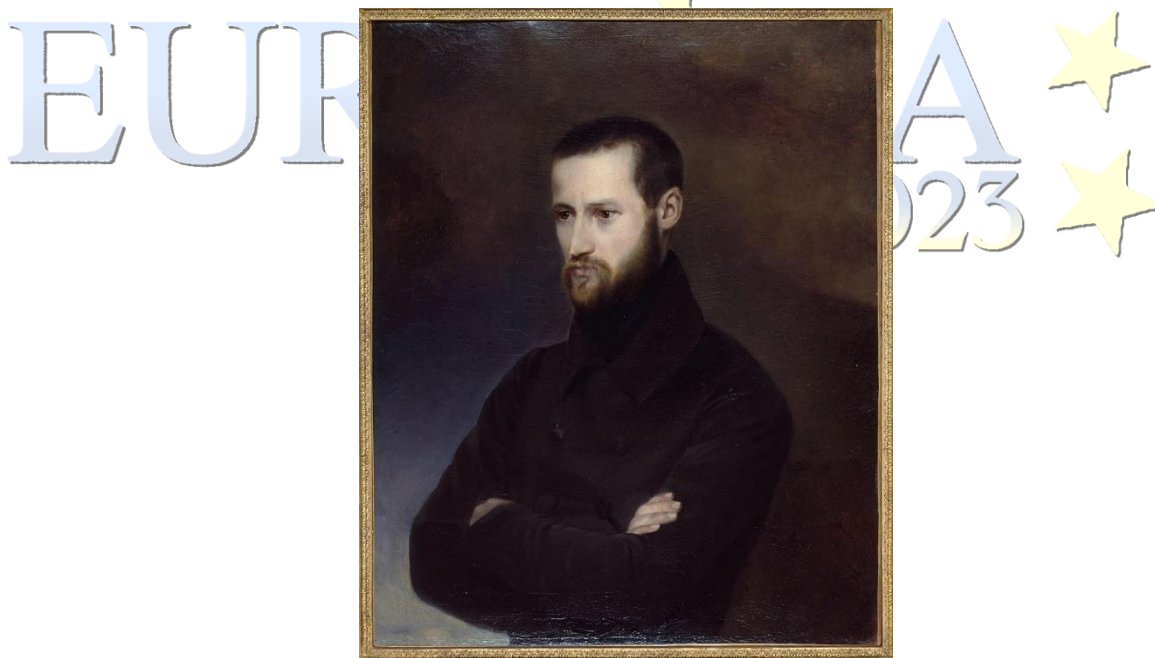
Louis Auguste Blanqui, circa 1835 (Public Domain)

However, Blanqui did neither approve of the perpetuation of the dictatorship nor the consolidation of political power in the hands of the "revolutionary elite", as it had been done by

the Jacobins. He was an egalitarian who ultimately sought the creation of a fully democratic **republic** after the revolution had been secured (Pilbeam 2005; Neudorf 2022). In fact, Blanqui believed that "the only legitimate form of government is one that expresses the enlightened (freely and consciously formed) will of the nation's vast majority" (The Blanqui Archive 2017). Consequently, Blanqui put a special emphasis on ideas (as he believed discussions between different ideas would create an enlightened democracy) and appreciated the existence of various socialist groups defending different ideas; he also advocated for the education of the masses for the same reason (Neudorf 2022; Hallward 2017; The Blanqui Archive 2017).

Blanqui spent nearly all his adult life trying to organize a revolution through the various secret societies he administered. Heartened by the simultaneity of an economic and a governmental crisis in 1839, he led an unsuccessful coup (i.e., revolution) attempt which saw the brief capture of *Hôtel de Ville* (The City Hall of Paris); he was subsequently arrested and stayed in prison until 1848. Shortly after his release, he founded another society, which urged the Provisional Government to pursue more socialistic policies; however, his extremist tendencies led to him being incarcerated again from 1849 to 1859. In 1861, Blanqui was arrested again for organizing secret societies and stayed in prison until 1865 when he escaped to Belgium. Blanqui's physical absence from revolutionary activities due to his incarceration and exile earned him the nickname "*l'enfermé*" (the locked-up one) (Bruhat 2023). Still, Blanquism managed to become the most prominent socialist ideology near the end of the Second Empire since Blanqui's revolutionary zeal, his hatred of the Empire, and his fierce hostility toward religion proved attractive to many workers (Price 2001, 49; Plessis 1987, 161 & 171). Blanqui returned to France following the collapse of the Empire in September 1870 and played an active role in promoting worker militancy during the

Siege of Paris. Blanqui was prisoned by the newly elected French government on 17 March 1871, the day before the proclamation of the Paris Commune (Bruhat 2023).

e. Marxism and Internationalism

The ideas of German philosopher **Karl Marx** started to gain attention in France during the 1860s. Marx, unlike other socialists of the time, focused on articulating an overly extensive economic analysis of capitalism, believing that economic conditions are the sole determinants of social and political conditions[10]. Marx argued that capitalism divided the entire society into two classes: the **bourgeoisie**, which owned & controlled the means of production, and the **proletariat**, which did not own the means of production they used and thus had to sell their labor to the bourgeoisie at the expense of exploitation (Ball and Dagger 2023). Marx argued that capitalism would inevitably lead to an unstoppable growth of a more-conscious proletariat, thereby paving the way toward a revolution in which the workers would seize all means of production and establish a dictatorship. He also predicted that the state would "wither away" as the formation of communities without exploitation would cancel the need for it after the revolution (Brooks 2020, vol 3. chap. 3; Ball and Dagger 2023). Marx's theory, therefore, prompted him to explicitly advocate for the subversion of capitalism and to support Blanqui's conspirations during his visit to France in 1850 (Moss 1998, 160). In contrast to Blanqui, however, Marx seldom elaborated on how the revolution would (or should) be realized. Nevertheless, some of his writings suggest that Marx questioned the importance of "disciplined conspirators" as he believed that the workers would stage a revolution sooner or later (Brooks 2020, vol 3. chap. 3).

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[10] Marx's prioritization of economic (material) conditions over everything is one of the most notable differences between him and Blanqui, who prioritized ideas instead.

Near the end of the 1860s, Marx's ideas came to be influential in the **International Workingmen's Association** (**First International**), a confederation of socialist organizations and trade unions across various nations. Following its formation in 1864, the Association successfully arranged and coordinated large-scale strikes across Europe, which helped workers (including French workers) to gain class consciousness[11] and bargain with employers for the improvement of their conditions. However, the Association came to adopt a more anti-capitalist & revolutionary stance as Marx's influence surmounted the influence of the proponents of nonrevolutionary reforms, at the expense of exacerbating internal divisions within the Association[12] (Musto 2020). Thus, the French **Internationalists** concentrated their efforts on mobilizing the workers to engage in mass political action; they were one of the eminent components of the republican opposition against Napoleon III near the end of his reign (Plessis 1987, 161).

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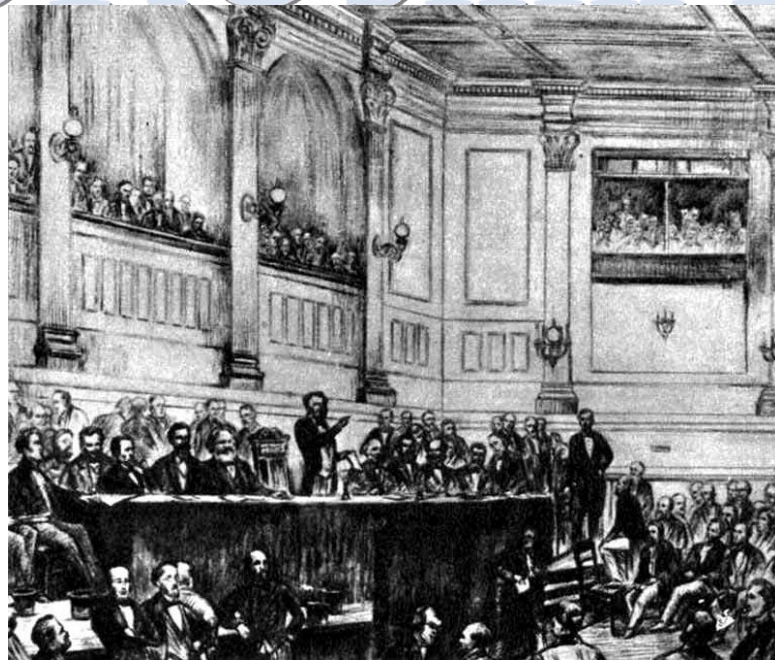
[11] The type of class consciousness fostered by the International was one which prompted the workers to fraternize with the workers of all nations.

[12] For example, the Proudhonists, whom the Marxists viewed as "moderate", and the trade unionists were eventually excluded from the leadership of the International.

The First Meeting of the International Workingmen's Association in 1864 (Public Domain)

iv.   Feminism

French feminism first took root during the aftermath of the French Revolution when egalitarian ideas prevailed. Many women actively contributed to revolutionary activities and some of them called for the institution of legal and social equality between men and women. Even though their desires were initially realized, the idea of constraining women into a role of "republican motherhood" soon became dominant. Consequently, the *Code Napoléon* legally subordinated women to men in social and economic affairs. The social norms (especially of the bourgeoisie) also reflected the same attitude concerning gender roles. Women were expected to be good mothers and housewives while public affairs were to be left solely in the hands of men (Accampo 2002, 100-105).

19th century feminists strove for the subversion (or modification) of such social norms and laws as a means of expanding the legal and social rights granted to women. However, they were not able to operate under a permanent, united organization; instead, different feminist organizations (with different political orientations) operated for short periods of time in the duration of the 19th century. The earliest of such organizations was a group called ***La Femme Libre***, a short-lived group that branched out from the Saint-Simonian movement in the early 1830s. The group idealized a society in which the authorities do not intervene in sexual affairs and child rearing is a collective activity, which they argued would emancipate the women (Popkin 2001, 90).

After the dissolution of La Femme Libre, no significant feminist organization started operations until 1848. Many feminist organizations, whose members mostly came from bourgeois backgrounds, were founded after the February Revolution. These organizations usually did not

seek radical societal reconfigurations but sought the greater participation of women in civil and political life (through the extension of education rights, voting rights, etc.) instead. However, they were not able to gain the support of other political groups (such as the republicans) and were significantly weakened by the 1851 Coup. Hence, gender inequality remained unchallenged throughout the Second Empire; working women were being underpaid and were blamed for the dropping fertility rates in the 1860s (Popkin 2001, 105; Accampo 2002, 116-117).

Lastly, it is possible to say that the socialist movement had great influence over the development of feminism, though not directly in the form of creating feminist organizations. Many women participated in socialist organizations during the 19th century; **Flora Tristan**, who briefly formed a nationwide trade union in 1844, is a notable example (Popkin 2001, 103). Female socialists argued that the emancipation of women was intrinsically linked to the subversion of capitalism and the emancipation of workers, thus advocating for a socialistic brand of feminism. In fact, it is possible to say that this brand of feminism was the most salient brand of feminism during the Second Empire because the number of female workers was rising considerably (Accampo 2002, 112-113; Popkin 2001, 160; Pilbeam 2002, 44).

v.   Monarchism

Three different monarchist ideologies prevailed in France as of 1871, namely **Legitimism**, **Orleanism**, and **Bonapartism**. Each of these ideologies advocated for the installation of a particular dynasty to the French throne; their political stances slightly differed from each other as well. However, all adherents of monarchism were committed to the preservation of "order", a concern that sometimes brought these camps together.

a. Legitimism

Legitimism first emerged during the 1830 Revolution. The supporters of the deposed Bourbon Dynasty, who refused to swear an oath of allegiance to King Louis-Philippe, became known as the legitimists (Pilbeam 2002,49). The legitimists stood for the strict preservation of traditional political values such as hierarchy and absolutism[13], which led them to disregard the legacy of the French Revolution (Price 2001, 14; Pilbeam 2002, 49). As a result, they opposed the formation of a "constitutional monarchy" wherein the monarch's powers were tangibly reduced by constitutional provisions that transferred power to the legislature and placed restraints on how the monarch could exercise his powers. Thus, the legitimists' main aspiration was the restoration of the Bourbon Monarchy (and its political institutions) under the kingship of ***Henri d'Artois, comte de Chambord***, who was the grandson of Charles X and the legitimist pretender[14] to the throne of France (Pilbeam 2002, 49; Popkin 2001, 133). The legitimists advocated for a solidly conservative social policy in addition to their advocacy of political conservatism; they consequently formed an organic alliance with the Catholic Church & clergy, who were generally involved in propagating legitimist ideas to the public (Price 2001, 14 & 35).

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[13] Absolutism is a term used to describe a form of monarchical power that is unrestrained by all other institutions, such as churches, legislatures, or social elites.

[14] A pretender is someone who claims to be the rightful ruler of a country although not recognized as such by the current government.

Comte de Chambord (Public Domain)

Legitimism was mostly espoused by the aristocratic elite (especially in Western and Southern France) who exerted great influence over peasants, making it a quite popular political stance in the rural regions. The legitimists constituted the main pillar of the conservative opposition to Napoleon III since Bonapartism was not exactly compatible with legitimism; still, Napoleon III tolerated them due to their commitment to "order". Some legitimist aristocrats did not fundamentally oppose Napoleon's regime and held important public offices during the Second Empire[15] in an attempt to obtain political power and influence governmental policy. However, comte de Chambord continued to fiercely oppose the Second Empire (Price 2001, 35).

182 legitimist deputies were elected in the parliamentary elections held in February 1871 (Rois & Presidents n.d.).

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[15] Their conduct was against the wishes of the comte de Chambord.

b. Orleanism

Orleanism also emerged during the 1830 Revolution. A (moderate) liberal faction, headed by a journalist named **Adolphe Thiers**, managed to install Louis-Philippe of the Orleans Dynasty (a branch of the Bourbon Dynasty) as the King of the French right after the revolution. Louis-Philippe agreed to accept the constitutional restraints placed on his authority and to acknowledge that his sovereignty depended on the will of the French rather than divine will (Popkin 2001, 88; Britannica 2002). He further promised to uphold political liberties, most notably through securing freedom of expression and enfranchisement rights (to a sensible extent[16]), and to respect the legacy of the 1789 Revolution, most notably through adopting the tricolor flag of France (Popkin 2001, 88). The supporters of the Orleans Dynasty thus became known as the **Orleanists**. The Orleanists were typically moderate liberals who mostly happened to be members of the high bourgeoisie or the upper class (Pilbeam 2002, 49). They adopted conservative policies (though not as conservative as the legitimists) in the social sphere, and they were determined to establish order along with liberty, as demonstrated by the policies implemented by Adolphe Thiers and François Guizot during the July Monarchy (Popkin 2001, 88-93).

Orleanism slightly weakened following the 1848 Revolution, but it still preserved its eminence among French political movements. Orleanists usually stayed on good terms with Napoleon III and many Orleanists continued to engage in political activities (including holding ministerial positions) during the Second Empire (Price 2001, 30-34). As of 1871, the Orleanist pretender to the French throne was ***Philippe d'Orléans, comte de Paris***, who was the grandson of

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[16] In reality, some restrictions on freedom of expression remained during the July Monarchy (Pilbeam 2002, 51). Also, the enfranchisement was extended only marginally and did not cover the working class or the petty bourgeoisie (Popkin 2001, 88)

King Louis-Philippe (Britannica 2022b). The Orleanists obtained 214 seats in the parliamentary elections held in February (Rois & Presidents n.d.).

Adolphe Thiers, circa 1870 (Public Domain)

c. Bonapartism

Affection towards Napoleon I endured after his final deposition in 1815, especially on the belief that Napoleon I managed to assert France as a strong and glorious nation (Pilbeam 2002, 52; Euler 2023). **Bonapartism** as a complete political ideology was developed in the late 1830s by Louis-Napoleon Bonaparte upon this "Napoleonic legend"; Bonaparte posited that it was the members of the House of Bonaparte (especially himself) who could return France back to the days of glory, order, and peace. Louis-Napoleon claimed that Bonapartism (which he named the "**Napoleonic ideas**") was a social, industrial, humanitarian, peaceful, market-friendly ideology that would reconcile order/authority and freedom, all at the same time (Euler 2023; Pilbeam 2002, 53). Bonapartism was thus presented as an ideology above party struggles and for everyone; such a description of Bonapartism eventually succeeded in gathering support for Bonaparte from all

classes, which neither Orleanism nor Legitimism nor Republicanism managed to achieve (Price 2001, 15). Bonapartism de facto became the official ideology under the rule of Napoleon III.

In practice, Bonapartism became an ideology affiliated with authoritarianism under the guise of constitutional democracy. It supported the endowment of the Emperor with extensive authority, mostly at the expense of weakening parliamentary authority and subverting political liberties such as the freedom of expression[17], for the strict preservation of "order" (Plessis 1987, 15-16). However, the imperial regime was legitimized on the grounds that it directly reflected the will of the French people; the Emperor was even presented as the "savior of the society[18]" (Price 2001, 25 & 30). Plebiscites with universal male suffrage were held in 1851 and 1852 for the promulgation of constitutional amendments that granted extensive power to Emperor Napoleon III, thus turning those plebiscites into tools for legitimizing Napoleon's rule. Moreover, the parliamentary elections for *Corps Législatif* were held with universal male suffrage, as opposed to its counterparts during the earlier regimes, to create an illusion of democracy; in reality, the unfair elections nearly always resulted in the election of officially approved candidates who staffed a body without any proper authority (Pilbeam 2002, 53; Price 2001, 29-30). The Marxists similarly posited that the imperial regime was not actually based on popular will; they used the term Bonapartism to refer to the regimes created with the help of the military & bureaucracy when the society is not able to directly shape the government, which they believed was what Napoleon III exactly did (Tripp 1986).

Furthermore, Bonapartism (and the regime of the Second Empire itself) never enjoyed deep support from the populace and the elite. Bonapartism never transformed into a structured political

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[17] Still, the opponents that did not directly challenge the regime itself (such as some republicans and Ultramontane Catholics) were allowed to voice their opinions (Price 2001, 30).
[18] Here, "society" is used synonymously with "people".

party as a notable portion of the political elite (including ministers, bureaucrats, and deputies) were not committed Bonapartists but rather Orleanists, Legitimists, and people of other political dispositions; the elite supported the regime but not necessarily the tenets of Bonapartist ideology (Price 2001, 30-31). The overly authoritarian tendencies of Bonapartism were especially repulsive for many, which eventually forced the Empire to recruit more liberals and dilute true Bonapartists when it underwent a liberalization process during the 1860s (Spitzer 1962, 323). Thus, Bonapartism disappeared almost to the point of extinction when the Second Empire fell upon the capture of Napoleon III in September 1870 (Price 2001, 25). Only 20 Bonapartists were elected in the parliamentary elections held in February 1871 (Rois & Presidents n.d.).

vi.   Republicanism

Republicanism was a relatively simple ideology as its only defining feature was a commitment to the prevalence of republic as the state type. The roots of Republicanism can be easily traced back to the times of the 1789 Revolution, following which the First Republic was proclaimed and lasted for twelve years. Republicanism was thus considered an ideology that carried the legacy of the revolution by promoting the sovereignty of the people. However, republicanism was disfavored during the Bourbon Restoration and the 1830 Revolution, especially due to the fears that the proclamation of a republic would have brought a violent intervention from the European Great Powers. The repression of republicans continued throughout the July Monarchy. Nevertheless, the growth of republican sentiment among the emerging bourgeoisie and the working class culminated in the proclamation of the Second Republic in 1848, a triumph for republicanism (Pilbeam 2002, 50-51; Price 2001, 50).

The 1851 Coup and the subsequent proclamation of the Second Empire dealt a serious blow to the republican movement as republicans were the main opponents of the regime. Republicans

were severely persecuted in the aftermath of the coup, which stripped the republican movement of its press, left it quite fragmented, and compelled it to take the form of small secret societies. The republicans were also excluded from formal politics for the most part; only a few republican deputies managed to get elected to the parliament in the 1850s due to the official candidacy system. Regardless, the republic was still conceived as the ideal form of government by many (especially the urban workers) during this period despite the weakening support among the rural population. Thus, pamphlets promoting republicanism (especially those written by exiled authors **Felix Pyat** and **Victor Hugo**) were still circulated, though illegally (Price 2001, 36-38).

The republican movement gained considerable strength during the 1860s as Napoleon's pardoning of many republican leaders in 1859 was followed by a series of political liberalization reforms that allowed greater opportunities for political expression. Some groups such as university students and small businessmen demonstrated their support for the republican movement; the number of republican deputies in the parliament also continued to increase throughout the decade (Pilbeam 2002, 37 & 53; Popkin 2001, 125; Price 2001, 46-47). Consequently, the republicans had become the strongest opposition group by 1870 (Price 2001, 55). New names also emerged within the republican movement during the 1860s such as the young lawyer **Léon Gambetta**, who was famous for representing the opponents of the regime in court cases (Popkin 2001, 125-126).

Léon Gambetta (Public Domain)

The new generation of republicans mostly had radical tendencies, which caused the republican opposition to be loosely separated into the **moderate republican** and **radical republican** factions during the second half of the 1860s[19]. The moderate republicans usually included older politicians[20] that were fully committed to preserving order while pursuing a republican agenda; as a result, they respected religious institutions and condemned class conflict (Price 2001, 46-50). Radical republicans (led by Gambetta) were far more anticlerical and hostile towards the regime compared to their moderate counterparts. They vigorously advocated for political and social reforms that would cut wasteful government expenditure (through lowering taxes), enhance education, and improve the conditions of the poor; such policies placed them on

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[19] It is possible to say that all moderate republicans were moderate liberals in the sense that they favored the extension of social, political, and economic liberties to a reasonable extent. However, all moderate liberals were not moderate republicans since many moderate liberals also happened to be monarchists. On the other hand, it is possible to say all radical liberals were also radical republicans as radicalism directly repudiated monarchy.
[20] Such as Jules Favre, Jules Simon, and Ernest Picard

the political left. However, radical republicans differed from socialists in that they sought neither a revolution nor the destruction of capitalism nor the subversion of state authority[21]. In fact, they wanted to achieve progress democratically (via parliamentary control) without the usage of violence; they also preferred a system of economic & social liberalism wherein some regulations would be implemented for the benefit of all social groups. Hence, radical republicans managed to secure considerable amounts of support from urban workers without promoting socialism (Price 2001, 46-53).

The republicans, being the only properly organized political movement in the country, swiftly organized a new provisional government (of a radical republican character) following the capture of Napoleon III at Sedan in September 1870 (Price 2001, 63). Republicans did not obtain the parliamentary majority in the February elections (they gained a total of 222 whereas there were 638 filled seats in the parliament) but managed to form a government as the monarchists were deeply divided. The republican government was headed by the moderate republican **Adolphe Thiers**, who had left Orleanism and now believed that republicanism was the "least divisive political ideology" (Rois & Presidents n.d.; Popkin 2001, 133).

The republicans were loosely divided into three parliamentary factions in 1871. The socially conservative and economically liberal (i.e., moderate republican) supporters of Adolphe Thiers coalesced into the **Center Left** (*Centre Gauche*) faction and managed to secure most of the ministries (Garrigues 2011, 23-26). The radical republican supporters of Gambetta formed a smaller faction called the **Republican Union** (*Union Républicaine*) but their opposition to Thiers caused them to be excluded from the Council of Ministers (de Bouissieu, 2019). Lastly, the

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[21] The socialists were both radicals and republicans in reality, but the uniqueness of socialism prevented it from being categorized under the term "radical republicanism.

Republican Left (*Gauche Républicaine*) faction of **Jules Ferry** and **Jules Grévy** ideologically stood in between the two other factions[22] (Encyclopédie Larousse, s.v. "Gauche républicaine." accessed April 7, 2023, https://www.larousse.fr/encyclopedie/divers/Gauche_r%C3%A9publicaine/120927.).

B. Governmental & Administrative Structure

The governmental structure of the Second Empire was designed by the provisions of the 1852 Constitution. It was centered around the premise that the emperor was the only true representative of the people and the only true wielder of sovereignty. Thus, the constitution explicitly declared other governmental institutions (such as the assemblies) to be instruments through which the emperor ruled the country[23]; these institutions did not serve to create a system of checks and balances as they did in other constitutional regimes. Still, one could say that subtle constitutional arrangements carefully regulated the relations between the different institutions of government in order to perfect political relations under the authority of the emperor (Plessis 1987, 12-16).

i. The Emperor and His Cabinet

The emperor was endowed with extensive authority in executive affairs by the 1852 Constitution; his executive powers were explained by Article 6 of the Constitution as follows (Plessis 1987, 16):

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[22] The number of deputies in these factions could not be spotted exactly as some deputies were registered in more than one faction.

[23] Article 7 of the 1852 Constitution even stated that "justice is administered in his [the emperor's] name.

As head of State, he commands the army and navy, declares war, concludes peace treaties, alliances and commercial treaties, makes all appointments and draws up the regulations and decrees[24] necessary to implement laws.

However, the emperor also possessed substantial legislative powers. He was given the authority to initiate laws and to promulgate them, which meant that the start and the end of the legislative process were directly controlled by the emperor. This meant that the parliament and other assemblies were not able to deliberate on and enact any law that the emperor had a distaste for. The emperor was also given the power to unilaterally authorize tariff changes and public works projects, both authorities were given to the legislatures (as they had the final control over financial decisions) in other constitutional regimes (Plessis 1987, 16-17).

The ministers were appointed & dismissed by the emperor and were only accountable to him instead of being responsible to the parliament; in fact, they were prohibited from defending their bills in the parliament until 1867 (Price 2001, 28; Popkin 2001, 128). Their powers in policymaking were also limited as it was the emperor who made the final decision while the ministers acted more like his consultants in cabinet meetings. In reality, they were responsible for carrying out the decisions of the emperor and preparing draft bills upon the superficial propositions made by the emperor. The ministers were not jointly liable to the emperor with regard to policy implementation either; each minister was only responsible for the governmental actions that fell within their own personal sphere (Plessis 1987, 18-19 & 26).

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[24] A decree is a legally binding order, usually issued by an executive organ.

Napoleon III's head, as issued on a silver 1 Franc coin (Public Domain)

ii. The Assemblies

The legislative process was further regulated by the powers given to three assemblies, namely the **Senate**, *Corps Législatif*, and the **Council of State**.

The **Senate** (*Sénat*) served as the upper chamber of parliament. Its 180 members served for life and were irremovable. The senators were either ex-officio members (such as the cardinals and marshals) or those appointed by Napoleon, who were mostly retired bureaucrats and constituted the majority of the Senate (Price 2001, 25-26). The Senate was assigned the duty to review and approve/reject draft laws in terms of their constitutionality and compatibility with the principles the Empire stood for (such as religion, equality, and individual freedom). It was also tasked with interpreting the Constitution and proposing changes to it when necessary. In reality, however, the Senate failed to carry out many of its duties and only issued a few *senatus consultums* (Senate decisions) over the span of nearly two decades (Plessis 1987, 18-19 & 38).

The ***Corps Législatif*** (Legislative Body) was the lower chamber of the parliament. It consisted of about 260 deputies elected by universal male suffrage. However, these elections were

conducted with a system called "official candidacy" in which the official candidates designated by and loyal to the government were unfairly promoted against their opponents, who were often harassed. Thus, no substantial opposition capable of rallying the electorate flourished; this problem was deepened by the fact that the press was not allowed to report on parliamentary sessions (Plessis 1987, 20-23). The *Corps Législatif* was given the authority to debate on law & taxation proposals and to vote upon them, though the right to initiate legislation was reserved by the emperor. The *Corps Législatif* did not have any authority regarding the implementation of tariffs, public works, and budget (voted by the ministry). Thus, it is accurate to say that the *Corps Législatif* was reduced to an institution whose sole duty was to express (or not to express) its consent on governmental proposals (Price 2001, 26; Plessis 1987, 20-21).

The **Council of State** (*Conseil d'État*) was first founded by Napoleon I, and it retained its prerogatives up to the Second Empire. It consisted of around forty members appointed (and if necessary, removed) by the emperor; the ministers were ex-officio members. The Council had judicial and legislative duties at the same time. It simultaneously served as the supreme administrative tribunal of France and as an organ that drafted regulatory decrees upon the instructions of the emperor. It also played a vital role in the lawmaking process, as it first examined the draft bills prepared by the ministries and then the amendments made by the Corps Législatif.

The *conseillers d'État* (members of the Council) were also tasked with defending the bills in the Corps Législatif. (Plessis 1987, 19-20).

(1) The emperor would propose a law. (2) A draft bill was prepared in the appropriate ministry and submitted to the sovereign. (3) The bill was examined first by a department of the Conseil, then by a general meeting of the Conseil, after which it became a government proposal. (4) After examination, the head of State sent the bill to the Legislative Body. (5) The seven departments of the Legislative Body appointed a seven-member commission to draft a report on the bill. The commission could propose amendments on its own initiative or at the suggestion of deputies who asked for a hearing.	(6) These amendments were sent back to the Conseil d'Etat for examination: 'At this stage one can observe the true importance of the Conseil, for it exercised a certain form of direct control over the nation's representatives.' It was free to accept, amend or reject the amendments, and an amendment once rejected could not be sponsored again by the deputies or submitted by them to the Conseil for further review. This rigid mechanism remained for the most part in effect until 1869. (7) The bill was then discussed in the Legislative Body after the latter's commission had submitted its report. Deputies were not allowed to introduce new amendments; they could only pass or reject the bill. During this debate, the bill was defended by three *conseillers d'Etat* appointed by the emperor as 'government commissioners', since, at least until 1860, ministers were not allowed to appear before the Legislative Body. (8) The Senate ruled on the constitutionality of the law once it was passed. (9) The head of State promulgated the law if he saw fit to do so.

The lawmaking process (Plessis 1987, 19-20)

iii.   Local Administration

Local administration was structured to reinforce the power of central authorities during the Second Empire, continuing the tradition set by Napoleon I. France was divided into around 90 *départements* (provinces) during the Second Empire. These *départements* were governed by **prefects**, who were delegates of the central authority responsible for maintaining law, order, and government policies in their respective *départements*. They were appointed by the Minister of Interior, following the approval of the emperor, and were vested with wide decision-making abilities; the areas in which they made decisions included food provisioning, agricultural development, public works, minor infrastructure maintenance, poor relief, and beyond. This put them in a very powerful situation, but they were still accountable to the central government (including ministries) and the central government reserved the right to reverse the prefect's decisions (Plessis 1987, 44-47). A prefect also had to work together with a **departmental council** (*conseil general*) consisting of elected members on matters pertaining to the departmental budget and local taxation, though the prefects were able to subordinate the councils to their will in reality

(Plessis 1987, 50-51). The prefects also had the political duty of facilitating the electoral campaigns of the official candidates, along with their duty to serve as the local civil society's (including the notables) point of contact with the government (Price 2001, 29; Plessis 1987, 50).

The prefects were not the only local civil administrators. Each *département* was further subdivided into *arrondissements*, which were governed by **subprefects** in cooperation with the **arrondissement councils**. However, they usually submitted themselves to the prefects' will. The city mayors were not precluded from the hierarchical structure either as they were appointed by the prefects instead of being elected by the electorate. More interestingly, however, Paris and Lyon did not have mayors and were instead administered by prefects during the Second Empire[25]. The last group of notable civil servants were the **public prosecutors** (*procureurs généraux)*, who were responsible for preparing reports about the material and moral conditions of the inhabitants under their jurisdiction; Napoleon III was known to pay special attention to their reports (Plessis 1987, 42-44).

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[25] In fact, the infamous Baron Hausmann served as the Prefect of the Seine Department (which covered all of Paris) from 1853 to 1870.
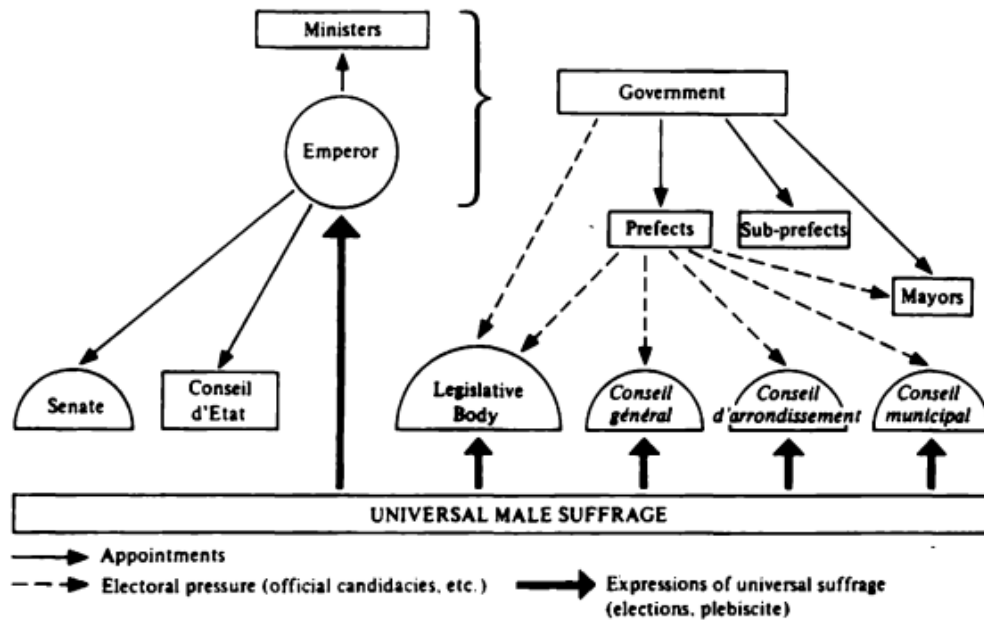
Diagram of the Political and Administrative System (Plessis 1987, 17)

iv.   Modifications on the Governmental Structure after the Empire's Fall

Many institutions of the imperial government immediately collapsed following the capture of Napoleon III at Sedan. On 4 September 1870, the session of the *Corps Législatif* was interrupted by a crowd, which eventually led to the proclamation of a republic later that day. Both the *Corps Législatif* and the Senate had effectively ceased operations by the start of October (Le Gouvernement De La Défense Nationale, 1870a). Their duties were transferred to the Council of Ministers (of the Government of National Defence); the ministers in the Council ruled the country by jointly issuing decrees. The Government decreed that the mayors should be appointed by the elected municipal councils (*conseils municipaux*) (Le Gouvernement De La Défense Nationale, 1870a), and reinstated the post of **Mayor of Paris** (Le Gouvernement De La Défense Nationale, 1870b), to which **Jules Ferry** was appointed in November 1870 (Britannica 2023). The Government also suspended the Council of State due to its close ties with the imperial regime and

established a provisional committee to undertake some of its duties until a new Council of State could be organized (FranceArchives, 2018).

Following the legislative elections in February 1871, a unicameral constituent assembly named the **National Assembly** (*Assemblée Nationale*) convened as the sole legislative organ of the French government. The Assembly designated Adolphe Thiers as the "**Head of the Executive of the French Republic**" and authorized him to form a cabinet (Council of Ministers) quickly thereafter (Plessis 1987, 170). A law issued by the Assembly on 17 February 1871 described, though rather vaguely, the legal relationship between the executive and the legislative organs as follows (Maury 2014):

> Monsieur Thiers has been named the Chief of the Executive Power of the French Republic. He will exercise his functions under the authority of the National Assembly and with the help of the ministers he will choose and preside over.

C. Political Agenda from 1852 to 1870

The imperial regime was a rather authoritarian one during its first decade, building on the legacy of the First Empire. In legal matters, the regime was heavily armed with the laws it inherited from the previous regimes, and more legal restrictions were imposed during Napoleon's rule. For instance, the press was heavily regulated by the government. Obtaining governmental permission to operate was mandatory for every newspaper, and these permissions ought to be renewed after each change in the editorial staff (Plessis 1987, 15).

In domestic policy, Napoleon tried to cultivate support from all social groups. To acquire the support of workers, Napoleon launched public housing campaigns, and certain gestures were made toward the working class. These actions led to the emergence of autonomous workers' movements instead and deteriorated the relationship between the Emperor and the bourgeoisie

(Popkin 2001, 121-125). In reality, the support given to Napoleon was not wholehearted; instead, it was the Second Empire's ability to ensure stability and economic enhancement that gathered "conditional" support from the elites and the rural population (Price 2001, 30-32).

The conditional support given to the regime declined over time as the disappearance of a revolutionary threat eliminated the fears regarding the jeopardization of stability. As the order was asserted, the elites started to demand more influence over the decision-making process of the Empire; this prompted them to raise opposition to the regime by demanding the formation of a responsive parliament (Price 2001, 34). The regime, however, continued to implement repressive policies. The **Law of General Security** was enacted in 1858 following an assassination attempt made on the Emperor's life by an Italian republican named **Felice Orsini.** The law entailed the detainment and deportation of many republicans without any trials (Price 2001, 37).

Orsini's Assassination Attempt in 1858 (Public domain)

In foreign policy, the Second Empire tried to make France the primary country of European politics. The Emperor dove into some foreign ventures, including the Crimean campaign wherein
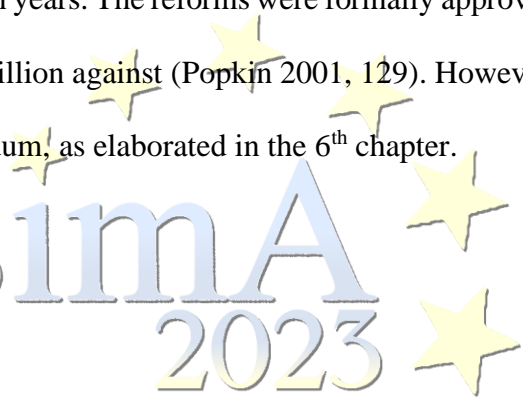
France fought alongside Britain, Piedmont, and the Ottoman Empire against Russia. Meanwhile, Napoleon also tried to reshape Europe according to the **principle of nationality** which envisioned the provision of support for the national movements across Europe (Popkin 2001, 122-123). It could be argued that Napoleon aimed to increase his support within France and the French prestige in international politics through his foreign policy actions.

The second decade of the regime began with an event that announced the end of the economic boom: the **Cobden-Chevalier Treaty** was signed in 1860 (Popkin 2001, 124-125). With this agreement, France lowered tariffs for British products and opened its markets to British competition, which ultimately resulted in the alienation of the businessman from the regime (Popkin 2001, 125). The decreasing support for the regime led Napoleon to launch some reforms aimed at liberalising the country to an extent. The powers of the *Corps Législatif* gradually increased after 1860. Newspapers were allowed to report on parliamentary debates after 1860, the *Corps Législatif* was given the power to control the budget (as a response to the growing anxieties of the financial circles) after 1861, ministers were required to defend their policies directly in front of the *Corps Législatif* after 1867. The *Corps Législatif* was finally given the right to initiate legislation in 1869, when the practice of designating official candidacies also ended (Price 2001, 39; Popkin 2001, 128; Plessis, 165). Moreover, the regime adopted a more tolerant stance toward public meetings and the press with a higher tolerance in order to neutralize the continuing reaction towards the Law of General Security (Price 2001, 40). It seemed that the Second Empire had become a "Liberal" Empire by 1870.

However, the regime was unable to cultivate extensive support the liberalisation reforms were intended to cultivate. Throughout the 1860s, deputies opposing the regime increased their influence in the parliament as they benefited from the liberalization of the political environment,

and social groups began to support political movements that constituted an opposition toward Napoleon III (Price 2001, 39-41). It should also be noted that the developments in international politics, especially the growing trend of international crises being resolved in favour of France's adversaries, discredited the regime's reputation in Europe and in the domestic sphere. Napoleon found the solution by enacting liberal reforms and appointing more liberal ministers in order to satisfy the ever-growing opposition; however, these reforms only made things worse by further facilitating the dissemination of anti-regime ideas (Popkin 2001, 128-129). Napoleon tried to boost his legitimacy again in May 1870 by organising a referendum in which the voters were asked if they approved the liberal reforms enacted in the last ten years. The reforms were formally approved by approximately 7 million votes in favour and 1.5 million against (Popkin 2001, 129). However, the Empire collapsed only 4 months after the referendum, as elaborated in the 6th chapter.

## IV. ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT IN THE SECOND EMPIRE

A. General Economic Tendencies and the Role of the State

The Second Empire is credited with being an era during which appreciable economic growth took place. Agricultural and industrial production rose sharply during the 1850s and continued to increase during the 1860s, which created a vigorous trend of economic growth and a surge in economic prosperity (Popkin 2001, 117; Plessis 1987, 71). Hence, the GDP of France nearly doubled between 1850 and 1870 (Fouquin and Hugot, 2016).

These trends were partly due to the favorable conditions that dominated the international economy. The discovery of gold in California and Australia at the end of the 1840s was an important factor. The money supply rose considerably as a result of the increased gold supply, causing the prices to rise 30 percent from 1850 to 1870. The increase in prices caused a surge in profits in turn as the price increase in industrial products was greater than the increase in agricultural products. Larger profits encouraged entrepreneurs and incentivized the producers to expand their plants, prompting economic growth in the long term (Popkin 2001, 118; Plessis 1987, 66).

The state also deserves credit for economic growth as the Second Empire gave priority to economic objectives and implemented policies that proved very beneficial in incentivizing the private sector to boost production. The main objective of the government was to increase productivity through lending help to private companies and ensuring that technological innovations were properly utilized (Plessis 1987, 62; Price 2001, 26). These endeavors were of great importance for Napoleon III as he believed that economic growth would provide employment opportunities and improve the standards of living, thus contributing to the preservation of social stability (Price 2001, 27). As Napoleon III saw the nation's greatness tied to its economic standing,

he believed that the state's involvement in economics was necessary. However, he preferred to facilitate the expansion of private enterprises instead of pursuing nationalization[1].

4 Output, 1845–72 (in constant prices, 1890 = 100)

(Plessis 1987, 70)
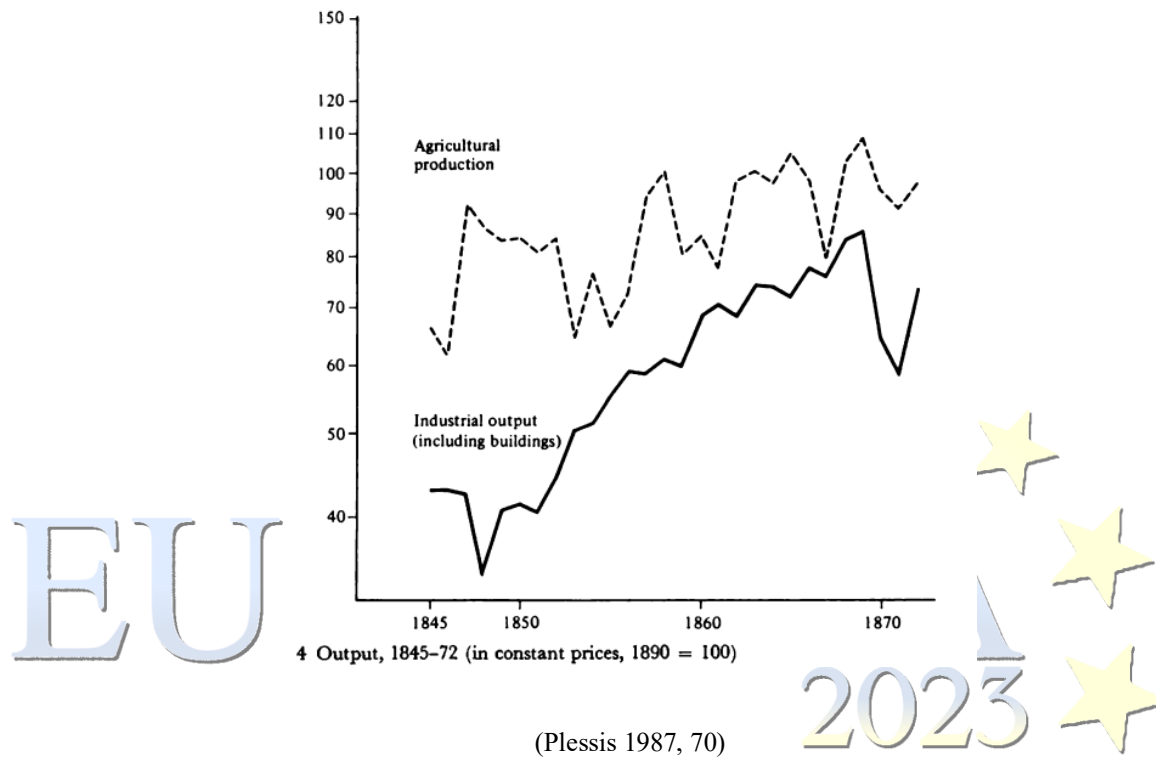
The state maintained close connections with the business circles; ministers and bureaucrats exchanged views with leading industrialists[2] and financiers in the ***Conseil Supérieur de l'Agriculture, du Commerce et des Travaux*** (The High Council of Agriculture, Commerce, and Labor) to become informed of business ambitions. To facilitate the realization of those ambitions, the state loosened some economic and business regulations that had hitherto hampered business growth. The maintenance of large public work projects (e.g., railway networks), and granting of concessions to the companies undertaking such projects also provided a stimulus for private

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[1] Nationalization refers to the transfer of a major branch of industry or commerce from private to state ownership or control.
[2] An example of these industrialists was Éugene Schneider, the owner of the Le Creusot Steel Factory. He even served as the President of Corps Législatif from 1867 to 1870.

enterprise. In some instances, the state even provided direct support to private enterprises by providing guarantees to the lenders that have lent financial resources to those companies. All these forms of support were easy for the government to carry out as the administration of the Second Empire was a strengthened one (Plessis 1987, 65).

B. Sectoral Development

i. Finance Sector

The Second Empire saw the vitalization and improvement of the methods used to finance enterprises. Even though a portion of business profits was invested in expanding enterprises, other financial resources were usually sought to ensure rapid expansion. Thus, many businesses were transformed into **joint-stock companies**[3] that were able to attract capital[4] from many shareholders through the sale of shares. The proliferation of joint stock companies also stimulated the trade taking place in stock markets. However, the formation of **limited companies**[5] was subject to government authorization despite them being more efficient in financing an enterprise. Nevertheless, pressures coming from business circles led to the abolition of the requirement for obtaining government authorization in 1867, facilitating the concentration of capital by businesses (Plessis 1987, 73-74).

In the meanwhile, a banking "revolution" took place. Many prominent bankers, encouraged by the government, modified their business strategies in order to be able to provide larger loans to growing businesses; many joint-stock banks with novel institutional structures were founded as a

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[3] A joint-stock company is a business owned by its shareholders, who can buy and sell shares freely. Joint-stock companies distribute a portion of their profits to shareholders in proportion to the value of their shares. However, it differs from cooperatives by the fact that it is not directly controlled by its owners in most cases.

[4] Capital refers to wealth in the form of money or other assets owned by a person or organization or available for a purpose such as starting a company or investing.

[5] A limited company is a private company whose owners are legally responsible for its debts only to the extent of the amount of capital they invested. Joint-stock companies may also be limited companies at the same time.

result (Popkin 2001, 119). One of the most notable among them was the ***Crédit Mobilier***, founded by the Pereire brothers, which was a bank that concentrated on financing industrial companies. The bank quickly grew to be one of the wealthiest banks in France and aspired to control entire sectors (especially the railway sector) by merging the companies that they have acquired in respective sectors (Plessis 1987, 75-77). French banks also gained a prominent spot in the international financing sector as they frequently lent financial resources to foreign businesses and governments. The abroad investments made by the French were also notable; in fact, they significantly contributed to the building of the Suez Canal (Plessis 1987, 81-82). Developments in the banking sector were not limited to private enterprises, however. The ***Banque de France*** (The National Bank of France) started behaving more impetuously upon matters pertaining to the financing of private enterprises; for example, it performed actions that facilitated the sale of railway companies' shares and bonds[6] (Plessis 1987, 75).

The increasing availability of financing methods eventually led to the growth of many industrial businesses and, more importantly, financing businesses. Powerful financial groups that controlled many large businesses (including large banks) across various sectors emerged and started competing with each other for economic power. The competition in the economy was soon translated into the political sphere as these financial groups tried to obtain favors from politicians (Plessis 1987, 78-80).

ii. Industrial and Agricultural Sectors

The Second Empire marked the shift from smaller and more traditional industries to **heavy industries** (also known as big industries). The persistent wave of technological innovation led to

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[6] A bond refers to a document that is sold by its issuers (usually companies) and which records that the issuer owes a debt to the buyer of the bond.

massive improvements in manufacturing processes, increased productivity, and increased profits. The increased profits contributed to the expansion of larger heavy industry plants[7] and put them in an advantageous position while competing with smaller firms. Thus, heavy industrial output was consolidated under well-established dynasties; in 1869, the two largest iron plants in France supplied 21 percent of the entire iron production in the country. The largest growing sectors within the heavy industry were the **ironmaking**, **steelmaking**, **heavy engineering**, and **coal industries**, all of which had faced greater demand in the wake of the proliferation of railway construction (Plessis 1987, 88-91). However, the growth of heavy industries did not substitute many activities of traditional industries; nearly 70 percent of total production was still supplied by the artisans. These industries (such as the **textile**, **building**, **food processing**, and **furniture** sectors) also experienced technological innovations but the improvements scored in these industries were neither rapid nor evenly distributed. In reality, industrial production continued to shift from the countryside to the towns. Thus, the French industry stood as a mosaic of both the old and new industrial methods as of 1871 (Plessis 1987, 91-95).

The growing activity of railway companies was reinforced by the incentives provided by the government. Apart from *Banque de France*'s involvement in the selling of railway companies' shares & bonds, the Second Empire granted extended operating leases (usually for 99 years) to the railway companies. The government also promoted mergers in order to counterbalance the harmful economic consequences of the competition between very small companies; the number of railway companies was thus reduced from 42 to 6. Railway construction overall became much more feasible with these incentives (Plessis 1987, 82-85). As a result, the total length of railways increased from 3230 km in 1851 to 17200 km in 1870 (Price 2001, 26). The proliferation of

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[7] This was because the already large heavy industry plants started making larger profits.

railways reduced transportation costs and promoted the growth of industries. The reduced costs also had an impact on eliminating the risk of famines and improving the living conditions of the people (Plessis 1987, 87-88).
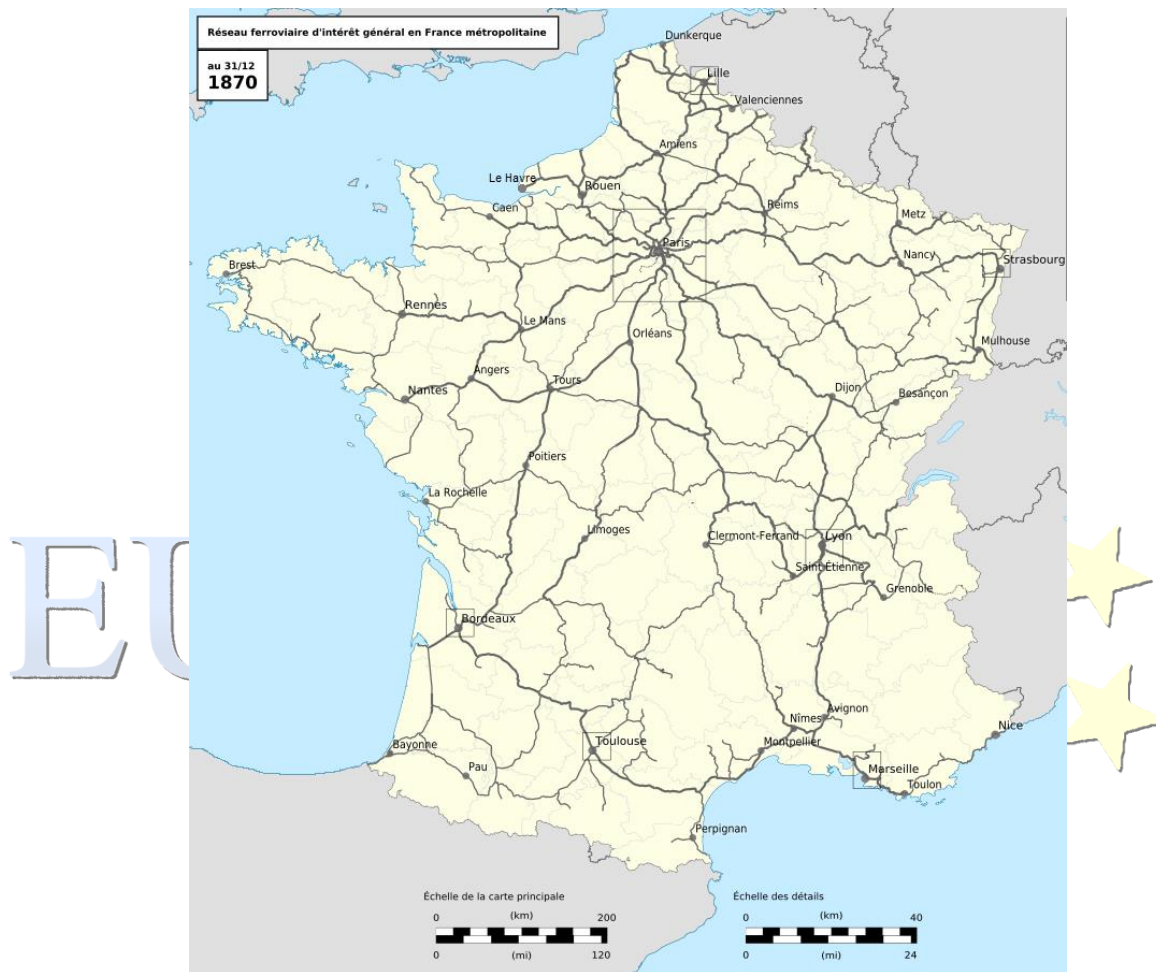
The railway map of France in 1870 ("Railway map of France – 1870 – fr- medium.svg, image, Wikimedia Commons, accessed March 20, 2023, https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Railway_map_of_France_-_1870_-_fr_-_medium.svg)

Agricultural productivity also increased as the real value of agricultural production increased by about 25 percent. This was due to a number of factors. First, more lands were cleared for agriculture across France. Moreover, the advent of railways helped farmers purchase better

farming materials (such as soil-enriching materials) more easily. The railways also helped commercialize agricultural products. Instead of using the traditional method of crop rotation, some farmers (though they remained a minority) started single-crop farming in order to profit from the high market demand for certain agricultural products. However, the increase in agricultural productivity was proportionately insufficient as it was limited by some other factors. These included the limited supply of fertilizers, the slowness of the process of farming equipment modernization, and the disinterest of the farmers to divert their savings into agricultural investments. The imperial government's decision to introduce drastic cuts in the budget for farming education made the situation only worse (Plessis 1987, 105-108).

C. Free Trade and Economic Stagnation in the 1860s

The increasingly liberal economic policy of the Empire manifested itself once again in 1860 through the signing of the **Cobden-Chevalier Treaty** with the United Kingdom. France had been espousing protectionist measures since the Bourbon Restoration in order to protect French producers from the competition of British producers, who were producing much cheaper products. However, some high-ranking officials began to question the protectionist measures as they believed that **protectionism** favored inefficient producers and discouraged technological innovation by limiting competition. Their arguments were mostly welcomed by Napoleon III, who furthermore believed that engaging in free trade with the British would lower the prices in favor of both the producers and the consumers (Popkin 2001, 124-125). The Cobden-Chevalier Treaty was thus intended to serve as a trade agreement that would benefit France by cancelling protectionism; France abolished all import bans and agreed to limit all duties below 30 percent while importing British goods. Similar free trade agreements with other European nations were signed in later years (for example, with Prussia in 1862) (Plessis 1987, 148). However, the flow of

British products into France was not well received by the businessmen as they believed that it was impossible to compete with the British and that the French economy was harmed as a result. The free trade agreement thus alienated a chunk of the business circles from the regime; even some deputies (such as Adolphe Thiers) began to publicly criticize the treaty due to the economic hardships it brought to producers (Price 2001, 43).

The treaty did not boost productivity as expected, however. In fact, economic growth slowed considerably after 1860, which threatened industrial profits and started discouraging entrepreneurs. Some factors may be used to explain the trend of stagnation that dominated the 1860s. First of all, the stalled population growth caused the workforce to remain constant in numbers while also aging (in twenty years, the population grew merely from 36 million to 38.5 million) (Plessis 1987, 58-61). Moreover, some sectors were deeply affected by structural changes. The textile industry faced great difficulties due to the price fall induced by British competition and the American Civil War's adverse effect on cotton imports (Plessis 1987, 92). The stagnation had ramifications in the finance industry with the *Crédit Mobilier* going bankrupt in 1867 (Popkin 2001, 125). Overall, Napoleon's promises of maintaining "swift" economic growth seemed to have failed by the start of the 1870s, though economic development was not gone away entirely.

V. FOREIGN POLICY OF THE SECOND FRENCH EMPIRE

A. Main Principles of the French Foreign Policy

During the Second Empire, French foreign policy was based on the vision that the order established by the Vienna Conference of 1815, which limited French power in order to prevent the spread of revolutionary ideals across Europe, must be abolished. France advocated the belief that the European borders should be redrawn based on the **principle of nationality** instead of supporting the existence of multinational empires (such as Austria and Russia). It could be argued that this principle was the basis of French support for Poland during the Second Empire (Price 2001, 33).

Napoleon III was not ambitious as his uncle Napoleon I, who wanted to exert his conquests all over Europe. Rather, his goal was to ensure that France had a moral and political primacy in European politics (Popkin 2001, 122). One of the most important events that served to realize this goal was the **Paris Peace Conference**, convened to end the Crimean War. Napoleon III was able to include the Kingdom of Piedmont (a small state in Italy) on the side of the victorious alliance, which helped Piedmont gain wider recognition and voice her plan for unifying Italy (Popkin 2001, 122-123).

A couple of years after the Paris Peace Conference, Napoleon III concluded a secret agreement with Piedmont to force Austria out of Northern Italy in 1859. This eventually prompted Austria to attack Piedmont in April 1859. Although the French and Piedmontese forces were mostly successful against Austria, heavy losses and the threat of Prussian intervention forced Napoleon III to sign the **Armistice of Villafranca**, whereby Austria recognized the Piedmontese annexation of Lombardy, in July 1859 (Plessis 1987, 146-147). It could be argued that this was a sign indicating that Napoleon III's diplomatic conduct was not

entirely discretionary but rather dictated by external influences, which was a source of significant problems for the Second Empire in the 1860s (Popkin 2001, 123).

B. Bilateral Relations with Great Britain

There were two major events that shaped bilateral relations between the Second French Empire and Great Britain. The first was the formation of an alliance during the **Crimean War** and the second was the trade agreement signed in 1860.

In 1853, a dispute arose between the Ottoman Empire and Russia on the issue of the principalities of Wallachia and Moldavia. Russia and the Ottoman Empire exchanged notes sending demands and counter demands on the principalities, while the Russian demands raised concern for great powers such as France, Austria, Great Britain, and Prussia. In the Summer of 1853, French and British navies were dispatched to the entrance of the Dardanelles (Schmitt 1919, 38). Believing that France and Britain would not leave her alone, the Ottoman Empire declared war on Russia in October 1853. However, the two powers intervened in the war in March 1854.

Paris Peace Conference of 1856 (Public domain)

In 1856, following two years of fighting, Napoleon managed to convene the belligerents in Paris for a peace agreement, though Napoleon's hopes for the revision of the order established by the Congress of Vienna were not fulfilled (Price 2001, 33). Still, Napoleon managed to make some achievements such as dividing the conservative monarchies of Europe by bringing Britain against Russia (Plessis 1987, 142).

The other significant event of the British-French relations under the Second Empire was the trade agreement signed in 1860, which was elaborated on in the 4th chapter. The trade agreement helped improve Anglo-French relations and considerably increased the volume of trade between these two nations (Plessis 1987, 148; Timini 2022).

C. Bilateral Relations with the United States

The United States had adopted a policy of non-intervention in European politics by the time the Second Empire was founded. George Washington and later James Monroe stated that the United States should remain in her continent (the Americas) and should not allow European powers to exert influence on it; this stance was known as the **Monroe Doctrine** (Armaoğlu 1997, 708-709). On the other hand, the US would have commercial relations with Europe and would work to acquire economic gains from Europe, like supplying the emerging European industry with cotton (Dunham 1928, 292-294).

However, the Monroe Doctrine was breached in 1862. That year, France, Britain, and Spain intervened in Mexico as it had stopped paying its debts. Although British and Spanish forces left the country after a short period, Napoleon III strove toward his to plan to establish a client state[1] in Mexico. (Plessis 1987, 150). However, the increased military expenditures caused by the Mexican campaign attracted internal opposition (Price 2001, 43). Due to the

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[1] A client state is a state that is economically, politically, and/or militarily subordinate to another more powerful state.

internal pressures and the pressures coming from the United States, which was no longer distracted by civil war, Napoleon had to withdraw French forces from Mexico in 1867; the Mexico Campaign thus resulted in a failure (Plessis 1987, 150).

D. Bilateral Relations with Italy

Italy held a crucial place in the foreign policy of Napoleon III, as it was one of the Napoleon tried to establish Italy as a sovereign nation-state. This intention even led him to declare war on Austria in 1859 in order to force the Austrians out of Northern Italy.

In 1855 Piedmont intervened in the Crimean War and declared war on Russia upon the encouragement of France (Popkin 2001, 122). Unlike its allies, Piedmont was not a European great power but a small kingdom in Northern Italy. However, its intervention in the war earned Piedmont a seat and a chance of representation in the Paris Peace Conference; Piedmont raised its demands for **Italian unification** at the Conference. However, any attempts to secure the unification were blocked by Austria, which controlled most of Northern Italy (Popkin 2001, 123).

Austrian opposition to the Italian unification brought France and Piedmont together, culminating in the formation of a secret alliance in 1859. Soon after, France and Piedmont declared war on Austria in April 1859. Napoleon III personally commanded his armies in Italy in order to demonstrate that he was successful in military command apart from his success in politics (Popkin 2001, 123). The French army achieved two victories against the Austrian army, in Magenta and Solferino, before invading Milan. However, heavy losses and an inability to get decisive victories prompted Napoleon to sign the **Armistice of Villafranca** in July 1859, through which he acquired far less than his ambitions (Plessis 1987, 147).

However, the armistice did not stop the progression of Italian unification. Constituent assemblies in different regions of Italy soon declared their desires to unite with the Kingdom

of Piedmont (Price 2001, 33). Napoleon tried to encourage the Pope to submit to unification; however, the Pope responded with a condemnation of such offers (Plessis 1987, 147). Nevertheless, Piedmont managed to acquire some regions of Italy, while agreeing to cede Nice and Savoy to France in return.

The Italian unification later reached a stage in which the only territory left outside of united Italy was the city of Rome, which was controlled by the Papacy. Even though the city was protected by Italian troops, French Catholics began displaying anxiety due to the threat of invasion faced by the city. Some even criticized Napoleon for his lack of response against the Piedmontese expansion into the Papal lands. **The Roman Question** continued to be an important point of contention in French parliamentary politics during the Second Empire (Plessis 1987, 154). Rome was invaded by the Italians immediately after the fall of the Second Empire (Burton and Woodruff, 2023).

Capture of Rome in 1870 (Public domain)

However, Franco-Italian relations were jeopardized by the formation of an Italian-Prussian alliance during the last years of the Empire. Following this development, many began

fearing that France was left isolated and weak in Europe as the two states bordering it formed an alliance (Plessis 1987, 162).

E. Bilateral Relations with Germany

In the 19th century, Prussia was holding a significant place in European politics with her powerful and disciplined army. Prussia acted as a counterbalance for the French power in some cases, like in 1859 when France and Piedmont were fighting against Austria in Northern Italy (Armaoğlu 1997, 295). The defeats of the Austrian army against the Italians and the French triggered a reaction from Prussia, which threatened France with mobilizing its troops around the Rhine, and compelled France to sign an armistice with Austria (Plessis 1987, 147).

Prussia began to pursue a rather offensive foreign policy in the 1860s since it began to base its policy on **Otto von Bismarck**'s ambition to unify Germany; it invaded Schleswig-Holstein in 1864 and defeated the Austrians at Sadowa in 1866. This decisive victory demonstrated that France was losing her primary role in European politics in the wake of Prussian ascendancy despite Napoleon III offering his mediation for peace between Prussia and Austria (Price 2001, 59). In exchange for his mediation and in order to compensate for the growing Prussian power, Napoleon requested Luxembourg to be annexed to France; this led to the **Luxembourg Crisis of 1867** (Popkin 2001, 128).

The King of the Netherlands, who also held the throne of Luxembourg, sold the city to France in 1867 despite Luxembourg being a member of the **North German Confederation**. The Confederation objected to this exchange, causing a crisis. Hence the great powers of Europe convened in the London Conference of 1867 to resolve the issue. The conference overruled the French annexation of Luxembourg, though it was also declared that Luxembourg was not a member of the Confederation but became an independent state. This decision forced Bismarck to withdraw the Prussian garrison in the city (Armaoğlu 1997, 316-317).

The Luxembourg Crisis demonstrated that Napoleon III was unable to dictate his demands in European politics. Similar to the results of the war with Austria in 1859, Napoleon was not able to fulfill his hopes. The Luxembourg Crisis proved to be even worse and came to be regarded as a total failure for Napoleon's foreign policy since he was not able to gain anything. He failed to meet the expectations he cultivated in his country and in Europe, which severely harmed the Second Empire's reputation (Price 2001, 59).

After the Treaty of London of 1867, Napoleon adopted a policy of curtailing the Prussian influence by organizing conferences aimed at strengthening the status quo in Europe, especially as a means of preventing the Prussian expansion towards Southern Germany. However, he was unsuccessful in his attempts to prevent Prussian expansion as Bismarck continued to pursue **German unification** (Echard 1966, 241).

F. Bilateral Relations with Russia

Relations between the Second Empire and Russia were rather conflictual at the beginning since Napoleon III supported the Ottoman Empire during the Crimean War and formally declared war on Russia in 1854. After the Paris Peace Conference, France and Russia established closer relations; Bismarck, who saw France as a threat to German unification, tried to deteriorate this relationship and isolate France. The chance Bismarck was looking for emerged in 1863 at the outset of the **Polish Revolt** (January Uprising). Napoleon himself did not support the revolt but there was huge popular support for the Polish in France; numerous volunteers left France to fight in Poland (Armaoğlu 1997, 303-305).

Seeing the French support for the revolt as an opportunity, Bismarck acted to isolate France from Russia; he proposed cooperation with Russia in order to suppress the revolt. Great powers sent proposals to Russia for the solution to the issue with the French proposal providing

the strongest support for the Polish among others; this attracted a reaction from the Russians and isolated France from Russia, just as Bismarck had planned (Armaoğlu 1997, 303-305).

G. Bilateral Relations with Austria

French-Austrian relations followed a trend of fluctuations during the Second Empire. The two powers were allies during the Crimean War, though Austria did not directly get involved in the war. Napoleon III allied with Piedmont and waged war on Austria to force her out of Northern Italy just four years later. Four more years later, during the Polish revolt of 1863, Napoleon proposed a bold plan to Austria that envisaged major land exchanges to provide land for a future Polish state. According to this plan, Galicia would have been ceded to Poland, and Austria would have been compensated with Silesia from Prussia. Austria would have also ceded Northern Italy to Piedmont, and it would have received some land from the Ottomans on the Adriatic coast (Armaoğlu 1997, 304). This plan became another one of the failed diplomatic initiatives of Napoleon III upon its rejection by the Austrians.

VI.   THE FRANCO PRUSSIAN WAR OF 1870-71 AND ITS AFTERMATH

A. Growing Influence of Prussia

Prussian influence in European politics increased starting from the late 19th century. Prussia was a devastated country with a weak army and a fragile economy until the mid-17th century. However, Prussia underwent a major transition during the reign of Friedrich Wilhelm I, turning it into a major country in European politics with an army known for its discipline (Clark 2007). Prussia was a participant in the Seven Years' War, during which major European powers were split into two blocks.

Prussian influence over German lands intensified during the 19th century as **Otto von Bismarck** (the Prussian Chancellor) launched **realpolitik** to unite all Germans under the flag of Prussia. He proclaimed in a speech that the major problems of the time would not be solved with majorities and speeches but with "**blood and iron**", stressing the need for pursuing industrialization and wars (Ramage 1899, 455).

Bismarck's realpolitik was actually a break from the German philosophical understanding of the state, which saw the state as a sacred & moral entity that served as the ideal form of order. (Goldstein 1962, 61; Pflanze 1958, 493-494). Realpolitik stood against this understanding of the state Bismarck regarded politics and the state to be entities related to the concept of power. Therefore, Bismarck chose to follow the path of asserting Prussia as the superior power of Europe instead of merely cooperating with other great powers. It could be argued that his policies were successful as Napoleon III had to accept the Armistice of Villafranca in 1859 because of the threat of Prussian intervention (Plessis 1987, 147).

Bismarck also worked toward achieving economic development. As Clark (2007) states, Prussia underwent a major industrialization process during the 1850s and 1860s. From

Bismarck's point of view, industrialization was key for establishing a powerful state since it enables the state to raise armies with smaller expenses in a shorter period of time.

To achieve his aim of unifying the Germans under Prussian leadership, Bismarck did not hesitate to use military force against countries that constituted an obstacle to the unification. On the other hand, he sought cooperation with other European countries (especially Austria) to prevent any intervention against Prussia's interests. In 1864 (when Prussia declared war on Denmark to resolve the Schleswig-Holstein issue), Bismarck sent an instruction to the Prussian ambassador in Vienna, stating that the cooperation between Austria and Prussia was necessary for all Germans' interests (Clark 2007). Nevertheless, Prussia waged a war against Austria two years later in order to resolve the competition for the leadership of the Germans (Armaoğlu 1997, 308-309). This shows that Prussia was always motivated by self-interests even if it was at the cost of hampering cooperation.

The Prussian victory over Austria led to the creation of the North German Confederation under the leadership of Prussia in 1867. However, the increasing influence of Prussia became a source of disturbance for the French Emperor, whose purchase of Luxembourg from the King of the Netherlands triggered the Luxembourg Crisis in 1867 (Popkin 2001, 128-129).

Following the Prussian victory over Austria in 1866, Napoleon started to believe that France should be compensated for the rising Prussian threat in the Rhine; he therefore demanded Luxembourg from the Confederation. Bismarck used the power of the press by leaking Napoleon's plans for Luxembourg and the Confederation to the German press, inciting outrage in the public (Clark 2007). Bismarck's diplomatic efforts and his usage of the press against France resulted in the Confederation being allowed to keep Luxembourg, though

Prussia had to withdraw its soldiers. Napoleon's inability to realize his aspirations tarnished the reputation of the Second Empire in Europe (Price 2001, 59).

B. The Situation of the French Army in 1870

In 1870, the situation of the French army was "chaotic" at best when compared to the Prussian army. Both sides remained nearly equal in terms of equipment. The advantage of the Prussian needle guns was balanced by the French infantry rifle known as the *chassepot;* the French also had a primitive machine gun called *mitralleuse* (Clark 2007).
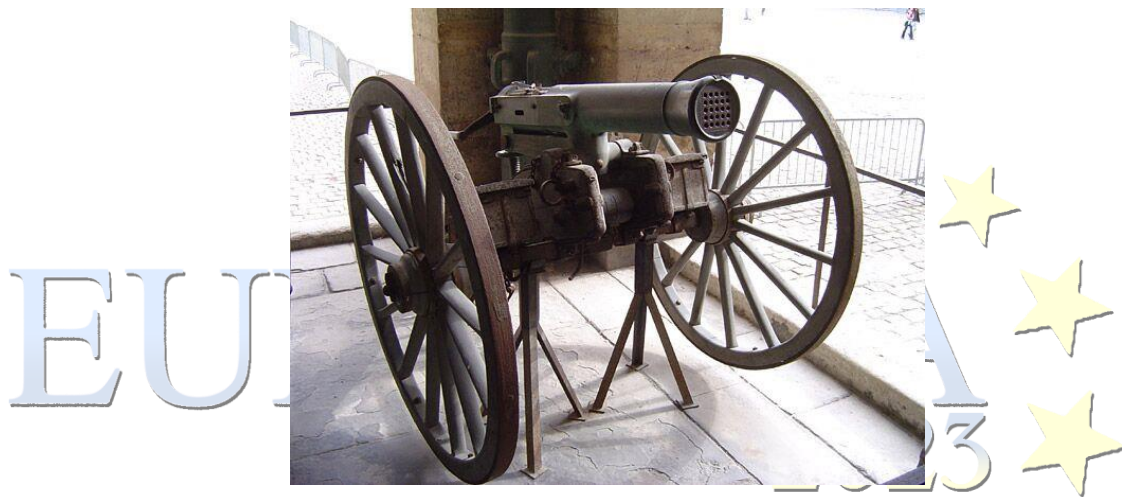
A *mitralleuse* produced in 1867 ("Front view of mitralleuse at Les Invalides, Paris", image, Wikimedia Commons, accessed April 13, 2023, https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Mitrailleuse_front.jpg)

However, the French army did underwhelmingly poor in terms of discipline and organization. The French system of military mobilization was one in which young men drew lots to determine who would serve in the military for up to seven years; the system was limited by budget constraints though it allowed France to mobilize about 650 thousand men in theory (Price 2001, 60). But the government's reluctance to raise taxes limited this mobilization ability to some 350 thousand men of whom 100 thousand were not able to fight in the frontline (Price 2001, 60). At the beginning of the war, the French army consisted of 370 thousand soldiers with 66 thousand being deployed to overseas territories (Plessis 1987, 169). Meanwhile, the

Prussians deployed an army of 500 thousand men to the French border and had 160 thousand men in reserves (Plessis 1987, 169).

Furthermore, the French officers were not qualified and disciplined as Prussian officers because of the fact that they were promoted on the basis of wealth rather than merit (Plessis 1987, 169). Also, no well-prepared plan was put in effect for the mobilization scheme. Some French troops went to the front before all personnel reportied for duty, mobilization plans were changed in the middle of the process, and one-sixth of the army deserted (Popkin 2001, 130).

C. The Franco-Prussian War

The rupture point of Franco-Prussian relations proved to be the candidacy of a member of the Prussian royal family to the Spanish throne in July 1870, which created a strong public reaction in France (Barker 1967, 431). Although **Leopold von Hohenzollern** (the Prussian candidate for the throne) later withdrew from candidacy, the French press continued to keep the public opinion hostile towards Prussia (Ramage 1899, 460). It could be argued that public opinion prompted Napoleon to demand further concessions from Prussia. One such demand was a guarantee that no member of the Hohenzollern Dynasty would be nominated as a candidate for the Spanish throne, which was refused by **Kaiser Wilhelm** of Prussia in a diplomatic manner. Bismarck manipulated the press by making a false announcement (known as the **Ems Dispatch**) that the Kaiser even refused to receive the French ambassador, which further escalated the outrage of the French public (Plessis 1987, 168). Napoleon III declared war on Prussia soon after upon the authorization of the Parliament (Plessis 1987, 168).

The Kaiser was not in favor of the war; however, Bismarck and **Helmuth von Moltke** (the General Chief of Staff of Prussia) favored waging a war against France. For Bismarck, the war was an opportunity for gathering the South German states (hitherto sceptical of the Prussians) under the leadership of Prussia, through exploiting the anti-French sentiment among

these states (Popkin 2001, 129). For this reason, Bismarck desired the French to wage a war against Prussia. In the meanwhile, the French government stayed unaware of the asymmetry between the French and Prussian militaries. Although the two armies were nearly equal in terms of equipment, the Prussian army stood superior with regard to discipline and infrastructure; this allowed the Prussians to mobilize more units than the French in a shorter timeframe (Clark 2007). In fact, von Moltke notified Bismarck that the Prussian army would be victorious in case of war even before the French took a decision to declare war (Ramage 1899, 460).

The French were outnumbered in almost all categories. Prussia, together with the 22 subject states of the North German Confederation, had roughly 600 thousand soldiers, 70 thousand horses, and 1500 field guns; in comparison, the French had roughly 250 thousand men, 43 thousand horses, and 900 field guns. Then power imbalance resulted in the French army facing defeat after defeat. The first casualty from the French side was inflicted on 25 July in Alsace (Chemins de Mémoire n.d.). The Alsace region had to be evacuated soon after. It was not looking good for the French as many other camps were facing defeat (Plessis 1987, 168-169).

On the 7th of August Napoleon fled to Metz after the defeat in Alsace; in his words, the Empire was lost. The French Army Headquarters assigned **General Bazaine** (commander of the **Army of Rhine**) with the protection of Metz even though Bazaine had no pre-planning due to the hastiness of the decision. As the army was already split into two (namely, the Army of Rhine and the **Army of Châlons**), the best plan for Bazaine would have been to retreat to the south of Langres; however, such a move would have been unacceptable as it would have resulted in Paris being abandoned. Many different ideas floated about what Bazaine should do, but his actions ultimately resulted in his capture. The capture also affected **General MacMahon** (the commander of the Army of Châlons), whose army had already suffered a huge loss of manpower, as the two generals were planning to meet. MacMahon considered

retreating to Sedan and adopting a defensive position there though the lack of ammunition would have meant that the fight would have been cut short. Thus, a decision was given to first gather information and then move east towards Carignan. An offensive was initiated in the early morning of 1 September; however, the German counteroffensive overcame the French efforts and culminated in the withdrawal of the French toward the west. The situation compelled Napoleon III to consider surrendering and meet with Bismarck on 2 September to negotiate an armistice. The negotiations failed as Bismarck realised that Napoleon had already accepted defeat and Napoleon was voluntarily captured on 3 September (Howard 1961, 97-109 & 162-177).
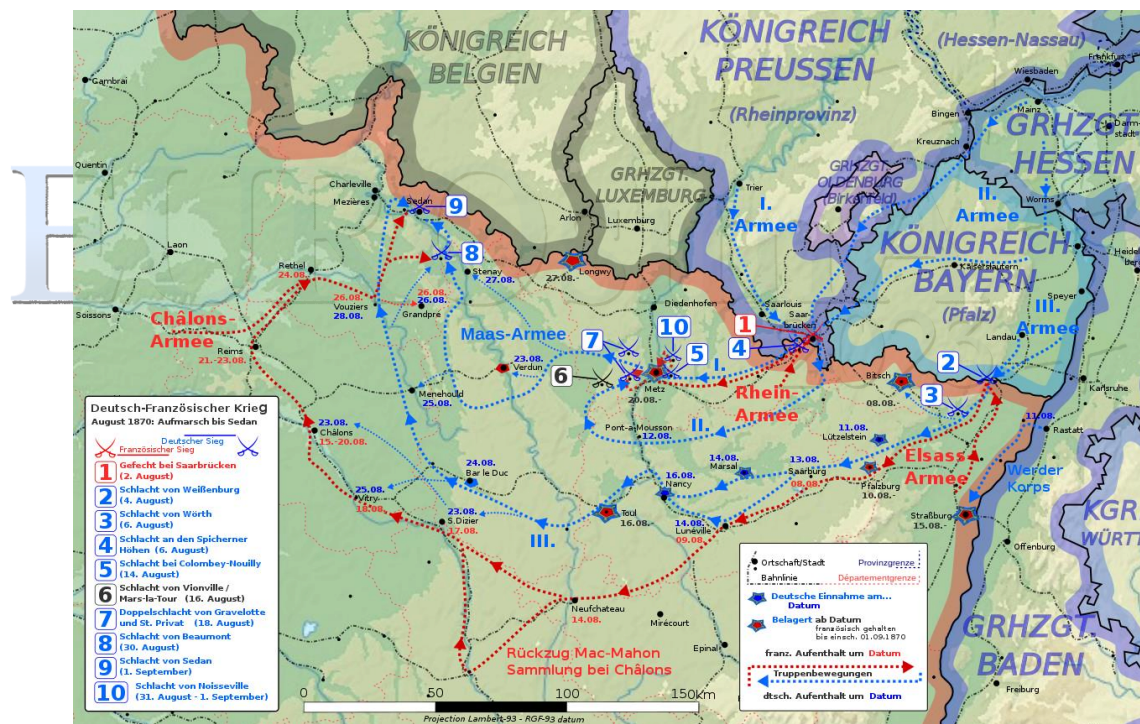
Course of the war up to the Battle of Sedan (In German) ("Karte des Deutsch-Französischen-Kriegs, Verlauf bis zum 1. September 1870," image, Wikimedia Commons, accessed 13 April 2023, https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Franco-Prussian-War_Phase_1_toSedan.svg).

D. Government of National Defence

Following the capture of the emperor, a republic was proclaimed in Paris. The new republic was to be governed by a leftist-leaning provisional government named the **Government of National Defence**. The government included many prominent republican politicians, such as **Léon Gambetta** (as the Interior Minister), **General Adolphe le Flô** (as War Minister), and **Jules Favre** (as Foreign Minister). The Government had three main goals: securing a favorable peace treaty, obtaining aid from foreign powers, and preparing for the defene of Paris from the Germans (Naranjo n.d.). The latter, however, was hard as the French army was roughened up by the defeat at Sedan. In fact, the largest remaining military force was Bazaine's army, which was still trapped at Metz (Popkin 2001, 132).

However, the government changed its plans after a few days. Jules Favre announced on 6 September that "France would not give up an inch of her territory nor a stone of her fortress" (Naranjo, n.d.). Bismarck, not pleased with the statements made by the Government of National Defence, demanded the control of Alsace-Lorraine, Metz, Strasbourg, and Mont-Valerien (the fortress in command of Paris) to be relinquished to the Germans. His request was declined, and the provisional government was forced to continue defending France against the Germans (Naranjo n.d.).

E. Siege of Paris

Paris was encircled by Prussian troops on 20 September, which restricted the city's access to resources. Gambetta escaped the city via a hot air balloon and strove toward rallying the people against the siege by issuing the following proclamation (Popkin 2001, 133):

> Tied down and contained by the capital, the Prussians, far from home, anxious, harassed, hunted down by our reawakened people, will be gradually decimated by our arms, by hunger, by natural causes.

The proclamation was only partially effective as it managed to levy an army south of the Lorraine River, yet it failed to levy soldiers on a national level. The proclamation furthermore prompted the radical republicans and the socialists in Paris, the self-proclaimed French patriots, to oppose any sort of capitulation. These groups later called for the decentralization of political power and supported the idea of a communal government governing Paris (Popkin 2001, 133).

The previously trapped army of Bazaine surrendered on 29 October. When the newspapers published the news, the government accused them of being a "Prussian organ"; the Le Combat newspaper office was raided and burned down by the public as a result. The Government finally had to admit on 31 October that the stories were real. Apart from that, **Adolphe Thiers** (who had stayed out of the provisional government) proposed to accept the Prussian terms of peace, which caused the left-wing leaders to suspect that their efforts to protect the nation's integrity were being undermined. The frustration over these events eventually led to a protest by the members of the National Guard; the protest was spontaneous as the political leaders were in a meeting when the protests started. The protestors quickly devised a plan to march to the *Hôtel de Ville* and replace the government. with a government consisting of **Louis Auguste Blanqui**, **Charles Delescluze**, **Felix Pyat, Gustave Flourens**, and **Victor Hugo**. The members of the proposed government eventually arrived at the scene, apart from Hugo. Nevertheless, the uprising attempt ended suddenly without any casualties or any tangible outcome (Horne 2007).

The Prussian siege continued in the meanwhile. Paris faced the threat of starvation as the newspapers published recipes for cooking animals and the wealth dined on the animals at the Paris Zoo. The situation worsened in January 1871 as the Prussians started bombarding the city. The Government of National Defence was left with no option but to accept the peace terms

of Bismarck, who oversaw the proclamation of the creation of a unified German Empire in Versailles a few days before (Popkin 2001, 133; State 2010, 221).

The Siege of Paris (Public Domain)

F.   Armistice and the February Elections

After the defeat, ceasefire talks were held first before any negotiations on a peace treaty were held. Bismarck was harsh and uncompromising during the talks. Favre, who was sent out for the talks by the Government of National Defence, managed to broker a number of more acceptable terms for the French. The National Guard was allowed to stay armed yet only one division of the regular French was allowed to stay armed. Other terms of the ceasefire agreement foresaw the French army surrendering its arms, and only the officers being allowed to keep their swords. The French government was furthermore forced to pay a reparation of 200 million francs while also surrendering the forts around Paris to the Germans. The armistice was expected to stay effective until 19 February, when an assembly was scheduled to convene following an election and discuss a possible peace treaty. (Horne 2007)

The way elections were conducted on 8 February 1871 using a system wherein the voters from each *département* voted for candidates and the most preferred candidates were elected as deputies. However, there were no restrictions about a single candidate being included in multiple lists, causing some to be elected in multiple departments; for example, Thiers was elected in 26 departments. The candidates were divided into two groups: one favored continuing the war while the other group upheld peace; the latter was triumphant in the elections. 675 seats in the **National Assembly** were filled as a result of the election; the majority of seats were won by conservative deputies that supported peace. Over 400 were monarchists, though divided between the Legitimist and the Orleanist camps. On the other hand, around 150 republicans (more than 200 if the more moderate supporters of Thiers are included) were elected. In the meanwhile, Napoleon still retained his claim to the French throne even though he was held captive and lost his influence in France. (Horne 2007; Plessis 1987, 169-170)

As the head of the pro-peace faction, Thiers was given the duty to head the government. The majority of deputies approved Thiers thinking that he had an impressive political background and a great understanding of French politics. Thiers' first task was to negotiate a preliminary peace treaty, the deadline for which was extended until 26 February. Thiers, being a tougher negotiator than Favre, continued negotiating until 26 February when the preliminary peace treaty was finalised (Horne 2007).

According to the provision of the treaty, France ceded the entire Alsace region and most of Loraine (including Metz and Strasbourg) to Germany. Not all was lost, however, as Thiers managed to save Belfort. France agreed to pay 6 billion francs as war indemnity to Germany though this amount was later reduced to 5 billion francs. Moreover, it was decided that the Germans will gradually retreat from the regions it had occupied only upon receiving the indemnity payments. Thiers was not contented; the National Assembly was not contended

either when Thiers presented the treaty on 28 February 28. Yet, with no other choice available, the treaty was ratified with 546 votes in favour, 107 against, and 23 abstentions. The decision angered the Parisian deputies and caused some deputies (especially those from Alsace-Lorraine) to resign (Horne 2007).

Most deputies were suspicious of the Parisian stance and claimed that they did not understand their morals. Hence, the Parisian deputies found themselves to be hated upon arriving at Bordeaux, where the National Assembly convened until moving to Versailles on 20 March. The parliamentary sessions got heated and Blanqui, Flourens, and two others were sentenced to death due to their involvement with the October uprising (Horne 2007).

G. Bitterness Between the Government and the National Guard

The Assembly enacted the **Law of Maturities** in early March, which obliged all debts to be paid within 48 hours and allowed landlords to demand payment of all unpaid rent. This bill was cruel to Parisians as the populace, already left in unsatisfactory material conditions due to the war, were forced the pay their debts despite them having no funds for that, save for a wealthy minority. The Assembly also decided to cancel the daily paychecks (worth 150 francs) distributed to the members of the National Guard. These decisions hurt the majority of the Parisians as even the petite bourgeoise were reduced to the material conditions of the working class. Moreover, the Assembly voted to relocate its venue from Paris to Versailles due to the Parisian opposition toward the government; this move angered many Parisians (Horne 2007).

The political situation in Paris had also become dangerous. An organ called the ***Comité Central de la Garde Nationale*** (**Central Committee of the National Guard**) had been formed by the left-wing members of the National Guard even before the treaty was signed. This organ, which assumed the role of administering the National Guard, had accumulated great power

over the administration of Paris by March. In fact, the group had become the most powerful armed force in France as it had 200 cannons, and its members retained their arms (Horne 2007).

On 18 March, Thiers' government attempted to capture the cannons of the National Guard located on Montmartre Hill; the operation ended in failure and the generals in command of the operations were executed by the National Guard. The Central Committee assumed control of Paris later that day. The French Government retreated to Versailles as a result and tried to negotiate with the National Guard, though the attempts at conciliation were short-lived (Plessis 1987, 171).

VII.   CONCLUSION: THE BIRTH OF THE COMMUNE

An autonomous city government was thus declared by the National Guard on 18 March 1871, and similar commune uprisings soon erupted in other urban population centers such as **Marseille**, **Lyon**, **Toulouse**, **Saint-Étienne**, and **Le Creusot**. Elections for a new citywide parliament to assume the political duties of the Central Committee, called the **Council of the Commune**, were scheduled for 26 March 1871. 227 thousand voters out of the 480 thousand eligible cast votes; participation was the lowest in the bourgeois neighborhoods (Popkin 2001, 134-135). A total of 66 elected members preferred to sit in the Council; among them, around twenty were **neo-Jacobins**, a dozen were **Blanquists**, seventeen were members of the **International** (including the **Marxists and Proudhonists**), and a couple of members were independents. The Council held its first meeting on 28 March 1871 during which it adopted the name "**Paris Commune**" for the new city government; the members of the Council were assigned to one of the nine collegial commissions meant to emulate the duties of ministries soon after (Musto 2021).

A barricade (a characteristic feature of the French revolutionaries and communards) guarded by the

National Guard on 18 March 1871 (Public Domain)

France stands in the midst of political uncertainty and the prospects of turmoil as the March of 1871 is coming to a close. The Commune Council of Paris seems determined in its goal to bring "true social justice", which had been neglected for decades, to the city of Paris and possibly to the glorious nation of France as a whole. On the other hand, the Thiers Government is not keen on letting insurgents seize the heart of the nation and subvert order, which indicates that a conflict between the two sides is inevitable. However, there is no certainty about which tools would be used and the support of which groups would prove to be vital in order to triumph in the upcoming conflict. The uncertainties do not end there as the reaction of the factions in the National Assembly or the German army camping outside Paris may become just as vital in determining the outcome. Which one will live longer: The Third Republic, or the Revolution? The uncertainties may be there, but the answer never waits.

8. QUESTIONS TO BE ADDRESSED

A. Questions to be Addressed by the Cabinet of the French Republic

1) *Through what means could the insurrection be contained within the boundaries of Paris?*
2) *What could be done to increase the strength of the armed forces, especially those currently deployed around Paris? Which methods of army recruitment should be utilized in order to restore the French army to its glorious days?*
3) *What should be done to prevent the coordination between the Paris Commune and the communal governments declared across the nation?*
4) *Is there a way to crush the commune uprisings once and for all?*
5) *What should be done to prevent the outbreak of any workers' uprising? What should be done to convince the workers that they are being cared for by the state?*
6) *What should the **republic** do the protect its legitimacy in the eyes of the French people?*
7) *Which strategies should be adopted while resuming diplomatic talks with the Germans?*
8) *Which revisions should be made to the **Versailles Peace Treaty** signed in February 1871 in order to make the terms as uncostly as possible for France?*
9) *Which measures should be taken to finance the payment of 6 billion francs in war indemnity to Germany? Is there a way to pay the indemnity swiftly so that the occupied regions could be liberated as soon as possible?*
10) *Should Catholicism remain the most privileged faith in France? Is there a need for the revision of the legal documents of the Concordat régime? Is there a need for the secularization of public institutions and the education system?*
11) *Should aristocratic titles be reinstated?*
12) *How to keep the lower-class content while not upsetting the bourgeoisie and the upper class?*
13) *Which regulations (if any) need to be passed concerning the working conditions?*
14) *How could the material conditions of the workers and the poor be improved?*
15) *Is there a need for revising the provisions of the Code Napoléon that concern social life?*
16) *What should be the new approach adopted towards the workers' organizations? Should their existence be tolerated, encouraged, or prohibited? Is there a way of utilizing those organizations in the state's interests?*
17) *Which stance should the government adopt towards the monarchist attempts to reinstate monarchy under the House of Bourbon or the House of Orléans?*
18) *Is there a need for seeking cooperation with the radical deputies in the Assembly?*
19) *What arrangements should be made so that political power is distributed between the executive and the legislative organs in the most suitable way? (This especially pertains to the powers of the President, the Council of Ministers, and the National Assembly)*
20) *What other institutional arrangements should be made in the political system? What will be the founding principles of the new republic?*
21) *Which local administration reforms should be made so that regional and urban problems could be addressed more effectively?*
22) *Which measures should be taken to promote economic growth?*
23) *How should the state take action to assist the industrial and financial sectors?*

24) *Which measures could be taken to sustain economic stability and favourable economic conditions for the consumers?*
25) *Which legal adjustments would prove to be beneficial to regulate the economy?*
26) *Is there a need for the state to prioritize supporting infrastructure investments?*
27) *What could be done to rally the European Great Powers (and other nations) to support France in dire straits?*
28) *What should be done to prevent the Paris Commune from receiving international aid/support, especially with the help of the members of the International Workingmen's Association?*

B. Questions to be Addressed by the Council of the Commune

1) *How should the Commune consolidate its grip in Paris and neutralise the forces in Paris that refuse to recognize its authority?*
2) *How could the National Guard be strengthened (in terms of military discipline and equipment)?*
3) *How should the National Guard protect Paris from any offensive that might originate from the armies of the Republic or the German Empire?*
4) *Which military strategies should be utilized to expand the area under Commune control? Is it possible to capture Versailles and subvert the government of the Republic?*
5) *Which methods of propaganda should be utilized to gain the sympathy of workers and soldiers across France? Could new uprisings be perpetrated? What could be done to undermine the legitimacy of the Thiers Government?*
6) *Should the composition of the Council of the Commune be redesigned? Which political and administrative reforms would create an efficient Commune government?*
7) *How should the balance between democracy and authority be established? To what extent should political divisions be tolerated?*
8) *Should socialism accompany radicalism? If yes, which strand of socialism should be espoused so that the goals of the Commune could be reached with utter efficiency?*
9) *How strictly should the Commune act while enforcing the revolutionary principles and punishing the anti-revolutionaries?*
10) *Which reforms should be taken with regard to the ownership and control of the enterprises and the means of production in Paris?*
11) *Which regulations should be put in effect to expand workers' rights, improve working conditions, and eliminate exploitation?*
12) *Which measures should be taken to eliminate poverty and improve living conditions?*
13) *Which legal adjustments would be in order so that the people can be relieved of economic hardships?*
14) *How should the redistribution of economic resources be realized?*
15) *How to improve the infrastructure in Paris, especially in working class neighbourhoods?*
16) *How should the role of religion (Catholicism) in social life and in public institutions be redesigned?*
17) *What will be the fate of financial institutions in Paris, most notably the Banque de France?*

18) Is it necessary to take decisions toward achieving gender equality? If yes, which decisions should be taken in this regard?
19) What could be done in order to revive the legacy of the Revolutions of 1789, 1830, and 1848?
20) How could the unconscious workers be made class-conscious?
21) What will happen to the capitalists? What should be the role of the bourgeoisie and the upper class in the new social environment created by the Commune?
22) How to establish connections with other communes in France?
23) Could the Commune acquire any foreign support against the Republic? How to cooperate with the International Workingmen's Association to acquire foreign support for the Commune?

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