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THE INTELLECTUAL ORIGINS OF FRENCH JACOBIN SOCIALISM

I

This essay was written with the thought in mind that there is need for more clarification in the terminology used to describe certain socialist philosophies of the nineteenth century. It seems clear that the terms "democratic socialism" or "social democracy" have lost much of the meaning they might have had in the past. "Democratic" as an adjective or "democracy" as a noun, have been so abused that today they may convey the idea of either a civil libertarian kind of government or a form of totalitarianism. Indeed, the words made for confusion in the nineteenth century when Jacobins, Babouvians, Blanquists, even Bonapartists, claimed each to be true representatives of the general will, and either executed or would have executed those representing opposing wills. Nonviolent were P.-J.-B. Buchez and Louis Blanc, each of whom claimed to be a democratic socialist. Yet in 1848 they opposed each other with intense vehemence. There is need then, for definition and delineation.

The problem of clarification involves a reinterpretation of certain socialist ideologies and a more definite understanding of the forces which brought about the politicizing of them. For France, only one author made this latter topic the subject of a special study.[1] However, he fell somewhat short of his goal, especially for the pre-1848 period, the one with which this essay deals. The purpose of this study, therefore, is to offer a more precise explanation concerning the origin of one of the currents of early socialist philosophy, called here Jacobin socialism. This task calls for an investigation of the efforts made by certain left-wing thinkers to unite two distinct ideologies: Jacobin democracy and co-operative socialism.

The seminal ideas of these ideologies appeared during the eighteenth century and were drawn, on the one hand, from the principle

[1] See Marcel Prélot, L'évolution politique du socialisme français, 1789-1934 (Paris, 1939).

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of popular sovereignty, and, on the other hand, from two contrasting theories of landed property. There was the radicalist theory which sought to make land accessible to all men by parceling it among them as individual proprietors, and the socialist theory which intended to make it available to all men by transferring it to them as collective owners. The latter ideal necessitated the equitable partition of produce rather than of land.

In the eighteenth century these two tendencies – the term "schools" would be misleading here – were not sharply divided. Both were influenced by a rather widespread approbation of limited economic controls. Both were also given to open denunciation of "*les riches*", which perhaps heralded the nineteenth century criticism of "*les capitalistes*"[1]. Finally, both tendencies shared a similar ethical foundation and outlook that distinguished them from the nascent liberal movement, from the ethics of utilitarianism.

Jean-Jacques Rousseau, the father of French radicalism, was not at one with most of the individualistic liberals of his time. They proclaimed that private property was a sacred natural right. It is true that some of them were not prepared to push the doctrine of natural right to an extreme, but Rousseau was more emphatic when he held that regulation and even dispossession were not violations of natural law.[2] However, the fact that he condemned the first enclosure of land, or that he advocated in his draft constitution for Corsica a kind of state socialism, did not make him a true socialist. Rather, in his general social philosophy he defended individual possession on condition that no one owned property in excess.[3] As a moralist he held that the economic dependence of the poor on the rich was degrading, the solvent of the individual's ethical conscience. It was the man of moderate property, the simple man, who promised to become the virtuous citizen. He therefore attributed to the general will and its agent, the government, the power to confiscate and distribute property so that each individual would become virtuous. The state was not to become in a true sense a welfare agency but a moralizing agency.[4] Limited private property, under these conditions, was also to be a moralizing agency. Thus grew up the radicalist distinction between a property right as a natural absolute and possession as a social contingency.

In contrast, Morelly and Gabriel Bonnot de Mably took the position that private ownership of land, in whatever form, was the cause of

[1] Maxime Leroy, Histoire des idées sociales en France (Paris, 1946), I, pp. 60-61.
[2] André Lichtenberger, Le socialisme français au XVIIIe siècle (Paris, 1895), p. 157.
[3] Oeuvres (Paris, 1852), II, p. 444.
[4] Ernst Cassirer, The Question of Jean-Jacques Rousseau (New York, 1954), pp. 56-64.

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social evil. They too, based their views on moral considerations.[1] Like Rousseau, they were inspired by Lycurgus, Plato, and the Bible, and in seeking the principles of a good society they condemned luxury and laziness and uncontrolled individualism.[2] These were the social evils which they identified with inviolable property rights and the gross inequality that resulted from such rights. All three thinkers differed from the liberals in that their society of virtue was one in which general equality was the first condition of liberty. They argued that where there was no equality there could be no social unity, and men would become free only as integral members of a unified society. In addition, they thought in terms of agricultural pursuits and small town craftsmanship, and inclined alike to share a distrust of the rich as well as of the poor of the cities. Mably referred contemptuously to industrial workers as "*des hommes vils*".[3]

What distinguished Rousseau from the socialists, apart from property considerations, was his greater concern with the problems of government and his emphasis on popular sovereignty as the political basis of freedom. The socialists were far less clear in this matter. Morelly held that any form of government would be acceptable provided there was no private property.[4] Mably was vaguer still; in fact, he despaired of ever having good government, "men are too depraved for there to be a wise statecraft".[5] The most accurate statement to be made is that the socialist tendency was political-minded in only a vague, rather unconcerned fashion. It revealed hardly any awareness of the relation of an economic system to the power of the state.[6]

II

During the Convention, 1792-95, the heirs of the radical tradition were in control, and their Republic of Virtue assumed a decidedly anti-socialist stand. Laws provided for the execution of proponents of the agrarian law and of any idea subversive of property.[7] Many

[1] Morelly, Code de la nature, edited by Gilbert Chinard (Paris, 1950), pp. 241 ff. See Lichtenberger, pp. 237-38; F. J. C. Hearnshaw, ed., The Social and Political Ideas of Some Great French Thinkers of the Age of Reason (London, 1930), pp. 237 ff.

[2] Kingsley Martin, The Rise of French Liberal Thought, edited by J. P. Mayer (Rev. ed.: New York, 1956), pp. 202, 237.

[3] Oeuvres complètes (Lyon, 1792), VI, 525; for Rousseau see Alfred Cobban, Rousseau and the Modern State (London, 1934), chap. vii.

[4] Code de la nature, pp. 196, 217-18, 230.

[5] Quoted in Lichtenberger, p. 234; see also Hearnshaw, pp. 246-47.

[6] See the interesting remarks in Harold Lasky, The Socialist Tradition in the French Revolution (London, 1930), p. 5.

[7] A. Lichtenberger, Le socialisme et la Révolution française (Paris, 1889), p. 260.

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Jacobins favored equality, but conceived of it as a general uniformity among men in thought and action rather than common ownership. The most advanced of them, Maximilien Robespierre and Louis de Saint-Just, followed Rousseau in their belief that political equality was a delusion unless based on economic justice. Their proposals, however, were designed to limit individual acquisition of wealth, not to collectivize it. Important was their concept of the relation between individual rights and the role of society. Robespierre, in the tradition of Rousseau, placed property among those rights granted by society rather than among the inviolable natural rights. He then went farther than Rousseau when he gave a marked social orientation to the Rights of Man. He proclaimed that society owed to the individual the right to work or to assistance when incapacitated.[1] It is true that his views were not shared by all Jacobins; many of them, especially the provincials, failed to discern any intimate connection between the humane debt of society and popular sovereignty. They, also readers of *Le contrat social*, shared its author's distrust toward the plutocracy and the masses, and were not greatly moved by the moderate social organicism of the radical left wing.[2] Not even the *enragés* and the Hébertists attacked the ideal of limited private property, being anti-capitalist petty bourgeois.[3]

Despite these qualifications the Jacobin experiment marked an important phase in the history of Jacobin socialism. The dominance of liberal individualism and laissez faire was challenged and Robespierre's proposed Declaration of the Rights of Man took its place beside *Le contrat social* as an additional chapter in the democratic bible. Louis Blanc later wrote that certain Jacobins, with the Incorruptible at their head, recognized the need of fraternal aid among men, and of the intervention of an active power to protect the weak.[4] Interventionism of some sort became integrated into the Jacobin left and the experiences of 1793-94 awakened in the minds of contemporaries and of later generations an awareness of social problems and their relation to political action. Henceforth all movements in which the Jacobin tradition exercised an influence called for a strong state. For most, this state was to be strong in order to overcome monarchic and clerical opposition, yet there was often in the back of the later Jacobin's mind the idea of a strong power acting to arrange social and economic con-

[1] Ralph Korngold, Robespierre and the Fourth Estate (New York, 1941), pp. 87-88; A. Mathiez, La Révolution française (Paris, 1951), II, pp. 66-67.

[2] C. Crane Brinton, The Jacobins (New York, 1930), pp. 159-67.

[3] Daniel Guérin, La lutte des classes sous la première République (Paris, [1946]), I, pp. 72-79.

[4] Histoire de la Révolution française (Paris, 1847-62), X, pp. 249-50; Histoire de dix ans (11th ed.: Paris, n.d.), IV, pp. 105-9.

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ditions. As Roger Soltau put it, "The Republican of 1848 is often more an undeveloped Socialist than an advanced Liberal..."[1]

This was more true of the 1830's and '40's than of 1848 or 1793. Blanc accurately recognized that the Jacobin radicalism of the great Revolution and socialism were distinct.

III

The first significant effort to bring the two tendencies together occurred, as a political expedient, only in the mid-1790's with the Conspiracy of Equals. This affair was a desperate reaction against the Directory and, as such, attracted both Jacobin radicals and Babouvian socialists. These men, not very happy in one another's company, were able to smooth over their differences in May 1796.[2] A temporary alliance was possible, not only because they opposed a common enemy, but also because Gracchus Babeuf and Philippe Buonarroti and others of the conspiracy were deeply influenced by Rousseau. His writings had nurtured their political and educational ideas. Babeuf also came to praise the Declaration of the Rights of Man of Robespierre, in particular, its recognition of the right to existence.[3] One might add that he, like Robespierre, read into *Le contrat social* the ruthless Jacobinism that dominated their views and actions, which made of them, however reluctantly, dictators of uncompromising temper.[4] Buonarroti for his part greatly esteemed Saint-Just who, he affirmed, "had caused to be decreed that the goods of the enemies of the Revolution would be given to the People".[5] In fact, Babeuf and Buonarroti were, in their fashion, Jacobin collectivists. They were therefore able to cooperate with the remnants of the orthodox radicals, and to lay plans for the overthrow of the Directory. However, they were not greatly concerned with political theories and their radicalism did not assume a large place in their proclamations.

The influence of Mably showed more clearly in their key documents: the *Manifeste*, the *Acte d'insurrection*, and the *Analyse de la doctrine*.[6] Like the philosophical cleric they proclaimed, with a good deal more enthusiasm and conviction, that real equality could not exist without the

[1] Roger Soltau, French Political Thought in the Nineteenth Century (London, 1931), p. 95; see also Leroy, II, p. 414.

[2] Gérard Walter, Babeuf (Paris, 1937), p. 153.

[3] Maurice Dommanget, ed., Pages choisies de Babeuf (Paris, 1935), p. 145.

[4] See Soltau, „Introduction".

[5] Papiers de Buonarroti, n.a.f. 20804, f. 7, in the Bibliothèque Nationale. See f. 69 for his admiration of Rousseau.

[6] For these documents see Victor Advielle, Histoire de Gracchus Babeuf (Paris, 1884), I, pp. 197-217.

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"community of goods", that "The land belongs to no one, its fruits belong to everyone." Unlike Mably, however, they looked to a Jacobin state to bring about a collectivist society, and they called for the Constitution of 1793, at least as a minimum political program. In reality, the conspirators did not look forward to an immediate promulgation of the still-born constitution, having planned to set up a "*comité insurrecteur*" to carry out the plot, and to reactivate the Terror.[1] They proclaimed rather that equality must be absolute, and to attain their goal they were prepared to act in the tradition of Marat, Robespierre and the Hébertists, to carry out the tyranny of freedom.

Their collectivism was still rather primitive, being a compound of eighteenth century utopian and natural law theories on the one hand, and of the pre-capitalist economy of France on the other. They tended to stress the equalization of distribution and to ignore the problems of collectivist production. However, Babeuf favored the use of machines in industry provided it was socialized.[2] At the same time his concept of equality led him to become a leveler in a more complete sense than were the advanced Jacobins. His collectivism was based on the assumption that all men had equal capacities, and those pursuits which differentiated citizens from one another, science, art, higher education, were evil, were violations of man's natural equality.[3] Under his leadership the Conspiracy of Equals assumed the form of a rudimentary conflict of classes, not one between capital and labor but one between „*les riches*" and „*le peuple*". It set out to eliminate the wealthy and to arrange that the people become not merely equal but homogeneous, as nature intended.[4]

The conspiracy failed. It was primarily a bourgeois movement, with little cohesion and hardly any working class following. Vague in its ideological content it left to succeeding generations an inspirational legend rather than a real program. This legend was preserved by Buonarroti. Probably a distant descendant of the Renaissance artist he too, was a master who chiseled from the raw stuff of his experiences in the 1790's a solid tradition that took shape in his work, *Conspiration pour l'égalité dite de Babeuf*, published in Brussels in 1828 and in Paris two years later. These two volumes of memoirs had a marked influence on a new generation of Jacobins.[5] Typical was what Louis Blanc later wrote of him: „As for his opinions, they were of celestial

[1] See article 12 of the Acte d'insurrection, in: Paul Louis, Histoire du socialisme en France (5th ed.: Paris, 1950), p. 53.

[2] Dommanget, ed., Pages choisies, pp. 213-14.

[3] Leroy, II, pp. 75- 76.

[4] Dommanget, ed., Pages choisies, pp. 192-93.

[5] Georges Weill, Histoire du parti Républicain en France (Revised ed.: Paris, 1928), pp. 35-36.

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origin, since they tended to bring back among men the cult of evangelical fraternity."[1] His importance lies in the fact that he quickened the social orientation of Jacobin politics as it renewed its vigor.

IV

The revolution of July 1830 witnesses the phoenix-like rebirth of political radicalism. Headed by fire-eaters such as Godfrey Cavaignac and Louis Auguste Blanqui, it drew strength from the early disappointment with the July Monarchy. As yet, its followers were no more than a handful of devotees assembled in the Society of the Friends of the People. The essence of their program reaffirmed the constitutional principles of 1793: popular sovereignty, universal male suffrage and eligibility for public office, the election of representatives, of magistrates and officers of the National Guard, an indemnity for representatives, obligatory primary education, and disestablishment.[2] These were chiefly political objectives. However, Cavaignac, Blanqui, and Buonarroti led the society into the realm of social problems, and although most of its adherants were above all concerned with political opposition, the society suggested that the skilled workers form voluntary co-operatives or associations of production.[3] It also set up an „industrial commission" to study a project favoring „exchange banks for industrial products."[4] Of these activities Eugène Fournière later wrote: "One finds here the first contours of democratic socialism of which, six years later, Pecqueur, and then Vidal and Louis Blanc, will be the most complete expression."[5] It must be kept in mind, however, that the society stressed its respect for private property.[6] Probably Fournière's assertion would be more appropriate for the successor of the society.

Dissolved in 1833 it was replaced by the Society of the Rights of Man, and there now occurred a more determined effort to modify orthodox radicalism along the lines of socialist principles. The Babouvian legend now wove itself into a reinterpretation of the great Revolution. In particular the role of the Convention and the Terror were now displayed with refurbished luster.[7] Latter day Jacobins and Babou-

[1] Histoire de dix ans, IV, p. 182.
[2] Procès des quinze (Paris, 1832), pp. 45-55.
[3] See Godfrey Cavaignac, Procès du droit d'association (Paris, 1832).
[4] Gabriel Perreux, Aux temps des sociétés secrètes (Paris, 1931), p. 24.
[5] Le règne de Louis Philippe, vol. VIII in: Jean Jaurès, ed., Histoire socialiste (Paris, n.d.), p. 24.
[6] Weill, p. 31.
[7] Arthur Lehning, Buonarroti and His International Secret Societies, in International Review of Social History, I (1956), pp. 112-13.

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vians, thrown together once more by common opposition to the government, rediscovered the old formula of the Conspiracy of Equals: "Bread and the Constitution of 1793."[1] A noticeable evolution, however, was the emergence of a new type of revolutionary, one less concerned with rural problems than those of urban workers. This change was an inevitable result of a growing economy and a rising laboring class more conscious of its unhappy plight and more determined to activate reform.

Workers, however, only influenced the society; they never dominated it. The leaders were petty bourgeois Jacobins: Guinard, Vignerte, Cavaignac, Kersausie, Dupont (of Bussac), and Babouvians: Charles Teste, René Voyer d'Argenson, Audry de Puyraveau. All of these men were disciples of Robespierre whose Declaration of the Rights of Man served as the ideological basis of the new society. They also laid plans for a new committee of public safety, composed of a virtuous élite, to guide the people toward „universal association".

During the July Monarchy the word association acquired the currency of a messianic formula, with numerous overtones attracting all groups of the left, whether radical or socialist. Almost cabalistically vague, it lent itself to a variety of meanings. Most of the members of the society conceived principally of a political organization, such as the one to which they belonged. Even François Raspail, who affirmed that the future would witness the growth of agricultural, industrial and commercial associations, believed that for the present generous-minded thinkers should limit their ambitions to political organization.[2] He, along with Cavaignac, represented a kind of social-minded Jacobinism that emphasized popular government and some popular ownership in production and distribution. Thinking in terms of petty industry, they had in mind political clubs for the present and associations of employers and workers for the future. Constantly in their thought was the Jacobin state, benevolent toward *sans culottes* and strong enough to equalize moderately the distribution of wealth and property. As regards land, Cavaignac affirmed, „The sentiment of property is one of the sentiments natural to man; precisely because of this we demand that it receive satisfaction among the largest possible number of men, instead of being an exception. There should be no great fortunes; there should be no excessive poverty."[3]

[1] David Thomson, The Babeuf Plot (London, 1947), p. 64.
[2] Tribune, Aug. 29, 1833.
[3] Quoted in Pierre Angrand, Les tendances égalitaires et socialistes dans les sociétés secrètes françaises, 1830-34, in: 1848 et les révolutions du XIXe siècle, XXXIX (1948), p. 19.

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These radicals were also hostile to liberal individualism. They tended, on the one hand, to favor the hard-working, independent-minded craftsman and peasant, but, on the other hand, conceived of each individual as a distinct entity well integrated into an organic society. Cavaignac therefore spoke out strongly against a system favorably accepting as natural a society decomposed into isolated, squabbling, and uncontrolled individuals competing for power and wealth. To him this was anarchy which precluded the necessary reconciliation between authority and freedom, between the group and its particular members.[1] These early radicals, influenced as they were by nascent socialism, were not the crypto-anarchists of the twentieth century. Like the socialists they were out of power and sought to capture power, and while theoretically anti-étatist, they nearly all looked toward a Jacobin dictatorship to inaugurate equality and to prevent their much cherished liberty from destroying the equilibrium which was to make for social solidarity. In the delicate balance between liberty and eqality they tended to emphasize the latter.

Before long there appeared in the society a number of thinkers greatly interested in labor conditions and anxious to win labor support. More influenced by the rising co-operative movement than by Babouvian collectivism they broadened the concept of association, adding to it the ideals of economic and social reform. They went beyond the pure co-operators, Charles Fourier and Etienne Cabet, who were inclined to ignore politics, and found in the radicalist state the source of credit necessary for financing workers' associations. This plan, a conscious effort to give a social aim to the Jacobin tradition, was elaborated most cogently by Marc Dufraisse in his pamphlet, *Association des travailleurs*, published by the Rights of Man in 1833. In this same year appeared another official pamphlet, *De l'égalité*, which stated: "The day when France will be free and the nation sovereign, the essence of the duties of the republic will be to furnish the proletarians with the means of forming co-operative associations and of exploiting themselves their industry."[2] The author looked forward to the abolition of wages and glorified the use of machines.

Despite these advanced views the society was chiefly a conspiracy for the overthrow of the July Monarchy. Most members were closer to Cavaignac than to the neo-Babouvians or to neo-étatists such as Dufraisse. And yet, that the idea of producers' associations penetrated the membership cannot be doubted, for the pamphlets listed above were published by the society. But even many of those who favored

[1] Revue du progrès, V (March 1, 1841), p. 95.
[2] Quoted in Angrand, p. 26.

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economic interventionism seem to have entertained the hope of reviving *compagnonnage*, purified of its craft jealousies and brutal rivalries; they did not conceive of production save in its pre-capitalist form.[1] They were more concerned with just distribution than collective production. The most advanced in the society, those who did think in terms of production, were influenced largely by P.-J.-B. Buchez, Pierre Leroux, Charles Fourier, and Robert Owen.

The society was fairly successful in its propaganda activities, with the result that a larger numbers of laborers entered into its conclaves than had been the case with its predecessor, the Friends of the People. In Paris some of its sections contained a majority of workers, while in a few others workers made up the membership. They therefore strengthened the more revolutionary elements in the club and ended by drawing it into the almost purely economic struggle between labor and capital. In 1834 the monarchy tightened the laws against associations of every sort. Since the society was largely an underground organization it might not have been fatally affected; however, in April the workers of Lyon resorted to their classic mode of protest, barricades, and when the revolt spread to Paris the club became involved. This penchant for insurrection, alluring for many radicals, proved to be disastrous. The society as well as the workers organizations were crushed.

The disappearance of the society brought to an end the agency that was plaiting together the two threads of Jacobin socialism. There occurred, so to speak, the great dispersal. Branching off to the left were the continuators of the Babouvian tradition with its *mystique* of permanent conspiracy, its materialistic atheism, and its uncompromising voluntarism. The leaders, Blanqui, Théodore Dézamy, J.-J. Pillot and Richard Lahautière, emphasized the class struggle, whithout, however, clearly distinguishing between manual laborers and petty bourgeois. In the secret societies of the extreme left, the Society of Families (1834) and the Society of Seasons (1837), Blanqui combined the tactics of Hébertism and a vague collectivism based in part on Babouvism, thus laying out a different revolutionary movement, that of Jacobin communism.[2]

V

The leaders of the more moderate Jacobin associationist tendency

[1] Perreux, pp. 281-82.

[2] See the excellent study by Alan B. Spitzer, The Revolutionary Theories of Louis Auguste Blanqui (New York, 1957), chap. vi; see also E. S. Mason, Blanqui and Communism, in: Political Science Quarterly, XLIV (1929), pp. 498-527, and Roger Garaudy, Les sources françaises du socialisme scientifique (Paris, 1949), chap. v.

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ceased to be a unified group. They were either in prison or in exile. This setback was partly counterbalanced by the significant activity of a number of socialist intellectuals from whose lucubrations would emerge the essential credos of a new reform movement, Jacobin socialism. The aims of these men were rendered doubly difficult, first by the fact that many radicals, fearful of the latter-day Babouvians, grew increasingly distrustful of all collectivist ideas, and second, by the absence from the socialist tradition of any acceptible political basis on which to build.[1] During the eighteenth century the utopian dreamers had lent only the slightest attention to politics. During the 1790's the Conspiracy of Equals had brought together momentarily the Jacobin and collectivist threads, but the later neo-Babouvians had carried the cult of their hero into the nascent communist camp where it remained. Fourier, possibly reacting against the violence of the 1790's, elaborated a "socializing" ideal which was fundamentally apolitical, and his disciple, Victor Considerant, although concerned with governmental affairs, wrote in 1847 in favor of constitutional monarchy.[2] At the other extreme was the Count de Saint-Simon who combined the idea of a controlled economy with that of an autocratic state. Curiously enough, the more definite democratization of socialism began largely as a reaction against his autocracy.

The earliest theorists to work in this direction were Buchez and Leroux.[3] Both had entered into the movement for social reform as Saint-Simonians, but both soon dropped away from the school. By 1830 they were influenced by the idea of a republic, finding in this form of government the one most adaptable to the need for social reform. In the *Journal des sciences morales et politiques*, soon known as the *Européen*, Buchez displayed an admiration for Jacobinism and joined the Society of the Friends of the People. Shortly after he came forward in his monumental *Histoire parlementaire de la Révolution française* as an influential apologist of the Convention and Robespierre. At the same time he worked out his program for workers' associations, making a significant contribution to the co-operative movement. However, his effort was largely directed toward reconciling rather than fusing what he considered two distinct entities, popular representative government and producers' associations. The hand of the politician, he concluded, was guided by the tendency to pick the pocket of individual freedom and therefore must be excluded from two most precious treasures, economics and religion. Influenced by Félicité de

[1] Prélot, pp. 35 ff.

[2] Principes du socialisme (Paris, 1847), p. 69.

[3] I. Tchernoff, Le Parti Républicain sous la Monarchie de juillet (Paris, 1901), p. 75.

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Lamennais he became a Catholic, albeit not a practicing one, and during the late 1830's assisted the excommunicated priest to lay the foundations of Christian socialism.[1] His defense of Catholicism as a religion tended to alienate him from the radicals and was perhaps a leading factor driving him during the 1840's toward the more moderate outlook of *Le national*, edited by Armand Marrast. Nonetheless, his plans for the organization of co-operatives influenced Louis Blanc.[2]

Although antagonistic to the neo-theocratic ideals of Buchez and his disciples of *L'atelier*, the socialism that grew up under the influence of Jacobin politics was not irreligious. It inclined to be anticlerical but it differed from Jacobin communism in that its exponents were secular-minded pantheists or deists. Imbibing their inspiration from the Bible and Rousseau they had visions of the second coming as the fulfillment of a vast political and social reform, part of which was disestablishment.

Such was Pierre Leroux. He compounded a kind of spiritual socialism, popular sovereignty and representative government in his *Revue encyclopédique*. He later explained his mission during the 1830's, "I served in explaining by the formula of the Republic, what Saint-Simon, Jean-Jacques Rousseau and Owen wanted to say. ...This was the synthesis that I elaborated more than any other."[3] He had this aim in mind when he helped to draw up the program of the Society of the Rights of Man. As a member of that society he influenced such leaders as Cavaignac, teaching them that the republic to come must be social.[4]

But Leroux was not a fullfledged radical, repudiating as he did the ideal of a unicameral legislature, a fundamental of the Jacobin state. Enchanted with the number 3 he desired the juxtaposition of three councils. This would have created that bogey of the radicals, a "mixed government". In spite of this trinitarian heresy he called for an interventionist state. "The legislator", he wrote, "must be made to intervene, because it has been demonstrated that not to recognize in politics any other principle save individualism and laissez faire, is to surrender the lower classes to brutal exploitation."[5] He was also convinced of the permanent utility of representative government. It "harmonises the struggle and expresses unity", and brings into accord "the sentiments which move toward the future... [and] the interests

[1] Armand Cuvillier, P.-J.-B. Buchez et les origines du socialisme chrétien (Paris, 1948), p. 33.

[2] F. Muckle, Geschichte der sozialistischen Ideen im 19. Jahrhundert (Leipzig, 1909), II, p. 147. Muckle, however, has somewhat overstated this influence.

[3] L'espérance, 1856-57, p. 172.

[4] Edouard Dolléans, Histoire du mouvement ouvrier (Paris, 1948), I, p. 76.

[5] Revue encyclopédique, 1832, p. 305.

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and sentiments which are attached to the present." Blanc's concept of "social virtue" was identical to this, and the author of *Organisation du travail* also learned from Leroux that the "true Republic is socialism. To wish the triumph of the Republic in France without socialism is absurd."[1]

Leroux also repudiated the belief in an all-powerful state, which explains in part why he disassociated himself from the Saint-Simonian movement. One of the first thinkers to give extensive attention to the problem of liberty and authority he sought to reconcile the freedom of the individual with the will of society. As though inspired by an inner sense of oneness with all men, those of the past, present, and future, he lyrically wrote: "Each man is a fruit on the tree of humanity; but the fruit, although the product of the tree, is nonetheless complete and perfect in itself;... Thus each man within himself reflects the whole of society, each man is in a certain fashion the manifestation of his century, of his people and of his generation, each man is humanity." On the other hand, he felt within a strong awareness of himself posed starkly against the huge oneness of humanity, and cautioned that "each man is a sovereignty, each man is a right, for whom the law is made, and against whom no law can prevail."[2] Looking forward to the eventual disappearance of the proletariat he coined the word "socialism", which he applied to his vague scheme for industrial organization based on workers' co-operatives and to his concept of industrial property. The whole process of industrial production, he reasoned, was collective in nature, the work of all society including the dead as well as the living; consequently manufactured articles were a property belonging to no one in particular, a property indivisible, a common stock from which each person was to draw according to needs, capacity and work.[3]

The term socialist, however, could not be applied to his plan for agriculture inasmuch as he called for the generalization not the collectivization of land. Here he was an orthodox radical. Yet he and Buchez kept alive during the 1830's the ideals of social unity and popular sovereignty, and passed on these essentials to Louis Blanc, Constantin Pecqueur, and François Vidal. These men revised them in accordance with the demands of French urban society. The economy was becoming increasingly industrialized, although it still preserved many features of its pre-capitalist structure.

[1] Quoted in Tchernoff, p. 107.

[2] Quoted in David Owen Evans, Le socialisme romantique, Pierre Leroux et ses contemporains (Paris, 1948), pp. 234-35.

[3] Georges Renard, La République de 1848, vol. IX in: Jean Jaurès, ed., Histoire socialiste (Paris, 1907), p. 239.

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This revision began in 1839 with Pecqueur's *Economie sociale* and *Traité des améliorations matérielles*, and then Blanc's *Revue du progrès*. In 1840 Blanc published his famous *Organisation du travail*, and in 1842 Pecqueur rounded out his earlier ideas in his *Théorie nouvelle d'économie sociale et politique*. In 1846 Vidal came out with his *De la répartition des richesses*.

In its fully developed form Jacobin socialism was a homogeneous compound of the two threads we have been tracing. This, its major characteristic, is best observed in the writings of Blanc. Unlike his predecessors he was far more than a reconciler, he was a synthesizer seeking to fuse Jacobin politics and co-operative socialism, seeing in this fusion the logical and therefore inevitable outcome, not only of the 1789 Revolution but of the whole course of French history.[1] In his system radical politics was so bound up with socialist economics that the two became one, harmoniously blended and inseparable. Without the Jacobin state there could be no social workshop and without the social workshop the Jacobin state would lose its reason for being, for there would be neither equality nor liberty.[2]

Like the two ideologies it combined, Jacobin socialism was dedicated to the little people, petty bourgeois and urban and rural laborers. It did not, however, seek to abet class warfare, being persuasionist rather than revolutionary. It appealed to the humanitarianism of the well-to-do. Yet it was in the lower classes, the virtuous poor, that the Jacobin socialists discerned the wellspring of social morality, the primeval source of that goodness inherent in humanity as a whole. Emphasizing virtue, they tended to repudiate the pain-pleasure polarities as motivating forces and posited that pain or pleasure really resulted from the absence or presence of virtue in society. Now virtue did not have quite the same meaning for them as it had for Mably who dreamed of recreating another Sparta. Rather they conceived of it as the desire for social justice, as a willingness to struggle unsparingly for the benefit of the people whose will must be sincerely respected. Virtue was enthusiasm for doing good, a state of social grace, and hence, a complete absence of skepticism.

Again unlike their predecessors, whether radical or socialist, they had more of the entrepreneurial spirit. State aid was made necessary because they had in mind a socialist system involving extensive mechanization and large-scale production. Not all of them wanted to do

[1] Leo A. Loubère, Louis Blanc's Philosophy of History, in: The Journal of the History of Ideas, XVII (1956), pp. 70-88.

[2] See Blanc's Histoire de dix ans, III, pp. 61-62; also Otto Warschauer, Geschichte des Sozialismus und neueren Kommunismus, vol. III; Louis Blanc (Leipzig, 1896), pp. 159-60; Paul Keller, Louis Blanc und die Revolution von 1848 (Zurich, 1926), p. 49.

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away with peasant holdings, but they called for an economy in which all men would have plenty, not because men lived frugally but because men produced in abundance.

It might be said that because of their views on land, Leroux and Cavaignac, until his death in 1845, formed the right wing of the group; Blanc and Vidal, who sought to balance centralized and decentralized control, constituted the center; and Pecqueur with his belief that the Jacobin state must be the sole owner and organizer of all property formed the left wing. Pecqueur has been called the real father of state socialism.[1]

As regards the immediate influence of these theorists Blanc was undoubtedly the most important. Less profound than Pecqueur, less philosophical than Leroux, more readable than Vidal, he more definitely than the others came to seem in the public eye the incarnation of the doctrine. It was he above all who stimulated the already growing political consciousness of the workers who, in the Luxembourg Commission in 1848 greeted him with wild enthusiasm. In the nine years preceeding the February revolt he revived the political ideas of Jacobinism: universal suffrage, a unicameral legislature, a weak executive, an elected magistracy, trial by jury, graduated income tax, freedom of the press, of thought, and of assembly.[2] Of course in this revival his was not a lone voice; nor was he the only publicist who insisted that political reform must lead to social reform. However, distinct from the more orthodox Jacobins he taught that reform must not merely be social but socialist, and that economic equality was just as important as political and judicial equality. Only in a socialist society might the interests of the individual be brought into accord with those of his fellows. He warned that individualist competition did not make for the improvement of most individuals. What was needed was an economic agency to foster fraternity. Just as a democratic legislature harmonized political interests so would social workshops harmonize economic interests. Here was the essence of the organization of work as understood by the Jacobin socialists.[3]

VI

During the 1840's three distinct socialist movements emerged: at the extreme left was Jacobin communism, in the center Jacobin socialism,

[1] G. Marcy, Constantin Pecqueur, fondateur du collectivisme d'état (Paris, 1934).
[2] Leo A. Loubère, The Evolution of Louis Blanc's Political Philosophy, in: The Journal of Modern History, XXVII (1955), pp. 39-60.
[3] See his Organisation du travail (1st-9th eds.: Paris, 1840-50).

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and on the right Christian socialism. All three were formally democratic in that they desired a state based on universal suffrage, and all three were more or less collectivistic in that they demanded that the workers assume ownership of the means of production by co-operation. Nonetheless, they could not unite to form a consolidated force. The communists scorned the Jacobin socialists for being too moderate, for lacking a revolutionary *élan*;[1] the center looked upon the extreme left with the same distrust that Robespierre had displayed toward the Hébertists. Blanc considered Blanqui an extremist who would destroy the revolutionary movement by exaggerating it. He also had a marked dislike for the atheism of the *Enfermé*.[2] Finally, the Christians distrusted everything to their left, seeing in Blanc an authoritarian étatist who would willingly sacrifice freedom to equality.[3]

In consequence of these feuds there was no unity in the socialist left when the revolution broke out in February 1848. Not even the temporary alliance between orthodox Jacobins and Jacobin socialists was preserved. Alexandre Ledru-Rollin, who had collaborated with Blanc to found *La réforme*, turned against him, siding with the moderate republicans for awhile.[4]

During a brief space of time Jacobin socialism enjoyed a strong influence over the working class of Paris. As the head of the Luxembourg Commission, Blanc won a sizable following. Working with Vidal and Pecqueur, he published a program in the *Moniteur*, which was a concise consolidation of their doctrines.[5] But moderate republicanism won the elections of April. And after the fiasco of May 15, when a mob invaded the National Assembly, republicans prepared the destruction of all forms of socialism. In June they abolished the Luxembourg Commission, and crushed the workers who rose in revolt. In August they prepared to prosecute Blanc who saved himself by flight to England. He was soon joined by Jacobin communists, Jacobin socialists and orthodox Jacobins. But not even their tragic fate could induce them to unite against their common enemy.[6]

[1] Maurice Dommanget, Blanqui à Belle-Ile (Paris, 1935), pp. 73, 177; Spitzer, pp. 168-69.

[2] Histoire de dix ans, V, pp. 373-88; Times (London), March 5, 1851.

[3] Armand Cuvillier, Un journal d'ouvriers, L'atelier (Paris, 1954), pp. 117, 145, 184.

[4] Alvin R. Calman, Ledru-Rollin and the Second French Republic (New York, 1922), chaps, x-xii.

[5] See Georges Cohen, Louis Blanc et la Commission du Luxembourg (Paris, 1897); Moniteur universel, April 27, May 2, 3, 6, 1848.

[6] See the vivid description Barbès sent to George Sand in Edmund Plauchut, Autour de Nohant; lettres de Barbès à George Sand (Paris, 1897), pp. 239, 250; see also A. Calman, Ledru-Rollin après 1848 et les proscrits français en Angleterre (Paris, 1921), pp. 35-37, 140 and *passim*; René Gossez, La proscription et les origines de l'Internationale, in: 1848, revue des révolutions contemporaines, No. 189 (1951), pp. 97-115.

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During the Second Empire it was chiefly Blanc who sought to preserve the doctrines of his creed, and when he returned to France in 1870, now an old man, he struggled to re-establish it as a major force. But this topic lies beyond the limits of this essay.[1]

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