

Napoleon's Hundred Days and the Politics of Legitimacy

Edited by Katherine Astbury and Mark Philp

War, Culture and Society, 1750–1850



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Napoleon's Hundred Days and the Politics of Legitimacy

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SERIES EDITORS' PREFACE

The century from 1750 to 1850 was a seminal period of change, not just in Europe but across the globe. The political landscape was transformed by a series of revolutions fought in the name of liberty—most notably in the Americas and France, of course, but elsewhere, too: in Holland and Geneva during the eighteenth century and across much of mainland Europe by 1848. Nor was change confined to the European world. New ideas of freedom, equality and human rights were carried to the furthest outposts of empire, to Egypt, India and the Caribbean, which saw the creation in 1801 of the first black republic in Haiti, the former French colony of Saint-Domingue. And in the early part of the nineteenth century they continued to inspire anti-colonial and liberation movements throughout Central and Latin America.

If political and social institutions were transformed by revolution in these years, so, too, was warfare. During the quarter-century of the French Revolutionary Wars, in particular, Europe was faced with the prospect of 'total' war, on a scale unprecedented before the twentieth century. Military hardware, it is true, evolved only gradually, and battles were not necessarily any bloodier than they had been during the Seven Years War. But in other ways these can legitimately be described as the first modern wars, fought by mass armies mobilized by national and patriotic propaganda, leading to the displacement of millions of people throughout Europe and beyond, as soldiers, prisoners of war, civilians and refugees. For those who lived through the period these wars would

be a formative experience that shaped the ambitions and the identities of a generation.

The aims of the series are necessarily ambitious. In its various volumes, whether single-authored monographs or themed collections, it seeks to extend the scope of more traditional historiography. It will study warfare during this formative century not just in Europe, but in the Americas, in colonial societies, and across the world. It will analyse the construction of identities and power relations by integrating the principal categories of difference, most notably class and religion, generation and gender, race and ethnicity. It will adopt a multi-faceted approach to the period, and turn to methods of political, cultural, social, military, and gender history, in order to develop a challenging and multidisciplinary analysis. Finally, it will examine elements of comparison and transfer and so tease out the complexities of regional, national and global history.

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Introduction

Katherine Astbury and Mark Philp

Even today, Napoleon is an instantly recognisable figure, and memorabilia relating to his person continue to command high prices. The last trademark hat to be sold at auction in 2014 fetched £1.5 million. Even during his reign, his silhouette was familiar to many thanks to the spread of prints across Europe and beyond. The golden age of caricature coincided with the Napoleonic period and owed some of its verve to the myriad ways in which the Emperor could be represented. Due to the strict censorship controls in France, anti-Napoleonic imagery outnumbered pro-Napoleonic prints, but in many ways Napoleon's threat to Europe was as much in the eye of the beholder as in that of the print makers, and the silhouette "hidden profile" print on the front cover of this volume exemplifies this. Some viewers might just see the giant hat, others will see that the profile of Napoleon is created out of the Prussian soldiers holding it up. It is thus his detractors who form the image. In focusing on the final few weeks of Napoleon's time in power in 1815, a period known retrospectively as the Hundred

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Days, this volume will show the extent to which responses to Napoleon are constructed and created by the responses to his exploits of different peoples across Europe. The Hundred Days bring into focus tensions surrounding the representation and legitimacy of not just Napoleon but all of the Great Powers ranged against him.

I

In 1814—after the disastrous Russian Campaign in the winter of 1812 to 1813, the catastrophic defeat at Leipzig in October 1813, and the dogged progress made by Wellington against French troops in the Iberian peninsula after 1812—Napoleon’s spectacular military successes seemed at an end, as did the willingness of the French people to continue to tolerate the privations of war and conscription. As Prussian, Russian, and Austro-Hungarian troops threatened France from the North and East, Wellington’s forces brought additional pressure on the South. In addition, while Napoleon sought to mobilise his army, his commanders increasingly recognised that there was little point in continuing resistance. At the end of March 1814, the troops defending Paris surrendered. On 6 April, his generals told Napoleon that it was over, and Napoleon abdicated.

In the Treaty of Fontainebleau signed five days later, Napoleon was allowed to retain the courtesy title “Emperor,” but he was consigned to the isle of Elba, off the Italian coast, over which he was accorded sovereignty. He was also allowed to keep 400 troops. On his journey into exile he was initially welcomed by crowds, but as he approached the south of France, the public mood became more hostile and there were points at which Napoleon feared for his life. He arrived on Elba on 4 May.

Napoleon remained on Elba for a little less than ten months. The restored king of France, Louis XVIII, first refused to pay the pension that had been agreed at Fontainebleau and, in December, he confiscated all of Napoleon’s personal property in France. At the same time, rumours from Vienna—where the Congress had convened to reach a post-war settlement amongst the Great Powers—suggested that Napoleon would either be removed from Elba, probably to St Helena, or assassinated. Plans for his removal were even discussed in the French press in mid-November. It also became clear that Austria would not permit his wife, Marie-Louise, and their son to join him, which in turn meant that Austria would have no interest in preventing his removal. At the same time, intelligence from France reported the evaporation

of confidence in Louis along with continued support for Napoleon in the army—although the Emperor would also have recalled the popular attacks on his period of rule and on his personal integrity after his departure. Were he to attempt to return to France, there was also an issue about the timing of the enterprise. Waiting until the disbanding of the Congress of Vienna, so as to make allied cooperation more difficult, would run the risk that he would have been disposed of during that process.

Napoleon put together a small flotilla of seven boats, which was enough to carry his troops, made up of the 400 Guard and additional recruits who had gravitated to Elba once Napoleon was there, probably amounting to some 600–700 troops in all.¹ He boarded his ship, the *Inconstant*, at Portoferráio on Elba on Sunday, 26 February 1815, only to find that the wind had died so that the ships had to be rowed out of the harbour. They did not sail until after midnight, and the next day had to slip through the rather incompetent surveillance of both the British and French.² On embarking he had declared, “The die is cast”—a clear recognition of the gamble he was taking. He had to count on the French people rising to welcome him as well as the French army switching their loyalties before a serious confrontation destroyed him or turned him from a liberating to an invading force.

The small flotilla of ships arrived off the French Coast between Cannes and Antibes; they anchored, and a landing was made at the small port of Golfe Juan on 1 March. Almost immediately a small detachment of his troops was captured by the local guard and taken to Antibes. Nonetheless, Napoleon stayed ashore and insisted that his troops resist any armed combat. His own “assault” came in the form of three proclamations: to the French people denying Bourbon legitimacy; to the French army to rally round and liberate France; and to the Imperial Guard to treat the white cockade of the Bourbons as a badge of shame. There was no appeal to liberty and constitutionalism; military glory and, for the people, the expulsion of their enemies were the key words.³

The prevailing tone was one of bitterness at what Napoleon saw as his betrayal at Paris in 1814, but he also made an appeal to restore France’s greatness. He desperately wanted to return at the head of and in the name of the French people, but he was wholly uncertain of whether that was in fact feasible. Indeed, he chose his route north to avoid areas where he was doubtful of people’s loyalties. However, in the opening week he caught elements of the mood of the people that

encouraged him to reinstate the tricolour, and as he moved north he found a shift toward a popular, almost Jacobin fervour of anti-monarchism. Napoleon's biographer, historian Philip Dwyer, points out the following: "At Lyons (8 March), it looked as though the spirit of 1789 and indeed of 1793 was alive and well."⁴

These opening days of Napoleon's campaign were anxious ones. There was no guarantee that his reception would be welcoming. Six days after landing, he faced the first major loyalist force sent to halt his progress at Laffrey, which lies just south of Grenoble. The commander of the Royalist troops, General Lessard, reputedly gave the order to fire. Napoleon, according to legend, dismounted, strode towards the troops, and baring his chest, cried: "Soldiers! I am your Emperor. Do you not recognise me? [...] If there is one among you who wants to kill his general, here I am." The soldiers' response was to shout "Vive l'empereur." The next day he was welcomed into Grenoble, later commenting: "Before Grenoble I was an adventurer. At Grenoble I became a reigning Prince again."⁵

Napoleon's two most serious threats after Grenoble were an army under the Comte d'Artois assembled at Lyons and a major force under Marshall Ney, who had promised Louis that he would bring his former commander back to Paris in a cage. When Napoleon left Grenoble his troops had swelled to 4000 men. D'Artois abandoned Lyons and melted away, thus allowing Napoleon to enter and then to lead some 14,000 men north to meet Ney, who now commanded a far smaller force. In a dramatic *volte face* on 14 March, Ney wrote to Napoleon pledging his support, and the route to Paris was thrown wide open. Later that summer, Ney's defection would be the subject of a particularly scathing royalist caricature, *Le serrement du nez* (the pinching of the nose—a pun on *Serment [oath] du Ney*) where the Marshall is shown with his nose firmly in Napoleon's backside. The mordant satire on Ney's loyalty is a reminder of the stakes for both royalists and Bonapartists.⁶

News of Napoleon's landing reached Vienna on 11 March, and on 13 March the Great Powers proclaimed Napoleon an outlaw. They subsequently agreed to bind themselves to military action until such time as Napoleon was "put absolutely outside the possibility of exciting troubles." They thereby ensured the inevitability of war, and by doing that they ensured that popular support for Napoleon in France would ebb. After nearly twelve years of continuous warfare, few people in France welcomed the prospect of its return.

On 16 March, Louis XVIII addressed the two Chambers of the Corps Législatif in an extraordinary display of traditional pomp and splendour. Louis' speech held out the Constitutional Charter as a bastion of liberty that Napoleon would sweep aside and called on all French citizens to ensure its support: "Let us rally, gentlemen, let us rally around it, let it be our sacred standard ... let the two Chambers give it the force of authority it requires and this war will then truly prove to be national war, showing what can be done by a great people united together by their love for their King and by their fundamental love of the State."⁷ He went into exile just three days later.⁸ His departure was followed, within a matter of hours, by Napoleon's return to Paris on 20 March where he took up residence in the Tuileries. The Comédie Française responded to news of Napoleon's imminent arrival by cancelling that night's performance. By contrast, the popular boulevard theatre, the Théâtre de la Porte Saint-Martin, erected a temporary stage outside complete with busts of Napoleon and Marie-Louise so that one of its actors could offer praise to Napoleon as he passed by on his way to the Tuileries. As during the French Revolution twenty five years earlier, politics once again infused every aspect of cultural production. The theatricality of events again called into question the representativity of *the* political actor par excellence, the Emperor himself. As Nikolai Turgenev (1789–1871), a key figure in Russian liberal thought and part of the diplomatic entourage at the Congress of Vienna, wrote in his diary: "Today [we] found out here that N[apoleon] entered in Paris, as if he was back from a journey. He plays his role in a masterly fashion amid the people made of actors."⁹

It is often better to travel than to arrive. Napoleon's March north—christened the Flight of the Eagle—was a stunning spectacle that caught the imagination of many. Having arrived, the task he faced was to turn that success into a political system that could run France while retaining the support of the French people. At the same time, he needed to prepare to meet the onslaught of the allies. The first challenge, on its own, raised issues about what kind of order Napoleon sought to impose and how far he would be prepared to keep, and improve on, the Constitutional *Charte* that Louis had rather reluctantly accepted in October 1814. Having ridden back to power on the claims of popular legitimacy, he could ill afford to lose the support of the people of France. He had to adapt to their expectations, while creating a system that he could manage and make effective, and while having to face the prospect of the renewal of

war. From the beginning of his first days back in Paris, he was faced with governing in a system that was not of his making, forced to forge alliances with people who had been his severe critics, and had to consolidate his forces as he watched the European powers mobilise.

The Flight of the Eagle was a stunning feat of propaganda and thereby a political success. The essential vehicle for his return was his claim to a legitimacy that Louis could not command. However, because all government rests on opinion, it is a slippery terrain and it must be managed. The less one is willing to use force, the more important popular legitimacy becomes; the more one relies on coercion, the more dependent one is on one's forces and thus the more fragile is one's popular standing. This was a central problem for Napoleon, but it was not a problem he faced alone. The allies also needed to convince their soldiers, their financiers, and their people that a further war was necessary and could be won. In addition, although the vast majority of the literature on the Hundred Days focuses on the last brutal encounter at Waterloo, it is clear that a great deal of politics was necessary throughout the period, on all sides, to ensure that political and military leaders could deliver on their promises, sustain their authority, and carry their people with them. It is the central contention of this collection that the means of doing this are not restricted to military discipline and political alliances or to the winning of battles. Rather we must also address the way that multiple components of popular and elite culture in France, and also more widely, represented, refigured, validated and resisted Napoleon's return. In this culture, media of legitimation—music, theatre, dance, paintings and prints, songs, newspapers, and a whole range of what are thought of as more peripheral and ephemeral aspects of the political world—took on a significance and played their part in the response to Napoleon's return and in its increasingly fragile grip on the claim to legitimacy with which his return had commenced.

II

Napoleon's return to office was not a return to absolute power. He found it difficult to recruit the ablest men: when Carnot accepted the Interior Ministry it had already been declined by three others. In contrast to his earlier reign, he left the administration in the hands of those he appointed, and neither Carnot nor Fouché, the Minister of Police, were confident of Napoleon's ability to survive and adjusted

their behaviour accordingly. Fouché, for example, kept in contact with Louis, Wellington, and Talleyrand. Carnot was stymied by the fact that Napoleon wanted only loyal civil servants, but that would have meant stripping out the bulk of the administration. Moreover, one of Napoleon's first priorities was to appear to liberalise and constitutionalise his rule: freedom of the press was announced on 24 March; on 29 March he announced the abolition of the slave trade; and he sought a rewritten constitutional *Charte* in the form of an *Acte Additionnel*, on which he managed to persuade Benjamin Constant, a former outspoken liberal critic, to collaborate.¹⁰ However, much suggests that Napoleon was not himself an enthusiast for the reforms despite his public rhetoric: old autocratic habits died hard, and he found the populism his return had generated discomfiting in practice as well a restraint on his actions.

Napoleon also had early evidence of the underlying fragility of his popular support. There were civilian and military riots in Orleans, and elements of royalism surfaced in several towns, including Marseilles, but also in Northern France and the Vendée. He quickly found that goodwill was a strained and conditional commodity, not a bank to be drawn on.

Nonetheless, he was well aware how valuable peace with Vienna would be. On 3 April, Napoleon wrote to his new Foreign Minister, Armand Caulaincourt, instructing him to send agents to most of the foreign capitals of Europe to secure information but above all to assure these nations of his friendly intention toward them. His "Lettre circulaire aux souverains" announced both that the re-establishment of the imperial throne was necessary for the happiness of the French people and that he had been carried to it by their love. However, he also insisted that his wish was for peace and for the protection of international frontiers. Few believed him, and he himself believed that few would do so; he may merely have been buying time. Inevitably, the over-riding imperative became to mobilise to defend France against the aggression of his enemies and against the possibility of civil war. Indeed, on the same day as he wrote to the European sovereigns, he set about creating the largest light cavalry force in existence at that time, which could be used to strike quickly and hard against enemies beyond France's borders.

As minister for war, Marshal Louis-Nicolas Davout, who was responsible for the recall of higher military officers to Paris in preparation for war, found the response tepid to say the least. Napoleon was forced to accept that past supporters could not be coerced, and, if they refused to serve, it was better to ignore them than proceed against them.

As Napoleon prepared for war, opposition to his rule within France grew largely owing to sheer war-weariness. In military terms, he was aware that the four major allied powers pledged to raise 150,000 troops each—600,000 in total and vastly more than France could hope to levy. This meant that once convinced of their hostility, Napoleon's core tactic had to be to divide, to demoralise, and to pick off armies serially while hoping that the allied coalition would eventually fragment. To do that he required a large, seasoned army that needed inspired leadership. On both fronts there were real questions as to whether Napoleon could realise either of these.

Napoleon found it difficult to raise money and men (especially given France's dramatically shrunken boundaries). Britain's population was also war-weary, but neither the government's majority nor its commitment to war were in doubt, and the British fiscal system that had been developed under William Pitt gave the government access to extensive credit in addition to taxation. Moreover, the British military quota was met with a combination of British troops and others paid for by the British purse but coming from Hanover, Brunswick, the Netherlands, and elsewhere, all assembled under Wellington's command. Despite this multi-national force, British caricaturists and ballad singers framed the conflict between Napoleon and Britain in the language of 1803–1805 as a contrast of John Bull versus little Boney. Crucially, though, in the re-appropriation of the image of Napoleon as a harlequin, first seen in 1803 when Britain feared invasion and revived in 1815, caricaturists such as Cruikshank revelled in Napoleon's return while exposing the problem it caused: the hero, welcomed back by his people, was acknowledged as having a popular legitimacy that the British government challenged in looking to overthrow him.

In France, Napoleon also faced problems raising troops. The tax base of Napoleon's old empire had been dramatically curtailed by the re-imposition of France's old borders in 1814, and a sizable proportion of the national budget was absorbed in paying off creditors from the previous war. To solve the military problem Napoleon had to solve the fiscal problem; to solve the fiscal problem he needed to solve the legitimisation problem; and the legitimisation problem was exacerbated by fears of the return of war and austerity. Indeed, there was unrest from both traditionally loyalist and republican strongholds, neither of which Napoleon's return could satisfy without major concessions that he was unwilling—often unable—to make.

The legitimation problem is revealed sharply in his summoning on 14 April of the liberal political philosopher Benjamin Constant.¹¹ Constant's previous fierce opposition was overcome by the Emperor's charm (in his diary Constant described him as "an astonishing man"), and he was persuaded to draw up reforms to the constitutional *charte* that had been in place under Louis XVIII. That move was designed to conciliate liberal opinion and to widen the base of support for the regime. On the same day, Napoleon's advisors in the Treasury reported to him on the financial state of the nation. In contrast to Louis XVIII's projected budget for 1815 of just fewer than 300 million francs, much of which was committed, Napoleon needed at least 840 million francs during the course of the year wholly for the War Ministry. Napoleon lacked the fiscal and military resources to secure his rule, so he needed the support of his people; however, the character of support he needed—both money and men—were precisely the things that people were most reluctant to concede. How then to win them over?

After his meeting with Napoleon on 14 April, Constant produced a draft *Acte Additionnel* that was signed by Napoleon on 22 April and released to the public the following day without any discussion in the Constitutional Committee.¹² It was not popular, neither in content, process or means of adoption, and it satisfied neither liberals nor royalists, neither republicans nor Napoleonists. Napoleon also revealed his impatience with debate and with the idea of constitutional powers that could restrain him. Recognising the unpopularity of his promulgation of the *Acte*, he resorted to a plebiscite, the polls for which opened on 26 April, but at which the voter was limited to either endorsing or rejecting the *Acte*.

The *Acte Additionnel*, was published for British readers in the *Morning Chronicle* of 27 April 1815, which recognised its importance to Napoleon's legitimacy and to the legitimacy of allied action: "Upon the whole it is an outline of wise, temperate and well-digested rules, as the basis of a free representative Government, and if the voice of the nation shall be fairly, openly and freely taken upon it, previously to the meeting in the *Champ de Mars*, we do not see what foreign sovereigns can allege against it, unless they mean to question the right of any people to judge for themselves.... One thing is clear, that with such a constitution, it can be of no consequence to Great Britain, whether a BONAPARTE or a BOURBON shall be on the throne in France."

In fact, the *Acte* and the plebiscite deepened the fractures between Napoleonists and the royalist west of the country: aristocratic leaders and peasant *chouans* combined to attack urban centres where support for Napoleon was concentrated. In response, a movement of *jeunes gens* in support of the Emperor emerged linking Nantes, Rennes, and other towns. In Rennes, on 29 April, a *pacte fédératif* was proposed with the support of delegates from five other Breton *départements*. The declaration combined support for general revolutionary principles, of liberty and equality, with support for the Emperor, the dynasty of whom was “consecrated by our will”, and with a commitment to supporting the authorities and acting within the law. When General Cafferelli was sent to Rennes by Napoleon to act as the government’s commissioner, he reported favourably on the movement and attended a banquet celebrating its founding, after which delegates set off to proselytise. From these roots, a powerful popular movement, designed to resist aristocratic usurpation and the restoration of the Bourbons, spread across the country.¹³ In Paris, at least, the majority of those who became Fédérés, as those in the people’s militias were known, were from poorer, working-class backgrounds, thus creating a dilemma for Napoleon about whether in fact they could be managed under his regime or whether they threatened a return of the revolutionary populism of the *sans-culottes* of 1793 and 1794. Like any populist movement under Napoleon, it inspired mixed feelings on the part of the Emperor, but it did testify both to the popularity of his return as well a gradual slide towards civil war in some parts of France.

For the plebiscite on the *Acte Additionnel*, polls remained open from 26 April to the end of May, but the turnout remained relatively low—with only one fifth of those eligible to vote actually doing so—although that might have been an indication either of apathy or of contentment.¹⁴ At the same time, however, Napoleon chose to welcome back members of his family, with whom relations had often been strained or worse at the end of the Empire, but who now rallied in his cause. Lucien Bonaparte returned to Paris and was reconciled with his brother (after 10 years estrangement) on 9 May. Both Joseph and Julien also returned, although his brother Louis declined to do so. This produced an odd combination of populism (seeking the ratification of the *Acte* by plebiscite) and a return to the dynastic politics of the old Empire. That tension between populism and autocracy continued to increase throughout May, with Napoleon’s instinct being for autocratic action, but facing the problem that the wider support he needed would be lost if he took that route.

Napoleon's instinct had been to defer elections to the Chamber of Deputies until the end of the crisis caused by his return, but he faced widespread opposition to doing so and was persuaded that he needed at least to observe the forms of the new government. When the legislative elections were held on 14 May, with a low turn-out in a suffrage restricted by property qualifications to some 100,000 people, they provided a strong indication that there was only very weak support among the elite in the country. A liberal majority was returned, who largely mistrusted Napoleon; only a very small minority could really be called Bonapartists. Moreover, the Chambers sought to establish and insist on the rule of law, thus leading to endless controversies with Napoleon and to his hands being more restrictively tied than he had anticipated.

Insurrection in the Vendée flared up on 15 May: Although it was led by monarchists, the principal motivating force was the threat of further requisitioning of men for the war. The revolt was pacified, but the region remained febrile and tied up troops. Conscription was an issue elsewhere, too. During the 1790s, the French had sought to spread the principles of the French Revolution through the establishment of sister republics across Europe. That system had brought Napoleon a very much wider resource base for tax and conscription and decreased the costs of war to France. In 1815, the sole place outside France to which Napoleon could look for support was Naples. Joachim Murat, who had abandoned Napoleon in Russia to save his throne in Italy in 1813, but who found himself marginalised after 1814 by the Great Powers and under threat from the Austrians, the British, and by anti-Napoleonic forces in Italy, gambled on being able to defeat the Austrians in the North and to act as a flag bearer for a wider unification of Italy. After Napoleon's return, he declared for Italian independence and unification on 31 March 1815 and moved north to challenge the Austrians only to be defeated on 2 May at Tolentino and forced into a rapid withdrawal south.¹⁵ The defeat of Murat left Austria in charge of Italy and ensured that the allies had no other sites of conflict on which to concentrate their military energies. Napoleon now stood alone.

By the last week of May, the regime's attention seems to have been increasingly absorbed by the preparation for war. The initial flood of "Lois et Décrets" that had come after the return of Napoleon began to dry up partly because Napoleon had to bargain with both the Council of State and with the Chambers, neither of which were prepared to accept his direction as a matter of course. Many in the regime spent

considerable energy avoiding too clear an association with Napoleon so that they would not be penalised when their leader finally fell. However, Napoleon's attentions were increasingly absorbed in his attempt to be ready to attack the Allies before they were in a position to descend on him. He may also have been distracted by preparing for the Festival on the Champ de Mai on 1 June, at which it became clear how distant the Imperial commitments and priorities of the Emperor and his dynasty were from the more patriotic hopes of the *fédérés*.¹⁶ But there was also a sense that Napoleon himself was failing. He worked constantly, only to be told to relax by his doctors; his advisors found his previous certainties dissolving into vacillation; and he was in a poor emotional state after the abandonment by his wife Marie-Louise (who retained control of his son). He was especially shaken by the death of his old comrade Marshal Louis Alexandre Bérthier, who fell—or was pushed or jumped—from a third story window on 1 June, thus underlining to Napoleon the absence of a cadre of officers on whom he could place his complete reliance.

In his *Memoirs from Beyond the Tomb*, François-René Chateaubriand, a royalist and hardly a supporter of Napoleon, wrote of the Hundred Days:

Those who had been unable to bind themselves to Napoleon by his glory, who had not been able to adhere out of gratitude to the benefactor from whom they had received their riches, their honours, and their very names, were they going to sacrifice themselves to a precarious fortune making a fresh start, these ingrates whom a fortune consolidated by unexampled success and by the spoils of sixteen years of victory failed to attach?...Napoleon found no faithful friends but the phantoms of his past glory; these escorted him...from the place where he landed to the capital of France. However, the eagles which had 'flown from steeple to steeple' from Cannes to Paris settled wearily on the chimneys of the Tuileries, unable to go any further.¹⁷

As this brief narrative suggests, to depict the Hundred Days wholly in terms of military might and contending states is to assume the existence of components that had to be created, sustained, and reproduced, namely, the capacities of the belligerents to mobilise and retain political and wider popular legitimacy and support. This had evaporated for Louis XVIII merely by the presence of Napoleon on French soil. It was something that also informed the thinking of those opposed to Napoleon. When the Great Powers in Vienna determined to treat

Napoleon as an outlaw, they could not have been confident about their own unity (since Vienna had already stretched their tolerance of each other's ambitions to close to breaking point), the willingness of their own people to pay the cost in terms of money and lives of the renewal of war—having faced it as a practical reality for much of the previous twenty years—or their ability to exert their dominance over those who might seek power in their place. By seeing the period as one in which the domestic political and international orders were generally fragile and subject to constant tensions and challenges, the story of the Hundred Days becomes one of conflicts of legitimacy as much as of military might and military leadership. In addition, if we turn to ask questions about the dimensions and means of legitimation, we must move beyond a focus on the military and ask questions about how states were able to maintain and re-enforce legitimacy at a time when Napoleon's return signalled the failure of the Great Powers to extinguish the flame of popular sovereignty and the values of the French Revolution.

The cultural history of the Hundred Days is not simply a story about the cultural resonances and impact of the Hundred Days, nor is it just a story of how the Hundred Days are represented in the wider culture. In each case, these ways of thinking about the relationship between events and social, cultural and political phenomena assume a relationship in which the one causes the other. In our view, this dramatically understates the significance of the history of legitimation and the cultural media through which it is secured, in particular in relation to the Hundred Days. Prints, pamphlets, songs, and plays—to give but four examples—inflect the public sphere, shape the debate about legitimacy, and influence the calculations made by those in the political scene. This is particularly the case in geographical areas such as the Low Countries and Italy, where Napoleon's return to power coincided with internal debates over political unity and sovereignty.

As the essays in this collection show, Napoleon's return to France demonstrated the extreme fragility of the political legitimacy of the restoration and it played into—and gambled with—that fragility, looking to create a tipping point in which the restored order would evaporate before his advance. Moreover, Napoleon sought to achieve much the same effect on the wider European order—he sought less to make the allies vanish and more to give them pause, to undermine their unity, to forestall their collective action against his return. On that wider front he failed. However, in understanding how he thought he might

have succeeded, and why he did not, we must recognise that for the allies, positions were also fragile. They did not trust each other, and as the Congress at Vienna dragged on, it is clear they trusted each other increasingly little. They were conducting often long-distance negotiation in which national politics could (as in Britain) undermine the government's will to commit their forces again. And governments, albeit to different degrees, had to have confidence that they could continue to command legitimacy with—and compliance from—their citizens and subjects.

Some of most important battles during the Hundred Days were fought using symbols, performances, propaganda and rituals, through which the political legitimacy of both restoration Europe's and Napoleonic rule was tested and contested, produced, and reformed: sometimes these were found wanting, and sometimes they proved to be surprisingly stable. Cultural artefacts, events and performances are not an effect of this process, but to a significant extent the site of it, thus providing diverse media through which legitimacy comes to be tried, tested, subverted, reshaped and repudiated. That, at least, is the argument we want to make in the chapters that follow.

III

The Hundred Days project, which was developed at the University of Warwick, brought together scores of historians and critics to chart the wider European implications of Napoleon's return. Their contributions can be seen in the chronicle of the events of the period in the on-line exhibition at www.100days.eu. For this collection of longer papers, we wanted to bring together work that (1) explored a range of different media, in which the events of the Hundred Days were represented and interpreted, (2) investigated some of the cultural dimensions of the struggle for legitimacy in France (but also more widely), and (3) captured aspects of the wider European impact of the Hundred Days. This period has only rarely been given sustained attention, and even then the attention has focussed predominantly on the last act. Our position is that there is a great deal to learn from giving due weight to the period as a whole.

The volume begins with three papers on France and Napoleon's "legitimacy." Michael Sibelis discusses the resurgence of a Parisian popular politics and the rise of the "*fédérés*," both of which carried almost

wholly unwelcome echoes of the revolutionary days of 1793–1794. John Dunne interrogates the evidence for the various claims made for Napoleon’s legitimacy, which is usually seen as rising rapidly and then collapsing in the face of war, thus giving us a more nuanced account of the contours of support. Not the least, we are encouraged to jettison the binary of “for or against” Napoleon and to consider that a range of calculations were being made by people, deriving from past experience, but also looking forward to the consequences of their actions in the event of restoration. In each case, we gain a richer and more subtle understanding of the difficulties Napoleon faced as well as the new constraints on his own resources—personal, military, administrative, and ideological. In the final paper of the trio, Alessandra Aloisi digs into the diary and journal of Maine de Biran, a staunch loyalist, and his responses to Napoleon, thus demonstrating the extent to which Napoleon’s return deeply disturbed Biran both politically, and in parallel, somatically. His resulting melancholia mirrored the psychic disorder of the political world but was experienced so profoundly that Biran had to re-think his understanding of the forces necessary to hold together a monarchical order.

The collection then turns to examine the wider European reaction and its cultural manifestations with a focus on the piecemeal way in which news circulated, and on how intimately responses to Napoleon’s return were bound up with nationalist concerns. Valentina Dal Cin sketches the reactions of Venetians; Lotte Jensen details the Dutch/Belgian response; Leighton James gives us an account of the mixed responses of the German states; and Martina Piperno analyses literary reactions in Italy to the ill-fated campaign fought by Napoleon’s brother-in-law, Joachim Murat, an interloper who promised Italians the possibility of unity. In no case are these responses simple: each is marked by the experience of the previous two decades of warfare and struggle, and each signals in part that in this period, relationships between rulers and ruled had become more complex, less efficiently autocratic, and more wary of alienating popular support. Although the Congress of Vienna may have hoped to put the genie of popular revolutionary politics firmly back under autocratic control, states in practice could not assume this. It is true that in most cases the close of 1815 seemed to go Vienna’s way, but these papers help point toward the gestating seeds of some later popular action in the 1820s, in the 1830s, and then in 1848. One dramatically under-researched component of the period, which connects in a distinctive way to the theme

of popular participation, concerns the pressures in Britain for the abolition of the slave trade by other European powers. As Alan Forrest's essay demonstrates, reformers in Britain saw Vienna as an ideal opportunity for pressing Britain's case for the abolition of the trade. The story then becomes complicated by Napoleon's own declaration on his return that France would end the trade, and it is clear that British negotiators felt themselves compromised in negotiations by the pressures that the anti-slaving movement was able to exert through the British Parliament. This is a story with wide humanitarian consequences, but it is also one whose traditional narrative has obscured the importance of the events of the Hundred Days.

The final section of the volume focuses on ways in which legitimacy is contested in the British context. A number of cultural vehicles for contestation are examined in the papers by Susan Valladares on popular theatre in Britain, John Moore's work on George Cruikshank's caricatures of Napoleon, Mary-Ann Constantine's research on Welsh newspapers as a medium for communicating events, and Erica Buurman's reflections on the significance of the associations made by dance music with military and political events.

The essays collectively demonstrate the dramatic impact of Napoleon's return across most of Western Europe. In addition, they emphasise the importance of the episode for our thinking about the stability of the restoration era, the means by which the states involved were able to equip themselves in their preparation for the renewal of war, and the extent to which the associated activities reached down to affect an extraordinary range of people across a wide swathe of Europe and to affect them in often very diverse ways—raising hopes and fears, re-animating more radical aspirations for their country's future than had seemed possible under the restoration, and, in some cases, reproducing the sudden shift in equilibrium somatically. The elites in Vienna were clear that they wanted a firm hand over popular impulses but the evidence of this volume suggests that the Hundred Days demonstrate that legitimacy could not survive without popular support, that the effects of the Hundred Days were felt widely and deeply throughout the contestant countries of Europe, and that inevitably raised questions about what could be legitimated to whom. This is not yet a popular democratic politics, but one legacy of the Revolution, that the Hundred Days underlined for European states who were concerned only to restore Europe, was that the people could not be wholly ignored.

IV

In the wake of Waterloo, Louis XVIII travelled slowly toward Paris. At the Parisian “suburb” of Arnouville, Louis agreed to meet Fouché who had been trying to “manage” the monarch’s return (and secure his own future). The meeting must have gone well, despite Fouché’s hugely compromised past, because Louis made him minister of police. Chateaubriand and Talleyrand were also present. Chateaubriand was contemptuous: he reported that he had been waiting in a corner of the antechamber:

Suddenly a door opened: silently Vice entered leaning on the arm of Crime, M. de Talleyrand walking in supported by M. Fouché; the infernal vision passed slowly before me, penetrated the King’s room, and vanished. Fouché had come to swear fealty and homage to his lord; the trusty regicide, going down on his knees, laid the hands which caused Louis XVI’s head to fall between the hands of the royal martyr’s brother; the apostate bishop went surety for the oath.

Before leaving Saint-Denis, I was received by the King, and had the following conversation with him:

“Well?” said Louis XVIII...”

“Well, Sire, so you are taking the Duc d’Otrante?” (i.e., Fouché)

“I have had to:...everyone said we could not do otherwise. What do you think?”

“Sire, the thing is done: I beg Your Majesty’s permission to say nothing.”

“No, no, speak: you know how I have resisted since leaving Ghent.”

“Sire, I am only obeying your orders; pardon my loyalty: I think the monarchy is finished.”

The King kept silence; I was beginning to tremble at my boldness when His Majesty remarked:

“Well, Monsieur de Chateaubriand, I am of your opinion.”¹⁸

Paris had been abandoned by French troops in the face of the advance of Wellington and Blücher; Louis followed at a leisurely pace. On 8 July, Louis XVIII was restored and re-entered Paris after an interval of exactly a Hundred Days!¹⁹

Napoleon initially holed up in Rochefort, at the estuary of the Charante, hoping to set sail for America to claim asylum, but he was concerned about the possibility of British capture and was still not entirely convinced that it would not be worth turning back to fight for Paris. In a state of considerable indecision, he was persuaded that the British blockade of the port made escape impossible (although it seems unlikely that the British could have guaranteed his capture, especially during the first days of his stay in Rochefort).

On 8 July, word reached Napoleon that the Executive Commission, established after his abdication and headed by the treacherous Fouché, whose support (along with that of Talleyrand) was now firmly switched behind Louis XVIII, had given him 24 hours to leave the country. On 10 July, Napoleon sent two aides to negotiate with Captain Maitland of the *Bellerophon*, who encouraged them to believe that England might provide asylum. On 15 July, he surrendered to Maitland on board the *Bellerophon*.²⁰ Maitland had consciously misled him, but Napoleon was a ready believer. His note to the Prince of Wales on 13 July betrayed his willingness to believe in British good intentions: “Exposed to the factions which distract my country and to the enmity of the greatest Powers of Europe, I have ended my political career, and I come, like Themistocles, to throw myself on the hospitality of the English people; I put myself under the protection of their laws, which I claim from Your Majesty as the most powerful, the most constant, and the most generous of my enemies.”²¹ Apparently, John Wilson Crocker, the first secretary of the Admiralty, roared with laughter at the reference to Themistocles, who was ostracised and then sentenced to death (c 470 BCE) by a suspicious and ungrateful Athens, which forced him to seek asylum with the Greek’s enemy Artaxerxes of Persia, who made him the governor of Magnesia.

The voyage to Torbay took seven days. Throughout the crossing, Napoleon was treated with respect as well as some affection by the crew, but he was not made aware of the depth of the British Government’s antipathy. On his arrival at Torbay, the British government declared Napoleon a prisoner of war. There was no legal basis for doing so, and Napoleon and his supporters resorted to legal manoeuvring to try to get the courts to issue a writ of *habeas corpus* requiring his release from detention on

the *Bellerophon*.²² Massed British crowds of the curious sought glimpses of the Emperor from the shore and cliffs, or hired boats to row them alongside the *Bellerophon* for a closer look, thus helping to keep alive Napoleon's hopes that the public would support his demand to be landed and given asylum. Their government had no intention of allowing him that privilege and were fearful that they would lose control of him if he secured legal protection. Instead, they determined that he would be sent to the island of St Helena, in the South Atlantic, and given the half-pay of a General to support himself there. To forestall efforts to serve a writ of *habeas corpus*, the *Bellerophon* put to sea, rendezvousing at sea with the *Northumberland*, to which Napoleon was transferred on 9 August and by which he was taken to his final destination, where he died on 5 May 1821, aged 51.

Throughout his career, Napoleon gambled on carrying other people with him—sometimes, indeed, “the people”—a force the Revolution had mobilised and unleashed in France and to which other powers had reacted by seeking similarly to galvanise their publics. Onlookers had to judge how to respond to these throws of the dice both in France but also more widely in the Europe that his military exploits had transformed. We might see people as hard-headedly following their interests, or have judgments about where their interests lay, but it is clear that interests were not pre-determined nor set in stone but were themselves constructed in engagement with wider ideals and cultural values, understandings of legitimacy and authority, and senses of the trajectory of history events and the possibilities of what was increasingly recognised as a new modernity. If the outcome of 1815 was the restoration of Louis XVIII and the sealing of Great Power dominance in Europe, it was a much more tentative outcome than the facts of French defeat suggest. More tentative because the real legacy of the Hundred Days was the underlining of the fact that political rule had to command popular support and that some form of constitutionalism that would make power more popularly accountable would be the inevitable demand of those who resisted autocracy. That demand was increasingly articulated and contested through a range of popular cultural forms that were increasingly, if unevenly and intermittently, politicised and mobilised in opposition to or support for the existing regimes.

NOTES

1. The details of the Hundred Days are set out in the Web site associated with this project: *The Last Stand: Napoleon's 100 Days in 100 Objects*, <http://www.100days.eu>.
2. Philip Dwyer, in *Citizen Emperor: Napoleon in Power* (New Haven: Yale University Press; London: Bloomsbury, 2013), 517, argues this is more likely a case of turning a blind eye.
3. <http://www.100days.eu/items/show/11>.
4. Dwyer, *Citizen Emperor*, 523.
5. <http://www.100days.eu/items/show/22>.
6. <http://www.100days.eu/items/show/29>.
7. Cited by Alan Schom, *One Hundred Days: Napoleon's Road to Waterloo* (London: Penguin Books, 1994), 47.
8. <http://www.100days.eu/items/show/33>.
9. The diary is kept at the Institute of Russian Literature (the Pushkin House), Russian Academy of Sciences. For more on Turgenev's reactions to Napoleon's return, see Alexei Evstratov, "Turgenev's diary." entry for 19th May 1815, in the online exhibition *The Last Stand: Napoleon's 100 Days in 100 Objects*, <http://www.100days.eu/items/show/95>.
10. <http://www.100days.eu/items/show/44>.
11. <http://www.100days.eu/items/show/60>.
12. <http://www.100days.eu/items/show/68>.
13. <http://www.100days.eu/items/show/90>.
14. <http://www.100days.eu/items/show/83>.
15. <http://www.100days.eu/items/show/79>.
16. <http://www.100days.eu/items/show/108>.
17. Francois-René de Chateaubriand *Memoirs from Beyond the Tomb*, trans. Robert Baldick (London: Penguin, 2014), 282.
18. *Memoirs from Beyond the Tomb*, 289–290.
19. <http://www.100days.eu/items/show/145>.
20. <http://www.100days.eu/items/show/151> and <http://www.100days.eu/items/show/152>.
21. F. McLynn, *Napoleon: A Biography* (London, 1997), 634.
22. <http://www.100days.eu/items/show/160>.

PART I

Napoleon's Legitimacy in France

The Hundred Days and the Birth of Popular Bonapartism in Paris

Michael Sibalís

On the evening of 21 June 1815, Napoleon, back in Paris from Waterloo, was walking in the gardens of the Élysée Palace with the liberal writer and politician Benjamin Constant when they heard shouts from a “crowd of men, mostly of the indigent and laborious class,” gathered in the Rue de Marigny to acclaim the Emperor, who was under pressure from the Chamber of Deputies to abdicate: “You see that, he told [Constant], those are not the people whom I showered with honours and wealth. What do they owe me? I found them poor, I left them poor.”¹ Here was one of history’s ironies. There is no real evidence that Napoleon ever enjoyed enthusiastic popularity—as distinct from broad acceptance—among the common people of Paris (or France) throughout most of his reign.² On the contrary, war, conscription, economic crisis, and increasing taxes had considerably worn down support for the regime by the time it fell in 1814. Quite unexpectedly, however, the authoritarian ruler, whose police had harried and repressed the remnants of the Parisian sans-culotte movement, emerged in the Hundred

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Days under a new guise and with fervent support from the city's common people. Historian Frédéric Bluche has labeled the phenomenon "Jacobin Neo-Bonapartism."³ In the words of a royalist pamphleteer, "[Napoleon] had thus rejoined the Jacobin Club, he had thereby agreed to swap his imperial crown for the frightful red liberty cap and his imperial title for that of general of patriots."⁴

The explanation for this development lies in the First Restoration, the ten months between Louis XVIII's entry into Paris (3 May 1814) and Napoleon's return (20 March 1815). The restored Bourbons were unpopular with the Parisian masses from the start. As early as 6 April 1814 (the day Napoleon abdicated), René de Chateaubriand's sister described "the rabble" (*la canaille*) as "insolent and very brazen"; no one (she said) dared wear the white cockade in certain (unidentified) Paris faubourgs (peripheral districts inhabited predominantly by artisans and workers), where posters announcing her brother's pamphlet backing the monarchy were smeared with excrement.⁵ However, the police (initially at least) expected that peace, prosperity, and full employment would eventually win over Paris' workers.⁶ Furthermore, as the Director-General of Police suggested in October 1814, Napoleon had turned the city's "working classes" into passive spectators of political events. They purportedly cared only about earning a living, and this "egoism" and "servile obedience," forced on them by fifteen years of dictatorship "are for the [present] government the strongest guarantee of its tranquility, which is complete in the capital."⁷ Police reports on public opinion during the First Restoration are on the whole vague and reassuring, like this one from August 1814: "These faubourgs [St. Antoine and St. Marcel] are under constant surveillance; there is nothing seen there that can give the least concern."⁸ However, many of these reports also record numerous incidents—relatively minor, to be sure, but telling when taken together—that suggest a different picture.⁹

Indeed, by the late autumn of 1814 police agents were appalled by what they were overhearing: "In those places where the common people gather, such as wine shops in particular, workers and the lower class, when speaking of the Government, express themselves with a freedom and an indecency that prove that the people are being ... stirred up and strongly stirred up."¹⁰ Dissatisfaction was particularly acute among veterans and demobilized soldiers, who grumbled about the poor treatment they felt they were receiving from the new government. Former soldiers recalled with pride "the days when they marched from victory

to victory” and they were openly loyal to the dethroned Emperor.¹¹ For instance, two assistant pastry chefs (*garçons pâtisseries*) recently returned from the army were heard (in August 1814) “to utter the most insolent words against His Majesty, and to praise Bon*** to the skies; they long for his return, in which they believe.”¹² However, such discontent went far beyond one-time soldiers. On one day, for example (29 September 1814), the police arrested both a drunken carter as he walked along the Seine shouting “Long live Napoléon!” and a cotton worker who refused to doff his cap when the King passed by in the Tuileries Gardens.¹³ It was not unusual for drunken workers to sing songs praising Napoleon, and the revolutionary song *La Marseillaise* could be heard “on all sides.”¹⁴ According to one report, port workers “are in general men of the lowest class, among whom there are many admirers of Bonaparte.”¹⁵ Louis XVIII on his throne implicitly challenged the French revolutionary tradition in a way that Napoleon’s monarchy had not. The police arrested a shoemaker named Maillefer for saying that “we should do to the fat pig [Louis XVIII] what we did to his brother [Louis XVI] and make him look through the *lunette* [of the guillotine] to see if Napoleon is coming back.”¹⁶ Placards on the walls of the capital insulted the King, lauded Napoleon, and demanded work and bread.¹⁷

As this suggests, economic woes added to the discontent. In a petition dated 30 May 1814, ten Parisian workers in the building trades predicted that “if the workers ... were employed, all these murmurs of misery would cease, gaiety would reign, and the wise and beneficent government would be blessed.”¹⁸ Instead, police reports indicate a general decrease of wages through the summer of 1814.¹⁹ The earnings of cotton workers in the Faubourg Saint-Antoine fell by half, “which causes them to contrast the past to the present,”²⁰ while journeymen carpenters repeated rumours that their employers had bribed the King to permit lower wages and longer working hours.²¹ Wage-earners blamed the new regime for their economic distress.²² An engraver named Langlé and his wife kept a bust of Napoleon in his workshop; “these two individuals complain that since the arrival of His Majesty, the workers have had their wages reduced by half.”²³ The Minister of the Interior himself believed that it was “impolitic” of the monarchy not to continue the public works program “to which the last government had accustomed the people of the capital.”²⁴

Another destabilizing factor was rampant anti-clericalism. By the Napoleonic period, Christianity had lost its hold on Parisian workers,

especially men.²⁵ The First Restoration got off to a bad start by banning Sunday work on 7 June 1814, a measure resented by workers, who thus lost a day's wages and in any case often preferred to take off Mondays (*faire le lundi*) if they could afford it, as well as shopkeepers, who disliked the loss of business hours.²⁶ There were also disturbances in June when, for the first time since the Revolution, the government authorized Corpus Christi processions in the streets and the National Guard forced people to kneel as the host passed by.²⁷ By July, if the police can be believed, workers in the Faubourgs Saint-Antoine and Saint-Marcel "speak endlessly of Bonaparte who, they say, did not support the priests."²⁸ Two months later, police informants reported overhearing workers gathered on the Quai de Gesvres complaining that priests were seeking to regain their former prerogatives from the King.²⁹ In January 1815, when the curé of Saint-Roch refused to conduct burial services for the actress Mademoiselle Raucourt, a mob estimated at eight- or nine-thousand-strong forcibly brought her coffin into his church. The curé was subsequently insulted in the streets when visiting his counterpart at Sainte-Marguerite in the Faubourg Saint-Antoine, while people mocked a group of priests skating on the frozen Ourcq Reservoir and pelted them with snowballs and rocks. The police were at a loss to explain this reaction among the common people, most of whom (they noted) could not have been familiar with the celebrated actress. Although downplaying the incident's political significance ("it's neither a Bonapartist operation nor an anti-royalist undertaking"), they nonetheless commented: "It's the strangest explosion of the multitude's hatred of the clergy There were veritable curses and swear-words ringing out everywhere."³⁰

Almost inevitably, support for Napoleon merged with the revolutionary tradition in the minds of many workers. A boot-maker named Pasque used to declaim against Napoleon when drunk; now he spoke out in his favour.³¹ Rocher, a shoemaker's assistant, "who formerly ranted against Bon***'s government and did everything possible to get out of conscription" now "openly manifests his opposition to the King and announces the imminent return of Bon*** who will overthrow the Bourbons."³² Fréché, a notoriously republican shoemaker, "did not like Bonaparte when he ruled, and now he speaks of him favourably." He saw Napoleon's return as a potentially revolutionary act that "would lead to further events."³³ Of course, not every rabid republican had suddenly turned Bonapartist, and many former "anarchists" held fast to their

anti-Bonapartist sentiments.³⁴ For instance, a man named Perrin, allegedly “one of the blood-thirsty terrorists of September 1792,” declared: “That madman Bonaparte has fallen; now we have to overthrow the King.”³⁵ However, as the Director-General of Police recognized: “Every movement, every disorder, every agitation in France will be to [Napoleon’s] advantage, whatever even those who hate and fear him may say or think. The Republic, the Regency, or Bonaparte are more or less the same thing because, as long as he lives, he is the inevitable successor to any government that is not the legitimate one.”³⁶

There was, in the event, no Parisian insurrection against the Bourbons, nor was there ever much likelihood of one. The lower classes lacked both program and leadership, and Napoleon was living in exile on Elba. News of his sudden return (known in Paris on 7 March 1815) changed the situation. According to a police informant, “the majority of the people, petty merchants and others got a fiendish pleasure from announcing the return of this ravenous tiger who will once again cover France with blood. Some said, we will rush to his side, others said that if he had no shelter, I would give up my bed to him with pleasure.”³⁷ François Panot, a 23-year-old hatter, could not contain his joy and exulted: “That’s our corporal who is returning, he’s my Father. I will serve him unto death, we’ll have our turn and we’ll make the Royalists dance!”³⁸ The authorities could no longer discount the possibility—albeit an undoubtedly exaggerated one—of a popular uprising in the capital.³⁹ Curé Dubois of Sainte-Marguerite in the Faubourg Saint-Antoine actually claimed that a repentant conspirator had revealed to him a plot to raise the district. Dubois immediately distributed a pro-Bourbon flyer on 16 March, warning his parishioners not to be misled by “a crowd of foreigners and strangers.” That evening he delivered a special sermon reminding them of their duty to king, country, and church. However, the faubourg remained calm, and National Guard patrols reported nothing amiss.⁴⁰ The curé’s attitude would not be forgotten nor forgiven by some parishioners. On 20 April, Napoleon’s police arrested a father and son, both cabinet-makers, for shouting in front of the church, “Down with the clergy, the curé is a Vendean who should be hanged, the church should be set on fire and burned down!”⁴¹

The Napoleon who returned to Paris on 20 March 1815 appeared to be, ideologically and politically, a very different man from the one who had left just eleven months earlier. The transformation occurred during the “Flight of the Eagle” from Golfe-Juan to Paris (1–20 March 1815).⁴²

As historian Rob Alexander explained, “along the route the Emperor had donned new clothing—he now appeared in the curious guise of arch-defender of the Revolution,” a “conversion [that] was soon to prove embarrassing.”⁴³ Whatever Napoleon really thought, by the time he reached Paris, he was, either sincerely or (more likely) not, pledged to the role of liberal, even revolutionary Emperor. As John Hobhouse, an Englishman living in Paris at the time would point out in urging his compatriots to recognize Napoleon’s re-established government, “Napoleon did not remount the throne by virtue of his previous popularity”. On the contrary, as the embodiment of French independence and popular sovereignty, he had “rallied the pride and self-love of France around his person.” “The Emperor,” he stressed, “is now the man of the people – the people are at the head of his ministry – the people compose his army – his cause is that of the people – and finally, it is against the people, more than against Napoleon, that the allies are now in arms.”⁴⁴

The temper of Paris during the Hundred Days recalled the heady times of the Revolution. Pamphlets rolled off the presses with a strident rhetorical tone straight from the Year II (1793–94), and troops on review marched to the strains of *La Marseillaise* and *Ça Ira*, songs previously banned under the Empire because of their revolutionary content.⁴⁵ Workingmen gathered regularly beneath the windows of the Tuileries Palace to acclaim the Emperor (of course, royalists claimed that they were paid to do so).⁴⁶ In the café Montansier in the Palais-Royal, “a tribune was erected as in the times of the revolution,—and male and female orators made the place echo with *vive l’empereur, et la liberté!*”⁴⁷ Napoleon himself was ill-at-ease with the revolutionary energies that his return had unleashed, fearing that they would prove to be a double-edged sword. The ambiguity of the situation is best revealed by Napoleon’s uneasy relationship with the so-called “federations.”

The “federative movement,” which spread rapidly across France, began spontaneously in mid-April in Brittany when the young middle-class men of Rennes organized to defend revolutionary principles and the Bonaparte dynasty against the Bourbons and the Allied powers. There were originally four distinct federations in Paris (a cause of great confusion both to contemporaries and to many historians). Three quickly merged into the *fédération ouvrière* (workers’ federation) or *fédérés-tirailleurs* (federated skirmishers), a popular militia based in Paris’s artisanal and working-class *faubourgs* (peripheral districts). In contrast, the *fédération de Paris* (of which little is known) was overwhelmingly

bourgeois in composition and limited its activities to issuing declarations of political support for the Napoleonic regime.⁴⁸ The *fédération ouvrière* started when 3000 inhabitants of the Faubourg Saint-Antoine and Faubourg Saint-Marcel signed a *pacte fédératif* (federal pact) published on 10 May. In it they pledged themselves to defend French honour and liberty, declared the cause of the people to be “inseparable from that of our immortal Emperor,” and adopted as their rallying cry: “Long live the Nation! Long live Liberty! Long live the Emperor!” “We want to participate in the common defense; we offer our arms to the Emperor We are asking to be armed and organized... . We also want by our attitude to strike terror into the traitors who might once again wish for the debasement of their country... . We swear that the Capital will never again see the foreigner impose his laws.”⁴⁹ They did not propose to take an active part in the coming military campaign against the Allies—that was the army’s job—but to defend Paris alongside the middle-class National Guard as *éclaireurs* (scouts).

Napoleon agreed to review the *fédérés* from the Faubourgs Saint-Antoine and Saint-Marcel on Sunday morning, 14 May 1815. That morning hundreds of men gathered on the boulevard near the Place de la Bastille before marching in a column seven-to-eight men across to the Tuileries.⁵⁰ Their social origins were obvious to every observer. The American statesman John Quincy Adams saw them pass along the boulevards: “There were about 3500 men and boys of the Fauxbourg St. Antoine and 1600 of the Fauxbourg St. Marceau, all labourers of the most indigent class. They marched in ranks of 20 holding one another arm in arm, and shouting incessantly ‘vive l’Empereur’.”⁵¹ John Cam Hobhouse, who witnessed the review itself, reported that “the greater part [were] in their labouring dresses and their dustman’s hats” and that “many of them [had] served [in the army].”⁵² A more-or-less official image of the event (published by *Le Moniteur*) depicts respectable artisans and workingmen enthusiastically acclaiming Napoleon as he rides through their ranks on horseback. In contrast, a Royalist caricature lampoons the men in a way that made them simultaneously both ridiculous (their ill-shaped bodies, their ragged and patched clothes) and menacing (their ferocious expressions, their swords and pikes).⁵³

Their ideological leanings—for Bluche they were the very embodiment of Jacobin Neo-Bonapartism—were no less evident than their social origins.⁵⁴ Their spokesman (a veteran soldier) addressed Napoleon as protector of revolutionary principles and national independence rather than autocrat or conqueror:

We have welcomed you enthusiastically because you are the representative of the nation, the defender of the Fatherland, and we expect from you a glorious independence and a wise liberty. You guarantee us these two precious possessions; you consecrate forever the rights of the people; you will reign by the Constitution and the laws. We come to offer our arms, our courage and our blood for the safety of the capital.

In response, Napoleon—as always, a master propagandist—played up to his audience:

I accept your offer. I will give you arms. I will give you as leaders officers covered with honorable wounds... . I will not worry about the capital with the National Guard and you charged with its defense... . Federated soldiers, while there are men born into the higher social classes who have dishonored the name of Frenchman, love of country and the sentiment of honour have been entirely preserved among the common people of the cities, the inhabitants of the countryside and the soldiers of the army... . I have confidence in you.⁵⁵

Napoleon's reaction was very different in private, however, as the former prefect and newly named peer Antoine-Claire Thibaudeau witnessed: "After the review, the Emperor and his courtiers, relieved of this heavy burden, fumigated themselves in order to cleanse themselves of their contact with this rabble." Napoleon even assured Interior Minister Lazare Carnot that he had no intention of distributing arms to such men. According to Thibaudeau, "Nobody dared admit the real reason that the *fédérés* would not be armed: they were considered a revolutionary army, and they terrified the upper classes and the monarchical government. As was said, it reeks of the Republic."⁵⁶ Marching workers were a disturbing reminder of the days of sans-culotte supremacy during the French Revolution, and they worried a lot of people: "The incorrigible [reactionaries] feign to see, in the meeting of peaceable citizens, the germ of popular frenzies," declared one Bonapartist newspaper; "they ... are still screaming their heads off about the [Reign of] Terror."⁵⁷ According to one contemporary pamphlet, "It's the Cossacks of the Faubourg Saint-Antoine, it is said [by the bourgeoisie], who are the most to be feared."⁵⁸ Such anxieties were doubtlessly an overreaction but the revolutionary significance of this militia was nonetheless very real, as one pamphleteer made explicit when he described Napoleon's review this way:

“The Emperor did well to honour the noble devotion of the two faubourgs; he even owed them this justice in reparation for the outrage done to them, precisely twenty years ago,” when, in the aftermath of the Prairial Uprising of May 1795, the French army surrounded and disarmed the Faubourg Saint-Antoine.⁵⁹

Only a year earlier, in spring 1814, attempts to encourage voluntary enlistment in the defense of Paris had failed. The predominant mood at the time was discouragement, fear, and desire for peace.⁶⁰ However, in 1815 the government could not ignore the military advantages of the manpower—officially estimated at 72,750 suitable male workers in the capital—that now seemed to be offering itself to the Emperor.⁶¹ The very day after the review, on 15 May, Napoleon authorized the recruitment of twenty-four battalions (17,280 men) of *fédérés-tirailleurs* under the control of the authorities, which effectively “put an end to the associations of the faubourgs as independent entities.”⁶² Judging from (incomplete) registers, these *fédérés-tirailleurs* were overwhelmingly ordinary workingmen: artisans (37.6%), shopkeepers (6.3%), and manual labourers (43.9%), with another 12.2% of unknown social class.⁶³ In other words, they were the one-time sans-culottes and many of them came from the old sans-culotte heartland—initially the Faubourgs Saint-Antoine and Saint-Marcel (like the men reviewed on 14 May) but after 18 May, also from the Faubourgs Saint-Martin, Saint-Denis, and Temple, as well as other districts of the capital.

To be sure, there was always something staged and second-hand in this revival of revolutionary enthusiasm. As Tocqueville famously observed of the February Revolution of 1848, the participants were too obviously self-conscious as they parodied old revolutionary gestures and slogans; they had the mannerisms down pat, but they somehow lacked the original warmth.⁶⁴ When a Parisian student, with some trepidation, attended a “popular assembly” (modelled on the popular societies of the Year II) that was meeting in a venue on the Rue Saint-Honoré, he was quickly disillusioned—or perhaps reassured?—by what he found: “The assembly was calm and decently dressed: only a few workers were still wearing their work clothes.... The president, in speaking to the assembly, used the word *Messieurs*, when I expected to hear him call us *Citoyens!*” The debate itself concerned nothing more radical than the drafting of a patriotic address to Napoleon. On another evening, the same student heard that a bust of Napoleon at the Café Montansier in the Palais-Royal had been adorned with a Phrygian

bonnet; hurrying there, he discovered this to be only a rumour.⁶⁵ Although Royalists claimed that this café was “the most disorderly, turbulent and filthy sewer,” one more favourably disposed observer saw 1200 people there: “distinguished soldiers, good bourgeois, talented clerks [*employés de mérite*], elegant and modest ladies.”⁶⁶

Even the *fédérés* proved in the event far less menacing than many had feared. Napoleon called for 17,280 men from across Paris, but officials managed to recruit only approximately 13,000. Some willingly volunteered, but many more had to be wheedled or coerced into joining by employers or local officials. Commissioners charged with recruitment convoked 400 men in the Quartier de la Cité; however, “the majority did not present themselves and of those who came, 108 accepted.” When officials summoned 1200 workers from the Quartier du Palais-Royal and the Faubourg Montmartre to meet in the courtyard of the Bibliothèque Impériale on the Rue de Richelieu, only 400 showed up.⁶⁷ In short, the initial outburst of enthusiasm seen on 14 May did not last. The government did in the end provide the *fédérés* with 6348 rifles—enough for approximately half of them, but the weapons were kept locked up in armouries; the *fédérés* (unlike national guardsmen) could not take their guns home.⁶⁸

It is impossible to know how the popular movement would have developed—or if Napoleon would have suppressed it (as seems likely)—had he won the Waterloo Campaign. However, Napoleon’s defeat, flight to Paris, and abdication on Thursday, 22 June, led to a final outburst. The demonstrations that Napoleon and Constant witnessed on the evening of 21 June were renewed in the afternoon of the 22nd, after the abdication, with an estimated 6000 Parisians in the Rue de Marigny shouting slogans. An anonymous English “gentleman” recorded at 3 p.m. “a sensible movement among the *fédérés* whose threats and outrages commence from this time. [...] Others of them, in bodies, go to the Palace Élysée and there demand Buonaparte to lead them.” They also called for arms. A worried Prefect of Police ordered the National Guard to prevent such gatherings the next day.⁶⁹ On Friday morning, however, groups formed in the Rue de Rivoli as early as 6 a.m. to read proclamations of the abdication posted overnight; they reacted with cries of “No, no abdication! Long live the Emperor! It’s treason!” A crowd knelt before the Vendôme Column and swore to die for the Emperor. Unemployed

workers on the quays spoke of nothing but the abdication and expressed their fears of another Bourbon restoration. A crowd of *fédérés* threw the authorities into a panic by marching from the Élysée to the Palais Royal; the shops along the route closed their shutters out of fear of violence.⁷⁰ John Scott, a Englishman then present in the city, claimed (however, no evidence supports him): “It is no longer doubtful that they are excited by Buonaparte, and that money is distributed among them.”⁷¹

Tensions remained at fever pitch for days to come even though Napoleon left the capital on 25 June. Any popular demonstration was likely to take on a Bonapartist tone. For instance, on the morning of 27 June, men working on the city’s fortifications staged a protest because they were owed two days’ pay. Three hundred of them marched through the Faubourg Saint-Marcel to the Hôtel-de-Ville shouting “Vive l’Empereur!” along the way.⁷² Similar incidents—relatively minor but disquieting all the same—continued to occur. This is how Hobhouse described the situation and mood on 4 July when rumours circulated that the government was about to surrender Paris to the Allies: “I have just heard that the whole National Guard are put under arms. Single musquets have been heard in various parts of the city ... and parties of men are running through the streets, shouting ‘Vive l’Empereur!’ ... The movement began at three o’clock, when many groups formed in the gardens and streets, listening to harangues and denunciations.”⁷³

Louis XVIII entered Paris on 8 July, thus bringing the Hundred Days and such agitation to an end. In the following months, however, the police arrested scores of ordinary men and women in every sort of occupation for seditious remarks that threatened the King, expressed support for the fallen Emperor, or predicted his imminent return to the city.⁷⁴ Such public utterances may have been the actions of “a narrow minority”; however, as Bernard Ménager pointed out, “The Police ... considered them to be a barometer of opinion.”⁷⁵ During the course of August 1815, the police also began to disarm former *fédérés* (in late June, when the Allies threatened the city, approximately 6000 had at last been allowed to keep their guns), and they kept an eye on many of the men for at least another year.⁷⁶ The kind of devotion that Napoleon could still evoke is best represented by a cotton worker in 1816 who regularly remarked that “he knows only God and the Emperor.”⁷⁷ The events of the First Restoration and the Hundred Days are thus crucial in fusing revolutionary, liberal, and Bonapartist sentiment such

that “Long live Napoleon!” could become a battle cry for many on the political left throughout the Restoration period. This fusion is demonstrated by a police report on a workers’ demonstration in June 1820: “The trouble-makers forced all whom they met to cry “Long live the Charter!” to which they added “Long live the Charter, that’s long live liberty! Long live the Nation!” These cries were accompanied by even more reprehensible cries of “Long live the Emperor!”⁷⁸

The critical point to understand is that the emerging Bonapartism in 1814 and 1815 (which remained a political force for decades to come) was—as everybody at the time including Napoleon himself, understood—never nostalgia for the First Empire. Rather, Parisian workers’ opinions were similar to the attitude of those former middle-class revolutionary leaders who also came out in support of Napoleon in 1815. As Jacqueline Chaumié explained in an analysis of former Girondins during the Hundred Days: “More than an act of political adherence to the Imperial government, their rallying to Napoleon in 1815 was an act of revolutionary fidelity and a rejection of the Old Regime. By this impetus that carried them towards Napoleon, they expressed their almost visceral hatred of feudalism and clericalism.”⁷⁹

NOTES

1. Benjamin Constant, *Mémoires sur les Cent-Jours*, ed. O. Pozzo di Borgo (Paris, 1961), 199.
2. On the complex issue of Napoleon’s popularity, see the brief analysis in Natalie Petiteau, *Les Français et l’Empire (1799–1815)* (Avignon, 2008), 157–190, who argues (157) that there was “an apparent acceptance [of the regime] on the part of these populations, which certainly concealed revolts and rejection, but which the government strove to stifle and which is rarely visible in the sources.”
3. Frédéric Bluche, *Le Bonapartisme: Aux origines de la droite autoritaire (1800–1850)* (Paris, 1980), 101–102.
4. Gallais, *Histoire de la Révolution du 20 mars 1815* (Paris, 1815), 161.
5. *Paris en 1814: Journal inédit de Madame de Marigny, augmenté du journal de T.-R. Underwood*, ed. J. Ladreit de Lacharrière (Paris, 1907), 69–70.
6. Archives Nationales (hereafter AN), Paris, F¹c III Seine 29, undated police report, quoted in Adolphe Schmidt, *Tableaux de la Révolution française, publiés sur les papiers inédits du Département et de la police secrète de Paris*, 4 vols. (Leipzig, 1867–1871), 3: 509, who attributes it

- to 7 June 1814. Also, Bibliothèque de l'Histoire de Paris (henceforth BHVP), Ms 1010, f^o 185, 'Considérations sur l'esprit public du 3^e arrondissement', 19 May 1814.
7. Archives du Ministère des Affaires Étrangères (hereafter AMAE), Paris, Mémoires et documents, France, registre 340, report to King, 6 October 1814.
 8. AN, 40 AP 10, report, 25 August 1814.
 9. This essay uses only manuscript sources, but for a selection of police reports for the First Restoration, see Eugène Welvert, *Napoléon et la police sous la Première Restauration d'après les rapports du comte Beugnot au roi Louis XVIII* (Paris, n.d.) and Georges Firmin-Didot, *Royauté ou Empire: La France en 1814 d'après les rapports inédits du comte Anglès* (Paris, 1897).
 10. AN, F⁷ 3784, report, 12 November 1814.
 11. AMAE, Mémoires et documents, France, registres 336–342, reports to King, 20–21 May, 1–3 and 19 June, 25 September, 6 October, 11 November, 3 and 17 December 1814; AN, F⁷ 3783–84, police bulletins, 5 and 8 July, 6 August, and 17 November 1814; AN, F⁷ 6623, n^o 114A, Minister of War to Director-General of Police, 29 July 1814.
 12. AN, F⁷ 3783, report, 16 August 1814.
 13. AMAE, Mémoires et documents, France, registre 339, report to King, 29 September 1814.
 14. AMAE, Mémoires et documents, France, registre 341, report to King, 31 January 1815; AN, F⁷ 3784, police bulletin, 20 January 1815; F⁷ 3144, police reports, 20 August/2 September 1814, 26 August/2 September 1814.
 15. AN, F⁷ 3145, report, 5/10 October 1814.
 16. AN, F⁷ 6624, n^o 580-A, police report, 10 March 1815.
 17. AMAE, Mémoires et documents, France, registre 344, report to King, 1 February 1815; AN, F⁷ 3783, police bulletins, 1 July, 19, 22 and 31 August 1814.
 18. AN, F¹³ 637A, petition, 30 May 1815.
 19. AMAE, registres 337–8, reports to king, 1 and 10 August 1814; F⁷ 3783–84, police bulletins, 1 and 27 August, 2 September and 10 October 1814, and 27 January 1815.
 20. AN, F⁷ 3143–4, police reports, 6 September, 5/14 September 1814.
 21. AN, F¹³ 950, petition by "400 carpenters," [spring 1815].
 22. AN, F⁷ 3783, police bulletins, 12, 22 July, 27 August 1814.
 23. AN, F⁷ 3783, police bulletin, 19 July 1814.
 24. AN, F³ II Seine 39, Minister of the Interior to Minister of Finance, 10 November 1814.

25. François-André Isambert, *Christianisme et classe ouvrière: jalons pour une étude de sociologie historique* (Paris, 1961), 142–143, 153. See also Cobenzl to Colloredo, Paris, 28 April 1802, in Alfred Boulay de la Meurthe, *Documents sur la négociation du Concordat*, 6 vols. (Paris, 1891–1905), 5: 568–570; royalist agent's report, 6 June 1802, in Albert de Remacle, *Bonaparte et les Bourbons: Relations secrètes des agents de Louis XVIII à Paris sous le Consulat (1802–1804)* (Paris, 1899), 24; AN, AF IV 1012, observations by the Prefect of the Seine, Year IX, under heading "Cultes"; remarks by the curé of Sainte-Marguerite (Faubourg Saint-Antoine), quoted in AMAE, Mémoires et documents, France, registre 344, report to King, 29–30 January 1815.
26. *Avis à tous les négocians, fabricans, marchands de vin, limonadiers, marchands d'eau-de-vie, maîtres de billard, cochers, charretiers, étaleurs, colporteurs, ouvriers de tous métiers et professions, hommes de journée et commissionnaires, sur la défense d'ouvrir les boutiques et de travailler les dimanches et fêtes* (Paris, 1814). On "Saint Monday" (as it was called), see Jeffrey Kaplow, "La fin de saint-lundi," *Temps Libre* 2 (1981): 107–118.
27. [Thomas Richard Underwood], *A Narrative of Memorable Events in Paris, Preceding the Capitulation, and During the Occupancy of that City by the Allied Armies, in the Year 1814; Being Extracted from the Journal of a Détenu, who Continued a Prisoner, on Parole, in the French Capital from the Year 1803 to 1814* (London, 1828), 197–198.
28. AN, F⁷ 3783, police bulletin, 20 July 1814.
29. AMAE, Mémoires et documents, France, registre 339, report to King, 22 September 1814.
30. AMAE, Mémoires et documents, France, registre 343, reports to King, 17, 18, 20, 24 and 29–30 January 1815; AN, F⁷ 3784, police bulletins, 18, 23 and 25 January 1815 (quotations from 18 January).
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32. AN, F⁷ 3783, police bulletin, 26 August 1814.
33. AN, F⁷ 3144, police report, 3/10 September 1814.
34. AN, F⁷ 3784, police bulletin, 5 October 1814.
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The Last Stand: Napoleon's Hundred Days in 100 Objects (online exhibition by The University of Warwick), available at <http://www.100days.eu/items/show/90>.

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Back by Popular Demand? Historians and the Problem of Public Opinion During Napoleon's Hundred Days

John Dunne

Of the many conflicts of legitimacy that, as pointed out in the Introduction, characterized the brief but fateful episode of the Hundred Days, the most intense was played out in front of the French nation between the recently restored but now ousted Bourbon monarchy of Louis XVIII and the regime “with no name” that Napoleon instituted on his return from Elba.¹ Among the various arguments each side presented on behalf of its respective claimant’s legitimacy and against his adversary’s, one evidently trumped all others. Napoleon put it succinctly: “My power is more legitimate than the Bourbons: they hold theirs only through the support of the Cossacks and by a so-called right of succession; mine issues from the will and love of the French people.”² True, he was not pleased when the Council of State, which he had re-instated, pointed to the underlying logic of his position, declaring “Sovereignty resides in the people. That is the sole legitimate source of power.”³

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After all, he would have liked to enjoy the same sort of composite legitimacy, comprising traditional and religious as well as popular elements that he had laid claim to before the first abdication, but there could be no going back.⁴ Bonapartist pretensions met with a predictable royalist response in the form of Louis XVIII's counterclaim: "So Bonaparte has force on his side; all hearts are for me."⁵ Divine right apparently did not come into it.

Needless to say, the contending parties were concerned not only to present their respective versions of public opinion but also to monitor and influence the real thing. This was more especially the case with the actual government in Paris than the virtual one in exile. All governments need a substantial measure of consent to make their rule effective. However, the need was particularly acute for Napoleon's restored regime because its chances of survival depended on mobilising French national resources on an unprecedented scale—unprecedented because in previous wars the Empire had also been able to draw on the human and financial resources of a swathe of territories that were now beyond its reach. Jacques-Olivier Boudon recently suggested that "Napoleon's actions during the Hundred Days were ... almost exclusively directed towards building another army."⁶ That is true provided it is recognized that securing popular consent and support was an essential part of that process. Apart from military preparations in the strictest sense, virtually all government measures during the regime's short life could be—and were at the time—seen to be motivated by the need to win the battle for people's minds. Although the most conspicuous example concerns the ceremony of the Champ-de-Mai, it was also the case with the decisions to relax censorship and issue a new constitution by another name (the *Acte Additionnel aux Constitutions de l'Empire*), submit it to a plebiscite, hold elections to the new Chamber of Representatives, and bring forward its opening so that it took place before Napoleon left for the front.⁷ The same motive partially explains the puzzling decision to allow communes with fewer than 5000 inhabitants to elect their mayors and *adjoints* for the first and last time in their history.

The constant obsessive concern with monitoring and influencing opinion during the Hundred Days has provided historians with an extraordinary array and volume of sources for its study. The staple governmental sources for the study of political opinion and activity in France for much of the nineteenth century are the reports of prefects, police commissioners and the like, and commanding officers in the *divisions militaires* into which the country was divided, as well as their subordinates in each

department; this “trinity” of sources exists for this period in particular abundance. What is unparalleled in French history, however, is the mass of information resulting from the decision to hold three electoral consultations almost simultaneously—the plebiscite on the *Acte Additionnel*, the municipal elections (both by virtual universal male suffrage), and the parliamentary elections—in which voting was restricted to the official political class comprising life-time members of the electoral colleges. At the same time, the relaxation of censorship at a time of acute national crisis resulted in an outpouring of political comment and debate in the newspaper press and the appearance of many hundreds of political pamphlets.⁸ This is to say nothing of the subsequent proliferation—mostly under the Restoration and July Monarchy—of memoirs by contemporary actors, thus giving extensive coverage to the Hundred Days.⁹ Moreover, much of the governmental material is of unusual quality because, given the comparative weakness of the regime, administrators were more inclined than hitherto to speak truth to power.

Had Napoleon, as he claimed, returned in accordance with the wishes of the great majority of French people? Or did the king, over the border in Ghent, retain the loyalty of most of his subjects—except in the army—as he and his supporters claimed? And how did whatever support Napoleon enjoyed in the country at large stand up once it became obvious to all that war was inevitable? Given the wealth of historical sources and the difficulty of commanding them all in their detail, historians have taken a variety of different approaches, thus reaching very different conclusions on these questions. It is instructive first to acknowledge the interpretative tendencies within the historiography before adopting a critical perspective on the sources and evidence used in the construction of what has become the dominant “narrative” of Napoleon’s popular legitimacy.

HISTORIOGRAPHY: FROM HOUSSAYE TO THE PRESENT

The discussion of the historiography of any aspect of France’s domestic history between Napoleon’s return from Elba and his second abdication must begin with two works written either side of the First World War: Henry Houssaye’s *1815: La Première Restauration—le retour de l’île d’Elbe—les Cent-Jours*, published in 1893, and, Emile Le Gallo’s *Les Cent-Jours: essai sur l’histoire intérieure de la France depuis le retour de l’île d’Elbe jusqu’à la nouvelle de Waterloo*, which appeared thirty years later.¹⁰ This is not out of an antiquarian interest in the

way history was written before its professionalization—in this case by a historian of Greece—cum—art critic and a provincial schoolteacher, respectively—but on account of their works’ enduring influence. This results from a combination of two factors. The first is the prodigious amount of archival research that the two men carried out in preparing the works in question. Houssaye’s love affair with the archives and his belief that only primary sources were relevant to the reconstruction of the past led him to immerse himself in not only the Archives Nationales, where he paid particular attention to police reports, but also the Army Archives at Vincennes and, to a lesser extent, the Foreign Affairs archives on the Quai d’Orsay. With Le Gallo subsequently concentrating his research in the Archives Nationales largely on a *sous-série* containing 85 cartons of prefectoral correspondence with the Ministry of the Interior, between them the two men made huge inroads into the trinity of administrative sources referred to earlier. The other factor is simply the comparative failure of subsequent historians to follow their example. As a result, all historical writing on the Hundred Days has been more reliant on the two men’s work than some have liked to admit, and such is the volume and range of source material that they consulted that anyone carrying out first-hand research on the period, whether consciously or not, is almost certainly following in their footsteps.¹¹

Much of both men’s research effort was directed toward uncovering the state of public opinion during the period. Houssaye’s stated aim to “portray the feelings of the French people of 1815” was more than matched by Le Gallo’s ambition to “evoke the feelings of the anonymous masses, penetrate their illusions, hopes and hatreds, [and] reveal their grievances and fears.”¹² Ostensibly, their respective approaches to the study of history could hardly have been more different. Inspired by his supervisor Albert Mathiez, the famous neo-Marxist or “Jacobin” historian of the French Revolution, Le Gallo held that the historian’s task was to explain the past in terms of economic forces and class interest; for Houssaye, it was a matter of bringing the past to life for his huge readership.¹³ Yet, in practice, such professional differences seem to have been obscured by certain shared politico-cultural values, which coloured their interpretation of the past—in particular, an intense patriotism, bred in part from collective anxieties about France’s great power status. Certainly, their treatment of the movement of opinion during Napoleon’s “85 days” is essentially similar.¹⁴

The starting point for both was the mounting discontent with the restored Bourbon monarchy before Napoleon's return from Elba, which was largely provoked by the behaviour of ultra-royalist supporters of the regime. This prepared the ground for the explosion of popular feeling that, after an initially cool reception, occurred along the route of his march from Digne onward. Thereafter, their accounts of the *vol de l'aigle* read like an elaborate version, with accompanying footnotes, of Napoleon's own propagandist *Relation de la marche*, published in the *Moniteur* of 23 March, and later reprinted in the *Memorial of St. Helena*. For both historians, though, the initial enthusiasm soon began to dissipate once Napoleon was back in power. Taking issue with the notion that the regime's loss of popularity was due to the *Acte Additionnel*, Houssaye insisted that the decline pre-dated its publication and resulted from a host of other factors: "foreign threats, the fear of war, the machinations of the royalists, the agitation of the clergy, the open opposition of mayors, and measures taken on the orders of the emperor himself to dampen down revolutionary enthusiasm."¹⁵ Ultimately, though, rather than stress the effects of the growing certainty of war and the threat of invasion, both men pointed to Napoleon's domestic political decision-making. For Le Gallo, instead of taking the parliamentary road, which made him "a prisoner of the liberal bourgeoisie," he should have used the support he enjoyed with "soldiers, the greater part of the urban and rural masses, very many young people [and] the fédérés" to become "a powerful and invulnerable 'patriotic dictator.'"¹⁶ Houssaye was less concerned with the big constitutional issues than government's failure to root out defeatist elements within the administration and deal effectively with royalist subversion, both of which led to widespread demoralisation. He was concerned to keep this phenomenon in perspective in his conclusion: even at its lowest point, "the Dauphiné, Franche-Comté, the Nivernais, the Saintonge, the Béarn, Burgundy, the Ile de France, Champagne, Lorraine, Alsace [and] Lower Brittany—that is half of France—had remained Bonapartist."¹⁷ Furthermore, he claimed to see a last-minute improvement in the regime's standing, thanks both to overdue "energetic measures," such as the purging of prefects and the use of special police powers taking effect, and a resurgence of patriotism in the face of impending hostilities.

This version of popular political attitudes during the Hundred Days went largely unchallenged for most of the twentieth century. Historians writing about the episode were not so much influenced by these two

historians as dependent on them. This dependence was (and remains today) most marked in works aimed at a general readership, but most specialists were also in thrall. It is true that not all of the little first-hand research carried out at this time supported the orthodoxy. Philip Mansel's *Louis XVIII* argued that the picture of overwhelming support for Napoleon, even during his march on Paris, had been greatly overdrawn.¹⁸ By contrast, in his path-breaking study of the *fédéré* associations, formed to prevent the return of Bourbon government, Robert Alexander took issue with the "general consensus that revolutionary support for Napoleon declined shortly after the *vol d'aigle*."¹⁹ However, the most influential research-based study of mass political attitudes during the period to appear at this time came out firmly on the side of the historiographical status quo. Bluche's near-exhaustive analysis of the results of the plebiscite on the *Acte* led him to conclude that support for Napoleon had declined drastically from the heady days of the return from Elba.²⁰

Within the last ten years there has been a significant shift in the historiography on this question. This can be demonstrated with reference to three of the more important works to appear in that time: Emmanuel de Waresquiel's *Cent Jours: la tentation de l'impossible, mars-juillet 1815* (2008), the fourth and final volume in Thierry Lentz's *Nouvelle Histoire du Premier Empire* entitled *Les Cent-Jours, 1815* (2010) and, most recently, Charles Esdaile's *Napoleon, France and Waterloo: The Eagle Rejected* (2016).²¹ Each author approaches the Hundred Days from a different angle and with a different objective in mind: Lentz offers a top-down narrative of events from Napoleon's first abdication to the beginning of the Second Restoration; Waresquiel's concern is with the experiences of the king and those who followed him to Ghent or went into internal exile; and Esdaile's study, although intended as a contribution to the endless debate on the epic battle, differentiates itself from other publications in this crowded market place by its attention to the domestic background and context (a fifth of the book is devoted to the "home front" during the Hundred Days). Yet, on the subject of public and popular opinion at the time, these disparate works have much in common. Of the three, only Waresquiel's draws extensively on manuscript material (held in more than a dozen depositories); however, in accordance with its primary focus, most of this relates to opposition to Napoleon—including invaluable popular royalism. As a result, as far as actual support for his restored regime is concerned, all three are largely reliant on the archival research of others.

With regard to attitudes to Napoleon's restored regime once he was back in power, these historians put a more negative gloss on the kind of evidence—often the exact same evidence—that Houssaye and Le Gallo had used to paint an already quite bleak picture of its standing in public opinion. In addition to the many instances of opposition from within the administration itself—as well as the population at large—to be found in reports by civilian, police, and military officials, the evidence comprises quantitative data relating to the plebiscite on the *Acte*, the legislative, and, to a lesser extent, the municipal elections of May 1815.²² Lentz is particularly trenchant in his assessment of their significance: the plebiscite is described as a “catastrophe,” whereas the two elections, he maintains, bear out Bluche's assessment that the regime “no longer had avowed supporters outside the army.”²³ In contrast, Esdaile's no less sweeping verdict on the lack of popular support enjoyed by the emperor after his return to power is largely supported with reference to testimonies found in (published) private correspondence and journals, much of it penned by British soldiers or civilian visitors to France. So decisive, in his view, was the country's rejection of Napoleon, even before Waterloo, that the reader is left wondering along with him: “How does one account for the fact that within very few years France embraced the Napoleonic Legend?”²⁴

Where these historians break with the old consensus is on the question of Napoleon's reception during his progress from Elba to Paris. Waresquiel quotes at some length from the testimonies of several key eye-witnesses, used by previous historians to show that “the people seem effectively to have presided over Napoleon's return,” but then proceeds to deconstruct them through source criticism.²⁵ Memorialists who recorded their recollections years after the event, he suggests, may have done so under the spell of the Legend, whereas former royal officials and army officers who, on the Second Restoration, were called to account for their inaction during Napoleon's progress from Elba had an interest in making themselves out to be powerless before a tidal wave of popular pro-Napoleonic feeling.²⁶ However, although Waresquiel readily acknowledges that “the people had some part in his [Napoleon's] return,” the same can hardly be said of the other two. Lentz speaks for both when he concludes that the “alleged popular mobilisation” played no part in Napoleon's recovery of his throne, which he owed simply to a “military coup d'état.”²⁷

CRITICAL REFLECTIONS ON THE NEW CONSENSUS

How well founded is this new consensus on the subject? In particular, how secure are its evidential foundations? In addressing this question, it is necessary to separate out the issue of responses to Napoleon's return before his resumption of power, on which today's orthodoxy is in sharp opposition to earlier views, as well question the subsequent movement of opinion on which it has accentuated pre-existed trends in the scholarship.

The areas of controversy surrounding the famous *vol de l'aigle* concern, in the first place, the extent and significance of the popular support he received along the route of his march and, second, how the news of his progress and ultimate success was received further afield, i.e., in the rest of France. On the first issue, the downgrading in the current scholarship of the role of popular—particularly, peasant—support as a factor in the “miraculous” success of Napoleon's gamble is not principally the result of the exploitation of new material but rather a re-reading of the old. If Waresquiel is right to point out that previous historians have here been insufficiently critical of their sources, this does not mean that accounts of mass enthusiasm bordering on hysteria should be discounted altogether rather than an allowance being made for some degree of hyperbole. What is more open to question is what influence displays of popular support along and adjacent to Napoleon's route had on the series of troop mutinies that then occurred. Although Houssaye's claim that “demonstrations of peasants and workers” were a constant factor behind the defection of royal units to Napoleon may be excessive, it would seem implausible to maintain that they were not without influence in specific instances.²⁸ In this connection, it is worth pointing out, *pace* Pierre Lévêque, that the initiative in such movements came from within the ranks rather than the high command.²⁹ Nor can it be disputed at moments during Napoleon's advance that local people intervened decisively on his behalf; for example, when they prevented royal troops from demolishing or barricading their bridges to halt his advance on Paris.³⁰ However, were they acting out of sympathy with the Bonapartist cause or simply trying to protect their community's links with the outside world?³¹ This could hardly have been the case when inhabitants from Chalons-sur-Saône, with the help of National Guardsmen, waylaid an artillery convoy “to save its guns for the emperor.”³²

Not surprisingly, given the scope of the task, it is not currently possible to hazard even a provisional assessment of the balance of responses, outside areas along or adjacent to Napoleon's route, to news of his

second coming. Clearly, it would be unwise to follow Houssaye and Le Gallo in accepting uncritically either prefects' reports of the welcome it received from their *administrés* or the proclamations of loyalty emanating from public bodies. That is not to say that a close reading of the relevant texts might not reveal meaningful differences in tone between them.³³ Similarly, it remains to be seen whether such reports were forthcoming for all areas. It is significant that some regions soon to be considered sites of opposition or resistance, such as Normandy, were said to have responded positively.³⁴ In contrast, Lentz's attempt to counter the notion of the widespread popularity of Napoleon's return is puzzling in its suggestion that the best evidence that Houssaye and Le Gallo could come up with for Napoleon's popularity was "the appearance of tricolour flags or instances of billposting in Brittany, the Cantal, the Haute Garonne or the Eastern departments."³⁵ Yet, the value of this type of evidence is beyond question: such incidents can help to serve as a "barometer" of popular Bonapartism just as similar symbolic statements emanating from the opposite camp help to constitute "the real barometer of royalism."³⁶ This suggests that his point must concern the lack of similar evidence for other areas. But here we need to be sure the two historians in question found no other such examples and that their searches were suitably exhaustive.

By contrast, the notion of a steep decline in the popularity of the restored Empire over its brief lifespan rests on a more substantial body of evidence drawn overwhelmingly from the "trinity" of administrative sources and data from the plebiscite and parliamentary and municipal elections of May 1815. However, without contesting the overall direction of opinion during Napoleon's "85 days," it is possible to question the scale of the movement.

All three of the electoral consultations called by the Imperial government during the Hundred Days are generally held to have been "set-backs" or worse for the recently restored Imperial regime.³⁷ In the case of the elections to the newly created Chamber of Representatives, the argument rests primarily on the poor turnout of the elite electorate, comprising members of the departmental and arrondissement electoral colleges, more or less as constituted before 1813. (Both types of college elected Representatives but the more prestigious departmental colleges had a larger quota of seats in the Chamber.³⁸) So sure was the Second Restoration government that the failure of these Napoleonic notables to do their electoral duty in the emperor's hour of need represented a major propaganda victory for Bourbon legitimacy that it published in the *Moniteur*—not once but twice—membership and voting figures for all

86 departmental colleges that had met in May 1815.³⁹ On the second occasion, these were set alongside the far more impressive figures the same colleges notched up when convoked by Louis XVIII three months later.⁴⁰ According to the retrospective figures for the May election, had not Napoleon's government, specifically for this occasion, lifted the normal quoracy rule (by which a majority of members had to vote in a ballot for it to be considered valid) most of these colleges would have been unable to conduct any business.

Though poor, turnout in these departmental colleges during the Hundred Days was not quite as bad as is sometimes made out. For example, Lentz's assertion that abstentions at this level ran at "nearly 70 per cent" appears excessive: using the "official" Second Restoration figures for voters taking part in the highest single ballot yields a "proxy" participation rate of 38%.⁴¹ Furthermore, this figure itself may well be on the low side. This is not because the nominator—the number of voters—is wide of the mark, but because of doubts about the denominator—the total number of "ayant droit de voter." The last-minute decision to call the elections meant that there was not enough time to produce up-to-date membership lists taking account of all recent deaths or changes of domicile. In one case where we have the necessary supplementary information—the departmental college of the Seine—the discrepancy turns out to be of the order of 5%.⁴² On the other hand, it is not clear whether the holders of the Legion of Honour who obtained special authorisation to vote in these assemblies were included in the membership figures published in the *Moniteur*. However, unlike in the case of the arrondissement colleges, very few such admissions were made to the departmental assemblies.⁴³

Whatever the actual turnout in the departmental colleges, it paled in comparison with rates regularly achieved during the Empire's "better days." Then, as Malcolm Crook shows in an important article, which also takes a fresh look at the plebiscite, "two-thirds of members [were] habitually present" in departmental colleges and "a turnout of 70 percent was not unusual."⁴⁴ Most, though by no means all, of the disparity in attendance before Napoleon's first abdication and in May 1815 is to be accounted for by the royalist boycott of the latter elections. Conspicuous among the resultant absentees were ancien-regime nobles who formed a sizeable contingent in most departmental colleges, thanks both to the wealth qualification required for membership and to the assiduous efforts of the Imperial regime in its heyday to incorporate them into its system.

So far, so bad for Napoleon's restored regime government. However, it could take comfort from the fact—which commentators after Le Gallo have tended to lose sight of—that attendance in the arrondissement colleges held up better—according to Crook, “almost 50 per cent better”—than in the departmental assemblies.⁴⁵ This was the reverse of the situation that prevailed before the Empire's first fall. The greater willingness of members of the arrondissement colleges to take the oath of the allegiance and vote is significant for two reasons: first, being more numerous, these colleges contained a far larger population overall; second, their members were regarded as being “closer to the people”—and so arguably more in tune with the popular mood—because while members of both sets of colleges were elected for life by cantonal assemblies open to all adult male citizens, no financial qualification was required for membership of the lower colleges.⁴⁶

The plebiscite of 1815 occupies a crucial position in the historiography of the Hundred Day for two reasons. Firstly, with participation open to all adult males, it permits insights into political loyalties within French society more widely. Secondly, it has been intensively studied by Bluche. That is not to say, however, that conclusions that have been reached on the basis of his findings are beyond question. Clearly the vote failed to give the renewed Empire the boost it was looking for, but it was not the “pure disaster” that it has been claimed to be.⁴⁷ The “disaster” claim rests on the low participation rate in comparison to the preceding plebiscites of 1802 and 1804. However, as well as raising the 1815 rate by a few percentage points (to nearly 22%) on the grounds that Bluche considerably overestimated the total electorate, Crook has shown that turnout does not compare unfavourably either to that in 1799 or similar consultations during the Revolution.⁴⁸ Compared with 1802 and 1804, the vote held up better in rural areas than in large urban centres—or more accurately, did not fall as sharply. The general rule that abstention was higher in cities than in the surrounding countryside held good even in cities such as Lyons where the federative movement was particularly strong.⁴⁹ Of course, in terms of the regime's prospects of survival, the fall in urban support had worrying implications for the future of the regime but, for our purposes, it is related to an interesting trend. Given that in general voters in the cities tended to come from higher up the social scale, the fall in the urban vote almost certainly means, as Bluche acknowledged, that popular votes made up a higher proportion of the total on this occasion than in the plebiscite on the Empire in 1804.⁵⁰

More importantly, while Esdaile attempts to minimize the political meaning of voting “yes” in the plebiscite by referring to the authorities’ opportunities “to intimidate electorate ... and to manipulate the result,” it is unlikely that either was exploited on anything like the scale practised in earlier plebiscites.⁵¹ Indeed, with state power at an all-time low, voters were much less likely to be subject to official pressure to vote than royalist intimidation not to.⁵² As a result, a positive vote on the *Acte Additionnel* surely signified a stronger attachment to the regime than its equivalent in previous plebiscites. Accordingly, we might conclude with Crook that obtaining 1.3 million civilian votes on this occasion was a case of the glass being “one-quarter full rather than three-quarters empty,” or, less opaquely with Thibaudeau, a contemporary critic of the *Acte*, that “in such a critical situation, the groundswell of national support was not at all bad.”⁵³

We are on firmer ground in objecting to the way the municipal elections, called by a decree of 30 April, have been made to fit the minimalist case. In this instance, historians have had little or nothing to say on the question of turnout. Indeed, if we were able to equate participation in the communal elections with Bonapartist sympathies, then the localized figures we have would suggest that the strength of popular Bonapartism has been seriously underestimated.⁵⁴ Certainly the signs are that in communes where the elections took place it was not unusual for citizens to vote in greater numbers than in the plebiscite.⁵⁵ It remains to be seen whether or not turnout was consistently higher in regions sympathetic to Napoleon but, even if it was, voting at this level did not necessarily connote support or even acceptance of the regime. The royalist boycott of elections was lifted on this occasion and many Bourbon supporters were elected or re-elected mayor by their fellow citizens. However well received, then, the decision to break with the previous Napoleonic practice of nominating mayors and *adjoints* and instead to elect both by universal male suffrage can hardly be presented as a success. None of this is in dispute. Whether the elections were quite the “slap in the face to Imperial power” that Lentz maintains is another matter.⁵⁶

While Esdaile passes over the elections entirely, according to Waresquiel, “two out of three former mayors—many of whom were royalists—were re-elected,” and Lentz asserts that “about 80 per cent of mayors and adjoints installed by the royal government” were returned to office.⁵⁷ However, Lentz cites no authority for this figure, and Waresquiel refers to just one study of a single canton—hardly the basis

for generalising to the national level. The resemblance with a similarly unsubstantiated claim in Houssaye may be a clue as to its provenance: “Two-thirds of [incumbent] mayors which the Imperial government hoped would be replaced were re-elected.”⁵⁸ How Houssaye arrived at this figure is entirely unclear as the data from communal returns have never been collated on a national basis. Even today, only three studies have conducted the necessary calculations for even a single *arrondissement* or department. While the larger study—on a department in Western France—comes up with a figure in the same ballpark as Waresquiel, the *arrondissement* studies for the Haut-Rhin and Rhône respectively found, in the first case, that only a third of mayors were re-elected, and, in the other, that just under 42% of incumbent mayors and *adjoints* were returned.⁵⁹

There are also reasons to question whether the men re-elected were as unfailingly royalist as has been assumed. First, the widespread view that there was a drastic turnover of mayors at the Louis’ first restoration is unfounded; the vast majority of the men re-elected in 1815 had been appointed before Napoleon’s first abdication—admittedly, perhaps most at a time when *ralliement* was the order of the day.⁶⁰ Second, the frequent claim in military and police sources that most mayors in office in 1815 were former *seigneurs* or royal *gardes du corps* seems inherently implausible: were there really enough male ancien-regime nobles of an appropriate age to head up more than a limited proportion of France’s 38,000 communes? Third, there is the awkward fact that many re-elected mayors were included in the massive purge of municipal personnel that took place within the first twelve months or so of the Second Restoration.⁶¹ In the prevailing revanchist climate some were probably victims of false denunciations, but many others actually lacked the necessary royalist credentials. Not that all the latter were necessarily partisans of the Revolution or Empire; most likely, a fair number were village-level *girouettes*, not in the pejorative sense but according to a modern-day definition: someone for whom “loyalty to the polity [transcends] loyalty to the person of the sovereign.”⁶² Finally, if these elections were the outstanding royalist victory that has been claimed, it is perhaps surprising that the possibility of continuing the experiment after the Hundred Days does not seem to have been discussed.⁶³

Electoral data has featured prominently in the recent historiography but so too has the documentary evidence left by members of different branches of state service reporting both on the “esprit public” within their

territorial jurisdiction and on the attitude of local officials. Much of this material presents us with a picture of a regime that, within a few weeks of its inception, enjoyed neither the support of much of the local population nor the loyalty of many of the agents whose job it was to interact with local communities. However, like all evidence, these reports require careful scrutiny. In a recent work, *L'État des esprits: l'invention de l'enquête politique en France, 1814-1848*, concerned with government's attempts to fathom public opinion, Pierre Karila-Cohen refers to the need to go beyond what he calls "the traditional use" (*l'usage classique*) of official reports of this kind in favour of "a more problematized reading" (*une lecture plus problématisée*).⁶⁴ This requires some understanding of the values, goals and interests of the organization to which the reporter belongs, including the tenor of its relationships with other state agencies.⁶⁵ The most damning and persistent reports cited by historians to show the parlous state of the country in general and the political unreliability of its administrative personnel in particular come from high-ranking army officers stationed in the departments. Their denunciations, which, as Pierre Serna points out, called, either tacitly or increasingly explicitly, for a wholesale purge of the civilian authorities, may at another level be seen as an expression of the military's traditional distrust of the civilian administration.⁶⁶ This antipathy had recently taken on a whole new dimension in view of the widespread conviction within the army that it had not been defeated in 1814 but "stabbed in the back" by defeatist elements on the home front.⁶⁷

Houssaye entertains the possibility that inter-service rivalry may have been behind these denunciations, only to dismiss it. Rather than being simply the product of the machinations of military officials against the civil authorities (*un complot des traineurs de sabre contre l'autorité civile*), their testimony, he insists, is corroborated by the complaints of "ordinary citizens" to Carnot, the Minister of the Interior, one of which he cites: "The civilian authorities are rotten to the core. The emperor's many qualities, the enthusiasm of the citizens, his glorious return to the capital ... nothing will have any effect unless we change the prefects, secretaries-general, sub-prefects, mayors, deputy mayors, clerks and other government employees."⁶⁸ Yet, the letter in question, rather than expressing the views of the "man in the street," is clearly from someone well known to the minister (it is almost certainly, General Bonamy, who attended the ceremony of the Champ-de-Mai representing the department of Vendée).⁶⁹

Of course, civilian administrators sometimes spoke about their subordinates in terms redolent of the military's disdain. However, my impression

is that, unlike the latter, rather than condemn them *en masse* they tended to single out individuals or small groups for opprobrium, usually for what they are held to have done or, more likely, not done, rather than for the views they are reputed to hold. It is true that many of the prefectural corps were scathing in their assessments of the results of the municipal elections. According to the sub-prefect of the arrondissement of Le Havre, the voters' choices were uniformly "bad."⁷⁰ Given that the area was notorious for the strength of its opposition to Napoleonic rule, his assessment, from the regime's point of view was almost certainly correct. Nevertheless, it is hard not to see in the vehemence of his and other colleagues' criticisms of the electoral outcomes an element of corporate hostility to the electoral process per se. The unexpected decision to call municipal elections added very considerably to their administrative load and in depriving prefects of the power of choosing their own subordinates it significantly lessened their control over them, simultaneously reducing their powers of patronage. To add salt to their wounds, if the idea of holding municipal elections did not actually originate with the military, mounting pressure from commanding officers in the interior, through their mouthpiece, the Minister of War, Marshal Davout, was instrumental in the decision to call them.⁷¹

EPILOGUE

It has not been the intention of this essay to argue that support for Napoleonic rule during the Hundred Days was actually far greater than is generally allowed in recent syntheses. It is true that, on the question of the importance of popular insurgency at a critical stage in the *vol de l'aigle*, it seems to me that, in their proper efforts to combat the Bonapartist myth, historians have gone too far in the opposite direction. That aside, my aim has simply been to suggest that the current consensual view that Napoleon was decisively losing the battle for opinion rests on insecure foundations. In a thought-provoking review of Lentz's *Les Cent-Jours*, Cyril Triolaire criticizes the work both for its dependence on "the old and outdated studies" of Houssaye and Le Gallo and for "ignoring how the episode [of the Hundred Days] was experienced on the ground by millions of French men and women in the cities and villages."⁷² Rectifying such a deficiency in a work of synthesis on any period would be demanding enough; in the current state of research on the Hundred Days (and even more as it was when Lentz wrote) it would require superhuman powers.

What needs to be done to make the desired synthesis in the future a feasible proposition? Without offering a comprehensive prescription, a few reflections are in order. Perhaps the most urgent need is to make greater—and more ingenious—efforts to hear the “voices” of ordinary people when expressing their political opinions and choices outside the formal political arena. Analysis of incidents of seditious speech may be constrained by the consequences of magistrates’ reluctance to prosecute—unlike under the Second Restoration—on the quantity and quality of the documentation. On the other hand, non-verbal, or performative utterances that carry overt political significance offer more fertile fields of enquiry. These include the incidence and symbolism of festivals celebrating Napoleon’s return and, as Waresquiel reminds us, their counterparts, the royalist charivaris, usually held on Sundays or market days, and conflicts over official symbols of power, notably flags and cockades.⁷³ While from Houssaye onwards, all histories of the period make passing reference to the tearing down of flags of one colour or the other and other symbolic protests, recent work by Emmanuel Fureix on “political iconoclasm” in the period 1814–1848 shows how much may be gained from the systematic study of these and other “forms of the popular appropriation of sovereignty,” in particular through the use of hitherto largely unexploited judicial sources in the Archives Nationales (BB³, BB¹⁸ and BB³⁰).⁷⁴ The crisis years of 1814 and 1815 would merit separate and more detailed treatment, with closer attention to the fast-changing political context than is possible within Fureix’s time frame. At the same time, familiar and well-used sources could be more systematically exploited. One way of doing this would be to adopt a cartographical approach—for example, again as Triolaire suggests, it should be possible to plot, among other data, areas from which addresses of support for Napoleon emanate.⁷⁵ The ultimate desideratum, of course, would be a national map of responses to the raising of the National Guard in both its “active” and “sedentary” embodiments, including subsequent desertions. Given the impact of coercion on such responses, this would not quite constitute the “véritable carte de l’esprit public” that has been suggested, but it would nevertheless be highly instructive to overlay it on the maps of participation in the plebiscite on the *Acte* and attendance at departmental colleges, produced by Bluche and Crook respectively. What should be clear is that, without this and other work being undertaken, the grounds we have for supporting or dismissing claims about Napoleon’s legitimacy in the Hundred Days remain seriously inadequate.

NOTES

1. Diane de Bellescize, 'De l'Acte additionnel aux Constitutions de l'Empire, 22 avril 1815. Une Constitution mal nommée pour un régime sans nom', *Revue du droit public et de la science politique en France et à l'étranger* 109 (1993): 1043–1077.
2. Cited in Emmanuel de Waresquiel, *Cent Jours: la tentation de l'impossible, mars-juillet 1815* (Paris, 2008), 92. (All translations from French-language works are my own.)
3. Conseil d'état, session of 25 March, cited in *Mémoires pour servir à l'histoire de France en 1815* (Paris, 1820), 233.
4. Stéphane Rials, *Révolution et contre-révolution au XIXe siècle* (Paris, 1987), 142.
5. Letter to Talleyrand, cited in Philip Mansel, *Louis XVIII* (London, 1981), 232. Louis was here plagiarizing from Voltaire's sycophantic *Épître* 67 to Frederick the Great.
6. Jacques-Olivier Boudon, *Napoléon et la dernière campagne: les Cent-Jours, 1815* (Paris, 2015), 308.
7. *Esquisse historique sur les Cent-Jours et fragmens inédits* (Paris, 1819), xii.
8. Henry Houssaye, *1815: La Première Restauration—le retour de l'île d'Elbe—les Cent-Jours* (Paris, 1893), 533, puts the number at nearly eight hundred.
9. Waresquiel, *Cent Jours*, 13, puts the figure for the period 1815–1848 at nearly four hundred.
10. Emile Le Gallo, *Les Cent-Jours: essai sur l'histoire intérieure de la France depuis le retour de l'île d'Elbe jusqu'à la nouvelle de Waterloo* (Paris, 1923).
11. Pascal Cyr, 'Waterloo, le bataille de tous les enjeux', Thèse—docteur en histoire (University of Montreal, 2007), 3. The author denies the phrase applies to him but if true at an interpretive level, it is not so in relation to his documentation. A revised version of the thesis has been published as *Waterloo: origines et enjeux* (Paris, 2011).
12. Houssaye, *1815*, i; Le Gallo, *Les Cent-Jours*, 3.
13. Le Gallo, *Les Cent-Jours*, 2. While not quite the stupendous success of his earlier *1814*, Houssaye's *1815* has still run to over eighty editions.
14. This refers to the period between his resumption of power and departure for the front on 12 June.
15. Houssaye, *1815*, 552.
16. Le Gallo, *Les Cent-Jours*, 4 and 484–485.
17. Houssaye, *1815*, 619.
18. Mansel, *Louis XVIII*, 224–241.
19. Robert Alexander, *Bonapartism and Revolutionary Tradition in France* (Cambridge, 1991), 8.

20. Frédéric Bluche, *Le plébiscite des Cent-Jours, avril-mai 1815* (Geneva, 1974).
21. Thierry Lentz, *Nouvelle histoire du Premier Empire*, vol. 4: *Les Cent-Jours, 1815* (Paris, 2010); Charles Esdaile, *Napoleon, France and Waterloo: The Eagle Rejected* (Barnsley, 2016).
22. Unlike the other two, Waresquiel regards the plebiscite as less compelling evidence of the regime's unpopularity than the elections and relegates discussion of it to an extended footnote (p. 611). Esdaile is seemingly unaware of the municipal elections.
23. Lentz, *Les Cent-Jours*, 393; F. Bluche, *Le Bonapartisme: aux origines de la droite autoritaire (1800–1850)*, 100, cited in *ibid.*, 393.
24. Esdaile, *Napoleon*, 189.
25. Waresquiel, *Cent Jours*, 89.
26. *Ibid.*, 91.
27. Lentz, *Les Cent-Jours*, 319.
28. Cited in Pierre Lévêque, 'La "révolution de 1815." Le mouvement populaire pendant les Cent-Jours', in *Les Cent-Jours dans l'Yonne: Aux origines d'un bonapartisme libéral*, ed. Léo Hamon (Paris, 1984), 51–73, 55.
29. *Ibid.*, 53–54.
30. The bridges of Nevers and at Lyons, see respectively, Jean Tulard, *Les vingt jours. Louis XVIII ou Napoléon?* (Paris, 2001), 221–222, and Lévêque, 'La "révolution de 1815"', 55–56.
31. Mansel, *Louis XVIII*, 225.
32. Lévêque, 'La "révolution de 1815"', 56.
33. See for example, Annie Crépin, *Vers l'armée nationale: les débuts de la conscription en Seine-et-Marne, 1798–1815* (Rennes, 2011), 363–366.
34. Houssaye, *1815*, 387–389.
35. Lentz, *Les Cent-Jours*, 322.
36. Waresquiel, *Cent Jours*, 415.
37. Lenz, *Les Cent-Jours*, 392–393, applies the word 'échec' to all three, others apply it to just one.
38. Before 1814 the role of the colleges was restricted to electing candidates for places in the legislature, from whom the Senate chose the actual deputies.
39. No elections were held in Corsica.
40. *Moniteur universel*, 9 August and 22 September 1815.
41. Lentz, *Les Cent-Jours*, 389. Esdaile (p. 172) cites the same participation rate but mistakenly believes it applies to the combined membership of both types of college. Waresquiel's figure, however, is virtually the same as our own (p. 426).
42. Jean-Yves Coppolani, *Les élections en France à l'époque napoléonienne* (Paris, 1980), 468, note 680.
43. *Ibid.*, 468, note 683.

44. Malcolm Crook, “‘Ma volonté est celle du peuple’: Voting in the Plebiscite and Parliamentary Elections during Napoleon’s Hundred Days, April–May 1815”, *French Historical Studies* 32 (2009): 619–646, 638–642. My considerable indebtedness to this piece will be evident in the course of the next few pages.
45. *Ibid.*, 642, but note that his figure for percentage turnout at departmental colleges is a little lower than that used here.
46. *Ibid.*, 640.
47. Gregor Dallas, *1815: The Roads to Waterloo* (London, 1996), cited in Crook, “‘Ma volonté’”, 631.
48. Crook, “‘Ma volonté’”, 628–629.
49. Bluche, *Le plébiscite*, 50; Alexander, *Bonapartism*, 281.
50. Bluche, *Le plébiscite*, 126.
51. Esdaile, *Napoleon*, 171. The results were manipulated but, outside those of the army, surely not on the same scale as previously.
52. Bluche, *Le plébiscite*, 30.
53. Crook, “‘Ma volonté’”, 631; cited in *ibid.*, 635.
54. For turnout in the Seine-Inférieure, John Dunne, ‘In Search of the Village and Small-Town Elections of Napoleon’s Hundred Days: A Departmental Study’, *French History* 29 (2015): 304–327, 316–319. Coppolani, *Les élections*, 469, gives figures for a few communes in a couple of departments.
55. Dunne, ‘Village and Small-Town Elections’, 318–319, and research in progress on three other departments.
56. Lentz, *Les Cent-Jours*, 392.
57. Waresquiel, *Cent Jours*, 425; Lentz, *Les Cent-Jours*, 392.
58. Houssaye, *1815*, 505.
59. Dunne ‘Village and Small-Town Elections’, 322; B. Vogler, ‘Une région originale, l’Alsace’, in *Les maires en France du Consulat à nos jours*, eds., M. Agulhon et al. (Paris, 1986), 185–204, 192; G. Charcosset, ‘Trajectoires municipales au prisme des changements de régime. Le cas des municipalités des Cent-Jours dans l’arrondissement de Villefranche-sur-Saône (Rhône)’, *Histoire et Mesure* 29 (2014): 85–106, 95. The Pas-de-Calais seems to have been an exception: Jean-Pierre Jessenne, *Le Pouvoir au village et Révolution: Artois 1760–1848* (Lille, 1987), 134.
60. E. de Waresquiel and B. Yvert, *Histoire de la Restauration*, 69, cited in Pierre Serna, *La république des girouettes: 1789–1815—et au-delà: une anomalie politique: la France de l’extrême centre* (Champ Vallon, 2005), 160: ‘Never has there been a gentler political transition.’
61. On what he calls “l’épuration/purification municipale de 1815–16”, see Pierre Karila-Cohen, *L’état des esprits: l’invention de l’enquête politique en France, 1814–1848* (Rennes, 2008), 167–172.

62. Emmanuel Fureix and Judith Lyon-Caen, 'Introduction: le désordre du temps', *Revue d'histoire du XIXe siècle* 498/2 (2014), <http://www.cairn.info/revue-d-histoire-du-dix-neuvieme-siecle-2014-2.htm> (29 September 2016).
63. By contrast, there was considerable discussion of continuing the Napoleonic practice of having two-tier legislative elections involving universal male suffrage at the primary level.
64. Karila-Cohen, *L'état des esprits*, 14–15.
65. *Ibid.*, 14–17 and 155–156. Karila-Cohen's concern is with the Ministries of the Interior and Police and their agents in the departments but the same point could be made about relations between the Interior and War Ministries: Richard Cobb, *The Police and the People: French Popular Protest, 1789–1820* (Oxford, 1970), 56–58.
66. Serna, *La république*, 176.
67. Alexander, *Bonapartism*, 5.
68. Houssaye, *1815*, 500.
69. Houssaye transcribed the signature on the letter as 'Bonanay'.
70. Dunne, 'Village and Small-Town Elections', 323–324.
71. Davout to Napoleon, 19 April 1815, *Correspondance du maréchal Davout, prince d'Eckmühl: ses commandements, son ministère, 1801–1815*, 4 vols (Paris, 1885), vol. 4, 455: 'Les généraux commandant les départements s'accordent à dire qu'il serait à désirer que la presque totalité des maires soit remplacée par des hommes choisis par les communes: cette opinion [est] exprimée dans les rapports venus de toutes les parties de la France'.
72. Cyril Triolaire, 'Thierry Lentz, *Nouvelle histoire du Premier Empire. IV. Les Cent-Jours, 1815*', *Annales historiques de la Révolution française* 375 (2014): 226–230, 230.
73. Waresquiel, *Cent Jours*, 415. The publication of Triolaire's forthcoming *Fêter Napoléon* is eagerly awaited.
74. Emmanuel Fureix, 'Iconoclasse: une pratique politique? (1814–1848)', in *La politique sans en avoir l'air. Aspects de la politique informelle, XIXe–XXIe siècle*, eds. Laurent Le Gall et al. (Rennes, 2012), 117–131, 124. See also his '*L'iconoclasse politique (1814–1848): une violence fondatrice?*' in *Entre violence et conciliation: La résolution des conflits sociopolitiques en Europe au XIX^e siècle*, eds. Jean-Claude Caron et al. (Rennes, 2008).
75. Triolaire, 'Lentz', 230.

The Melancholy of the Revolution: Maine de Biran Facing Napoleon's Hundred Days

Alessandra Aloisi

This essay will examine the reaction by French élites to Napoleon's Hundred Days by focusing on one specific case: that of Marie-François-Pierre-Gonthier de Biran, better known as Maine de Biran (Bergerac 1766—Paris 1824).

The case of Maine de Biran can be seen as emblematic for a series of reasons. Biran is known today as the philosopher of will and *effort*, but he was known amongst his contemporaries above all as a politician and statesman. A royalist all his life, Biran was part of the King's life guards until their dissolution in 1792. After 1795, he embarked on a political and administrative career; notably, he was appointed administrator to

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the department of the Dordogne and elected a member of the Council of Five Hundred in 1797. He was a member of the Legislative Body under the Empire. After the restoration of Louis XVIII, in 1814, he was re-elected as a deputy of the department of Dordogne and occupied a number of prestigious offices including that of member of the Chamber of Deputies.¹ The numerous institutional and administrative positions he held enabled him to follow at close quarters, as a major player and direct witness, the alternating events of the revolutionary and post-revolutionary periods.² Various occasional political writings and public speeches, now gathered into the collection of his works edited by François Azouvi, provide us with precious testimony of Maine de Biran's political roles and of the official position he held during the various stages of the Revolution and the Bourbon Restoration.³

However, it is not really my intention here to examine the reactions of the politician and statesman. Even more worthy of attention than his occasional political writings is the diary that the Bergerac philosopher kept regularly between 1814 and 1824. Biran was a member of the Chamber of Deputies of the restored Bourbon monarchy, and the pages of this diary became denser during the Hundred Days. These pages present an account of what was a profoundly traumatic experience for those who had opposed Napoleon's rise and had supported the restoration of the monarchy.

As Henri Gouhier observed, Maine de Biran's diary is not so much a *journal intime* (as François Naville initially called it), nor is it a *cahier de souvenirs* (as Victor Cousin hurriedly classified it); rather it is a *journal métaphysique*, wherein psychological, philosophical, and political considerations are entwined on a daily basis with everyday experience, thus creating a tapestry in which the various threads become inseparable and almost indistinguishable.⁴ Hence the interest in the pages written during the Hundred Days. They do not merely document the private reaction of the *homme public*; they offer an interpretation, both political and philosophical, of an affair that irreparably shook the certainties of the monarchical and conservative élite. As Gouhier observed, if Maine de Biran's *Journal* can be considered a valuable testimony for reconstructing the history of public opinion in France and, specifically, the position of certain "notables" in the ambit of Napoleon's Hundred Days, it is because it is the diary of a philosopher⁵; more particularly, as we will see, it is the journal of a post-sensationalist and post-revolutionary philosopher who had believed in the possibility of a *restauration* that was no less philosophical than political.

Prompted by various studies that have highlighted the centrality of the relationship between politics and philosophy in the *Journal*, this essay examines how this relationship is expressed specifically in those pages written at the time of Napoleon's return from Elba. Despite their importance, these entries have not yet been closely examined and given due attention. My thesis is that the political and philosophical significance of this affair was interpreted and articulated by Maine de Biran through the grammar of "melancholy," the chronic disease from which he believed he suffered and the symptoms of which were used in his description of the nation when it experienced the revolution of Hundred Days. By comparing his own diseased body with the social body of the revolution, the author of the *Journal* offers us a precise picture of what the Hundred Days meant for a part of French high society: the impotence of reason and will embodied by the sovereign faced with instincts and passions that originated from below. As we will see, these events were so decisive as to drive Biran himself to revise his philosophy.

It is worth making a methodological clarification regarding the juxtaposition proposed here of melancholy with revolution. The post-revolutionary period has often been read in the light of the notion of "melancholy," the romantic sentiment *par excellence* that is so well suited to defining the way in which the conservative élite of the whole of Europe expressed the mourning that was produced by the end of the *ancien régime*.⁶ However, by speaking of "melancholy" I do not wish to refer to a notion derived from specific more modern psychological or psychoanalytical theories that are seen as applicable to Maine de Biran's case. I will refer, rather, in the strict sense, to the nervous disease that, under the name of "melancholy," appeared in medical and nosological treatises between the end of the eighteenth and the beginning of the nineteenth century. This was the disease that, during the Hundred Days revolution, emerged as the real *mal du siècle*⁷ that afflicted society no less than the individuals who belonged to it.

POLITICS AND PHILOSOPHY IN THE RESTORATION

Various studies have stressed the importance of the relationship between politics and philosophy in the thinking of Maine de Biran. Dwelling in particular on the *Journal*, Agnès Antoine showed how there is a real *analogy* between the plane of psychological and metaphysical considerations about the self and the plane of political considerations

about monarchical government.⁸ Just as the self, that is one with reason and will, must govern the body (consisting of impulses, passions, and instincts) to ensure that the person does not disintegrate into the anarchy of sensations, so too must the sovereign govern the social body (the people) so that the nation does not fall apart in democratic folly:

In the government of moral man, as in that of a well-formed society, *power (imperium)* must come from above, or from what is established as superior by nature and by convention, to be applied to what is *inferior*. If power comes from *below*, everything is confused and in disarray; anarchy reigns in the ideas and passions of the individual as well as in the movements and relations of society: the sovereignty of the people is to politics what the supremacy of the sensations and the passions is to philosophy or morals. (J. II, 307, January 1821 [italics in the text])

In this physiology of the political body, health corresponds with the monarchical regime, in which the power that comes from above takes the reins from impulses that come from below. In contrast, Napoleon Bonaparte represented a form of disease that was apparently opposite but effectively the same as that of democracy.⁹ He was the incarnation of the most inauspicious and tyrannical outcomes of the French Revolution, which—by overthrowing the legitimate sovereign and encouraging the advance of a popular power—produced nothing other than folly, disorder, and disintegration.

The central problem that tormented Maine de Biran was thus, according to Antoine: that of *souveraineté*. It was a fundamental problem, common to many thinkers of the revolutionary and post-revolutionary period, but it was one on which Biran placed particular focus and articulated in his dual political and philosophical capacity. The problem of legitimate government reflected and reproduced on a greater scale the “government of the self.”¹⁰ Just as a virtuous man carries within himself a monarchy, which is the most suitable regime for the government of men, so the sovereign must be to the people what reason and will are to the instincts and the passions: a guide that is firm but magnanimous based on the model of that exercised by paternal power. The principal difference between a king and a tyrant consists of this: the former *governs*, whereas the latter *dominates*.

Albeit on the same wavelength as questions raised by Antoine, Jan Goldstein’s approach is slightly different.¹¹ The analogy between

individual body and social body is set aside in favour of a focus on the intrinsically political logic that guided Biran's philosophical project (subsequently perfected by Victor Cousin) to reconstitute the self that had been disintegrated by sensationalist psychology. Condillac, in the wake of Locke, had reduced the self to a simple aggregate of sensations of which one has memory. Biran reacted to that minimalist conception of a passive and fragmented self by seeking to restore a unitary and transcendent vision of the self as *will*. Biran's self was not so much a thinking substance (Descartes' *ego cogito*) as an acting force that creates experience of itself in the muscular effort in which it meets the resistance of the body.

However, for both Antoine and for Goldstein, Biran's philosophy is placed explicitly under the aegis of a "restoration" that is simultaneously philosophical and political. It is a question first of cancelling the philosophical revolution brought about by Locke and then taken up by Condillac in which thought is subordinated to the faculty of sensation. By reducing the self to a simple aggregate of sensations that originate from the body, sensationalism annulled the difference between what is high (the soul) and what is low (the body). On a philosophical plane, it overturned and de-hierarchized in the same way as the French Revolution did on a political plane through the idea of equality. Sensationalism was for philosophy what the French Revolution was for politics: the intrusion of a headless power that came from below and that produces disorder and anarchy on both political and psychic planes.

Against this background, we can already grasp the double political and philosophical crisis caused by the Hundred Days. If the Bourbon Restoration was an attempt to restore order and reason from above, the return of Napoleon in March 1815 represented a sudden and devastating fall back into the irrational. Biran, and all those who had supported the return of the Bourbon monarchy, were impotent witnesses to the dissolution of the French "people" (*peuple*) into a "multitude" of isolated individuals deprived of any common will.¹² The revolutionary passions that were believed to have been allayed had once again erupted with unexpected violence. The same French citizens who had enthusiastically welcomed the restoration of the king abandoned themselves without restraint to their most unbridled instincts aroused by the return of the tyrant¹³. In the daily notebook that he kept in parallel with the diary, Biran wrote: "I reflect a lot on the events, on my blindness regarding men and the matters of the Revolution; the men hadn't changed and were ready to begin again" (J. III, 82, April 1815).

The Hundred Days reveal the fragility of the political and philosophical assumptions of the Bourbon Restoration and made it clear how easily, like a diseased body, a people corrupted by philosophical ill-fated ideas and by bad habits reinforced by years of revolutions and instability, could rebel against the guidance of reason and will.¹⁴ Moreover, in the same months that Napoleon's return unsettled the apparent equilibrium of the restoration, the same type of problem started to emerge for Maine de Biran with respect to the government of the self. In comparing his own cases with those of Montaigne, who like him had lived in an era of significant political unrest, Biran reached the conclusion that he was a weak and ill individual, incapable of trusting the inner *appui* that had been the main source of stability and consolation for the author of the *Essais*. In the midst of the Wars of Religion, Montaigne had written:

[I]t was safest for me to trust to myself in my necessity [...] Men on all occasions throw themselves upon foreign assistance [*appuis*] to spare *their own*, which is alone *certain* and *sufficient* to him who knows how therewith to arm himself [...]. The true liberty is to be able to do what a man will with himself: *Potentissimus est, qui se habet in potestate*.¹⁵

In April 1815, while commenting on this passage from the *Essais*, which he transcribed precisely into the *Journal*, Biran observed: "I sometimes feel that this assistance [*appuis*] escapes me, as my stomach churns and my mind languishes with my nerves" (J. I, 70). It was in these months that Biran started to become aware of the weakness of his own self and of the inefficacy of his will due to the *resistance* of a diseased body that had failed him on all sides, condemned him to dispersion, and made him incapable of the free exercise of thought. Once again commenting on a passage of Montaigne, which stated that study and education could suffice to make men serene and happy,¹⁶ Biran observed how that frame of mind depended rather on temperament and character, which were linked to precise organic conditions that over time gradually became less and less modifiable. This makes happiness and inner stability inaccessible to those, like him, who experience every day "certain disruptions of their organic functions": "when digestion, the secretions, etc... are laborious, when the vital principle encounters *resistance* on the part of all the organs: it is quite impossible for the mind to be free, at ease and quick to act" (J. I, 95, September 1815 [my italics]).

The destiny of France, which Napoleon's return had once again plunged into anarchy and revolution, was like a larger-scale reproduction of Maine de Biran's own fate (what he sometimes referred to as organic *fatum*). Just as the Hundred Days were a demonstration of the volubility of the nation, always on the brink of falling prey to an acephalous power that derives from below, so Biran's chronic disease experienced the inadequacy of the self and of the will in its efforts to contain the overbearing power that derives from the body.

MELANCHOLY AND REVOLUTION

In their relative coherence and uniformity, which crystallised around the decisive episode of Napoleon's return from Elba, the pages written during the Hundred Days represent almost a separate section of the *Journal*. In the urgency of events, the relationship between politics and philosophy became closer, and their parallels emerged with greater clarity.

As has been observed,¹⁷ the bond that kept politics and philosophy together in Maine de Biran can be seen above all in his language, which moves continually from one semantic field to another. For example, terms like *gouverner*, *regner*, *souveraineté*, or *dominer* were central, with each having a double significance—not only political but also philosophical and psychological—and connected with the idea of self-control through reason and will. During the Hundred Days, another term with a double meaning took on especial importance: the term *révolution*.

Maine de Biran learnt of Napoleon's landing on the French coast on 12 March 1815, when he was in his country residence in Grateloup, not far from Bergerac, seeking shelter from the distractions of the capital and for the composure that philosophical work requires.¹⁸ Only a few days earlier, in Périgueux, he had taken part in the celebrations in honour of the Duke and Duchess of Angoulême. The news of Napoleon's return from exile took Biran completely by surprise. He immediately left for Paris the next day and, after a very troubled trip, reached the capital late on the night of 14 March, just in time to witness the retreat of the King to Lille and the dissolution of the Chambers on 20 March.

Maine de Biran describes the inner tumult he experienced when he received the news of Napoleon's return as a "revolution" that shook every fibre of his being, that threw him into a state of agitation, and deprived him of all self-control:

I was calmly seated in my study, rereading my metaphysical manuscripts, when I was interrupted at 3 o'clock by the arrival of the post from Paris. I finish a note that I had begun and I proceed to open a letter that tells me that Bonaparte is in France, that the Chambers have been called and that I am to take up my place immediately. *Instantly my entire being undergoes a revolution. I rapidly pass from the most profound calm to the most vivid agitation; my mind is disoriented, my stomach comes to a halt* [mon estomac se ferme]; I dine quickly and order preparations to for my departure the following morning. (J. I, 44 [my italics])

Placed in this context, the lexical choice of the word “revolution” to define a psychological upheaval creates an immediate short circuit to the political events of the moment that, in the following pages, are referred to using the same term: “This day brings with it all the signs of new misfortunes and revolutions” (J. I, 45), “everything already heralds the revolution” (J. I, 46). It is significant that the *Journal* regularly uses that term to refer to the 1815 coup d'état. According to Biran, Napoleon's return produced a revolution: one that was even more shocking for its double political and psychological impact: “*Tout présage que la révolution est faite dans les esprits de ce pays*” (J. I, 47). Not by chance, a few pages later, these two planes (political and psychological-philosophical) are explicitly superimposed and made to work together. Napoleon had done nothing short of enacting a revolution that already existed in the souls of the French people:

Here we have the assistants of Bonaparte and his army, who alone has carried out a revolution that had already existed in people's minds without anyone noticing. Today all minds are surprised by this sudden movement, by this extraordinary revolution, that in a single moment seems to have overcome all resistances in opinion. (J. I, 56, April 1815)

With the term “revolution” Biran refers on both the psychological and the political plane, to a sudden movement (*mouvement subit*) that completely overwhelms and subverts the previously existing order (the tranquillity of Grateloup, the calm of the Bourbon Restoration), thus revealing its extreme fragility and precariousness. This is a movement that removes all control from above (from reason, from will, from the self or from the sovereign), and it triggers the blindest and most uncontrollable reactions that originate from below (whether these be political unrest or physiological reactions).

Along with words such as *gouverner, dominer, souveraineté, révolution* is thus a key term for Biran to express the analogy between philosophy and politics and between individual and collective. As much on the political as on the psychological plane, the term “revolution” describes a diametrically opposite movement to the centralising action of “*gouverner*”: a movement of *subversion* (between high and low, between what should govern and what should be governed) that generates *disintegration, dispersion, and anarchy*.¹⁹

In these pages, Maine de Biran describes this movement of *subversion* and *disintegration*, referred to with the term “revolution,” as a pathological state that strikes both the individual body and the collective body of the nation. Moreover, the representation of this pathological state retraces in particular the symptoms of melancholy; the medical description of melancholy structures and organises the way in which Biran refers to the revolution on both psychological and political planes. In other words, melancholy, the chronic illness from which Biran felt he suffered, provided, by analogy, the language and the logic to describe the disease that had struck the political body.

Pierre Montebello has already highlighted the centrality of melancholy as a fundamental element at the base of Biran’s philosophy. In his opinion, the *Journal* has only one principal theme: melancholy as an experience of passivity and the vacillations of thinking that is constantly invaded by the affective repercussions of the world.²⁰ I have shown elsewhere that the melancholy in question is not so much a romantic sentiment (the sweet sadness that kindles the inspiration of poets) but the pathological state that the medicine of that era, drawing on the inheritance of the four humours, considered a psycho-physical disorder related to the dysfunction of the nervous system and classified among the main forms of madness or alienation.²¹

Maine de Biran was very interested in the study of mental illnesses, which he saw as limit cases for understanding the relationships between *physique* and *moral* in man and, more particularly, the origin of the self and of consciousness.²² His philosophical research in this area brought him into contact especially with the writings of Pierre Cabanis and Philippe Pinel, in which he could find ample discussions of melancholy.²³ Cabanis in particular ascribed decisive importance to melancholy as a pathological state that enabled the study of “the physical artifice of thought” (*l’artifice physique de la pensée*).²⁴ We can suppose that these readings, which Biran indulged in out of purely scientific

and philosophical interest, would nonetheless not have failed to stir his hypochondriac sensibility, which brought him, as the *Journal* reveals, to engage in obsessive self-examination of the smallest psycho-physical oscillations in his being.

The pathological picture of melancholy can be seen in Biran's self-depicting in his diary. Day after day, the *Journal* displayed and in a sense *staged* (in the sense of a real *performance*) the symptoms of melancholy even where there were no explicit references to the disease. He also complained on various occasions about being ill, about being affected by a condition that he cursorily described as an "intellectual and moral illness" (J. I, 20, October 1814) of organic origin that concerned mainly the liver, the stomach, and the brain. Albeit consisting of no more than a "partial disorder of the faculties" and "intellectual anomalies," this disease, in his view, absolutely deserved medical attention.²⁵ It is sometimes described as a "nervous state" in which the mind becomes foggy (*remplie de brouillards*: J. I, 34, January 1815) and incapable of attentiveness: "I have trouble concentrating on anything, my head is empty, my ideas drift" (J. I, 53, April 1815). The use of certain expressions and the identification of specific symptoms (such as distraction, nervous mobility, mood changes, bad digestion, sadness, worry, fear, restlessness, agitation, desire for solitude, inertia, obsession) are not casual: they reveal an awareness of a specific clinical picture that corresponds to the pathological state known at the time as "melancholy," which Biran must have associated with his own condition.²⁶

Between the end of the eighteenth and the beginning of the nineteenth century, the medical description of melancholy defined complex and variegated symptoms, which were further complicated by the influence of circumstances (such as climate, sex, age, intake of certain types of foods and drink) that could modify the way in which the illness manifested itself in each individual.²⁷ Not by chance, when melancholy moved outside the medical sphere, its classification started to include diseases as different as monomania, neurosis, schizophrenia, and depression.²⁸ However, beyond the variety of symptoms that the condition could display, the various medical descriptions of melancholy generally had in common a sense of the complete *passivity* of the melancholic person, who is unable to control reactions and impulses deriving from the body. Those affected are generally weak, unstable, changeable, and constantly driven outside themselves, and they fall prey to involuntary and unconscious processes that they cannot dominate. One of the

characteristic traits of this disease, also to be found in the *Journal*, is effectively a lack of will (it is not by chance that melancholy was traditionally associated with the sin of *acedia* or torpor²⁹) that prevents the free exercise of thought and makes intellectual activity completely subordinate to the body. We could say that melancholy is a pathological state in which the “democracy of sensations” is founded, where the power that comes from below (passions, affections, instincts, purely physiological functions) rebels against the power that comes from above, thus condemning the person to dispersion and fragmentation. In this sense, as Jan Goldstein observed, we can maintain that the disease from which Maine de Biran suffered was nothing other than a psycho-somatic translation of the aberrations produced by sensationalist philosophy, in which the self is reduced to a simple aggregate of impressions originating from the body.³⁰

Weakness of will, psychological instability, changeability and—more generally—a tendency to be driven by every slightest external or internal change are the essential traits of melancholy found in the *Journal*. It is to the latter that we can attribute the obsessive attention with which, day after day, Biran noted the atmospheric conditions—the temperature, the level of humidity in the air—before describing his own corresponding psycho-physical state. A recurrent image that Biran uses to refer to his pathological *faiblesse* is that of *mollesse*: the feebleness and malleability of his constitution (*constitution molle*), continually subjected to the smallest variations coming from the body and the outside world.

In correspondence with the pages written during the Hundred Days, two phenomena can be observed. Occurrences of political disorder perceptibly aggravated the chronic illness from which Biran believed he suffered, with the symptoms becoming more intense (the same word “melancholy” recurs with significant frequency in the space of just a few pages). In addition, the grammar of melancholy, focussed, as we have seen, on the idea of passivity, *mollesse*, lack of control, weakness of will, begins to give shape not only to the way in which Biran represents himself but also to the way in which he describes the political and social situation of France as shaken by the revolution caused by Napoleon’s return.

On 26 March, Maine de Biran finally returned to Grateloup after a hurried and dangerous trip that tested his fragile health. Two days later, the local celebrations organised by the supporters of Napoleon officially marked the proclamation of the Empire in Périgeux; only a few weeks

earlier the same people had applauded the Duchess of Angoulême, daughter of Louis XVI. On 30 March, Maine de Biran attempted in vain to reach Bordeaux, where a fringe of loyalists, rallied by the Duchess, continued to resist, but he returned to Grateloup only a few days later. After eluding a warrant, issued for his arrest by the Bonapartist sub-prefect Trompéo on 7 April, he finally withdrew to Grateloup, resigned to retreat in solitude, and resumed his intellectual work.³¹

It is somewhat significant that instances of the words “revolution” and “melancholy” multiply and accumulate on the same pages written during the month of April 1815.³² Biran seamlessly passes from considerations of his own pathological state and ineptitude to descriptions of the moral and political degeneration in which France finds itself. In both cases, he adopts the same language and the same metaphors, all linked to the idea of *mollesse*. Medical and psychological terms are continually mingled with those of politics. Melancholy, the illness that best embodies the schisms and fragmentation of the self promoted by sensationalism, becomes the illness *par excellence* of democratic society taken as a whole.

The revolution that was once again passing through the social body, casting it into the anarchy of an uncontrollable power coming from below, is described as a real melancholic evil attacking the whole nation. Just like a melancholic person, the nation that had fallen prey to the revolution of the Hundred Days was traversed with irrational impulses as well as contradictory pressures and had completely fallen prey to blind and irrational movements. On 12 April, one month after receiving the news of Napoleon’s landing on the French coast, Biran wrote in his *Journal*:

The return of the Bourbons and of the previous government seems less and less likely to me. The healthy and properly moral part of the nation is the only one that desires and ardently calls for them; but this part is the least considerable, the one least likely to act, the least influential. The mass of this generation is *revolutionary*, and the Bourbons, above all Louis XVIII, this philosopher king, so wise, so good, so just, so moderate, will never solidly govern over a generation that no longer recognises legitimate power, that is used to considering everything from the point of view of relations of *force*, that needs movement, agitation, the false brilliance of conquests, that no longer endures order and peace. (J. I, 64 [italics in the text])

The political disorder running through France is described as a pathological state that is attacking the whole social body, the “healthy part” of which (the king and his supporters) is too weak to oppose the diseased part.

Biran insists on the feebleness, changeability, and instability of a generation without moral strength, corrupted by bad habits and, like the melancholic, betraying its needs for movement and agitation, unable to bear the guidance or restraint that comes from above and creates order and peace.

The analogy between individual and collective highlighted previously now represents the melancholic person on the one hand and democratic or revolutionary society on the other as prey to a blind and uncontrollable power that comes from below and condemned to the disintegration and anarchy of the passions and instincts. Left to itself, the people is no more than “a collection of ignorant and passionate individuals who only act when pushed by blind sentiment” (J. I, 53, 4 April 1815); endowed with physical strength, these isolated individuals are completely lacking in wisdom and reason. Politically they correspond to the purely affective and obscure impressions that, on a philosophical plane, stand opposed to the conscious and reflective activity of the self.³³ Although remaining below the threshold of consciousness and unknown to the self, these impressions emanating from the body (from the “animal life” or “sensitive life”) have the power to dominate our behaviour.³⁴ The revolution occasioned by Napoleon’s return had only strengthened and reinvigorated these blind instincts coming from below.

CONCLUSION

18 June 1815 saw the defeat of Waterloo. Maine de Biran had already been back at Grateloup since the beginning of April. The news only reached him on 27 June. The pages of the diary provide us with a dry and essential account of the events after Napoleon’s capitulation: the return to Paris, the abdication, the initial plan to retire to England with his family. Biran describes the end of the revolution of the Hundred Days with the caution of a convalescent patient who is still uncertainly observing the signs of possible recovery, conscious of the fact that the illness is still lurking and precisely at this stage could unleash decisive blows:

The revolutionary party is becoming agitated; the allies are advancing towards the capital and threaten it; *the resistance of the army brings with it new misfortunes*. On the 3rd of July, capitulation is agreed between the allies and the French army; the latter retreats behind the Loire. Paris is saved but the provinces of the Midi are exposed to all evils. (J. I, 94 [my italics])

The term *résistance*, here referring to the last attempt by the revolutionary party to hinder the advance of the allies toward Paris, is a key word in Maine de Biran's political physiopathology and reappears in subsequent pages with a purely medical meaning, i.e., to indicate the *organic resistance* of the diseased body that is the principal obstacle to the government of the self, the freedom of the spirit, and the exercise of will.³⁵ It was only on 8 July, when the king re-entered the capital, that Biran appeared to abandon himself to the general enthusiasm for the recovery from the revolutionary evil. On 20 July, he returned to Paris himself to resume his position as a member of the Chamber of Deputies.

This is where the pages of the *Journal* on the Hundred Days officially come to a close. His diary entries, made for four months practically without interruption, only started again regularly on 1 January of the next year. Biran had attempted a brief reprise in September 1815, annotating a small number of pages in which he reflects on how, despite Napoleon's defeat, the illness was still circulating: "the revolutionary principles," the germs of the democratic pathology that wanted the power to come from below or from the multitude, "remain and will remain" (J. I, 96). From the few, meagre notes that appear in his daily diary,³⁶ we learn that the months of silence were full of political and institutional commitments. This, however, does not explain his suspension of the writing of the *Journal*, which he had continued even at times of equally demanding public engagements in the past. This long period of silence, after months of regular and intense writing, is a sign of the profound political, philosophical, and existential crisis that the Hundred Days created. By suspending the writing of the diary, which until then had been the main instrument for a possible government of himself,³⁷ it was as if Biran was putting aside that project or felt the need to profoundly rethink its premises.

When Maine de Biran started to write again in the *Journal* in 1814, the so-called "Biranism" (the idea that the self and the consciousness of the self derive from the *sens intime* acquired through an immediate apperception in the voluntary effort) had by then been completed.³⁸ In keeping with the essential nucleus of his philosophy, Biran was still confident that the foothold for the government of the self could be found in the will and in the self as *effort*. The year 1815 marked a decisive political and existential threshold that would bring with it a philosophical turning-point. Taking overall stock of the year that had just passed, in December 1815 Biran wrote:

In reviewing the events of that year and the various sentiments or modifications of my existence that accompanied them, I find that no other period of my life has been fuller or more varied [...]. I feel every day that the weakness of my physical and moral organisation does not support the shock of the passions, of the opinions and disagreements that surround me; I am overwhelmed; my entire existence is disrupted [...]. My ideas and my manner of judging the Assembly, the men and things with which I have relations have undergone a revolution, and the loss of several illusions make me desire ever more ardently to distance myself from business, to return to my solitude, and to live independently. My declining health and my old age, which has begun to show above all last year, tell me that is time to think of my retirement. (J. III, 143)

The year 1815 was the year in which ideas began to take root that would bring Maine de Biran to deepen, from 1818, his religious convictions.³⁹ The *Journal* reveals how the progressive conceptualisation of that dimension, which was to correspond to *la vie de l'esprit*, started to define itself in precisely the months when Biran withdrew to Grateloup to escape the political disorder caused by Napoleon's return:

We have abandoned ourselves long enough to the torrent of events, of opinions, of the continuous flux of external and internal modifications, of everything that *passes* like a shadow... We have to hold on now to the only being that remains immutable, that is the true source of all our present consolations and of all our future hopes [...]. Whoever does not always have this idea present in the midst of the continuous upheavals of all things, when crime triumphs, when virtue sighs, beaten, outcast, defamed, denatured, whoever has a moral sense and, witnessing all these things, does not think of *God*, of the eternal and unchangeable rule of the just and the unjust, and of the necessary consequences that flow from this rule, should, I say, despair. (*Journal*, I, 66, April 1815 [italics in the text])

It is significant that the first signs of his future religious "conversion" are visible precisely between April and June 1815. The quoted passage establishes an immediate link between the political events (*torrent des événements, bouleversements de toutes choses*) and the need for a *point d'appui* that could offer an outer *soutien* that was finally fixed and stable. A few pages later we read again: "It is today and in these terrible circumstances that we momentarily see injustice, crime, madness, and impiety triumph; it is today that we are happy to experience this feeling of trust in God" (J. I, 86).

It was precisely the experience of the Hundred Days, in its dual political and philosophical capacity, that acted as the catalyst for the conceptual reshuffle that was to bring Maine de Biran to search for a transcendent foundation beyond the will.⁴⁰ Even more than an authentically religious necessity, it was a philosophical consideration, which arose from political experience, that drove him in that direction. If it is true that Biran conceived the Bourbon Restoration as a “philosophical problem” that represented “the equivalent in the collective context of government of the self being sought [...] for one’s own self,”⁴¹ we cannot underestimate the importance of the Hundred Days on a psychological–philosophical plane.

By revealing the precariousness of the restoration of the monarchy, the Hundred Days showed the fragility of the idea of *souveraineté* that Biran had embraced until then as much on a political as on a philosophical level. The ease with which the people of France fell back immediately under the sway of passions and irrational instincts re-awakened by the tyrant reflected the ease with which the diseased body rebels against the self that wishes to govern it. As we have seen, 1815 was also the year in which Maine de Biran began more acutely to feel the effects of his chronic disease and started to doubt that reason and will alone could constitute a guarantee of a certain degree of stability. During the course of the Hundred Days, he discovered that he was not in full control of himself, even in the solitude of Grateloup, where he continued to be distracted, carried to dispersion, incapable of composure or concentration,⁴² and completely overwhelmed by the flow of events.

Just as Napoleon’s definitive defeat was only possible by means of the intervention of external powers, so too man can hope to obtain stability and control only by trusting in a transcendent entity. The Hundred Days showed, as much on a political as on a philosophical plane, the need for a *point d’appui* that is independent of internal and external fluctuations to which an individual is subordinated.

Signalling a turning point in Biran’s philosophy, the pages of the *Journal* written during the Hundred Days also provide eloquent testimony to the political, philosophical, and psychological importance of this experience for the monarchical and conservative élites who had believed in the Bourbon Restoration. The downfall of the regime, which confirmed its fragility, forced those loyal to the King to turn, after the second restoration, to other forms of support such as religion.

Melancholy established itself as the disease *par excellence* of the post-revolutionary period. It was not only the evil of the democratic and restless man who had lost his certainties and his place in the social order,⁴³ it was also the disease that had struck democratic society as a whole. “Melancholy” was the other name of the revolution. The melancholy that afflicted Maine de Biran as a post-sensationalist and post-revolutionary thinker became the pathological state of the collective political body, totally traversed and dominated by an unconscious and underground *vie animale*.

NOTES

1. During his lifetime Maine de Biran published only three works: The *mémoire* on the *Influence de l'habitude sur la faculté de penser* (1802), a pamphlet entitled Examen des “Leçons philosophique” de M. Laromiguière (1817), and an article with the title “Exposition de la doctrine philosophique de Leibniz,” which appeared in 1819 in the periodical *Bibliographie universelle* by Michaud.
2. For detailed information on Maine de Biran’s political career, cf. Jean Lassaigue, *Maine de Biran homme politique* (Paris, 1958).
3. Cf. Maine de Biran, *Oeuvres*, publiées sous la direction de François Azouvi, tome XII: *L’homme public*, édité par André Robinet et Nelly Bruyère (Paris, 1999).
4. Cf. Henri Gouhier, *Introduction* to Maine de Biran, *Journal*, édition intégrale, 3 vols. (Neuchâtel, 1954–1957), vol. 1, VII–XXXIV. The passages from the *Journal* to which I refer are quoted from this edition (signalled hereafter as J., followed by the volume reference, the page number, and the date) and were translated into English by Elisabeth Wallmann. By Henri Gouhier see also “Maine de Biran et son ‘journal métaphysique,’” in AA. Vv., *La diaristica filosofica* (Padua, 1959), 61–71.
5. Cf. Henri Gouhier, “Autobiographie et philosophie: ‘le journal’ de Maine de Biran,” *Formen der Selbstdarstellung, Analekten zu einer Geschichte des literarischen Selbstopportraits*, Festgabe für Fritz Neubert (Berlin, 1956), 95–103 (96 and 99).
6. Cf. in particular Thomas Pfau, *Romantic Moods: Paranoia, Trauma, and Melancholy, 1790–1840* (Baltimore, 2005).
7. Cf. *Difficulté d’être et mal du siècle dans les correspondances et les journaux intimes de la première moitié du XIX siècle*, textes réunis et présentés par S. Bernand-Griffiths avec la collaboration de C. Croisille (Clermont-Ferrand, 1998).

8. Cf. Agnès Antoine, *Maine de Biran, Sujet et politique* (Paris, 1999). The two essays by Elizabeth G. Sladzewski, “Maine de Biran devant la révolution” and “Maine de Biran (1766–1824) et la dynamique du sujet”, Id., *Révolutions du sujet* (Paris, 1989), 163–181 and 183–195, are also focussed on the relationship between philosophy and politics.
9. Cf. Antoine, *Maine de Biran*, 16.
10. For the use of this Foucauldian concept in the case of Maine de Biran, cf. Marco Piazza, *Il governo di sé, Tempo, corpo e scrittura in Maine de Biran* (Florence, 2001).
11. Her study on Maine de Biran is included within a broader study on the relationship between politics and psychology in France between the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries: cf. Jan Goldstein, *The Post-Revolutionary Self, Politics and Psyche in France, 1750–1850* (London, 2005), 103–138.
12. Cf. J. III, 158, June 1815. On the distinction between *peuple* and *multitude* cf. also J. III, 150, August 1815.
13. On 28 March 1815, Biran noted in his diary: “Crime and banditry triumph. The causes of virtue, of honour, of justice are abandoned. If one believes the papers, the capital is at the feet of the despicable monster, which it had banished: it entered triumphantly. Not one voice rose against it, not one arm tried to slay it. Oh shame! [...] there is no more French nation; it was not worthy of a good king [...]. The French people deserves only to be conquered. There it is, under the yoke of soldiers and even more ferocious Jacobins. The present generation, born in the midst of the storms of the Revolution, depraved and profoundly immoral, is not susceptible to a good government” (J. I, 48–49).
14. As Antoine has suggested, *Maine de Biran*, 54, it is probable that Maine de Biran derives from *De l’Allemagne* (cf. in particular Madame de Staël, *Œuvres complètes*, Geneva, 1967, III, 4–113, 115), the reading of which dates precisely to these months, regarding the idea of a connection between sensationalism and the degenerate morality of the French.
15. Michel de Montaigne, *Essais*, III, 12 quoted in J., I, 69, April 1815 [*italics in the text*] (English edition: *Essays of Montaigne*, vol. 9, transl. by C. Cotton, revised by W. Carew Hazlett, New York, 1910). The Latin quotation is taken from Seneca, *Epistulae morales ad Lucilium*, letter CX.
16. Cf. Montaigne, *Essais*, I, 26.
17. Cf. in particular Antoine, *Maine de Biran*, and Piazza, *Il governo di sé*, cit.
18. Cf. Marco Piazza, “Fra camere e torri, in vista di se stessi. Maine de Biran, Xavier de Maistre e Henri Bayle,” M. Bettetini and S. Poggi (eds.), *I viaggi dei filosofi* (Milano, 2010), 161–176.
19. It may be of interest to compare the use and meaning of *révolution* in Maine de Biran with that of *rivoluzione* in Giacomo Leopardi

- (1789–1836), another post-sensationalist and post-revolutionary thinker who gave consideration to problems that were similar to those of Maine de Biran, reaching, however, an opposite conclusion: cf. Alessandra Aloisi, ‘Rivoluzione’, N. Bellucci, F. D’Intino and S. Gensini (eds.), *Lessico leopardiano* (Rome, 2016), 109–114.
20. Cf. Pierre Montebello, ‘Mélancolie et vacillation de la pensée dans le *Journal de Maine de Biran*’, Id., *Nature et subjectivité* (Grenoble, 2007), 110–130.
 21. Cf. “Maine de Biran e la fisiologia della malinconia,” presentation given at the conference *Melancholia, Metamorfosi dell’umor nero*, University of Pisa, June 2105, and “Maine de Biran’s conception of melancholy. Between physiology and philosophy,” presentation given at the conference *Mood, Aesthetic, Psychological and Philosophical Perspectives*, University of Warwick, May 2016. The essay I present here is part of a larger research project that I am conducting on melancholy and distraction between the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries with particular reference to Maine de Biran.
 22. Cf. in particular *Mémoire sur la décomposition de la pensée* (1804) and *De l’apperception immédiate* (1807), in which ample sections are devoted to mental illnesses.
 23. Cf. Pierre Cabanis, *Rapport du physique et du moral de l’homme* (1802), *Mémoire VI* (however, various considerations about melancholy are spread throughout nearly all the mémoires) and Philippe Pinel, *Nosographie philosophique ou la méthode de l’analyse appliquée à la médecine* (1798), *Traité médico-philosophique sur l’aliénation mentale ou la manie* (1801).
 24. Cabanis, *Rapports du physique et du moral de l’homme* (Paris and Geneva, 1980), 94, about which cf. Mariana Saad, “La mélancolie entre le cerveau et les circonstances: Cabanis et la nouvelle science de l’homme,” *Gesnerus* 63 (2006), 113–126 (114).
 25. ‘We only pay attention to mental illnesses that cause the loss of reason or of the superior faculties such as mania, delirium, etc. Moral medicine does not take into account the partial disorders of the faculties, the intellectual anomalies that are to the moral what disruptions of health are to the physical’ (J. I, 37 January 1815). On melancholy as “partial” delirium cf. in particular Michel Foucault, *Histoire de la folie à l’âge classique* (Paris, 1972), 282, that refers in particular to Jean-François Dufour, *Essai sur les opérations de l’entendement* (1770).
 26. For a more detailed treatment of this subject, please refer to my essay “Maine de Biran e la fisiologia della malinconia,” *Odradek. Studies in Philosophy of Literature, Aesthetics and New Media Theories* I/1 (forthcoming: 2017).

27. On the centrality of the circumstances in medicine at the end of the eighteenth and the beginning of the nineteenth century cf. Michel Foucault, *Naissance de la Clinique. Une archéologie du regard médical* (Paris, 1963). On the importance of the circumstances in relation to the symptoms of melancholy, cf. Saad, “La mélancolie entre le cerveau et les circonstances.”
28. Cf. Foucault, *Histoire de la folie*, 281–296, wherein Foucault showed in particular how eighteenth-century melancholy started to absorb the symptoms of the mania, which previously had been seen as opposed to it, and Jan Goldstein, *Console and Classify. The French Psychiatric Profession in the Nineteenth Century* (Cambridge, 1987), 156–157.
29. Cf. Jean Starobiski, *L’encre de la mélancolie* (Paris, 2012), 51.
30. Cf. Goldstein, *The Post-Revolutionary Self*, 134.
31. Cf. Jean Lassaingne, *Maine de Biran homme politique*, 100–111.
32. Cf. J. I, 63–66, April 1815.
33. Cfr. J. I, 19, September 1814. On the developments of this idea of an alliance between psychic anarchy and political anarchy (founded on the establishment of a hierarchy between the obscure field of pure impressions and the clear consciousness that guarantees order) in a subsequent era, particularly in Charles Blondel, cf. Andrea Cavalletti, *Classe* (Turin, 2009), 22–25.
34. Cf. J. I, 25, October 1815. On the notions of “animal life” and “sensitive life,” partly derived from Xavier Bichat, *Recherche physiologiques sur la vie et la mort* (1800), and on their political implications, see Roberto Esposito, *Third Person. Politics of Life and Philosophy of the Impersonal*, transl. by Z. Hanafi (Cambridge, 2012), 20–63.
35. “I feel something constrained in myself that keeps me in a state of habitual effort, that prevents me not only from doing difficult things, but also from easily and naturally fulfilling the simplest tasks. This moral state is linked to a kind of disruption in the organic functions... When digestion, the secretions etc. ... are laborious, when the principle of life meets resistance on the part of all the organs: it is quite impossible for the mind to be free, at ease and quick to act” (J. I, 95, September 1815 [my italics]).
36. Cf. J., III, 107–143.
37. Cf. Piazza, *Il governo di sé*.
38. Henri Gouhier, *Les conversions de Maine de Biran* (Paris, 1947), 169, dates Biran’s conversion to *Biranism* to 1804.
39. What Gouhier, *Les conversions*, 310–422, defined as his “last conversion.”
40. Cf. Antoine, *Maine de Biran*, 85.
41. Piazza, *Il governo di sé*, 32.
42. Cf. J. I, 93 e 74.
43. Cf. Agnès Antoine, “Le mal du siècle dans le journal intime de Maine de Biran,” *Difficulté d’être et mal du siècle*, 43–56.

PART II

Legitimacy Beyond France

German Central Europe and the Hundred Days

Leighton S. James

On 22 March 1815, the *National-Zeitung der Deutschen* reported on Napoleon Bonaparte's escape from Elba and his March on Paris. The paper, published by the author and educationalist Rudolph Zacharias Becker, described the news as a terror that had "come over Germany, from north to south."¹ Becker himself had good cause to be concerned by events. He had begun publishing his newspaper in Gotha in 1796, and it continued to be published until 1829.² In 1811, however, Becker had been arrested by the French and imprisoned in Magdeburg for seventeen months for penning an article critical of Napoleon, and his newspaper had been banned. He later wrote a pamphlet about his experience as a French prisoner with the subtitle, *A Contribution to the Characteristics of Despotism*.³ Despite his fears, Becker recognized the multiplicity of reactions to Napoleon's return to France and pointed to the differences of opinion among the German public as to the meaning of Napoleon's return. "Some claim, as usual, that they predicted this since the Treaty of Fontainebleau was signed and how leniency

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then was too great and now suffering will lead to wisdom. Others see divine punishment already befalling Germany because it has obscured again the new dawn of freedom through inner strife and discord so that a good many holy rights have again been treated with contempt, because oppressive mockery has striven to degrade what had recently been sanctified." Becker accepted some of the latter criticisms of political events in Germany since the victory of the Sixth Coalition in 1814, but he pointed out that others could not believe that the Almighty would "impose something so dreadful on Europe, that we so little repent of our sins, and that all we have done, suffered and believed should be so completely in vain." Still others, he reported, received the news with insouciance and "think the next newspapers will without fail report the end of the adventure and the whole affair will remain a trivial fright."⁴

The *National-Zeitung's* articles chronicling the Hundred Days reflected some of the hopes and fears engendered by the return of Napoleon to France. Responses varied by region, state, age, and social status. Although the end phase of Napoleonic hegemony in German Central Europe has been intensively studied, the reaction to the Hundred Days has not been examined in its own right. Instead, it has been rather subsumed into studies of the so-called *Befreiungskriege*, or Wars of Liberation, from 1813 to 1815. Research has tended to focus on the extent to which wars were a crucible in which German nationalism was forged.⁵ The Hundred Days undoubtedly witnessed another outburst of nationalist sentiment similar to that of 1813 and 1814. This feeling was captured in the autobiographical writings of soldiers, particularly volunteers, and some civilians. To focus on the works of volunteers and patriotically inspired non-combatants, however, glosses over the diversity of reaction as exhibited in other autobiographical writings, newspapers, and governmental reports. These sources also reveal a complex interaction of popular reaction with the Prussian-dominated vision of the German nation that characterized much of the political discourse of the Wars of Liberation.

In many respects, the popular reaction in German Central Europe to the Hundred Days represented a microcosm of attitudes from the previous fifteen years. Similar attitudes to those enumerated by Becker had been expressed repeatedly during the 1790s and the 1800s. Although many feared the dislocation and renewed bloodshed warfare might bring, others received the news with excitement and hopes for the chance for military adventure, patriotic sacrifice and, more prosaically,

career advancement and enrichment. The primary reaction in 1815 was concern, but this ranged from anxiety to outright paranoia over the activities of suspicious individuals. For some, the return of Napoleon represented a chance to reinvigorate the patriotic feeling they believed had swept Germany in 1813 and that was slowly ebbing away in the seemingly interminable wrangling at Vienna. For many amongst the governing elite, however, such sentiments were almost as much of a danger to the newly emergent political order as was a resurgent Napoleon. Ultimately, the hopes of German nationalists that a renewed crusade against Napoleon would unite Germany were disappointed. The campaign would be more of a traditional *Kabinettskrieg* than a people's war, and the victory at Waterloo would be a victory for the dynastic order. Consequently, the Hundred Days and the climatic Battle of Waterloo would always be overshadowed in the nationalist discourse of the nineteenth century by the patriotic events of 1813–1814.⁶

Reactions to the Hundred Days were also tempered by the seismic political changes that German Central Europe had undergone. More than any other part of Europe, German Central Europe had been transformed by the Napoleonic conquests. The thousand-year-old Holy Roman Empire had been dissolved in 1806 and of the 300 or so polities that comprised the Empire, only 38 remained by 1815. German territories along the left bank of the Rhine and along the North Sea coast had been annexed to the French empire and spent years under French rule. Other German states, particularly those in southern Germany, had seen their territories vastly increased, usually at the cost of other smaller German rulers, whilst the world of German home towns had been cracked open and exposed to the liberalising and centralising tendencies of Napoleonic power.⁷ The complex mosaic of ecclesiastical states and Free Imperial Knights was gone. Of the Free Imperial Cities, only four—Lübeck, Bremen, Hamburg and Frankfurt—had survived by 1815. Meanwhile, the demand for money and men to support Napoleon's campaigns in Spain and in Russia had resulted in a strengthening of the state at the expense of noble and urban estates and regional elites. The "French yoke" had been thrown off in 1813, but there would be no return to the old order because the southern German states demanded recognition of their territorial gains as the price of their defection to the Sixth Coalition. While the southern states consolidated their gains, in the north and west some German states—such as Hanover and Hesse-Cassel—were busy re-establishing

themselves after the collapse of the French satellite state of the Kingdom of Westphalia.

The news of Napoleon's escape from Elba therefore not only raised the spectre of renewed warfare, it also intruded into the negotiations over the future of German Central Europe at the Congress of Vienna. Becker commented in a subsequent edition of his newspaper that at least the threat posed by Napoleon had brought the states of Europe together. Negotiations over the fate of Poland had been particularly tense, but in reality, more or less amicable negotiations had actually been resumed before Napoleon's dramatic escape from Elba.⁸ When the news reached Vienna in the early hours of 7 March, it provoked a flurry of recriminations. The British were accused of neglecting their duty and even of allowing Napoleon to escape. More broadly, the Austrian secret police reported widespread anxiety amongst the population as the news spread across the city, whereas the representative of the Swiss city of Biel at the Congress wrote to his father that "one cannot imagine the consternation and general uncertainty that the news of Napoleon's escape has provoked."⁹

Similar sentiments appear to have characterized the mood in Berlin. A letter from the Jewish merchant Theodor Marcus Robert-Tornow to the writer Rahel Varnhagen, then in Vienna as part of Chancellor Hardenberg's retinue, suggests that the news was not merely passively received. He expressed a personal sense of war weariness but claimed that the military was fomenting war sentiment and Francophobia. He wrote that "the mood in the whole land is dissatisfied. It is spread by the military ... which always wants strife and war, from the same reasons I wish for peace."¹⁰ Varnhagen for her part expressed shock and concern at the dizzying speed of events. She wrote to her brother Markus Levin, "He is back ... all the old disarrangements, vexations, bad customs, and mistakes which will now be stirred around. Basta! Everything is going to be different!"¹¹

Some, however, welcomed the emergency. The initial uncertainty was followed by a resurgence of the patriotic literature that had accompanied the campaigns of 1813 and 1814. Then literary figures, such as Theodor Körner, Friedrich Gentz, and August Schlegel, had produced songs and poems that demonized the French and eulogized German freedoms. Whilst the French were depicted as deceitful, effeminate, and cunning, German manhood was represented as brave, martial, virile, and honest. Meanwhile German womanhood was virtuous and nurturing.¹²

This material had circulated clandestinely since Austria's attempt to challenge French hegemony in 1809, but it came into the open after the Prussian declaration of war on France in 1813. The renewal of the conflict in 1815 would lead to the production of more such material. Amongst the reports about foreign dignitaries and intercepted communications, the Austrian secret police, for example, had also passed on a copy of a patriotic song penned by the poet and dramatist Friedrich Ludwig Zacharias Werner. The song was dedicated to the "new Crusade against the archenemy" and characterized Napoleon as an anti-Christ figure intent on enslaving the German people.¹³

The *National-Zeitung*, as its title suggests, was a keen supporter of this patriotic discourse. Early reports characterized the coming struggle as one between the people of Europe and one man. The emphasis was thus on the threat to peace posed by Napoleon himself.¹⁴ Napoleon's triumphal entry into Paris, however, prompted an increasingly strident nationalistic tone as the newspaper sought to mobilize the German patriotism and Francophobic sentiment that had characterized public discourse during the Wars of Liberation of 1813 and 1814.¹⁵ Increasingly the struggle was presented as one between the German and French peoples. The French officers and officials who had defected to Napoleon were accused of perjury (*Meineid*) for failing to protect Louis XVIII from the upstart. "What will the world-stormer (*Weltstürmer*) start with this perjured host and with the inconstant French people? How will he seek to consolidate a rule achieved through disloyalty and betrayal?" The paper painted a picture of a Germany whose wounds caused by the last war were only just healing. This process had now been put in jeopardy "since the world-stormer has risen again from his corner to the throne of the people, which for centuries was the main source of the all the misfortune and ruination of the Germans." On a practical level, Becker demanded that French men and women in Germany be treated with the utmost suspicion in case they proved to be spies. In the longer term, it recommended rhetorically that a "high and thick dividing wall must over the years be erected between Germany and France in order to stop the corrupting influence of this land on our spiritual and physical welfare."¹⁶

This rhetoric still had the potential to mobilize and enthuse. For some, particularly those that had been too young to participate in the campaigns of 1813 and 1814, the Hundred Days represented an opportunity to demonstrate their patriotic feelings through military service. The 17-year-old Hans Häring, who wrote under the pseudonym

Willibald Alexis, served as a Prussian volunteer in 1815. He claimed in his memoir that the generation of young Germans who volunteered alongside him were still inspired by the idealism that had characterized the patriotic literature of 1813 and 1814. Alexis wrote that “the rousing speeches of our teachers, the lingering sounds of the learned warlike eloquence of Fichte, Schleiermacher and Arndt resounding from every lectern, the songs of Körner and Schenkendorf, the tales of the older boys who had bled and triumphed along in 1813 and 1814, all of this kept the thrill alive.”¹⁷ A self-confessed Romantic, Alexis took a copy of the *Nibelungenlied* with him on campaign for spiritual nourishment and compared the conflict against the French to that between the Burgundians and the Saxons and Huns in that epic poem.¹⁸

Carl August Pfitzner, a volunteer *Jäger*, expressed similar sentiments to Alexis in his unpublished diary. The work is suggestive of the influence that the patriotic literary produced during the previous campaigns could have on volunteers. Pfitzner opened his account of the campaign with a Körner poem, claiming that it had stirred his soul when he left Königsberg. Later, in a seeming reference to Arndt’s *Was ist des Deutschen Vaterland?* (*What is the German Fatherland?*), he wrote on arriving at the Rhine on 22 July, “I am at the Rhine! There a thousand voices sounded the song: To the Rhine, to the Rhine, which I had so often sung too, without ever having walked in this region.”¹⁹

The *National-Zeitung* praised volunteers, such as Alexis and Pfitzner, holding them up as exemplars of patriotic sentiment to the rest of German society. Becker claimed that the sight of the sons of the wealthy willingly taking up arms and risking their lives in the service of the Fatherland would act as an inspiration to the “uneducated portion of the people” and encourage them also to enlist.²⁰ Some 50,000 volunteers served in the campaigns of 1813, 1814, and 1815. A survey of 25,361 Prussian volunteers reveals that more than 74% were drawn from the educated upper and lower-middle class young men, whilst the poorer peasantry were underrepresented amongst the ranks at just 15%.²¹ Tellingly, however, few of the volunteers of 1813 and 1814 re-enlisted in 1815. This was partly due to the growing sense of disillusionment that many felt over the future of Germany. The news of negotiations at Vienna seemed to promise a conservative political settlement rather than the united Germany for which many volunteers had hoped and fought. Becker’s reference to the “inner discord and strife” that had threatened to obscure the “holy rights” won in the last war were an expression of

this sentiment.²² This disillusionment, coupled with the disdainful treatment they had often received at the hands of the regular army, disinclined many from taking up arms again.²³

Alexis was also ultimately disenchanted with the reality of military service and attitude of the Prussian officer corps to the volunteers. In a comment revealing of his own social snobbery, he complained that they were treated like “common soldiers” and lamented that the freedom and unity in Germany that they had dreamt of had been betrayed at the Congress of Vienna.²⁴ These sentiments would be expressed at the nationalist Wartburg Festival in 1817 where students and veterans of the Wars of Liberation burnt symbols of the Prussian and Austrian military as well as the Code Napoleon.²⁵ Pfitzner meanwhile was disappointed that not all of his comrades shared his idealism. He divided them into the educated and the uneducated and complained that there were few of the former and that the latter seemed motivated chiefly by the chance to loot rather than by a sense of self-sacrifice.²⁶ Alongside patriotism, other reasons for military enlistment—such as a desire for adventure, escape from domestic circumstance, peer pressure, or a desire to see the world—also underpinned volunteering in 1815, just as they had done during earlier wars and would do so again.²⁷

The diary of Theodor von Papet, a captain of a Landwehr battalion, gives some sense of the excitement that military action of the Hundred Days offered. Papet wrote at the end of February that rumours of Napoleon’s escape from Elba had reached them late at their billet in Bruges. Most, he recorded, thought Napoleon’s campaign a foolhardy adventure that would surely end in failure. Others, however, knew the “characterless French” more completely. They believed that Napoleon would be successful in seizing the throne because the French people were like “a little child, which cannot bear mild government.”²⁸

The order to mobilize seems to have been received with some excitement. Papet wrote that he and his officers looked forward with “some hopes to the campaign,” although this was mixed with sadness at having to leave a comfortable billet in Bruges.²⁹ Papet’s unit eventually reached Brussels where they received orders to march to meet the enemy on 15 June. His diary ends at this point. Papet fought at Waterloo where he was wounded. He died three years later due complications occurring after his refusal to allow the amputation of his leg.³⁰

Others were more circumspect about the prospect of renewed war. Georg von Coulon was a major in the King’s German Legion and had

seen plenty of fighting in Spain during the Peninsular War. He criticized the European powers for allowing Napoleon's escape and prophesied in his diary entry for 26 March 1815 that the return of Napoleon would lead to a war in which "[thousands of] innocent people will lose their lives and health." He put the blame squarely on the European rulers who had shown Napoleon leniency in 1814. Yet he also hoped that Napoleon would be punished. "This all could have been avoided if the great powers had not been so indulgent towards the villain (*Bösewicht*), but had destroyed him more than a year ago, but I hope that in the end he will receive his deserved reward."³¹

The Hundred Days not only inspired educated young men to enlist. The military mobilisations of the 1813/1814 campaigns been accompanied by a public outpouring of support in Prussia. This was symbolized by the "gold for iron" campaign initiated by Princess Marianne of Prussia. The Princess had appealed to Prussian women to sacrifice their jewellery for the war effort. Those who donated received an iron ring stamped with the words, *Gold gab ich für Eisen* (I gave gold for iron). Women were conspicuous in these fundraising efforts, and between 1813 and 1815 some 600 women's associations were formed. After the end of the 1814 campaign, women's associations continued the raise funds for the wounded, soldiers' widows, and orphaned children. The *National-Zeitung* published numerous examples of such donations. On 17 May 1815, it reported that the women's association in the Duchy of Hesse had collected 12,293 *Florins 3 Kreuzer* along with donations of clothing. The money was used to support five field hospitals and the impoverished. Other associations were active in Marburg, Hannover, Hoya, Breslau, Berlin, and Cassel.³² The paper later estimated the amount raised by the women's associations by April 1815 at 73,534 *Reichsthaler 11 Groschen 2 Pfennig*.³³

The military emergency of the Hundred Days rekindled this charitable impulse, and activities were extended to support the veterans of 1815. The *Altmarkisches Intelligenz-Blatt* reported extensively on collections and donations. Church collections figured prominently. Churches in the Altmark collected a total of 426 *Reichstaler 5 Groschen* to support hospitals and to rebuild destroyed churches. Military units also raised money for the veterans and widows. The *Jäger* company of the *Bürgergarde* in Stendal, for example, collected 61 *Reichsthaler 18 Groschen* for the wounded soldiers of the 1st Elbe *Landwehr* infantry regiment.³⁴ The names and occupations of individual donors were also published.

Although the nobility and urban patriciate gave the most, charitable donations appear to have been forthcoming from both higher- and lower-status groups. The list published in 25 July 1815 edition of the *Altmärkische Intelligenz-Blatt*, for example, included three labourers (*Tägelohmer*)—Bröcker, Schmidt, and Lehmann—each of whom donated 4 *Pfennig*.³⁵ Others gave goods in kind, such as the two young women from Ditfurt who donated five silver coins, a pair of gold earrings, two broken rings, and a silver thimble.³⁶

Rebecca Achelis, a middle-class woman from Bremen, did not record her reaction to the return of Napoleon in her diary, but she did try to capture the patriotic feeling that accompanied the departure of soldiers and volunteers from the city. The Bremen's Women's Association held a celebratory breakfast for the departing troops. She described a scene of joy where the "happy singing of the soldiers mixed with the beautiful martial music." Never, she claimed, had the word "freedom" meant so much to her and lamented how one "felt ever more the scourge and oppressiveness of the French." She admitted, however, to mixed feelings about the forthcoming struggle. "They are now all going away to meet the enemy with good courage—but who will come back? Who will remain? Will our city also have its victims? God be with us!"³⁷

Despite the material and moral support these patriotic activities offered to the war effort, the reaction of the authorities was often ambivalent. The patriotic and nationalist movements that emerged in the 1800s were associated with radical and democratic ideas that challenged the legitimacy of the old dynastic order, which was only now being repaired at the Congress of Vienna. In fact, fears of democracy as well as the political implications of arming the people had led to fierce debates between supporters and opponents of a citizen's militia in both Austria and Prussia in the 1800s. Ultimately, both German states did create a *Landwehr*, but many among the Austrian and Prussian political elites remained wary of a "people's war." In nineteenth-century Prussia, two narratives of the Wars of Liberation would eventually emerge. An official narrative emphasized the role of the Hohenzollerns in spearheading the liberation of Germany. A radical democratic alternative, epitomized by Friedrich Ludwig Jahn and the gymnastic movement (*Turnvereine*), portrayed liberation as the result of a spontaneous outpouring of nationalist sentiment by the German people that dragged the often reluctant monarchs and princes along in its wake.³⁸

Some patriots were unimpressed with the reaction of the authorities to the emergency. Johann Diederich Gries wrote from Jena to his poet brother, Karl, on 14 April 1815, to complain that the Hamburg Senate had not issued a call to arms as had happened in Bremen and Lübeck, nor had collections been undertaken for the soldiers. He felt that “naturally Hamburg loses through this un-German (*undeutsche*) behaviour all credit in the community of nations, and is it then any wonder if no-one is interested in our preservation.” Karl claimed that his brother’s complaint was widespread in Hamburg but that the city’s senators lacked conviction. One senator had allegedly told a friend that the “*Bürgerschaft* was too effusive, one should not show oneself so zealously against Napoleon, because it was surely possible that it is the will of Providence that he takes control of the helm.”³⁹ The Senate, which was focused on the economic recovery of Hamburg after the period of direct French rule and the devastating siege in 1813, sought to block attempts to resurrect the Hanseatic corps of volunteers that had fought in 1813 and 1814.⁴⁰ The *National-Zeitung* attempted to address these fears about arming the common people by pointing out that it was from the same source that the regular army received its recruits. It also argued that most of the volunteers came from the propertied classes.⁴¹ Yet, even where volunteers units did appear, as in Prussia, they did not play as significant a role in the fighting as they had in 1813 and 1814.

If the authorities were somewhat ambivalent about the volunteers, they appear to have been less so regarding the potential for espionage. Becker would no doubt have been pleased to know that the Prussian authorities, in particular, initiated surveillance of politically suspect individuals. A list of around 217 suspects was drawn up for the Government between the Elbe and the Weser.⁴² The list included names, residences, place of birth, family status, occupation, and a comment on their perceived trustworthiness. The majority were foreigners who had settled in Prussian territory during or after the last wars and are suggestive of the extent of migration during the conflict. The 28-year-old Angelo Elleron, for example, was born in Parcia near Venice. He had served as a French soldier, but by 1815 he had settled in Magdeburg where he worked as an apprentice in a tannery. He was also married with one child. Despite these apparently settled circumstances, it was reported that Elleron’s “appearance promises that he is not to be trusted.” Like Elleron, the twenty six-year-old Leonhard Lenders was a foreigner having been born in Maastricht. He was also a former French soldier, but he now worked as a shoemaker’s

apprentice. Unlike Elleron, there “was nothing disadvantageous to say about this person.”⁴³

Amongst the information provided was whether the suspect was Jewish. The Napoleonic period had witnessed the emancipation of, or at least a diminution of legal discrimination against, the Jewish population of German Central Europe. Moreover, during the Wars of Liberation, hundreds of Jewish men, mainly from urban centres, had also volunteered to fight against Napoleon as a demonstration of their patriotism and loyalty.⁴⁴ Hopes that such activities would ensure more tolerance of the Jewish community were disappointed. Traditional prejudices based on religion and economic function endured and would receive violent expression in the Hep Hep anti-Jewish riots of 1819. Furthermore, the patriotic discourse of the Wars of Liberation had a strongly Christian inflection, and thus many patriotic writers, such as Ernst Moritz Arndt, had excluded Jews from the new German community on the basis of their faith. In February 1815, the historian Friedrich Rühs published an article on the issue of Jews’ citizenship that argued that they could only become German citizens if they converted to Christianity and that they should not be subject to universal conscription because military service was meant to be an expression of unity of the *Volk*. Rühs’s work appeared to have been widely read and received a sympathetic ear among some Prussian ministers, such as Friedrich von Schuckmann and Friedrich Leopold von Kircheisen, the ministers for the Interior and Domestic departments, respectively.⁴⁵

Given these attitudes, it is perhaps unsurprising that the Jews seem to have been of particular interest to the Prussian authorities during the Hundred Days. The local authorities in Halberstadt reported that the “Jewish doctors Wolff, Warburg, as well as the Jews Bock, Marks and Dreyfuss, and the *Bürger* Damm, resident in Baader Strasse are described to me as supporters of the French. The Jew Baruch in Magdeburg should be seen as particularly suspicious,”⁴⁶ Meanwhile the *Polizei Direktor* in Halle reported on Abraham Fränckel. Fränckel had acted as an interpreter for the Russian army when it passed through the city and had accompanied it to France as a sutler (army provisioner). He had returned in February 1814, but orders to detain him as a spy were frustrated because he had already left the city with his wife.⁴⁷ Those with a previous history of criminality also attracted police attention. The police authorities in Frankfurt, for example, thought it worth reporting the history of a Jew called Wolfstein, known as Little Wolf, despite tenuous evidence.

He was a known thief and had disappeared after the arrival of the Coalition armies in 1813 and had not been heard of since.⁴⁸

The authorities also had to deal with those who were less enthusiastic about military service than Alexis and Pfitzner. Although the patriotic volunteers and their supporters tend to dominate the autobiographical sources, there is ample evidence that many were less than eager to join the war effort. Like all armies during the Napoleonic Wars, the German armies, whether regulars, *Landwehr*, or volunteers, had had to confront the issue of desertion. Although desertion rates from the Prussian *Landwehr* were lower than average, the Prussian King nevertheless had to toughen the penalties for such behaviour in 1813. Problems with desertion re-emerged in 1815, and even the *National-Zeitung* had to acknowledge the limits of popular patriotism. In the same article in which it praised the example of the volunteers, the newspaper reported that “whole bands of 200 and 300 disloyal individuals (*Trenlosen*) in the county of Lingen and Bevergern had avoided military service by fleeing across the border into Holland, whilst in the communities of Holstern and Dreyerwald only the ‘old men’ were left.”⁴⁹ The proximity of borders made avoidance much easier, although the press was used to track down deserters. The *Altmärkische Intelligenz-Blatt*, for example, reported on deserters providing their names, place of birth and physical descriptions.⁵⁰ The *National Zeitung* reported approvingly on the capture of deserters from Paderborn and Münster and demanded that they be ritually humiliated by being mounted backward on a mule and drummed through the towns.⁵¹

Desertion belied the patriotic feeling Becker believed had swept across Germany after Napoleon’s return from Elba. In fact, the Hundred Days tested new loyalties. This was particularly the case in those areas that had been part of the French Empire since the mid-1790s but were now integrated into other German states. Paderborn and Münster, for example, had only recently come under Prussian control, and tensions between the local inhabitants and the new rulers fed into issues such as desertion from the *Landwehr*. The art dealer Sulpiz Boisserée recorded in his diary that on the left bank of the Rhine one often heard the mocking phrase, “better French than Prussian.”⁵² In the Lower Rhine, the Prussian privy councillor, Johann August Sack, feared that local veterans of the French army might throw their lot in with Napoleon. To forestall this he issued an order that all veterans must join Prussian forces. The Prussian authorities also required church, school, and court officials—as well as mayors

and representatives of both town councils and chambers of commerce in the region—to take an oath of loyalty in Aachen in symbolic declaration of the unity of the Rhineland and Prussia.⁵³ Despite these attempts to inculcate new state loyalties a popular attachment to Napoleonic institutions and symbols continued into the nineteenth century in the Rhineland, particularly the Palatinate, through veterans' associations and popular songs.⁵⁴

Such tensions were also fomented for political reasons by other German states. Negotiations at the Congress of Vienna had become particularly fraught over the fate of Poland–Saxony. Bavaria's attempts to prevent the enlargement of Prussia at the expense of Saxony included a press campaign spearheaded by the lawyer and publicist Georg Friedrich Rebmann. In pamphlets and essays, he rejected the outright Francophobia of the pro-Prussian press, such as Joseph Görres's *Rheinische Merkur*, and defended the positives of French rule. The Bavarian press therefore provided a platform in the region for anti-Prussian sentiment. This included the distribution of an anti-Prussian pamphlet, *Sachsen und Preußen*, among the Saxon regiments stationed in Belgium. The work contributed to a mutiny by the Saxon soldiers in May 1815 when they were informed they were to be divided and some of them incorporated into the Prussian army as a consequence of Prussia's acquisition of Saxon territory. The mutinous soldiers declared their loyalty to their Saxon king, Frederick Augustus I, and threatened the Prussian commander, Blücher, himself before being suppressed by Prussian forces.⁵⁵

These incidents reveal the divisions behind the rhetoric of Germany unity. Even the climactic Battle of Waterloo would become a divisive issue within German memory in the nineteenth century. Disagreement as to whether victory had been secured by the British or Prussian began almost as soon as the smoke cleared. This was about more than who took the laurels because an acceptance of Prussian claims that they turned the tide of battle would have reinforced their territorial claims at the Congress of Vienna. The war was, in one sense, a German victory. By the end of the campaign, some 75% of the troops in the theatre of war were of German origin.⁵⁶ Prussian claims to pre-eminence, however, sat uneasily with the thousands of Hanoverian, Brunswick, and Nassau troops who had fought under Wellington's command. The issue was particularly complex in Hanover because Hanoverian soldiers made up the core of the King's German Legion that had defended the crucial

farmhouse of La Haye Sainte. The Waterloo monument in Hannover, which was completed in 1832, celebrated dynastic loyalty to the personal union between Britain and Hanover. In contrast, the column erected by the Prussian state on Belle-Alliance Platz subsumed Waterloo into the Wars of Liberation and the official, monarchical Prussian interpretation of the conflict.⁵⁷

Moreover, despite the approbation of the *National-Zeitung*, charitable and philanthropic activities were not necessarily bound to German nationalism. As Ute Planert pointed out, the appearance of the *Frauenvereine* in various German states did not amount to a widespread patriotic-national women's association movement. The composition and activities of the *Frauenvereine* varied by region and state. The emergence of such associations in the Rhineland, for example, was forestalled by Napoleon's abdication in 1814. When they re-emerged in 1815, they did so at the instigation of the Prussian authorities rather than as a result of spontaneous patriotic feeling. Many of the associations were involved in general charitable work for the poor inspired by a religious revival in the wake of the secular reforms that had characterized the revolutionary era and the Napoleonic occupation rather than simply supporting the war effort.⁵⁸ Finally, the relationship between local loyalties, or *Landespatriotismus*, and German national feeling was complicated and unclear.⁵⁹ Fundraising for war widows and orphans did not necessarily entail a commitment to a more politically united Germany.

Focusing on the authorial voice of educated upper and middle-class individuals, such as Achelis, Alexis and Pfitzner, also obscures the day-to-day reality for most inhabitants of German Central Europe. Whatever the momentous nature of Napoleon's escape and eventual defeat, the daily and seasonal rhythms of agricultural and urban work continued unabated. In many diaries, the return of Napoleon is mentioned briefly alongside the everyday, prosaic concerns such as the weather, the harvest and agricultural prices, and local events. Johann Jacob Eselgroth's account, for example, is chiefly concerned with the grape harvest. His diary is occasionally punctuated with references to wider events, but these are usually brief and to the point. On 13 June he noted that they had to quarter soldiers en route to France to fight Napoleon. This entry is followed by a terse summary of events in Belgium: "The war was not long; at a battle in the Netherlands, where the French had to fight against an English and against a Prussian army it was decided; the French had to retreat and were beaten; in a few days the Prussians were in

Paris and the Emperor was caught and sent to the island of St. Helena; Marshall Ney and the other instigators of the war were sentenced to death. The land punished with hard fines and the old King restored.”⁶⁰

Johann Peter Delhoven, the mayor of the village of Dormagen, which sat on the left bank of the Rhine, recorded more information on military preparations in his chronicle, but his references to Napoleon were similarly brief. On 1 March he noted, “Napoleon is gone from the island of Elba and on 1 March landed ... with 1100 men.” On 19 March, he recorded a local pilgrimage followed by the terse entry “Napoleon is in Lyon, the French go over to him.” A longer, but undated entry for May reports on the military build-up in the area and that “Napoleon sits in Paris.” On 27 June, he records “the beginning of hostilities between the French, Prussians and English.” Finally, like Eselgroth, his undated entry for July is a brief summary of events. “The Prussians and the English have invested Paris after winning the battle on 18 June; after them the Austrians and Russian moved in. Napoleon will be taken to the island of St. Helena.”⁶¹

The accounts of Delhoven and Eselgroth are probably more representative of the general experience and reaction to the Hundred Days in German Central Europe. Their accounts seem impervious to the political atmosphere, their authors seemingly indifferent to patriotic sentiments. In this, the popular reaction to the Hundred Days represented a microcosm of attitudes and behaviours that had been evident during the previous decade of warfare. For many, the war was far removed and represented primarily by the passage of soldiers en route to the front. For others, the war was a burden to be avoided by evading conscription. For professional soldiers, such as Coulon, it was another campaign in a long series of conflicts, as well as a chance for career advancement and enrichment.

Nevertheless, the Hundred Days did offer some an opportunity either to demonstrate their patriotism or to reiterate political demands for a more united Germany. The hopes of German nationalists were disappointed, and the Hundred Days and the military campaign of 1815 were overshadowed by those of 1813 and 1814, particularly by the so-called *Völkerschlacht* (Battle of Nations) at Leipzig on 6–8 October 1813. Unlike 1813, the response to Napoleon’s final campaign was much more of an old-style *Kabinettskriege*, and the volunteers of Alexis’s stamp saw little real combat. Yet, the Hundred Days and Waterloo would ultimately be folded into a triumphant Prussian–German narrative of liberation

from Napoleonic despotism and national reawakening. This narrative also glossed over the widespread uncertainty amongst the population as well as the rivalries between German states and regions in 1815. Whilst the patriotic discourse produced by Arndt and others found echoes in the autobiographical writings of educated Germans, particularly of those from northern Germany, others rejected its Prussian-centric character in favour of a different vision of Germany's future. Even before the Hundred Days were over, the German question preoccupied many writers and statesmen. In the later editions of the *National-Zeitung*, as it became apparent that an invasion of German would not occur, articles dealing with the negotiations over the new German Confederation displaced news of the military campaign against Napoleon. Even news of Napoleon's ultimate defeat at Waterloo, his embarkation on the *Bellerophon*, and his transportation to England was moved to the back pages. The fate of the "world-stormer", the man who had transformed the political landscape of German Central Europe, was summed up in just seven lines.⁶²

NOTES

1. *National-Zeitung der Deutschen*, 22 March 1815.
2. Reinhart Siegert, "Positiver Journalismus. Aufklärerische Öffentlichkeit im Zusammenspiel des Publizisten Rudolph Zacharias Becker mit seinen Korrespondenten" in »Öffentlichkeit« im 18. Jahrhundert, ed. Hans-Wolf Jäger (Göttingen: Wallenstein, 1997), 165–185.
3. Rudolph Zacharias Becker, *Leiden und Freuden in siebzehnmönatlicher französischer Gefangenschaft von ihm selbst beschrieben. Ein Beitrag zur Charakteristik des Despotismus* (Gotha, 1814).
4. *National-Zeitung*, 22 March 1815.
5. For an overview of the historiography of the Wars of Liberation, see Karen H. Hagemann, *Revisiting Prussia's Wars Against Napoleon: History, Culture and Memory* (Cambridge, 2015), 14–22.
6. Of a sample of 129 German-language military memoirs published before 1875, 63% or 49%, respectively, deal with the conflict between 1813 and 1814, whilst 67% or 51%, respectively, deal with the Russian campaign. See Hagemann, *Revisiting Prussia's Wars*, 311.
7. For an overview of the political changes in German Central Europe between 1800 and 1815, see Leighton S. James, *Witnessing the Revolutionary and Napoleonic Wars in German Central Europe* (Basingstoke, 2013),

- Ch. 1. On the “home towns,” see Walker Mack, *German Home Towns: Community, State and General Estate, 1648–1817* (Ithaca, 1998), 185–216.
8. Brian E. Vick, *The Congress of Vienna: Power and Politics After Napoleon* (Cambridge, MA, 2014), 18.
 9. Cited in Thierry Lentz, *1815. Der Wiener Kongress und die Neugründung Europas* (Munich, 2014), 278.
 10. Rachel Levin Varnhagen, *Familienbriefe*, ed. Renata Buzzo Margari Barovero (Munich, 2009), 521.
 11. Quoted in Fritzsche, *Stranded in the Present*, 31.
 12. Hagemann, “Francophobia and Patriotism: Anti-French Images and Sentiments in Prussia and Northern Germany During the Anti-Napoleonic Wars,” *French History* 18:4 (2004): 404–425.
 13. August Fournier, *Die Geheimpolizei auf dem Wiener Kongress* (Vienna, 1913), 441–446.
 14. *Ibid.*, 29 March 1815.
 15. Hagemann, »Männlicher Muth und Teutsche Ehre«: *Nation, Militär und Geschlecht zur Zeit der Antinapoleonischen Kriege Preußens* (Paderborn, 2002).
 16. *National-Zeitung*, 5 April 1815.
 17. Cited in Hagemann, *Revisiting Prussia’s Wars*, 191.
 18. Wilibald Alexis, *Als Kriegsfreiwilliger nach Frankreich 1815: Blätter aus meinen Erinnerungen*, ed. Adolf Heilbron (Leipzig, 1915), 24.
 19. Bibliothek Uniwersytecka we Wrocławiu, Manuscript Department, IV 0 48, Carl Ernst Eduard Pfitzner, Mein Tagebuch während des Feldzugs 1815, 74–75.
 20. *National-Zeitung*, 10 May 1815.
 21. Ibbeken, *Preußen 1807–1813. Staat und Volk als Idee und in Wirklichkeit* (Cologne, 1970), 48.
 22. *National-Zeitung*, 22 March 1815.
 23. Hagemann, *Revisiting Prussia’s Wars*, 191–192.
 24. On the treatment of the volunteers see Willibald Alexis, *Eine Jugend in Preußen* (Berlin, 1991), 240. On the Congress and German unity see Alexis, *Als Kriegsfreiwilliger*, 9.
 25. Wolfgang Hartwig, “Studentische Mentalität - politische - Jugendbewegung - Nationalismus: Die Anfänge der deutschen Burschenschaft,” *Historische Zeitschrift* 243:3 (1986): 581–628.
 26. Pfitzner, Mein Tagebuch während des Feldzugs 1815, 185.
 27. Leighton James, “For the Fatherland? The Motivations of Austrian and Prussian Volunteers during the Revolutionary and Napoleonic Wars” in, *War Volunteering in Modern Times: From the French Revolution to the Second World War*, eds. Christine G. Krüger and Sonja Levsen (Basingstoke, 2010), 40–58.

28. Theodor von Papst, *Tagebuch des Captains Theodor von Papst über den Feldzug in den Niederlanden 1814/15*, 119. Available at: <http://www.amg-fnz.de/tagebuch-ueber-den-feldzug-in-den-niederlanden-1814-1815/edition/seite-i-119/>.
29. *Ibid.*, 121.
30. J. G. Renner, *Historisch-Topographisch-Statistische Nachrichten und Notizen von der Stadt Osterode am Harze* (Osterode, 1833), 159.
31. Joachim Kannicht (ed.), *Und alles wegen Napoleon. Aus dem Kriegstagebuch des Georg von Coupon, Major der Königlich Deutschen Legion, und den Briefen seiner Frau Henriette, 1806–1815* (Koblenz, 1986), 185.
32. *National-Zeitung*, 17 May 1815.
33. *Ibid.*, 31 May 1815.
34. GStAPK, I HA Rep. 91 C Militär- und Zivilgouvernement für d. Land zw. Weser und Elbe zu Halle und Halberstadt Nr. 1969: Siegesfeier fuer die Schlacht von Waterloo und die Einnahme von Paris, *Altmärkisches Intelligenz-Blatt für das erste Departement der Königl. Preußischen Provinzin zwischen der Elbe und Weser*, 21 July 1815.
35. *Ibid.*, 25 July 1815.
36. *Ibid.*, 28 July 1815.
37. DTA, Emmendingen, Aus dem Tagebuch der Rebekka Achelis, 1813–1833, 28–29.
38. Christopher Clark, “The Wars of Liberation in Prussian Memory: Reflections on the Memorialisation of War in Early Nineteenth-Century Germany,” *Journal of Modern History* 68:3 (1996): 550–576.
39. Heinrich Reincke (ed.), “Aus dem Briefwechsel von Karl und Dietrich Grins 1796 bis 1819,” *Zeitschrift des Vereins für Hamburgische Geschichte* 25 (1924): 272.
40. Katherine B. Aalestad, *Place and Politics: Local Identity, Civic Culture and German Nationalism in North Germany During the Revolutionary Era* (Leiden, 2005), 310.
41. *National Zeitung*, 19 April 1815.
42. On 15 March 1813, Prussia established four military governments to co-ordinate the war effort. Two more governments, between the Elbe and the Weser and the Rhine, were established as the Coalition armies advanced. Each was headed by a military and a civilian governor.
43. GStAPK, I HA Rep. 91 C, Nr. 1161: Kommission des Oberlandesgerichts Dalkowski zu Untersuchung politischer Vergehen. List derer in Gouvernement zwischen der Elbe und Weser sich aufhaltenden Polen, Franzosen und Individuals dem Ex Kaiser gedient habe, April 1815.
44. Horst Fischer, *Judentum, Staat und Heer in Preußen im frühen 19. Jahrhundert: Zur Geschichte der staatlichen Budenpolitik* (Tübingen, 1968), 47–53.

45. Hagemann, *Revisiting Prussia's Wars*, 121–127.
46. GStAPK, I HA Rep. 91 C. Nr. 1159: Kommission des Oberlandesgerichtsrats Dalkowski zu Untersuchung politischer Vergehen. Herr Glowin an König. Hohes Militair-Gouvernement der preußischen Provinzen zwischen Elbe und Weser. 4 April 1815.
47. GStAPK, HA Rep. 91 C Nr. 1159. Kommission des Oberlandesgerichtsrats Dalkowski zu Untersuchung politischer Vergehen. Der König. Polizei Director an König. Hohes Militair-Gouvernement der preußischen Provinzen zwischen Elbe und Weser, 3 May 1815.
48. GStAPK, I HA Rep. 91 C Nr. 115. Kommission des Oberlandesgerichtsrats Dalkowski zu Untersuchung politischer Vergehen. Frei Stadt Frankfurt, Das Polizei-Amt an des Königlich. Preußische Hochlobt. Militär-Gouvernement zu Halberstadt. 12 May 1815.
49. *National-Zeitung*, 10 May 1815.
50. GStAPK, I HA Rep. 91 C. Nr. 1969. *Altmärkisches Intelligenz-Blatt für das erste Departement der Königl. Preußischen Provinzin zwischen der Elbe und Weser*, 25 July 1815.
51. *National Zeitung*, 26 July 1815.
52. Jürgen Herres, »Und nenne Euch Preußen!«. Die Anfänge preußischer Herrschaft am Rhein im 19. Jahrhundert', in *Fremde Herrscher - fremdes Volk: Inklusions- und Exklusionsfiguren bei Herrschaftswechseln in Europa*, eds Helga Schnabel-Schüle and Andreas Gestrig (Frankfurt am Main, 2006), 119.
53. Michael Rowe, *From Reich to State: The Rhineland in the Revolutionary Age, 1780–1830* (Cambridge, 2003), 238–239. See also Jeffrey M. Diefendorf, *Businessmen and Politics in the Rhineland, 1789–1834* (Princeton, 1980), 218.
54. See Walther Klein, *Napoleonkult in der Pfalz* (Munich, 1934) and James M. Brophy, *Popular Culture and the Public Sphere in the Rhineland, 1800–1850* (Cambridge, 2007), 60–63.
55. Rowe, *From Reich to State*, 236–238. See also Wolfgang Perth, *Bayerns Pressepolitik und die Neuordnung Deutschlands nach den Befreiungskriegen* (Munich, 1999), 112–113.
56. See Brendan Sims, *The Longest Afternoon: The 400 Men Who Deduced the Battle of Waterloo* (London, 2014), and Peter Höfschroer, *1815: The Waterloo Campaign—The German Victory* (London, 2003).
57. On the cultural memory of Waterloo in Hanover, see Jasper Heinzen, "Transnational Affinities and invented traditions: The Napoleonic Wars in British and Hanoverian memory, 1815–1915," *English Historical Review* CXXVII (2012): 1404–1434, here 1413.

58. Jean H. Quataert, *Staging Philanthropy: Patriotic Women and the National Imagination in Dynastic Germany, 1813–1916* (Ann Arbor, 2001), 22.
59. Ute Planert, *Der Mythos vom Befreiungskrieg: Frankreichs Kriege und der deutsche Süden: Alltag – Wahrnehmung – Deutung, 1792–1841* (Paderborn, 2007), 489–492.
60. DTA, Emmendingen, Johann Jacob Eselgroth, 613.
61. Herman Cardauns and Reiner Müller (eds), *Die Rheinische Dorfchronik des Johann Peter Delhoven aus Tormagen (1783–1823)* (Dormagen, 1966), 220–221.
62. See *National-Zeitung der Deutschen*, 26 June 1815 for the report on the Battle of Waterloo and on 2 August 1815 for Napoleon's departure on the *Bellerophon*.

Venetian Elite Reactions to the Hundred Days: News Circulation and Political Commentaries

Valentina Dal Cin

For Fernand Braudel, news was a luxury good worth more than its weight in gold, especially in the context of sixteenth-century Europe when mail travelled the continent by way of horseback.¹ After more than two centuries of print culture, and despite the wide diffusion of newspapers, getting reliable news in times of political instability was still a major, much sought-after luxury.² This situation influenced the thoughts and debates shaping the public sphere.³ If news was “not mere information but information that is important to someone,” such importance is forcibly accentuated in times of crisis when fears and expectations are created by the uncertain climate in which events are rapidly evolving.⁴ Every crisis generates its own “audience,” a varied combination of people with interests in the event, who must face its consequences regardless of whether they can directly influence them.⁵ The Hundred Days were one such moment of crisis. It was perceived as such all over Europe, and it

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produced a wide audience interested in the rapid succession of events. During this brief yet intense time of political instability, the anxious search for news and the difficulty of obtaining it fanned the doubts of a generation that since 1789 had witnessed a succession of previously unimaginable events.

Within the space of an intense three months, the rapid evolution of events and the uncertain meanings attributed to them generated a very wide range of reactions from the public influenced by political orientation, social position, and institutional role. From a geographic point of view, one audience that was particularly sensitive to the umpteenth political upheaval threatening the whole of Europe was in those areas that had directly experienced the political and institutional turnover caused by wars, peace treaties, and territorial divisions. The north-eastern part of Italy, which was divided between the French and Austrians and whose rule had continually alternated during the previous twenty years, experienced this new jeopardising of the status quo with apprehension and weariness. After the end of the Republic of Venice in 1797, the territory experienced a brief democratic moment and a short annexation to the Hapsburg Empire (1798–1805) before being incorporated into the Napoleonic Kingdom of Italy (1806–1814). Provisionally annexed again to the Hapsburg Empire in 1814, the former Republic of Venice represents an interesting case study in the behaviour of local elites in a time of crisis and transition. Given their uncertain legitimacy, state authorities were further destabilised by the international diplomatic and military context, thus rendering credible all kinds of hypotheses about current events. These hypotheses, circulating as public rumours, persuaded people of the fragility of the current regime, thus further undermining its stability.⁶ Although they might at times be no more than disguised personal opinions,⁷ rumours and commentaries on them, along with reports of news in the newspapers, provide an important perspective on the behaviour of local elites in the overheated political climate of the Hundred Days.

BONAPARTE'S FLIGHT FROM ELBA AND NEWS CIRCULATION IN NORTHERN ITALY

Regarding early nineteenth-century Venetia, the term “elite” refers to a very composite social group. The group included members of the Venetian patriciate, the sole holders of political power until the fall of the Republic of Venice; members of the *Terraferma* nobility who had access

to only minor local roles until 1797; and people of bourgeois origin.⁸ Books and newspapers were mostly the prerogative of the upper class, although newspapers and gazettes could enjoy quite a wide circulation because single copies would be read in cafés or other public places. Although we lack specific studies about the early nineteenth century, Mario Infelise's work on the end of the previous century has shown that Italian readership was extremely slow to "expand downwards from the urban aristocratic and haute bourgeois milieus to the middle classes."⁹ One of the first Italian Reading Societies, called *gabinetti di lettura*, was established in Padua in 1790. The society featured some mid-upper class members—nobles, professionals, intellectuals, and a couple of merchants—and provided a place where members could talk about the political situation and read newspapers.¹⁰ Consequently, the *ralliement* and *amalgame* policies (attempting to get former adversaries to cooperate in a new regime and "fusing" different social groups, respectively) pursued by Napoleonic authorities mainly addressed those social classes forming the educated public opinion, the support of which the government tried to gain while also managing its dissent.¹¹

If Milan in 1815 was the principal centre of information in Northern Italy, Venice was the second.¹² It is known that "the first newspapers evolved from mid-sixteenth century hand-written Venetian *Gazzette*, from which originated the term gazette. Their format was so influential that it remained a commonplace for over two centuries."¹³ In addition to the widely diffuse practice of the division of the gazette into clearly labelled geopolitical sections, another very common practice in the early nineteenth century was the copying and pasting of entire paragraphs from other newspapers and mentioning the appropriate source. Despite the apparent harmlessness of such a practice, this editing work was far from neutral because news could be deliberately manipulated.¹⁴ Readers were perfectly aware of this, just as they were aware of the unreliability of much published material, because "journalists sought up-to-date information from private and mercantile correspondence, books and printed ephemera, travellers as well as merchants' reports, coffee-house gossip, and a range of other oral sources."¹⁵ Readers were also aware that news might be censored or manipulated by the government with the clear intention to influence what was beginning to be known as "public opinion."¹⁶ During the course of his political rise, Napoleon had demonstrated his awareness of the power of the press, particularly in times of crisis, and showed great skill in using it to serve his propagandistic ends.¹⁷

This power, though, was also known to his opponents. From Napoleon's landing in France on 1 March to his arrival in Paris on 20 March, Louis XVIII's government censored unfavourable information and published news that reconstructed events as it pleased. The *Moniteur universel*, the government official newspaper, sought to spread loyalism to and optimism about the royalist cause.¹⁸

Similar dynamics occurred in the Italian periodical press, especially considering the timing and the way in which information on Napoleon's escape from Elba and his entry into Paris twenty days later was released. News of the Emperor's flight reached Genoa on 2 March and was printed in the *Gazzetta di Firenze* two days later.¹⁹ The same day, on 4 March, the news reached Louis XVIII by telegraph, although he decided to keep it a secret for the moment.²⁰ Although many people had been already informed by private letters, the news became public knowledge in Paris only on 7 March, when an official proclamation in the *Moniteur* made a short reference to the event, with further confirmation the next day.²¹ On the same day, the flight of Napoleon appeared in the *Giornale di Bologna* and the *Gazzetta Piemontese*, and an urgent message arrived in Vienna warning all of the diplomats who had convened at the Congress.²² They were informed of details of the place of the landing only three days later, on 10 March, when the news of the Emperor's escape from Elba finally reached London.²³ The same day, the news was published in Milan for the first time by the *Corriere milanese*, whereas the *Giornale italiano*—the former official paper of the Napoleonic government but now serving the Austrian one—reported it the next day.²⁴ The reasons for the delay were explained three days later in an article copied from the *Gazzetta di Genova*: the editors had waited to publish the news because of the uncertainty of the rapidly spreading rumours and the difficulty of judging their veracity.²⁵

Venetian readers had to wait thirteen days before the *Giornale di Venezia* reported Napoleon's landing on the French coast.²⁶ However, this does not mean that people in Venice were wholly unaware of what was happening because it is likely that the news had circulated through private letters considering that the event was widely known in Bologna the previous week. Nevertheless, there is no doubt about the delay with which the press of the soon-to-be Kingdom of Lombardy–Venetia informed its readers about what was happening in Europe. On 20 March, the day Napoleon entered Paris, the *Giornale italiano* reported that news from the French border was of a quiet climate in the capital

and of very scarce support received by the Emperor in Lyon. This news was taken from the *Moniteur* and was dated 8 March, so it was far from up-to-date.²⁷ One week later, the *Giornale italiano* reported Swiss newspaper accounts from Lyon on 17 and 18 March that started with a meaningful sentence: “In general, we are badly informed about what is going on in France nowadays. News is contradictory.”²⁸ The news of Napoleon’s arrival in Paris was published only on 29 March, when Milanese newspapers had been finally informed through letters coming from Switzerland.²⁹ However, readers of the *Giornale italiano* had to wait until 31 March before receiving a detailed report of the event, which was taken from the 21 March edition of the *Moniteur* and already published by the *Gazzetta di Genova*.³⁰

The spreading of news about the internal situation in France, mostly obtained from Switzerland, Piedmont, or Liguria, became increasingly slower as it moved eastward. On 21 March, the *Giornale di Venezia* reported the same reassuring news published the day before in Milan, i.e., emphasising Parisians’ attachment to the royalist cause and minimizing Napoleon’s advance. This was described as an event that in Italy had produced “almost nothing but indignation and curiosity.”³¹ Much news in the *Giornale di Venezia* was taken from the *Österreichischer Beobachter*, the second most important Viennese political newspaper after the official *Wiener Zeitung* as well as Metternich’s favourite weapon for his own propaganda. Although more widely read in the elitist milieu than the other newspaper, the *Österreichischer Beobachter* “was held in very high esteem at home and abroad simply because people knew that it was Metternich’s private news organ.”³² Its manifest partiality was a characteristic of many other newspapers including the *Moniteur*.³³ Relying on information reported by the *Österreichischer Beobachter*, on 28 March—one week after the Emperor’s entrance into Paris—the *Giornale di Venezia* said that all reports confirmed how every department on Napoleon’s route had kept calm after his departure because both civil and military authorities had implemented the orders given them by the King and the government. The author of the article wrote, “a few sporadic successes obtained with partial betrayals have no influence on the general evolution of events”!³⁴ News spread by the Swiss press, which was truer to the apprehensive European atmosphere, was reported in the *Giornale di Venezia* on 30 March. According to Swiss newspapers, it was hard to express the uncertainty that the news of Napoleon’s landing had produced around the French frontiers, particularly along the Rhine.

Messengers kept coming and going from Karlsruhe and Neustadt to Paris, whereas the telegraph in Strasbourg kept working. In contrast to the *Österreichischer Beobachter*, the article concluded, “it seems that everything has been already affected by the great impulse this event will give to Europe.”³⁵

Readers therefore had to deal with dramatically different accounts of the same event given by different newspapers as well as with great discrepancies between the news provided by the press and more-or-less confirmed rumours. In such critical times, rumour and false news proliferated. Napoleon was himself a subject of gossip of various kinds, to the point that rumours of his return had started to circulate somewhere in France in the spring of 1814 and spread further until the end of the year.³⁶ According to François Ploux, the French sensed the instability of political institutions in a particularly intense and febrile way. They lived in an uncertain climate, thus encouraging both the uncontrolled spread of unconfirmed rumours and their manipulation. Furthermore, the exchange of news through everyday social networks was a way to achieve a form of political participation by those officially excluded from government.³⁷ During the Hundred Days, the most unlikely stories and conspiracy theories were spread around and supported even by people of apparently sound common sense.³⁸ Such considerations can be extended to the Italian case and particularly to Venetia as well, which had endured almost twenty years of political upheavals and military invasions.

THE IMPORTANCE OF NEWS: LOCAL ELITES FACING POLITICAL INSTABILITY

In Venetia in 1815, memories of what had occurred six years before, as the Austrian army advanced in most parts of the region severely testing the Napoleonic government, were still vivid. In 1809, the withdrawal of prefects led to the establishment of temporary provincial administrations, in which even officials of the Kingdom of Italy who had sworn allegiance to Napoleon were involved. Once the viceroy Eugene de Beauharnais regained control of the region, thus restoring the Kingdom of Italy, Napoleon’s public officials—who had collaborated with the Austrians—were charged with treason, relieved of their duties, and put on trial. Although the trials did not lead to serious consequences, the 1809 events served as a warning, thus instilling caution in local elites.³⁹

This is why, after Napoleon's first fall in 1814, many people stayed on the sidelines. Austrian authorities experienced many difficulties in replacing all of the vacancies left by the Napoleonic prefects who were ordered to resign after the withdrawal of the troops. It was feared that, as long as the outcome of the war was uncertain, only mediocre opportunists who had nothing to lose from a change of regime would consider running for such positions.⁴⁰ Just as the situation seemed about to normalize again, after the negotiations at the Congress of Vienna, the Hundred Days shuffled the deck again.

For Venetians it was crucial to know if and how the political-institutional order that had regulated Venice and Venetia for some months would be overthrown again. For those in public office or aspiring to one, and in general for those with important interests to protect, news on Napoleon's moves, on the French situation, and on the reaction of the Congress of Vienna was essential and was not just a pastime. For a ruling class that had lost its independence, with Venetian patricians going from sovereigns to "subjects,"⁴¹ understanding who was likely to win in the end was essential in deciding whom to side with. At the same time, this does not mean that Napoleon and the Allied Powers were equated. Daily news commentaries often showed the author's preference for one of the two factions, thus pointing out the existence of more or less politically divided sub-groups within the elite.

This emerges clearly from the correspondence of a group of Venetian patricians who, since the fall of the Republic of Venice, had shown a propensity for the Hapsburg Empire rather than for the French "liberators." These patricians—people such as Gian Domenico Tiepolo, former president of the *Tribunale di Sanità*; Angelo Lorenzo Giustinian Recanati, his son-in-law; and Giuseppe Priuli, who in 1799 worked with Francesco Pesaro, Imperial Commissioner Extraordinary and head of the Venetian pro-Austrian party—played a significant role during the first "Austrian domination" and kept to the sidelines during the Napoleonic years.⁴² Their network included not only Venetians but also leading figures of the Lombard elite such as Alfonso Castiglioni, former member of the Congregation of State in Vienna and very close to Emperor Francis I.⁴³ Aligned on the pro-Austrian front, such people regarded the Hundred Days with great concern and hostility.

Consequently, they were particularly inclined to accept the false news of Napoleon's capture when marching to Grenoble. Elena Tiepolo reported this news to her father, Gian Domenico, writing that it had

been “spread with almost total certainty” because both Anton von Raab, chief of police, and Chasteler de Courcelles, a military commander, had confirmed it.⁴⁴ On 17 March, the news was repeated by Giuseppe Priuli, who took pains to inform his friend Tiepolo of Napoleon’s arrest. According to him, the news reached Nice on 12 March, then arriving in Turin and reaching Livorno the next day. Afterward it was decided to print it in the *Gazzetta di Firenze*, thus stimulating its further circulation both by way of the press and private letters. Even in Milan, the news was considered to be reliable, and so it was repeated to couriers right before their departure.⁴⁵ The next day, Priuli had to temper his enthusiasm and acknowledge that rumours of Napoleon’s arrest had not been officially confirmed. This was something “really regrettable,” he added. Such uncertainty also concerned Murat’s fate; rumours said he was stuck either in Ancona, Bologna, or Ravenna. Priuli’s letter was full of expressions such as “it is uncertain,” “it is not known,” and “great obscurity.”⁴⁶

The whole story of Napoleon’s arrest became clear on 21 March when an article in the *Giornale italiano* appeared, having already been published in the *Gazzetta di Genova* three days before, explaining how the rumour had been generated by “accounts of the orders given by General Marchaud for such an operation,” which had then failed because of the desertion of some of the troops. The author of the article specified that the rumour had not been reported by his own newspaper “because of its little plausibility.”⁴⁷ Nonetheless, the implausibility of the news had not prevented other newspapers from publishing it, nor people from writing about it in private letters. As Marc Bloch has pointed out, false news published by the press is often not spontaneous, but instead is created for a specific purpose, either acting on public opinion or simply embellishing the account. However, the spread of an error requires a breeding ground such as when the news communicates shared emotions, feelings, and hopes.⁴⁸ Rumours are often a reflection of the concerns of the public or a segment of it, so it is not coincidence that some rumours spread within certain specific circles.⁴⁹ The false news about Napoleon’s arrest spread within the pro-Austrian cluster precisely because it spoke to the group’s wishful thinking.

Giuseppe Priuli’s praises for Louis XVIII, who in such short a time was able to gain “universal esteem,” putting out a dangerous “spark,” were soon contradicted by the facts.⁵⁰ Two days earlier, the Venetian patrician had written to his friend Tiepolo: “Everybody is stunned, and many are scared by the escape of Bonaparte.” Although hoping for

“the fatal event to be nipped in the bud,” people feared its influence on the Congress of Vienna, which would now have to experience further delays because of Napoleon’s reappearance. Nonetheless, several rumours considered the fate of Venice and Venetia as already decided because they had been annexed de facto to the Hapsburg Empire. At the same time, some reports said that General Bellegarde had moved his troops to Piedmont, whereas in Switzerland riots orchestrated by Joseph Bonaparte had broken out “in the Jacobin Country of Vaud, as in 1796.”⁵¹

In such a contradictory melange of news, it was hard to be sure of anything. The difficulties were the same in Venetia, Italy, and the rest of Europe. The marquise de la Tour du Pin, finding herself in Brussels away from her husband—who had been sent to the French *midi* on behalf of the Congress of Vienna—complained to Madame de Staël about how hard it was to obtain information on her beloved ones from short articles published in the *Moniteur*.⁵²

Accounts received through private letters were compared with those of the press because comparison was the best way to critically analyse all of the information received. On 29 March, Giuseppina Cassini wrote to her friend Gian Domenico Tiepolo complaining about the inaccuracy of his account received the previous day: a friend of hers had reported that the *Gazzetta di Sciaffusa* (that is, the Swiss *Allgemeiner Schweizerischer Korrespondent*) was saying “very opposite things.” In particular, the newspaper reported on Napoleon’s entry into Paris, which was acknowledged by the *Giornale di Venezia* only two days later. Cassini begged Tiepolo to keep her updated, should news come out, at the same time asking him to tell to their mutual friends what she had just written to him.⁵³ Information obtained through letters as well as copies of newspapers, especially foreign ones, were shared widely. On 31 March, Priuli wrote to Tiepolo saying that he was sending him a copy of a newspaper to allow him to read the Pope’s notifications provided that he gave it back quickly. On another occasion, he asked Tiepolo for copies “of the last three gazettes.”⁵⁴ Then Priuli asked his friend if Giustinian, his son-in-law, had heard news about the possible arrival of the Pope in Venetia, or, if not, he begged him to speak to the courier at the local post office as usual to make sure it was not a lie. The Venetian patrician thought it necessary to verify every single piece of information by comparing sources as he did with Lord Castlereagh’s speech published in the *Giornale di Venezia*, which he also wanted to read in the original and tried to obtain a copy of the newspaper from which it had been taken.⁵⁵

MANAGING THE CRISIS:
ELITES' REACTION TO POLITICAL TRANSITIONS

One may think that the difficulty in getting reliable news might be due to the minor role Venice and Venetia played on the international scene, but being up to date was not an easy task even in Vienna. In 1815, Antonio Miari, a nobleman from Belluno, was in the Austrian capital to attend the Congress as a representative of the Order of Malta. In 1809, during the Austrian occupation of Belluno, he had been appointed head of the temporary Provincial Commission, which was given the task of ruling the Department of the Piave after the prefect's departure.⁵⁶ As Marie-Cecile Thorat has pointed out about Isère, the government often asked local notables for their support relying on their knowledge of the territory, their family connections, and their "moral ascendancy over the local population."⁵⁷ It was a cooperation based on mutual benefit because the notables needed a high-profile political-administrative position to underline their membership of the elite and to have a direct relationship with the government.⁵⁸ Their cooperation with the authorities was therefore at least partly self-interested, thus making their behaviour more ambiguous and their political orientation and loyalty to the government harder to be sure of.⁵⁹ If the importance accorded by the regime to the notables' support is acknowledged, according to John Dunne, "what is still in question is how such men responded to the regime's call, the significance of various forms of participation as evidence of political attitudes and how far these gave notables a real handle on power."⁶⁰ Such questions, although already crucial for the everyday carrying out of tasks, were even more critical in times of crisis and regime change.

Miari's case is a perfect example. He was chosen by Count Peter von Goess because he enjoyed "public consideration," which could have intensified a "positive attitude" toward the Austrian government among the people under his authority. Goess in fact explained his intention to hire new officials "amongst local people" who could be "safely entrusted with a greater influence on public affairs." He believed that it was "extremely important to win over public opinion."⁶¹ When the Department of the Piave was finally reconquered by the French in July 1809, all of the members of the temporary Provincial Commission were put on trial by a special tribunal for alleged loyalty to the enemy. Although in the end he was absolved of all charges, Antonio Miari did

serve some time in jail.⁶² Consequently, he was scarred by the episode as were all his companions in misfortune. For this reason, between 1814 and 1815 Miari paid close attention to the new phase of political transition.

Miari's friends and relatives from Venetia saw his presence in Vienna on behalf of the Order of Malta as a way to obtain first-hand news. However, on 27 March he wrote to the Paduan noble Giovanni Lazara saying that he could not avoid the "uncertainty" and the "obscurity" in which one lived in Vienna so that it did not seem like the capital of the Hapsburg Empire and the centre of the Allied Powers.⁶³ To block channels of negotiation with Napoleon, who was prosecuting a strategy of divide and rule, frontiers were so effectively closed off that even newspapers had a hard time passing through.⁶⁴ Furthermore, wrote Miari, there was no way to understand what was going on by listening to public rumours: "all factions here, as in every other town, spread news they have fabricated themselves. As if that wasn't enough, we do not lack speculation, and the government itself manipulates news, passing it off as real, in order to counteract it."⁶⁵ This situation was confirmed by many sources. A few days before, Talleyrand complained to Jaucourt, Minister for Foreign Affairs *ad interim*, about the spreading of some bad news in Vienna, adding that it was necessary to quash it.⁶⁶ Rather than "news about the war," it would be more correct to talk about a "war of news" because opinions and predictions were based on news reports.

Antonio Miari's predictions for the future of the Order of Malta were not encouraging: the Congress was experiencing a deadlock, and if Napoleon was not "repressed and defeated soon" the sovereigns would be forced to rally their troops and invade France. According to the nobleman from Belluno, that would mean the final dissolution of the Congress, "things done being done, and things to be done postponed to God knows when."⁶⁷ Despite widespread uncertainties, Miari kept looking for news to report to his Venetian contacts. On 5 April, he wrote to his friend Lazara relating both what he had read in the 25 March edition of the *Moniteur* and the rumours he had collected in diplomatic environments. The *Moniteur* reported defections in the new Napoleonic government, particularly in the West and South of France, with a call for action in favour of Louis XVIII. According to voices in Vienna, the king was in Ostend with other members of the royal family, 300 bodyguards, and "many marshals and generals who had distanced themselves from Napoleon" allegedly including Bérthier, Macdonald, Marmont,

Augereau, Victor, Gouvion-Saint-Cyr, Mortier, and Oudinot. Among these voices, that of the Austrian Ambassador to the King of France, General Nicolas-Charles de Vincent, had confirmed a scenario of desolation in giving this account:

Paris is a deeply sad place. One evening the theatre *Comédie-Française* had only two spectators, for whom the curtain was not raised. N[apoleon] bivouacs at Tuileries with the troops considered to be the most loyal surrounding him. Rumours say he has drawn up a long blacklist. He has prepared two decrees which he hasn't dared to publish yet: one about a forced loan of 100 million, the other about 300,000 conscripts.⁶⁸

News like this highlighted some of the key problems that Napoleon's new political course forced him to face, not least the need for loyal servants, money, and soldiers. Such issues played a crucial role in the fate of his adventure, which, although favourably welcomed by some, was seen with indifference or even with hostility by others. If some regions—such as the Vendée, the Southwest, and Provence—did not hesitate to rebel against Napoleon, in general elites tended to be at least cautious in welcoming the new political developments.⁶⁹ As in Venetia, where phases of transition set a precedent, in France many people were reluctant to take sides and tried to keep a foot in both camps. Qualifying them as turncoats, Miari wrote: “Great God! Who will ever believe again in the words, actions and oaths of the French?” adding, “let's see what will happen as the troops enter France.”⁷⁰

Similar comments alternated with considerations about the new political course started by the Emperor, who dusted off revolutionary rhetoric and legitimated his return to power by presenting it as a response to the people's will.⁷¹ Although very effective from an anti-royalist perspective, this strategy worried many members of the Venetian elite, even those who had supported the Napoleonic regime in the past. Antonio Miari wrote to Giovanni Lazara that “the French nation” had to be absolutely “corrupted,” “demoralized,” and “lost,” if Napoleon was able to stay in France for more than one month without facing a fight and instead could make “his easy way” to Paris despite “his most revolutionary proclamations.”⁷² The nobleman from Belluno saw Bonaparte as a man with “crazy and perverted designs” for whom “putting Europe upside down was both a game and a pleasure.”⁷³

This destabilization and its imponderable outcomes raised anxieties within the Italian ruling classes. If in France, according to Italian

newspapers, a civil war was inevitable, in Italy many people feared the outbreak of popular riots triggered by the fervour that the Emperor's liberal declarations and initiatives had already generated among the French.⁷⁴ The Milanese nobleman Alfonso Castiglioni, a member of the Aulic Organizational Commission for the Italian territories occupied by Austria, wrote to his friend Tiepolo on 17 April that he had endured "moments of deep restlessness" due to "fears of invasions and internal uprisings." Although his public role required him to "display indifference," he confessed having suffered intensely from his situation.⁷⁵

This unease was shared by the Paduan nobleman Girolamo Polcastro, a former Senator of the Kingdom of Italy and an influential member of the pro-French Venetian elite, who had been living in Milan for eight years. Polcastro, as well as Miari, wrote frequently to Giovanni Lazara, his cousin and friend, who during the last bout of political turbulence had always been able to keep a well-balanced attitude, thus becoming a bridge among different subgroups of the Venetian elite.⁷⁶ On 5 April, Polcastro wrote to him that because it was very likely that rumours of "unrest" in Milan had already reached Padua, he must tell him the whole story. There was fear of "troubles" and "ploys" led by "the infamous ones from 20 April" 1814, namely, the crowd that, incited by a group of nobles and driven by rancour, had caused the murder of Giuseppe Prina, the Minister of Finance.⁷⁷ In the end, though, "public tranquility" was not "disturbed at all." If the "real aim" of such feared riots remained enigmatic, their ostensible cause was very well known. A false news report about the upcoming arrival of the Pope had been deliberately spread to "dramatically increase" the crowds from the hinterlands that usually poured into the city during a traditional festival. It was feared, "with reason," that some ill-intentioned persons might mingle in the crowd to generate an uprising. Accordingly, Polcastro praised the work of Marshal Bellegarde, who had been publicly applauded at Teatro alla Scala.⁷⁸ This last event was reported in the *Giornale italiano* on 3 April without any reference to the feared riots and to their repression.⁷⁹ This silence from the official newspaper was broken by Polcastro, who wrote to his cousin that "many armed peasants" were being arrested at the entrance of the city and would be tried. According to the nobleman, only the outcomes of such trials would shed light on the real authors of and the true reasons for the "supposed sedition." Everything had "returned to order," but political news kept coming "so quickly" that there was no time to "reflect on the past."⁸⁰

Caught up in the pressing events, people believed they did not have enough time to evaluate exactly what was happening. They felt forced to make up their minds rapidly on the basis of news that was difficult to verify or on the basis of rumours that might prove false. In a letter written to Lazara on 15 April, Girolamo Polcastro underlined the seriousness of the problem:

The war which has just broken out in Italy and the political disorders which threaten to set it on fire from top to bottom make the horizon of the future so obscure that I keep being reasonably perplexed.

Pondering the situation, he added:

I believe and hope that our homeland will not be invaded. But that could happen by chance, even if provisionally, and in this case I'd rather not be there. It is easy to consider: I won't say, I won't do. We do and say what the circumstances require, and so it is easy to find yourself compromised when the order is restored. ... The offices I have held in our homeland in similar circumstances and even the goodwill of my fellow citizens become dangerous titles for me, so that I must protect myself against them with a cautious distance only during the early moments of a new change.⁸¹

The former Senator and Paduan nobleman was afraid that the north-eastern part of Italy would be subject to another military occupation, this time by the Napoleonic forces, and therefore preferred to stay in Milan. Had his fears come true, he would likely have been appointed to a public office, a designation that—in his own words—was hard to refuse. This possible scenario was a sort of inverted 1809 when compromising by taking Napoleon's side during a potential invasion would have involved repercussions if the Austrians came back. Author of the epic poem *Napoleoneide, ovvero la Francia salvata*, Girolamo Polcastro belonged to that part of the Venetian elite that had rallied to the Napoleonic regime. After the arrival of the French army in Padua in 1797, he had agreed to collaborate and entered the government of the Democratic Municipality. During the Austrian occupation of Venetia in 1802, he had made a trip to Milan, the then-capital of the Italian Republic, coming back home “with a spirit inflamed with liberal ideas.”⁸² Despite it all, in 1815 he hoped not to be drawn into collaboration with a possible provisional pro-French government.

After all, even in France, some of Napoleon's closest collaborators showed a general lack of enthusiasm. As Isser Woloch pointed out,

“a former Napoleonic servant might sully his honor by staying conspicuously on the side-lines or by opposing the emperor after his daring return,” but the risk in now rallying to Napoleon was even greater “should the emperor’s resurrection abort.”⁸³ It must be recalled that the shift from one political regime to another lent itself to public and private matters of revenge, so that avoiding being compromised meant also avoiding falling victim to anonymous denunciations containing slanders of any kind.⁸⁴

In conclusion, both the Venetian elite’s members closer to the Hapsburg cause and the principal Venetian supporters of Napoleon’s one greeted the Hundred Days adventure rather coldly. Pro-Napoleon local elites had been willing to collaborate with a government preserving public order and property, favouring career advancement by merit, and granting social distinctions to its most prominent supporters, but they could not side with a government introducing democratic principles. During eight years of Napoleonic rule, most of those who rallied had offered more of a pragmatic collaboration than a real willingness to integrate the system. This political “moderation” displayed by Venetian elites was a result of their composition. If in France the regime incorporated “the new elite that had risen during the Revolution,” in Venetia, as in other parts of Europe, “the old elite remained substantially intact and unchallenged, and managed to relegitimise its position with reference to its utility to the state.”⁸⁵ In the territories of the former Republic of Venice, the most innovative principle introduced since 1797 was the abolition of the hierarchy that elevated the Venetian patriciate above the *Terraferma* nobility, thereby making the city of Venice, which styled itself “The Dominant” (*La Dominante*), superior to the rest of the region. More than an elite renewal in the strict sense, the process set in motion after the first arrival of the French was a new balance between social groups who had enjoyed different kinds of privileged status since the old regime.⁸⁶

In this respect, it is clear why Napoleon’s return, his use of revolutionary rhetoric, and the threat of another war and more political change did not excite people. The Hapsburg domination might not be what everybody wanted, but it was widely acknowledged that, for the moment, it was the most likely to ensure some peace and stability for the north-eastern part of Italy. As the Venetian patrician Alvise Querini Stampalia, former Counsellor of State, wrote the next year to Giovanni Scopoli, former

Director-General of Public Education, Italians, as far as public offices were concerned, were not favoured by the Austrian government, but it was necessary to be patient. “Maybe our sons will be better than us”—he concluded—“either because they will let themselves be Germanised or because they will be able to “Italianate.”⁸⁷ In the long run, as we know, it was the latter prediction that came true.

NOTES

1. Fernand Braudel, *The Mediterranean and the Mediterranean World in the Age of Philip II* trans. Sian Reynolds, 2 vols. (1972, repr. Berkeley 1995), vol. 1, 365. Documents for this essay were consulted in the following archives: Archivio di Stato, Venice (ASV); Biblioteca della Fondazione Querini Stampalia, Venice (BFQS); Biblioteca Civica, Verona (BCV); Biblioteca Civica, Padova (BCP); Biblioteca Civica, Lendinara (BCL). Archival documents are cited as follows: the abbreviation of the archival repository, followed by the document group consulted, the *busta* (box, hereafter “b”) or *codice* (codex, hereafter “cod.”) number, and by the *fascicolo* (folder, hereafter “fasc.”) number, if any.
2. See Jeremy Popkin, *News and Politics in the Age of Revolution: Jean Luzac’s ‘Gazette de Leyde’* (London, 1989), 222.
3. For a recent discussion on the Habermasian notion of public sphere, see Massimo Rospocher, “Beyond the Public Sphere: A Historiographical Transition,” in *Beyond the Public Sphere: Opinions, Publics, Spaces in Early Modern Europe*, ed. idem (Bologna, 2012), 9–28.
4. Tamotsu Shibutani, *Improvised News: A Sociological Study of Rumor* (Indianapolis 1966), 40.
5. *Ibid.*, 37–39.
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28. Idem, 26, 27 March 1815.
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63. Ibid., fasc. 3. Antonio Miari to Giovanni Lazara. Vienna, 27 March 1815.
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83. Woloch, *Napoleon and His Collaborators*, 227.
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87. Alvisè Querini Stampalia to Giovanni Scopoli. BCV, Carteggio Scopoli, b. 479. Venice, 8 April 1816. Querini used the verb "italianare." Both former officials of the Kingdom of Italy desired "a stable order of things in order to put an end to all troubles" caused by "past events." Ibid., Venice, 27 August 1815.

Napoleon's Hundred Days and the Shaping of a Dutch Identity

Lotte Jensen

Dutch people! – brave! – good hearted!
Brothers, Belgians! Noble family
Too long were we separated,
Now our destiny is one
Let us sing united together
Humanity's triumphant song.¹

With these words, a poet from the Dutch city of Alkmaar celebrated the taking of Paris and the defeat of Napoleon by the allied forces in July 1815. It is clear that to his mind the victory should be celebrated together by the Dutch and Belgian people. Having been separated for so long, destiny had now reunited them. The author emphasised the familiar relationship between both nations by using by using words like “brothers” (*broeders*) and “family” (*kroost*).

The political union between the Dutch and Belgian people was of a very recent date: only a year before, on 21 June 1814, had it been decided, in a confidential treaty—the Eight Articles of London—that the

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Belgian Provinces would be added to the territory of the Netherlands. This treaty may be regarded as a diplomatic victory for the Dutch sovereign William I and his negotiators, who began their move for territorial expansion several months before his return from exile in November 1813.² On 16 March 1815, shortly after Napoleon's escape from Elba, William proclaimed himself as the king of the United Kingdom of the Netherlands. Before that, his official title had been "Sovereign Prince of the Netherlands," a deliberate choice. Although the majority of the people seemed to be in favour of the new Orangist regime, that did not mean that the Dutch, with their long history of republicanism, were ready to accept a king.³ The sudden return of Napoleon put things in a different perspective and prompted William to make a clear statement. However, it wasn't until 9 June 1815, with the signing of the Final Act of the Congress of Vienna, that the new monarchy under the rule of William I was officially recognised by the other European powers.⁴

By July 1815, the union between the Dutch and Belgian people had already taken firm shape in the mind of the above-mentioned poet. Moreover, throughout the Hundred Days many Dutch authors expressed their views on current political affairs on France and on the union. In this chapter, I explore popular reactions to the decisions that were made at a diplomatic level, in particular those concerning the Netherlands. How did authors react to the return of Napoleon and to the proclaimed union with the southern people of Belgium, and to what extent did they refer to the diplomatic negotiations of the Congress of Vienna? What shape did national identity take in Dutch popular responses to the Hundred Days, and did this national identity include both the northern and southern provinces?

My main source is the collection of Early Modern Pamphlets, which is kept in the Royal Library at The Hague: it contains approximately eighty pamphlets from Napoleon's Hundred Days; in 22 of these explicit references to the political union is made.⁵ Although this collection contains only part of all printed matter, it does offer a broad window into popular thought on national identity in the period. These occasional writings vary in form and length: they include heroic poems, treatises, essays, dialogues, and plays.

These resources demonstrate that the political union between the Dutch and Belgian people became topical at two particular moments: (1) directly after William's proclamation as king of the United Netherlands on 16 March 1815; and (2) after the defeat of Napoleon at Waterloo.

However, reactions were dominated by the Northern Dutch perspective, which was strongly coloured by the years of Napoleonic annexation.⁶ What is more, southern authors developed their own discourse on “national” identity, which only partly overlapped with the northern narrative. As a result, two different cultures of identity were being created, which reflected the difficulties of melding the two nations that had been divided since their breakup in 1579 during the Eighty Years’ War. Before discussing the contents of the pamphlets, I will briefly recall the diplomatic background as well as the chronological events that led to the creation of a new Dutch kingdom during the years 1813–1815.

AN INTIMATE AND COMPLETE UNION

The Hundred Days were part of a longer process of nation forming in the Netherlands that dates back to the sixteenth century. A perception of the Low Countries as the common fatherland can already be witnessed in the mid-sixteenth century.⁷ This view spread rapidly during the Revolt against Spain and took firm political shape with the establishment of the Union of Utrecht in 1579, which united the seven northern provinces in their struggle to liberate themselves from Spanish oppression. This treaty not only marked the foundation of the Republic of Seven United Provinces, it also led to a political rupture with the southern provinces, which banded together in the Union of Arras (1579). The Eighty Years’ War ended with the signing of the Treaty of Münster in 1648 and the official acknowledgement of the Dutch Republic as a sovereign state. The celebration of this event—as well as the continuing commemoration of the Dutch victories of the Eighty Years’ War—contributed significantly to the development of a national consciousness.⁸ In the second half of the eighteenth century, it became common to use the term “fatherland” to refer to the Republic as a whole, and there was even quite a “fatherland cult.”⁹ Feelings of national awareness reached a height at the beginning of the nineteenth century during the years of the French occupation (1806–1813). Napoleon was considered a major threat to Dutch national identity, and authors went to great lengths to celebrate Dutch national values and heroes in their writings by expressing their disgust with the French regime.¹⁰

The years after the liberation from the French (1813–1815) marked a new era in the history of the Dutch nation. It was characterised by the creation of a new kingdom reuniting the southern and northern

provinces. In the development of this so-called United Kingdom of the Netherlands, several dates are of great importance. The first date is 30 November 1813. On that day, William Frederick, the son of the former stadtholder William V, returned to the Netherlands. Several months later, on 30 March 1814, he took the oath on the new constitution and was officially inaugurated as “sovereign Prince of the Netherlands.” His reign as yet did not include the southern provinces, but his ambition was to augment his territory.¹¹

As the historian Niek van Sas has convincingly argued, the shaping of the United Kingdom of the Netherlands was not only an invention of the Great Powers but also the result of effective and steadfast diplomatic pressure by Prince William and his staff. As a result of the diplomatic skills of, amongst others, his secretary of state Anton Reinhard Falck, the politician Gijsbrecht Karel van Hogendorp, and the German nobleman Hans Christoph von Gagern, Prince William quickly managed to achieve this goal.¹² In the Eight Articles of London of 21 June 1814, it was stated that the Dutch territory would be augmented with the Belgian Provinces. The text of the first article reads:

The union shall be intimate and complete, so that the two countries shall form only a single state to be governed by the Fundamental Law already established in Holland, which by mutual consent shall be modified according to the circumstances.¹³

The expression “intimate and complete” first and foremost refers to a complete juridical and political integration of both nations, but it also carries an emotional connotation. It suggests that a real political union can only be achieved if mutual feelings of kinship and affect are also established.

Shortly after signing the Eight Articles of London in August 1814, Prince William appointed a temporary government in the Belgian provinces. He vigorously started to strengthen his new state and took a variety of measures to achieve a closer union between the two nations. One of his most important measures was the Language Act (*Taalbesluit*), announced on 1 October 1814, which made the Dutch language the official language in the Belgian Provinces. Other measures were concerned with the freedom of the press and marriage policy: Respectively, freedom of press was restricted by law in September 1814, and it became almost impossible for Protestants to marry Catholics.¹⁴

In the same period, peace negotiations started in Vienna. It was Von Gagern's mission to make sure that the political union between the northern and southern provinces was acknowledged as well as reclaiming the hereditary lands of Nassau and expanding territory in the eastern part of the Netherlands.¹⁵ The Eight Articles of London still had to be ratified by the Congress of Vienna, but Napoleon's return from exile sped up the process. The stability of Europe was once more threatened, and William took a firm stand by proclaiming himself the king of the United Netherlands on 16 March 1815. It would take another three months before the new state and its king were officially acknowledged in the Treaty of Vienna, which was signed on 9 June 1815.

All of these decisions were made at the highest diplomatic level behind closed doors, but how did people other than the professional agents of diplomacy respond to these political decisions? What sense of national identity was put forward in occasional writings during the Hundred Days? This focus on popular reactions is inspired by current trends in international relations and cultural history, which promoted an investigation of the interaction between popular culture and transnational politics as a multidirectional process.¹⁶ Peace-making and securing the future Europe were certainly the core business of policymakers and diplomats, but they also operated within a larger cultural framework, in which pamphlets, poetry, and newspapers played an important role.¹⁷ Although political decision-making was a top-down process, political rulers increasingly realised the potential uses of and need for public media and its role in securing popular support. A lack of public support meant risking protests and revolts. Indeed, the autocratic leaders of the post-Napoleonic decades would become obsessed with suppressing potential resistance to their regimes to the extent that one could say that they were fighting against a "phantom terror," as Adam Zamojski has aptly called it.¹⁸ Nevertheless, their fear had some basis in reality: The recent history of the Dutch state included a period as the Republic of Batavia (1795–1806), a French satellite. King William I was, in other words, dealing with a people that had overthrown its previous Orangist regime. During his reign, the enforced political union with the southern provinces led to many tensions, resulting ultimately in a revolution that would lead to the creation of Belgium as an independent state in the years 1830–1832.¹⁹

The fact that the political union with the southern provinces failed reminds us that one key feature of this revolutionary period is a shift from

Romanticism to seeing nations as held together not only by territorial borders, governmental policies, and legal texts but also by a sense of belonging to the same community. National communities came to be seen as rooted as much in cultural and historical traditions as in legislation.²⁰ Cultural and emotional attachments to the nation were increasingly seen as elements that needed to be mobilised through shared history, language, habits, and values. It was exactly at this point that the southern and northern parts of this new United Kingdom diverged.

This divergence had its origin in the above-mentioned separation of the Low Countries in 1579 with the signing of the Union of Utrecht, which unified the northern provinces in their struggle against the Spanish enemy. By signing the Treaty of Utrecht, the southern provinces chose the side of the Catholic Spanish king Philip II. This rupture led to the development of two distinct national sentiments, a gap which would only enlarge over the course of the next centuries.²¹ One of the main differences was that of religious denomination: Catholicism was dominant in the south, whereas the Dutch Republic built its system of values on protestant beliefs. Another difference was the state of independency. The Republic of the Seven United Netherlands officially gained sovereignty in 1648, whereas the southern provinces were permanently ruled by foreign powers, consecutively, by the Spanish, Austrians, and French. When the French were defeated in 1814, it was not clear what the future would hold for the former Austrian Netherlands. Several scenarios were possible: a restoration of the former ties with Austria, unification with the French, annexation with the northern Netherlands, or independence.²²

William I had his way, and the southern provinces were added to his reign. However, this did not mean that an “intimate and complete union” could be easily realised. On the contrary, there was a mental gap of more than two centuries to overcome, and the southern people were deeply divided internally. Some southerners sympathised with Napoleon and the French, whereas others preferred a union with the northern Netherlands or opted for an independent nation state. As a result, William faced a very difficult challenge, which involved more than just introducing new laws and regulations. The Hundred Days became a perfect test case for assessing the impact of Napoleon’s return on the forging of a new Dutch national identity that included both the northern and southern provinces.

MARCH 1815: UNITED WE STAND TOGETHER

The news of Napoleon's escape from Elba caused a great stir amongst the diplomats and rulers of Europe, who had been laboriously bargaining over the division of the Europe at the congress of Vienna. The French diplomat Charles-Maurice de Talleyrand in particular was under considerable pressure; he took a firm stand by having the congress declare Napoleon an outlaw. Consequently, the allied powers, including the government of the French King Louis XVIII, joined forces to stop Napoleon's advance.

Napoleon's return also caused a shock in the Netherlands. The *Rotterdamsche Courant* released an extra issue entirely devoted to his escape. Dutch readers were assured that in Paris the Ministry of War was working day and night to cope with the crisis and that severe measures would be taken against those who supported a man who had spilled so much blood all over Europe.²³ At the same time, William wanted to make sure that the southern borders of his young (but still not officially recognised) kingdom would be protected. He had his troops take up strategic positions and offered the French king full assistance, even to the extent that he was prepared to intervene in France.²⁴ The allied forces, however, decided not to intervene directly and started reinforcing their troops for a later showdown. For his part, William managed to recruit nearly 30,000 men, of which approximately one third came from the southern provinces.²⁵

During these turbulent weeks, the main topic of Dutch pamphleteers was to call their fellow countrymen to arms.²⁶ All men had to join the army of the allied forces in order to stop the "monster from Corsica" as quickly as possible. Both male and female authors emphasised the necessity of supporting the allied forces. One of the most well-known Dutch female authors of that time, Petronella Moens (1762–1843), published a poem entitled "On Napoleon Bonaparte's entering of Paris" (*Bij het intrekken van Napoleon Buonaparte in Parijs*). To strengthen her address, she included emotional calls from three different groups: fathers, mothers and wives, and young girls of marriageable age ("the Dutch virgins"). Each group voiced an emotional appeal to the men and encouraged them to enlist and fight. The conclusion of the poem was that the Dutch would be able to defeat Napoleon with the support of their king and with God on their side:

No, dear Fatherland, with such heroic souls
 With such an honourable King, you don't have to be afraid of
 betrayal or power [...]
 Yes, the heart's blood of the Dutch youth will flow to the last drop
 [...]
 Before the Corsican gets the chance to let his eagle fly again
 The glorious Netherland will triumph brotherly
 God will crown the king's virtue and support the triumph of the
 heroic people.²⁷

Moens gave women a strong voice in her poem, but she was not exceptional in this. The 54-year-old poet Maria Petronnella Elter-Woesthoven (1760–1830) also called the “Batavians” to action. The tyrant Napoleon had to be destroyed before he had the chance to destroy them. She even suggested that even “weak women” might turn into killers themselves if Napoleon turned out to be unstoppable.²⁸

Many pamphleteers referred to the great past of the nation, in which the Dutch had proved their bravery against the Spaniards during the Eighty Years' War. They took William of Orange as a role model, who had led the Dutch during the revolt. The new sovereign was referred to as “the second First William” to suggest continuity between the past and the present.²⁹ Authors unanimously praised the new king for being a courageous man taking the lead in the fight for freedom. A minister from Schiedam for instance wrote: “Come on, take your weapons from the wall! / It is for the fight of the Fatherland, / For God and for the King!!”³⁰

POLITICAL AWARENESS

It is striking how quickly and smoothly the term “king” was adopted. Although the country had been transferred into a kingdom between 1806 and 1810 during the French occupation, it had not been clear from the start that the nation would turn into monarchy after the liberation from the French at the end of 1813. The Dutch had a long history of being a republic, and not everybody was immediately willing to accept the idea of having the Nassau family restored to power again.³¹ In March 1815, the tide had obviously turned: facing such a new major threat, pamphleteers unanimously expressed their loyalty and support for their new king. In a way, one could say, William profited from the

new political situation. Internal political struggles were set aside, and it strengthened his plea for a “complete and intimate union” between the northern and southern provinces.

This becomes clear from the popular reactions to these events, which reveal that there was a general awareness of the significance of the new political constellation. In some of these writings, William I was explicitly referred to as the mutual king of the Dutch and Belgian people. A ship architect from Dordrecht encouraged Belgian and Batavian soldiers to join the fight for the sake of *their* prince and fatherland.³² J. S. Swaan, dean of a Latin school in Hoorn, did not neglect the differences between the Belgian and Dutch but saw the reunion of both nations as a positive development:

You see in the shadow of the throne
 The arrows bound again
 That grim fate had torn apart
 For two centuries. [...]
 Batavian and Belgian join forces
 They have their own fatherland.
 They have their own fame to shore up.
 The tree of Orange bears fruit for both.³³

The union was clearly seen as a profitable and necessary bond that was required to stand up against the new threat Napoleon posed to Europe. The same thoughts were expressed by an anonymous author, who called himself “Patriot” (*Vaderlander*). He argued that the great powers should unite to conquer Napoleon and that this call for unity also applied to the Belgian and Batavian people:

Help God! — inspire, strengthen the Great Alexander!
 Help Austria! — Germany! The noble Prussian Brith!
 May all rulers resolutely join forces;
 To achieve your holy goal and know:
 Thus Belgians *and* Batavians do battle! With their Orange King!
 Together in concord to defend the Netherlands.³⁴

In poems like these, written at the beginning of the Hundred Days, the union between North and South was represented as something that would strengthen the allied forces against Napoleon. Their mutual

source of inspiration was considered to be King William, in whose name they were fighting the enemy.

March and April 1815 also saw the publication of several essays, in which the current political situation was discussed. Two highly prolific intellectuals—Jacobus Scheltema and Jan ten Brink—stated that the allied forces should immediately recognise the rights of the Dutch sovereign William.³⁵ Both had supported the anti-Orangist party in the past but now whole-heartedly supported the prince of Orange. The best defence was to create a wall of protection (*voormuur*), which basically meant that union was the only way to counter the new international crisis. Scheltema pointed to France's many interferences in the provinces of Flanders and Brabant in the past, which made it absolutely clear that the political stability could only be secured by creating a large buffer zone. At the internal political level, discord had to be avoided at all times: "the name of Netherlander, must bind all hearts together, our language is that which binds us."³⁶ This was a clear reference to the Language Act of 1814, which made Dutch the official language of the southern provinces and which Scheltema embraced.

A firm stand was also taken by an anonymous author who published a conversation between three friends about the current political situation, *Waarom vreest men toch thans zoo zeer of bemoedigende gesprekken tussen drie vrienden* (Why is everybody so afraid now, or, encouraging conversations between three friends). The author stated that it was important that all Dutch people showed their loyalty to the new king even though some of them might not have been strong adherents of the House of Orange in the past. The time had now come to be "real Dutchmen" and to join forces in the struggle against Napoleon, and this explicitly included the inhabitants of the southern provinces.³⁷ The question was raised whether the Belgian people would feel inclined to support the new king or whether they would lean in favour of Napoleon. There was no doubt, one of the friends replied, that the Belgians would prefer to stay under the "soft reign" of William, enjoying their freedom, privileges and religiousness, rather than having to bend, once again, beneath the iron sceptre of Napoleon.³⁸

These utterances of support may give the impression that everybody supported the Dutch king, but the propagandistic tone suggests that some people still had to be convinced of the advantages of his policy. Critical reactions, however, are hardly to be found. The pamphlet collection only contains one negative response by a certain M. Schilderman,

author of *Le cri de l'oppression ou lettre d'un Belge à ses concitoyens* (The cry of oppression or letter of a Belgian to his fellow citizens). This anti-Orangist pamphlet was published in Paris, probably at the end of March or beginning of April 1815.³⁹ The author argued in favour of France's annexation of the southern provinces. He stated that they are all of French blood (*nous sommes Français par le sang*), and that their nation officially still did not belong to anyone: *Notre pays n'appartient encore à personne, puis qu'il n'en a pas été disposé au congrès de Vienne [...] N'attendons pas alors, O mes concitoyens, que les Français viennent nous chercher; allons au devant d'eux, et jetons nous dans leurs bras* (Our country does not belong to anyone yet, and it was not disposed of at the Congress of Vienna [...] Do not wait then, O my fellow citizens, that the French come to seek us; Let's go ahead of them, and throw ourselves into their arms).⁴⁰ As long as the allied powers had not put their signature to the treaty of Vienna, the future of the Belgian people remained unclear. This pamphlet prompts the question: are there other critical voices to be found? Were they silenced? Or were they perhaps uttered in different media and by other means? Further research is still needed here.

18 JUNE 1815: TRIUMPHANT BROTHERS

A second peak in publications occurred after the battle of Waterloo. As in other countries, the defeat of Napoleon at Waterloo led to an explosion of propagandistic writings in the Netherlands. Authors celebrated the restoration of peace in Europe and highlighted the particular contribution of Dutch and Belgian troops to the victory over the French. Only nine days before the battle at Waterloo, the allied troops had signed the Final treaty of Vienna, officially making the Kingdom of the United Netherlands a new European state.

To what extent was this union part of the celebrations taking place after Napoleon's defeat? Which national identity was being celebrated in the flood of publications? It must be said that in the majority of pamphlets, no reference was made to the union: most northern authors expressed their happiness without referring to their fellow countrymen in the south. However, a handful of writings explicitly referred to the union, and they reveal a gap in the northern and southern reactions. They differ in three respects: the description of the battlefield, the references to the national past, and the choice of national heroes.

First, southern poets laid much more emphasis on the actual fighting, the wounded people, and the horrors, whereas the northern poets refrained from sketching too detailed a picture of these scenes. This difference may be explained from the fact that the northern poets literally were further from the battlefield. The northerners reflected upon the events in more distant, abstract terms than the southerners. H. A. Spandaw, a poet from the upper north in the Netherlands, celebrated the victory in much more general terms than his fellow-poet in the south, P. J. Rembry:

(Spandaw:) I saw that fatherland elevated;
Belgian and Batavian united;
And the royal crown given
To him who gives the crown lustre.⁴¹

(Rembry:) Imagine a cloud of people who move on in confusion,
Starved and tired out from head to foot,
Smearred with mud, black from the gunpowder, wounded, covered
with blood, [...]
The victory of the Belgians, after such terrible danger:
It caused young and old to jump for true joy.⁴²

Second, the southerners attributed the victory more to the Belgian soldiers than the Dutch. Words like “Nederland” (Dutch) or “Nederlands” (Dutchness) were used less frequently, “Belgian” dominated throughout these texts. This is the case, for example, in the theatrical play *Belle-Alliance, ou les journées mémorables* (Beautiful Alliance, or the memorable days [Louvain 1815]), written by the poet and publisher Luis-Charles Mallard from Louvain. His piece is one big celebration of the Belgian soldier, whereas the Dutch, Prussian, and English soldiers are hardly mentioned. Nevertheless, the Belgian troops are loyal to one prince only, and that is William I. They often call out, *Vive le Roi! Vive Guillaume!* and in the end, the Belgian commander swears eternal faith to the Dutch king: *je jure obéissance éternelle / A notre prince à notre roi!* (I swear eternal obedience / To our prince, to our king!).⁴³

King William I was praised both in the northern and the southern provinces, but with regard to his son we see a third difference.⁴⁴ The hereditary prince William Frederick was wounded on the battlefield and became the most celebrated hero in the northern provinces. Meanwhile, the southerners created their own cult figure: Jean-Baptiste van Merlen (1773–1815). This general, born in Antwerp, served under Napoleon at

the Battle of Leipzig. After the coronation of Louis XVIII in 1814, he resigned from the French army and joined the Dutch troops. He died at the Battle of Waterloo after being hit by a cannonball. Van Merlen became their local hero as a counterpart to William Frederick in the north.⁴⁵

The popular reactions to the victory at Waterloo show that two different memorial cultures were created, which only partly overlapped. Although the Dutch and Belgian people had fought side by side to defeat Napoleon, it becomes clear that an “intimate and complete union” was not to be easily achieved. A final case in point is a lengthy pamphlet, which appeared anonymously in Arnhem (a city the eastern part of the Netherlands).⁴⁶ It was entitled *The Hand of Brotherhood, Offered by the Northern to the Southern Provinces (De hand van broederschap, door de Noordelijke aan de Zuidelijke Nederlanders toegereikt)* and consisted of a series of 12 letters, which were written partly before and partly after the battle of Waterloo. It offered an extensive account of the advantages of the union between the northern and southern provinces. In this so called “new Dutch empire” (*nieuw Nederlandsche Rijk*), the Dutch language had to become dominant, which meant that southerners would have to start using Dutch as their main language. This also meant that their level of literacy had to be increased. The author recommended a series of recent books on Dutch grammar and speech—including a well-known book by the professor Matthijs Siegenbeek on spelling from 1804—in which he proposed a set of standard rules and practices.⁴⁷ The author also paid considerable attention to the necessity of ensuring a flourishing publishing and book trade and the vital role of the arts in order to obtain new wealth. The perspective was entirely northern: the southern provinces had to be “raised up” and had to adapt themselves to their new political situation as in the injunctions to a subaltern culture in a colonial relationship.

CONCLUDING REMARKS

The question of how the Dutch reacted to Napoleon’s return is complicated by the fact that the Dutch nation was under construction: national identity was a fluid concept and could refer to different political realities and reflect diverse sentiments. The political union between the northern and southern provinces became topical at two particular moments: (1) directly after William’s self-proclamation as king of the United Kingdom

of the Netherlands; and (2) after the victory at the Battle of Waterloo. After William's self-proclamation, the communal bond between the Belgian and Dutch was primarily regarded as essential to the military operation to counter the French threat. In the celebratory writings after Waterloo, a gap between the northern and southern reactions can be witnessed as becomes clear from their different ways of reflecting on their contributions to the great victory. During the entire period, the northern perspective remained dominant; in most northern reactions, the southern provinces were not mentioned at all.

This changed rapidly after the official instalment of the new king, in Brussels, on 21 September. From then on, the celebration of the union between North and South became predominant in patriotic discourses. Exemplary are the following verses of the well-known Dutch poet Hendrik Tollens:

O brothers, come! Return! Return!
 Come quickly, estranged compatriots!
 The barrier has fallen and shattered.
 Come quickly: the paternal blessing awaits you!
 The fraternal heart greets you warmly,
 A cheering welcome rolls towards you!
 The hour of unification has broken.
 [...] our brothers have been returned to us,
 Those who had strayed for two centuries.⁴⁸

Tollens's poem expressed great confidence in the future: at long last, the nation was reunited after having been separated for more than two centuries. His optimism was smashed only fifteen years later when the Belgian Revolution broke out. It turned out that there was little public support in the south for this union and that religious, linguistic, and moral barriers proved insurmountable. If one reads the popular reactions to the Hundred Days, one can already see clear signs that it would be difficult if not impossible to create "a complete and intimate union" between the two nations: each of the nations had created its own memorial culture and wished to remember Waterloo on their own terms.

NOTES

1. W., *Triumf-zang, bij het inrukken der geallieerde legers, onder bevel der veldmaarschalken Wellington en Blucher, binnen Parijs. Op den 6^e van booiimaand* (Alkmaar, 1815), 7–8.
2. See N. C. F. van Sas, *Onze Natuurlijkste Bondgenoot. Nederland, Engeland en Europa 1813–1831* (Groningen, 1985), 55–60; Beatrice de Graaf, “Second-tier Diplomacy. Hans von Gagern and William I in their Quest for an Alternative European Order, 1813–1818,” *Journal for Modern European History* 12 (2014): 552–554.
3. Jeroen Koch, *Koning Willem I, 1772–1843* (Amsterdam, 2013), 228–259.
4. The Eight Articles of London were literally incorporated in the Acts of the Congress of Vienna. See *Handelingen van het Kongres van Weenen, zoo als dezelve aldaar, op den 9 juny 1815, door de respectieve gevolmagtigden der geallieerde mogendheden onderteekend zyn* ('s-Gravenhage, 1815), 43.
5. The collection is also called the “Knuttel-collection” and can be accessed at www.kb.nl (The Early Modern Pamphlets Online).
6. See on this patriotic discourse: Lotte Jensen, “The Dutch Against Napoleon. Resistance Literature and National Identity, 1806–1813,” *Journal of Dutch Literature* 2/2 (2011): 5–26.
7. Alistair Duke, “In Defence of the Common Fatherland. Patriotism and Liberty in the Low Countries, 1555–1576,” in R. Stein and J. Pollmann (eds.), *Networks, Regions and Nations. Shaping Identities in the Low Countries, 1300–1650* (Leiden and Boston, 2010), 217–239.
8. See Lotte Jensen, *Celebrating Peace. The Emergence of Dutch Identity, 1648–1815* (Nijmegen, 2017).
9. N. C. F. van Sas, “De vaderlandse imperatief. Begripsverandering en politieke conjunctuur, 1763–1813,” in N. C. F. van Sas ed., *Vaderland. Een geschiedenis vanaf de vijftiende eeuw tot 1940* (Amsterdam, 1999), 275–308.
10. Jensen, “The Dutch Against Napoleon.”
11. Historical works exist that describe the making of the United Kingdom of the Netherlands. A recent collection of essays is: Ido de Haan, Paul den Hoed and Henk te Velde (eds.), *Een nieuwe staat. Het begin van het Koninkrijk der Nederlanden* (Amsterdam, 2013).
12. Van Sas also points out the influential role that Clancarty played in the whole process. See *Onze Natuurlijkste Bondgenoot*. 45–109, especially 102–103. On Von Gagern, see Beatrice de Graaf, “Second-tier Diplomacy.”
13. Quoted in George Edmundson, “The Low Countries,” in D. A. Acton, A. W. Ward, G. W. Prothero, and S. Leathes, *The Cambridge Modern History. Vol. X: The Restoration* (Cambridge, 1907), 519. The French text reads: “Cette réunion devra être intime et complète, de façon que

- les deux pays ne forment qu'un seul et même État, régi par la constitution déjà établie en Hollande, et qui sera modifié d'un commun accord, après les nouvelles circonstances." See *Actes du Congrès de Vienne* (Paris, 1816), 213, in which the Eight Articles are included in an appendix.
14. See for the so called "Taalbesluit" (Language Resolution) Janneke Weijermars, *Stepbrothers. Southern Dutch Literature and Nation-Building Under Willem I, 1814–1834* (Leiden and Boston, 2014), 21–39. The press and marriage restrictions are discussed in M. M. S., *Le cri de l'oppression ou lettre d'un Belge à ses concitoyens* (Paris, S.A.), 4–7.
 15. De Graaf, "Second-tier Diplomacy," 557–559. According to Van Sas, the Dutch interests were mostly advocated by Clancarty. See Van Sas, *Onze Natuurlijkste Bondgenoot*, 102–103.
 16. See, for example, Renger de Bruin, Kornee van der Haven, Lotte Jensen, David Onnekink (eds.), *Performances of Peace. Utrecht 1713* (Leiden and Boston, 2015).
 17. See, for example, Lotte Jensen, *Celebrating Peace*, 163–182 and B. A. de Graaf, "Bringing Sense and Sensibility to the Continent—Vienna 1815 Revisited," *Journal of Modern European History* 13 (2015): 447–457.
 18. Adam Zamoyski, *Phantom Terror. Political Paranoia and the Creation of the Modern State, 1789–1848* (New York, 2014).
 19. The independency of Belgium was acknowledged by King William I in 1839.
 20. Etienne François und Hagen Schulze, "Das emotionale Fundament der Nationen," in *Mythen der Nationen: ein Europäisch Panorama*, ed. Monika Flacke (München and Berlin, 1998), 17–32; Lotte Jensen, "Introduction," in *The Roots of Nationalism. National Identity Formation in Early Modern Europe, 1600–1815*, ed. Lotte Jensen (Amsterdam, 2016), 9–27.
 21. Jean Stengers, *Les racines de la Belgique. Histoire du sentiment national en Belgique des origines à 1918*, vol. 1 (Brussels, 2000), 101.
 22. Sébastien Dubois, *L'invention de la Belgique. Genèse d'un État-Nation* (Brussels, 2005), 133–143.
 23. *Rotterdamsche Courant* (11-03-1815).
 24. Jurriën de Jong, Ben Schoenmaker and Jeroen van Zanten. *Waterloo. 200 jaar strijd* (Amsterdam, 2015), 49–50.
 25. De Jong, Schoenmaker, and Van Zanten. *Waterloo*, 49–55; Johan Op de Beeck, *Waterloo. De laatste 100 dagen van Napoleon* (Antwerpen, 2013), 142–153.
 26. For a general overview of the Dutch reactions to the Hundred Days, see Lotte Jensen, "De hand van broederschap toegereikt' Nederlandse identiteiten en identiteitsbesef in 1815," in *Belg en Bataaf. De wording van het Verenigd Koninkrijk der Nederlanden*, eds. Frank Judo and Stijn Van de Perre (Antwerpen, 2015), 79–101, 343–349.

27. Petronella Moens, *Bij het intrekken van Napoleon Buonaparte in Parijs* (Utrecht, 1815), 15: “Nee, dierbaar Vaderland! Met zulke heldenzielen; / Met zulk een edlen Vorst, ducht gij verraad noch magt. [...] / Ja, ’t laatste hartebloed van Hollands kroost zal vloeijen; [...] / Eer hier de Corsikaan zijn aadlaars weêr doet zwieren./Neen, ’t roemrijk Neêrland moet verbroederd zegevieren / God kroont hier ’s Konings deugd en strijdt voor’t Heldenvolk.”
28. Maria Petronella Elter, geb. Woesthoven, *Nederland in Frankrijk in maart, 1815. Lierzang* (Amsterdam, 1815).
29. T.[ollens?], *Aan de Nederlanders* (S.l., 1815), 1: “tweeden Eersten Willem.”
30. A. N. Pellecom, *Wapenkreet*. Schiedam, 1815, 15: “Komt, fluks de wapens van den wand! Het is de strijd voor’t Vaderland, / Voor God en voor den Koning!!”
31. The historian Wilfried Uitterhoeve has shown that the months after the liberation from the French were full of chaotic events and political riots. See Wilfried Uitterhoeve, *1813- Haagse bluf. De korte chaos van vrijwording* (Nijmegen, 2013).
32. Jan Schouten, *Opwekking ten strijd in april 1815. Lierzang* (Rotterdam, 1815, dated 19 April), 6: “Verzelt den Belgen en Bataven / In ’t strijden voor hun Vorst en Land.”
33. J. S. Swaan, *Aan mijne Nederlandsche landgenooten, bij het bezetten van Parijs door Buonaparte* (Hoorn, 1815), 3: “Gij ziet [...] Der pijlen bundel weêr herbonden, / Die voor twee eeuwen’t grimmig lot / Had losgescheurd. [...] / Bataaf en Belg staan hand in hand. / Zij hebben’t eigen vaderland. / Zij hebben d’eigen roem te schragen. / D’Oranjeboom schenkt beiden vrucht.”
34. *Vaderlander, Stryd! Voor God! Den Koning! En het vaderland* (Amsterdam, 1815), 6: “Help God! – beziel, versterk, den Grooten Alexander! / Help Oostenrijk! – Germaan! En eedlen Pruisch en Brith! / Sla aller Vorsten hand onschroefbaar in elkander;/ Tot het bereiken van uw heilig doel en wit:/ Zóó strijde en Belg! Bataav! Met hunnen Oranje Koning! / Tot steun van Nederland eendrachtig onderling.”
35. Jacobus Scheltema, *Wat willen – wat zullen nu de Franschen – wat moeten wij doen? [...]* (Amsterdam, 1815); Jan ten Brink, *Kort betoog, dat de verbondene mogendheden gerechtigd en verpligt zijn, om Napoléon Buonaparte van den Franschen troon met geweld van wapenen te verdrijven* (Amsterdam, 1815).
36. Scheltema, *Wat willen – wat zullen nu de Franschen*, 16: *Aller harten moeten zaamgebonden zijn door den naam van Nederlander; onze taal zij het vereenigingspunt.*

37. *Waarom vreest men toch thans zoo zeer, of bemoedigende gesprekken tusschen drie vrienden* (Rotterdam, 1815), 28. From the content it becomes clear that the pamphlet must have been written shortly after Napoleon's return to Paris (see the reference to this event on page 4).
38. *Waarom vreest men toch thans zoo zeer*, 29.
39. The author refers to the news of Napoleon's return to Paris, see: M. M. S., *Le cri de l'oppression, ou lettre d'un Belge à ses concitoyens* (Paris, 1815), 21. The pamphlet is signed by M. Schilderman.
40. M. M. S., *Le cri de l'oppression*, 30.
41. H. A. Spandaw, *Nederlands behoud, in 1815; lierzang* (Groningen, 1815), 3: "k Zag dat Vaderland verheven; / Belg en Batavier hereend; / En de Koningskroon gegeven / Hem die kroonen luister leent."
42. P. J. Rembry, *De daegen Van den sestiende, seventiende en achtiende Juny 1815* (Antwerpen, 1815), 16–17: "Verbeélt u wolke volks [...] Verhongerd, en vermat van hoofde tot aen voet, / Bemodderd, zwart van't kruid, gekwetst, bedekt van bloed, [...] / De zége van den Belg, naer zoo vreeslyk gevaer: / Dit deed daer oud en jong van ware vreugd opspringen."
43. Louis-Charles Mallard, *Belle-alliance, ou les journées mémorables des seize, dix-sept et dix-huits juin 1815* [...].
44. As Alan Forrest rightly observes, the Dutch commemoration was mainly focused on the House of Orange, and their laudable contribution to Waterloo, rather than the people. See Alan Forrest, *Waterloo* (Oxford, 2015), 165–171.
45. See on the celebration of different heroes in the northern and southern provinces also Janneke Weijermars, "De mythe van Waterloo. De Slag bij Waterloo in de Nederlandse literatuur, 1815–1830," in *Oorlogsliteratuur in de vroegmoderne tijd. Vorm, identiteit, herinnering*, eds. Lotte Jensen and Nina Geerdink (Hilversum, 2013), 182–197.
46. *De hand van broederschap, door de Noordelijke aan de Zuidelijke Nederlanders toegereikt* [...] (Arnhem, 1815).
47. Matthys Siegenbeek, *Verhandeling over de Nederduitsche Spelling* (Amsterdam, 1804).
48. H. Tollens, C. Z., *Bij de verheffing van zijne koninklijke hoogheid Willem Frederik Prins van Oranje en Nassau op den troon der Nederlanden. Lierzang* (Den Haag, 1815), 7–8: 'Snelt toe, onze armen zijn omsloten: / o Broeders, komt! keert weer! / Snelt toe, vervreemde landgenooten! / De slagboom viel verguizeld neêr / Snelt toe: u wacht de vaderzegen! / Het broederhart gloeit u tegen, / Het welkom rolt u juichend aan! / 't Vereeningsuur is aangebroken [...] de broedren zijn ons weergegeven / Twee eeuwen lang van ons afgedwaald."

“A People Grown Old in Revolutions”: Conflicting Temporalities and Distrust in 1815 Italy

Martina Piperno

The “Hundred Days” are not normally regarded as an episode of significance to Italian history, although military and cultural movements connected to them marked the peninsula in the spring of 1815, in particular, Joaquim Murat’s military campaign against the Austrians. By looking mostly at literary reactions (poems, orations, novels) to the event and to the literary construction of Murat’s figure, and by considering unpublished material that has not been an object of scholarly attention until now, I will attempt to draw a faithful picture of the conflicting cultural responses of 1815 Italy. As I will show, these responses were characterized by indecisiveness, weariness, confusion about legitimacy and consent, and a sense of loss: signs of a post-traumatic crisis. In this essay, I challenge current historio-graphical interpretations of the events of 1815, which identify them as the first phase of the Italian Risorgimento.

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According to the sociologist Jeffrey Alexander, a cultural trauma can be divided into three subsequent phases: identity revision, rationalization, and routinization.¹ After a trauma, collective identity can be subject to a significant revision: after the first phase a distribution of responsibilities normally follows, when society agrees on who are the victims and who are the oppressors. Subsequently, trauma is rationalized, accepted, and turned into a rite through the establishment of institutions dedicated to memory such as museums or memory days.

The French Revolution and the Napoleonic Wars can be regarded as cultural traumas on a European level affecting directly both cultural and literary spheres. Modern scholarship has made important contributions to the study of this topic, particularly with respect to French culture² and Italian culture.³ Museums dedicated to the Napoleonic age have flourished across Europe, and the site in Belgium where the battle of Waterloo took place is now a popular tourist hotspot as well as a *lieu de mémoire*,⁴ a destination of lay pilgrimages, and the location of an annual commemoration.⁵ It is less well known, however, that there exists, in a field near Tolentino in the province of Macerata, in central Italy, a similar *lieu de mémoire*: the battlefield of the Battle of Tolentino, where the Austrians defeated the French army led by Joaquim Murat, King of Naples, thus undermining Murat's so-called Italian campaign. In Tolentino, too, a re-enactment of the battle takes place every spring, and memory of the event is kept alive through the activity of a vibrant cultural association, "Tolentino 815."⁶

Murat's ruinous Italian campaign profoundly shaped political, cultural, and literary events in Italy during the Hundred Days. Napoleon's brother in law (he married Caroline Bonaparte in 1800), and a general of Napoleon's army, Murat was put in charge of the Kingdom of Naples in 1808. However, after the Battle of Leipzig, he abandoned La Grande Armée and increasingly moved away from his brother-in-law, eventually signing a treaty with Austria in January 1814 to try to save his throne. During this phase, he tried to claim the legitimacy of his authority over Southern Italy by presenting himself—through intense propaganda—as an Italian ruler, deeply engaged in the matter of Italian independence. He wanted to assume the role of the liberator of Italy, and to be acclaimed and remembered as such.⁷ This has been described by historian Domenico Spadoni as Murat's "conversion to Italy."⁸

Murat's commitment to the Allied side was, however, very fragile. In 1815, Napoleon's return and his movements around Europe

led to Murat's decision to fight the Austrian domination of the Italian soil. When the news of Napoleon's escape from Elba arrived in Naples, Murat immediately sent a messenger to him to offer his help, while in the meantime he reassured England and Austria of his loyalty. However, as soon as he received confirmation of Napoleon's arrival in Lyons, he declared his support to his brother-in-law and war against Austria. As his adviser general Pietro Colletta noted, the enterprise was desperate: In fact, his military forces were much weaker than those of Austria. "Something crazy is about to be done," Colletta commented in a private letter,⁹ thus inaugurating the use of the semantic field of insanity that characterized several of his contemporaries' accounts of Murat's venture. For example, Flaminio Baratelli, commissioner of the Austrian police, described Murat's idea to declare war on Austria as "true madness."¹⁰ Similarly, Giulio Perticari, an Italian writer and patriot who happened to meet Murat on his way to central Italy during the campaign, said he was "happy to have refused to take part in and to submit myself to flattery of the King of Naples," adding that "one must be crazy to go with the crazy."¹¹

On the 30 March 1815, the Neapolitan army reached Rimini, which lies on the Adriatic Sea. There, Murat published the so-called Rimini Proclamation, which was aimed at provoking riots against the oppression of the foreign rulers who wanted to dominate Italy such as the Austrians who governed the Venice area:

With what right do foreign peoples dare to deprive you of your independence, which is the first right and the first good of any people? With what right do they rule your most beautiful districts? With what right do they steal your goods to take them to regions where they do not belong? With what right do they take your children, destining them to serve, to languish, and to die far from the tombs of their ancestors?¹²

The proclamation was in itself problematic because it was signed by a foreign (French) ruler who wanted, paradoxically, to persuade the Italians to fight foreign rulers.¹³ This patent contradiction was perceived by many Italians as a slur as Pietro Colletta reports:

It was observed that King Joaquim, who had occupied for eight years the nation that he governed, wanted to drive away foreigners from the Italian soil.¹⁴

In other words, Italians doubted whether was Murat a legitimate leader for their rebellion against the foreigners despite his effort to be recognized as the potential liberator of the peninsula. Murat hoped that the Italian population would rise up in support of his cause. However, no such general insurrection occurred; few Italians outside Naples were willing to take up arms and join Murat's cause. Poor recruitment of local volunteers resulted in an incontrovertible defeat: between 2 and 3 May 1815, Murat's army was vanquished at Tolentino, near Macerata; meanwhile, the Austrian army had reached and conquered Naples. Murat then tried to return to Naples to reorganize his army, but he was caught on the beach of Pizzo Calabro, in Southern Italy, and executed, later to become, as we will see, a symbol of Italy's unlucky struggle for independence.

Why did Italian patriots ignore Murat's appeal? Many Italians must have had an impression of *déjà vu* because the Rimini proclamation consistently repeated keywords and rhetorical devices that had characterized the series of proclamations issued in the period of the Jacobin Triennium and throughout the Napoleonic Wars. As De Lorenzo notices, both French and Austrian propaganda used the same political rhetoric: promising freedom, independence, self-determination, choice for the Italian nation. One example of this was the proclamation "Ai popoli d'Italia" ("To Italian peoples") by the Austrians in 1813.¹⁵ These similar claims from conflicting sources contributed to the widespread confusion and discouragement among the Italian patriots.

Similarly, Neapolitan writer and patriot Francesco Saverio Salfi lamented the uncertainty and inconstancy of Murat's actions: in the years before 1815, he had been raising and then dashing Neapolitan hopes that he would lead a struggle for a unified and independent Italy. Indeed, when he finally seemed more resolute in his support for Italian independence, Italians reacted with skepticism.¹⁶ "Coldness and indifference had taken the place of enthusiasm and hope,"¹⁷ as Salfi's biographer Angelo Maria Renzi put it.

However, the sparse military response to Murat's campaign did not mean that Italians were indifferent to his venture. In fact, several literary reactions were produced for the occasion; although there was little military action, there was a lot of poetry. According to Antonio Spinosa, Murat himself complained that on the occasion of the Rimini proclamation he obtained nothing more than sonnets.¹⁸ This peculiar phenomenon is noted in passing by all historians dealing with the Campagna

d’Italia, but it has received no scholarly attention in itself. Indeed, most of the poetry or prose produced have their first account in this essay.

Murat’s campaign is an offshoot of “popular reactions” to Napoleon’s Hundred Days; Italian patriots’ reaction to Murat’s campaign was very peculiar; indeed, we could call it a non-reaction. They confronted themselves with their own stereotypical representation as lazy, disengaged, prone to rapid and inconsistent passions, and prolific writers but weak patriots. This old stereotype had been recently reassessed and popularized, particularly among Italian readers, by Madame de Staël’s hugely successful *Corinne ou l’Italie* (1807).¹⁹ Literary reactions to Murat’s campaign, although sparse, occasional, and conceived for rapid consumption, do give an important account of the rivalries and conflicts characterizing the Italian cultural scene in those key months. As Pietro Colletta noted, Italians’ non-reaction reflected the disenchantment and indecisiveness of Italian intellectuals of that age:

What was the impact of that proclamation on the Italians? An impact foreseeable on *a people grown old in revolutions*: it stirred passions, but created just a few followers.²⁰

Colletta’s significant definition, “a people grown old in revolutions,” effectively summarizes the state of mind and the perception of temporality that Italian intellectuals in those years shared. Between 1796 and 1797, Northern Italy had witnessed the traumatic passage of the Napoleonic army during the “campagna d’Italia.” During the military campaign, several Italian intellectuals believed that the unprecedented Napoleonic revolution would lead Italians to awaken from their long-term political decline and to fight for their independence. Many Italian poets wrote orations and poems for Bonaparte, such as Ugo Foscolo, author of *Ode a Bonaparte liberatore* (*Ode to Bonaparte the Liberator* [1797]), Pietro Giordani, who wrote a *Elogio di Napoleone* (*Eulogy of Napoleon* [1807]), and Vincenzo Monti, author of several works in Italian describing Napoleon as an hero and as the only hope for the Italian nation.²¹ Napoleon’s military parable and Italy’s political destiny were intrinsically connected in the conscience of Italians. In 1797, however, Napoleon let the Italians’ hopes down when he signed the Campoformio Treaty assigning several territories of Northern Italy—Venice, Istria and Dalmatia—to the Austrian Emperor. This was seen by several intellectuals as a betrayal.²² Ugo Foscolo, in his largely

autobiographical novel, *Ultime lettere di Jacopo Ortis* (*Last Letters of Jacopo Ortis* [1802]), effectively portrayed the devastating disillusion provoked by Napoleon's decision as, for example, in the powerful incipit:

The sacrifice of our homeland is complete: everything is lost; and what remains of our life, if it is conceded to us, will only serve for us to weep for our disgrace and our infamy.²³

Italy's political scene remained extremely volatile: In 1799, a revolt against the French erupted in Naples and was rapidly and violently repressed. Vincenzo Cuoco, in his influential account of the failed revolution, did not hesitate to call this revolt an "extraordinary event," resembling a "natural disaster" and revealing secret forces lurking in the depths of the society.²⁴ In 1800, the huge battle of Marengo, the ultimate fight between the French and the Austrians, took place on Italian soil resulting in the death of a number of Italian soldiers. After this, the power distribution in Italy changed rapidly with the establishment of the Napoleonic Republics and then of the Italian Kingdom. A number of Italians fought and died in the disastrous Russian campaign in 1812 as Giacomo Leopardi (1798–1837) will later remember in his poem "All'Italia" ("To Italy" [1818]):

O miserable is he who dies in battle,
not for his country's soil his faithful
wife and precious children
but who dies serving someone else
dies at the hands of that man's enemies. (ll. 54–58)²⁵

In 1814, of course, Italians witnessed Napoleon fall at Leipzig; then, in 1815, Italians experienced a new "foreign" war between Murat and the Austrians on their soil. Disillusion over the recent military and political controversies burdened Italian patriots and was probably a major reason why Murat's venture was unsuccessful.

The literary documents I am about to analyze show reactions ranging from enthusiasm to disenchantment and mistrust, and they give an idea of the ambivalent feelings of Italian intellectuals about the legitimacy of both Napoleon's and Murat's enterprises. However, they can also be read as belonging to the category of post-revolutionary trauma. To give a clearer sense of Italy's immediate reactions to Murat's campaign, I have looked primarily at materials published during the days and months in

1815 when Murat was moving across the peninsula. I will now examine them and identify common trends and features as well as thematic nexuses. I will examine reactions to Murat’s uprising first, then to his defeat, and finally to his death.

Nothing is more revealing of the sense of hope and despair that Italian patriots must have felt during Murat’s movements across Italy than the most famous text of this series: the unfinished poem “*Il proclama di Rimini*” (“The Rimini proclamation”) by Alessandro Manzoni (1785–1873). The Italian nation in this text is described, as is traditional with countries, as a woman warrior (“*Questa antica, gentil donna pugnace*”): but this woman, despite her noble past, is now silent (“*posto il labbro al dito*”), isolated (“*in disparte*”), and completely passive regarding her future: In fact, she needs to wait for her enemy to decide her destiny (“*dovea il fato aspettar dal suo nemico*”). Manzoni uses conventional materials and depicts Murat as a Biblical prophet, specifically, Moses, who has finally risen to pursue the mission of Italy’s independence. This heroic figure would then collect and raise the scattered fasces, the symbol of power in ancient Rome.²⁶

He rose, for God sake! Yes, for Him,
 who one day chose [Moses] the Jewish young man
 who defeated the persecutor of his brothers;
 [...]
 with Him, master of Italy’s destiny,
 you will collect from the ground the scattered branches
 and you will make fasces of them in your hand.

The unfinished text ends laconically with these words. Manzoni worked on the poem during April 1815, so it is likely that he stopped drafting it on receiving news of Murat’s defeat: Inspiration immediately evaporated. The status of the text itself, then, conveys information about the rise and fall of hope among Italians who believed in Murat’s enterprise, but it also highlights the characteristic immediacy and impulsiveness of this kind of literary production. “*Il proclama di Rimini*” is traditionally considered an ugly, weak poem, an example of conventional and trite eulogy: Manzoni himself remembered composing these lines as a “sacrifice” made in the name of his “faith” in Italy’s independence, a sacrifice that cost him writing “ugly” verses.²⁷

Additionally, it should be noticed that Manzoni wrote another poem the year before, “*Aprile 1814*” (“April 1814”) to raise hopes in the Austrian restoration after Napoleon’s abdication. Manzoni thus describes

the situation in 1814: “in 1814 many were dazzled by the ghost of our former glory: many, for the current circumstances, desired ardently the Austrians to return: that is, after 18 years of many events, they desired order to be restored, that order that then had been recognized as unfit [for ruling Italy]. Few people, the quietest, said: ‘What do you want to do? Leave it with them. Do you want to fight against so many bayonets?’.”²⁸ This shows Manzoni’s indecision in choosing sides between the opposing factions in Italy but also the desire for calm, security, and peace after years of war.

When Manzoni was writing “*Il proclama di Rimini*,” Murat reached the city of Bologna, which responded enthusiastically to the Rimini proclamation. An example of this is a military hymn by Giambattista Giusti, “*Sorgi Italia, venuta è già l’ora*” (“Rise, Italy, the time has finally come”), which became relatively famous because it was set to music by Gioacchino Rossini. Rossini also directed a performance of this hymn at the Contavalli theatre in Bologna, on the 15th of April 1815, in the presence of Murat.²⁹ This text opens with the phrase “the time has come,” which is taken directly from the text of the Rimini proclamation: “Italians! The time has come for the noble fate of Italy to be accomplished.” Furthermore, “*Giunta è l’ora, volate o guerrieri*” (“Time has come, fly, warriors”) by Paolo Costa,³⁰ set to music by Francesco Sampieri, used the same opening, which tries to raise the hopes of the Italian population by invoking their tiredness and impatience through a reference to temporality.

According to Rossini himself, the people sang his hymn in the streets of Bologna.³¹ Additionally, a largely testified anecdote relates that after Murat’s defeat, Italians changed the words of Giusti’s text and used the same music to sing these words:

King Joaquim was defeated
between Macerata and Tolentino.
The independence came to an end
between the river Chienti and the river Potenza.³²

This speaks of a particularly sarcastic attitude of the Italian people by mocking both Murat and those who believed in him. The transformation of materials used to celebrate Murat for other purposes was not restricted to this case: As Viviana Jemolo has demonstrated, Luigi Biondi (1776–1839) re-used an ode he had composed for Murat (1814) several years

later to honour Pope Pius IX (published 1847).³³ These examples suggest that eulogies for Murat were largely conventional and were not normally based on solid political and ideological commitment.

Although the above-mentioned poems react positively to Murat's intentions, other voices responded polemically to the Rimini proclamation. For example, Pietro Bottigella Menapace (unknown date of birth and death), a marquis from Voghera in Piedmont, provided a sarcastic response by a personified Italy directed to Murat. Italy, indignant, rejects Murat's offer of independence because it comes from a foreigner (“*un Gallo*”), thus highlighting the inner contradiction of Murat's proclamation that I have already identified.³⁴ Similarly, Evangelista Zappi (unknown date of birth and death), from Imola, had no hesitation in declaring that Murat was “crazy,” “temerarious,” or reckless, daring to disturb the restored peace and order of Europe. For him, Italy wished to die in its chains, its “sweet chains”: He eventually cursed freedom itself, “pitiless freedom,” suggesting that the foreign domination in Italy was preferable to Murat's blasphemous revolutionary attempt because it was blessed by God.³⁵

Zappi was not the only one to doubt the legitimacy of Italian freedom and independence. The young Giacomo Leopardi (1798–1837) raised a similar issue in his 1815 “*Orazione in occasione della liberazione del Piceno*” (“Oration on occasion of the liberation of the Piceno”),³⁶ which was written on the day of the defeat of Murat's army in the Piceno, the region on the Italian East Coast near Tolentino, where he lived. The central theme of Leopardi's oration is that of happiness: European States under the Bourbon Restoration were, for Leopardi, peaceful and contented; was independence, then, the right way to pursue happiness for Italians?

This independence, however, which is exalted with such magnificent expressions by those least engaged, and sought with appropriate means and under the best auspices, would it be an advantage for Italy? I don't deny it. [...] But would Italy be happy because of that? To say so, it would be necessary to presume that happiness for a nation consists in the strength of its army, in being feared by its enemies, in taking advantage of starting a war and continuing it without surrendering, in having all that is necessary to be feared and not to fear, in the availability of means to sustain the glory of its armies and the good fortune of its weapons. However, if the true happiness of peoples is to be found in peace, which is necessary to the useful arts, humanities, and sciences, in the prosperity of commerce

and agriculture, sources of wealth for the nations, in the *paternal* administration of beloved and legitimate Kings; we can say this truthfully, there is no people happier than the Italian.³⁷

The most interesting feature of Leopardi's oration is the recurrence in the body of the text of the keywords "paternal," "father," "patron [...]" of ourselves" (4 times). Leopardi defines the Bourbon Restoration leaders as fathers of their people and praises their administration as "paternal"; in contrast, Italians are represented as being incapable of being masters ("*padroni*") of themselves and therefore need a guide. This semantic field highlights what is possibly the key range of problems for this generation of Italians: the difficulty of becoming the "founding fathers" of a new idea of Italy, the recognition of the lack of a paternal yet indigenous authority, the temptation of borrowing a leader from abroad, the rejection of this idea.³⁸

The shock of Murat's defeat would last in Leopardi's memory: he would, several years later (1831–1835), return to the memory of Tolentino and Murat's lost battle. He drafted an unfinished satirical poem, "*Paralipomeni alla Batracomiomachia*" ("Omitted facts from the War of Frogs, Crabs and Mice"), in which he cynically mocked revolutionary dreams and hopes. By taking inspiration from the model of the pseudo-Homeric *Batracomyomachia*, which he had translated from ancient Greek in his youth, Leopardi portrayed the French as frogs, the Austrians as crabs, and the Neapolitans as mice. Rewritten and mocked, the military events show their ridiculous side, as a vain accumulation of failures. Murat himself is transformed into an animal in Leopardi's imagination. Scholars have in fact suggested that his figure might have inspired the mouse Rubatocchi ("chunk-stealer"), the leader of the mice.

Rubatocchi [...] was, as Homer tells,
the Achilles of that field. For a long time,
widowed frogs across the entire lake
cried bitter tears for him; people say
that Rubatocchi's name
is still feared among young frogs.

Leopardi was not alone in providing a caricatural portrayal of Murat. Laughter, irony, and satire characterized several reactions to Murat's campaign in 1815 as well. This was due also to the fact that Murat

himself sometimes appeared ridiculous to his contemporaries. Joseph Fouché, for example, a collaborator of Murat, remembered him thus:

The heart of Joachim [Murat] was a singular one, and his kingdom on the Vesuve was very unsteady. Murat had plenty of courage and little spirit; no other great figure of that day pushed further than him the ridiculousness of appearance and the pretence of pomp; it is him that soldiers called “roi Franconi.”³⁹

In addition Ugo Foscolo testified that Murat’s actions took a “ridiculous” turn. We have already remembered previously that in 1797, for the occasion of the first Napoleonic campaign in Italy, Foscolo had written the enthusiastic poem “*Ode a Bonaparte Liberatore*.” In 1815, instead, he refused any kind of involvement in Murat’s deeds. Not only did he not praise Murat’s venture, he also refused to take up a position in the debate. Foscolo declares that he has lost faith in Murat because he had shown his *ridiculous* side. The semantic field of laughter and irony expresses the writer’s disenchantment and disbelief in the potential of Murat’s venture. Finally, Foscolo describes Italy as a cowardly nation, incapable of taking action itself, thus replicating in part Leopardi’s use of the notion of paternity.

In Milan some believe that I escaped Napoleon. Others believe that I escaped the King of Naples [Murat]. I have no faith in the one, I do not esteem the other: when rulers have been laughed at, they cannot do any good, in particular new rulers. For me, any foreign government in Italy – even if it is nowadays indispensable to this cowardly Italy – is execrable.⁴⁰

Another example of satire was provided by a completely unknown writer, Nicodemo Lermil (this might be a *nom de plume*: it has been suggested this name might be an anagram of Domenico Miller, but there is no evidence to confirm this identity),⁴¹ who used irony and satire to mock Murat and his temerarious enterprise. Lermil was the author of several short compositions about political events, three of which were dedicated to Murat and Napoleon; all of them were printed in Rome in 1815. His “*La fuga di Napoleone Bonaparte*” (“Bonaparte’s escape”)⁴² mocked Napoleon for leaving the battlefield of Waterloo without his sword and hat, forced to leave his jewels and his cloak to the Prussians, and concludes by inviting both Murat and Napoleon, now ridiculous characters,

to commit suicide. Lermil's "*La presa di Napoli*" ("The Conquest of Naples")⁴³ additionally makes use of the Neapolitan dialect to portray even more vividly the relief of the Neapolitan population when the army of Ferdinand I entered the city. The song ends with an exhortation to France to learn a lesson from Murat's defeat. Instead, in "*La fuga di Murat*" ("Murat's escape"),⁴⁴ Lermil used a more serious register but still very vibrantly described the violence on the bloody battlefield of Tolentino. Interestingly, the opening of this last song contains another reference to the sphere of temporality:

Sons of Rome, Friends,
I certainly have lived a lot
since I have seen so much
in the last four years.
Scepters and crowns were broken,
empires and kingdoms were shattered,
great projects were let down
in a short time.

Lermil manages to evoke a sense of the hopeless and useless accumulation of violence and abuse of power, which echoes Colletta's statement about the Italians' sense of tiredness and boredom. This reinforces my hypothesis that Italian intellectuals' perception of temporality in 1815 was accentuated by witnessing the end of a confused series of revolutions that had shattered society without leaving any tangible heritage to the next generation.

Let us now turn to the representation of Murat's death. It is worth mentioning a *Canzonetta* (short song) by an anonymous composer,⁴⁵ which describes Murat as an "evil usurper," who is deservedly punished with a violent death as an example for his followers. Also in this case Murat is portrayed as a ridiculous and childish character, whining and crying and begging for pity:

Then crying I said to myself
o miserable
now I must die!

More interesting is a long song by another little-known author, Achille Corciulo (unknown date of birth and death), "*La morte di Murat*" ("Murat's Death"), which was probably produced for a Masonic context

as the subtitle—“dedicated to free bricklayers”—suggests.⁴⁶ This song bemoans the loss of Murat as that of an heroic captain; additionally, it does so in a fairly complex and structured way by drawing from semantic fields related to the Apocalypse: the sun falls down, the moon turns pale, animals hide in fear, and the sky becomes suddenly dark when Murat, the hero, is shot dead.

So much horror, so much grief,
so many horrendous circumstances
made the Sun dark in pain. The heavenly Goddess
who crosses the sky turned pale!

Corciulo’s song is a telling example of how Murat quickly entered the domain of the legendary in some Italian patriots’ imagination. The songs, in fact, stress the stories that circulated about Murat’s death such as his display of courage, his compassionate last words to his fellow soldiers, his wife’s excruciating pain, and the unfortunate delay of the order of grace from Ferdinand I that arrived in Pizzo just minutes after Murat’s execution. It is hard to establish whether these stories are true. What is certain is that they were collected in apologetic accounts of Murat’s death in post-Unification Italy.⁴⁷ Murat’s biographer, Mario Mazzucchelli, also mentions several songs in Sicilian and Calabrese dialects that mourn the death of the unlucky leader and that apparently still survive in local memory.⁴⁸

Despite its failure, and the general disillusion that Italian writers expressed with it, Murat’s campaign is still perceived by the general public as the first phase of the Italian Risorgimento, namely, the cultural, political, and military complex process that led to the political unification of Italy and its independence and, therefore, its “youth,” its “dawn,” its “first steps.”⁴⁹ However, this viewpoint betrays a rather teleological view: it retrospectively acknowledges the first step of this process, which we can only now see in its completeness. As we have seen, literary sources testify to a sense of tiredness and a desire for security (the “old age” Pietro Colletta mentioned) rather than to the dawn of a new era.

Current perspectives were influenced by Italian patriots, in the later stages of the Risorgimento, who retrospectively constructed Murat’s legitimacy as a ruler and his campaign as a missed chance for Italian independence. They started retelling this story as a generous and heroic sacrifice of a clumsy yet brave and generous leader. During Garibaldi’s

military campaign, Italian soldiers who were part of the small army of “i Mille” (the One Thousand), stopped in Pizzo Calabro to honour Murat’s memory. The fact is attested by one of them, Giuseppe Bandi, who carefully narrated his visit in Pizzo on the trail of Murat’s death. Bandi portrays the precise moment of the creation of a shared cultural memory by detailing his visit. He was guided by two old men—two alleged witnesses—who transmitted details of the moving story of the unlucky leader and unhappy king to him. The story clearly resembles a sacred pilgrimage including a visit to the place of the death and the admiration of a relic (a handkerchief used by Murat to incite the people to the war). Some of Bandi’s fellow soldiers were so moved by Murat’s story that they tried to destroy a statue of King Ferdinand that still dominated the scene where Murat was executed. Finally, Bandi summarized:

Murat was not an Italian and was an accomplice and a servant to one of the worst tyrants who ever pestered the earth; however, the greatness of his soul, the splendour of his deeds, and particularly his pitiful death make him deserve admiration and pity from anyone with a gentle heart.⁵⁰

Bandi’s reassessment of Murat is an example of how Italians retrospectively appropriated the events of 1815 and fitted them into a patriotic and teleological narrative. Interestingly, this narrative developed over space as well as over time because the memory of Murat touched several places across the peninsula. Since 1900 there has been a plaque, in the spot where Murat was executed in Pizzo Calabro, remembering the “blessed memory” of “Re Gioacchino, glorious prince in life, fearless of death.” The fifteenth-century castle in Pizzo Calabro, built by Ferdinand D’Aragona, has now been renamed “Murat Castle.” After the Unification, an entire area of the Southern city of Bari, now in Puglia, was dedicated to Murat and is still known by his name.⁵¹ In the Marche area, the association “Tolentino 815,” as previously mentioned, keeps alive the memory of the Battle of Tolentino. Thanks to the publications promoted by the association, this is one of the most largely documented events of Italian history.⁵² Some of the towns around Tolentino still dispute whether the battle should be named after them. Murat’s death in a castle over the sea in Pizzo Calabro, thanks to its picturesque frame, rapidly became a widespread subject for illustrations and paintings. It also became a subject of a novel by Moritz Hartmann, *Die letzten Tage eines Königs* (*The last days of a king* [Stuttgart 1866]), which popularized

in Italy by Valente Defranceschi in his 1870 Italian translation.⁵³ The unlucky king of Naples is also the protagonist of *Murat*, a TV show by Silverio Blasi (1975) and the recent movie *Fuoco su di me* (*Fire on me*) by Lamberto Lambertini (2006). Disseminated in several *lieux de mémoire*, legitimized by art, history, and literature, then, the memory of Murat has been romanticized and conveyed as a shared cultural memory similarly to that of Garibaldi.⁵⁴

This view of the military adventure of “*Re Gioacchino*” is one narrated in post-Unification Italy. The representation of the events earlier in the 1800s, as with the literary reactions that I have analysed testify, was much more controversial. This collection of fragmented and little-known texts helps shed light on the attitude of several Italian intellectuals of that moment. Those who believed in Napoleon’s and Murat’s intentions were let down; those who did not believe in them, or did not believe in them any more after Leipzig, faced disenchantment and disillusion. All of this highlights a crisis of belief in the political symbols of the previous years, and challenges the idea that a “Risorgimento” had taken place in those days. At the same time, it demonstrates that the Hundred Days deserves a place in the longer history of Italy as an episode that reveals both the depth of people’s war-weariness after Napoleon’s invasion as well as their continuing aspiration for peace and security.

NOTES

1. Jeffrey C. Alexander, “Toward a Theory of Cultural Trauma,” in *Cultural Trauma and Collective Identity*, ed. by Jeffrey C. Alexander, R. Eyerman, B. Giesen, N. J. Smelser, and P. Sztompka (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2004), 1–30. On cultural trauma see also *Trauma: Explorations in Memory*, ed. by Cathy Caruth (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1995); and Cathy Caruth, *Unclaimed Experience: Trauma, Narrative, and History* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1996).
2. Deborah Jenson, *Trauma and Its Representations. The Social Life of Mimesis in Post-Revolutionary France* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2001); Katherine Astbury, *Narrative Responses to the Trauma of the French Revolution* (Oxford: Legenda, 2012).
3. Fabio Camilletti, *Classicism and Romanticism in Italian Literature* (London: Pickering and Chatto, 2013).
4. I borrow the definition of *lieu de mémoire* from the works of the historian Pierre Nora. As Nora explains, in fact, “un objet devient lieu de mémoire

- quand il échappe à l'oubli [...] et quand une collectivité le réinvestit de son affect et de ses émotions." Pierre Nora, *Les lieux de mémoire*, 3 vols. (Paris: Gallimard, 1984–1992), II, 7.
5. Information available at: www.waterloo-tourisme.com. Last accessed 4 August 2016.
 6. Information available at: www.tolentino815.it. Last accessed 4 August 2016.
 7. Carlo Zaghi, "Introduzione" to Pietro Colletta, *La campagna d'Italia di Gioacchino Murat*, ed. by Carlo Zaghi (Turin: UTET, 1982), xxvi–xxvii.
 8. Domenico Spadoni, "La conversione italiana di Murat," *Nuova Rivista Storica*, 14 (1930), 217–252; see also Desmond Gregory, *Napoleon's Italy* (Madison and London: Farleigh Dickinson University Press, 2001) and Renata De Lorenzo, *Murat* (Rome: Salerno, 2011), 270–290 and 321–333.
 9. Pietro Colletta, letter to Tito Manzi, no date, in *Opere inedite o rare*, 2 vols. (Naples: Stamperia Nazionale, 1861), II, 178, my translation.
 10. Flaminio Baratelli, *Memorie sulla condotta politica e militare tenuta da Gioacchino Murat con le quali sull'appoggio di fatti e documenti, fino ad ora non conosciuti, provasi che il solo di lui scopo fu di servire ai progetti ed alla causa di Bonaparte sotto la maschera di alleato nella Casa d'Austria* (Ferrara: 1815), 103, my translation.
 11. Unpublished letter to Bartolomeo Borghesi, 30th April 1815, quoted in Antonio Mambelli, "Di Giulio Perticari e di un albero della libertà a Savignano," in *Rubiconia Accademia dei Filopatridi*, 4 (1963), 60–73, on 61, my translation.
 12. Colletta, *La campagna d'Italia di Gioacchino Murat*, 24 n. 2, my translation.
 13. For the proclamation's ambiguous language see Zaghi, "Introduzione," xxxii–xxxiii, De Lorenzo, *Murat*, 302–305.
 14. Colletta, *La campagna d'Italia di Gioacchino Murat*, 25, my translation.
 15. De Lorenzo, *Murat*, 282.
 16. Francesco Saverio Salfi, *L'Italia nel secolo diciannovesimo, o Della necessità di accordare in Italia il potere con la libertà*, It. transl. by Ferdinando Canonico Scaglione (Cosenza: Brenner, 1990), 49.
 17. Angelo Maria Renzi, *Vie politique et littéraire de Francesco Salfi* (Paris: Chez Fayolle, 1834), 37, my translation.
 18. Antonio Spinoso, *Murat. Da stalliere a Re di Napoli* (Milan: Mondadori, 1990), 376.
 19. See Robert Casillo, *The Empire of Stereotypes. Germaine de Staël and the Idea of Italy* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2006).

20. Colletta, *La campagna d'Italia di Gioacchino Murat*, 25, my translation, my emphasis.
21. See Walter Binni, *Vincenzo Monti poeta del consenso* (Florence: Sansoni, 1981).
22. An interesting paper on the representation of Napoleon as an illusionist and a magician has been presented by Fabio Camilletti during the workshop “Illusione, inganno, artificio. Coleridge, Hoffmann, Manzoni, Leopardi,” 10 March 2015, Laboratorio Leopardi, La Sapienza Università di Roma.
23. Ugo Foscolo, *Ultime lettere di Jacopo Ortis (1802)*, critical edition ed. by Giovanni Gambarin (Florence: Le Monnier, 1970), 137, my translation.
24. Vincenzo Cuoco, *Saggio storico sulla rivoluzione di Napoli*, ed. by Antonino De Francesco (Bari: Laterza, 2014), 37 note 1, my translation. In the *Saggio*, Cuoco formulated the theory of the “passive revolution,” which was destined to have large critical attention. Maria Antonietta Visceglia, “Genesi e fortuna di una interpretazione storiografica: la rivoluzione del 1799 come ‘rivoluzione passiva,’” *Annali della Facoltà di Magistero dell'Università di Lecce*, 1 (1970–1971), 172–178.
25. Giacomo Leopardi, *Canti*, bilingual edition ed. by Jonathan Galassi (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2010), 20.
26. Alessandro Manzoni, *Tutte le opere*, ed. by Alberto Chiari and Fausto Ghisalberti, 6 vols. (Milan: Mondadori, 1957), I, 120.
27. Cesare Cantù, *Alessandro Manzoni. Reminiscenze*, 2 vols. (Milan: Treves, 1882), II, 308, my translation.
28. Cantù, *Alessandro Manzoni*, II, 313, my translation. On this point, see Saverio Ieva, “Amor di patria e misogallismo nel giovane,” Leopardi. *L'Orazione in occasione della liberazione del Piceno* tra esercizio retorico e tradizione letteraria, *Italies*, 6 (2002), 233–259.
29. Fabrizio Dorsi, Giuseppe Rausa, *Storia dell'opera italiana*, 247. The whole text of the hymn is in Gaia Servadio, *Gioacchino Rossini. Una vita* (Milan: Feltrinelli, 2015), 201.
30. Full text in Giovanni De Castro, “La restaurazione austriaca in Milano (1814–1817),” *Archivio Storico Lombardo*, 4: 5 (1889), 591–658, on 654–666.
31. Servadio, *Rossini*, 123.
32. The story is testified by Antonio Spinosa, *Napoleone, il flagello d'Italia* (Milan: Mondadori, 2003), 301; Iris Origo, *Leopardi* (1935), It. transl. by Paola Ojetti (Milan: Rizzoli, 1994), 17. Sperandio, *Rossini*, 209. At present I am unable to track down the origin of this rhyme.
33. Viviana Jemolo, “Luigi Biondi,” in *Dizionario biografico degli Italiani*, vol. 10 (Rome: Treccani, 1968), a.l.

34. Pietro Bottigella Menapace, *Risposta dell'Italia all'offerta fattale da Murat col noto manifesto* (Voghera: Gaudenzio Giani, 1815), Biblioteca Norberto Bobbio, Torino, Collocation A 117 bis B 12 15. This is a sonnet dedicated to the Duchess of Modena Maria Beatrice.
35. Evangelista Zappi, *Vaticinio a Murat nell'atto che abbandonando Ajaccio intraprese l'infelice spedizione. Ode* ["Wishes to Murat when abandoning Ajaccio started his unlucky venture. Ode"] (Imola: Stampe Comunali di Imola, 1815), Biblioteca Comunale di Imola, 19 Cart. 098 0065 1, my translation. The text was written on occasion of the last enterprise by Murat on the 28th of September 1815, when, after the defeat of Tolentino, he tried one last time to conquer Naples and left Ajaccio with 250 armed men, only to land in Pizzo Calabro to be arrested and executed. The hymn is shamelessly obsequious to Ferdinand I Bourbon, to whom it is probably dedicated. On a similar page, but with reference to the Austrians, a pompous song by a Tirolese poet, Antonio Dalla Brida: *Sulla completa vittoria riportata dall'armata austriaca in Italia contro Murat Re di Napoli* ["On the complete victory gained by the Austrian army in Italy against Murat King of Naples"] (Wien: Schmidt, 1815), Biblioteca Comunale, Trento, Collocation t-TS I-op d 124.
36. See Saverio Ieva, "Amor di patria e misogallismo nel giovane Leopardi."
37. Giacomo Leopardi, "Agli Italiani. Orazione in occasione della liberazione del Piceno," in *Tutte le poesie e tutte le prose* (Rome: Newton Compton, 2003), 936, my translation and emphasis.
38. Fabio Camilletti has pointed out how the problem of paternity and authority haunted the post-revolutionary generations in Italy. See his *Classicism and Romanticism*. See also Fabio Camilletti's blog post "The Battle of Tolentino," available at: <http://www.100days.eu/items/show/79>, posted 3 May 2015. Last accessed 18 August 2016.
39. Joseph Fouché, *Mémoires de Joseph Fouché, duc d'Otrante*, présentés par M. Vovelle (Paris: Imprimerie nationale, 1991), 397, my translation.
40. Letter to Giovanni Tamassia, 12 April 1815, in Ugo Foscolo, *Epistolario*, ed. by Giovanni Tambarin and Francesco Tropeano, 9 vols. (Florence: Le Monnier, 1966), VI, 7, my translation. As these examples suggest, Murat could easily be mocked as ridiculous. It is not surprising, then, that he would later become a popular character of the equestrian theatre in France, the Cirque Olympique: A piece entitled *Murat. Trois actes, quatre tableaux*, par Ferdinand Laloue et F. Labrousse, musique par Francastel, was performed there as early as 1841: "he was portrayed both seriously and comically (in terms of his pronounced taste for extravagant clothing)." Sharman Levinson, "Return of the Living Dead: Re-reading Pierre Flourens's Contributions to Neurophysiology and Literature," in *Literature, Neurology and Neuroscience: Historical and*

- Literary Connections*, ed. by Anne Stiles, Stanley Finger, François Boller, (Amsterdam: Elsevier, 2013), 149–172, on 165.
41. Alessandro D’Ancona, “La storia del padre che assassina il figlio,” *Archivio per lo studio delle tradizioni popolari*, 8: 2 (1889), 153–173, on 153.
 42. The complete title reads *La fuga di Napoleone Bonaparte senza Spada, e senza Bastone, e senza Cappello, e ferito in Testa, l’acquisto fatto dai Prussiani di Oro, Argento, Brillanti, e del suo Manto Imperiale, e finalmente il felice ritorno nella città di Parigi di Sua Maestà Luigi 18* [Napoleon Bonaparte’s escape without his sword, his stick and his hat, and wounded on the head, the acquisition of gold, silver and diamonds and his imperial cloak by the Prussians, and finally the happy return in Paris of his Majesty Luis XVIII]. Biblioteca di Storia Moderna e Contemporanea, Roma, Collocation MISC. Ris.b.511/54.
 43. Nicodemo Lermil, *La presa di Napoli. Canzone sul dialetto napoletano*, Biblioteca di Storia Moderna e Contemporanea, Roma, MISC. Ris.b.511/52 (*The conquest of Naples. Song in Neapolitan dialect*).
 44. Nicodemo Lermil, *La fuga di Murat, la sconfitta del suo Campo, e l’entrata dei tedeschi nel Regno di Napoli. Canzone* [Murat’s escape, his defeat on the battlefield, and the entrance of the Germans in the Kingdom of Naples. Song], Biblioteca di Storia Moderna e Contemporanea, Roma, Collocation MISC. Ris.b.511/70.
 45. *Canzonetta nuova sopra di Gioacchino Murat fucilato il di’ 13 ottobre nella città del Pizzo* [New short song about Murat executed on the 13th of October in the city of Pizzo] (Pesaro: Niccolò Gavelli, 1815), Biblioteca di Storia Moderna e Contemporanea, Rome, Collocation MISC. Ris.c.144/8.
 46. Achille Corciulo, *La morte di Murat. Cantata spontanea dedicata a’ liberi muratori* [Murat’s death. Spontaneous song dedicated to free bricklayers], probably 1820, Biblioteca di Storia Moderna e Contemporanea, Rome, Collocation MISC. Ris.d.9/109, my translation.
 47. Tommaso Antonio Masdea, *L’arresto e il supplizio di Gioacchino Murat* (Pavia: Fusi, 1889); Gaetano Gasparri, Ettore Capialdi, *Murat al Pizzo: la fine di un re (testimonianze inedite)* (Monteleone di Calabria: Francesco Passafaro, 1894).
 48. Mario Mazzucchelli, *Murat re di Napoli* (Milan: Longanesi, 1970), 191–194. The first song is particularly telling of the literarization of Murat’s enterprise. It blames Murat’s ambition (*la gula di lu rignu*) but exalts Murat for his courage and remembers that he refused to confess his sins (*ca è netta la me’coscienza*). Finally, it portrays Murat’s tragic farewell to his wife and his violent death.
 49. See for example Marco Scardigli, *Le grandi battaglie del Risorgimento* (Milan: Rizzoli, 2011), 23.

50. Giuseppe Bandi, *I Mille. Da Genova a Capua* (Milan: Rizzoli, 1981), 161, my translation.
51. Domenico Di Bari, *Bari: La formazione del quartiere Murat, 1813–1945* (Bari: Laterza, 1970).
52. Scardigli, *Le grandi battaglie*, 24.
53. Mortitz Hartmann, *Le ultime ore di Gioachino Murat*, Italian transl. by Valente Defranceschi, 2 vols. (Fiume: Emidio Mohovich, 1870).
54. On the role of propaganda and images in the construction of Garibaldi as an hero see Lucy Riall, *Garibaldi: Invention of a Hero* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2007).

The Hundred Days, the Congress of Vienna and the Atlantic Slave Trade

Alan Forrest

If Napoleon's arrival on French soil in March 1815 shocked many in France itself, it spread instant alarm among the other powers of Europe, convincing them that they had no choice but to intervene militarily. In the peace settlement of the previous year, the Allies had been surprisingly lenient in their treatment of France, listening to Talleyrand's eloquent pleas for reconciliation and taking care to distinguish between Napoleon's guilt and that of the French people. The territorial settlement within Europe was neither harsh nor punitive, whereas France was allowed to remain a colonial power in the Caribbean, albeit on a reduced scale after the loss of Saint-Domingue. However, news of the Emperor's return caused a rapid change in public mood. The Allied powers worked quickly to produce a concerted policy, and on 13 March they issued a joint declaration in the name of Austria, France, Britain, Prussia, Russia, Spain, Portugal, and Sweden, in which they undertook to provide "the King of France and the French nation" with such help as they might require to restore what they termed "public tranquillity."

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At the same time, they noted that “Napoleon Bonaparte had placed himself outside the pale of civil and social relations,” and that he stood condemned as “the disturber of world repose.”¹ All thought of compromise was rejected, and a war-weary Europe found itself compelled once more to mobilize mass armies with Russia, Austria, Prussia, and Britain each committed to provide (or, in Britain’s case, pay for) a force 150,000 strong. Even as they were making their preparations, Napoleon marched north into Belgium on his final campaign, the campaign that would end at Waterloo with his defeat and second abdication.

In the discussions that followed, some of the Allied leaders were unforgiving. Prussia, in particular, still smarting after her defeat at Jena, tried to insist on punitive terms. Many in Britain, including Lord Liverpool, sympathised with the call for severity: “we shall never be forgiven,” the Prime Minister wrote to Castlereagh in July, “if we leave France without securing a sufficient frontier for the protection of the adjoining countries.”² However, other, perhaps wiser counsels prevailed, arguing that it was important to maintain the balance of power established at Vienna. The final outcome was a compromise that reduced France to her 1790 boundaries while increasing the land area held by her European rivals. As a consequence, France was no longer seen as a threat to European peace.³

Waterloo gave Britain a degree of influence in these new negotiations, which she had not previously enjoyed. But how would she use it? British interests lay primarily outside Europe: Britain’s position in the post-war world era depended on imperial conquests and control of the seas; but to benefit from that position and to establish herself as a truly global power, Britain also needed to maintain the balance of power on the continent, which meant that Prussia had to be held in check and that the France of Louis XVIII must be allowed to rebuild its military and diplomatic strength. For Britain, as Huw Davies has convincingly argued, this meant Britain establishing a political dominance over her allies, and it was this that Wellington’s victory duly delivered.⁴

However, would Britain take advantage of her strength at the negotiating table to pursue other goals, not least of which was the moral cause of anti-slavery, which had taken such a hold on British public opinion in the early years of the nineteenth century? Since 1807, when Britain had abolished its own Atlantic slave trade, reformers had campaigned to end slaving entirely; for many, like Thomas Clarkson and William Wilberforce, theirs was the supreme moral cause of the age, which it was Britain’s

duty to press on other European leaders.⁵ Abolition was seen as a potent symbol of Britain's protestant morality, and abolitionists clamoured for action, unwilling to be "answerable for the guilt" of doing nothing.⁶ The Congress of Vienna was seized upon by British abolitionists as an unrivalled opportunity to advance their cause in Europe. British ministers tried, albeit without great success, to impose their moral view of the world on all the signatory nations, driven by abolitionist demands in parliament and by public opinion at home.⁷ In particular, the British were eager to impose the cause of abolition on France, traditionally their most bitter rival in the North Atlantic, and now that they had, as they saw it, taken a full part in Napoleon's defeat, they were reluctant to allow France to profit from a trade which Britain had voluntarily disavowed. In Parliament members took up the cause. For Wilberforce, Clarkson, and other leading abolitionists, the issue became the touchstone by which the Foreign Secretary, Lord Castlereagh, and the entire ministry would be judged. Would they impose Christian values on the French, or would they be outmanoeuvred by Louis XVIII and Talleyrand? It was a public relations issue at home before it was a diplomatic issue abroad.

For the abolitionists there was no room for compromise. In April 1815, when Napoleon abdicated for the second time, they were already planning for total abolition across Europe. In a private letter, Wilberforce wrote that he was "extremely occupied, both in mind and thoughts, with considering about, and taking measures for effecting a convention among the great powers for the abolition of the slave trade."⁸ Samuel Whitbread, speaking to the Commons on April 28, expressed the hope that "in the pending congress a decisive declaration would be made by all the allies against the continuance of this nefarious traffic; and that this declaration would be followed up by efficient acts on the part of each of those allies; at least, that the utmost influence of this country would be used to promote this desirable and desired end."⁹ Wilberforce went further, arguing before the House on 2 May that "there never was a period when the general circumstances of all nations were more favourable to such a motion than the present." It was surely, he continued, an unrivalled opportunity "when all the great powers of Europe were assembled in congress to consider and discuss the very elements, as it were, of their own political rights." He then, not uncharacteristically, got carried away by the religious import of the moment, concluding that, when he examined the "extraordinary succession of providential events which had placed the world in its present state of hope and security, he could not

but contemplate in them the hand of the Almighty stretched out for the deliverance of mankind.”¹⁰

Wilberforce’s view found many echoes in the churches and meeting houses of Methodist, Baptist, and Quaker Britain where some of the most committed abolitionists congregated. Many believed—in the words of Dissenters in Derby—that it was a specifically Christian cause and that slavery was “a system full of wickedness, hateful to God, and a curse and disgrace to Britain.”¹¹ They convinced themselves that with the defeat of Napoleon it was now only a matter of time before the Atlantic slave trade was abolished. However, if they thought it would happen overnight, they were to be disappointed. Abolition would be the subject of extended diplomatic negotiation, first at Paris, then at Vienna, and during Castlereagh’s ministry between 1815 and 1822.¹²

The abolition lobby at Westminster—those dubbed sardonically “the Saints” by their opponents—made no attempt to hide its ambition to force through abolitionist measures in France and other slaving nations whether or not their rulers acquiesced. They believed that the colonies that Britain had captured during the war, from France and Spain in particular, provided London with excellent bargaining counters in the negotiations to follow. Britain, it was implied, had won its war with France, on land in the Peninsula as well as at sea and in the colonies, and the peace should be Britain’s, too. They urged the government to press home its diplomatic advantage, first recruiting those countries in which there was no direct interest in the slave trade (Russia, Prussia and Austria) and then putting pressure on the Dutch to heed “the wishes of the British nation” before trying to wrest concessions from Spain and France. Some wanted to link the return of captured colonies to commitments to abolish slaving. Others were intent on stopping France, Spain, and Portugal from trading in slaves with immediate effect. Clarkson, believing that Louis XVIII was broadly sympathetic to the cause, suggested that the cession of an additional West Indian island to France could be the price of immediate French abolition. Talleyrand, who resisted any such immediate legislation for France, remarked that for the English the slave question had become “a passion carried to fanaticism and one which the ministry is no longer at liberty to check.”¹³ This perception was widely shared, and it became a handicap for British diplomacy when it sought to press the abolitionist cause. Castlereagh remarked to Liverpool, in October 1814, that the extent of domestic pressure that was being exerted on this single issue restricted

his diplomatic flexibility, and he complained of “the display of popular impatience which has been excited and is kept up in England upon this subject.”¹⁴

Interestingly, only seven years after Britain’s own abolition of the Atlantic slave trade, few voices were raised to challenge the wisdom of abolition. In 1806–1807, of course, in the run-up to abolition, there had been protests and petitions, notably from the Atlantic slaving ports and the great industrial cities; however, they were always, as in the case of Liverpool or Manchester, couched in economic terms. And for that reason, argues Seymour Drescher, they had been unable to muster much popular support. “Because it hung on the single thread of capital alone,” he argues, “the allegiance to the slave trade virtually died with abolition.”¹⁵ In contrast, the abolitionists were formidably well organised, ready at any moment to stir up the public’s sense of moral outrage. In 1806, for instance, among the cotton interests in Manchester there were many who, not unreasonably, were anxious for the future of their trade and their city’s prosperity. When a petition circulated by the anti-abolitionists in Manchester obtained more than 400 signatories, many protesting that their livelihood would be threatened if abolition were to pass into law, Clarkson leapt into action, circulating an abolitionist petition in the city that overnight gained 2300 signatories. The names were collected swiftly because the petition had to reach the Lords in time for the second reading of the bill; with an extra day’s campaigning, the abolitionists were confident that they could have secured twice that number. Trade, it seemed, could always be trumped by non-conformist zeal.¹⁶

The slave traders themselves were not so easy to win over. In the years between Britain’s Act of Abolition in 1807 and the end of the Napoleonic wars in 1814, British slaving had not been completely abandoned: Zachary Macaulay, the secretary of the African Institution, listed 36 suspected slave ships leaving Liverpool alone in 1809.¹⁷ However, over time Britain’s slaving ports were able to diversify and take full advantage of the new trading opportunities that her overseas empire provided. By 1814, if commercial interests had not been entirely silenced in Liverpool, they were—with a few exceptions—no longer directed toward the restoration of the slave trade. Rather they feared a resurgence of French trade on the back of slaving, which would be to Britain’s lasting disadvantage. At a Liverpool petition meeting, at which John Gladstone put the merchants’ case, Gladstone sought to end the slaving activities of Britain’s rivals. “Not only would France benefit by the

lack of competition in Africa,” he argued, “but it would thereby win the European market for tropical staples, restoring the pre-war British inferiority on the Continent.”¹⁸ The solution was to stop French slaving rather than restore the trade in England. However, overall what is most notable is that trading concerns played such a minor part in what was, even in Liverpool, overwhelmingly perceived as a moral debate.

In France, the moral imperative was more muted. Nor was the cause of anti-slavery widely linked to religious faith in a country where the voices raised against slavery more commonly resorted to the language of enlightenment in the manner of Montesquieu or the Abbé Grégoire.¹⁹ For many, the slave trade appeared an economic necessity if the country was ever to recover its former prosperity or to compete commercially with Britain. Abolitionism spelled decline and decay, especially in the port cities of the Atlantic. Some apologists went further, arguing that there was nothing immoral about agricultural slavery, that Britain was acting not out of moral outrage but in order to impose her commercial dominance, even that Britain’s sole interest in abolishing the trade was as a means of finding extra manpower to fight her American wars. Nationalist outrage played, too, there was understandable opposition to Britain’s claims to board French commercial ships at will. As for the Bourbon monarchy, while Louis XVIII might seek to appease Britain in the diplomatic context of 1814 and was prepared to make general, if largely unspecified, commitments to the future abolition of the slave trade, he had no interest in standing in the way of France’s economic recovery or in antagonising his Iberian neighbours. *Realpolitik* had an important part to play. In addition, there was widespread resentment in the country of what was seen as British bullying on the question, its attempts to introduce in peacetime a practice that had previously only been sanctioned in international law in war.²⁰

Besides, anti-slavery as a moral cause did not arouse the same level of indignation in Catholic France as in Protestant England. This is not easy to explain. Perhaps it was because the great Catholic nations of Iberia were so deeply involved in the slave trade; perhaps because the Pope did not get round to condemning slavery until 1839; or perhaps because for many in the centre and to the right of politics, abolition was so clearly identified with the atheistic regime of the First Republic, with the slave revolts in Haiti, the debates on the Rights of Man, and the work of Brissot and the *Amis des Noirs*.²¹ In any case, the movement for religious anti-slavery developed only slowly, largely through the *Société*

de la morale chrétienne in the 1820s.²² Only then do we see a flurry of works condemning the slave trade, while influential English publications, like Thomas Clarkson's *Le cri des Africains*, became available in French translation.²³ It is interesting to note how, even before the Revolution at the moment of American Independence, inspiration for the French anti-slavery movement often originated in England.²⁴ In addition, Quakers, who were such outspoken campaigners in both England and the United States, would seem to have had a disproportionate part to play.²⁵

Clarkson enjoyed an unusual level of popularity and exposure in France and not just because he was a well-known English abolitionist. He had, amongst the English anti-slavery campaigners, a unique knowledge of the French Antilles and had championed the cause of those black insurgents in Haiti who had thrown off their colonial shackles and ended the bondage of their fellow citizens. Also, between 1816 and 1820, he sustained a regular correspondence with the Haitian king, Henry Christophe, offering his advice on diplomatic and political matters. That correspondence, which was maintained until the King's death, had begun when Christophe contacted Clarkson seeking his advice. The English abolitionist had already an established reputation, and his anti-slavery society—the African Institution—had followers throughout the Caribbean. As Clarkson recounts the receipt of Christophe's first letter, it was a moment to savour:

The King wrote me a letter in which he was pleased to say that 'he had heard of my exertions to abolish the Slave Trade, for which he, in common with those of his race, could not feel too thankful; that he had a just abhorrence of it; and would do all he could do suppress it, either by subscription to the society [the African Institution] in London, or by anything he could do at home; that he should forever love the English nation for their generosity towards Africa; and that he would endeavour, by degrees, to introduce their laws and constitution into Haiti.'²⁶

Clarkson, Wilberforce, and other English abolitionists were gradually able to influence French public opinion, too, arguably to more effect than the diplomatic manoeuvrings of the British government at Vienna.

France was, of course, only one of the major European players in the Black Atlantic. Spain and Portugal continued to operate fleets of slaving vessels between Africa and South America. Nor should we forget that this debate was only about European involvement in the Atlantic slave

trade. It did not concern the institution of slavery itself in the colonies of Latin America and the Caribbean where all European powers, Britain included, continued to operate slave economies until at least the 1830s. Nor did it affect the slave states of the United States, where slavery remained in force until the Civil War in 1861. In the Caribbean, Cuba would prove a valued place of refuge for planters and their slaves fleeing the violence in Saint-Domingue.²⁷ Not even Britain thought of abolishing the institution of slavery in 1815: Africans remained enslaved in Britain's American colonies until the mid-1830s. As a consequence, slavery and abolition would remain at the heart of Atlantic politics across much of the century. Little could be achieved immediately: hence the single-mindedness with which the abolitionists focussed on the narrower question of the trade in slaves and grasped what looked to them like a unique opportunity presented by the Hundred Days.

In 1814, the campaign to force abolition on France was stagnating. During the war years, British warships had claimed the right to board French merchantmen, but that claim expired with the signing of peace. At the Congress of Vienna, Europe's diplomatic efforts—and, indeed, Britain's—were concentrated on other, more pressing issues. After a quarter of a century at war, the continent needed to establish the basis for lasting peace. Carving up Napoleon's annexed territories in Europe, building buffers between the great powers, and organising dynastic settlements occupied centre stage with Talleyrand manoeuvring cleverly to get France recognised as an equal power by the other four. Castlereagh's moral concerns about slavery were relegated to the periphery, a local matter to be compared to the civil rights of the Jews of Hamburg or Lübeck.²⁸ The Treaty of Paris in May 1814 thus proved a disappointment for the abolitionists because it addressed only the future of the French slave trade, excluding mention of any of the other slaving powers. Under the terms of the Treaty, France was given back her Caribbean colonies but was not forced to agree to an immediate suspension of slaving. Instead, she was to be allowed a five-year period of grace, during which to run down the slave trade and realign her commerce, five years in which slaves from West Africa would continue to repopulate the plantations in the West Indies and restore a flourishing slave economy to the islands.²⁹

This outcome was seen by the more fervent abolitionists as a failure, an opportunity that had been shamefully allowed to pass, and in the wake of the Treaty they collected more than 1 million signatures from

some 850 communities across the British Isles for a petition calling for universal abolition, which they presented to Parliament just before the visit of the Tsar and the King of Prussia to London in June 1814.³⁰ Wilberforce was even granted an audience with Alexander, and the abolitionists were able to provide both the Russian emperor and the Prussian King with bound copies of the evidence they had collected on the evils of the Atlantic slave trade.³¹ They hoped for these rulers' support back in Vienna, the more so in that neither Russia nor Prussia had a presence in the Atlantic slave trade. Once again, their hopes had been raised that the slave trade might be abolished across the entire continent, thus depriving the slave economies of the Americas of servile manpower and forcibly converting them to employ free labour, a process which, they rather glibly persuaded themselves, would be to everyone's advantage because a free labourer would double the slave's output through higher productivity. James Ramsay, one of the early propagandists against Caribbean slavery in the 1780s, had claimed that "he who can procure a freeman to work for him will never employ a slave." The case, they believed, was unanswerable.³²

However, again they were to be disappointed. France was not alone in rejecting Britain's demands. The other European slaving nations, which included Holland and Denmark as well as Spain and Portugal, were equally resistant, observing that Britain's attempts to police her own slaving voyages had been less than wholehearted. For in the years after the Act of Abolition, British slave ships had continued to ply the Atlantic, taking their human cargoes illegally to Jamaica or the American South, or quite legally to Cuba, which rapidly turned into a major *entrepôt* for the entire Caribbean region. Some took to smuggling slaves; others concealed their identity beneath foreign flags, most commonly those of Spain and Portugal; whereas British bankers, insurers, and manufacturers all connived in the trade to a greater or lesser degree.³³ In a Commons debate in April 1815, another anti-slavery campaigner, Dennis Browne, made it clear that in his opinion ministers needed extraordinary powers if even the British slave trade were to be effectively halted. To this end, he wanted the capitalization and insurance of slave ships to be made a criminal offence. For, he noted, "it was a well-known fact that at the present moment a large British capital was employed in British ships in this trade, to which practice there was now a much stronger temptation than at any former period, the price of slaves being from 250 to 400 pounds each."³⁴

Europeans also noted the role that Britain had played in the war years since 1807, when it had taken upon itself to police the Atlantic shipping routes and prowl around the west coast of Africa, claiming the right to board and arrest the vessels of other nations, including neutrals, that were engaged in slaving. These initiatives centred on the Court of Vice-Admiralty that was established in 1807 at Sierra Leone, whose Chief Judge, Robert Thorpe, a British barrister and a committed abolitionist, showed quite exceptional ardour in prosecuting ships' captains caught with slaves on board their vessels regardless of where the ships were intercepted and with little regard to their nationality. He claimed a jurisdiction that extended far beyond the African coastline and applied the law to all the prizes brought in by the Royal Navy's West Africa Squadron, the small naval force charged with the defence of the West African coast. Spanish and Portuguese, Dutch and Danish ships were intercepted and arrested along with a large number of American vessels; their captains were condemned; and the ships and their cargoes seized and sold, thus leading to a predictable outcry in the foreign ports concerned and to judicial appeals, some of which were upheld. For those countries that held territory in West Africa did have a legal right to trade; in Portugal's case, and in some others, this was confirmed in a bilateral treaty with Britain. Thorpe effectively took the law into his own hands, inventing norms based on a mixture of British law, treaty law, and such laws as were laid down by humanity and natural justice. The result, as Tara Helfman reminds us, served to place British jurisdiction above the international law of the sea. In her words: "The resulting judicial policy was expansive in its grasp, rendering any slave ship not explicitly protected by treaty with Britain open to capture by British ships and condemnation by British courts. It put the Royal Navy and the Court of Vice Admiralty at Sierra Leone in the unique position of being the enforcers of a near-universal ban on the slave trade."³⁵ Even in Britain itself judicial opinion on the right of arrest was unclear.³⁶

It is therefore unremarkable that in much of continental Europe the debate swung from the immorality of the Atlantic slave trade to the legal rights of shipping in neutral waters and on the high seas, and it focussed increasingly on the role played by the Royal Navy and its West Africa Station.³⁷ What Britain was claiming was nothing less than the right to police the seas and to arrest ships of other countries that were suspected of engaging in the slave trade, a right that was not intended to be reciprocal. In wartime, it may have been possible to claim and exercise this right

against the ships of belligerent powers or those suspected of working for the enemy; that was more or less acceptable under international law. However, to extend these powers to peacetime and to the normal conditions of trade was unprecedented, and for other rulers to accept Britain's claims in this domain would imply a diminution of their own sovereignty, which might easily be regarded—as it was by Louis XVIII—as something of a humiliation involving international recognition that he was in some way subservient to Britain and in no position to insist on complete sovereignty. In the eyes of his own people, he would seem weak and diminished with the consequence that he was not prepared to discuss maritime rights at Vienna, a sentiment he shared with monarchs across Europe. Britain's position was not favourably viewed by any of her continental allies, even those, such as Prussia and Russia, which had little at stake in the abolition of the Atlantic slave trade. Since 1807, they had watched as Britain exercised her right of search on the high seas, tried and imprisoned ships' captains suspected of slaving, and ordered that their cargoes be freed, only in many cases to find themselves recruited into the British army or navy. In their eyes, the right of search for the purposes of slave-trade abolition could not be divorced from the related question of maritime rights, and although Britain was in a strong diplomatic position in 1814, her aspirations in this domain were viewed with intense suspicion by all the other powers, who perceived British claims as an abuse of her position of maritime supremacy.³⁸

In 1815, things changed as the Hundred Days gave new impetus to the campaign against the Atlantic trade in slaves. Almost immediately on his return to Paris, on 29 March 1815, Napoleon issued a decree from the Tuileries abolishing the slave trade. From that date onward, no expeditions would be authorised either from French ports or from those of France's colonies. In addition, although slavers who had already left were authorised to complete their voyages and sell their cargoes, they would be the last. In the future, no blacks could be taken legally into France's colonies for sale whether by French ships or by others.³⁹ The terms seemed incontrovertible and appeared to indicate a remarkable change of heart by the Emperor. Yet Napoleon was no abolitionist; he had already restored slavery to other French Caribbean possessions, in Guadeloupe and Guyana, and his apparent conversion to the cause of abolition must be understood as a political manoeuvre rather than a gesture of principle, part of an attempt to change his image and reinvent himself as a man of the people in the tradition of the French Revolution.⁴⁰ However, for

British abolitionists it seemed propitious. They might not trust Napoleon to deliver on his promise. They might equally work for his overthrow by voting military credits for the Allied armies. However, the moment had a crucial symbolic significance for them. France had joined Britain in abolishing the trade, something they had been demanding since 1807, and their main concern now turned to the second restoration that they hoped was to follow. Could Louis XVIII be trusted to outlaw the traffic? Would the Bourbons respect legislation that had been passed by the Usurper? In Vienna, the British government signed a proposed clause for the final treaty, which promised immediate abolition north of the Equator. However, Talleyrand was already taking steps to protect his King's freedom of manoeuvre, inserting a revised wording whereby Louis would give his consent only after he was assured that "the actual state and needs of his colonies ... permitted him to do so." His aim was purely diplomatic: as he assured Louis, "we ceded nothing and nevertheless the English are content with us."⁴¹

After Waterloo and Napoleon's second abdication, Britain's diplomatic hand was considerably strengthened, whereas abolitionists at Westminster sensed that their moment had come. In the peace negotiations that opened in Paris, Britain sought to impose an undertaking to end the slave trade and an acceptance of Britain's *droit de visite* on French commercial shipping. This would prove difficult to enforce, of course, and various compromises were agreed upon, which meant that abolition would not take place right away, to allow French ports and French merchants a period of adjustment, but the deal satisfied Wilberforce and the abolitionist lobby in the British Parliament. For France it opened a period of much-reduced profits, with merchants and ships' captains forced into an illicit trade that was policed at sea by the British, and soon also the French, navies, and was exposed to both moral obloquy and criminal prosecution. However, the French were lax in pursuing slave ships, and before 1831—when a binding Anglo-French agreement was finally signed—arrests were comparatively rare.⁴² As a consequence, it did not kill the French triangular trade. For the British abolitionists, this was a bitter disappointment. The French, they believed, had been allowed to regain Martinique and Guadeloupe without being held to a clear abolitionist agenda. Others continued to resist or to seek a prolongation of their trade.⁴³ Spain and Portugal prevaricated and imposed their own conditions such that the Congress of Vienna had little impact south of the Equator.

Castlereagh and the British delegation did not leave Vienna empty-handed: it was just that most of what they achieved consisted of promises for the future, of statements of intent rather than clear political commitments. In a recent study of the Congress settlement, David King tries to portray this achievement in as positive a light as possible given that the diplomats and political leaders present had more pressing matters to settle with regard to the balance of power on the Continent: "On February 8, 1815, just days before his expected departure," he writes, "Castlereagh could finally point to some success" when the Great Powers issued a joint declaration condemning the slave trade in seemingly unequivocal terms, describing it as "repugnant to the principles of humanity and universal morality." They further agreed in the importance of ending a scourge that had so long "desolated Africa, degraded Europe and afflicted humanity," although there was no clear commitment as to quite when that would happen. The slave trade should be abolished as soon as possible; however, only the Dutch could be pressurized into immediate abolition. France promised to do so in five years, and Spain and Portugal agreed on eight years. Yet it was a start, and Britain took some satisfaction from it: human rights, for the first time, had been made a subject of a peace conference, and it looked as if anti-slavery had become a moral force that was difficult to counter.⁴⁴ Indeed, Wilberforce admitted privately, after meeting Castlereagh on his return from Vienna, that "I believe all done that could be done."⁴⁵

However, if slaving could not be policed, then that achievement was only relative, and arguments over the right to board suspect vessels dragged on. Castlereagh was not wholly averse to some sort of compromise here because he was well aware of the sensitivities the policy could cause. With the Americans—who had already abandoned the slave trade—that compromise was easier to achieve. In 1817 he offered the new American ambassador to London, Richard Rush, "a reciprocal right of search for slaves, and a limited number of the armed vessels of each of the maritime states to be empowered to search."⁴⁶ However, France presented the British government with an altogether more difficult problem. Louis XVIII had domestic concerns to address, especially in the merchant ports of the Atlantic coast, and he could not be seen to be giving into British pressure while an army of occupation remained on French territory. Castlereagh had to make do with statements of intent that he could present to the British Parliament as a more limited diplomatic triumph. A further conference called for 1816 in London also

failed to produce binding agreements, although the assurances given by the French at least had the result of diverting the main thrust of abolitionist attack from France to Spain, which refused to take any action until 1823 and then only north of the Equator. A series of bilateral treaties with Holland, Spain, and Portugal placed limits on their liberty to trade (in the cases of Spain and Portugal, Britain paid out £700,000 each in compensation⁴⁷). However, Britain's right to stop ships that were suspected of slaving remained contested by other nations and had no basis in international law until 1831 when it was at last recognised in an agreement between Britain and Louis-Philippe's France.

How effective was the right to search? Ships were rarely stopped on the high seas or in mid-Atlantic. Rather, searches were concentrated around the African coast, at those points like the Bight of Benin or the Bight of Biafra which were the centres of trade with African kings and slavers; in the waters off the French Caribbean islands of Guadeloupe and Martinique; or on the approaches to Cuba where many French planters from Saint-Domingue had fled to resume their slave economy in Santiago de Cuba and its hinterland, and where, in the east of the island, they formed an important ethnic community.⁴⁸ Off West Africa, the British had the added advantage of a string of forts, whereas the French had only one on Gorée.⁴⁹ Here a number of French slave ships were stopped and arrested, and the volume of French slaving decreased as a consequence. However, the trade was not totally eliminated; rather, the presence of British patrols off traditional slaving regions of West Africa, such as Senegambia and the Gold Coast, had the effect of pushing the slave ships further south to West Central Africa and the Bight of Biafra. From there, ships of all the European slaving nations continued shipping Africans to the Caribbean; it was just that Cuba had replaced Saint-Domingue as their favoured slave market. In the twenty years to 1835, nearly 40,000 captives were shipped from the Bight of Biafra into slavery in the Americas.⁵⁰ In this context, Britain's supposed victory on the issue at Vienna—and in the bilateral treaties that followed—must have seemed insignificant.

Many merchants in Nantes and Bordeaux sought to resume slaving as soon as the years of war and blockade were over. Some tried to conceal the identity of their vessels, or sailed back into foreign ports such as Hamburg or Antwerp, to avoid the waiting warships.⁵¹ Others sailed with false papers. Nantes—a port city whose wealth before the Revolution had been overwhelmingly dependent on the slave

trade—found it especially difficult to adapt to the new world order, and many businesses now sought to recoup the losses of the war years by returning to the trade in black ebony. As early as January 1815, we know of three ships—the *Cultivateur*, the *Bonne-Mère*, and the *Sénégalaise*—that were fitted out in Nantes, crewed with men from Brittany, from Nantes and Pornic, from Lorient and Paimboeuf, and sailed for West Africa loaded with silks and guns and all the usual accoutrements of the African trade. Their somewhat mixed fortunes reflect the precarious nature of the times. Of the three, only the *Sénégalaise* completed its voyage unimpeded. The *Bonne-Mère* was at anchor in Guadeloupe on 10 August 1815 when the island capitulated to the British; it was seized in the roads off Pointe-à-Pitre and treated by the British admiralty courts as an enemy ship even though the war between France and Britain had ended nearly two months earlier at Waterloo.⁵² The *Cultivateur* was arguably even more unlucky because it in turn fell foul of British efforts to police the Atlantic. When it left Saint-Nazaire on 1 April, it was respecting both French and British law at the time; it also respected the restrictions that had been placed on African trading. However, this did not prevent it from being arrested by a British schooner at Bonny or being taken back to Plymouth for trial. On 16 November, the ship was finally released by the High Court of Admiralty and an indemnity paid. It set out again for the coast of West Africa in May 1816 on a second slaving voyage.⁵³

The numbers tell their own story. French involvement in the slave trade diminished as the hustling and interception increased, and more and more captains decided that the risk of capture was simply too great. However, it cannot all be put down to the effect of British pressure. The loss of Saint-Domingue had greatly decreased the demand for slaves in the Caribbean with the consequence that the economics of slaving voyages was now less certain. In addition, there is evidence that the moral campaign against slavery was having an effect because abolitionist tracts were being published in ever-greater numbers, and English campaigners—such as Thomas Clarkson—were more widely read in French. As alternative commercial opportunities opened up—for example, in the Levant, North Africa, and the East Indies—the popularity of the African slave trade fell away, most particularly in ports along the Mediterranean littoral such as Marseille. However, during the Restoration the abolitionists could claim only a partial success. The illegal slave trade of Bordeaux and Nantes did not wither overnight. No comprehensive figures exist for slave

voyages during these years, because they were necessarily clandestine, but such statistics as we do have are suggestive of a much wider flouting of the law. Between 1814 and 1826, Eric Saugera lists more than forty vessels leaving Bordeaux alone for the African coast, heading to Calabar, or Gorée, or Senegal—with a single firm responsible for five different voyages.⁵⁴ Besides, French slave voyages were just the tip of a much larger iceberg. For the ships' owners and their sea captains, the risks were still worth taking, with the consequence that, during the Restoration years, some 3000 slave ships still plied the Atlantic mostly between West Africa and South America or the Caribbean. The abolitionists in London had relatively little to cheer about. Having completed a census of the ships involved, Serge Daget concludes, rather bleakly, that “all the conditions of the traditional slave trade are still present in this period, scarcely diminished by illegality and repression.”⁵⁵

NOTES

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19. Kielstra, *Politics of Slave Trade Suppression*, 96.
20. Serge Daget, "Tactiques, stratégies et effets du droit de visite," in *De la traite à l'esclavage : Actes du Colloque international sur la traite des Noirs*, Nantes 1985 (2 vols, Nantes and Paris, 1988), vol. 2, 345.
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PART III

Contesting Napoleon's Legitimacy

“All the World’s a Stage and All the Men Are Merely Players”: Theatre-Going in London During the Hundred Days

Susan Valladares

What did the Duke of Wellington, General Gebhard von Blücher, and the actor Edmund Kean have in common? Enough, William Heath would argue, to warrant their selection for his graphic satire, *Three great actors all the world a Stage & all the men are merely [sic] Players*. First published by Samuel Knight on 19 May 1814, Heath’s print aligns the still remarkable news of Napoleon’s first abdication (6 April 1814) with the dizzying heights of success enjoyed by Edmund Kean, who had made his London debut in January of that year. At the left of the print is Wellington, who points with one hand, as if issuing a command, while the other hand grasps the hilt of his sword; Blücher is at the centre; and Kean to the right. Wellington and Blücher both wear full military dress. However, whereas Wellington strikes an elegant figure, Blücher is obviously caricatured: his hat removed, the Prussian Field Master stands with his legs wide apart and places both hands on his hips. His physiognomy

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reveals furled eyebrows and such a bad squint that both his eyes turn outward. This gives the impression that Blücher keeps one eye firmly on Wellington, while the other focuses on Kean. Meanwhile, Kean appears in elaborate stage costume as Richard III, donning the velvet cloak and ermine hat that would long be associated with his interpretation of Shakespeare's Machiavellian king. Already in character, Kean's hunched back is turned away from the two military men while still allowing him to make eye contact with the print's viewers. The positioning of Kean's hands almost perfectly resembles that of Wellington, suggesting that Kean was to the theatres of London what Wellington was to the European theatres of war, while Blücher's centrality acknowledges his instrumental role in securing the surrender of the French armies.

Heath's decision to depict Kean as Richard III was no doubt determined, first and foremost, by the actor's success in that role (chosen for his first season at Drury Lane in full awareness of its important contribution to David Garrick's celebrity in the 1740s).¹ However, Heath may also have been influenced by a more recent graphic satire of 1808, the anonymous *Patriotic Vision appearing to N. Buonaparte*, which offers a politicized re-imagining of Hogarth's 1745 portrait of David Garrick as the haunted Richard III, substituting Napoleon for the pre-eminent Shakespearean actor.² As David Francis Taylor has argued, graphic satirists seem to have been loath to invest the French leader with "the cultural authority and national prestige" associated with William Shakespeare, making this particular print an especially interesting example of the appropriation of Shakespeare for political ends.³ The resulting invitation, i.e., to think of Kean as a second Napoleon, would be only further intensified during the course of the Hundred Days with prints such as Heath's *A Lecture on Heads Delivered by Marshalls Wellington & Blucher* (1815) and Thomas Rowlandson's *Transparency of the Victory at Waterloo* (1815) both coupling Wellington and Blücher as Napoleon's successful captors (Fig. 1).⁴

The graphic satires produced during the Hundred Days provide fascinating insight into popular responses to Napoleon's escape from Elba, his return to Paris, and his eventual defeat by allied forces, as explored in more detail by John Moores in his chapter on "[George Cruikshank and the British Satirical Response to the Hundred Days](#)". An awareness of visual culture also informs the argument of this essay, but it does so only to the extent that contemporary theatre-going might be best understood as a multimedia experience that called upon various levels of visual, musical,



Fig. 1 William Heath, *Three great actors all the world a Stage & all the men are merely [sic] Players*, published by S. Knight (19 May 1814). Library of Congress, Prints & Photographs Division [DSO-7461-22571]

and verbal literacies. The early nineteenth-century theatre offered an affordable and popular pastime within the reach of a broad social spectrum. It was, furthermore, a form of entertainment that had been significantly bolstered by the war against France. Charles Dibdin the Younger, manager of Sadler’s Wells Theatre, thus wrote:

As far as my experience goes, Theatres (in London, at least) prosper most during War, and it is a fact, that immediately previous to the short Peace of Amiens, Sadler’s Wells was crowded every night; but as soon as the Peace was announced, our receipts suddenly fell off to a very serious degree, and continued in that reduced state, till the war recommenced, and then they recovered their former amount.⁵

However, during the Hundred Days theatre tickets continued to sell out, not least because Napoleon’s return to France coincided with the height of an especially exciting theatrical season, which saw new actors

such as Edmund Kean, Charles Mayne Young, and Eliza O'Neill secure their "star" status by taking on ever more ambitious roles. Melodramas also continued to enjoy widespread success; the spectacular "blow-ups" that constituted such a critical part of the melodramatic dramaturgy rendered this genre of entertainment particularly popular at the time of Napoleon's return to France. As Jane Moody explains, the "blow-up" provided a highly symbolic "form of patriotic retribution, an act of dramatic vengeance upon history."⁶ For a nation at war, Britain's theatrical and political histories were closely linked—and, in many cases, inextricably, and deliberately, so—as exemplified by Heath's pointed decision to place Kean alongside Wellington and Blücher.

This essay seeks to locate the Hundred Days within English popular culture by offering an examination of the entertainments then on offer at the patent theatres of Covent Garden and Drury Lane. As sites closely monitored by the Office of Lord Chamberlain, the history of the patent stages testifies powerfully to the overlap between political and cultural discourses. These were, after all, venues wherein popular reactions were kept in check by the state, but this was done rarely straightforwardly and often uneasily.⁷ To what extent, then, did the repertoires at Covent Garden and Drury Lane engage with Napoleon's return to power? Were questions of political order, security, and legitimacy acknowledged and addressed? How effective was political censorship of the theatres? And why might Edmund Kean's career, in particular, serve as a case study for analyzing these questions?

COUNTING THE DAYS

The Licensing Act of 1737 secured monopoly status to Covent Garden and Drury Lane, the only theatres where staged plays could be acted "for hire Gain or Reward" until the introduction of Letters Patent in 1766. It also introduced strict measures by which the Lord Chamberlain's Office would exercise its control over plays and entertainments. Clauses III and IV of the Act made it clear that theatre managers were required to send "a true Copy" of new or amended plays and entertainments "fourteen days at least before the acting representing or performing thereof," and ascribed absolute authority to the Lord Chamberlain's judgments:

It shall and may be lawful to and for the said Lord Chamberlain...to prohibit the acting performing or representing any interlude tragedy comedy

opera play farce or other entertainment of the stage or any act scene or part thereof or any prologue or epilogue. And in case any person or persons shall for hire, gain or reward act, perform or represent, or cause to be acted, performed or represented...contrary to such prohibition as aforesaid; every person so offending shall for every such offence forfeit the sum of fifty pounds and every grant, license and authority...shall cease, determine and become absolutely void to all intents and purposes whatsoever.⁸

Within this context, direct engagement with contemporary politics would be so strictly monitored by the Lord Chamberlain as to effectively prohibit it. As spaces frequented by men and women from all walks of life, Covent Garden and Drury Lane nevertheless provided important platforms for the dissemination of political values—and indeed—news. Topical addresses were often delivered from the stage and proved a valuable means by which to celebrate the latest naval or military victory.

Indeed, a number of pivotal battles—such as Talavera and Salamanca—were successfully re-staged during the Napoleonic Wars, thus resulting in a form of entertainment for which the minor theatres were especially adept.⁹ The bloody and climactic conclusion to the Hundred Days emblemized by the Battle of Waterloo proved relatively resistant to representation, however. Playbills advertising the Royal Circus production of *Richard III* promised that Richmond would appear “in a REAL FRENCH CUIRASS, Stripped from a Cuirassier, on the Field of Battle, at Waterloo”; however, for the most part, as Philip Shaw has argued, Waterloo was not and could not be reduced to “the status of a historical object.”¹⁰ Indeed, what had seemed to be Napoleon’s final defeat would be only his first abdication. None of the men and women living through this turbulent period of history could, of course, have predicted when the Hundred Days would start, how long it would last, or, in other words, when they would be called upon to pay again the “tax of quick alarm,” which so painfully punctures the conclusion to Jane Austen’s *Persuasion* (1818).¹¹ For the political correspondent and theatrical enthusiast Henry Crabb Robinson, Napoleon’s first abdication had been almost beyond the realm of reason; news delivered “as by the stroke of an enchanter’s wand.”¹² A year later when, as if by another seeming sleight of hand, Napoleon returned to France, Robinson observed: “the prospect is tremendous, if we are to have war; for how are our resources to endure, which seem now nearly exhausted?”¹³ Beginnings and endings come together uncomfortably, the

prospect of a new war here weighed down by Robinson's apprehension that the allies were already at their breaking point.

The theatres had celebrated the peace of 1814 in style. In keeping with larger metropolitan responses, Covent Garden and Drury Lane had been brightly illuminated in commemoration of the allied victory.¹⁴ The streets of London soon thronged with curious onlookers keen to catch a glimpse of the diplomatic celebrities in the capital that summer, such as Alexander I, King William of Prussia, Blücher, Prince Metternich, and Prince Leopold (Wellington would make his victorious entry into London on 28 June 1814). To more prominently advertise its new "allegorical festival," *The Grand Alliance*, which premiered on 13 June 1814, Covent Garden boasted that a number of the "illustrious visitors," for whom the entertainment had been written, would in fact be attending the theatre in the company of the Prince Regent. The theatre's actor-manager, John Philip Kemble, and his sister, Sarah Siddons, both enjoyed good relations with the Prince Regent's circle, which goes some way toward explaining the royal sovereigns' return to Covent Garden a few days later on 17 June 1814, as well as Count Platoff and Blücher's selection of the entertainments staged on 21 June and 22 June, respectively.¹⁵ Not to be outdone, Drury Lane, although known as more of a Whiggish theatre, prominently advertised that Alexander I and King William of Prussia would be present on 16 June 1814 to watch Kean perform in Shakespeare's *Othello* and Samuel Arnold's melodrama *The Woodman's Hut*.¹⁶

Heath could not have anticipated that in the summer after Waterloo, Blücher would find himself in the auditorium of Drury Lane, watching Kean first hand. However, he would have known—at least by report—that Edmund Kean was an exceptional actor. After his debut performance as Shylock on 26 January 1814, Kean had taken on a number of other Shakespearean roles, including Richard III, Hamlet, Othello, and Iago, before concluding his first season at Drury Lane. In the season that followed, which was already well underway by the start of the Hundred Days, Kean continued to expand his Shakespearean repertoire (most notably by playing Macbeth and Richard II).

Kean's career speaks to the politicization of theatre—and, by extension, the theatricalization of politics—during the Hundred Days. The actor's perceived affinity to Napoleon received considerable contemporary endorsement and was even seemingly reinforced by the actor

himself. As has often been remarked, Kean showed a notable preference for playing “defeated” characters, thus entailing a re-valorization of men who were often dismissed as comic or grotesque. Kean was not the first to play a sympathetic Shylock (as Peter Thomson and others have pointed out, Charles Macklin preceded him in this respect), but his methodology was original.¹⁷ Whereas contemporary reviewers responded to Kean with varying degrees of enthusiasm, they almost unanimously reflected upon his investment in highly dramatic death scenes and his ready adoption of gestures and movements more commonly associated with pantomime and melodrama. Defeat, denial, and trickery, the three hallmarks of Kean’s tragic style were, of course, shared by Napoleon, as Lord Byron, among others, was quick to recognize.¹⁸

As a member of the Drury Lane Committee, Byron enjoyed privileged access to Kean both onstage and off.¹⁹ As early as 20 February, he wrote to James Webster, uncertain of Napoleon’s fate but confident in the talents of “a new Actor named Kean”:

he is a wonder – & we are yet wise enough to admire him – he is superior to Cooke certainly in many points – & will run Kemble hard – his style is quite new – or rather *renewed* – being that of Nature. - - -?²⁰

A few weeks after writing this letter, Byron’s spirits would receive a blow with the news of Napoleon’s first abdication. On 9 April 1814, Byron wrote to Thomas Moore describing Napoleon’s fall as a “crouching catastrophe.”²¹ Eleven days later, he still struggled to contain his feelings of dejection, expounding to Annabella Milbanke:

Buonaparte has fallen – I regret it – & the restoration of the despicable Bourbons – the triumph of tameness over talent – and the utter wreck of a mind which I thought superior even to Fortune – it has utterly confounded and baffled me – and unfolded more than was “dreamt of in my philosophy.”²²

During this period of political and emotional turmoil, Byron would carefully monitor the fortunes of his “poor little pagod,” Napoleon, while admiring the skyrocketing career of Edmund Kean.²³ Byron might thus be seen to posit Kean as, effectively, a rival to Napoleon, but the

relationship between the two might also be described as one of surrogacy, as hinted at in Heath's satire.

In 1869, Kean's Victorian biographer, Frederick William Hawkins, argued that Kean's performances were likely to have influenced Byron's "Ode to Napoleon" (written in April 1814). As proof, Hawkins claimed that key lines in the poem—"Or trace with thine all idle hand / In loitering mood upon the sand / That Earth is now as free!"—re-mediated the "expressive action of Kean in drawing figures on the sand with the point of his sword previous to his retirement as Richard III into his tent."²⁴ With contemporary audiences accustomed to a staple repertoire, in which revivals and adaptations of Shakespeare featured heavily, Kean's ability to ring-fence new interpretative "points"—i.e., performative climaxes—was crucial to his stage success. His reinvention of "points," such as this one, was at the heart of his celebrity during the Hundred Days. As Jeffrey Cox explains, points effectively function as "spots of time in the action when the actor is able to rise above the surrounding plot to perform almost an aria of words and gestures—Macbeth confronted by Banquo's ghost, for example, or Richard III on the battlefield."²⁵ Hawkins's reading of Byron's "Ode to Napoleon" reminds us of the metaphorical purchase of "points" during the Hundred Days period—a period characterized by actions that seemed to mark the boundaries between the possible and impossible as dangerously porous.

CATCH HIM IF YOU CAN

"Nothing ever so disappointed me as his abdication," Byron wrote of Napoleon in 1815 before adding, with relief, that "nothing could have reconciled me to him but some such revival as his recent exploit; though no one could anticipate such a complete and brilliant renovation."²⁶ The unexpectedness of Napoleon's escape from Elba and return to Paris was read as one of the most abrupt transitions in the French leader's military career—a transition whose realization and effects were not altogether different from that evinced by Kean on stage. Indeed, Kean was famous for his ability to surprise viewers, moving from one passion to another with impressive speed. In the role of Zanga in Edward Young's *The Revenge* (1721), Kean's performance was almost entirely dependent upon "abrupt transitions": "His hurried notions had the restlessness of the panther's; his wily caution, his cruel eye, his quivering visage, his violent gestures, his hollow pauses...were all in character,"

the *Examiner* reported.²⁷ It might even be argued that Kean’s attempt to revive *Richard II* in 1815 came short of full success because the title role simply did not deliver enough opportunities for acting of this kind. For Robinson, the play was “heavy and uninteresting” ... “principally because the process by which Richard is deposed is hardly perceived.” It was only in the final two acts, Robinson argued, that Kean really came into his own: “In the scene in which he gives up the crown, the conflict of passion is finely kept up. And the blending of opposite emotions is so curious as to resemble incipient insanity.”²⁸ In short, it was only towards the play’s conclusion, when the distance between the kingly and the “human all too human” aspects of Richard’s selfhood was most extreme, that Robinson recognized Kean’s great acting.

However, if the breathlessness of Kean’s performances captured something of Napoleon’s own exceptional return, then it is worth noting that Covent Garden had experienced a homecoming of its own. John Philip Kemble, whose difficult negotiations with the Old Price rioters of 1809 had left him open to accusations of Old Corruption, had sought the earliest opportunity to take a break from the stage. He only acted again at Covent Garden on 15 January 1814 after an absence of two years.²⁹ This return was celebrated by *The Times* as late as 1815, when it claimed that “No man of his day has brought to the stage such qualities, a nobler presence, a more polished taste, a more vigorous, rapid, and imitative seizure of character” than Kemble.³⁰ Kean was inevitably compared to Kemble, who was at once his predecessor and rival to the title of the great tragedian of the age. *The Times*, wearing its conservative politics on its cultural sleeves, thus sided with Kemble, to whom the newspaper ascribed a “nobler presence” and “polished taste”—qualities that doubled as implicit criticism against Kean’s putatively less dignified acting. Kean and Kemble approached the representation of passions in markedly different ways. According to the *Theatrical Inquisitor*, “Mr. Kemble exhibits human passions but not as they appear in human beings; he delineates them simply and abstractedly,” his more metaphysical response resulting in a seemingly “unnatural” “singleness of passion.”³¹ Kean, by contrast, was much more pluralistic in his treatment of the emotions. Like Napoleon, he was perceived to be a man of the people, whereas Kemble was unembarrassedly royalist. Kean and Kemble’s differing approaches to their crafts thus became determinedly aligned with disparate political sympathies. There was almost no chance that Kemble’s return during the Hundred

Days would be confused with Napoleon's—the Duke of Wellington was a more likely model.

The class register that became associated with both Kemble and Kean would have at once figurative and material implications. The theatrical auditorium—although open to royalty, aristocrats, the rising middle-classes, and servants alike—was divided according to the price of admission. The boxes constituted the most expensive section; the pit was popular with the middle-classes and critics due to its close proximity to the stage; and the galleries (both lower and upper) were commonly frequented by apprentices, sailors, and servants because their restricted views meant that tickets were relatively cheap at 1 or 2 shillings before half-price. In 1809, Kemble's attempts to increase the costs of admission to the pit and boxes—and to add to the number of private boxes and thus further compromise the views from the galleries at Covent Garden—had met with 67 nights of uninterrupted rioting known as the Old Price (O.P.) Riots. It took a hard-fought battle involving numerous arrests and the controversial recruitment of boxers to manage unruly audiences before the O.P. cause eventually emerged triumphant.³²

Kemble's woes served as an example to the managerial committee of Drury Lane, which was then working on plans for a new theatre (which opened in 1813 after its destruction by fire in 1809). The new Drury Lane's adherence to the familiar model of spectatorship was important to Kean's success because early reviewers almost unanimously stressed the need to secure a good position from which to see the actor. The still cavernous auditorium of the rebuilt theatre, which made it difficult to hear what was happening on stage (and Kean, in any case, did not have a powerful voice), made it all the more important to observe him as closely as possible (rather than from the distanced galleries of the re-built Covent Garden Theatre). As Iago, for instance, Kean realised a moment of exclusively silent communication with Othello (using his eyes alone for expression) at the play's conclusion. Drury Lane's in-house composer Michael Kelly, enjoyed a privileged perspective from his seat in the orchestra.³³ Byron, who was then a member of the Drury Lane committee and sat beside him on this occasion, was thrilled by the intimacy it afforded. He wrote to Thomas Moore on 8 May 1814: "Was not Iago perfection? particularly the last look. I was *close* to him (in the orchestra), and never saw an English countenance half so expressive."³⁴ Robinson, accustomed to sitting in the pit, found himself surprisingly disappointed

after acquiring admittance to the boxes. Noting that “the greater part of the pleasure was lost when the piercing glances from his eyes were lost,” Robinson affirmed that he “never wish[ed] to see or hear Kean from the Boxes.”³⁵ Toward the end of May 1815, when Byron wrote to Leigh Hunt inviting him to watch Kean from the privacy of his own box, he thus underlined the box’s closeness to the stage.³⁶ Kean’s greatest supporters hailed from the middle classes (who generally preferred the pit) or those with theatrical connections (who could position themselves even closer to the stage).

Yet, as Kean’s popularity at Drury Lane acquired a social charge of its own, the Hundred Days theatrical season concluded with threats of another furore at Covent Garden when steeper prices were announced for the theatre’s reopening after its summer closure. *The Times* reported that “a tumultuous clamour commenced” with cries of O.P. soon drowning out James Kenney’s farce *Raising the Wind* (1803): “Hisses, groans, whistling, screaming O.P.’s and Off’s, were the only sounds that could be heard.” It was further observed that most of this noise came from the pit and that, otherwise, the opponents to the new prices seem to have been “a visible minority.”³⁷ In 1815, Covent Garden was still haunted by the 1809 riots, whereas Drury Lane successfully launched an actor whose brilliance largely depended on the privileged viewing experience associated with the sections of the auditorium that had been rendered most vulnerable by Kemble’s proposed reforms.

THE ART OF DYING

Napoleon’s blaze of success at the start of the Hundred Days must have seemed nothing short of necromancy—to both his supporters, such as Byron, who reveled in the leader’s unexpected display of power, and his detractors, such as Robinson, who deemed the latest intelligence “dreadful indeed.”³⁸ In April 1814, Napoleon’s first abdication had been interpreted as his death knell. The satiric broadside *The last dying speech, confession and general character of Napoleon [sic] Buonaparte* (1814) offers a prime example of this. It features a generic (indeed, excessively outdated) woodcut of a public execution, followed by what purports to be a full criminal confession.³⁹ This imagined confession develops into a chilling catalogue of Napoleon’s reported crimes. It begins in the first person, with Napoleon defining himself through his most notorious acts,

both general and specific: “Destroyer of Crowns, and manufacturer of Counts, Dukes, Princes and Kings...Head butcher of the Massacre at Madrid, and the murderer of the noble Duke of Enghien. Kidnapper of a thousand Ambassadors. High Admiral of the threatened Invasion of England...Sanguinary Coxcomb, Assassin, and Incendiary.” This is followed by a brief switch to third-person narration, which confirms Napoleon’s execution but ultimately claims to give the final say to the French Emperor, whose final words are recorded as the pitifully solipsistic “Alas! alas! poor me!”⁴⁰

Napoleon was, of course, exiled to Elba rather than executed. Furthermore, even if a lethal punishment had been pursued, Napoleon’s execution would hardly have taken place “at the new drop, High Street, Birmingham, Monday, 11th. April, 1814” as advertised. Thus, although the broadside deliberately engages with the local and familiar spectacle of capital punishment, it never foregoes the fictionality ushered by its proudly provincial character. Mock execution broadsides such as this one enjoyed widespread popularity. Earlier examples include *The last dying speech and confession of Neapoleon* [sic] *Bonaparte alias Bonyparty*, which had appeared in Newcastle in 1810, as well as the 1793 broadside, *The End of Pain* (which took similar liberties with the exiled Thomas Paine by appropriating T. Ovenden’s satirical print, which was also published in 1793).⁴¹ What makes the Birmingham example especially interesting is the choice of 11 April for its title; that is the date of Napoleon’s exile to Elba. The broadside’s viewers were fully cognizant that Napoleon would not die in Birmingham, but this fact mattered less than the invitation to imagine that he might. As Vic Gatrell writes, “execution sheets were totemic artefacts. They were symbolic substitutes for the experiences signified or the experiences watched.”⁴² This satiric example was no exception.

The possible also eclipsed the probable in Kean’s on-stage death scenes. The American actor, James Henry Hackett, who aimed to offer an exact imitation of Kean’s impersonation of Richard III, provides a detailed description of Kean’s interpretation of the role in his notes to Oxberry’s edition of *Richard III* (1822).⁴³ Punctuated with dramatic dashes symbolic of Kean’s celebrated transitions, Hackett’s pronounced use of the present participle speaks to Kean’s dynamic energy on stage. In the final scene,

[He] fights furiously back & forth – in turning loses [*sic*] balance, falls on his knee, & fights up, – in turning ^{receives} Richmonds [*sic*] thrust – lunges at him feebly after it – [clenching] is shoved from him – staggers – drops the sword – grasps blindly at him – staggering backward & falls – head to R.H. – turns upon right side – writhes ^{rests on his hands} – gnashes his teeth at him (L.H.) as he utters his last words – blinks – & expires, ~~by falling~~ ^{rolling} on his back.⁴⁴

To William Hazlitt, Kean seemed to fight “like one drunk with wounds.” His refusal to accept defeat was uppermost: “the attitude in which he stands with his hands stretched out, after his sword is taken from him, had a preternatural and terrific grandeur; as if his will could not be disarmed, and the very phantoms of his despair had a withering power.”⁴⁵ Kean’s interpretation of Macbeth’s final moments was similarly pointed: “In *Macbeth* when mortally wounded he poises himself for a second totters and falls. He revives crawls after his sword and as his fingers reach it he dyes,” Robinson wrote in his diary.⁴⁶ There was, then, a clear resemblance between Kean’s interpretation of this death scene and his performance as Richard III where, once his sword had been “beaten out of his hands he continues fighting with his fist as if he had a sword.” The similarity prompted Robinson to reflect that “even in the last moments the ruling passion and the personalities of the character are not to be lost in the general idea of human suffering.”⁴⁷ Such sensitivity was a hallmark of Kean’s acting, which although less “abstract” than Kemble’s, was studied all the same. As G. H. Lewes observed, Kean seemed to evince an acute awareness of the ways in which “a strong emotion, after discharging itself in one massive current, continues for a time expressing itself in feebler currents.” Thus, “in watching Kean’s quivering muscles and altered tones you felt the subsidence of passion,” he argued.⁴⁸ There was a considered, deeply felt, and unrelenting energy to Kean’s actions.

On further reflection, Robinson wondered whether Kean’s performance of Richard III’s final moments would not have been better suited to Macbeth. However, he recognized that Richard had been performed first and that in the fickle world of celebrity, the actor “could not afford to reserve his best conception for the fitter occasion.”⁴⁹ He was also conscious that Kean’s tragic death scenes had already begun to establish a legacy of their own. Eliza O’Neill—Covent Garden’s newest sensation and most serious challenger to Sarah Siddons’s fame—showed clear signs of Kean’s influence when performing her final scenes

in *Isabella*. Robinson observed: “Her last motions were a convulsive movement of her hands as if in search of her child after she had lost her sight in the agonies of death. This trick she has learnt from Kean.” He adds, moreover, that “now the idea is known it will become the common property of the profession.”⁵⁰ If, as Robinson claims, previous generations of actors had focused on the bodily, rather than mental, sufferings associated with death, then audiences during the Hundred Days were privy to death scenes staged with greater emotional awareness than ever before. Kean was arguably the most impressive practitioner of this art, whose aptitude was evinced in his Shakespearean but also, lesser canonical, roles, such as that of Sir Edward Mortimer in George Colman the Younger’s *The Iron Chest* (1796; revived at Drury Lane in 1816). In this play, “the last scene of all” was, for Hazlitt, the most remarkable: “one of those consummations of the art, which those who have seen and have not felt them in this actor, may be assured that they have never seen or felt any thing in the course of their lives, and never will to the end of them.” The play showcased “his coming to life again after his swooning at the fatal discovery of his guilt, and then falling back after a ghastly struggle, like a man waked from the tomb.”⁵¹ With Kean’s new inflections taken up by O’Neill and other actors, the tragic climax was experienced, during the Hundred Days, in new, more emotive, and symbolically drawn-out forms. Kean’s lingering moments could be read, by men such as Byron, as an analogue for Napoleon’s refusal to relinquish his authority and quit the political stage, whereas for others more attuned to Robinson’s political sentiments, the same scenes could be read as a rejection of Napoleon’s return.

THE BLOW-UP

The Battle of Waterloo was not directly represented on the London patent stages for reasons both pragmatic and ideological.⁵² As Jeffrey Cox explains, the Licensor’s tendency to ban all contemporary history from the stage meant that Waterloo-themed plays were thus avoided at the end of the Hundred Days. The only notable exceptions, he observes, were pantomimes.⁵³ Bringing together song, spectacle, and dance, pantomimes were difficult to pin down and could therefore evade censorship more easily. In his essays on pantomime for the *Examiner* of 1817, Leigh Hunt described pantomime as the perfect vehicle for satire.⁵⁴ It was a genre

with which Kean was acutely familiar. His career had begun in the provinces where he played a diverse repertoire of high and low figures. In his *Reminiscences*, Michael Kelly retells the now well-known anecdote that when Samuel Arnold first went to Dorchester to assess Kean’s reputed talents, he recognized that as Harlequin, Kean had no competitor.⁵⁵ In fact, before his engagement at Drury Lane, Kean had accepted an offer from Robert Elliston, the manager of the Olympic Theatre, who had hired him as the company’s principal Harlequin and superintendent in the arrangement of pantomimes.⁵⁶ This was never fulfilled because successful negotiations were made at Drury Lane instead, but Kean’s experiences as a pantomimic actor stood him in good stead at the patent theatres. Although he did not play Harlequin there, he brought the gestural repertoire associated with that role to his performance of tragic figures. Kean’s innovative death scenes were, after all, visually expressive above anything else. “The three great pleasures of pantomime,” Hunt numbered, are “its bustle, its variety, and it’s [*sic*] sudden changes”—three great pleasures also associated with Kean’s acting.⁵⁷ Thus, although Robinson struggled to reconcile himself to Kean’s “want of dignity,” he could not help but appreciate the actor’s “fine pantomimic face and great agility.”⁵⁸

Such agility was well suited to the contemporary repertoire. As Peter Thomson notes, “Kean’s arrival in London coincided with the flowering of melodrama as the dramatic mode most accommodating to the taste of the time.”⁵⁹ And melodrama, as Cox explains, “is built for speed.”⁶⁰ Melodrama thus complemented Kean’s transition-based acting, but it was also a genre that posed a threat to Kean’s success as the leading tragedian of the day. During the Hundred Days period, both patent theatres depended heavily on melodrama. On 27 March 1815, Covent Garden, unable to compete directly with Kean’s stage presence, launched Isaac Pocock’s new melodramatic entertainment, *Zembuca; or, The Net-Maker and His Wife*.⁶¹ The play proved so successful that it was performed a further 27 times that season until its final representation on 12 June 1815, a bare week before the Battle of Waterloo.

Pocock’s melodrama evolves around the machinations of the Sultan of Persia, the eponymous Zembuca, who has imprisoned Almazaide, the loyal wife of his general, Selim. The latter is banished, a death warrant issued against anyone harbouring him, and a generous reward promised for his denouncer. Thus persecuted, Selim seeks shelter in the cottage of Mirza, the humble net-maker whose name significantly features in

the play's subtitle. With Mirza's support, Selim succeeds in returning to the palace under an assumed disguise. However, his interview with Almazaide results in his capture; he is made a prisoner and condemned to death. Korac, a slave in whom Zembuca confides, forms an alliance with Mirza in order to release Selim from his captivity. They join a body of troops in open resurrection against Zembuca. The palace is successfully stormed, and—in a final act that seeks to restore the balance of justice—the fortress is blown-up.

Contemporary reviewers generally agreed that there was little in the play's plot or dialogue to commend it. The *Morning Post* affirmed that the principal character of Zembuca, "like most stage tyrants, is somewhat at odds with common sense."⁶² *The Times*, extending its diagnosis of the weaknesses of melodramas, in general, to Pocock's new play, in particular, claimed that the plot was of "feeble and incongruous structure"⁶³; whereas the reviewer for the *Theatrical Inquisitor*, fatigued by the effort of delivering a full plot summary, described the melodrama as a "mass of absurdities" which did not merit "more minute detail."⁶⁴ However, was *Zembuca* really nothing more than a "wretched piece of vamped-up folly," as the *Theatrical Inquisitor* insisted? The patrons of Covent Garden seem to have thought otherwise—or, at least, to have been open to the play's supposedly meretricious quality. For all their reservations, none of the play's critics could overrule its spectacular stage effects: "the haram scene, with its internal blaze and gorgeous decoration coming in sudden contrast with the cool and dewy beauty of the moonlight [sic] landscape, excited considerable applause," *The Times* attested.⁶⁵ *The Morning Post*, more generous in its praises, suggested that "the voluptuous splendor of the East has never been more felicitously pictured than by the artists employed on some of the scenes in 'Zembuca'" (Fig. 2).⁶⁶

Pocock's melodrama was also ripe for political application; its representation of the tyrannical Zembuca amenable to re-casting as either Napoleon or one of the restored Bourbon kings, and its theme of slavery serving as a sharp reminder that an European agreement to the abolition of the slave trade had yet to be successfully negotiated.⁶⁷ Indeed, *Zembuca's* concluding scene seemed to openly acknowledge the excessive ways in which its action might be interpreted. The play ends climactically, with a direct denunciation of the Sultan's treachery and the spectacular destruction of his supposedly impregnable fortress. The net-maker Mirza (played by John Emery) and his wife Ebra (played by Maria Gibbs) both assumed pivotal roles:



Fig. 2 Set design by John Henderson Grieve for *Zembuca; or, The Net-Maker and His Wife*, Covent Garden, 1815. Given by John Walford Grieve. Museum number: S.1014-1984 © Victoria and Albert Museum, London

As ZEMBUCA's party are driven by SELIM's, and followed into the Castle, the Walls appear damaged – Shells and Bombs, &c. seen to pass to and from the Fortress; the Moat appears to fill with water, and the distant part of the Building in flames. The Combatants appear a second time in front – KORAC combats with ZEMBUCA; – his Sword, knock'd from his gripe [sic], is caught up by EBRA, who comes from the steps – the combat is renewed, ZEMBUCA rushes through the portal, followed by KORAC....The Building blows up, the Tower falls, and ZEMBUCA, clinging to a rafter is precipitated into the Moat – SELMIM enters with ALMAZAIDE, MIRZA preceding, and followed by KORAC, all bend the knee to ALMAZAIDE and SELIM – General shout of the Victors. The End.⁶⁸

The Times may have sardonically concluded that “amid the roar of combat and the sweep of flame the curtain comes a welcome intervention to the raptures and fatigues of the drama,”⁶⁹ but there is no denying that

this sensational moment of theatre constituted *Zembuca's* main attraction. As Jane Moody puts it, such “conflagrations offer visible image[s] of the moral clarity which melodrama often attempts to impose upon the world.”⁷⁰ Drury Lane itself could not resist the seductive appeal of this. Preferring romance to history, its production of *Charles the Bold; or, The Siege of Nantz* (1815)—an adaptation of René-Charles Guilbert de Pixérécourt’s *Charles le Téméraire: ou le siege de Nancy*—concluded not with Charles “slain and stript in vulgar battle with a brother duke,” but “blown to pieces by the delicate hand of the fair and heroic *Leontina*” (played by Frances Maria Kelly).⁷¹ Such “moral clarity” was in high demand, but it was not to be trusted at face value. As Jane Moody explains, such reassuring simplicity could also prove “illusory...a sham.”⁷²

Political sympathies during the Hundred Days were far from black and white. Toward the start of the Hundred Days, Robinson had begun a series of exigent political reflections. In his diary, he noted how he and Hazlitt had “once felt alike on politics.” At the time of writing, their “hopes and fears” seemed, however, “directly opposed.” Robinson recognized that this spectrum of emotions was a decidedly unstable one: “his [i.e. Hazlitt’s] *hatred* and my *fears* predominate and absorb all weaker impressions. This I believe to be the great difference between us”, he concluded.⁷³ By the end of the Hundred Days, when in the company of William Godwin and the Taylors, Robinson found himself cornered into a decidedly uncomfortable reckoning of past and present political sympathies:

Godwin and I all but quarrelled; both were a little angry, and equally offensive to each other. Godwin was quite impassioned in asserting his hope that Buonaparte may be successful in the war...We, however, agreed in apprehending that Buonaparte may destroy the rising liberties on the French, and that the allies may attempt to force the old Bourbon despotism of the French. But Godwin thinks the latter, and I the former, to be the greater calamity...⁷⁴

What defined the Hundred Days first and foremost was an acute sense of uncertainty. The full duration of the Hundred Days was still unknown to Robinson, even on 23 June 1815, when he described Waterloo as “most glorious,” but remained fearful that “it will not so affect the

French people as to occasion a material defalcation from Buonaparte.”⁷⁵ Mary Favret describes the period as “cataclysmic,” dominated by “an anxiety that both history and future could be obliterated, and time left drifting in the nearly present (but never present enough) wartime.” “On the one hand, living ‘in the meantime’ of war means living in constant anticipation and dread; simultaneously, and on the other hand, it means living belatedly,” she explains.⁷⁶ In apparent exemplification of this, the *Examiner* reported on 9 April 1815: “There has been little news of importance during the past week, but then that very fact is important, and tends to shew what doubts and difficulties are daily starting up with regard to the contest against BONAPARTE.”

In the form of melodramas such as *Zembuca*, the patent stages offered visually impressive narratives that sought to provide an antidote to such “doubts and difficulties.” The genre, which had first emerged after the short-lived Peace of Amiens—another false start for triumphalist myth-making—testified to the ardent emotions experienced during the Hundred Days. What it lacked in literary sophistication, it at least partly made up for through its emotive economy. Meanwhile, Edmund Kean—the mercurial actor whose heyday coincided with Napoleon’s return to power—sought to ascribe the experience of living through the Hundred Days with the cultural authority reserved for Shakespeare. He succeeded in doing this, ironically, by acting in a style more suited to pantomime and melodrama than tragedy. Moving with the nimble grace of Harlequin, the small actor travelled the breadth of Drury Lane’s deep stage, revising key performative points, and dying scenes most especially. He may not have been an universal success—indeed, for many theatre-goers the opportunity to see him at his best, close-up, would prove elusive—but Kean’s ability to replace expectation with surprise struck a chord, nevertheless.

As an actor Kean was, by definition, a surrogate. The parallels between Kean and Napoleon were relished by Byron and perhaps even exploited by the actor himself. However, all of this was secondary to the fact that Kean and Napoleon shared the ability to ensure that when they were on their respective stages, it was the here and now of the dramatic moment that took precedence. Theatre-going always has the potential of being more than *just* a pastime, but when Napoleon escaped Elba, it provided audiences of all political stripes with a means of conquering the slow and uncertain passage of the Hundred Days.

NOTES

1. In her introduction to the British Theatre edition of *Richard III*, Elizabeth Inchbald noted that Garrick was particularly well suited to the part because of his height and skills in mimicry. Kean shared similar attributes. *King Richard III: A Tragedy, in Five Acts, by William Shakespeare as Performed at the Theatres Royal, Drury Lane and Covent Garden. Printed under the Authority of the Managers, from the Prompt Book. With Remarks by Elizabeth Inchbald* (London, 1808), 4.
2. Anonymous, *Patriotic Vision Appearing to N. Buonaparte* (1808). Broadside. BM Satires undescribed.
3. David Francis Taylor, "Harlequin Napoleon: Caricature and the Pantomime of War." Abstract submitted for *The London Stage and the Nineteenth-Century World* conference, New College, University of Oxford, 14–16 April 2016. See "Harlequin Napoleon; Or, What Literature Isn't," Chapter 7 of Taylor's forthcoming book (title tbc) with Yale University Press (2018). I am grateful to David Francis Taylor for introducing me to this print.
4. By 30 April 1815, the *Examiner* was already reporting that in their efforts to defeat Napoleon, the Allies had begun to accumulate large armies under Blücher and Wellington.
5. Charles Dibdin the Younger, *Memoirs of Charles Dibdin the Younger*, edited by George Speaight (London: Society for Theatre Research, 1956), 119. Dibdin refuses to outline his theories for this perceived shortfall during peacetime.
6. Jane Moody, *Illegitimate Theatre in London 1770–1840* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 102.
7. On censorship in this period, see L. W. Conolly, *The Censorship of the English Drama, 1737–1824* (San Marino: The Huntington Library, 1976).
8. "The 1737 Licensing Act," in David Thomas (ed.), *Restoration and Georgian England 1660–1788*, (Cambridge University Press, 1989), 209.
9. Elsewhere I argue that battlefields recreated in London's minor theatres effectively "replaced the complex human dimensions of warfare with one of geopolitical order". For a more detailed discussion of this, see Susan Valladares, *Staging the Peninsular War: English Theatres 1807–1815* (Farnham: Ashgate/Routledge, 2015), 139.
10. Playbill for the Royal Circus, 11 September 1815. Philip Shaw, *Waterloo and the Romantic Imagination* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2002), 15.
11. [Jane Austen], *Northanger Abbey: And Persuasion: By the Author of 'Pride and Prejudice'; ... with a Biographical Notice of the Author. In Four Volumes* (London, 1818), 308; in *Nineteenth-Century Fiction*

(Cambridge: Chadwyck-Healey, 1999). Available on-line at http://gateway.proquest.com/openurl?ctx_ver=Z39.88-2003&xri:pqil:res_ver=0.2&res_id=xri:ilcs&rft_id=xri:ilcs:ft:nf:Z000030882:0. Last accessed 30 June 2017.

12. Henry Crabb Robinson, *Diary, Reminiscences, and Correspondence of Henry Crabb Robinson*, selected and edited by Thomas Sadler. 3 vols. (London, 1869), I, 427 (10 April 1814).
13. Robinson, *Diary, Reminiscences, and Correspondence*, I, 478 (18 April 1815).
14. In 1814, celebrations took place across the metropolis and, indeed, Britain. The illuminations were free for all to see. Other forms of jubilee—such as the masquerade held at Burlington House on 1 July 1814—were more exclusive.
15. Siddons officially retired from the stage in 1812 but continued to perform selected roles and deliver private readings.
16. For a Calendar of Performances spanning the years 1807–1815, see Valladares, *Staging the Peninsular War*, Appendices A and B.
17. See Peter Thomson, “Actors and Acting,” in *The Cambridge Companion to British Theatre, 1730–1830* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 5.
18. See Nicoletta Caputo, “Edmund Kean or ‘the Romantic Actor,’” in *The Languages of Performance in British Romanticism*, edited by Lilla Maria Crisafulli and Cecilia Pietropoli. Oxford: Peter Lang, 2008; 127–140.
19. See Byron’s letter to Lady Melbourne, dated 17 October 1814, where the poet notes: “Dined with Kean (*the Kean*). Kean is a wonderful compound – & excels in humour & mimicry – the last talent is rather dangerous – but one cannot help being amused with it: – in other respects – in private society – he appears diffident & of good address – on the stage he is all perfect in my eyes’. *Byron’s Letters and Journals*, edited by Leslie A. Marchand, 12 vols., Volume IV: “Wedlock’s the Devil, 1814–1815,” (Massachusetts: Belknap Press, 1974), 212.
20. Byron to James W. Webster, 20 February 1814, in *Byron’s Letters and Journals*, IV, 67.
21. Byron to Thomas Moore, 9 April 1814, in *Byron’s Letters and Journals*, IV, 93.
22. Byron to Annabella Milbanke, 20 April 1814, in *Byron’s Letters and Journals*, IV, 101.
23. For Byron’s description of Napoleon as his “little pagod,” see Byron to Lady Melbourne, 8 April 1814, and Byron to Thomas Moore, 9 April 1814, in *Byron’s Letters and Journals*, IV, 90 and 93 respectively (93).

24. Frederick William Hawkins, *The Life of Edmund Kean: From Published and Original Sources*. 2 vols. (London, 1869), I, 213.
25. Jeffrey Cox, *Romanticism in the Shadow of War: Literary Culture in the Napoleonic War Years* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2014), 71–72.
26. Byron to Thomas Moore, 27 March 1815, in *Byron's Letters and Journals*, IV, 284–285. Napoleon escaped from Elba on 26 February 1815. On 13 March, he was declared an outlaw. This declaration marked the beginning of the War of the Seventh Coalition.
27. *Examiner*, 28 March 1815.
28. Henry Crabb Robinson, *The London Theatre 1811–1866: Selections from the Diary of Henry Crabb Robinson*, edited by Eluned Brown (London: The Society for Theatre Research, 1966), 64 (25 May 1815).
29. Peter Thomson, “Chapter 4: Edmund Kean,” in *Garrick, Kemble, Siddons, Kean: Great Shakespeareans*. Volume II, edited by Peter Holland (London: Continuum International Publishing Group, 2010), 146.
30. *The Times*, 17 April 1815.
31. *The Theatrical Inquisitor and Monthly Mirror* for May 1815, 383.
32. On the Old Price Riots, see Marc Baer, *Theatre and Disorder in Late Georgian London* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1992).
33. Michael Kelly, *Reminiscences of Michael Kelly, of the King's Theatre, and Theatre Royal Drury Lane, including a period of nearly half a century; with original anecdotes of many distinguished persons, political, literary, and musical*. 2 vols. (London, 1826), II, 284.
34. Byron to Thomas Moore, 8 May 1814, in *Byron's Letters and Journals*, IV, 115.
35. Robinson, *London Theatre*, 57 (10 May 1814).
36. Byron to Leigh Hunt, May—1 June 1815, in *Byron's Letters and Journals*, IV, 294.
37. *The Times*, 21 July 1815.
38. Robinson, *Diary, Reminiscences, and Correspondence* (14 March 1815), I, 475. See also the *Examiner* for Saturday 26 Mar 1815, wherein it was claimed that “the whole business [i.e. of the Hundred Days], from its suddenness, looks more like a dream and a vision, than a waking truth...”; and the *Examiner* for Sunday 2 July 1815, which argued “the changes that now take place in the world have more the look of pageants or shews than any thing else.”
39. The appearance of the men gathered to witness the execution suggests Puritan spectators and thus invites associations with the Civil War period—associations that disturb the otherwise straightforward demonization of Napoleon realized by the printed confession.

40. *The Last Dying Speech, Confession and General Character of Napoleon* [sic] *Buonaparte*. Printed by H. Wadsworth [11 April 1814]. BM Satires Unnumbered.
41. See *The Last Dying Speech and Confession of Neapolcon* [sic] *Bonaparte Alias Bonyparty* (1810), BM Satires undescribed; and *The End of Pain* (1793) BM Satires 8294.A. See also T. Ovenden, [*The End of Pain*] (1793), BM Satires 8294.
42. Vic Gatrell, *The Hanging Tree: Execution and the English People, 1770–1868* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1994), 175.
43. Although Hackett’s annotations refer to Kean’s later acting, as Peter Thomson argues, “...there is good reason to accept that, once he had established himself in a character, Kean aimed to reproduce, not to vary, his performance of it,” Peter Thomson, “Chapter 4: Edmund Kean,” 157.
44. *King Richard III: Edmund Kean’s Performance as Recorded by James H. Hackett*, edited by Alan S. Downer (London: The Society for Theatre Research, 1959), 98.
45. William Hazlitt, *The Complete Works of William Hazlitt*, edited by P. P. Howe, after the edition of A. R. Waller and Arnold Glover. 21 vols. (London: J.M. Dent and Sons, Ltd, 1930–1934). Volume V, “Lectures on the English Poets and A View of the English Stage.” V, 182.
46. Robinson, *London Theatre*, 60 (23 December 1814).
47. Robinson, *London Theatre*, 60 (23 December 1814).
48. G. H. Lewes, *On Actors and the Art of Acting* (London, 1875), 2nd ed. 8–9.
49. Robinson, *London Theatre*, 60 (23 December 1814).
50. Robinson, *London Theatre*, 60 (23 December 1814).
51. Hazlitt, *The Complete Works*, V, 344–345.
52. Frederick Burwick notes that one of the first theatrical representations of the Battle of Waterloo was performed at the old Royalty in Wellclose Square on 15 November 1815. Frederick Burwick, “18 June 1815: The Battle of Waterloo and the Literary Response,” *BRANCH: Britain, Representation and Nineteenth-Century History*, edited by Dino Franco Felluga. An extension of *Romanticism and Victorianism on the Net*. Web. Last accessed 24 May 2016.
53. Cox, *Romanticism in the Shadow of War*, 166. See also: Jeffrey Cox, “‘Illegitimate’ Pantomime in the ‘Legitimate’ Theater: Context as Text,” in *Studies in Romanticism* 54 (Summer 2015); 159–186.
54. *Theatrical Examiner*, 26 January 1817.
55. Kelly, *Reminiscences*, II, 283.
56. Kelly, *Reminiscences*, II, 283.
57. *Theatrical Examiner*, 26 January 1817.

58. Robinson, *London Theatre*, 56 (7 March 1814).
59. Thomson, "Chapter 4: Edmund Kean," 173.
60. Cox, *Romanticism in the Shadow of War*, 51.
61. The application for a license for *Zembuca; or, The Net-Maker and His Wife*—listed as a "melodramatic romance' in two acts"—was submitted by John Fawcett on 11 March 1815. The MS was dated by Larpent on 13 March. Dougald MacMillan records "slight differences" between the MS and printed copies. See *Catalogue of the Larpent Plays in the Huntington Library*, compiled by Dougald MacMillan (San Marino, CA: San Pasqual Press, 1939), 307 (Entry 1854).
62. *Morning Post*, 28 March 1815.
63. *The Times*, 28 March 1815.
64. *Theatrical Inquisitor*, March 1815, p. 233.
65. *The Times*, 28 March 1815.
66. *Morning Post*, 28 March 1815.
67. On the issue of slavery during the Hundred Days see, for example, Robinson, *Diary, Reminiscences, and Correspondence*, I, 440 (29 August 1814).
68. Isaac Pocock, *Zembuca; or, The Net-Maker and His Wife. A Dramatic Romance in Two Acts as Represented at the Theatre Royal, Covent Garden on Monday, March 27, 1815* (London, 1815), 50.
69. *The Times*, 28 March 1815.
70. Moody, *Illegitimate Theatre*, 102.
71. *The Times*, 19 June 1815.
72. Moody, *Illegitimate Theatre*, 102.
73. Robinson, *Diary, Reminiscences, and Correspondence*, I, 477 (15 April 1815).
74. Robinson, *Diary, Reminiscences, and Correspondence*, I, 489–490 (22 June 1815).
75. Robinson, *Diary, Reminiscences, and Correspondence*, I, 491 (23 June 1815).
76. Mary Favret, *War at a Distance: Romanticism and the Making of Modern Warfare* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2010), 74.

Dancing the “Waterloo Waltz”: Commemorations of the Hundred Days – Parallels in British Social Dance and Song

Erica Buurman and Oskar Cox Jensen

A collection of 24 country dances “for the year 1815,” published by Button and Whitaker of London, which includes a tune and the accompanying figures for each dance, evidently appeared on the market before the unexpected events of the Hundred Days.¹ Amongst the dances are “Lord Castlereagh’s Waltz,” the namesake of which was around the time of publication still actively engaged in representing Great Britain at the Congress of Vienna; and “The Duke of Wellington’s Waltz,” written in celebration of the national hero who had played a pivotal role in the events leading up to Napoleon’s defeat and abdication in 1814. The collection also includes

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a dance called “Louis the XVIII,” a retrospectively premature celebration of the return to power of the Bourbon monarchy.

Several of the dances within Button and Whitaker’s collection were therefore outdated within months of publication. At a public ball, the titles of dances were announced to the assembled guests by the master of ceremonies, who would direct couples to their places and instruct the band to play the tune once through before dancing commenced. It was customary for the honour of calling the dance to fall to the ladies, and at some balls numbered tickets would be issued at the start of the evening to determine the order of the calling.² Dances with commemorative titles effectively enabled the calling of that dance to function as a public tribute to a significant person or event. As the events of the Hundred Days unfolded, it would therefore have become somewhat incongruous for a guest at a ball to call the tune of “Louis the XVIII.” Similarly, Castlereagh was no longer an obvious subject for glorification in the early months of 1815 with the Congress having lingered on for months and not yet having reached a satisfactory outcome by the time Castlereagh left Vienna to return home in February. Presumably the moment for “Lord Castlereagh’s Waltz” had similarly passed. In the immediate wake of the Battle of Waterloo, however, numerous new commemorative dances—including a “Waltz composed in Honour of the grand Victory at Waterloo” by I. C. Mencke,³ “The Waterloo or Belle Alliance Military Waltz for the Piano Forte” by Federigo Fiorillo,⁴ and “The Favorite Waterloo Dance With Variations for the Piano Forte” by J. Durwollt—quickly appeared on the market that reflected a more up-to-date commentary on recent events.⁵ The October 1815 edition of the fashionable magazine *La Belle Assemblée* also included a “Waterloo Waltz” by a Miss Charlotte Reeve.⁶ These commemorative dance publications clearly reflect a general spirit of patriotism and celebration at the close of the Napoleonic Wars as well as the opportunism of publishers in seizing on contemporary events to expand sales.

Not all commemorative dances appearing on the British sheet music market were as obviously patriotic as the various “Waterloo” dances, however. An Edinburgh collection of dance tunes from approximately 1817, for instance, includes a tune with the title “Buonaparte’s Return to Paris from Elba”.⁷ As a mere reference to the event, with no further text to clarify any specific political sentiment, the title was open to several interpretations: a genuine celebration of Napoleon’s escape from Elba; an ironic celebration of Napoleon’s return to power, which in retrospect

was known to be short-lived; or simply as an impassive reference to recent events. The tune itself provides no further clues, taking the form of a lively jig for a duet of flutes that could be used to accompany any generic country dance (see Fig. 1).

Similarly, the tune “St. Helena” (Fig. 2) (appearing in a London collection for 1819 [see Fig. 2]) may have had different political resonances at the time of publication than it would have had in the immediate aftermath of Waterloo⁸: by 1819, a growing body of popular song and poetry cast Napoleon as a fallen hero with his exile to St. Helena treated as a tragic subject. These sympathetic songs came to prominence as early as 1814, but they truly flourished across Britain only after his second exile. The most famous—such as “Isle of St. Helena,” “Bonny Bunch of Roses,” and “The Grand Conversation on Napoleon”—were sung into the twentieth century. Yet their tunes, slow and stately affairs all, can hardly be said to bear much relation to dance music: It would hardly seem proper to mourn Napoleon’s fate with a jaunty, toe-tapping number. The only likely exception, “The Earsdon Sword-Dancer’s Song,” which refers to “the great Buonaparte, the hero that cracked the whole all,” was not recorded until far later in the century.⁹ In terms of its simple and lively C-major dance tune, “St. Helena” seems to suggest a positive message, thus implying a patriotic celebration of Napoleon’s defeat and exile. When considered in the context of contemporary poetry and



Fig. 1 Buonaparte’s return to Paris from Elba, bars 1 through 8 (from *MacLeod’s Collection of Airs, Marches, Waltzes and Rondos, Carefully Arranged for Two German Flutes*, Edinburgh, c. 1817)



Fig. 2 St. Helena (or l’Alina), bars 1 through 8 (from *Button, Whitaker and Comp.’s Twenty Four Country Dances with Figures by Mr. Wilson for the year 1819*)

song, however, where the subject of St. Helena is associated with sympathy for the fallen emperor, the intended meaning behind the tune's title becomes somewhat ambiguous. This suggests that commemorative dance tunes represented a separate and slightly different type of commentary on contemporary events from the type represented in verbal and literary culture.

Recent scholarship has recognized the significance of ephemeral and commemorative music as markers of broader political and social issues within a given society. Popular song is particularly amenable to this type of investigation because the lyrics can explicitly espouse political, nationalist, loyalist, or seditious sentiments. This potential to convey text was seized on during the Revolutionary and Napoleonic conflict by reformers and activists of every political hue but most notably by loyalist writers, who sought to win the hearts and minds of the British people in sermons and manifestos masquerading as entertainment. The relationship between lyric and performed song was not straightforward, however, and across both the two decades of conflict, as well as the breadth of the British Isles, a wide array of perspectives were expressed, contested, accepted, and rejected in songs ranging from rousing anthems to tragic ballads and by authors and audiences as diverse in origin and status as they were in opinion. Napoleon himself figured prominently in these songs, by turns celebrated, demonized, ridiculed, and lamented in accordance both with the course of events and the domestic political situation.¹⁰

Commemorative social dance music has not yet been subject to similar in-depth investigation. The lack of a text (with the exception of a title) obviously inhibits in-depth readings of underlying political sentiments such as those expressed in poems or songs with multiple verses. Furthermore, the non-representational nature of dance music prevents the kind of investigation that links the musical material with its broader historical and political context as is possible in the case of longer and more sophisticated commemorative musical works (attested by a large body of literature on political elements in the music of Beethoven, for instance).¹¹ Although some of the more substantial sets of dance music originating from the ballrooms of Vienna incorporate clear allusions to military music and other characteristic styles, most British dance tunes of the period bear no discernible relation to their title.¹² This essay investigates the role of commemorative dance titles within contemporary social-dance culture by considering the manner and extent to which

those participating in the dance may have responded to its titular subject or theme. The political sentiments underpinning commemorative dance titles from the period of the Napoleonic Wars, and particularly the Hundred Days, will be investigated by exploring parallels in contemporary British song, the politics of which are more easily accessible through their lyrics (although even these can be ambiguous). Ultimately the essay seeks to investigate how commemorative dances contributed to shaping peoples’ responses, evocations, and memories of war.

SONGS AND DANCES OF THE NAPOLEONIC WARS

As ephemeral musical forms, commemorative dance tunes and popular songs were accessible to wider British society and therefore offer a useful marker of popular sentiment about contemporary events. Although popular songs could express specific political sentiments and may have been addressed to a range of audiences, commemorative dances generally appeared in published collections that were aimed primarily at fashionable society. Annual dance collections typically indicated on the title page that the collection included dances “as danced at Court, Bath, Brighton & all Polite Assemblies,” which were hardly the types of venue or occasion at which one would expect to encounter radical or subversive views.¹³ Dancing master Thomas Wilson’s guidelines for ballroom etiquette instruct that “No couple ought to refuse to stand up directly the Dance is called, as it shews great disrespect to the Lady who calls it.”¹⁴ There was clearly a tacit understanding that commemorative titles in annual country dance collections would be acceptable to everyone attending a public ball and therefore that the values reflected by such titles were the universal values of polite society.

As would be expected, important people and events of the Napoleonic Wars feature regularly in dance publications throughout the period of the wars. Table 1 outlines titles that explicitly refer to the wars from 28 annual dance collections dated between 1795 and 1815. Although these collections (many of which are now preserved in the British Library) constitute only a sample of the annual dance publications of the period, they nevertheless provide a reasonable overview of how such publications commented upon the wars. Each of the collections represented in Table 1 is explicitly marketed as containing dances for the named year and presumably appeared on the market toward the end of the previous year. The most up-to-date titles therefore comment on events

Table 1 Commemorations of the Napoleonic Wars in annual dance publications between 1795 and 1819

<i>Publication</i>	<i>Dance titles referring to people and events of the Napoleonic Wars</i>
<i>Smart's Annual Collection of Twenty-Four Country Dances, for the Year 1795</i> (London: Smart)	The Capture of Calvi
<i>Preston's Twenty Four Country Dances for the Year 1799</i> (London: Preston)	Sprigs of Laurel for Admiral Nelson
<i>Twenty Four New Country Dances for the Year 1799</i> (London: Skillern)	Buonaparte's Expedition
<i>Preston's Twenty Four Country Dances for the Year 1800</i> (London: Preston)	Lord Nelson's Hornpipe Bonaparte's Defeat
<i>W. Milhouse's Annual Collection of Twenty-Four Favorite Country Dances for the Year 1801</i> (London: Milhouse)	The Siege of Genoa
<i>Twenty Four Country Dances for the Year 1803 Composed by Mr. Gray</i> (London: Thompson)	Lord Nelson's Whim
<i>Preston's Twenty Four Country Dances for the Year 1803</i> (London: Preston)	Blessings of Peace Madm. Buonaparte's Waltz
<i>Thompson's Twenty Four Country Dances for the Year 1804</i> (London: Thompson)	Bonaparte in a Knapsack The Loyal Volunteers Conquer or Die Jump Frogs Jump A fig for Bonaparte 8000, Flat from France Joe the Volunteer Who's Afraid Loyalty and Freedom
<i>John Paine's Annual Collection of Twenty Four Country Dances for 1807</i> (London: Paine)	The Victory at Trafalgar The British Volunteer
<i>Twenty-Four Country Dances for the Year 1808</i> (London: Goulding & Co.)	Lord Cathcart's Reel Surrender of Copenhagen
<i>W. M. Cahusac's Annual Collection of Twenty-Four Favorite Country Dances for the Year 1809</i> (London: Cahusac)	Sir Arthur Wellesley's Dash—a Waltz The Ephemeral Emperor The Spanish Patriots Boney in the Dumps
<i>Button and Whitaker's Twenty Four Country Dances with Figures for the Year 1810</i> (London: Button & Whitaker)	Walcheren Waltz

(continued)

Table 1 (continued)

<i>Publication</i>	<i>Dance titles referring to people and events of the Napoleonic Wars</i>
<i>Twenty Four Country Dances, for the Year 1810</i> (London: Goulding, Phipps, D'Almaine & Co.)	Lord Cathcart Basque Roads The Island of Walcheren
<i>Fentum's Annual Collection of Twenty-Four Favorite Dances for the Year 1810</i> (London: Fentum)	Lord Wellington's Waltz Lord Cathcart Basque Roads
<i>Robinson's Twenty Four Fashionable Country Dances, for the Year 1811</i> (London: H. Robinson)	Bonapart's Nuptials Lord Wellington's Hornpipe
<i>Wheatstone's Elegant and Fashionable Collection of 24 Country Dances [...] for the Year 1812</i> (London: Wheatstone)	Lord Wellington Lord Wellington's Waltz
<i>Twenty Four Country Dances, for the Year 1812</i> (London and Dublin: Goulding, D'Almaine, Potter & Co.)	Lord Wellington The King of Rome
<i>Button and Whitaker's Twenty Four Country Dances with Figures by Mr. Wilson for the Year 1813</i> (London: Button & Whitaker)	Marmont's Retreat The Salamanca Castanets
<i>W. M. Cahusac's Annual Collection of Twelve Favorite Country Dances, with Their Bases, for the Year 1813</i> (London: Cahusac)	The Battle of Salamanca General Hill Marquis Wellington The French Eagle Marmont's Mistake
<i>Le Sylphe, an Elegant Collection of Twenty Four Country Dances, the Figures by Mr. Wilson, for the Year 1813</i> (London: Button & Whitaker)	
<i>C. Gerock's, Annual Collection of Twenty Four Favorite Country Dances, for the Year 1813</i> (London: Gerock)	Marmont's Defeat
<i>Twenty Four Country Dances, for the Year 1814</i> (London and Dublin: Goulding, D'Almaine, Potter & Co.)	Prince Kutusoff Vittoria Saragossa
<i>Button and Whitaker's Twenty Four Country Dances, with Figures by Mr. Wilson. For the Year 1814</i> (London: Button & Whitaker)	The Vittoria Waltz
<i>Button, Whitaker, and Beadnell's Twenty Four Country Dances, with Figures by Mr. Wilson, for the Year 1815</i> (London: Button, Whitaker & Beadnell)	The Bourbon Hornpipe

(continued)

Table 1 (continued)

<i>Publication</i>	<i>Dance titles referring to people and events of the Napoleonic Wars</i>
<i>Campbell's Favorite Set of New Country Dances & Strathspeys Reels &c., for the Year 1815</i> (London: Campbell)	The Royal Visitors The Emperor of Russia Genl. Prince Blucher's victory
<i>Le Sylphe, an Elegant Collection of Twenty Four Country Dances, the Figures by Mr. Wilson, for the Year 1815</i> (London: Button & Whitaker)	Lord Castlereagh's Waltz Lord Liverpool's Waltz The Duke of Wellington's Waltz Louis the XVIII
Augustus Voigt, <i>Twenty New Country Dances for the Piano Forte for the Year 1815</i> (London: Preston)	Duke Wellington's Welcome in London Prince Blucher's Waltz The Great Folks in London
<i>Goulding, D'Almaine, Potter & Cos. Twenty-Four Country Dances, for the Year 1815</i> (London: Goulding, D'Almaine, Potter & Co.)	Wellington in France The Isle of Elba Nap in the Clouds Field Marshall Blucher

of the previous year: Thus the Battle of Salamanca (1812) first appears in collections for 1813 ("The Salamanca Castanets" and "The Battle of Salamanca"), and the Battle of Vittoria (1813) is first commemorated in collections for 1814 ("Vittoria" and "The Vittoria Waltz"). Collections for 1815 include numerous titles celebrating the general peace of 1814 and the visit of the allied sovereigns to London in June 1814 (such as "The Bourbon Hornpipe," "Genl. Blucher's Victory," and "The Great Folks in London"). All of these collections were published in London, although their title pages frequently indicate that the tunes had also been performed at fashionable assemblies in places such as Bath and Brighton. The titles contained within these collections therefore offer a commentary on the progress of the Napoleonic Wars from the perspective of London-centred fashionable society.

The commemorative titles represented in Table 1 predictably celebrate British victories and military heroes more than any other aspects of the wars. The Duke of Wellington is commemorated most frequently, appearing a total of 10 times: first in 1809 ("Sir Arthur Wellesley's Dash—A Waltz") and continuing to appear in publications from 1810 to 1813 as events in the Peninsular War unfolded, and appearing in three of the five represented collections of 1815 (printed at a time when Britain

was celebrating general peace). Wellington was well known in fashionable society not only for his military achievements, but also as a prominent figure on the London scene and himself a regular attendee at balls. Although commemorative "Wellington" dances celebrated Britain's progress in the wars, they were particularly fitting due to Wellington's association with the social dancing of the fashionable elite. In contrast, while he was a junior general fighting an inauspicious campaign and tainted by the scandalous Convention of Cintra, he received little attention in song until the battle of Salamanca (1812) made him a household name across Britain. In addition, although his popularity peaked with Waterloo, it faded just as swiftly: almost no new songs mention him positively after 1815 despite a range of formal commemorations of his victories in subsequent years.¹⁵

Commemorative dance titles did however mirror a number of London-centred trends in popular song in terms of commentary on the wars, particularly regarding depictions of Napoleon. The image of Napoleon as the "familiar Corsican Ogre, perpetrator of atrocities, emasculated as infantile or literally demonised" first emerged in British popular song as a response to the renewal of hostilities with France in 1803 after the collapse of the Peace of Amiens.¹⁶ Before this, British songs had included admiring portrayals of Napoleon, where he featured "as a foil to the hero of the hour, Horatio Nelson," thus serving further to glorify Nelson's naval victories.¹⁷ A shift in attitude in 1803 can be also observed in a new flood of loyalist volunteer songs, stemming primarily from the London press, which consciously supported the volunteer movement that responded to the new threat of invasion.¹⁸ The two developments were necessarily related, the attacks on Napoleon themselves a response to his encampment at Boulogne, thus leading to fears of simultaneous invasion and insurrection. The songwriters' response, however, was both overwhelming and uncoordinated and beset by an essential contradiction: the danger of Napoleon had to be taken seriously, but morale simultaneously had to be boosted to face it, meaning that thousands of Britons were earnestly exhorted to unite in arms against a phantom, pantomimic menace.¹⁹ Editors of dance collections, of course, faced no such rhetorical difficulties because they needed only to provide titles to their tunes; yet, because there was no necessity that they insist on an affinity to current affairs, their allusions must have seemed to them to have some purchase politically as well as commercially as was the case for ballad writers.

A similar trend in depictions of Napoleon in annual dance publications can be observed in the titles represented in Table 1. Two publications of 1799 included tunes with the titles “Buonaparte’s Expedition” and “Buonaparte’s Defeat,” which appeared to be relatively neutral references to Napoleon’s Mediterranean Campaign of 1798 and his defeat at the Battle of the Nile. From late 1803, however, there was a marked shift in tone. This is most striking in *Thompson’s Twenty Four Country Dances for the Year 1804*, in which Napoleon was now irreverently portrayed as a diminutive figure of ridicule in “Bonaparte in a Knapsack” and “A Fig for Bonaparte.” The title “8000, Flat from France” is probably a satirical reference to the flat-bottomed boats with which the French were supposedly planning to invade Britain, here made to sound somewhat ridiculous. Thompson’s collection simultaneously celebrates the volunteer movement with “The Loyal Volunteers” and “Joe the Volunteer” and consciously celebrates British bravery and patriotism with titles such as “Who’s Afraid” and “Loyalty and Freedom.” The obviously loyalist sentiments in Thompson’s collection of 1804 were echoed in later collections with titles such as “The British Volunteer” (appearing in Paine’s collection for 1807) and “The Ephemeral Emperor” (in Cahusac’s collection for 1809). Irreverent nicknames for Napoleon—familiar from contemporary poetry, song, and caricature—also appear in collections for 1809 (“Boney in the Dumps”) and 1815 (“Nap in the Clouds”). The variant spellings of Bonaparte, particularly the Italian “Buonaparte” (appearing in collections for 1799 and 1803), may have carried particular connotations in print contexts: in France, for instance, the Italian spelling was a useful way for anti-Napoleon propaganda to highlight his identity as a Corsican “foreigner.” In printed tune books, however, the spelling of Bonaparte probably carried less significance, especially in the context of a public ball where a dance’s printed title would be visible only to the musicians (although of course the master of ceremonies could choose to adopt a pointedly French or Italian pronunciation when announcing a Napoleon dance). Overall, the shift in tone in commentary on the wars in dance titles from Thompson’s 1804 collection onward, with a new emphasis on celebrating British heroism and on lampooning Napoleon, mirrors the response of the loyalist London printers who churned out patriotic propaganda songs from 1803 in response to the return to a state of war with France.

A further parallel with contemporary song exists in the treatment of Napoleon's domestic life. The title "Madm. Buonaparte's Waltz" from Preston's collection for 1803 would presumably have been taken as a genuine tribute to Napoleon's wife Josephine, given that the collection appeared at a time of peace and that it also included a tune titled "The Blessings of Peace." The tune "Bonaparte's Nuptials" in Robinson's 1811 collection, however, appeared in print at a time when writers, songwriters, and caricaturists were using Napoleon's divorce from Josephine and marriage to Marie Louise as a subject of satire and a means of ridiculing the French emperor.²⁰ Leading printers of London songs exulted in the Emperor's supposed marital difficulties: The song "Boney Wants a Baby" took particular delight in imagining him as unlucky in love: henpecked, deluded, and sexually inadequate.²¹ Thus, as a dance title, "Bonaparte's Nuptials" would have been understood as a satirical commentary on Napoleon's domestic life rather than a respectful tribute to the new empress. Similarly, "The King of Rome," which appeared in Goulding, d'Almaine, Potter & Co.'s collection for 1812, would also have been taken as a satirical or ironic tribute to Napoleon's infant son; this is clearly evident in the British Library's copy of this publication, on which three handwritten exclamation marks have been added after the tune's title.²² In social-dance culture, the mocking of Napoleon that was familiar from literary and visual culture had the added element of collective participation. The act of calling "The King of Rome" at a ball would invite everyone present not only to enjoy the irony but also to contribute to its expression by joining in the dance.

Although the above-discussed dance titles can be seen to reflect broader trends in popular responses toward the war with France, the references to the 1807 Battle of Copenhagen ("Surrender of Copenhagen" [Goulding & Co.'s collection for 1808]) and the 1809 Walcheren campaign ("Walcheren Waltz" and "The Island of Walcheren" [both in collections for 1810]) are more surprising. Although the Copenhagen campaign was a British victory, which effectively prevented the Danish fleet from allying with the French, the British bombardment of Copenhagen resulted in more than 2000 civilian deaths and met with moral condemnation from many quarters.²³ Walcheren was an even more unlikely subject for celebration. Having been intended as a campaign to destroy the French naval fleet at Flushing, thereby consolidating Austria's recent victory over the French at the Battle of Aspern-Essling

in May 1809, the fall of Flushing to British forces in August ultimately had little impact on the French who had, in the interim, defeated the Austrians at the Battle of Wagram. In addition, during the protracted siege of Walcheren more than 4000 British soldiers died after contracting malaria, and the fiasco prompted the resignation of Castlereagh as Secretary of State for War.²⁴

The unsavoury aspects of the Copenhagen and Walcheren incidents presumably hindered their celebration in literary culture and popular song because it would be somewhat incongruous to comment on these events in any great detail without making reference to the unfortunate collateral damage they caused. No popular songs on either of these disasters appear to have been written, and the only poems that were published in the opposition press are highly critical of the events they describe.²⁵ In commemorative dances, however, the events could be alluded to in acknowledgement of Britain's involvement in the wars without the need to confront the finer details. The references to Copenhagen and Walcheren in annual dance publications in fact suggest a conscious effort to co-opt these incidents within a broader rhetoric of victory and patriotism despite the fact that they were already controversial by the time the eponymous dance tunes appeared in print. The calling of tunes such as "The Surrender of Copenhagen" and the "Walcheren Waltz" at public balls would help to consolidate the association of these events with acts of collective celebration, thus implicitly placing them on a par with the subjects of other commemorative dance titles such as "Lord Wellington's Waltz" or "The Battle of Salamanca."

Overall, the commentary on the Napoleonic Wars in annual dance collections produced in London largely echoes that of the patriotic songs produced by the London press, thus presenting an obviously loyalist and patriotic perspective. In the context of public balls, commemorative dances offered opportunities for guests to display their patriotism by calling a tune that obviously celebrated military heroes or recent victories. In contrast with popular song, however, social-dance culture enabled celebrations of military events that did not obviously warrant national celebration, thus bringing events such as the Copenhagen and Walcheren campaigns into a broader culture of festivity and collective participation. The naming of dances after military figures and events had the effect of casting the war in a positive light and of bringing the celebration of Britain's progress in the wars into an everyday cultural pastime.

SONGS AND DANCES OF WATERLOO

As outlined previously, a number of individual “Waterloo” dances appeared on the British sheet music market in the immediate aftermath of the event. The rapid appearance of these dances suggests a collective mood of celebration, and indeed a similar spate of celebratory dances had appeared on the Viennese music market during the Congress of Vienna only a few months before. Visitors to Vienna could buy copies of the music that had featured at the lavish balls, for which the Congress became renowned, and could also buy commemorative dances such as *Wellington in Vienna: Six Triumphal Marches for Piano-Forte* and numerous dances named after the famously dance-loving Tsar of Russia. Brian E. Vick cites these publications as part of a broader commemorative culture in which Viennese poets, composers, painters, and publishers jostled “to claim a share of the celebratory market.”²⁶ The “Waterloo” dances appearing on the London market in 1815 clearly demonstrate a similar celebratory moment being seized upon by composers and publishers of dance music.

In annual dance collections, of course, commemorations of the events of the Hundred Days first appeared in collections for the year 1816, by which time stability had been restored and Napoleon already exiled to St. Helena. Table 2 outlines references to the Napoleonic Wars in eight annual dance collections from the years after Napoleon’s final defeat between 1816 and 1819. Unsurprisingly, the majority of commemorative titles in these collections refer to the allied victory at Waterloo. Because they form part of an unbroken line of Waterloo commemorations in dance publications since 1815, their political message is unmistakably patriotic. Two also allude to Napoleon’s exile to St. Helena (“St. Helena Hornpipe” [1817] and “St. Helena” [1819]). Although in isolation these “St. Helena” dances could be read as being sympathetic to Napoleon’s fate (as discussed previously), in the context of the other titles represented in annual dance collections it is clear that these titles belong to a culture of end-of-war celebration and of British victory.

As with the commemorative dances that had appeared during the period of the wars, the medium of simple dance tunes allowed the celebration of Waterloo to be relatively unreflective, offering no opportunity to dwell on the violence or loss of life at the battle itself. In contemporary song culture, by contrast, even the most patriotic “Waterloo” songs

Table 2 Commemorations of the Hundred Days in annual dance publications between 1816 and 1819

<i>Publication</i>	<i>Dance titles referring to people and events of the Napoleonic Wars</i>
<i>C. Gerock's Annual Collection of Twenty Four Favorite Country Dances, for the Year 1816</i> (London: Gerock)	La Belle Alliance Wellington Hat
Charles Wheatstone, <i>The Union, an Elegant Collection of Twenty-four Country Dances for the year 1817</i> (London: Wheatstone)	Waterloo
<i>Le Sylphe, an Elegant Collection of Twenty Four Country Dances, the Figures by Mr. Wilson, for the Year 1817</i> (London: Button, Whitaker & Co.)	Waterloo Bridge
<i>For the Year, 1817, Monro's Annual Selection of Country Dances, Waltzes, &c.</i> (London: Monro)	Waterloo Bridge
<i>Annual Collection of Twenty Four Favorite Country Dances, for the Year 1817</i> (London: Gerock)	St. Helena Hornpipe
<i>Astor & Horwood's Twenty Four Country Dances for the Year 1818</i> (London: Astor & Harwood)	Wellington's Triumph La Belle Alliance La Wellington Waterloo Bridge
<i>Button, Whitaker and Comp.'s Twenty Four Country Dances with Figures by Mr. Wilson for the Year 1819</i> (London: Button & Whitaker)	St. Helena (or L'Alina) The Waterloo (or Caractacus)
<i>Thompson's Twenty Four Country Dances, with Figures by Mr. Wilson, for the Year 1819</i> (London: Thompson)	The Battle of Waterloo La Belle Alliance Wellington's Triumph Marshal Blucher

tended to incorporate mournful reflection on the fallen soldiers and their widows and orphans alongside celebration of victory.²⁷ J. Thompson's "Boney's Total Defeat, and Wellington Triumphant," which was set to the proud old drinking tune, "Roast Beef of Old England," nonetheless made room for the "thousands" that were "slain," admitting that "The slaughter was dreadful, I tell it with pain."²⁸ At the same time, in a growing body of song from the industrial north of England in particular, Waterloo increasingly featured in songs that dwelt on the social injustice

and economic depression of the post-war years.²⁹ “Waterloo Fashions” was published in Manchester and North Shields, where unemployment was suddenly rife, as well as London; one typical verse, well-pitched to resonate with its working-class market, runs:

Our Waterloo weavers are grown very thin,
And their Waterloo faces are all bone and skin.
And their Waterloo bellies it runs in my mind
Have not much in them but Waterloo wind.³⁰

No such tragic or embittered undertones can be read in the simple commemorative dance titles represented in Table 2: Here “Waterloo” continues to be treated straightforwardly as a subject for celebration.

Although the commemorative dances appearing in annual publications in the years after the end of the wars demonstrate a clear fixation on Waterloo, a somewhat different picture of post-1815 commemorations of the Napoleonic Wars emerges when more substantial dance collections are considered. Table 3 outlines commemorative titles in five such collections, four of which were published between 1817 and 1830 and the fifth in a manuscript collection. Unlike annual collections, the collections in Table 3 are not billed as dances for one particular year but rather as larger, general compendiums of dance tunes. Many of the dances contained within these collections were already widely known: Wilson’s *Companion to the Ballroom* contains old tunes such as “The Irish Washerwoman” and “Bobbing Joan,” a variant of the latter tune (as “Bobbing Joe”) also appearing in John Playford’s *The English Dancing Master* of 1651.³¹ The more recent tunes in these compendiums may have already been in circulation at public dances at the time of publication, although some may also have been original compositions by the editor. The commemorations of the Napoleonic Wars in these collections, as viewed in Table 3, offer a long view of the wars rather than commemorating only the most recent events.

Two of the five collections stem from the London press, and thus their perspective on the wars presumably resonates with that of the annual collections discussed previously (and indeed Thomas Wilson, author of *A Companion to the Ball Room*, provided the dance figures for many of Button and Whitaker’s annual collections outlined in Tables 1 and 2). Different perspectives might be expected from the two Edinburgh publications (Table 3) as well as the “Robert Harrison”

Table 3 Commemorations of the Napoleonic Wars in larger dance collections of the early nineteenth century

<i>Dance collection</i>	<i>Dance titles referring to people and events of the Napoleonic Wars</i>
Thomas Wilson, <i>A Companion to the Ball Room</i> , 3rd edition (London: D. Mackay, c. 1817)	Ça Ira The Downfall of Paris The Austerlitz Waltz
<i>The Flute Player's Pocket Companion. A Select Collection of Dances, Waltzes, Quadrilles & Airs with Variations Composed & Arranged as Duets for the German Flute by George Forrester</i> , 3 vols. (Edinburgh: J. Sutherland, c. 1817)	Bonaparte's March Duke of Wellington's Waltz
<i>MacLeod's Collection of Airs, Marches, Waltzes and Rondos, Carefully Arranged for Two German Flutes</i> , 3 vols. (Edinburgh: J. Sutherland, c. 1817)	Buonaparte's Grand Parade March Blucher's Waltz Buonaparte's Return to Paris from Elba Hero of Salamanca Leipsic Waltz Salamanca Waltz
<i>Vol 6 of Alexander's New Scrap Book Containing One Thousand Favorite Airs for the Flute, Violin or Flageolet</i> 6 vols. (London: J. Alexander, c. 1830)	Ah Ça Ira [<i>sic</i>] Buonaparte's March Waterloo March
"Robert Harrison" manuscript (nineteenth-century manuscript collection of more than 150 dance tunes) ⁴⁰	The Waterloo Dance La Belle Alliance Waltz St. Helena Waterloo The Downfall of Paris The Battle of the Nile The Austrian's Retreat Gen. Bonaparte's March Lord Nelson's Hornpipe

manuscript collection (of unknown origin). Nevertheless, in all five of these collections, Waterloo features far less than in post-1815 annual collections; in fact, Waterloo is notably absent from Wilson's, Forrester's and MacLeod's collections, all of which stem from approximately 1817. This may be partly due to the fact that any "Waterloo" dances then in circulation were too new to have entered the standard repertoire of dance tunes. Yet this explanation does not sufficiently account for the presence of "Buonaparte's Return to Paris from Elba," the lively jig shown in Fig. 1, which appears in MacLeod's Edinburgh publication and

which similarly could not have been in circulation for long. Furthermore, it seems striking that MacLeod’s collection includes this reference to the commencement of the Hundred Days with Napoleon’s return to France but no explicit references to Napoleon’s subsequent defeat.

It is difficult to read an ironic or satirical undertone in the title of “Buonaparte’s Return to Paris from Elba.” The title does not have the openly mocking tone of titles such as “Boney in the Dumps.” In part, this might reflect the editor’s own outlook: Edinburgh was a more radical city than London, and at least three notable members of the Macleod clan were famed for their reformist or pro-French sympathies.³² Furthermore, at the time of publication of MacLeod’s collection (1817), there was no obvious contemporaneous trend for the satirising of Napoleon’s escape from Elba that clearly leads the title to be taken as ironic; commemorative titles in annual dance collections from the post-Waterloo period, as observed in Table 2, have a patriotic, celebratory tone rather than a tone of mockery and satire. Yet “Buonaparte’s Return” does not clearly point to a celebration of Napoleon either, particularly because it appears alongside other titles that celebrate earlier notable victories against the French emperor, namely, the “Salamanca Waltz” and the “Leipsic Waltz” (the latter of which presumably refers to the 1813 Battle of Leipzig, which led to Napoleon’s abdication in 1814). Instead, the tone of the title “Buonaparte’s Return” resembles the more neutral references to Napoleon observed in dances from the early years of the wars (see Table 1). The other reference to Napoleon in MacLeod’s collection, “Buonaparte’s Grand Parade March,” similarly lacks a clear sense of mockery or irony as do similar titles represented in the other collections represented in Table 3 (“Buonaparte’s March” and “Gen. Bonaparte’s March”). The overriding impression in the references to the wars in the collections listed in Table 3 is that of impassive commentary on historical events rather than of explicitly loyalist or patriotic sentiment. This is suggested particularly by the inclusion of tunes that refer to the events of the French Revolution, long since overshadowed by the Napoleonic Wars: namely, “Ça ira” (the emblematic Revolutionary song) in the Wilson and Alexander collections and “The Downfall of Paris” in the Wilson collection and the Harrison manuscript.

The reference to the 1805 Battle of Austerlitz in the “Austerlitz Waltz” of Wilson’s collection, however, does apparently suggest a pro-Napoleon agenda. The tune itself is one of the simplest in the whole collection at only 16-bars long and spanning a range of less than an octave (Fig. 3).



Fig. 3 Austerlitz Waltz (from Thomas Wilson, *A Companion to the Ball Room*, c. 1817)

The simplicity of the tune, combined with the fact that the British army did not participate at Austerlitz, leaves no room for a tragic interpretation of the title. Instead, the title's reference to one of Napoleon's most famous victories appears to celebrate the event. It is also striking that Wilson's collection of more than 400 songs contains no obvious references to major British victories of the Napoleonic Wars, including Waterloo. Yet Wilson's *Companion to the Ballroom* is clearly pitched within the mainstream culture of social dance and concludes with a lengthy essay on "The Etiquette of the Ballroom"; a manual of this type would hardly be expected to convey radical political sentiments. Thus, the presence of the "Austerlitz Waltz" in *Companion to the Ball Room* appears to be highly ambiguous. A likely interpretation is that the tune originated in France, where Austerlitz would have been an obvious subject for commemoration in the years after 1805, and entered the British ballroom repertoire after Austerlitz had been eclipsed by subsequent events and was no longer an especially relevant symbol of pro-Napoleon sentiment. French country dances (or *contredanses*) published during the Napoleonic Wars similarly bore patriotic titles such as "La Bonaparte" and "L'Austerlitz,"³³ and other French tunes were absorbed into the English country dance repertoire ("Ça ira" being an obvious example). The "Austerlitz Waltz" in Wilson's collection of approximately 1817 supports the impression that, after Waterloo, commemorative titles from earlier stages of the wars no longer held their original significance as overt expressions of patriotism.

Overall, the commemorative titles outlined in Table 3 represent a different perspective on the Napoleonic Wars than the commemorative titles that appeared in annual collections throughout the period of the wars. Whereas annual collections consciously commemorated recent events and largely echoed the patriotic sentiments of the loyalist songs

stemming from the London press, larger compendiums of social dance tunes offered a more dispassionate commentary on the wars from a safe historical distance. Thus, the numerous Waterloo dances that appeared in annual dance publications after the end of the wars demonstrate an ephemeral, overtly loyalist and patriotic response to Waterloo rather than a perspective that had a lasting impact in social-dance culture. The patriotism underpinning the various Waterloo dances also marks an essential difference between the responses of social-dance culture and popular song to the events of the Hundred Days. Whereas even the most patriotic Waterloo songs invariably incorporated sober reflection on the suffering associated with the event (both in terms of the battle itself and the subsequent economic depression), dance tunes allowed for no such reflection; Waterloo dances therefore offered an unnuanced and uncomplicated mode of celebrating the close of the Napoleonic Wars.

SONGS AND DANCES AS MODES OF COMMEMORATION

It is possible to distinguish two different modes of commemoration of the Hundred Days in the commemorative social dances discussed earlier. The first was of patriotic celebration with Waterloo dominating as a subject representing victory and celebration (without being tempered by the reflections on the tragic aspects of the event that appeared in contemporary poetry and song). The second was of a more impassive commentary, in which references to the Hundred Days and Waterloo were absorbed into a narrative of the events of the Napoleonic Wars in their entirety. Although the second type of commemoration did not clearly embody the explicit patriotism of the various "Waterloo" commemorations, it was not unpatriotic either. As a form of culture in which wider polite society participated, social dance was unsuitable as a medium for expressing complex or controversial political sentiments; however, it could provide a setting for acknowledging the wider political and military context, thus bringing these themes into the centre of the social and cultural life of the nation.

In view of these two modes of commemoration, it is worth reflecting on commemorative social dance in the context of wider cultural ephemera. The inclusive nature of social dance clearly contributed to its suitability for expressions of public celebration. Both elite and wider polite society engaged in social dancing, which contributed to the sense of community and public spirit conveyed by commemorative dances.

Furthermore, social dancing was an inherently participatory activity, making it a particularly suitable medium for collective celebration. At a public assembly where the “Waterloo Waltz” was danced, for instance, all people present could actively participate in the act of celebration—indeed, even the foot-tapping observer is in some sense implicated.

Social dance was not universally held to be an appropriate medium for commemorations of Waterloo, however, as demonstrated in an 1817 poem by Robert Shorter with the title “On Seeing in a List of New Music, *The Waterloo Waltz*.”³⁴ The poem expresses outrage that an event of such magnitude and at which there was such loss of life should be commemorated in such a trivial medium. Although the poem first appeared in *Sherwin’s Political Register*, it subsequently appeared in *The Morning Post* with a modified title: “On Seeing in a List of New Music, ‘*The Waterloo Waltz*,’ by a Lady.”³⁵ The waltz in question may have been the aforementioned “Waterloo Waltz” by Charlotte Reeve that appeared in *La Belle Assemblée* in October 1815 as part of the wider culture of commemorative Waterloo dances published in the immediate aftermath of the event. In any case, the explicit mention of a “lady” adds a further layer to the poet’s outrage, thus highlighting the disparity between the feminine, domestic sphere and the male domain of the battlefield. As observed in other commemorative dances of the Napoleonic period, however, social dances routinely paid tribute to military events and personages without necessitating engagement with the associated violence and loss of life. It was this unreflective aspect of commemorative social dance that evidently troubled the author of the 1817 poem on “The Waterloo Waltz.”

Yet the lack of critical reflection in commemorative dances may, conversely, contribute to the appropriateness of the medium for capturing the longer-term societal memory of an event. Paul Connerton has explored the idea of bodily practices (including formal ritual as well as the bodily aspects of cultural behaviour and etiquette) as agents of social memory, arguing that such practices “provide a particularly effective system of mnemonics.”³⁶ Additionally, bodily practices “contain a measure of insurance against the process of cumulative questioning entailed in all discursive practices.”³⁷ Thus, although a song about Waterloo must address the fallen soldiers and the terror of the battlefield, so that even the most glib expressions of triumphalism—such as the “Battle of Waterloo” published by London printer Thomas Batchelar—found room to mention “pity’s tear” and “hapless widows,”³⁸ a dance about Waterloo (as a non-discursive practice) need not address these details.

Social dance, as a bodily activity, allows participants to preserve the memory of an event without having to engage with it critically.

It is this latter form of commemoration—of unquestioning memory of an event—that perhaps marks the clearest distinction between the responses to the Hundred Days in social dance compared with those in popular song. In social-dance publications, Waterloo continued to be commemorated even in the years of political and economic turmoil that followed the end of the wars, thus suggesting that the medium of social dance was in some way immune to the political counter-narratives that existed in song. It is worth emphasising that Shorter’s protest at the “Waterloo Waltz,” mentioned previously, took the form of a poem published in a radical newspaper: He could neither affect, nor express himself via, the culture of dance itself. The treatment of Wellington is a case in point: between the late 1810s and 1840, he was repeatedly attacked in numerous songs for both his politics and, retrospectively, the hard line he took as a general; however, as the titular hero of numerous dances, he remained impervious to criticism.³⁹ Even ambiguous titles—such as the “Austerlitz Waltz” and “Buonaparte’s Return to Paris from Elba”—could be incorporated into dance collections alongside celebrations of Wellington and Waterloo without danger of being understood as conveying subversive sentiments.

It is natural that publishers of annual dance collections would seize the opportunity to name dances after significant military figures and events during a period of war. Not only was this a convenient way to make dances appear up to date and relevant, it also allowed London’s loyalist press to bring celebrations of military victories into mainstream social life. The medium of social dance even allowed printers a certain degree of control over the way Britain’s progress in the wars entered wider social consciousness. A dancer may choose to call “Lord Wellington’s Triumph” because of a liking for its tune or its figures, but the formal announcement of the dance by the master of ceremonies and the collective participation in the dance might resultantly heighten the association of Wellington with public celebration. The immediate significance of the subject commemorated in a dance’s title would of course diminish over the course of time, so that the dancing of a Waterloo waltz years after the event might not conjure up any conscious associations of the events of 1815. The continued dancing of a Waterloo dance would nevertheless ensure that the subject of its title lived on in everyday social life and, consequently, that it endured in longer-term social memory.

NOTES

1. *Le Sylphe. An Elegant Collection of Twenty Four Country Dances the Figures by Mr. Wilson, for the Year 1815, Adapted for the German Flute, Flageolet or Oboe* (London, 1815).
2. Thomas Wilson, "The Etiquette of the Ball Room," in *A Companion to the Ball Room* (3rd ed., London, c. 1817), 238–246.
3. I. C. Mencke, *Waltz Composed in Honour of the Grand Victory at Waterloo, for the Piano Forte with Accompaniments for a Flute, or Violin & Violoncello* (ad lib) (London, c. 1815).
4. Federigo Fiorillo, *The Waterloo or Belle Alliance Military Waltz for the Piano Forte* (London, c. 1815).
5. J. Durwolft, *The Favorite Waterloo Dance with Variations for the Piano Forte* (London and Dublin, c. 1815).
6. Charlotte Reeve, "The Waterloo Waltz, Written Expressly for 'La Belle Assemblée,' No. 76," *La Belle Assemblée, or Bell's Court and Fashionable Magazine*, 76 (1815).
7. *MacLeod's Collection of Airs, Marches, Waltzes and Rondos, Carefully Arranged for Two German Flutes* (Edinburgh, c. 1817).
8. *Button, Whitaker and Comp.'s Twenty Four Country Dances with Figures by Mr. Wilson for the Year 1819* (London, 1819)
9. See Oskar Cox Jensen, *Napoleon and British Song, 1797–1822* (Basingstoke, 2015), 124–133.
10. Cox Jensen, *Napoleon and British Song*.
11. See, for instance, Nicholas Cook, "The Other Beethoven: Heroism, The Canon, and the Works of 1813–14," *19th-Century Music*, 27 (2003): 3–24; Stephen C. Rumph, *Beethoven After Napoleon: Political Romanticism in the Late Works* (Berkeley and London, 2004); Nicholas Mathew, *Political Beethoven* (Cambridge, 2013).
12. For instance, a number of Viennese orchestral dance sets from around the turn of the nineteenth century include so-called Turkish music, which is characterized by noisy percussion instruments (cymbals, triangle, and bass drum) and consciously alluding to Ottoman Turkish military music. Beethoven's Twelve German Dances, WoO 8 (1795) and Hummel's Twelve Waltzes and Coda, S104 (1817) both include Turkish episodes.
13. *Button and Whitaker's Twelve Elegant New Dances for the Year 1810 Arranged for the Harp or Piano Forte, with Correct Figures as Danced at Court, Bath, Brighton & All Polite Assemblies* (London, 1810).
14. Wilson, "Etiquette of the Ball Room," 241.

15. Cox Jensen, *Napoleon and British Song*, 74–75, 86, 124. Some of the prominent Wellington monuments that appeared within his lifetime include the Wellington Monument on Park Lane, London (1822), the Wellington Arch now on Hyde Park Corner (1825–1827), and the equestrian statues in London (1844), Glasgow (1844), and Edinburgh (1848–1852).
16. *Ibid.*, 51.
17. *Ibid.*, 42.
18. *Ibid.*, 66–73.
19. *Ibid.*, 51–53.
20. *Ibid.*, 79–83.
21. Cambridge University Library, Madden Collection, 5: 363, (London, 1810).
22. British Library, Music Collections, a.6.(6.)
23. See John Bew, *Castlereagh: Enlightenment, War and Tyranny* (London, 2011), 225–226.
24. *Ibid.*, 249–256.
25. Cox Jensen, *Napoleon and British Song*, 75.
26. Brian E. Vick, *The Congress of Vienna: Power and Politics After Napoleon* (Cambridge, MA, 2014), 85–96.
27. See Oskar Cox Jensen, “First as Farce, then as Tragedy: Waterloo in British Song,” *Studies in Romanticism*, 56 (2017) 341–360.
28. Bodleian Library, Oxford, Broadside Ballads Collection, Harding B 12(6).
29. Cox Jensen, *Napoleon and British Song*, 124–127, 155–161.
30. Bodleian Library, Oxford, Broadside Ballads Collection: Johnson Ballads 3019; 2806 c. 17(451); Harding B 25(2005).
31. John Playford, *The English Dancing Master: Or, Plaine and Easie Rules for the Dancing of Country Dances, With the Tune to Each Dance* (London, 1651).
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35. *The Morning Chronicle*, 22 April 1817.
36. Paul Connerton, *How Societies Remember* (Cambridge, 1989), 102.
37. *Ibid.*

38. Cambridge University Library, Madden Collection, 5: 615.
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Napoleon in Swansea:
Reflections of the Hundred Days
in the Welsh Newspaper *Seren Gomer*

Mary-Ann Constantine

[C]efais yr anrhydedd y llynydd i ddywedyd yn y lle hwn fod sect T. Paine ymron â llwyr ddiplannu, a bod Oes Rheswm yn gorfod rhoddi ffordd i Oes y Biblau, yn awr gallaf ychwanegu fod sect Bonaparte wedi myned yn dra isel, ac nid rhyfedd gennyf os oedd Bibl Gymdeithasau yn foddion i ddwyn hyn i ben.

[L]ast year I had the honour of saying here that the sect of T. Paine had all but vanished, that the Age of Reason has been obliged to make way for the Age of Bibles; and now I can add that the sect of Bonaparte has shrunk considerably, and it would be no surprise to me to learn that the Bible Societies have been the means of bringing this about.

Joseph Harris, *Seren Gomer*, 22 March 1815

The Reverend Joseph Harris of Swansea (1773–1825) was a Baptist minister and an energetic member of the Bible Society, a movement that

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cut across Anglican and Dissenting divides to enable the production and distribution of Bibles at home and abroad. Harris was also the editor of the ambitious but short-lived Welsh-language weekly newspaper, *Seren Gomer*, which ran to 85 issues from January 1814 to August 1815.¹ The paper's lifespan thus mirrors the dramatic final phase of Napoleon's military career, and since Harris aimed to provide his readers with foreign as well as national and local news, the French general makes several appearances in its pages, often in quite unexpected contexts. This chapter explores the uses of the figure of Napoleon in the Welsh press, and in this paper in particular, during the Hundred Days and highlights some of the complexities, as well as ironies, of regional news-reporting during this period.

Joseph Harris began preaching around 1795 at Llangloffan, Glamorgan; by 1800, he had become a pastor in Swansea, spending a few months at the Baptist academy in Bristol to improve his English, a necessity when dealing with the population of this increasingly Anglo-Welsh coastal resort town. *Seren Gomer*, a venture funded by Harris and five other Swansea colleagues, was not the first periodical to appear in Welsh—its roots go back to the itinerant almanac sellers (*almanacwyr*) of the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries. It also owes much to half-a-dozen different but short-lived literary, religious, and political journals of the 1790s, which had attempted to provide Welsh speakers with a forum for debate, helping to create the beginnings of a public sphere for the Welsh language (at the time spoken by approximately 90% of the population, although not everyone could read it).² The *Seren*, however, was the first Welsh-language weekly and thus the first recognizable Welsh-language “newspaper.”

Swansea, with some 6000 residents by 1801, effectively had the status of a Welsh capital. Merthyr Tydfil was slightly larger, however, in terms of civic provision—such as leisure, amenities, and education—Swansea had the edge (Cardiff would not mushroom into a city to be reckoned with for several decades yet.) Known variously as “Copperopolis” and the “Brighton of Wales,” Swansea offered a lively mix of industry and leisure, had a sizeable and engaged business community, and a growing middle class with an appetite for news.³ As a busy industrial port and a coastal resort, Swansea was not unaware of Bonaparte: the last “invasion” of Britain had taken place in 1797 at Fishguard, in Pembrokeshire, further up the coast, and throughout the Napoleonic wars the sight of unmarked or unexplained ships in the bay would cause momentary panics.⁴

In 1803, when invasion scares spread across Britain, a proposal was made to have copies of *A Dialogue between John Bull and Bonaparte* printed and distributed in Swansea in both Welsh and English.⁵ And, by an odd serendipity, the Swansea coppermaster John Henry Vivian actually met Bonaparte on Elba mere weeks before his escape. His account of their conversation is a fascinating read, recalling an audience with a man whom Vivian clearly admired.⁶ Their discussion touched on Cornwall (Vivian's native county) and its tin mines, after which Napoleon quizzed his guest at some length (and with hindsight, one can quite see why) about the current state of particular roads and bridges in France ("Is the bridge at Avignon finished?"—"No, over one branch of the river only").⁷

Wales's first English-language weekly, the *Cambrian*, had been launched in Swansea ten years before Harris's venture and was still going strong.⁸ Comparison between the two reveals the extent of *Seren Gomer*'s distinctive and specifically Welsh agenda, targeting a Welsh-speaking audience across the entire country. For national and international news, like other provincial papers, the *Cambrian* and the *Seren* digested information sourced from the London press and other regional papers, and there is naturally overlap in the reporting of local events; neither, though, seems to be merely copying the other. *Seren Gomer*, initially priced at 6½d, and from April 1815 (after the increase in Stamp Duty) at 8d, followed the regular format for a provincial paper: two large, densely-packed sheets opening with a typical mixture of small advertisements and national and international news.⁹ There are no vociferous front-page headlines, and the items on the first page are always a leisurely week behind the publication date at the top. Readers working through the paper item by item would thus be gradually brought up to date by revising what they had just read. When the "news" was in itself a day-by-day narrative as gripping as Napoleon's march up through France, this time-lag added to the complexity of tracking a moving target and caused immense difficulty with authenticating sources. This can be disconcerting from a historical perspective, with curious juxtapositions (discussed below) and accounts of major events oddly scattered or fragmented: news from Waterloo, for example, appears to come out in desultory bits and pieces through July, long after victory bells had been ringing all over the land.

The second section of the paper has a more local focus. A brief editorial here might refer to international events, but generally deals

with Swansea, or other Welsh, news: There are lists and names of ships arriving and departing; detailed accounts of local Bible meetings; a body found in the river; a little boy beaten to death; an old woman dead from drinking (cue editorial head-shaking on the evils of strong liquor). It is the final page, however, which marks the paper as distinct from the English-language (and more commerce-focused) *Cambrian*. This section is almost entirely given over to poetry and to abstruse but apparently engrossing debates about bardic diction and metre. Poets write in from Anglesey to Pembrokeshire, creating a vivid sense of a lively, culturally coherent reading constituency right across the country. Another constant theme in this section is language with special concern for the purity and correctness of written Welsh; frequent adverts for grammars and other improving educational tools rub shoulders with advice on register and letters of despair at slack or inaccurate writing. While mirroring a wider contemporary British concern for improvement through literacy, one also senses here an obsession with linguistic correctness typical of small languages fighting to be taken seriously: “*Seren Gomer*,” notes Aled Jones, “was intended to provide a voice for nonconformity in the form of a popular newspaper and to defend the Welsh language “against its enemies” seeking both to create a new readership and to “purify and reform” the written language.”¹⁰ Debates about grammar and spelling were thus not without political import.¹¹ These back pages, which rehearse various forms of Welshness, are home to the more culturally-inflected responses to the figure of Napoleon.

REPORTING THE HUNDRED DAYS

On 15 March 1815, page two of the *Seren* brought dramatic news from France:

Bonaparte landed in France. Declared a Traitor. Exceptional Meeting of the Two Chambers.

The piece opens with the words: *Y mae Efraingc etto yn agored i derfysg a gwrthrhwyfel* (France is once again exposed to riot and rebellion).¹² It is followed, ironically, by *Cerdd Croesawiad Heddwch* (a Poem Welcoming Peace), whose confident rhyming couplets praise Britannia’s role in bringing order and tranquility, more or less singlehandedly, to the whole of Europe:

*Ffrainc uchel falch agwedd, a blygoedd o'r diwedd
Mae Oen ar ei orsedd, lle llynedd 'r oedd Llew.*

(lines 8 to 9)

*Brytania heb air twm, a gynhaliodd y pwn
I dido cawr mawr, a *bwydawr y byd hwn*

(lines 29 to 30)

[High, proud France has succumbed at last
A Lamb is on the throne, where last year was a Lion.

Britannia true to her word shouldered the burden
Of chaining the mighty giant, the *devourer of this world.]¹³

The poem finishes with the image of the “whole world quiet, without War or fear,” and a note helpfully explains that “the devourer” is Napoleon Bonaparte—by then, though the author could not know it when he sent his poem to the editor—well and truly unchained. As Mark Philp has pointed out, such poignant juxtapositions of copy on the page reflect the contingent, and occasionally haphazard, nature of collating and publishing news, and this is a trait that intensified in subsequent issues.¹⁴

The edition for 22 March, indeed, almost makes a virtue out of showing its readers the uncertainty of its sources, highlighting the shifting blend of rumour and information within France itself as Napoleon approached Lyons:

It has been made known already that one of the French papers, for the 10th of this month, claims Bonaparte is in Bourgogne, and that he could be in Lyons (which used to be considered France's second city) on the 11th. Bourgogne is twenty miles to the south west of Lyons, and about 200 miles from Sisteron, at which place the French accounts left Bonaparte on the night of the 5th; but given that he has no ‘clud’ (baggage) he could have got that far in 5 days.¹⁵

Having established the approximate geography of Napoleon's route, and noting the surprising but not impossible distances apparently covered since the last report, the piece goes on to express its concern about the flow of information (or lack of it) in the French sources themselves, especially those from Paris:

It is very odd that the *Moniteur* for the 10th, which we received yesterday, contains nothing of his story later than the 5th; since news of the 9th could have been sent through the *hysbysai* (telegraph) from the area where

he is to Paris; yet there is not the slightest mention of him in the Paris papers. Indeed, there is a rumour spreading (but on what grounds we do not know) that he has gone to Lyons.¹⁶

Two Welsh words in this piece appear with English translations, as if to indicate that they might be unfamiliar to readers: “*bysbysai*” (“telegraph” from *bysbysu* to “make known” or “announce”) looks like a new word for a new concept, whereas “*clud*” (baggage) seems a rather more inscrutable word to calque. However, the translator/redactor’s concern for clarity in those two instances seems to reflect a wider concern to establish facts and truths; linguistic and journalistic correctness are here connected. A similar concern for linguistic and geographical exactitude can be found in the *Cheltenham Chronicle*, and *Gloucestershire Advertiser*’s reporting of the same few days. Here, too, we find surprise at the *Moniteur*’s announcement that Bonaparte has reached “Bourgoin” and could be in Lyons by the 11th (“We confess that there is to us something incomprehensible in the above statement:—if it be grammatically correct (for we have not seen the Paper), it is proof of a very extraordinary state of things in France”).¹⁷ It then offers a list of dates and distances, does some calculations, and concludes that the Emperor’s astonishing progress at “23 miles a day” through “difficult and mountainous country” indicates not a large army but rather a small body of men “unimpeded by resistance in its course.”¹⁸ There remains, though, the lingering doubt of mistranslation or grammatical “incorrectness” further up the chain of information. The *London Courier*, reporting the same item from Paris (from the *Moniteur* for 11 March), goes one step further in its caution by inserting a key phrase in French:

The Telegraph of this day announces that Buonaparte was at Burgoigne (four posts south of Lyons), and that it was supposed he might be able to enter (*il auroit du entrer*) Lyons this day (the 11th).¹⁹

The same front page of the same issue of *Seren Gomer*, two columns further along, then carries the *Newyddion Brawychus* (Fearful News) that Lyons has in fact fallen—left defenceless through the treachery of General Lefebvre. The King, it claims, is raising an army to meet Napoleon somewhere between Lyons and Paris. Compounding the confusion further, page three of the same issue, the section usually devoted to local news, offers the yet more exciting headline: *BONAPARTE YN GARCHAROR* (BONAPARTE PRISONER). This is accompanied by

the reprint of a letter from the *Bristol Mercury* claiming that General Ney had driven Napoleon from Lyons, that he was completely surrounded, and that some 2000 soldiers had already gone over to Ney's troops. The inevitable outcome of that encounter appears to be immediately confirmed by the additional news (also from the *Mercury*) of two gentlemen recently arrived in Bristol by mail-coach from Portsmouth, who had heard of the arrival of an official at Southampton, on their way to London to deliver news of Bonaparte's imprisonment.

One week later, the *Seren* offers a decidedly ruffled recantation:

We published in our last issue a letter from one of the Bristol papers, which said that Bonaparte was a prisoner; according to the information we had received at that time, it appeared to us that this could be true; at the same time we did, however, have our doubts about it, and for that reason we placed *Bristol Mercury* after the story, to show where we got it from and that we did not consider ourselves responsible for its contents; official reports this week show that it is untrue.²⁰

The laboriousness of the language reveals the frustrations of the editor, but highlights yet again the multiple sources through which "news" might arrive: here, rather than redacting material directly from the London papers, Harris has opted for the less "official" and more anecdotal regional paper from across the Bristol Channel.²¹ *Seren Gomer*—and it is no different from other regional and even national papers in this respect—provides a fascinating example of the kind of narrative "disorder" explored by Gavin Edwards across a range of literary texts produced between 1789 and 1819. What he describes as a "sense of compositional interruption—narratives palpably caught on the wrong foot by radical alterations of circumstance, shifts in the point of hindsight"²² is, he argues, inscribed particularly in texts from the rapidly-changing 1790s. The events of the Hundred Days revealed, to those living through them, a similar set of intensely concentrated *possibilities*, any one of which, from one day to the next, could alter the fate of Europe. Moreover, whereas the novels, memoirs, and poems discussed by Edwards internalise and encode their "narrative instability" in a range of ways, there is something helplessly exposed about these newspaper reports, as if the mechanism of narrative—of history itself—lay scattered in pieces across the four broadsheet pages. It would be interesting to know more about *how* people actually read them: how they negotiated the unfolding story.

FURTHER USES FOR NAPOLEON

Bonaparte appears in the *Seren* for the most part as a news item, in the international section of the paper, where his progress through France is recounted relatively dispassionately. Every so often, however, his name turns up in the more local pages in ways that show how he, and the wars with France more generally, figured in the mental maps of Welsh-language readers and writers. On 29 March 1815, for example, the Emperor is drafted in to do his bit for the language effort. A recurring, and rather entertaining, advert in the pages of the *Seren* is for a publication calling itself the *Parthysllydd*—a kind of Welsh language gazetteer.²³ The adverts take the form of a question- and-answer between an ignorant country-type and the volume’s editor, and stresses how useful it is to have information about the countries of the world, explained in one’s native language, during these turbulently geographical times.

A FEW REMARKS ON THE USEFULNESS OF THE GENERAL PARTHYSLLYDD – OR THE GEOGRAPHICAL DICTIONARY

Parthysllydd – What manner of thing is that; some kind of animal, or a tool for shredding straw? says Somebody.

No. It is a Book, which gives details of all the places in the world, and Ireland too [sic!]. It is so called because it looks at, regards, or takes notice of all the areas of the world, giving information about kingdoms, countries, cities, towns, villages, seas, lakes, harbours, mountains, and valleys; as well as the religion, manners, economy, and nature and appearance of their inhabitants, across the whole known world...²⁴

Many of the examples refer to war and international politics—“Where is Moscow?” and “Is Russia a parish?” The *Parthysllydd* is presented as an authority, a thing of exactitude and certainty, cutting through the swirling confusion of news from abroad with its nice crisp facts:

And is Elba a big Empire, where Bonaparte was sent to be ruler?

Elba is a small island, in the Mediterranean, approximately 8 miles long and two wide. See the *Parthysllydd*.²⁵

On 10 May, a short piece informs readers that the renowned educationalist Joseph Lancaster has been lecturing in Maynooth, and notes that his monitor system, already popular in Ireland, appears set to be adopted by the Emperor across the whole of France.²⁶ This looks like quiet support, if not overt approval, for certain Napoleonic measures in a sphere close to the hearts of those running the paper. Given the vocation of its editor, and the nonconformist affiliations of many of its contributors, it is unsurprising to find responses to the events of the day interpreted through a religious lens. This is perhaps the area of *Seren Gomer's* most significant, and most complex, engagement with France as various strands of reportage make clear.

The citation that opens this chapter, from an issue dated 22 March, comes from a speech Harris had made to the Swansea Auxiliary Bible Society a fortnight earlier: it is reproduced verbatim in *Seren Gomer* along with several others from the same meeting (the English-language *Cambrian* settles for a modest précis). In his speech, Harris stresses the civilising, cross-denominational energies of the Bible Society and rejoices in the progress it has made against the twin disruptive forces of Paineite atheism and the French Republic: his satisfaction at the defeat of the sects of both “T. Paine” and “Bonaparte” appear as yet another ironic casualty of delayed news during the rapidly changing Hundred Days (indeed, compounding the irony yet more painfully, Harris goes on to suggest that the recent success of the Bible mission in France makes it much *less* likely that France and Britain will go to war again). In the same issue, in similar vein, the Reverend W. Davies attributes the earlier atrocities of the French Revolution entirely to the absence of this civilising influence:

For proof, let us look at the French Revolution: at the beginning of that fearful time only very few of the common people owned a Bible, and if they had one they would, merely by having it in their possession, have left themselves exposed to the rigours of the law! [...] Acts of the most terrible cruelty were committed, not only in a state of filthy corruption, but with victorious exultation. From whence came all of this? From a lack of the Bible, which would have taught them better things.²⁷

Frequently attacked for their supposedly subversive activities throughout the 1790s and the Napoleonic wars, Welsh-speaking Dissenters often felt the need to stress their social conformity and their trustworthiness as

subjects of the British crown.²⁸ Nevertheless, the revulsion expressed by these Bible Society stalwarts toward the chaos and violence of the French revolution rings genuinely enough. It marks a shift in attitude since the mid-1790s, when Morgan John Rhys, another Glamorgan-born Baptist minister involved in the Bible Society, and founder of one of the earlier Welsh-language periodicals, had stood on the ruins of the Bastille and “felt the energy of those principles which shake Europe to the centre.”²⁹ For the millenarian Rhys, the revolution was not something to be contained or prevented but “God’s work” itself, a necessary prelude to religious and social emancipation. He would relate his experiences in France directly to his subsequent work in America touring the southern states, preaching and publishing against the slave trade and slave ownership.³⁰

Twenty years later, the markedly less radical pages of *Seren Gomer* maintain nonetheless a clear abolitionist stance. On 11 January 1815, for example, they express disappointment at the lack of progress amongst the powers in Europe toward abolishing the *fasnach erchyll mewn cnawd dymion* (the appalling trade in human flesh). In April, Napoleon’s declaration abolishing slavery drew a range of reactions in the British press. The *Cambrian*, despite an exclamatory headline, refused to be impressed and noted, rather pompously, that “[a]midst the astonishing measures by which the energetic promptitude and preemptory power of Bonaparte are characterised, the abrupt abrogation of the Slave Trade is not the least conspicuous” and dismissing it as no more than “a mere trick to reconcile himself to an extensive class in England.”³¹ In a postscript on page 3 of the 5 April edition, *Seren Gomer* announces news of the Emperor’s ordinance in capitals:

DIDDYMIAD Y FASNACH MEWN CAETHION GAN BONAPARTE

[ABOLITION OF THE TRADE IN SLAVES BY BONAPARTE]

The paragraph that follows does not, in its brief account of the facts taken from the French papers, offer any overt opinion either way, but *Seren* readers must have contextualized this announcement in the light of its earlier abolitionist stance. In the weeks that follow the paper offers similar reports—each time without further comment—which appear to show Bonaparte in a favourable light. On 5 April, the paper notes that he has declared freedom of the press, *megis ag y mae ym Mbrydain*³² (as it is in Britain), and describes enthusiastic crowds throwing their hats in the air and shouting *Vive l’Empereur!* And, as the question of war with France sharpens in debates in the House of Commons, a piece dated 18 April

devotes several paragraphs to the astonishment expressed by “the French papers” at the overt preparations being made in Europe to overthrow Napoleon, when all in France are convinced of his overwhelmingly peaceful tendencies, and when the French people themselves welcomed him back with scarcely a shot fired, etc.³³ (This piece, in the interests of balance, is followed by a short paragraph noting the presence of pro-Bourbon graffiti all over the town of Dieppe, and an opinion from a loyalist source that the French people will not, in fact, support Napoleon if it comes to war.)

Ken Jones has looked at responses across the British press to the debate held in the House of Commons on 28 April, when Samuel Whitbread, for the Opposition, asked “whether the House would consent to embark the country on a new war.”³⁴ Some newspapers, such as William Cobbett’s *Weekly Political Quarterly*, supported the return of Napoleon and were fiercely against the notion of war with France; Nottingham and Leeds papers were also explicitly anti-war. Welsh papers seem not to have committed themselves so clearly. *Seren Gomer* reports even-handedly on the speeches of both Whitbread and Castlereagh, and it is difficult to see in this instance that there is any editorial nudging. But in more meditative mood—once Britain was clearly on a war-footing and preparations were well underway—the back page of an issue from June prints a piece by a Carmarthenshire poet, Dafydd Glantren, describing an early morning walk along the shoreline. The sight of the ocean moves him to consider the impending confrontation with France:

I thought how fortunate Britain is to have a circle of water around her; and more specifically, I thought of the Exile of Elba and his return to the throne, of the likelihood that men’s blood will be spilled; how likely it is that the red horse will be loosed again this year.³⁵

He says how ungrateful people were for the brief period of peace, in particular those making money out of war with France; now, he says, they have their desire, and many will die before peace returns again.

NAPOLEON IN WALES

Napoleon’s presence in Welsh culture beyond the pages of *Seren Gomer* and the immediate context of the Hundred Days reflects the complex and shifting range of responses in Britain as a whole. In the late 1790s he had the support of London Welsh radicals such as George Cadogan

Morgan, the nephew of Richard Price: a family memoir recalls Morgan's enthusiastic interest in the progress of "the champion of freedom" across the Alps.³⁶ In 1797, a *Gorsedd* (bardic convention) was held in Glamorgan under the auspices of the poet and stonemason, Edward Williams (Iolo Morganwg), during which "the bards busied themselves with inventing a coat of arms for Napoleon Buonoparte. The arms they selected were those borne according to them by Rhita Gawr, namely, *Tri Thrwsa mawrion farfau Brenhinoedd eurlliw* (the Three most Oppressive big-bearded golden Kings)".³⁷ Rhita Gawr, a long-standing favourite of anti-monarchists in Wales, was a legendary giant who destroyed kings and made a cloak of their beards.

The invasion scare in the year 1803 brought a range of responses. The reprint and translation of the *Dialogue* between John Bull and Napoleon in Swansea had a North Walian counterpart, a tract published by Robert Humphreys of Caernarfon, which opened with a dialogue between the two great enemies:

BONAPARTE, *Ha! Jonni! Beth yr wyt ti yn ei wneuthur? Parottoi yr ydywyf fi.*

JOHN BWL. *Ai é? Parottoi hefyd yr ydywyf finew.*³⁸

[BONAPARTE: Ha! Johnny! What are you up to? I am making preparations.

JOHN BWL: Indeed? And I am making preparations too]

When John Bwl calls on Plant Albion (the "Children of Albion") to come rushing to war with "a mighty yell that will split the rocks of Snowdon"³⁹ he appeals directly to his readers' loyalty as Ancient Britons—the pre-Saxon defenders of the Island of Britain—a trope much deployed during the invasion scares of this period. It is interesting, as Marion Löffler has pointed out, that Humphreys believed it necessary to explain to his Welsh-language readers who the character "John Bull" actually was: "he represents all the Inhabitants of Britain"; "he is portrayed as a giant." Napoleon, apparently, needed no introduction beyond "First Consul of France."⁴⁰

The fear of invasion in 1803 also produced clutch of rousing poems in both languages, such as "*Anmerch i'r Cymry yn amser y rhyfel 1803*" (An Address to the Welsh during the war of 1803), whose author summons his fellow countrymen:

Dowch yn brysur, wŷr a llanciau,
 Ni godwn arfau i gyd yn awr,
 I gadw'r wlad lle'r oedd ein tadau,
 Rhag Bonaparte a'i fintai fawr⁴¹

[Come quickly, men and boys, we will all raise weapons now to save the land of our fathers from Bonaparte and his great band.]

God, he says, is on the side of George III, whose soldiers alone can *ffrwyno ymfydrwydd Efrainc* (curb the idiocy of France).⁴² In his successful poem, “The Horrors of Invasion,” Robert Holland Price likewise praised the Welsh contribution to national “unanimity”: “What a proud day for Britain; to see a whole nation, rising as one man, and rallying round the throne of a beloved Monarch!”⁴³ Conflict with France, and the readily despised figure of Napoleon (“Scourge of the earth! inhuman Monster!”)⁴⁴ did not, however, always work toward a univocal sense of Britishness. Many of these English-language poems draw on a specifically Welsh history of resistance, one that supersedes or indeed uncomfortably resurrects memories of conflict with England. Thus, in a similar piece, Joseph Reade almost accidentally revives a martial Welsh history until now “thought inert”:

Nor Cambria's Sons, nor Cambrian Deeds were known,
 Or, with the Past compar'd, were thought inert,
 Till the same Wind that wafted Foes from France
 Blew Fame of Cambrian Valor's added Store;⁴⁵

Elizabeth Edwards has shown how this group of invasion-scare poems can be read as pulling in apparently contradictory directions. Even in the stirring loyalty of Richard Llwyd's “Address of the Bard of Snowdon, to his Countrymen”, she suggests, “a sense of disruption creeps into the poem through its Welshness,” whereas alternative British histories and ethnic differences introduce “ambivalence, and rupture”.⁴⁶

We get glimpses of how Napoleon figured in everyday conversations through travel writing of this period. Edward Pugh's *Cambria Depicta*, completed in 1813 and posthumously published in 1816, is one of the few Welsh Tours written by a native speaker and is full of anecdotes and (frequently comic) encounters. In an inn at Llangynog in North Wales, Pugh meets a “wrongheaded mountain politician” who complains, in his “rusticated” style, that the wars with France are proving ruinous to

the common people. Pugh's response is a pep talk on "the necessity of opposing the Corsican", a tactic so successful it leads to an enthusiastic toast proposing health to King George and "Confusion to Boney and all his schemes"—a cry kept up by the old man as Pugh left, and which he "heard at a distance of some hundreds of yards off."⁴⁷ In 1802, a French traveller in North Wales, later to become Napoleon's secretary on St. Helena, arrived with his companion at what felt like the perfect place to *trouver le repos et échapper au bruit des révolutions* (find rest and escape from the noise of revolutions). He was gratified, over a decade later, to be able to tell his master in exile that the innkeeper, on hearing their accents, *nous demanda aussi des nouvelles de France, et de ce que faisait son Premier Consul Bonaparte* (asked us at once for news from France, and the doings of the First Consul *Bonaparte*).⁴⁸ In 1809, the poet and radical pamphleteer, John Jones (Jac Glan-y-Gors), was moved to compose verses at the very top of Snowdon, calling it *nen uwch ben Boni—ynfydwr/Ni fedr ddod atti* (a summit far above Boney—that fool/he cannot attain it). The mountain's loftiness evidently brought other forms of eminence to mind, but Snowdon is also invoked here in its traditional role as the last bastion of defence for earlier beleaguered Britons.⁴⁹

The appetite for news of the great man seems to have been widespread. In 1814, the Aberystwyth printer, Samuel Williams, published a forty-page biography of Napoleon describing his life and exploits up to his departure for Elba; it was priced at sixpence and presumably destined for a general public. A brief but engaging pen-portrait of the Emperor is given on the inner leaf, starting with a physical description—he is *fychan o hyd, ond yn dra lluniaidd, ac yn wrol a grymus iawn* (short in stature but handsome, manly and powerful)—noting his talent for vivacious conversation and quick thought and finishing, somewhat surprisingly, with the information that his "real Christian name" is Nicholas.⁵⁰

The account that follows, although acknowledging Bonaparte's skill as a soldier, does not attempt to portray him in a positive light. Several pages are devoted to his schooling at Brienne, and the Rousseauesque image of the young Corsican tending his little patch of garden, reading, and shunning company is appealing enough; thereafter, however, every advancement in his brilliant military career is linked to an act of cruelty. From Toulon to Paris, through to Syrian and Egyptian campaigns of riot, rape, and plunder, Napoleon is shown as coolly capable of war crimes, from the mass murder of defeated prisoners or the deliberate poisoning of his own plague-ridden soldiers at Jaffa (both episodes that appear in

the Caernarfon *Dialogue* of 1803).⁵¹ *Bywyd Napoleon* ends with some reflections on the terms agreed upon for his surrender, as well as the impending exile in Elba, and marvels at the fact that virtually the whole of Europe, once on his side, is now against him.⁵²

A year later, a small group of printed ballads composed in response to Waterloo rejoice unequivocally in Bonaparte's recapture. Ioan Dafydd suggests a number of things that should have been done to him rather than sending him to St. Helena:

*Wel, wel, rhaid canu eto, gwir yw'r gair, gwir yw'r gair,
 Fe gaethiwyd yr hen gadno, gwir yw'r gair;
 Sef Bonaparte y filen,
 Fe'i daliwyd ef drachefen;
 Mae llawer gwŵr yn llawen, gwir yw'r gair, gwir yw'r gair,
 Ar ddŵr ac ar y ddae'ren, gwir yw'r gair.*

*Fe haeddsai gael ei grogi, &c., &c.,
 Heb achos judge na jury, &c.;
 A thorri'i ben ar blocyn
 A'i lusgedd lusgo wedyn
 A'i ddryllio bob yn ddernyn, &c., &c.,
 A'i gladdu'n nhwlc y mochyn⁵³*

Well, well, we must sing again, so it is, so it is,
 the old fox has been taken into captivity, so it is;
 namely Bonaparte the villain,
 he has been caught again;
 many a man is happy, so it is, so it is,
 on the sea and on land, so it is.

He had deserved to be hung, &c., &c.,
 without need for judge nor jury, &c.;
 and to have his head struck off on a block
 and be slowly drawn afterwards
 and cut up piece by piece, &c., &c.,
 and be buried in the pigsty, &c.

There is little sympathy for the devil here: this is the caricature enemy of broadsheets and cartoons. No Welsh ballad-writers appear to have taken up the more sympathetic stance of some of the English broadsheets with their poignant focus on Napoleon's last farewell.⁵⁴ Napoleon's

status as an emissary of evil is conclusively confirmed in a painstaking article by *Graikos* in a July issue of *Seren Gomer*, which—nicely drawing together the newspaper’s key strands of Biblical study, orthography, and international politics—proves that the Emperor’s name (albeit spelt BONNEPARTE), with each letter transliterated into Greek and assigned a number, adds up to 666: *fe wel yn glir fod Ioan yn nodi allan Bonaparte fel y bwystfil* (it will be clearly seen that John marked out Bonaparte as the beast).⁵⁵

CODA: AUGUST 1815, SETTING STARS

Despite its energy and its committed readership, the *Seren* failed as a business venture. There may perhaps have been just too many reports of Bible Society and Baptist General Meetings; record high taxes on newspapers cannot have helped either. Harris and his five fellow investors lost £1000. The paper had, though, for its eighty-five issues contributed a great deal toward the development of an extremely vibrant Welsh-language press and periodical culture that would flourish in the second half of the nineteenth century. And, through its continual (and one must assume high-pressured) work of excerpting and translating material from external news sources, it also contributed to the development of the Welsh language itself as a medium for public debate and education: the *Seren*’s journalistic prose (often in contrast to the high-flown style of the back-page letters) is, by and large, supple, idiomatic, and clear.

By a strange kind of narrative justice, the story of the Hundred Days and the story of the newspaper both come to a close in the final pages of the last issue, 9 August 1815, where the editor takes poignant leave of his reading public with the words ‘*Wele’r Seren Wythnosol yn machludo!*’

Behold the Weekly Star is setting! This is the final issue of our Newspaper.
– We believe that we are not the only ones grieving because of this – we have done our best to keep our publication going as a weekly, but the support we received was not enough.⁵⁶

Also on this page is a post-Waterloo poem celebrating the vanquishing of “Boni.” Sung to the tune of “God Save the King,” this piece was composed for a celebration dinner of the London Gwyneddigion Society by

“Wm Jones, B.M.,” who (like his prematurely triumphant predecessor in the 22 March issue) rejoices that, thanks entirely to the efforts of the British, turbulent Europe is now once more at peace. And just above that editorial farewell, another star is setting. A short paragraph at the top of the page informs readers that on Friday evening Captain Maitland set sail, with Bonaparte and several others on board, to intercept the *Northumberland* on its way to St. Helena.

NOTES

1. The name means “Star of Gomer.” Gomer was one of Noah’s three sons and the progenitor of the race of the Gomeri, a name assimilated by enthusiastic antiquarians to the Cymry, or Welsh. Harris used “Gomer” as his pen name. See Aled G. Jones, “Harris, Joseph (1773–1825),” *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (Oxford University Press, 2004). Available at: <http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/12409>. Accessed 1 November 2016.
2. For the 1790s periodicals see Marion Löffler, *Welsh Responses to the French Revolution: Press and Public Discourse* (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 2011); on the development of the Welsh press more generally see Aled Gruffydd Jones, *Press, Politics and Society: A History of Journalism in Wales* (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 1993) and *idem*, “The Welsh Language and Journalism,” in Geraint H. Jenkins (ed.), *The Welsh Language and Its Social Domains 1801–1911. A Social History of the Welsh Language* (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 2000), 379–404.
3. Louise Miskell, *Intelligent Town: An Urban History of Swansea 1760–1855* (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 2011).
4. *Ibid.*, 44.
5. David and Margaret Walker, “An Anglo-Welsh Town,” in Ralph A. Griffiths (ed.) *The City of Swansea: Challenges and Change* (Stroud: Alan Sutton, 1990), 1–16, at 14. I have not been able to track down the Welsh version of this, but copies of *Plain answers to plain questions: In a dialogue between John Bull and Bonaparte, met Half-seas over between Dover and Calais* were printed in Swansea by Evans and Son in 1803. The same text was printed in Dundee (Chalmers, Ray, and Co) and presumably derives from that printed in London, Piccadilly (J. Hatchard) reproduced in Alexandra Franklin and Mark Philp, *Napoleon and the Invasion of Britain* (Oxford: Bodleian Library, 2003), 34.
6. *Minutes of a Conversation with Napoleon Bonaparte, During His Residence at Elba in January 1815* (London, 1839). For a recent edition with a good introduction, see Ralph A. Griffiths (ed.), *In Conversation with*

- Napoleon Bonaparte: J.H. Vivian's Visit to the Island of Elba* (Newport: South Wales Record Society, 2008). Although he published the conversation many years later, Vivian claims that his notes were taken very soon after the meeting; parts of the text are given in French.
7. Griffiths (ed.), *In Conversation with Napoleon Bonaparte*, 47.
 8. Sandra Thomas, "The 'Cambrian,'" *Gower: Journal of the Gower Society*, vol. 54 (2003), 58–68.
 9. Hannah Barker notes that British papers tended to have a larger format and were more varied in content (and political expression) than their continental counterparts. See "England, 1760–1815," in Hannah Barker and Simon Burrows (eds.), *Press, Politics and the Public Sphere in Europe and North America 1760–1820* (Cambridge: CUP, 2002), 93–112 at 94.
 10. Jones, "Harris, Joseph (1773–1825)", *ODNB*.
 11. In 1814, the pages of *Seren Gomer* became a battleground over the attempted orthographical reforms of the London-based lexicographer William Owen Pughe. One contributor declared: *ni ddechreuwyd terfysgu y llythyreg [...] nes dechrau y terfysg yn Ffrainc, a difeddiannu y blaenoriaid o'u hawdurdod, a gosod rhai o'r iselaf radd yn eu lle* (the rioting of the orthography [...] was not begun until the beginning of the rebellion in France, and the dispossession of the betters from their authority, and the placing of those from the lowest station in their place). For a full discussion, see Rhys Kaminski-Jones, "True Britons: Ancient British Identity in Wales and Britain 1680–1815" (Unpublished doctoral thesis, University of Wales, 2017).
 12. *Seren Gomer*, 15 March 1815, 2.
 13. *Seren Gomer*, 15 March 1815, 3. The poem is by Robert Davies (*Nant Glyn*), who was Bard to the London Cymreigyddion Society.
 14. Mark Philp, "News Reaches Britain (11 March 1815)." Available at: <http://www.100days.eu/items/show/26>.
 15. *Seren Gomer*, 22 March 1815, 1.
 16. *Ibid.*
 17. *Cheltenham Chronicle, and Gloucestershire Advertiser*, 16 March 1815, 3.
 18. *Ibid.*
 19. *London Courier and Evening Gazette*, 16 March 1815, 4.
 20. *Seren Gomer*, 29 March 1815, 3.
 21. The importance of border-based papers, such as the *Chester Chronicle* and the *Hereford Times*, for Wales as whole is examined in Löffler, *Welsh Responses to the French Revolution*.
 22. Gavin Edwards, *Narrative Order, 1789–1819: Life and Story in an Age of Revolution* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2006), 15.
 23. From *parth*, a place or area, and *syllu*, to gaze or look at closely. The original *Parthysylllydd* of 1814–1815 was the creation of the Glamorgan poet,

- Thomas Williams (*Gwilym Morgannwg*) and the Baptist minister John Jenkins; the gazetteer was revived and revised in the 1870s by John Jones (Ioan Emlyn) and J. Spinther James.
24. *Seren Gomer*, 29 March 1815, 3.
 25. *Seren Gomer*, 29 March 1815, 3.
 26. *Seren Gomer*, 10 May 1815, 3.
 27. *Seren Gomer*, 22 March 1815, 3.
 28. See the discussion by Ffion M. Jones, *Welsh Ballads of the French Revolution* (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 2012), 10–14. In a pamphlet of 1801, Thomas Ellis Owen, rector of Llandyfydog on Anglesey, accused Methodists and Dissenters of “drinking success to the French; adorning their parlours with portraits of Buonaparte, Tom Paine, Horne Tooke, and others; and, *perhaps, a little ivory Guillotine in some sly corner, plotting treason.*” Cited in Marion Löffler, *Political Pamphlets and Sermons from Wales 1790–1806* (Cardiff: University of Wales Press 2014), 29.
 29. Mary-Ann Constantine, “The Welsh in Revolutionary Paris,” in Mary-Ann Constantine and Dafydd Johnston (eds.), *Footsteps of Liberty and Revolt: Essays on Wales and the French Revolution* (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 2013), 69–91, at 78.
 30. Hywel M. Davies, “Morgan John Rhys and James Bicheno: Anti-Christ and the French Revolution in England and Wales,” *Bulletin of the Board of Celtic Studies*, XXIX, part I (1980), 111–127. For Rhys in America, see Hywel M. Davies, *Transatlantic Brethren: Reverend Samuel Jones (1735–1814) and His Friends: Baptists in Wales, Pennsylvania and Beyond* (Bethlehem: LeHigh University Press and London, Associated University Presses, 1995), 216–246, and Gwyn Williams, *In Search of Beulah Land: The Welsh and the Atlantic Revolution* (London: Croom Helm, 1980).
 31. *The Cambrian*, 8 April 1815, 2. Note, however, that the paper was happy to publish a scathing letter to the editor a fortnight later criticising Britain’s obsession with Napoleon as a figure of hate: “the cry for war seems to originate with many in a feeling merely personal, excited by and directed against the solitary individual *Napoleon Bonaparte*” (29 April, 4).
 32. *Seren Gomer*, 5 April 1815, 1.
 33. *Seren Gomer*, 26 April 1815, 1.
 34. Ken Jones, “Publications reporting debate in Parliament ‘Prevention of War with France’ 28 April 1815,” Unpublished research paper: I am grateful to the author for a sight of this work.
 35. *Seren Gomer*, 14 June 1815, 4.
 36. Mary-Ann Constantine and Paul Frame (eds.), *Travels in Revolutionary France and a Journey Across America: George Cadogan Morgan and Richard Price Morgan* (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 2012), 142.

37. Cathryn Charnell-White, *Welsh Poetry of the French Revolution, 1789–1805* (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 2012), 20.
38. Robert Humphreys, *Y Ruthr-Ymgyrch o Ffraingc: Ychydig o'i Amgylchiadeu, ac o Ansawdd y Rhyfel: mewn Ymddiddan rhwng BONAPARTE a JOHN BWL* (Caernarvon, 1803), 3.
39. *Ibid.*, 12.
40. Löffler, *Political Pamphlets*, 46. There is also a curious moment in the text (pp. 7–8) when, after John Bwl has declared his absolute faith in the navy, Napoleon answers, apparently with approval: *Meddwl Cymreig, Jonni ydyw efe. Rhaid, mae'n wir, addef, i'rh longeu di ymladd yn dda, y rhyfel diweddaf* ('That's a Welsh thought, Johnny; and it's true that your ships fought well in the last war.') This Welsh John Bwl seems to have gone native.
41. Charnell-White, *Welsh Poetry*, 128.
42. *Ibid.*, 130.
43. Elizabeth Edwards, *English-Language Poetry from Wales 1789–1806* (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 2013), 203.
44. The opening line of “To Napoleon,” by “Britannus,” in Edwards, *English-Language Poetry*, 220.
45. *Ibid.*, 217–218.
46. *Ibid.*, 37.
47. Edward Pugh, *Cambria Depicta: A Tour Through North Wales Illustrated with Picturesque Views* (1816, repr. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013), 270–272.
48. Emmanuel-Auguste-Dieudonné de Las Cases, *Mémorial de Sainte-Hélène*, vol. I (Paris, 1822–1823, rev. edn. Paris: Ernest Bourdin, 1842), 411. I am very grateful to Heather Williams for this citation.
49. “Verses Composed on the Summit of Snowdon, Aug, 10th 1809,” *North Wales Gazette*, 5 October 1809, 4.
50. [S. Williams], *Bywyd Napoleon Bonaparte: yn cynnwys ei ddygiad i fynu, ei natur, ei dderchafiad, a'i ddarostyngiad; befyd, hanes am ei ryfeloedd... ynglwyd â'r modd y daeth heddwch i gymmeryd lle...; at yr hyn y rhag-ddodwyd swm cytundeb wnaed a Bonaparte pan gafodd fyned i fyw i Ynys Elba* (Aberystwyth, 1814). The idea that Napoleon's “real” name was Nicholas appears to have been fairly widespread and to have been considered insulting. A footnote by Lucien Bonaparte to Walter Scott's biography of the French general notes indignantly: “there were those who carried their effrontery so far as to declare that the name of Napoleon was not his own but that he was called Nicholas”. *The Complete Works of Walter Scott, with a Biography [...] in Seven Volumes* (New York: Connor and Scott, 1833), vol. 7, 277.
51. *Bywyd Napoleon*, 18–20.

52. Ibid., 40.
53. Ioan Dafydd, “*Cân newydd am ailgymeriad Bonaparte, ynghyd â’i anfo-niad i St Helena*,” in Jones, *Welsh Ballads*, 318.
54. English ballads sympathetic to Napoleon are discussed by Oskar Cox Jensen in *Napoleon and British Song 1797–1822* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2015).
55. *Seren Gomer*, 26 July 1815, 2.
56. *Seren Gomer*, 9 August 1815, 3.

George Cruikshank and the British Satirical Response to the Hundred Days

John Moores

NAPOLEON BONAPARTE IN BRITISH CARICATURE

James Gillray died on 1 June 1815, just over a fortnight before the Battle of Waterloo. Due to his ailing health, the famous caricaturist had already been inactive since 1811, so the duty of representing Napoleon's first exile and subsequent surprise return from Elba fell to Gillray's surviving contemporaries and successors. George Cruikshank (1792–1878) was the natural heir to Gillray as London's foremost satirical artist. George may have followed in his father Isaac's footsteps by becoming a professional caricaturist, but Gillray was his true artistic hero; so much so, in fact, that when the latter died, George purchased Gillray's old drawing desk and used it for his own work right up until his own health deteriorated.¹ In later life, Cruikshank would accept bribes from George IV, became more conservative in his personal political and social outlook, and made the professional transition of abandoning political caricature

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in favour of non-satirical book illustration. At the time of Napoleon's Hundred Days, however, Cruikshank was still working very much in the "Gillray-ian" tradition. For all the mockery that Napoleon had received in the years leading up to his initial exile to Elba in 1814, Gillray and his fellow printmakers (and, hence, their consumers) had been evidently obsessed with the so-called Corsican bugaboo with certain prints betraying an admiration for him, sometimes begrudgingly so, or even emitting stronger emotions such as sympathy.

Thomas Rowlandson, William Heath, George Cruikshank, and James Gillray all produced prints that charted Napoleon's extraordinary journey from his relatively humble beginnings to the position of Europe's most dominant personality. Thomas Rowlandson's *The Progress of the Emperor Napoleon* (19 November 1808), for instance, charts in eight simple steps Bonaparte's evolution from "a ragged headed Corsican peasant" to the enthroned emperor of France. An earlier Gillray production, *Democracy;—or—a Sketch of the Life of Buonaparte* (12 May 1800), is a sequence of eight small panels on a single print sheet. Each panel depicts a specific landmark in its subject's life and career from his "wretched" poverty-stricken upbringing in Corsica, through his military education, his service for the revolutionary government on 13 Vendémiaire and in the Egyptian campaign, his abandonment of the latter in order to overthrow the Directory, and his appointment as First Consul. More speculative is Gillray's Fuseli-inspired final panel, which shows Napoleon haunted by ghosts of the murdered with the head of his bed shaped as a guillotine.

Such depictions of Napoleon's rapid rise to power were hardly flattering. They were, after all, loaded with allusions to Napoleon's atheism, duplicity, cruelty, and bloodlust. Even so, no other figure of his age excited this level of interest or was portrayed so commonly in this narrative manner. Although precursors of the modern "comic strip" can be traced at least as far back as Early Modern prints, most caricature victims of the Georgian era were depicted in single-sheet, single-panel prints that focused on issues and criticisms referring to the particular moment at which the satire in question was conceived and designed. "No image," writes Vic Gatrell, "caught the fleeting moment or transient sensation as they did. If a sensation was to be commented on, a point quickly made, it was the copperplate as much as to newspapers that people turned."² In such a climate, although their background and history might well be emblematically insinuated, most caricature

victims did not feature in stage-by-stage summaries of how that particular personality had arrived at his or her present position. Certain prints, which were created more in the Hogarthian mode, did employ this technique when engaging in social-satirical commentary. Richard Newton, for example, would use this method when stereotyping the “progress” of Irishmen, Scotsmen, or aspiring actors.³ Although Newton’s social progress prints were concerned with pigeonholing certain national or professional stereotypes, those starring Napoleon emphasised just how exceptional this individual was. Napoleon was granted special treatment, alongside his wife Josephine, who was also awarded her own progress print by the collaborative satirists George Moutard Woodward and Charles Williams. In her catalogue of the British Museum’s collection of satirical prints, Dorothy George wrote that *The Progress of the Empress Josephine* (20 April 1808) was a “libellous” design describing the final image of the empress as “fat and vulgar,” language far too strong for this relatively mild satire. Showing Josephine progressing from “A Planter[’]s Daughter” through “A French Countess,” “A Widow,” “A Prisoner,” “A Loose Fish,” and “Barras’s Mistress” to “A General’s Lady” and finally “An Empress,” the print may have tapped into its era’s widespread fears of women’s use of their sexual charms to secure power, privilege, and wealth (as articulated in the writings of John Andrews among others, not to mention the countless written and graphic attacks on the Duchess of Devonshire).⁴ As with similar prints of her husband’s adventures, it also suggests that there was something extraordinary, something undeniably impressive and alluring, perhaps even inspirational, about an individual who had risen to such a prominent position from relatively humble beginnings.

Of course, English society was not a meritocratic one at this time, whereas France had only recently experienced its own overhaul. The Revolution had actively championed talent over inherited elitism, and without its reforms Napoleon would never have risen to such prominence. After he came to power, Bonaparte continued to promote the system from which he had so greatly benefitted. He understood how it could help military success by rewarding soldiers through decorations and political posts and promoting talented men from all social backgrounds (albeit with the caveat of setting himself up as First Consul For Life in 1802, then hereditary emperor in 1804, and installing his own family members on assorted foreign thrones).⁵

In reality, the young Napoleon Bonaparte had never really been the ragged, bone-gnawing peasant depicted by Gillray in his Corsica-set panel of *Democracy*; Napoleon had been born to one of the longest established families in Ajaccio. Even so, Napoleon's family were not wealthy by the standards of French high society; his father fell regularly into debt, and the Corsican definition of nobility was not akin to that of the mainland. Napoleon's decision to join the artillery arm of the French military had been taken wisely and tactically for it was a branch in which educational accomplishment, ability, and ambition could compensate for a lack of noble status as well as one that offered legitimate career prospects for men of bourgeois backgrounds even before the Revolution swept away the old hereditary system.⁶ Napoleon's subsequent rise, as Alan Forrest tells us, "owed everything to the French Revolution, to its ideals of liberty and equality, the meritocracy that lay at its roots, and the huge institutional changes that it wrought."⁷

This was in stark contrast to the British system where a less meritocratic system was still dominated by the aristocracy. In military terms, Britain did learn some lessons from its difficulties in defeating Napoleonic France, although when it came to the Crimean War of the mid-nineteenth century its forces continued to suffer the negative consequences of a non-meritocratic, aristocratic leadership, for which the government was widely criticised in *Punch* cartoons and other Victorian commentary.⁸

The momentum of the eighteenth-century British reform movement had been derailed by the country's wars against France, although its arguments continued to bubble under the surface, and—as we shall see—they fed into the way Bonaparte was discussed, debated, and depicted. As Thomas Paine wrote in his popular pamphlet of 1776, *Common Sense*, "One of the strongest natural proofs of the folly of hereditary right in kings, is, that nature disapproves it, otherwise, she would not so frequently turn it into ridicule by giving mankind an ass for a lion."⁹ Paine may have fallen out of favour with many of his fellow countrymen in the wake of the French Revolution, but his words and ideas had not been erased from memory.

Alongside his meteoric, meritocratic rise, there were other things that certain Britons couldn't help but admire about Napoleon including his domestic policies. As Simon Burrows neatly summarises it, by the end of 1801 Napoleon had successfully "pacified France, scotched the Jacobin menace and orchestrated reconciliation with the Pope and Catholic

Church, thereby renouncing revolutionary de-christianization.”¹⁰ Even though certain eminent military and political figures—such as Horatio Nelson and Pitt the Younger—harboured little hope for the prospect of a permanent peace with France when the Treaty of Amiens was arranged, publicly the peace was celebrated with great fervour on both sides of the Channel.¹¹ During the brief cessation of war, British tourists flocked to visit Napoleon’s France. Those such as Charles James Fox were even given the opportunity to meet the great man in person. Back home, meanwhile, publishers produced few and less grotesque caricatures of Napoleon as the print shops became momentarily flooded with straight portrait pictures of France’s glamorous First Consul.¹²

Napoleon’s presence as a proto-comic strip hero/anti-hero, then, discloses some of the awe felt toward the undeniably talented enemy general who had achieved his power and status through personal merit rather than the old-fashioned route of effortless inheritance. As Max Beerbohm, the caricaturist and essayist of a later generation, would put it in 1901, “If caricature affected us at all towards its subject, it would affect us favourably towards it. Tragedy, said Aristotle, purges us of superfluous awe, by evocation, and comedy likewise purges us of superfluous contempt.”¹³

More often than not, Napoleon was depicted by London’s caricaturists as being classically handsome. This continued to be the case even during the Hundred Days, the Battle of Waterloo, and beyond, when in reality his deteriorating health was taking a visible toll on his body.¹⁴ With his “high cheekbones, his finely chiselled Roman nose, his fair fashionably cut *à la Titus*,”¹⁵ Napoleon was caricatured in an attractively portrait-like manner. Compare this with George III, who was regularly portrayed as a gormless bumpkin of privilege. Perhaps both impressions purged their audiences of “superfluous contempt” for each of their subjects. After all, derisively dopey caricatures of George III are said to have contributed to an “amused tolerance” of the monarchy on the part of the British people, thus serving to strengthen the institution’s position rather than undermining it.¹⁶ Still, when contemporaries were confronted by these two starkly contrasting portrayals—when Napoleon was at the peak of his powers while Britain’s own rulers, who were frequently abandoned by their European allies, struggled to defeat him—print audiences must have been compelled to ask themselves which country had been blessed with a lion and which one might have been regrettably lumbered with an ass.

GILLRAY, GULLIVER, AND CRUIKSHANK

More patently mischievous than progress prints were those caricatures, pioneered by Gillray and imitated by others, that cast Napoleon—not as a diminutive Lilliputian as is sometimes mistaken¹⁷—but rather as Jonathan Swift’s Lemuel Gulliver visiting the land of Brobdingnag. With *The King of Brobdingnag, and Gulliver* (26 June 1803), Gillray created a lasting image of Napoleon as “Little Boney,” but it was also one that was rife with ambiguities from the very outset.¹⁸ In this print and its sequel,¹⁹ by casting him as the hero of Swift’s ambiguously satirical novel, Gillray rendered Napoleon as a rather plucky underdog who is subjected to the torment of the ugly and ogre-like British royals.

In the first instalment, a dim-witted George III inspects “Gulliver” through a spy-glass, more a curious and apathetic observer than loyal defender of his country. A diminutive Napoleon may have made their enemy seem less threatening to Britons, thus serving to bolster the nation’s confidence in battling him, but such prints also raised the following question: if Napoleon was really so tiny, weak, and insignificant, then why had the giant king not been able to squash him sooner and more easily? In its sequel (Fig. 1), the king, queen, princesses, and other individuals of their circle amuse themselves by observing Napoleon’s attempts to sail his tiny boat within a trough, mirroring Swift’s original.²⁰

The viewer’s eyes are drawn by the ogling gazes of the larger characters in the direction of Napoleon, thus inviting sympathy for little Gulliver and his valiant efforts to sail in the face of adversity. The viewer may also have felt somewhat complicit in the larger characters’ sport, but, as James Baker has argued, in these Swiftian designs the British royals and their circle “are not representative of the majority looking down upon Napoleon, rather Napoleon-cum-Gulliver represents the majority looking up to them.” In Swift’s text, this perspective makes the monarchy of Brobdingnag appear so grotesque that it makes Gulliver feel disgusted and nauseous, although the longer he resides there the more they start to look less horrible and increasingly ridiculous.²¹ At the same time, writes Baker, Gillray’s prints act as a critique of the elite’s ostensible need for playthings and fripperies, particularly during wartime.²²

Draper Hill contends that after Gillray’s death, Cruikshank continued “the pursuit and torment of ‘Little Boney’ with a verve that even Gillray might have admired,”²³ but as well as lifting subjects, designs, emblems, and facial types from Gillray, Cruikshank’s prints emulated



Fig. 1 *The King of Brobdingnag and Gulliver. (Plate 2d.)* (Gillray, 10 February 1804). Reprinted Courtesy of the British Cartoon Prints Collection, Library of Congress

his hero's penchant for ambiguous, subversive, and roguish messages, thus similarly inviting multiple readings. This is not to downplay Cruikshank's patriotism. Indeed, the Cruikshank family were actively involved in Britain's volunteer movement. Isaac Cruikshank joined a volunteer troop in 1803 with his sons sometimes accompanying him on its drills and marches. Robert Cruikshank would go on to reach the level of sergeant in the Loyal North Britons. George also joined, although he remained a private. In 1860, after the outbreak of war between France and Austria-Hungary aroused a surge in debates over national defences, George even published a pamphlet promoting the necessity and virtues of a volunteer movement. In it, George reminisced with fondness about his family's involvement in the volunteers, although he was careful to distance himself from any implications of Francophobia.²⁴

Still, Cruikshank's arguments in this pamphlet should be taken with a pinch of salt, rose-tinted as his memories may well have been. Thanks to the work of scholars—such as J. E. Cookson, Nicholas Rogers, and Katrina Navickas—we now know that people signed up to the Volunteer Corps for a myriad of different reasons, not all of them especially ideologically or constitutionally motivated, and Cruikshank's pamphlet was written in the later, more conservative Victorian political and social climate at a time when Cruikshank's own views had grown more conservative.²⁵ His retrospective claim that his etchings—as well as those of his father, Gillray, Rowlandson, and other artists—had been one arm of the war effort against Napoleon should not fool us into interpreting satirical prints as univocal wartime propaganda.²⁶ It is going too far to insist, as Robert Patten does, that such art was “a kind of alternative service, where George's talent for drawing and his martial ardour combined to fight against Britain's enemies at home and abroad.”²⁷

Georgian graphic satire, particularly that in the Gillrayian mode—which Cruikshank continued to produce throughout the Napoleonic Wars and beyond—was remarkably unstable, fluid, multilayered, mischief-making, polymorphous, carnivalesque, self-referential, and multi-referential, thus inviting a variety of different interpretations and responses.²⁸ Furthermore, the young Cruikshank himself enjoyed close ties with some of those so-called “enemies at home,” namely, radicals and reformists such as William Hone and William Hazlitt, both of whom were at times prone to idolising Napoleon. For Hazlitt and Hone, Napoleon represented the secular spirit of liberty; one that offered an admirable challenge to the European absolutist *anciens regimes*. Both rued their country's treatment of Napoleon and were ashamed when Britain helped to re-impose the old Bourbon monarchy on the French people.²⁹

Between 1813 and 1814, Hazlitt criticised writers of anti-Napoleon rhetoric in his articles for the *Morning Chronicle* and the *Examiner*. These in turn inspired Hone to produce his 1815 satirical broadside, *Buonaparte-phobia*, which humorously exaggerated opinions printed in *The Times* to the level of frenzied paranoia.³⁰ Later, Hazlitt would take Napoleon's defeat at Waterloo so bitterly that he was said to have spent the weeks afterward as an unwashed and unshaven drunkard.³¹ Although he may have taken this further than most, Hazlitt was no exception. Whereas Hazlitt's adoration of Napoleon is “often regarded as an eccentricity distinguishing him from his radical contemporaries,” Stuart Semmel concludes that such attitudes were not especially uncommon.³²

As Semmel has shown, the terms “legitimate” and “legitimacy” acquired a “specific political significance in English” during the course of Napoleon’s reign, a development that was “directly connected to the peculiar case of Napoleon.”³³ For British loyalists, Napoleon was the illegitimate “upstart” usurper of the French throne. Reformers and radicals, however, were able to lift loyalist condemnation of Napoleon and reapply it to Britain’s own monarchy.³⁴ The British crown had, after all, hardly been passed down in anything approaching an orderly fashion.³⁵ In Napoleon, there could be found echoes of Oliver Cromwell, the popular military leader who overthrew Charles I to establish himself as “Lord Protector”. Parallels could also be drawn with 1688’s “Glorious Revolution,” which had ousted James II replacing him with his daughter Mary (who was not next in line to the throne) and her husband William. There was also the 1701 Act of Settlement, which prohibited the throne to Catholics, thus ensuring the accession of George I, the Elector of Hanover. Xenophobic print satires critiquing the rule of uncharismatic German kings had informed British print satires from George I onward, so the insistence that Napoleon was another foreign despot governing a country that was not his birthplace could provide a subtext of disillusion with Britain’s own political situation.

English radicals, therefore, were able to use the parallels between the British crown and the French imperial throne either to undermine George III’s legitimacy or to defend Napoleon’s, whereas loyalists had to tread carefully when lambasting Napoleon’s claims to sovereignty so as not to undermine Britain’s monarchy by association. For example, in 1804, a masquerade coronation held in Soho parodying Napoleon’s promotion from First Consul to Emperor led William Cobbett to deliberate whether it was possible to lampoon Napoleon’s authority without also implicating George III’s.³⁶

Even as Napoleon increasingly came to resemble a hereditary despot, many British radicals continued to admire him and use his example to attack their own rulers,³⁷ and—when he returned from his exile to Elba, apparently inspiring popularity in France and pledging a more liberal regime—such radicals were naturally inclined to celebrate.

ELBA

When he was not depicted as a diminutive figure by Gillray and others, Napoleon was alternatively caricatured as a towering giant. Indeed, as Theresa M. Kelley tells us, printmakers harboured “a persistent refusal

to represent the figure of Napoleon in ordinary human scale.”³⁸ As we have seen, images of a tiny Napoleon could convey mixed messages, on the one hand making him seem less powerful and threatening but also inviting sympathy or admiration for his efforts and achievements while undermining the legitimacy, grandiosity, and loyalties of Britain’s own rulers. The image of Napoleon-as-colossus had similarly slippery connotations. The man who had started life as a wretched Corsican peasant, as Gillray and Rowlandson alleged in their biographical panel-prints, had risen to become the dominant figure of the European continent, and certain prints represented this growth in stature by depicting him as a literal giant, large enough in some portrayals to straddle the globe.³⁹ Again, there was a detectable sense of admiration here, which was reflected in, and perhaps also influenced, the work of radical writers such as Hazlitt.

To Hazlitt, Napoleon was “like the French or English people, a vulgar but colossal power” who, in contrast to Britain and France’s royals, owed his success to talent rather than birth and “could be assimilated to that of the French people as a colossus or a Hercules.”⁴⁰ In his four-volume biography of Napoleon, which was published between 1828 and 1830, Hazlitt would repeatedly emphasise the “colossal” nature of his subject and the picture he painted of Napoleon’s time in Elba contained some of his most sympathetic language, thus emphasising the littleness of Bonaparte’s new domain.⁴¹

Hazlitt was writing retrospectively then, but contemporary satirical prints on Napoleon’s time in Elba were similarly obsessed with the relative tininess of the island in comparison to the metaphorical stature of its latest inhabitant. Vivid prints such as these may even have cemented in his imagination an image of Napoleon on Elba that Hazlitt was simply unable to shake and thus returned to again and again in his writings.

Satirical prints depicting Bonaparte’s banishment to Elba in 1814 tended to do so with a mixture of humour and pathos imaging the “great man” reduced to sitting, weeping on a tiny rock, greeted by gross locals, striving to rally an army out of this imbecilic population, or desperately and insanely playing toy soldiers with straw.⁴² It was probably *The Sorrows of Boney*, or a print very much like it, that John Scott (1783–1821) described as having “a very touching character” due to the “great disproportion between the size of the place and of its inhabitant”.⁴³

When Napoleon fled Elba and returned to France for the Hundred Days, he courted popular opinion by dropping much of the imperial

pomp and authoritarianism that had defined his previous regime, alternatively presenting himself as a “man of the people” who proposed to protect and secure the ideals of the French Revolution. He offered liberal reforms and wider voting rights, shared legislative power, and had a new constitution drafted by the liberal thinker Benjamin Constant (a critic of Napoleon’s prior dictatorial tendencies).⁴⁴ Many remained wholeheartedly unconvinced by his purported conversion, yet for those who were willing to believe him this new liberal regime, which promised to eschew Napoleon’s earlier excesses, appealed to British liberals, radicals, and republicans as never before.⁴⁵

CRUIKSHANK’S *ESCAPE OF BUONAPARTE FROM ELBA*

After Napoleon’s ascent, as depicted in Gillray and Rowlandson’s progress prints, and the subsequent exile to Elba, his dramatic return from the island added yet another barely believable, legend-like element to his incredible story, thus stimulating many satirical prints that remain noticeable for their electricity. A particularly prolific etcher of these was George Cruikshank, who depicted Bonaparte rising from flames like a phoenix, unceremoniously booting Louis XVIII from his throne and on more than one occasion bursting through a door or window to interrupt the burlesqued rulers of Europe from dividing territory in his absence.⁴⁶

George Cruikshank’s prints of Napoleon’s return from Elba contain a palpable aura of excitement at the re-emergence of “Boney.” Granted, part of this might have been a personal financial thrill seeping into the artist’s work. Satirical prints were attractive commodities, and the production of images of Napoleon had made very good business sense for print artists, sellers, and publishers alike.⁴⁷ The prospect of renewed war notwithstanding, print artists such as Cruikshank, who it must be said could often be a morally and professionally unscrupulous bunch, may well have been both excited and relieved to witness the return of the person whose image had sold so consistently well in recent times, and such feelings may well have been channelled into their art. On the subject of personal circumstance, it is also possible that Cruikshank’s conscious or subconscious mind may have been tapping into the emotions he had experienced when his brother Robert went missing at sea in 1804 and was declared dead only to arrive home safely two years later, much to the surprise of his mourning family.⁴⁸

Sometimes aided by the Devil but evoking the phoenix, Prometheus, Orpheus, Lazarus, and even Christ, Napoleon flickers between the role of hero and villain in such pieces. The disturbance of the European monarchs, whose self-satisfied laurel-resting had been disrupted to their shocked and horrified amazement by their old adversary's sudden return, was etched by Cruikshank with an infectious glee.

Both in Britain and abroad, satirical prints on the Congress of Vienna were uniformly negative, focusing largely on the territorial greed of the Great Powers.⁴⁹ In England, Cruikshank's *The Bungling Tinkers!, or Congress of the Blockheads!* depicted the Congress' sovereigns and statesmen battering to pieces a kettle adorned with the map of Europe. While they are engaged in this selfish pursuit, Napoleon takes the opportunity to escape through a hole in the container. Here, the Great Powers are accused of being responsible, if only indirectly at the very least, for the renewed threat to peace.⁵⁰ In *Twelfth Night, or What You Will*, an earlier Cruikshank design produced in January 1815, they cut up the European cake while ignoring the wishes of lesser European nations, which are represented by starving beggars.⁵¹ The print twice uses the words "Avarice" and "Ambition" to condemn the Congress' actions, terms that not long before had been employed by loyalists to disparage Napoleon. The hammering of the kettle, the slicing of the cake (also seen in *Congress Dissolved Before the Cake was Cut Up*), and the cutting up of Europe in *Boneys Return from Elba—or The Devil Among the Tailors* all invoked Gillray's famous and much-imitated design, *The Plumb-Pudding in Danger:—or—State Epicures Taking Un Petit Souper* (26 February 1805), which featured the haughty, skinny Pitt the Younger and fierce Napoleon heartlessly carving up the globe between themselves. By the time of the Congress, however, Napoleon was no longer able to take part in the greedy scramble for territory. Rather, when he appears, he serves to disrupt it.

Even in prints that used Cruikshank's caricatures as accompaniments to anti-Napoleon verses, the artist exploited and emphasised the dubiousness of the restored Louis XVIII and other participants in the Congress of Vienna as well as the continued (or renewed) popularity of Bonaparte in the eyes of the French. For instance, the verses to *John Bull in Alarm; or, Boney's Escape, and a Second Deliverance of Europe* (c. April 1815) describe Bonaparte as a satanic "thief" who should be caught and skinned like an eel, yet Cruikshank's illustration includes an obese depiction of Louis XVIII, who is greedily grasping a pouch of "Jewels, Precious Stones, &c &c" and is being kicked by Napoleon from his throne toward

representatives of “England”, “Russia,” and “Prussia”. On the left, joyous Frenchmen cheer their hero, whereas on the right John Bull consoles the Bourbon monarch by saying, “Cheer up old Lewis for as fast as he kicks you down we’ll pop you up again.” Given the unflattering caricature of Louis, this statement of ostensible bravado might have read rather ominously to those in Britain who felt decidedly uneasy about the prospect of the Bourbon restoration. Unflattering portrayals of Louis XVIII, it should be noted, also tended to closely mirror caricatures of the unpopular Prince Regent, thus adding an extra layer of satire.⁵²

Regarding the broadside *Escape of Buonaparte From Elba* (1815), there is—once again—a discrepancy between the text and its image. It is doubtful that Cruikshank composed the text himself. More likely, he was either commissioned to provide an illustration (as was common practice in the print profession), or the text’s author believed that Cruikshank’s pre-prepared image was an appropriate match for the verses. These appear to be a sincere attack on Napoleon, the “hypocritical villain” who cowardly abdicated, affected an aversion to shedding blood, carried out “secret and treasonable intrigues,” and then returned to “relume the torch of war.” Like much anti-Napoleon material, the Corsican usurper’s name is spelt in its original form with the inclusion of the letter “u”, a technique that served to distance Napoleon from the French, thus emphasising his foreignness and illegitimacy. The text goes on to mention the Polish, Neapolitan, and Piedmontese banditti who made up Napoleon’s latest army, thus reinforcing Bonaparte’s dubious non-French “otherness”.⁵³

Although its verses are seemingly intended to demonise Napoleon in a straightforward, unambiguous manner, Cruikshank’s image (Fig. 2) is far more unstable much like the prints his hero Gillray used to produce.

In the bottom left corner of his picture, Cruikshank has included a mass of celebrating Frenchmen, thus signifying Napoleon’s popularity. This was a crucial element in British debates over the Emperor’s legitimacy because supporters of Napoleon could cite his popularity with the option of simultaneously alluding to the relative unpopularity and arguable illegitimacy of British dynasts, particularly the Prince Regent. Arguments over Napoleon’s contested legitimacy could reflect very badly on Britain’s own leadership. Since the Glorious Revolution and Hanoverian Succession, the British monarch owed its position to parliamentary support, which some saw as virtually akin to the popular election of a monarch. The Hanoverians, moreover, owed their crown to an



Fig. 2 *Escape of Buonaparte From Elba* (George Cruikshank, 1815). Reprinted Courtesy of Pictorial Press Ltd/Alamy Stock Photo

illicit landing of troops much like Bonaparte's surprise return. These episodes, argued radicals, undermined the British Regent's claims to fight on the behalf of "hereditary legitimacy." By defending the hereditary Louis XVIII against the more popular Napoleon Bonaparte, the Regent would therefore "chip away at the very principle that had installed his own family on Britain's throne."⁵⁴

For radicals such as Hazlitt and Hone, Napoleon was adopted as a symbol of liberty against the *anciens regimes* of Europe. Cruikshank was friends with both men and collaborated several times on the latter's satires; despite his later conservatism, we should bear this in mind when assessing this image of Napoleon as well as his many others. Setting the tone of Cruikshank's illustration from its centre flies a grinning demon figure who looks disarmingly jolly and amiable as he transports Napoleon back to Europe. Riding on the creature's back, Napoleon appears both small and large at the same time. The tiny rock that is Elba lies in the distance, and in his claws the demon carries tricolour baskets brimming

with tiny soldiers who are far smaller than Napoleon. Yet, at the same time, Napoleon still resembles the “Little Boney” of yore: he is significantly smaller than the demon, possesses proportionately short limbs, and waves his large bicorn hat with one of his stubby arms. In this respect, Cruikshank’s illustration anticipates J. M. W. Turner’s 1842 painting *War, The Exile and the Rock Limpet*. Turner’s image of Napoleon was not received too kindly by critics who were unable to unlock its meaning, preferring instead to dismiss the painting as “grotesque” and “ridiculous”. However, as Theresa M. Kelley has shown, the painting’s title “invites a mimetic reading which the absurdities of scale in the painting itself frustrate.” With this image, Turner—who was always attentive to scale—avoided nineteenth-century realism in order “to insist on an allegorical reading of Napoleon’s foreshortened place in history.”⁵⁵ Turner’s distortion of size and perspective evokes long-established images of Napoleon both as colossus and miniature as depicted in caricature and in the writings of the Romantics; it allusively calls to mind Gillray’s “Little Boney” alongside images of the gigantic “great man” exiled to a tiny rock. In *Escape of Buonaparte From Elba*, George Cruikshank had already experimented with such techniques 27 years earlier, thus augmenting the ambiguity of his illustration.

Admittedly, Cruikshank’s picture features skulls, skeletons, and other allusions to apocalyptic war. Like the beaming demon, these too are portrayed in a relatively jovial, light-hearted manner. The skeleton that follows Napoleon’s trajectory while dancing and playing the fiddle references the “dance of death”, an artistic theme that had captivated artists since medieval times and made regular appearances in Georgian satires, particularly those of Thomas Rowlandson, to whom Cruikshank may also have been paying tribute here. By showing the skeleton mingling among all ranks of men from pope down to beggar, the dance emphasised that death paid no heed to social status, and far from this being a morbid affair, its depictions were often shot through with humour.⁵⁶ Even so, Cruikshank’s apocalyptic symbols remain threatening but a threat to whom exactly? They are flying toward that group of complacent, self-serving European leaders on the left, asleep at their table during their congress. Are they about to get their comeuppance at last? Meanwhile, back in Elba stand some empty gallows and three small figures registering astonishment at the absence of their intended victim, Napoleon. This scene recalls accounts of eighteenth- and early nineteenth-century criminals who, usually through the failure of the

hangman or his equipment, managed to momentarily escape their execution and in doing so won over the support of the assembled crowd irrespective of his or her crime.⁵⁷

With Cruikshank tapping into cultural traits such as this, and taking into account Napoleon's ambiguous caricatural history—during which time prints had reflected a wide range of attitudes toward this contentious figure, inviting multiple readings and encouraging different and by no means wholly negative responses—it can be safely assumed that the sight of Bonaparte's miraculous escape from his own supposedly conclusive fate would have provoked cheers as well as jeers from London's print shop–window crowds.

SUMMARY

The ambiguities in prints by George Cruikshank and his fellow satirists on the subject of Napoleon's Hundred Days testify to the uncertainties surrounding the events and the questions and debates raised by these events (such as those regarding legitimacy and sovereignty). The sale and consumption of prints—including Cruikshank's *Escape of Buonaparte From Elba*—as well as the public's reaction to these and the issues they raised and represented, was part of a shared process of figuring out how Britons should respond to the events being depicted. Therefore, they provided a commentary on the Hundred Days and the different reactions to it; however open those prints were to multiple and contradictory interpretations, they were also a commentary that engaged in an ongoing construction that coloured the bare episodes of 1815 with ideological significance.

NOTES

1. Robert Patten, *George Cruikshank's Life, Times, and Art, Vol. 1: 1792–1835* (London: Lutterworth Press, 1992), 120.
2. Vic Gatrell, *City of Laughter: Sex and Satire in Eighteenth-Century London* (London: Atlantic, 2006), 213.
3. *Progress of an Irishman* (8 April 1794), *Progress of a Scotsman* (22 April 1794), *Progress of a Player* (11 February 1793).
4. John Andrews, *Remarks on the French and English Ladies: In a series of letters: Interspersed with various anecdotes, and additional matter arising from the subject* (1783); John Andrews, *A Comparative View of the French*

- and *English Nations, in Their Manners, Politics and Literature* (1785); Thomas Gisborne, *An Enquiry into the Duties of the Female Sex* (1796).
5. Alan Forrest, "The Nation in Arms I: The French Wars," in Charles Townshend (ed.), *The Oxford History of Modern War* (2005), 63.
 6. Alan Forrest, *Napoleon* (London: Quercus, 2011), 25–29.
 7. *Ibid.*, 41.
 8. Matthew Lalumia, "Realism and Anti-Aristocratic Sentiment in Victorian Depictions of the Crimean War," *Victorian Studies*, 27 (1983), 25–51.
 9. Thomas Paine, *Rights of Man, Common Sense and Other Political Writings* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1995), 15.
 10. Simon Burrows, "Britain and the Black Legend: The Genesis of the Anti-Napoleonic Myth," in Mark Philp (ed.), *Resisting Napoleon: The British Response to the Threat of Invasion, 1797–1815* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2006), 142.
 11. H. F. B. Wheeler and A. M. Broadley, *Napoleon and the Invasion of England* (Stroud: Nonsuch, 2007 edition), 215–216; Robert and Isabelle Tombs, *That Sweet Enemy: The French and the British from the Sun King to the Present* (London: Pimlico, 2007), 231–232.
 12. Draper Hill, *Mr. Gillray The Caricaturist* (London: Phaidon, 1965), 126; Dorothy George, *Catalogue of Prints in the British Museum, Division I, Political and Personal Satires*, vol. 8, xix.
 13. Max Beerbohm, "The Spirit of Caricature," *A Variety of Things* (New York: A.A. Knopf, 1928), 125.
 14. One of the very few exceptions is Thomas Rowlandson's *The Corsican and his blood hounds at the window of the Thuilleries looking over Paris* (16 April 1815), in which Napoleon's physique appears bloated, as it had become in reality, yet even here his chubbier-than-usual face retains a certain handsome dignity.
 15. Linda Colley, *Britons: Forging the Nation, 1707–1837* (London: Yale University Press, 2005), 284.
 16. *Ibid.*, 210, Marilyn Morris, *The British Monarchy and the French Revolution* (London: Yale University Press, 1998), 176–178, 191–192.
 17. Mark Bryant, *Napoleonic Wars in Cartoons* (London: GrubStreet, 2009), 9.
 18. For further detail, see John Moores, *Representations of France in English Satirical Prints 1740–1832* (Basingstoke: Palgrave, 2015), 92–95.
 19. *The King of Brobdingnag and Gulliver (Plate 2d.)* (10 February 1804).
 20. Jonathan Swift, *Gulliver's Travels* (London: Penguin, 2003 edition), 112.
 21. *Ibid.*, 87, 99, 101.
 22. James Baker, "Locating Gulliver: Unstable Loyalism in James Gillray's The King of Brobdingnag and Gulliver," *Image & Narrative*, 14 (2013), 137.
 23. Hill, *Gillray*, 132.
 24. Cruikshank, *A Pop-Gun Fired Off by George Cruikshank, in Defence of the British Volunteers of 1803* (London: W. Kent, 1860), 13–14.

25. J. E. Cookson, *The British Armed Nation, 1793–1815* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997); Nicholas Rogers, “The sea Fencibles, loyalism and the reach of the state,” in Philp, *Resisting Napoleon*, 41–59; Katrina Navickas, “The defence of Manchester and Liverpool in 1803: Conflicts of loyalism, patriotism and the middle classes,” in Philp, *Resisting Napoleon*, 61–73.
26. Cruikshank, *Pop-Gun*, 10.
27. Patten, *Cruikshank*, 67.
28. Ian Haywood, *Romanticism and Caricature* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013), 5–10. As Richard Clay has noted, there was a commercial impetus to prints’ ambiguity; the ambivalent treatment of Joseph Priestley in the caricatures studied by Clay suggests that their creators had hoped to sell them to both reformists and radicals. Were Cruikshank’s ambiguous depictions of Napoleon similarly intended to maximise the consumer base by appealing to pro- and anti-Bonapartists alike? Richard Clay, “Riotous Images: Representations of Joseph Priestley in British Prints During the French Revolution,” *History of Education* 37 (2008), 599.
29. Ben Wilson, *The Laughter of Triumph: William Hone and the Fight for the Free Press* (London: Faber and Faber, 2005), 131–132.
30. Wilson, *Laughter*, 132–137.
31. Benjamin Robert Haydon, *Autobiography and Memoirs* (1926), 213.
32. Semmel, *Napoleon*, 187.
33. *Ibid.*, 110–111.
34. *Ibid.*, 115.
35. Stuart Semmel, “British Uses for Napoleon,” *MLN* 120 (2005), 741.
36. Semmel, *Napoleon*, 118, 120, 146.
37. *Ibid.*, 135.
38. Theresa M. Kelley, “J. M. W. Turner, Napoleonic Caricature and Romantic Allegory,” *ELH* 58 (1991), 354.
39. *A Stoppage to a Stride Over the Globe* (c. 1803).
40. Kelley, “Turner,” 370–371.
41. *Ibid.*, 374–376.
42. *The Sorrows of Boney, or Meditations in the Island of Elba!!!* (15 April 1814), *Nap Dreading His Doleful Doom or His Grand Entry in the Isle of Elba* (Thomas Rowlandson, 25 April 1814), *Boney and His New Subjects at Elba* (J. Lewis Marks, c. June 1814), *Boney at Elba or a Madman’s Amusement* (Williams?, 20 April 1814).
43. Quoted in Semmel, *Napoleon*, 157.
44. Forrest, *Napoleon*, 282–284.
45. Semmel, *Napoleon*, 159.

46. *The Phenix of Elba Resuscitated by Treason* (1 May 1815), *John Bull in Alarm; or, Boney's Escape, and a Second Deliverance of Europe* (c. April 1815), *Boneys Return from Elba—or The Devil Among the Tailors* (21 March 1815), *Congress Dissolved Before the Cake was Cut Up* (6 April 1815).
47. Mark Philp, "Introduction," in Philp, *Resisting Napoleon*, 8.
48. Patten, *Cruikshank*, 41, 45–46.
49. Jos Gabriëls, "Cutting the Cake: The Congress of Vienna in British, French and German Political Caricature", *European Review of History*, published online 20 May 2016. Available at: <http://www.tandfonline.com/doi/pdf/10.1080/13507486.2016.1177714>, 11. Accessed 19 August 2016.
50. *Ibid.*, 13.
51. *Ibid.*, 14.
52. Moores, *Representations*, 107–109.
53. To read the broadside's text in full, please visit the following link: http://www.britishmuseum.org/research/collection_online/collection_object_details/collection_image_gallery.aspx?partid=1&cassetid=171136001&objectid=1645983. Accessed 19 August 2016.
54. Semmel, "British Uses for Napoleon," 742.
55. Kelley, "Turner", 352–353.
56. Matthew Payne and James Payne, *Regarding Thomas Rowlandson 1757–1827, His Life, Art and Acquaintance* (Cornwall: Hogarth Arts, 2010), 294–295.
57. Vic Gatrell, *The Hanging Tree: Execution and the English People 1770–1868* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1994), 50.

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