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THE PARIS ACADEMY OF MORAL AND POLITICAL SCIENCES– ITS PUBLIC CAMPAIGN IN 1848

1. Speaking in the Council of The Five Hundred on the 19th Pluviose of the Year IV of the Republic (8 February 1796), on the subject of the National Institute (now the Institute of France),[1] which was to take the place of Royal Academies abolished on August 8th, 1793 (the Academies of Science, Literature, Painting, Sculpture and others),[2] Joseph Lakanal declared: "The National Institute constitutes an assembly of persons established under the control of the government for the purpose of conducting such scientific work as the government may entrust them with."[3]

The above explanation of the existence of this body, or assembly of scholars and scientists, was a novel idea; at any rate the explanation of its purpose in such wonderfully simple unceremonious manner was a great novelty. It could only have come from a representative of very young state authority, as yet unfamiliar with the specific complexes and susceptibilities particular to men of science, which is precisely what the Rev. Father Lakanal was– a Jacobin, deputy to the revolutionary Council of The Five Hundred and member of its Committee for National Education.

In the actual fact, practice which corresponded with the formulation used by Lakanal may have been observed earlier. Other academies and assemblies of men of science– not those privately run, such as the Accademia

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[1] *Almanach National de France, l'an quatrième de la République Française, une et indivisible*, Paris 1796, p. 445ff.

[2] *Almanach Royal, année bissextile MDCCXCII, présenté à Sa Majesté*, Paris 1792, p. 465ff.; *Almanach National de France l'an deuxième de la République, une et indivisible*, Paris 1794, p. 480.

[3] "The National Institute constitutes an assembly of men placed under the control (under the eyes and under the hand) of the government in order to engage in scientific work which the government entrusts them with" – Lakanal: report submitted to the Council of the Five Hundred on 19th Pluviose. Year IV, Paris 1796.

dei Lincei of Rome or the Royal Society of London, but ones sponsored by the state or government – concerned themselves mainly with such subjects and questions as their sponsors and founders desired them to study, who were moved either by their personal scientific interests or their personal understanding of the current needs and requirements of the state. For example the famous Accademia del Cimento, which functioned at the Medici Court of Florence between 1657 and 1667, studied primarily such questions and subjects which aroused the particular interest of those enlightened princes. Determination by state authorities of subjects to be studied by a scientific institution went much further in the case of the Paris Académie Royale des Sciences, founded by Colbert in 1666. This Academy was entrusted with the settlement of a variety of technical problems connected with the completion and arrangement of the magnificent new royal residence of Versailles.

But this was so in practice only, since officially, founders designated only in general outline and once and for all what the given institution was to concern itself with. This was what Cardinal Richelieu did when he founded the Académie Française in 1635; its Statute ruled that: "The principal purpose of the Academy will be work, as careful and as painstaking as possible, aimed at giving our language specific rules which would make it more eloquent and suitable for debating the arts and sciences."[4] The authorities of the young French Republic proceeded likewise when founding the said National Institute in 1795. They declared what follows: "This Institute belongs to the Republic as a whole. It has been established in Paris. Its purpose will be to advance the arts and sciences through continuous studies, publication of results, relations entertained with other scientific societies, including foreign ones. In conformity with the rules and decisions of the Excutive Directorate, it will devote itself to scientific and literary work aimed at the general benefit and advantage of the Republic."[5]

In point of fact, a "tremendous future" awaited the doctrine advanced by the Rev. Joseph Lakanal.

2. As regards the social sciences, however, this future was to be quite a distant one.

At the time, the very concept and emergence of social sciences as a distinct specific whole was of very recent date. Founding the National Institute in 1795, it was the Republican Convention which gave official confirmation to the existence of such a thing as social sciences (in the narrower

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[4] *Statutes of the Académie Française*, Paris 1635, Article XXIV.

[5] The above-quoted *Almanach* of 1796, p. 445. Those sentences were repeated for decades, with the sole difference that the formulation "belongs to the whole Republic" was changed to "belongs to the whole Empire", then changed to "belongs to the whole Kingdom", and back again "... to the whole Republic".

significance of the term), or of moral and political sciences, as they were known at the time, thereby giving them institutional form for the first time in history. The Convention established three "classes", or departments, in the Institute. Class I, divided into ten sections, included the mathematical and natural sciences and had a predecessor the Académie Royale des Sciences. Class III, divided into eight sections, comprised linguistics, philological disciplines, as well as the "fine arts"; its predecessors were the Académie Française, Académie Royale des Inscriptions et des Belles-Lettres, Académie Royale de Peinture et de Sculpture, and the Académie Royale d'Architecture. Class II on the other hand, given the name Sciences Morales et Politiques in 1797, was an absolute novelty with no predecessor among the pre-revolutionary academies or similar institutions. It comprised the following six sections: (1) Analysis of Sentiments and Ideas (the name was subsequently altered to Analysis of Sensations and Ideas)—it may be said to have corresponded with contemporary psychology; (2) Morale; (3) Social Science and Legislation; (4) Political Economy; (5) History; (6) Commercial Economy, Statistics (subsequently this was shortened to Geography). It was very significant that this "Class" was listed second in the official register of the Institute's classes, after Natural and Mathematical Sciences and before the Class of Literature and Fine Arts, instead of in the last place (as former custom demanded, namely to list academies in the order in which they had been founded, a custom which was subsequently re-established). And perhaps most significant of all, one ought to note the use of the term "sciences" instead of "lettres" or "arts" in the official name of this "Class".[6]

This institutionalised existence of moral and political sciences was, however, not of long duration: it lasted not more than eight years. On the 3rd Pluviose of the year Eleven of the Republic (January 23rd, 1803), Bonaparte, then the 1st Consul, ordered re-organisation of the Institute. The three existing classes were replaced by the following four: I. Class of Natural and Mathematical Sciences (divided into eleven sections); II. Class of French Language and Literature (with no division into sections); III. Class of Ancient History and Literature (also undivided into sections); and IV. Class of the Fine Arts (with five sections). Thus, roughly speaking, the former Class I was left unchanged; the former Class III was divided into three classes, thereby expanding the institutional foundations of the disciplines it comprised (ancient history and literature in particular, disciplines which not without cause were close to the 1st Consul's heart); whereas the former Class II was eliminated altogether. It is no secret that Bonaparte had no liking for philosophers, calling them contemptuously *idéologues* (in the sense of dreamers, or visionaries). This attitude had a clear motivation: aiming at absolute power, Napoleon felt that the existence of an assembly, officially financed by the State in its capacity of Institution (which it

[6] The *Almanach* of 1796, and similar *Almanachs* from subsequent years.

was from the outset and remains to this day), its members' wages being paid out of the state budget, and at the same time free to discuss at will political and social questions in general, would be—to say the least—inconvenient. It should also be noted that the name of the Institute itself underwent significant changes: the term "national" was dropped in 1805, becoming simply the Institute of Sciences, Letters and Arts, and shortly after the term "Imperial" was added.[7]

Following restoration of the Bourbons, the former academies were also restored. The ordinance of Louis XVIII issued on the 21st of March, 1816, did not abolish the Institute (which had then become Royal), but replaced its four classes with four academies listed in the following traditional order, according to their seniority: (1) Académie Française; (2) Académie Royale des Inscriptions et Belles-Lettres; (3) Académie Royale des Sciences; (4) Académie Royale des Beaux-Arts. As regards the moral and political sciences, they proved just as unnecessary to the restored Bourbons as they had been to Napoleon.[8]

On the other hand, the revolution of July 1830 demanded restoration of the institutional foundations to those sciences. This demand was accorded by the constitutional monarch Louis Philipe, the cause having been supported by François Guizot, professor of the Sorbonne, now appointed minister, at first Minister of Home Affairs, then Minister of Education and finally Prime Minister.[9] By royal ordinance of the 26th of October, 1832, a fifth component part of the Institute was called into being, namely the Academy of Moral and Political Sciences, comprising the following five sections: (1) Philosophy; (2) Morale; (3) Legislation, Public Law, Jurisprudence; (4) Political Economy and Statistics; and (5) General History and History of Philosophy.[10]

Thus an institution dealing with moral and political sciences found itself once again under the control of state authorities—to recall the fundamental formulation coined by the Rev. Joseph Lakanal. But having conceded to the social demand and restored this institution, financing it from state resources, the authorities left it to itself, which, according to some, is the optimal condition. In point of fact, the authorities still felt no need to call for the Institute's assistance.

3. This was finally done by General Louis-Eugène Cavaignac in the stormy year 1848.

[7] *Almanach National de France*, Year XII of the Republic, presented to the First Consul, Paris 1804, p. 541; *Almanach Impérial pour l'an XIII*, presented to His Majesty, Paris 1805, p. 577.

[8] *Almanach Royal, pour l'année bissextile MDCCCXVI*, presented to His Majesty, Paris 1816, p. 677ff.

[9] E. Mireaux, "Guizot et la renaissance de l'Académie des sciences morales et politiques" ["Guizot and the Revival of the Academy of Moral and Political Sciences"], in: *Institut de France, Publications diverses de l'année 1957*, vol. XXVII.

[10] *Almanach Royal et National pour l'an MDCCCXXXIII*, presented to His Majesty and the Princes and Princesses of the Royal Family, Paris 1833, p. 693ff.

Who was this General Cavaignac? From the point of view of our subject, it is essential to spare some greater attention to this interesting figure.

Louis-Eugène Cavaignac was born in 1802. He studied in the famous École Politechnique, later in the Metz Military College. In 1829 he was appointed captain in the French army. He was a staunch republican – at any rate according to his principal and it seems his only biographer.[11] He also joined the Carbonari. Despite that, in 1830 he gave his support to Louis Philipe (contrary to his brother Godefroi, a year older, who fought on the republican side in the July Revolution, was arrested, emigrated to Britain, and in 1841 became one of the founders and first president of the Société des Droits de l'Homme). Captain Cavaignac was accused by his superior officer that he had not fired at republicans. As a result he was transferred in 1832 to the army just then conquering Algeria, where he distinguished himself by his gallantry. He was appointed colonel of a Zouave regiment in 1841, and in 1844 was promoted General.

As a result of the revolution of 1848, Cavaignac was appointed Governor General of French Algeria, but since he was elected deputy of the National Assembly at that very same time, and since the Assembly was to vote the Constitution of the 2nd Republic, he decided to remain in Paris. There he witnessed the left-wing manifestations of May 15th, during which people led by Louis-Auguste Blanqui and François Vincent Raspail, manifested in the cause of Poland's independence – the day became known as Jour de la Pologne. The manifestations constituted a warning to the Right--Wing and Centre of the National Assembly, from which the few representatives of the Left had been removed, and to the rulers of the Republic in general. General Cavaignac was appointed Minister of War on May 17th, and immediately ordered a concentration of troops round the capital.

The rising of the working class in the eastern districts of Paris which began on June 22–23, known as the June Days, did not catch him unprepared. He smashed the rioters after a few days fighting, efficiently, in a bloody and ruthless manner – the experience he had gained in Algeria serving him in good stead.

Casualties on the side of "law-and-order" amounted to approximately one thousand dead and two thousand wounded. Nobody bothered to

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[11] Ibos, *Le Général Cavaignac, Un Dictateur Républicain*, Paris 1930, Hachette, p. 263. This is quite a singular book. For instance none of its author's Christian names (Pierre, Amile, Marius) figure there; on the title-page he figures as General Ibos of the Colonial Infantry. Neither are his first names mentioned in any of his earlier works (the first, published in Hanoi in 1900) dealing mainly with problems of military colonisation; he always figures as "Lieutenant Ibos", "Captain Ibos", and so on. The book on Cavaignac, a work by a general about a general, by a colonist and coloniser about another colonist and coloniser, is highly sympathetic to him, kept in almost adulating tones, but it is a serious work based on documentary sources.

count or even estimate the number of casualties sustained by the rioters, but the number of arrests was recorded and amounted to approximately fifteen thousand. A bullet fired by the forces of law-and-order killed the Most Reverend Affre, Archbishop of Paris, on the barricade in the Faubourg Saint-Antoine just as he was trying to stop the fighting. On the other hand, the rioters killed General Bréa, hero of Leipzig and Waterloo. During the rioting of the June Days he commanded one of the brigades of the forces of law-and-order engaged in subduing the rising, and was killed at the Barrière de Fontainebleau, the rioters last major resistance point, when trying to negotiate their surrender. Nevertheless, it cannot be denied that those brigades of law-and-order were known to have fired at perfectly innocent citizens, peaceful burghers standing in their windows or on their balconies, and their artillery bombarded the city indiscriminately.

During the rising, on June 24th to be exact, the government was dismissed and full executive power was entrusted to the courageous General Cavaignac. He relinquished his powers in favour of the National Assembly on June 28th, immediately after subduing the rising. At that same session, however, the Assembly entrusted him with power once again, this time adding the following, rather complicated and unclear title: "President of the Council of Ministers, entrusted with executive power". The National Assembly also voted that he had been "Well-merited for his country".[12]

Thus he became Prime Minister – and in fact not just an ordinary prime minister, much more than that.[13] What this meant was that he had once again been entrusted with dictatorial powers. This dictatorship was not the result of any coup d'état, it was entrusted to him unanimously by the National Assembly, that same body which in the spring had been split into various groups and factions mutually at odds with each other, but now, after the June Days, united together under the influence of fear. Though the rising had been suppressed, the situation remained threatening; bloodily suppressed, the working people were still on the boil, and the bourgeoisie lived in fear of them. Cavaignac was well aware of the fact that his position as "head of executive power" (which was the title generally given him) would remain strong only as long as that fear was great, but would weaken when fear diminished.

At the same time, though governing a country which was in a state

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[12] *Almanach National annuaire de la République Française pour 1848–1849–1850, présenté au Président de la République*, Paris 1850, pp. XII–XIII; *Histoire de la France Contemporaine 1789–1980*, vol. III, 1835–1871, Paris 1979, joint production by Editions Sociales – Diderot Book Club, p. 79ff. See: Karl Marx, *The 18 Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte*, Warsaw 1949, pp. 28–54.

[13] In books on French history the period between February and the 28th of June 1848 is sometimes called "period of the people's revolution", whereas the period after the 28th of June 1848, a "period of the republic of law-and-order". See: *Histoire...*, the work and volume quoted in Note 12, pp. 79–105, 107ff.

of emergency, he had to preserve at least the appearances that the Revolutionary Republic was still continuing. For instance, he could not openly disavow some of the pre-June revolutionary freedoms voted by the National Assembly (though he saw them as evident absurdities), fearing that when the danger had passed, this would be held against him.[14] Neither could he openly ignore the various appeals directed from abroad to France which, after the February Revolution, was once again viewed by many as the champion of progress and defender of freedom in Europe and the world in general.[15]

This was not his greatest problem however. According to the General Prime Minister, the primary problem was that "it would not be sufficient to restore law-and-order by force, unless moral order was also restored", and that is precisely what was lacking in France at the time – as various contemporary publications testified eloquently. As soon as he realised this fact, Cavaignac drew a practical conclusion: he appealed for help to the Academy of Moral and Political Sciences, a body which he had "under hand" so to speak.

4. On Saturday, the 15th of July 1848, General Cavaignac invited Charles Dupin, President of the Academy of Moral and Political Sciences, to pay him a visit the very next day.[16] On arrival, the President of the Academy

[14] Ibos enlarges at length on this subject. For instance, he gives the following example: "Had Cavaignac been inspired in his foreign policy by the declaration on a fraternal pact with Germany, restoration of Poland and liberation of Italy, voted by the National Assembly on May 24th, he would have risked involving France in an endless war", p. 194.

[15] In this question Ibos also displays much sympathy for Cavaignac. He writes as follows – not without sarcasm, but also not without humour: "France a protector! It was to her that those who made themselves champions of lost causes turned, and addressed their appeals to Cavaignac. One of them was General Bem who demanded arms and ammunition, which was to be sent to Poland *via* the Black Sea, the Danube and Hungary, Poland's natural ally – hence unrest in Central Europe where Russia had an army of a hundred thousand men ready for action in the event of a war of independence. Another was the former President of Haiti, Hérad, who proposed France protectorship over the Island in return for three thousand men and eight ships – which France could not refuse him – with which he would oust the tyrant in order to take his place. Such were also Deputy Ellamil and Le Long, the Consul General of Uruguay in Paris, who suggested the formation of an expeditionary corps of five thousand red insurgents with which to settle the outstanding question of the La Plata. Invitations kept flowing to Paris from the Lebanon, Denmark and various parts of Italy, which would have opened wide the gates to various conflicts in which the Head of Executive Power had no wish to get involved", p. 198–199.

[16] The account which the above sentence begins is based on the text of the anonymous *Avertissement* [*Warning*], probably written by Auguste Mignet, permanent secretary of the Academy, which was included as a sort of foreword in Victor Cousin's work, *Justice et Charité*, Paris 1848, Pagnerre, pp. 1–16, and subsequently reprinted in *Mémoires de l'Académie des Sciences Morales et Politiques de l'Institut de France*, vol. VII, 1850, pp. 1–7. The first part of this Preamble deals with the activity of the Academy in general, it is full of boasting and written in a style which the French call *coquerico*. In the latter part however, he quotes protocols of several consecutive sessions of the Academy – which served as a source of our information.

was "handed a communication of great and patriotic significance". The Head of Executive Power requested that "The Academy should contribute to the defence of social principles which were under attack by publications of every sort and kind. Convinced that it would not be sufficient to restore law-and-order with the help of force, unless moral order was also restored with the help of real authentic ideals, he believed it essential to calm down people's minds by enlightening them. Consequently, he had come to the conclusion that the Academy should participate in this highly important task by seconding government efforts and placing science at the service of society and civilisation."

In his reply, the President assured General Cavaignac that "the Academy, to which the General had communicated his intentions, would eagerly accept and carry out the noble task which he had proposed, that it was very grateful and flattered by the confidence he had shown them; that convinced, just as he was, of the dangers which certain theories carry for the state by confusing minds and feelings and disturbing people's hearts, the Academy had already begun to oppose them with principles on which the rights of ownership, welfare of families, freedom of nations and world progress are based; that each and every member of the Academy would submit to the request expressed by the Head of Executive Power, and by helping the Academy in the execution of its mission, will desire at the same time to serve the eternal cause of truth and the most pertinent current interests of the country".

Charles Dupin (who incidentally was a Baron and former minister under Louis-Philippe), repeated all the above to his colleagues of the Academy at a plenary session which he convened on the very next day, namely Monday, July 17th.

Speaking at the session, Mr. Cousin expressed the feelings of the Academy and thanked the President for what he had said and done with such speed and aptitude in that momentous hour. He declared that the day on which the government had called on the Academy for the support of its knowledge in the moral interests of the country, and thus had called science to the assistance of the authorities, was a glorious one for the Academy.

Monsieur Mignet, life-long secretary of the Academy, was instructed to forward an official letter of acceptance and thanks to the Head of Executive Power on behalf of the Academy– which he dispatched forthwith. (It would be superfluous to quote this lengthy communication, kept in highly exalted to enthusiastic tones, which recapitulated what President Dupin had already said personally.)

A committee was selected, composed of representatives of all five sections of the Academy, with instructions to prepare, for the coming Saturday, concrete conclusions regarding the manner in which the Academy was to fulfil the mission it had undertaken.

The committee held three meetings, and at the next plenary session of

the Academy on Saturday, July 22nd, tabled two concrete suggestions, both of which were accepted.

In the first place, it was decided that the Academy would publish special publications "aimed at propagating true and useful ideals"; the Committee was instructed to prepare a programme of such publications and submit it to the Academy as a whole.

Secondly, the academician Monsieur Adolphe Blanqui was instructed to carry out special investigations in four of France's great working-class centres, outside of Paris. The session voted a detailed programme of those investigations for the said Monsieur Blanqui, in the form of an instruction--cum-questionnaire. (Since Blanqui was on the committee, in all likelihood he suggested it himself, and the committee submitted the prepared programme to the plenary session for approval.) It should be noted that Adolphe Blanqui (1798–1854), one of France's leading economists of his generation, was the brother of Louis-Auguste Blanqui (1805–1881), a communist then in prison, not for the first time; needless to say, however, Adolphe Blanqui did not share his younger brother's convictions. The programme of investigations was as follows:

Monsieur Blanqui is hereby instructed to investigate and submit a report on the moral and economic condition of the working-class population of the cities of Lyon, Marseilles, Rouen and Lille, together with the neighbouring regions of which those cities may be considered the industrial centres. He will investigate:

1. The standard of physical and moral education of working-class children.
2. The influence of family life, spirit of religion and type of reading in which they usually engage on the customs and welfare of workers.
3. What is the influence exercised by different professions on the health and character of the working-class population.
4. To what economic causes should the anxiety and uneasiness of the working-class population be ascribed, and whether those causes are different for the industrial and agricultural population.
5. Which industries are most threatened by unemployment, and what are the usual causes of this unemployment.
6. Are workers' associations a means of improving their condition, and are there any examples worth imitating. [The associations in question were productive cooperatives, not trade unions.]
7. What progress has been noted in the condition of workers in the last twenty-five years, and what were the causes of progress.

The programme for "propagation of true and useful ideals" was finally accepted by the plenary session of the Academy held on August 12th, after numerous meetings of the committee in question. It was decided that the Academy would publish "periodicals in the form of short treatises" on all questions which came within its domain, in particular those which might regard social order. Preserving an entirely general character and high standard, which no scientific work of the Academy and its *Mémoires* should ever lose, those treatises should be as short and clear as the subject matter which they presented and discussed permitted. The Academy had

the right to expect that their briefness and clarity would make them plain and understandable to a great number of readers. They would be published every fifteen days, or perhaps at even shorter intervals, in small institutional format, in pamphlets of sixty to a hundred pages. The plenary session was informed that the committee had already come to an agreement with Monsieur Didot, librarian of the Institute, and the publishers Paulin and Pagnerre, who were to assist in printing those treatises, the texts of which would be supplied by the Academy free of charge, while they would publish them at low prices.

This decision was quickly put to practice: twelve works of the series were already published in 1848 and at the beginning of 1849.

After that, the whole operation was stopped. Why?

It was not because the Academy had lost any of its zeal – the then permanent secretary was to say more than a century later, but great changes occurred in the personnel and political orientation: Louis-Napoléon had become President of the Republic. The general atmosphere in which the Academy had been working was modified, so that, understandably, that body was bound to ask itself the question: was its cooperation (with the state authorities) still expected?[17]

The Constitution of the 2nd Republic was finally proclaimed on the 12th of November, 1848. On the strength of this Constitution, the presidential elections were held on December 19th. In those elections Cavaignac suffered a smashing defeat, the winner was Bonaparte. Already thinking of his own "18th Brumaire" (which was to be the 2nd of December, 1851), Bonaparte seems to have had a similar opinion of *idéologues* and philosophers as his great uncle. He expected more trouble from their activities than any benefit which might be derived. Most certainly he did not share Cavaignac's confidence in the educational mission of social sciences. (Incidentally, after his coup d'état, Bonaparte, now Napoleon III, ordered Cavaignac's imprisonment.)

None the less, all twelve of the little treatises, together with a Preamble, were published again in 1850, as the 17th volume of the *Mémoires de l'Académie des Sciences Morales et Politiques de l'Institut de France*. Actually, this was an additional novelty (since another one published that same year was in fact an annal), and was given the subtitle *Petits Traités*.

Let us now turn to the Preamble. After quoting protocols of sessions of the Academy and thus explaining in documentary manner the origins of the whole series, the author of the Preamble addressed readers of the first little volume in the following words:

So much for the explanations of the origin and purpose of the publications we are now beginning. ...The Academy hastens to offer the cooperation which was so nobly asked of it. It was noble of the government to have thought of this. We have every reason

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[17] E. Mireaux, "L'Académie des Sciences Morales et Politiques en 1848", in: *Institut de France, Publications diverses de l'année 1960*, vol. XXXI, Paris 1960, p. 6.

to believe that science will be of assistance to the state's policy by speaking to the peoples in the language of common sense. The Academy will make use of that part of authority which is its due with dedication, but also with independence. It will endeavour to express in energetic but simple terms the fundamental truths on which the whole society rests, truths which are even more essential to a democratic society than to any other. A society which in itself constitutes an epoch, which has the ambition to break with all prejudice, with conventions of every sort and kind, with all fiction, can only be united by wisdom. Such is the present-day condition of republican France. The first right of the people is the right to the truth.

5. What can be said of the "little treatises" themselves?

Let us begin with formal matters.

In the first place, looking at different volumes it will be seen that not all of them deserve their diminutive appellation. Nearly all of them exceed the allocated limit of a hundred pages: some are quite fat volumes; some of the treatises were published in two volumes; the format of some is larger than they were supposed to have. Volume VII of the *Mémoires*, mentioned above, in which all the "little treatises" were published jointly, has 987 pages of quite a large format!

Secondly, among those "little treatises", which were supposed to have been written for a specific purpose, in popular style (though of course conforming to the standard demanded of an academy, etc.), there are some which were simply new editions of works repeatedly published beforehand, and, it would seem, without any popularising alterations. The impression one gets (also when studying the subject of those works) is that at any rate some of their authors simply profited from the occasion to have one of their already published works republished, or to have some former work published for the first time, perhaps simply for the honour of figuring among participants of such a praise-worthy undertaking. Be as it may, there can be no question that the concept of this whole series of publications, accepted in August 1848, was implemented in a somewhat distorted manner. But such is the lot of all ideas— as Plato once remarked.

Let us now turn to the subjects with which those works are concerned. Here follows a list of all twelve volumes, or rather a list of the contents of Volume VII of the *Mémoires*, which comes to the same thing:

1. Victor Cousin— *Justice and Charity*
2. Raymond Troplong— *On Ownership According to the Code of Civil Law*
3. Hippolite Passy— *On Causes of the Inequality of Riches*
4. Charles Dupin— *The Well-Being and Concord Between Different Classes of the French People*
5. Louis-Adolphe Thiers— *On the Right of Ownership*
6. Auguste Mignet— *Life of Franklin*
7. Jules Barthélemy de Saint-Hilaire— *On True Democracy*
8. Louis Villermé— *On Workers' Associations*
9. Auguste Portalis— *Man and Society or Essay on the Respective Rights and Duties of Man and Society*

10. Adolphe Blanqui— *On Working Classes in France in the Year 1848*
11. Jean-Philibert Damiron— *On Providence*
12. Louis-Francisque Lelut MD— *On People's Health.*

Some of those authors were eminent scholars, Blanqui, Cousin, Mignet and Dupin for example— the last mentioned was a mathematician, others were prominent politicians, others still were historical figures. Thiers for example, the next "Head of Executive Power" in French history, the one who quashed the Paris Commune in 1871, and subsequently became the first President of the Third Republic.

What of the gist and substance of those treatises? Their joint volume, the fact that they represented many disciplines, not to mention the lack of competence of the author of the present article, renders their precise analysis and detailed recapitulation virtually impossible. On the other hand, it is relatively easy to distinguish the general significance and intention of the series of twelve volumes as a whole. Despite some distortion of the original concept, of which there was mention above, their meaning and general tendency fully conformed with Cavaignac's instructions, and the immediate response of the Academy in July 1848. It was a zealous, though not very "academic", defence of the capitalist system against its contemporary critics and enemies, headed by contemporary communists and socialists— against Pecquerr, Iamennais, Cabet, Saint-Simonists, Buchez, Pierre Leroux, Auguste Comte, even Louis Blanc.

Ostentatious affirmation of the "achievements of the Revolution" was the ideological basis of this defence, as well as equally ostentatious fidelity to its principles— naturally to principles of the revolution of 1789, in the interpretation (let it be added) of the Termidorians, not, God forbid, of the Jacobins or Sans Culottes. In fact, this basis was simply liberalism. In the series, this liberalism was repeatedly represented almost as a simple and ideal implementation of the "laws of nature", firmly opposed to "theocratic, aristocratic and despotic laws" (Troplong). It should be added that of all the detailed "laws of nature" thus understood, greatest attention and most space was devoted— alongside of the right of the individual to personal freedom— to the individual's right to preserve his property, to the right of ownership, which at the time was in greatest danger, under most violent attack.

It should also be noted (since this, too, seems to have the quality of a precedent with "tremendous future"), that the said affirmation of the "laws of nature" often began with severe criticism of the *ancien régime*, of absolutism in general, for example of various sayings by Louis XIV, and then turned against enemies of those laws, namely communists, socialists, etc.— in fact people extolled by contemporary "government instructions" and "social demand".

In sum, the series of twelve "little treatises" unquestionably constitutes an excellent document of "political commitment" on the part of the scholars,

and the rapidity with which the series was conceived and produced testifies of their "operativeness" and "civic commitment".

Needless to say, we have in mind their attitude towards the "Republic of Law-and-Order", such as the 2nd Republic undoubtedly was after the 28th of June, 1848.

6. The Academy's response to the appeal by the "Head of Executive Power" General Cavaignac and its resultant performance in the year 1848, proved a matter of lasting importance and pride to the Academy, recalled and spoken of for well over a century, during the 3rd, 4th and 5th Republic, also during the period known as "Etat Français".

Their performance of 1848 was recalled repeatedly in course of that long period at formal annual plenary sessions of the Academy in opening addresses by the President, or in the basic reports which followed. We shall quote three such reports, each of them delivered by the current permanent secretary, namely the actual director of work conducted by the whole Academy, which in consequence may be regarded as expressions of that body's official views.

The first report we shall quote is the one delivered by Charles Lyon-Caen on the 18th of October 1932, at a special open session held in commemoration of the hundredth anniversary of the Academy's foundation (let us recall that the relative "ordinance" issued by Louis-Philippe was dated October 26th, 1832). The report was not devoted to the Academy's performance of 1848 in particular, but to the whole of its contemporary history (together with that of Class II of the Institute which preceded it), none the less the Academy's notable performance of 1848 was given the prominence it deserved.[18] The fact that the government of the time had appealed to the Academy for assistance was stressed with marked approval. Apparently the Academy was particularly desirous of such specific interest on the part of the authorities; it wanted to be necessary. It was a difficult time, a time of great and increasing economic crisis, of frequent changes of government, of attempts to introduce Fascism into the country, of the approaching Popular Front.

The same theme and desire was even more pronounced in the report delivered by Baron Seillère at a plenary session of the Academy, in Nazi occupied Paris, on the 6th of December 1941, devoted specifically to the Academy's participation in "moral recovery of France after the events of 1848".[19] In this report Seillère offered, in no uncertain terms, the Academy's services to Marshal Pétain, Head of the French State (who was not present at the session), comparing the Marshal by allusion, obviously in flattering

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[18] Ch. Lyon-Caen, *Notice historique sur l'Académie des Sciences Morales et Politiques 1795–1803, 1832–1932*, Paris 1932, Institut de France, p. 26.

[19] Seillière baron de, "L'Académie des Sciences Morales et Politiques et le redressement moral de la France après les événements de 1848" ["The Academy of Moral and Political Sciences and the Moral Revival of France after the Events of 1848"], in: *Institut de France. Publications diverses de l'année 1941*, vol. XVI, Paris 1941, p. 21.

terms, with the "Head of Executive Power" General Cavaignac. Those services were to be directed primarily against the "followers of Marx". In conclusion Seillére declared:

Gentlemen! History frequently repeats itself. As I mentioned at the beginning of this report, we are assisting in these splendid efforts at French recovery. Can they bring results of more lasting nature than the ones aiming in the same direction undertaken in the years 1799, 1848 and 1871? That is a matter of life and death for our country. The genius of France, her glorious history, give us firm confidence that the country will choose life.

The third report was delivered on the 3rd of December 1960, shortly after General de Gaulle's coup d'état, a time of military coups in Algeria, still French in those days, and growing opposition by the Left against gradual suppression of traditional democratic institutions in France. The report came from Emil Mireaux.[20] His opinion of some of those "little treatises" was somewhat more critical, for instance he saw in them "signs of haste and improvisation"; nevertheless, he waxed enthusiastic over the "great mission of civic education demanded by Cavaignac" and praised Cavaignac for having made the demand. He saw those twelve "pamphlets" as "testimony of unquestionable good will and somewhat naive faith in the educating force of science and truth". He also saw them as a laudable "testimony of the spirit of the Academy as a whole", a spirit which manifested itself when faced by the grave events which—let it be added—came to be known in history as the "Spring of the Nations". Turning to ideology, or—as Mireaux expressed it—to the "doctrine" of the Academy, as a whole, he let fall a very interesting remark. In fact he declared that the doctrine in question was liberalism, which in those days was professed unanimously by the whole Academy, and went on to add: "which does not seem to be the case at present" (undoubtedly he had in mind defection of some academics away from liberalism towards the Right or the Left). In conclusion Mireaux declared:

We can all remember perfectly well how some years ago, our President, Pastor Boegner, moved us by his statement on the role of the élite. Is it not that this role consists in turning to the mass of the people in efforts to enlighten them, prevail on them to reflect calmly, without passion. on the many complicated problems which are always, today more perhaps than at any other time, troubling human consciences? To work in undisturbed peace on scientific progress, on modernisation of various techniques, on development of more profound philosophical and moral reflection, such is unquestionably the primary duty of the élite, both the academic and other élites. But once we have fulfilled this duty, have we any right to believe that we have already paid all our debts to the community? In a word, can we affirm with conviction that we have done all that it behoves us to do?

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[20] Mireaux, *L'Académie*..., p. 18.