10 October 2012

Republicanism and the Third Republic

1880-1885

la République, Paris
“The Republic,” Paris (1880-1885) from
A Photographic Trip around the World (1892, Chicago)

Frédéric Bartholdi, “Liberty Enlightening the World,”
New York Harbor (1886)
Revolutionary Tradition and/or Civil War (*les guerres franco-françaises*)?

- 1789  French Revolution
- 1792  overthrow of monarchy
- 1814-1815  monarchy restored; Hundred Days;
- 1830  July Revolution
- 1848  February Revolution; June Days
- 1871  the Commune

*Triumph of the Universal Democratic Social Republic* (1848), detail.

Paris Hôtel de Ville (City Hall), after May 1871
Political Spectrum in France, 1871

Legislative Elections (February) 700 positions

Radical republicans*  5.63%
Moderate republicans  16.59%
Liberals             10.67%
Orleanists           31.70%
Legitimists          26.96%
Bonapartists         2.96%

* opposed peace treaty with Prussia; included
37 of those elected from the Department
of the Seine (Paris)—Louis Blanc, Victor Hugo,
Gambetta, Garibaldi (!), and Clemenceau

Paris Municipal Elections (March 26) 90 positions

60 “revolutionaries”: members of the International Workingman’s Association
Blanqui-inspired socialists (violent revolution)
“Jacobins”
15 for reconciliation with Thiers and the government based in Versailles
15 “other” including Gustave Courbet
**French Regimes, 1792-1940**

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*“The Republic is the form of government that divides us the least”*

Adolphe Thiers

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Alsace-Lorraine and the Political Culture of the Third Republic

“Alsace weeping on the shoulders of Lorraine” (Nancy)

Alphonse de Neuville, *The Last Cartridge* (1873)

Politics and Culture in the Third Republic: Heroics of Defeat and Call for *Revanche* (“Revenge”)
The Gender of Revenge

Politics and Culture in the Third Republic: Heroics of Defeat and Call for *Revanche* (“Revenge”)
What is a Nation?

It may be that Alsace is German by race and by language; but by nationality and sentiment, it is French. And do you know what made it French? It wasn’t Louis XIV, it was our Revolution of 1789. From this moment, Alsace has followed our destiny and lived our life. All that we think, she thinks; all that we feel, she feels. She shared our victories and our reversals, our glory and our faults, our joy and our sadness. She has nothing in common with you. The fatherland, for her, is France. The foreign, for her, is Germany.

Race and language are part of history—the remains and the signs of a faraway past. Desires and ideas, interests and affections—these are actual and living. History may tell you that Alsace is German; but the present proves to you that it is French. Are you going to re-establish everything that used to exist? And if you do, what Europe will we make? That of the seventeenth century, or the fifteenth, or maybe that when ancient Gaul possessed the entire Rhine, when Strasbourg and Colmar were cities in the Roman Empire?

N.D. Fustel de Coulanges, Is Alsace French or German? A Response to Professor Mommsen, October 1870.

Politics and Culture in the Third Republic: defining the Nation
What is a Nation?

More valuable by far than frontiers and strategic ideals is the fact of having suffered, enjoyed, and hoped together. These are the kinds of things that can be understood in spite of differences of race and language. I spoke just now of "having suffered together" and, indeed, suffering in common unifies more than joy does. Where national memories are concerned, griefs are of more value than triumphs, for they impose duties, and require a common effort. A nation is therefore a large-scale solidarity, constituted by the feeling of the sacrifices that one has made in the past and of those that one is prepared to make in the future. It presupposes a past; it is summarized, however, in the present by a tangible fact, namely, consent, the clearly expressed desire to continue a common life.

Ernest Renan, “What is a Nation?” (1882)
Making the Modern Nation: Peasants into Frenchmen?*

transportation

mandatory schooling

universal military service

Making the Nation: Schools

Albert Bettanier, *The Black Stain* (1887)
To Monsieur the Teacher:
The school year that has just begun is the second during which the law of 28 March 1882 applies. I did not want to let it begin without personally addressing you…

The law has two features that are complementary without being contradictory: on the one hand, it excludes any particular dogma from the school program and, on the other, it emphasizes moral and civic education. Religious instruction belongs to the family and to the church; moral education belongs to the schools. In passing this law, the legislature doubtlessly wanted to separate school and church, to guarantee freedom of conscience for both teachers and students, and to distinguish two domains that have long been confused: that of faith, which is free and individual, and that of knowledge, which must be common and available to all. … The Law of 28 March does more than that, however: it also affirms our wish to create a truly national education, and to base this education on the ideas of duty and of rights…

Jules Ferry, circular to schoolteachers, 1884.
...the higher races have a right over the lower races, because they have a duty. They have the duty to civilize the inferior races. In the history of earlier centuries, Gentlemen, these duties have been misunderstood and certainly when the Spanish introduced slavery into Central America, they did not fulfill their duty as men of a higher race. ... But in our time, European nations can acquit themselves of this civilizing duty with generosity, with grandeur, and with sincerity.

Jules Ferry, speech on colonial expansion, 1884.
Our Forefathers, the Gauls…

F. A. Bartholdi, “Vercingétorix” (Clermont-Ferrand)

Making the Nation: Schools
Royer, Vercingetorix and Julius Caesar
(1899)

Making the Nation: Schools
Making the Nation: Traditions and Civic Religion

Manet, *The Rue Mosnier with Flags*, 1878

Monet, *The Rue Montorgueil*, 1878
Making the Nation and Exhibiting the Empire