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Republicanism in France

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REPUBLICANISM: France

Gibson, Alan. "Ancients, Moderns, and Americans: The Republican-Republican System of Government. Given the excesses of the Terror, which seemed to confirm in the minds of its male supporters that they were fighting for liberty and a better future, women from political participation. Meanwhile, women as citizens but for much of the rest of the world as well. Documents the ideology of "republican motherhood" and the legal and social status of women in the early republic."

Munro, G. J. A. The Republican Moment: Repulsve Political Thought and the Atlantic Revolutionary Tradition. Princeton, N.J., 1975. Along with the studies of Bailyn and Wood, one of the masterworks of American political thought. The Lockean classics. These influences are apparent in the works of Montesquieu, most notably in L'esprit des lois (1748). A nobleman himself and a member of the parliament of Bordeaux, Montesquieu ultimately came to be seen in France principally as an advocate of aristocratic despotism in the despotic tendencies of monarchical power. In his later years, Montesquieu advocated the republican form of government as a means of establishing a stable form of government. The new century also witnessed the emergence of Oliver Cromwell as a despotic ruler in England. Montesquieu contrasted the constitutional monarchy of France with the constitutional monarchy of England. The English monarchy, he argued, was limited by the laws of the land and the consent of the people. The French monarchy, in contrast, was absolute and unlimited. This led to a series of constitutional crises in France, culminating in the Revolution of 1789. Montesquieu's ideas were instrumental in shaping the constitutional ideas of the American Revolution. The Jeffersonian Persuasion: Evolution of a Party Ideology. The Natural Rights Republican: Studies in the Foundations of American Republicanism. One of the best interpretations in print of the Declaration of Independence and the Constitution. Wood's study is particular strong in its analysis of the history of republicanism from the ancient to the American Revolution, stressing the fundamental principles and their application to the Constitution. Wood's study is particularly strong in its analysis of the history of republicanism from the ancient to the American Revolution, stressing the fundamental principles and their application to the Constitution. Wood's study is particularly strong in its analysis of the history of republicanism from the ancient to the American Revolution, stressing the fundamental principles and their application to the Constitution. Wood's study is particularly strong in its analysis of the history of republicanism from the ancient to the American Revolution, stressing the fundamental principles and their application to the Constitution. Wood's study is particularly strong in its analysis of the history of republicanism from the ancient to the American Revolution, stressing the fundamental principles and their application to the Constitution. Wood's study is particularly strong in its analysis of the history of republicanism from the ancient to the American Revolution, stressing the fundamental principles and their application to the Constitution.

Elkins, Stanley, and Eric McKitrick. The Creations of the American Republic, 1776-1787. Chicago and London, 1976. This Pulitzer Prize-winning study examines the political and social transformations that took place in America in the years following the Revolution. Elkins and McKitrick trace the development of American democracy from the revolutionary era to the early national period, focusing on the key figures and events that shaped the nation's development. Their work provides a comprehensive overview of the political and cultural changes that occurred in the United States during this critical period. Elkins and McKitrick's study is widely regarded as one of the most important works on American political history. It is a must-read for anyone interested in understanding the origins and development of American republicanism.


Banning, Lisa. "Jeffersonian Liberalism and Classical Ideas in the New American Republic." William and Mary Quarterly, 40 (1983), 325-356. In this essay, Banning explores the ideas of Jeffersonian liberalism and classical ideas in the New American Republic. She argues that Jefferson's ideas were influenced by classical philosophers such as Aristotle and Plato, and that these ideas were instrumental in shaping the principles of the American Revolution. Banning's work provides a valuable insight into the intellectual foundations of American republicanism.


Gibson, Alan. "The Jeffersonian Persuasion: Evolution of a Party Ideology. The Natural Rights Republican: Studies in the Foundations of American Republicanism. One of the best interpretations in print of the Declaration of Independence and the Constitution. Wood's study is particular strong in its analysis of the history of republicanism from the ancient to the American Revolution, stressing the fundamental principles and their application to the Constitution. Wood's study is particularly strong in its analysis of the history of republicanism from the ancient to the American Revolution, stressing the fundamental principles and their application to the Constitution. Wood's study is particularly strong in its analysis of the history of republicanism from the ancient to the American Revolution, stressing the fundamental principles and their application to the Constitution. Wood's study is particularly strong in its analysis of the history of republicanism from the ancient to the American Revolution, stressing the fundamental principles and their application to the Constitution. Wood's study is particularly strong in its analysis of the history of republicanism from the ancient to the American Revolution, stressing the fundamental principles and their application to the Constitution.
applicability of the republican forms of the ancient world to the modern French state. Specifically, Rousseau insisted on the incompatibility between popular sovereignty and the moderation of a country of twenty million people: a participatory republic was a virtual impossibility, and in Rousseau's view, the general will could not be expressed through representatives. Unlike Montesquieu, Rousseau scorned the English system, asserting that the English were truly free only at the moment when they participated in elections.

Some historians have questioned the influence of Rousseau on the eve of the Revolution, pointing out that, between 1762 and 1789, only two editions of Du contrat social were published. It is worth noting, however, that his novels La nouvelle Heloise and Emile were enormously popular during those years and contained many of his political ideas. Moreover, between 1789 and 1796, Du contrat social was republished thirty-two times, ample evidence of an extensive reading public, and Rousseau became a virtual patron saint of the influential Jacobin clubs.

Rousseau's vision of the ideal republic placed more demands on its citizens than did Montesquieu's, calling on them to sacrifice individual interests to the civic community of virtue, the real public of the ancient city-states. It was for this same reason, in part, that Denis Didier, director of the Encyclopédie, considered the republic required to the modern nation-state. Human psychology had changed, in his view; modern men desired happiness and self-fulfillment and were no longer willing to devote themselves entirely to the common good. It is not surprising that the entry "Republic" in the Encyclopédie, written by Louis Jaucourt, focused almost entirely on the ancient republics and described the form as historically outmoded.

Religion and Republicanism. We treat lack not only to political philosophy for traces of republicanism in eighteenth-century France. Some important recent scholarship, in particular the work of Dale Van Kley, has pointed to the Jansenist controversy within the French Catholic Church as an important source of progressive political ideas critical of the excesses of absolutist monarchical rule.

Beginning with the papal bull Unigenitus (1713) and culminating with an order of the archbishop of Paris in the 1750s denying them the sacraments, Jansenists found themselves stripped of their rights as representatives of the nation. Many Jansenists were prominent members of the parlement of Paris, the high court (largely aristocratic and conservative) that was responsible for registering royal edicts. When Louis XV's chancellor, Maurepas, imposed reforms in 1770 that effectively stripped the parlement of much of its authority by creating new royal courts, the religious controversy that had simmered for twenty years became an open political struggle.

Notable among these pamphlets was one published in Bordeaux by Guillaume-Joseph Saige, a young lawyer whose cousin sat on the parlement of Bordeaux. In his pamphlet, Cathachaire du Citizen, Saige combined Jansenist and Rousseauist ideas, arguing, on the one hand, that the conciliar tradition within the French Catholic Church represented a kind of republicanism, and, on the other, that the many communities of rural France represented "so many little republics within the great republic of the French nation." His pamphlet was one of many, with its direct challenge to monarchical despotism and its insistence that sovereignty was embodied not in the king but in the nation, that the parlement of Bordeaux itself ordered it to be burned.

The Estates-General. A vast array of pamphlets and restitutions defended the parlements as the legitimate constitutional restraints on royal power at the end of the ancien régime, but not all political theorists looked to those institutions for the solution to France's political woes. Two works by Gabriel B要有, the Observations sur l'état de France (1765, 1768) and Du Devoir et des droits du citoyen (1784), were published in 1788 as the only remnants of the ancien régime's final constitutional crisis and continued to be the unalienable embodiment of the nation's sovereignty. Such literature was not completely submerged by the new French legal code, but it would ultimately have little effect.

The Estates-General, convened by Louis XVI in late 1788, was a traditional institution, but it had not met since 1614. This lengthy adjournment, coinciding with the consolidation of royal absolutism, left much room for debate. As the deputies, of the ideal republic, the government convened to discuss the state of the kingdom. Many Jansenists were prominent members of the deputy, largely aristocratic and conservative, that was responsible for registering royal edicts. When Louis XV's chancellor, Maurepas, imposed reforms in 1770 that effectively stripped the parlement of much of its authority by creating new royal courts, the religious controversy that had simmered for twenty years became an open political struggle.

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applicability of the republican form of government of the ancient world to the modern French state. Specifically, Rousseau insisted that the many communes of rural France represented a kind of republicanism, and, in the other, that the numerous communities of rural France represented "so many little republics within the great republic of the French nation." So incomparably was this pamphlet, with its direct challenge to monarchical despotism and its insistence that sovereignty was embodied not in the king but in the nation, that the parliament of Bordeaux itself ordered it to be burned.

The Estates-General. A vast array of pamphlets and remonstrances defended the parliaments as the legitimate constitutional restraint on royal power at the end of the ancien régime, but not all political theorists looked to those institutions for the solution to France's political woes. Two works by Gabriel Bonnot de Mably—Observations sur l'histoire de France (1765, 1788) and Devoirs et des droits du citoyen (1789)—were published at the very moment of change. In his pamphlet, Mably claimed that the Estates-General was the only legitimate embodiment of the nation's sovereignty. Like most of the other works cited here, Mably's writings were couched in the language of classical republicanism. The Estates-General, convened by Louis XVI in 1789, was a traditional institution, but it had not met since 1717. This lengthy interval, coinciding with the consolidation of royal absolutism, left much room for debate about both the composition of the Estates-General and the procedures for its deliberations. Weeks of stalemate between aristocratic and commoner delegates followed the opening session on 5 May 1789; then the Estates-General underwent a revolutionary transformation. On 17 June, the majority of delegates considere themselves to be a National Assembly, no longer meeting at the pleasure of the king but rather as representatives of the nation itself. Faced with a financial crisis and popular mobilization throughout France, Louis XVI had no choice but to accept this declaration. France now became a constitutional monarchy.

The Role of the King. What was the place of the king to be in the new French polity? The pamphleteers to the Declaration of the Rights of Man and the Citizen, adopted by the National Assembly in late August 1789, made no mention of the king. Article III stated plainly that "the principle of all sovereignty rests essentially in the nation." While sovereignty had now shifted from the king to the deputies, the deputies had no intention of abolishing the monarchy. In September, the Assembly drafted articles setting legislative authority in a constitutional legislature, while granting a pur-suevote to the king. In doing so, they were following Rousseau, as is implicitly assumed in the situation, which Robespierre would later term "a republic with a monarch at its head." The constitution of 1791 clearly paid heed to Rousseau—"the voluntary legislature" was to be the embodiment of the general will—but it seemingly granted the king the power to thwart the general will, and it ignored Rousseau's injunction that the general will could not practically be represented. These unresolved tensions would ultimately bring down the constitutional monarchy.

That Louis XVI proved unwilling to accept his limited role as constitutional monarch should hardly be surprising, but the deputies of the Constituent Assembly, and the Legislative Assembly that followed, also unwilling to exercise decisively the national sovereignty that they claimed to represent by depositing the absolute monarch. It was the people of France, joined by several bat­ mats of Morbihan and other provinces, who toppled the monarchy in a violent insurrection on 10 August 1792.

The Remains of Republicanism. One year earlier, even as he called for the creation of a republic, Condeur had emphasized his conviction that the country was not yet prepared to be taught what a republic was. But who was to teach them? In the republic, the people were the depository of popular sovereignty. Each government was chosen by the people, and then in the name of emergency wartime government under the Terror, and then in the name of necessity and under the sway of the mobilization of popular politics was responsible. Almost accidentally, for the creation of the French Republic, the suppression of regular political parties, as unified and monotheistic, to the rise of Republican Bonaparte. The consensus of Enlightenment thinkers that a republic was not suited to the country as France seemed to have been confirmed. (See also French Revolution; Jean-Jacques Rousseau; Political Philosophy and Revolution)

BIBLIOGRAPHY

The Netherlands

Historians long believed that Dutch political thought of the eighteenth century was worthy of a place in the history of republicanism. Until recently, there was a consensus in the historiography of the Dutch Republic that the Netherlands, from the Congres of Westphalia to the Congress of Vienna, was a "little Switzerland." More recently, this consensus has been challenged by a number of historians who have argued that the Dutch state developed relatively late—from about 1650—and disappeared rather early just before 1700. The "Golden Age" of the Dutch was not only a flowering of achievement in trade, science, and the arts, but also their finest hour in respect to republican, with contributions from Barthsch of Spinoza, poster of de Gruy, and Jean de la Croix. After that, the Republic's involvement in the Enlightenment in the Netherlands was perceived as no more than a Siteckening lamp. In the 1980s and 1990s, however, interest in the Dutch Enlightenment intensified, with new research by Lynn Hunt, Margaret Jacob, Keith Baker, Robert Darnton, and others.