

## ABSTRACT

Title of Document:                   LABOR IN THE CAULDRON OF PROGRESS:  
  JULES DALOU, THE INCONSTANT WORKER,  
  AND PARIS'S MEMORIAL LANDSCAPE

  Andrew Eschelbacher, Doctor of Philosophy, 2013

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French populist identity and changing notions of masculinity converge in the monument projects of Jules Dalou, revealing the fissures in the Third Republic's attempts to unify the nation. Treating the worker as France's representative man, Dalou intervened in a memorial sphere where the male laborer's ambiguous position manifested the effects of profound cultural traumas stemming from the *année terrible* and the development of new social and economic structures. This dissertation investigates how Dalou, the leading public sculptor of the early Third Republic, consistently altered his depictions of the worker as he pursued a monumental idiom and representation of the masculine icon appropriate for Modernity. The formal and thematic inconsistencies that resulted reveal the sculptor's efforts to navigate the ruptures between social traditions and emergent political, scientific, and industrial values that rendered the fin-de-siècle memorial environment a cauldron in which the era's conflicting social dogmas and cultural

doctrines forged new amalgams. Manifesting the complicated relationships between public art, modern aesthetics, and the formation of new national mores, these projects illustrate the social angst of the last decades of the nineteenth century and anticipate the visual language of divisive twentieth-century ideologies.

LABOR IN THE CAULDRON OF PROGRESS:  
JULES DALOU, THE INCONSTANT WORKER, AND PARIS'S MEMORIAL  
LANDSCAPE

By

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Dissertation submitted to the Faculty of the Graduate School of the  
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## Dedication

To my family, with love and thanks.

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## Table of Contents

Dedication .....	ii
Acknowledgements .....	iii
Table of Contents .....	vi
List of Illustrations .....	vii
Introduction .....	1
Chapter 1: Popular Romanticism, the Revolutionary Metanarrative, and an Alternative Commune Paradigm.....	21
Chapter 2: Dalou’s Artisan Ideal and the Changing Scope of Parisian Nationalism.....	72
Chapter 3: Visual Positivism and Radical Contradictions .....	125
Chapter 4: Gendering Modernity/Modernizing Masculinity.....	175
Epilogue: Dalou and the Question of Modernity .....	223
Illustrations .....	228
Bibliography .....	330

## Illustration List

Figure 1.1 Aimé-Jules Dalou, *Mirabeau répondant à Dreux-Brézé dans la séance du 23 juin 1789*, Salon 1883. Bronze. Assemblée Nationale, Paris.

Figure 1.2 Aimé-Jules Dalou, *Fraternité (La Fraternité des peuples - La République)*, Salon 1883. Marble. 442 x 264 x 85 cm. Mairie du X<sup>e</sup> Arrondissement, Paris.

Figure 1.3 François Rude, *La Marseillaise, Départ des Volontaires, 1792*, 1833-1836. Stone. Arc de Triomphe d'Etoile, Paris.

Figure 1.4 Alfred Roll, *Le 14 Juillet 1880*, 1882. Oil on Canvas. 645 x 980 cm. Musée du Petit Palais, Paris.

Figure 1.5 Aimé-Jules Dalou, *Fraternité model*, 1878-1882 c. Terra Cotta. 51 x 34 x 10 cm. Musée du Petit Palais, Paris.

Figure 1.6 Philippe-Auguste Jeanron, *Les petits patriotes*, 1831. Oil on Canvas. 101 x 81 cm. Musée Carnavalet, Paris.

Figure 1.7 Alfred Roll, *Execution of a Trumpeter during the Commune*, 1871. Oil on Canvas. 55 x 45 cm. Musée Carnavalet, Paris.

Figure 1.8 Aimé-Jules Dalou, *Tomb of Auguste Blanqui*, 1885. Bronze. L. 175 cm. Père Lachaise Cemetery, Paris.

Figure 1.9 Head Detail, *Tomb of Auguste Blanqui*. 1885. Bronze. Père Lachaise Cemetery, Paris.

Figure 1.10 Alphonse Dumilatre, *Tomb of Joseph Eustache Crocé-Spinelli and Théodore Sivel*, 1878-1882. Bronze. 190 x 135 cm. Père Lachaise Cemetery, Paris.

Figure 1.11a-b François Rude, *Tomb of Godefroy Cavaignac*, 1845-47. Bronze. Cemetery of Montmartre, Paris.

Figure 1.12 Aimé Millet, *Tomb of Alphonse Baudin*, 1872. Bronze, Cemetery of Montmartre, Paris.

Figure 1.13 Arm Detail, *Tomb of Auguste Blanqui*. 1885. Bronze. Père Lachaise Cemetery, Paris.

Figure 1.14 Auguste Bartholdi, *Tomb of the Colmar National Guards killed in action in 1870*, 1872. Bronze and Stone. Cemetery of Ladhof, Colmar.

Figure 1.15 Crown Detail, *Tomb of Auguste Blanqui*. 1885. Père Lachaise Cemetery, Paris.

Figure 1.16 L.L. Cugnot and E.G. Coquart, *Tomb of Claude Martin Lecomte and Jacques Léonard Clément-Thomas*, 1872. Stone. Père Lachaise Cemetery, Paris.

Figure 1.17 Henri Gervex, *Une séance du jury de peinture au Salon des Artistes français*, 1885. Oil on Canvas. 299 x 419 cm. Musée d'Orsay, Paris.

Figure 1.18 Aimé-Jules Dalou, *Souvenir du 22 Mai 1885*, 1886. Plaster. 151 x 148 x 116.5 cm. Musée du Petit Palais, Paris.

Figure 1.19 Aimé-Jules Dalou, *Projet de tombeau pour Victor-Hugo, à ériger au Panthéon*, 1886. Plaster. 202 x 180 x 70 cm. Musée du Petit Palais, Paris.

Figure 1.20 Victor Hugo's Catafalque lying in State at Place d'Etoile, 1885. Photograph. Unknown Author.

Figure 1.21 Quasimodo saving Esmeralda Detail, *Projet de tombeau pour Victor-Hugo*, 1886. Plaster, Musée du Petit Palais. Paris.

Figure 1.22 "Eviradnus" Detail, *Projet de tombeau pour Victor-Hugo*, 1886. Plaster. Musée du Petit Palais, Paris.

Figure 1.23a-c Masks Detail, *Projet de tombeau pour Victor-Hugo*, 1886. Plaster. Musée du Petit Palais, Paris.

Figure 1.24 Germain Pilon, *Mascarons du Pont Neuf*, c1600. Stone. Pont Neuf, Paris. Photograph Sam W. McDonald.

Figure 1.25 *Les Châtiments* Detail, *Projet de tombeau pour Victor-Hugo*, 1886. Plaster. Musée du Petit Palais, Paris.

Figure 1.26 "Pleine Mer" Detail, *Projet de tombeau pour Victor-Hugo*, 1886. Plaster, Musée du Petit Palais, Paris.

Figure 1.27 Satyr Detail, *Projet de tombeau pour Victor-Hugo*, 1886. Plaster, Musée du Petit Palais, Paris.

Figure 2.1 Jules Dalou, model *Triumph of the Republic*, 1879, Patinated plaster. Plaster. 215 x 110 x 160 cm. Musée du Petit Palais, Paris.

Figure 2.2 Jean-François Soitoux, model for *La République*, 1879, print after model. Reproduced from Imbert and Groud, eds. *Quand Paris Dansait avec Marianne* (Petit Palais, 1989).

Figure 2.3 Jean Gautherin, model for *Monument à la République*, 1879, print after model. Reproduced from Imbert and Groud, eds. *Quand Paris Dansait avec Marianne* (Petit Palais, 1989).

Figure 2.4 Charles and Léopold Morice, model for the *Monument à la République*, 1879, print after model. Reproduced from Imbert and Groud, eds. *Quand Paris Dansait avec Marianne* (Petit Palais, 1989).

Figure 2.5 Charles and Léopold Morice, *Monument à la Republic*, 1883. Bronze and Stone. Place de la République, Paris.

Figure 2.6 Alexandre Falguière, *The Triumph of the Revolution model*, 1882. Wax. Musée d'Orsay, Paris.

Figure 2.7 Aimé-Jules Dalou, *Triumph of the Republic*, 1899. Bronze. Place de la Nation, Paris.

Figure 2.8 Peter-Paul Rubens, *Triumph of Divine Love*, c. 1625. Oil on Canvas. Ringling Museum of Art, Sarasota, Florida.

Figure 2.9 Antonin Mercié, *Gloria Victis*, model 1874, bronze cast 1879. 140 x 84.1 x 67.3 cm. National Gallery of Art, Washington, DC.

Figure 2.10 Jacques Louis David, *Triumph of the French People*, 1794. Black chalk, brown ink, and gray wash. 33 x 72 cm. Musée Carnavalet, Paris.

Figure 2.11 Aimé-Jules Dalou, Blacksmith Detail, *Triumph of the Republic*, 1899. Bronze. Place de la Nation, Paris.

Figure 2.12 Aimé-Jules Dalou, *Triumph of the Republic*, from East, 1899. Bronze. Place de la Nation, Paris.

Figure 2.13 Aimé-Jules Dalou, *Triumph of the Republic*, from North, 1899. Bronze. Place de la Nation, Paris.

Figure 2.14 Aimé-Jules Dalou, Vegetal vines Detail, *Triumph of the Republic*, 1899. Bronze. Place de la Nation, Paris.

Figure 2.15 Aimé-Jules Dalou, Lions Detail, *Triumph of the Republic*, 1899. Bronze. Place de la Nation, Paris.

Figure 2.16 Constantin Meunier, *Le Débardeur*, modeled 1885, bronze cast 1905. 46 x 22.5 x 20 cm. Museum of Fine Arts, Boston.

Figure 2.17 Aimé-Jules Dalou, Blacksmith, Putto Detail, *Triumph of the Republic*, 1899. Bronze. Place de la Nation, Paris.

Figure 2.18 Aimé-Jules Dalou, Beehive shield Detail, *Triumph of the Republic*, 1899. Bronze. Place de la Nation, Paris.

Figure 2.19 Aimé-Jules Dalou, Justice Detail, *Triumph of the Republic*, 1899. Bronze. Place de la Nation, Paris.

Figure 2.20 Aimé-Jules Dalou, Justice Plaque Detail, *Triumph of the Republic Model*, 1879. Patinated Plaster. Musée du Petit Palais, Paris.

Figure 2.21 Aimé-Jules Dalou, Justice Plaque Detail, *Triumph of the Republic*, 1899. Bronze. Place de la Nation, Paris.

Figure 2.22 Aimé-Jules Dalou, Genius of Liberty Detail, *Triumph of the Republic*, 1899. Bronze. Place de la Nation, Paris.

Figure 2.23 Aimé-Jules Dalou, Genius of Liberty Core Detail, *Triumph of the Republic*, 1899. Bronze. Place de la Nation, Paris.

Figure 2.24 Alexandre Dumont *Genius of the Bastille*, 1833. Gilt bronze. Place de la Bastille, Paris.

Figure 2.25 Aimé-Jules Dalou, Liberty Plaque Detail, *Triumph of the Republic Model*, 1879. Patinated Plaster. Musée du Petit Palais, Paris.

Figure 2.26 Aimé-Jules Dalou, Liberty Plaque Detail, *Triumph of the Republic*, 1899. Bronze. Place de la Nation, Paris.

Figure 2.27 Aimé-Jules Dalou, Peace and Putti Detail, *Triumph of the Republic*, 1899. Bronze. Place de la Nation, Paris.

Figure 2.28 Aimé-Jules Dalou, Peace Face Detail, *Triumph of the Republic Model*, 1879. Patinated Plaster. Musée du Petit Palais, Paris.

Figure 2.29 Aimé-Jules Dalou, Republic Detail, *Triumph of the Republic*. 1899. Bronze. Place de la Nation, Paris.

Figure 2.30 Aimé-Jules Dalou, Republic Detail, *Triumph of the Republic Model*, 1879. Patinated Plaster. Musée du Petit Palais, Paris.

Figure 2.31 Jean Baffier, *Jacques Bonhomme*, 1885. Plaster. Lost. Reproduction from McWilliam, *Monumental Intolerance* (Penn State, 2000).

Figure 3.1 Aimé-Jules Dalou, *Monument à Eugène Delacroix*, 1885-1890. Bronze and Stone. Luxembourg Gardens, Paris.

Figure 3.2 Laurent-Honoré Marqueste, *Monument à Pierre Waldeck-Rousseau*, 1909, Marble. Tuileries Gardens, Paris.

Figure 3.3 Aimé-Jules Dalou, *Tomb of Victor Noir*, 1891. Bronze. Père Lachaise Cemetery, Paris.

Figure 3.4 Aimé-Jules Dalou, *Monument to Jean-Baptiste Boussingault*, 1895. Bronze and Marble; postcard reproduction. Originally Conservatoire National des Arts et Métiers, Paris; now Conservatoire National des Arts et Métiers, Saint Denis.

Figure 3.5 Aimé-Jules Dalou, Bust Detail, *Boussingault*, 1895. Bronze. Originally Conservatoire National des Arts et Métiers, Paris; now Conservatoire National des Arts et Métiers, Saint Denis.

Figure 3.6 Aimé-Jules Dalou, Peasant Detail, *Boussingault*, 1895. Bronze and Marble. Originally Conservatoire National des Arts et Métiers, Paris; now Conservatoire National des Arts et Métiers, Saint Denis.

Figure 3.7 Aimé-Jules Dalou, Science Detail, *Boussingault*, 1895. Bronze and Marble. Originally Conservatoire National des Arts et Métiers, Paris; now Conservatoire National des Arts et Métiers, Saint Denis.

Figure 3.8 Aimé-Jules Dalou, *Monument to Jean Leclaire*, 1896. Bronze and Stone. Square des Epinettes, Paris.

Figure 3.9 Aimé-Jules Dalou, Leclaire Face Detail, *Leclaire*, Bronze and Stone. Square des Epinettes, Paris.

Figure 3.10 Aimé-Jules Dalou, Leclaire Detail, *Leclaire*, Bronze and Stone. Square des Epinettes, Paris.

Figure 3.11 Aimé-Jules Dalou, Painter Detail, *Leclaire* Bronze and Stone. Square des Epinettes, Paris.

Figure 3.12 Aimé-Jules Dalou, *Monument to Jean-Charles-Adolphe Alphand*, 1899. Stone. Avenue Foch (formerly Avenue Bois de Bologne), Paris.

Figure 3.13 Alfred Roll, *Portrait of Adolphe Alphand*, 1888-9. Oil on Canvas. 159 x 128. Musée du Petit Palais, Paris.

Figure 3.14 Aimé-Jules Dalou, Alphand Detail, *Alphand*, 1899. Stone. Avenue Foch (formerly Avenue Bois de Bologne), Paris.

Figure 3.15 Aimé-Jules Dalou, Cloth Detail, *Alphand*, 1899. Stone. Avenue Foch (formerly Avenue Bois de Bologne), Paris.

Figure 3.16 Aimé-Jules Dalou, Dalou Detail, *Alphand*, 1899. Stone. Avenue Foch (formerly Avenue Bois de Bologne), Paris.

Figure 3.17 Dalou in his studio, 1899. Photograph, reproduced from *Revue Illustré*, Nov. 1899.

Figure 3.18 Aimé-Jules Dalou, Huet Detail, *Alphand*, 1899. Stone. Avenue Foch (formerly Avenue Bois de Bologne), Paris.

Figure 3.19 Aimé-Jules Dalou, Bouvard Detail, *Alphand*, 1899. Stone. Avenue Foch (formerly Avenue Bois de Bologne), Paris.

Figure 3.20 Aimé-Jules Dalou, Roll Detail, *Alphand*, 1899. Stone. Avenue Foch (formerly Avenue Bois de Bologne), Paris.

Figure 3.21 Aimé-Jules Dalou, Garden Frieze Detail, *Alphand*, 1899. Stone. Avenue Foch (formerly Avenue Bois de Bologne), Paris.

Figure 3.22 Aimé-Jules Dalou, City Worker Frieze, *Alphand*, 1899. Stone. Avenue Foch (formerly Avenue Bois de Bologne), Paris.

Figure 3.23 Vincenzo Vela, *Le vittime del lavoro*, 1882-3. Bronze. Galleria nazionale d'arte moderna e contemporanea, Rome.

Figure 3.24 Constantin Meunier, *Industry Frieze*, c1900. Stone. Laeken, Brussels.

Figure 4.1 Aimé-Jules Dalou, Final Model Monument to Workers, 1898c. Plaster. 8 x 32 x 31 cm. Musée du Petit Palais, Paris.

Figure 4.2 Aimé-Jules Dalou, First Model Monument to Workers (Paysan au cheval), 1891 Plaster. 38.5 x 18 x 13 cm. Musée du Petit Palais, Paris.

Figure 4.3 Constantin Meunier, *L'Abreuvoir*, 1890-1899. Bronze. Square Ambiorix, Brussels.

Figure 4.4 Paul Richer, *Premier Artiste*, 1890. Bronze. Jardin des Plantes, Paris.

Figure 4.5 Paul Richer, *Faucheur Statuette*, 1892. Plaster. 22 x 26 x 12 cm. Musée d'Orsay, Paris.

Figure 4.6 Aimé-Jules Dalou, *Baling Statuette I*, 1894c. Terra cotta. Plaster. ~ 11 x 11 x 12 cm. Musée du Petit Palais, Paris.

Figure 4.7 Aimé-Jules Dalou, *Baling Statuette II*, 1894c. Terra cotta. Plaster. ~ 11 x 11 x 12 cm. Musée du Petit Palais, Paris.



Figure 4.8 Aimé-Jules Dalou, *Baling Statuette III*, 1894c. Terra cotta. Plaster. ~ 11 x 11 x 12 cm. Musée du Petit Palais, Paris.

Figure 4.9 Aimé-Jules Dalou, *Second Model Monument to Workers, (colonne octogonale)*, 1895. Plaster. 73 x 27 x 27 cm. Musée du Petit Palais, Paris.

Figure 4.10 Aimé-Jules Dalou, *Workers Detail, Second Model Monument to Workers*. Plaster. Musée du Petit Palais, Paris.

Figure 4.11 Constantin Meunier, *The Marteleur*, 1886 (original). Bronze. Columbia University, New York.

Figure 4.12 Auguste Rodin, *Balzac*, 1897. Plaster. 275 x 121 x 132 cm. Musée d'Orsay, Paris.

Figure 4.13 Paul Cézanne, *Factories near the Mont du Cengle*, c 1870. Oil on Canvas. 41 x 55 cm. Private Collection.

Figure 4.14 Edgar Degas, *Racehorses before the Stands*, 1868-72. Oil on Canvas. 46 x 61 cm. Musée d'Orsay, Paris.

Figure 4.15 Auguste Rodin, *Tower of Labor*, 1898-99. Plaster. 151 x 65 x 68 cm. Musée Rodin, Paris.

Figure 4.16 Aimé-Jules Dalou, *Grand Paysan*, 1898-1902. Plaster. 195 x 67 x 65 cm. Musée du Petit Palais, Paris.

Figure 4.17 Aimé-Jules Dalou, *Assorted Terra Cotta Statuettes 1890-1900*. Terra Cotta. Musée du Petit Palais, Paris.

Figure 4.18 Jules Bastien-Lepage, *Le Père Jacques*, 1881. Oil on Canvas. 197 x 181 cm. Milwaukee Art Museum, Milwaukee.

Figure 4.19 Jean Baffier, *Travailleur de la terre*, 1890. Bronze. 66 x 23 x 24 cm. Musée du Berry, Bourges.

Figure 5.1 Aimé-Jules Dalou, *Assorted Bronze statuettes*, Phoenix Museum of Art, Phoenix. Photograph by James Hargrove.

## Introduction

Jules Dalou was France's leading monument maker in the late-nineteenth century. His public ensembles still dot Paris's urban landscape – from the city's eastern extreme at Place de la Nation to the far western regions of Avenue Foch. His monuments exemplify the fin-de-siècle culture of *Statuemanía*, through which the nation's new republican government, private committees, and municipal groups erected countless public statues commemorating a diverse pantheon of national heroes.<sup>1</sup> Despite this near universal impetus to install sculptural projects throughout the French capital's urban spaces, the monuments' intended affects, stylistic concerns, and ideological programs were incredibly diverse. Dalou himself, though a committed republican, was hardly consistent in his expression of socio-political ideas and formal techniques. Yet the variations in Dalou's œuvre, and in the Parisian memorial sphere more broadly, expose profound cultural uncertainties that marked France's advance towards the modern age.

This dissertation investigates the ambiguities manifest in Dalou's treatment of the male laborer in a series of public sculptural projects designed between 1879 and 1902. In these years, bookended by the artist's amnesty for his participation in the Paris Commune and his death, Dalou probed questions of national identity at the intersection of French masculinity and working-class character. The thematic and aesthetic ambivalences that

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<sup>1</sup> On Statuemanía see: Hargrove, *Statues of Paris*, Agulhon, *Marianne au combat* and *Marianne au pouvoir*, Lafranchi, *Les statues des grands hommes à Paris*, and Debuissou, et al. *A nos grands hommes*.

mark his production reflect his effort to negotiate instabilities in France's transforming fin-de-siècle society. In this environment, shifting politico-industrial circumstances and the development of modernist – and anti-modernist – ideals meant that traditional artistic interventions no longer offered cleared solutions to new national paradigms.

The labor-centric focus of this dissertation reflects neither Dalou's entire œuvre nor, obviously, the only social tensions during the period. That said, Dalou was preoccupied with the position and character of the worker. His obsession mirrored that of many in the nation and the Western world. In the wake of the Paris Commune, and in the midst of a period when industrialism accelerated changing social and geographical patterns, the unstable station and political role of the male laborer weighed heavily on the psyche of France.

This project will reveal a new image of Dalou, an artist traditionally marginalized in established scholarship as a spokesman for the nation's conservative Opportunist leaders, a practitioner of staid public sculpture, and an ancestor to twentieth-century Social Realism.<sup>2</sup> Far from showing a single-minded practitioner of passé aesthetics and a sycophantic organ of the republican regime, my evaluation of Dalou's shifts, false-starts, and continuous modifications reveals an artist committed to responding to his new age. The ideological and stylistic uncertainties that his works convey demonstrate his profound engagement with the nation's contested cultural dialogues and evolving artist

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<sup>2</sup> Dalou's sculpture also emerges as a foil for Modernist art of the 1890s in notable texts such as Christopher Green's *Art in France 1900-1940* or Richard Thomson's *The Troubled Republic*. These authors use the 1899 inauguration of a permanent version of the *Triumph of the Republic* to frame the official art culture against which Modernists rebelled. Thomson and Green are surely correct in describing the 1899 celebration of the neo-baroque monument as a marker of *arrière-garde* culture, but their assertions obfuscate Dalou's own rejection of that mode a decade prior.

currents. This reconsideration of Dalou offers new evidence about the sculptor's connection to the development of the modern art and asks new questions about public monument's engagement with the uncertainties of the fin de siècle.

## Background:

Aimé-Jules Dalou was born in 1838 to an artisan father and a mother with staunch republican values. His political education is reputed to have begun at his birth, when his mother would rock him to sleep singing Pierre Dupont's *Chant des ouvriers*. At the age of nine he is said to have climbed the workers' barricades in the 1848 revolution.<sup>3</sup> His artistic education commenced somewhat later when he entered the *Ecole Gratuite du Dessin* – an institution commonly referred to as the *Petite Ecole* – in 1852. In this arts academy geared towards educating industrial and decorative artists of the working class, Dalou studied under the direction of Jean-Baptiste Carpeaux. Several years later, Carpeaux, who also began his training in the *Petite Ecole*, encouraged Dalou to follow the master's example in pursuing official success through a transition to Francisque Duret's studio. The switch from Carpeaux's *atelier* to the *statuaire* Duret's studio involved a new formation for Dalou under an *Ecole des Beaux-Arts* pedagogy, steeped in the academic concerns of sculptural logic, idiom, and calculation.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> Dreyfous, *Dalou*, 1-5.

<sup>4</sup> For a description of Duret's teaching, see: Hunisak, *The Sculptor Jules Dalou*, 29. Duret's style had not always been so Academic. In the 1830s he was a leading Romantic sculptor, but turned more towards an Academic style when he began accepting students who were competing for the Prix de Rome.

As the three principal biographies of Dalou detail, the sculptor toiled in this setting for a number of years without any major achievements.<sup>5</sup> He never won the coveted *Prix de Rome* and felt that the academic mode retarded his creativity. By the mid-1860s, Dalou became disenchanted with the institutional mechanisms of French art in the Second Empire. He bemoaned his lack of official (and financial) success, especially after marrying and fathering a handicapped daughter whom he needed to support. He professed his affinity for the nation's crafts traditions – connected to his working-class and *Petite Ecole* backgrounds.

In this period, which Dalou's first biographer Maurice Dreyfous describes as the sculptor's bohemian phase, Dalou worked as a *praticien*. In addition to time as a taxidermist, Dalou joined his *Petite Ecole* friend – and future rival – Auguste Rodin in executing decorative sculpture for the Hotel Païva. Despite embracing the artisanal lifestyle and protesting against the official systems of French art, Dalou nevertheless continued to submit works to the Salon, where he finally achieved official recognition in 1870 – a Third Class medal for *La Brodeuse*.

The critical success that Dalou gained for the *Brodeuse* was short lived. The *année terrible*, which included the devastating Franco-Prussian War and the fratricidal brutality of the Paris Commune, produced a life-altering series of events.<sup>6</sup> Along with fellow artists including Auguste Rodin, Alexandre Falguière, and Henri Chapu, Dalou

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<sup>5</sup> Dreyfous, *Dalou: Sa vie et son œuvre*; Caillaux, *Aimé-Jules Dalou*; Hunisak, *The Sculptor Jules Dalou*.

<sup>6</sup> While there are countless studies about the period from rigorous scholarship to provocative graphic novels, Alistair Horne's *The Fall of Paris: the Siege and the Commune, 1870-1871* and Rupert Christiansen's *Paris Babylon: The Story of the Paris Commune* remain among the most readable and engaging histories of the terrible year – though they are not academic works in the traditional sense.

joined the National Guard during the Prussian siege of Paris. Dalou continued what he termed his “service in defense of the Republic” the following spring when he joined the Paris Commune – a civil insurgency that pitted the people of the capital against the Government of National Defense, which was installed in the former royal Chateau of Versailles.

During the revolt, the sculptor served as one of forty-seven members of the central council of the *Fédération des artistes* – an organization typical of Commune theories about worker independence, mutualism, cooperation, and federalist unions.<sup>7</sup> The sculptor also accepted a position as an adjunct-curator of the Louvre museum, though his duties there were minimal. He was seemingly content to allow the pre-Commune curator Barbet de Jouy continue running the institution.<sup>8</sup> Dalou’s most significant impact during the uprising involved helping to develop the municipal government’s new artistic pedagogy, which recalled many Communard artists’ *Petite Ecole* backgrounds.

The Commune ended in May 1871 amid violent clashes between the government troops from Versailles and the insurgents. With the help of Barbet de Jouy, Dalou and his family were able to hide during these bloody days, giving credence to later assertions that the sculptor never wielded a gun during the insurrection. Shortly after the revolt ended, the family fled to England, where Dalou found refuge and work with his former *Petite Ecole* friend Alphonse Legros, who had established himself in the British capital years earlier. Because of his exile, the *Troisième Conseil de Guerre* tried Dalou *in absentia* for his participation in the uprising, adjudicating a life-sentence of hard labor.

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<sup>7</sup> Sánchez, *Organizing Independence*.

<sup>8</sup> Barbet du Jouy, *Son Journal Pendant la Commune*.

After several early rough patches, Dalou created a comfortable life for himself in London. He gained notoriety in city's *artisogauche* circles, earning a series of royal, private, and public commissions, and achieved great success as a sculptor in the Royal Exhibitions.<sup>9</sup> He became a teacher in London's new arts schools and influenced English sculptors in a manner that is widely credited as a force in the creation of a new British style.<sup>10</sup> The President of the Royal Academy, Dalou's friend Frederic Leighton, even offered the exiled Frenchman a place in the British pavilion at the *Exhibition Universelle* in Paris; needless to say, the patriotic Dalou declined.<sup>11</sup>

As a Communard in the *aristogauche* milieu, Dalou enjoyed a privileged social position. Little more than a year into his stay, he wrote to Edouard Lindeneher explaining that in London's high society the nobility and bourgeoisie welcomed the French exiles with open arms: "On nous considère comme des hommes politiques et tout ce qui découle, comme conséquences, des évènements politiques leur semble tout naturel."<sup>12</sup>

This attitude toward the Commune – and by extension Dalou – was far removed from that of Frenchmen of the bourgeoisie. In France, the uprising had compounded the unease of a society already in the midst of substantive change before the terrible year. Under the leadership of Napoleon III, the Second Empire (1851-1870) had altered

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<sup>9</sup> Amélie Simier introduced me to the term *aristogauche* during a conversation about the socialist aristocrats of 1870s London, including Dalou's first British patron Lord Carlisle (George Howard) and later patrons including Charles and Emilia Dilke.

<sup>10</sup> On Dalou's time in England see: Dreyfous, *Dalou*, 48-81; Briggs and Albinson, "Dalou in England;" E. Lantéri, "Jules Dalou Sculptor;" Hunisak, *The Sculptor Jules Dalou*. On Dalou's influence on New British Sculpture see: Getsy, *Body Doubles*, 3; Read, *Victorian Sculpture*.

<sup>11</sup> Ginepro, "Dalou ou le naturalisme en sculpture," 32.

<sup>12</sup> Dalou to Edouard Lindeneher, 9 January 1873, quoted in Dreyfous, *Dalou*, 51. "They consider us as politicians and all the consequences that followed the political events seem [to them] very natural."

relations between the capital and the provinces, engaged an active foreign policy intent on aggrandizing France's position in Europe, Asia, and the Americas, redeveloped Paris in a manner that drastically altered the city's social structures as well as its infrastructure, and initiated the industrial shifts that would help define the last decades of the century. Critics dubbed the society that emerged in Paris during these years, marked by the *flâneur*, as decadent. Contemporary to the rise of the *flâneur*, Paris witnessed a huge influx of workers joining its urban population from the provinces. The social and geographic changes began to transform slowly Paris's population under the dual pressures of *proletarianization* and *embourgeoisement*.

The embarrassing defeat at the hands of the Prussian army, followed by the rampant bloodshed of the Commune's final days produced further social instability and angst. Peter Starr has described the culture that emerged after the "Bloody Week" as one that a phenomenon of confusion marked. As Starr writes:

[w]hen one evokes the confusions that resulted from such massive tectonic shifts as the breakdown of an inherited class structure or the development, under the twin pressures of capitalism and revolutionary experience, of a functionally modern conception of the crowd, one intends a state of phenomena whose elements 'are mixed to such an extent that it is impossible to distinguish among them.'<sup>13</sup>

While the Commune was not solely responsible for circumstances such as the collapse of inherited class structures, it was the most concrete manifestation of the profound tensions that could paralyze the nation.

In the next two decades a dominant discourse formed that allowed Frenchmen to cope with the social shifts that the revolt exposed and the fear it had engendered. The

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<sup>13</sup> Starr, *Commemorating Trauma*, 3.



bourgeoisie and national government vilified the Commune as a product of boorish and wanton lawlessness perpetrated by a working class teeming with criminals and devoid of morals. They sought to marginalize the political concerns of Communards in order to remove the uprising from the revolutionary metanarrative that the Republic held dear.<sup>14</sup> Socialist, anarchist, and communist commentators structured an oppositional narrative – a counter-discourse – that presented the Commune as a heroic struggle of the proletariat against its bourgeois oppressors.<sup>15</sup> These accounts also distinguished the revolt from earlier French uprisings, suggesting that it was a break from the bourgeois revolutions of the past and a new prism through which to consider modern social and political engagement.<sup>16</sup>

These constructions of the Commune took shape within the structures of a larger, pre-existing discourse rooted in quasi-scientific rhetoric that linked the working class to inherent traits of criminality and immorality.<sup>17</sup> Beginning in the 1870s, authors littered their accounts of the revolt with violently animalistic and racial pejoratives that negated differences between the working class and the rebels.<sup>18</sup> They populated their novels with villains who served as easily identifiable Commune types such as the “jeune déclassé,”

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<sup>14</sup> There are numerous studies on the government’s effort to evacuate the Commune from national memory in order to assert Republican grandeur. See, for example: Wilson, *Paris and the Commune, 1871-78*.

<sup>15</sup> On Counter-Discourse see: Terdiman, *Discourse/Counter-Discourse*.

<sup>16</sup> The most famous of this type of counter-discourse is Karl Marx’s *La Guerre civile en France 1871*.

<sup>17</sup> On class and crime see: Chevalier, *Class laborieuses et classes dangereuses*; on nineteenth-century interests in the links between social disease and crime/deviance see: Nye, *Crime, Madness, and Politics*; P. O’Brien, “Crime and Punishment as Historical Problem.”

<sup>18</sup> Burton, *Blood in the City*, 143

the “mauvais ouvrier,” the “voyou,” and the hysteric, sadistic Parisian woman.<sup>19</sup> In the years following the revolt, the government largely echoed and encouraged these social evaluations. For instance, the 1874 Carron report, which set the archconservative Government of Moral Order’s position towards amnesty, presented the Commune as an apolitical uprising of a degenerate and lazy working class that sought revenge against its natural superiors.<sup>20</sup> This style rhetoric, which flattened distinctions, entrenched the laborers’ subordinate position, dissolving the power of Paris’s popular milieu and removing workers from the sphere of the culturally powerful.

At the end of the 1870s, the Opportunist party – largely comprised of moderate bourgeois republicans of the *nouvelles couches sociales* – replaced the Government of Moral Order as the political leader of the country. This transition produced a less overtly antagonistic relationship between the dominant sphere and the workers. The new republican regime also moved the center of the government back to Paris from Versailles, where it had remained since 1871. A mood of conservative and bourgeois republican nationalism flourished as the nation sought to move forward from its terrible decade.

The rise of the Opportunists accelerated momentum for Commune amnesty. Though the powerful narrative of the revolt’s criminality still dominated the discourse, many republicans understood amnesty as the only way to close the 1870-1871 chapter of French history.<sup>21</sup> Others developed a new perspective to distinguish an ennobled

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<sup>19</sup> Lidsky, *Ecrivains contre la Commune*, 97-115.

<sup>20</sup> Carron, “Rapport Supplémentaire fait au nom de la commission chargée d’examiner la proposition de loi de M. de Pressensé;” Joughin, *The Paris Commune in French Politics, 1871-1880*, vol. 1, 67-114.

<sup>21</sup> *La République française*, 12 July 1880.

proletariat, who were paragons of tireless industrial labor and non-confrontational support for the Republic, from the dangerous workers.

In 1879, the Parisian municipal council joined in the effort to forge a spirit of national reunion, initiating a competition for a monument to the Republic at Place Château d'Eau. The prospect of amnesty and imminent repatriation allowed Dalou to prepare an entry for the contest. Though he did not win, critics and the Council valued his submission, agreeing to commission his *Triumph of the Republic* for elsewhere in the city.

Dalou definitively returned to France in the spring of 1880. Despite the government's effort to move beyond the history of the Commune, Dalou remained unrepentant for his part in the uprising, which he deemed to be exclusively political. In the next twenty years, the sculptor would navigate his political concerns, Communard past, labor-centric ideologies, and conceptions of modern society to intervene in the discourse of national identity by exploring the appropriate representation of the ideal male worker in an age of science and industry.

The first chapter of my project investigates a series of sculptures – *Fraternité*, *Auguste Blanqui*, and the proposed monument to Victor Hugo for the Pantheon – that Dalou created in the years surrounding his reintegration into the Parisian spheres of the 1880s. In these works, he sought to reintegrate the Commune into a transhistorical narrative of revolution that transcended boundaries marked by changing historical periods and accounted for the continuation of revolutionary progress into the future. Though compositionally diverse, the sculptures employ Romantic-Naturalist aesthetics and

specific iconographic clues to intertwine the conditions of the 1880s with shared memories of the Commune. They enfold the 1871 uprising into the people's revered revolutionary tradition – highlighted by the insurgencies of 1792, 1830, and 1848. Together the sculptures construct a constitutive national history, advancing a narrative of continuous French progress.

The modern men who embody this tradition express a timeless ideal of masculinity and popular character that emerged from the milieu of the traditional working classes. In Dalou's expressive modeling, as well as in revolutionary lore and the writings of republican historians such as Jules Michelet, the heroes of these popular strata embraced a commitment to a romantic construction of the motherland.<sup>22</sup> Their tireless support of revolutionary advance and vigilant concern for social justice was not bound to notions of class difference, but instead deeply connected to the possibilities for universal harmony in the ideal republic.

Though Dalou designed each of these sculptures as public projects, he chose to exhibit them at national Salons. Within the walls of this social space defined by the dominant bourgeoisie, the sculptures disrupted the historicization of the Commune as a moment of historical rupture. Breaking from entrenching national narratives and insisting on a timeless vision of masculine honor rooted in the people's romantic traditions, the sculptures prompt a reconsideration of the character of the modern male worker and his connection to the revolutionary heritage.

The second chapter of the dissertation continues on these themes, but focuses on Dalou's *Triumph of the Republic*. The sculptor originally conceived this ensemble for his

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<sup>22</sup> Michelet, *Le peuple*.

1879 entry into a Paris municipal council competition for a monument at Place de la République. Dalou's vibrant group departed significantly from the traditional formal tone and conventional allegorical construction of the Republic that the council wanted for this particular intervention. The city government nonetheless praised Dalou's innovative composition in its official report and offered him the opportunity to sculpt the ensemble in the multi-layered memorial sphere of Place de la Nation.

Here, the *Triumph of the Republic* contributes new meaning to a royal and imperially designed space within a historically working-class neighborhood of Eastern Paris. The colossal ensemble's melding of three centuries of period-styles present this rolling Republic as the culmination of a national history of progress. The group's allegorical program advances a popular, fraternal, and mutualist message that operates with the monument's Naturalist detail and decorative precision to assert the traditional Parisian artisan as the embodiment of France's essential values. The *forgeron* pushing the group from the north becomes a spokesman for a modern ideology developed from mid-century republican, and subsequent Communard, theories of social justice, liberty, and equality.

On 21 September 1889, the Municipal Council inaugurated a temporary plaster version of the group, which Dalou had patinated to appear bronze. This ceremony participated in the national commemoration of the centennial of the French Revolution and occurred in the wake of the Boulanger Crisis that had threatened the young Third Republic's stability. Dalou had hoped this would be a moment to celebrate popular valor, however the unveiling of the enormous plaster saw the President of the Republic and a parade of the country's political and military elite co-opt the event.

The circumstances surrounding the ceremony, specifically the fissures between the monument's populist allegorical program, the elitist inauguration festivities, and evidence of the transforming social realities of Eastern Paris in the 1880s – accelerated by industrialism, the shock of the Commune, and the phenomena of *embourgeoisement* and *proletarianization* – exposed a set of ruptures between France's traditions and its future. Dalou's artisan hero, a fixture of the romantic-revolutionary pantheon and the hero of the capital's popular quarters, appeared disconnected from the developing industrial working class as well as the parade of new republican icons.

Returning home from the ceremony, Dalou was distraught over what he believed to be the government's usurpation of his allegorical program. At the same time, he was conscious of his own anachronisms. In a passionate journal entry, he derided his project as being appropriate only for *autrefois*. He resolved to create a monument to laborers that would operate with a new formal language – outside the established conventions of public sculpture – to celebrate the worker as the hero of what he termed the modern cult.<sup>23</sup>

The third chapter of my dissertation investigates a series of 1890s monuments through which Dalou sought new visual and thematic modes to commemorate Jean-Baptiste Bousingault, Jean Leclaire, and Adolphe Alphand. In each group, Dalou operated with an attention to visual positivism – a combination of a scientific evaluation of society and unflinching Naturalism. As he experimented with new formal idioms, Dalou tried to render unsentimentally the real-world dynamics between bourgeois

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<sup>23</sup> Roujon, "Preface," vii.

exemplars, noble workers, and those who may exist in the slippage between the social poles.

In addition to manifesting steps towards a stylistic shift away from allegory and monumental convention, the groups offer a new take on social dynamics. Insisting on the presence of class distinctions, Dalou breaks from the celebration of a universal, popular hero. In the place of this icon, the sculptor experimented with figures that embodied the distinct traits of diverse French social strata. While the monuments assert powerful differences between social groups, they also speak to possibilities for class cohesion and republican harmony. This line of thinking was not unique to Dalou, finding sympathy in the political programs of the Radical party and its ideology of *Solidarité* – a philosophy rooted in scientific doctrines that sought to structure hierarchical, but mutually beneficial, relationships between social classes based on shared needs and commitment to the nation.<sup>24</sup>

In the memorial landscape, the monuments construct a new visual tone for laboring figures, but also produce a series of stylistic, theoretical, and geographic contradictions. The Alphand monument, for instance, confuses the very class distinctions on which its tiered-composition is based, inserting manual workers into a monumental landscape within a neighborhood from which they were largely socially absent. Such inconsistencies expose the artistic difficulties of a sculptor engaging aesthetic and social modernity. Moreover, they mirror the challenges that the nation faced as it pursued a culture of class harmony that would respect traditional values of French republicanism and respond to new theories about the nation's modern structure.

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<sup>24</sup> Bourgeois, *Solidarité*.

The final chapter of the dissertation considers Dalou's decade long quest to erect a *Monument to Laborers*. In his most advanced effort for the unrealized project, Dalou designed a model for a 30-meter high column with a rounded top that he compared to "the badge of Priapus." This aggressive pronouncement of male virility, which Dalou also described as a factory pipe and a laborer's prison, departs from traditional images of the masculine ideal. Marrying the phallus and the smokestack and using a ring of naturalistically depicted laborers as ornamentation, the project suggests that the cult of science and industry would dominate the new age and organize its principles. The virile smokestack – a symbol of the industrial age *par excellence* – also reveals Dalou's effort to come to terms with the seemingly paradoxical relationship of the ephemeral modern era to the traditional role of public monument.

In a contemporary project that enriches the proposed monument, Dalou sculpted the *Grand Paysan* – an anonymous peasant who is subject to the ceaseless advance of modernity. This tired and aged laborer – Dalou's new masculine icon and symbol of the working everyman – exudes humility and quiet dignity while he stoically rolls his sleeve before another day's toil. Though the *Monument to Laborers* and the *Grand Paysan* are distinct sculptural projects, reading the works together – and in the context of both published and unpublished writings by Dalou's great friend and colleague Paul Richer – reveals the sculptor's most mature vision of modernity. In the context of these works, the unstoppable and brutal advance of progress and industry defines the modern age, rendering man impotent to alter his position. Honest labor is still the nation's ennobling virtue, but the worker is now imprisoned by the era's progress and is no longer the driving force in its advance.



My project builds on John Huniak's 1975 dissertation. Huniak's work, which evaluates Dalou's life and career, provided the first modern, scholarly evaluation of Dalou in almost half a century. It is the foundation for further inquiry. Since Huniak's reappraisal of Dalou, a number of other scholars – including Daniel Imbert, Guénola Groud, and Antoinette le Normand-Romain, to name just three – have enriched our understanding of the sculptor and the artistic climate of Paris's memorial environment within which he worked.<sup>25</sup> Additionally, Amélie Simier and Cécilie Champy's stewardship of the Dalou collection at the Petit Palais has advanced the field through thoughtful consideration of the sculptor's archives, terra cottas, and posthumously-cast bronze statuettes. Simier has recently published an extremely valuable and beautifully illustrated *Catalogue Sommaire* of Dalou's works conserved at the Petit Palais museum.<sup>26</sup>

These studies have established the base for a current resurgence of interest in Dalou, including Janice Best's consideration of the works of Dalou, Ernest Barrias, and the frères Morices in the context of republican mythmaking after the Commune.<sup>27</sup> In a 2008 dissertation, Ariel Plotek challenged John Huniak's contention that there is “no real legacy” of Dalou, suggesting that the *forgeron* on the *Triumph of the Republic* belongs to a twentieth-century tradition as a precedent for Antoine Bourdelle and Pablo

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<sup>25</sup> See for example: Imbert and Groud, eds. *Quand Paris dansait avec Marianne*; Le Normand-Romain, “Le Triomphe de Silène de Jules Dalou ;” Le Normand-Romain, *Mémoire en Marbre*.

<sup>26</sup> Simier, *Jules Dalou. L'œuvre sculpté*.

<sup>27</sup> Best, “Une Statue monumentale de la République,” 303–22; Best, *Les Monuments de Paris*.

Picasso.<sup>28</sup> Moreover, in France there are several recently completed Masters degree-level manuscripts that evaluate discrete components of the sculptor's career.<sup>29</sup>

Each of these studies – and many of the authors personally – have impacted the development of my project. Additionally, I have also turned to texts such as Neil McWilliam's study of Jean Baffier and Renée Ater's book on Meta Warrick Fuller as dynamic examples of interdisciplinary scholarship about sculpture and national identity.<sup>30</sup> These single-artist studies depart from purely biographical modes to consider the unique way that sculpture – and sculptors – may intervene at the convergence of cultural instabilities. Tim Barrainger's study on Labor in Victorian Britain and Melissa Dabakis's *Visualizing Labor in American Sculpture* have also proved very pertinent.<sup>31</sup> These projects insist that we consider visual constructions of the laborer in multiple ways, with Dabakis's book specifically offering a model for thinking about the intersections of the sculpted laborer and the negotiation of national values amid a series of transforming cultural attitudes.

Beyond art historical precedents, my dissertation also creates connections to, and depends on, existing writings about nineteenth-century masculinity and working-class character. Though much of the focus in the former area has been on bourgeois men, texts by authors such as Robert Nye, Christopher Forth, and Bertrand Taithe highlight the issues at stake in defining maleness and manliness in fin-de-siècle France.<sup>32</sup> For the latter

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<sup>28</sup> Plotek, "Allegory in the Age of Realism," 220.

<sup>29</sup> Wassili Joseph and Cloé Viala have been very generous in sharing with me their MA theses on Dalou's portraiture and 1880s Salon career, respectively.

<sup>30</sup> McWilliam, *Monumental Intolerance*; Ater, *Remaking Race and History*.

<sup>31</sup> Dabakis, *Visualizing Labor in American Sculpture*; Barrainger, *Men at Work*.

<sup>32</sup> For example Nye, *Masculinity and Male Codes of Honor*; Forth and Taithe, *French Masculinitie*; and Corbin, Courtine, and Vigarello, *Histoire de la virilité*. On larger

historiography, writings by William Sewell, Robert Tombs, Jacques Rancière, and Roger McGraw – among many others – provide a nuanced perspective that leads me to understand the French working class(es) of the nineteenth century as a shifting and amorphous society. The understanding that this milieu of Frenchmen was profoundly diverse and ideologically fractured is fundamental to my dissertation.

I have grounded many of the theoretical ideas that amplify my study in a corpus of writing on history and memory, with a specific understanding that any past is constructed, negotiated, multiple, and active. Specifically, Maurice Halbwachs landmark writings on the importance of society in constructing memory – while dated and since refined by a number of scholars – inform my work.<sup>33</sup> Following Halbwachs, the scholarship of Pierre Nora, David Lowenthal, Richard Terdiman and others has allowed me to refine my ideas about how and why societies construct their past to produce an assortment of memories.<sup>34</sup> As memory and history engage questions of monuments and commemoration, James E. Young, Jay Winter, and Kirk Savage – among others – have provided examples of incisive scholarship.<sup>35</sup> The German historian Reinhart Koselleck’s writings on the semantics of historical time have also significantly framed my thinking, especially as it relates to the fin de siècle as a moment of rupture where the so-called “spaces of experience” no longer aligned with the “horizons of expectations.”<sup>36</sup>

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questions of fin-de-siècle France and gender see: Surkis, *Sexing the Citizen*; Tilburg, *Colette's Republic*; Accampo, Fuchs, Stewart, *Gender and the Politics of Social Reform in France, 1870-1914*; Chenut, *The Fabric of Gender*; and many others.

<sup>33</sup> Halbwachs, *The Collective Memory* and *On Collective Memory*.

<sup>34</sup> Nora, dir., *Les Lieux de Mémoires*; Lowenthal, *The Past is a Foreign Country*; Terdiman; *Present Past*.

<sup>35</sup> Young, *Texture of Memory*; Winter, *Sites of Memory*; Savage, *Monument Wars*. See also: Kammen, *Mystic Chords of Memory*; Bodnar, *Remaking America*.

<sup>36</sup> Kosellek, *Futures Past*.

Like many of these aforementioned studies, my interest in memory and commemoration also intersects with concerns for nationalism. Iconic texts such as Benedict Anderson's *Imagined Communities* as well as Eric Hobsbawm and Terence Ranger's *The Invention of Traditions* have shaped my understanding of the ways in which groups of people develop communal, social, and national codes.<sup>37</sup> As it specifically pertains to the fin de siècle, Robert Tombs's *Nationhood and Nationalism in France*, as well as separate texts by many of the authors included in that volume, has clarified the competing visions of France and Frenchness.<sup>38</sup> For connections between art and nationalism, the essays in June Hargrove and Neil McWilliam's *Nationalism and French Visual Culture 1870-1914* serve as a rich source that touches on significant themes central to my project and as a model of interdisciplinary inquiry.<sup>39</sup>

While my dissertation emerges from this existing scholarship (and the countless other sources that I have not singled out), my recipe of social art history, memory studies, literature, post-colonial theory, formalism, and iconography forms a distinct methodological approach, which I hope will prompt further questions that refine our understandings of the development of modern art. To these ends, this dissertation on a nineteenth-century sculptor has broad twentieth-century resonance. Dalou's evolving treatment of gender and class reveals cultural dialectics from which the new worker – and novel constructions of industrial society – emerged. As the monuments express new ideologies and manifest new formal concerns, they expose a crucial subtext of modernist

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<sup>37</sup> Anderson, *Imagined Communities*; Hobsbawm and Ranger, *Invention of Traditions*.

<sup>38</sup> Tombs, ed. *Nationhood and Nationalism*. See also Sternhell, *La droite révolutionnaire*, Irvine, *Boulangier Affair*; Lehning, *To be a Citizen*.

<sup>39</sup> Hargrove and McWilliam, *Nationalism and French Visual Culture*.

investigations into the visual language that would define the proletarian hero and his role in early-twentieth-century society.

Finally, I believe that simply considering Dalou outside of the established construction of his official career – and beyond the shadow of his contemporary Auguste Rodin – is in and of itself an important step for nuancing understandings of French sculpture. As an artist engaged in the social passions of his era, struggling to come to terms with the fracture between France's traditions and its new structures, Dalou emerges as a figure who embodies the uncertainties and tensions of the modern period. His public sculptures elucidate the changing values and scope of the fin-de-siècle monument sphere. His ultimate vision of the new age contrasted with that of his *avant-garde* colleagues, but his programs nonetheless suggest an alternative modern strain that arises from his own labors in the period's cauldron of progress.

## Popular Romanticism, the Revolutionary Metanarrative, and an Alternative Commune Paradigm

In the years after Jules Dalou returned from exile in 1880, he engaged the memory of the Commune with a series of sculptural interventions that combined ideological and formal approaches rooted in the nation's venerated revolutionary traditions. In their aesthetic and iconographic programs, as well as through their interactions with Parisian sites of meaning, three very different compositions – *Fraternité* (1883), *Auguste Blanqui* (1885), and *Projet de tombeau pour Victor-Hugo, à ériger au Panthéon* (1886) – suggest an alternative to the dominant narratives that presented the 1871 uprising as a moment of rupture in the national metanarrative.<sup>1</sup> The union of formal devices, reference to historic events, and spatial engagement allow the sculptures to operate at intersections of the transhistorical revolutionary structure and precise moments that evoked the Commune and its aftermath. They present the 1871 insurgency as the manifestation of a multi-century process that advanced France towards the establishment of the ideal republic. In offering this construction of a constitutive national past, Dalou

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<sup>1</sup> The original title of *Fraternité - La République* – has caused some confusion in Dalou scholarship. For instance, Janice Best seems to have conflated this work with the *Triumph of the Republic* intended for Nation. “En 1883, le Conseil municipal autorisa l'exécution en marbre de la statue de Dalou, qui fut exposée au Salon.” See Best, *Les monuments de Paris*, 83. Accordingly, I will refer to the work throughout the remainder of this manuscript as *Fraternité* so as to avoid such misunderstandings.

affirmed the vitality of men who espoused a popular romantic nationalism, suggesting that their heroism was the model for modern French masculinity.

When Dalou returned to Paris for good in the spring of 1880, carrying the Parisian Municipal Council's promise to erect the *Triumph of the Republic* somewhere in the capital, he had already assured himself a place on the national stage. Nevertheless, the sculptor chose to bide his time before reinserting himself into the milieu of the cultural elite through exhibiting at the Salon. In the first two exhibitions after his repatriation, he limited his submissions to decorative sculptures that would have ornamented a much larger proposed monument to the National Assembly at Versailles of 1789.

Dalou seems to have been waiting specifically for the Salon of 1883, which contemporaries believed was the one-hundredth national exhibition, to mark his homecoming in grand fashion.<sup>2</sup> That year, he submitted two large reliefs. Taken together, they astounded the public and critics alike. Dalou earned the Medal of Honor and the rank of *chevalier* in the Légion d'honneur. Critic Philippe Burty went so far as to declare the exhibition the "Salon de Dalou."<sup>3</sup>

Dalou's first 1883 entry, *Mirabeau répondant à Dreux-Brézé dans la séance du 23 juin 1789* (fig. 1.1), was an enlarged, bronze version of a scene that he executed as one of the 1881 decorative sculptures for the monument to the National Assembly. The large relief, which the State commissioned following its first exhibition, commemorated what many moderate republicans praised as the philosophical activation of the Revolution –

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<sup>2</sup> Hunisak, *The Sculptor Jules Dalou*, 111.

<sup>3</sup> Burty, *Salon de 1883*. The best compilation of the critical reception of Dalou's 1883 Salon success exists in the archives of the Petit Palais museum. This document, which Dalou likely made or had made, contains an enormous litany of Salon articles praising his two reliefs. For specific examples, see: Burty, *Salon de 1883*; "Salon de 1883," *Moniteur Universel*; Jouin, "La Sculpture au Salon de 1883," 59-76.

the Count de Mirabeau's defiance of the Monarchy.<sup>4</sup> The government's interest in celebrating the scene was natural; Mirabeau's speech was a defining moment in the Opportunist government's construction of a legitimizing revolutionary narrative.<sup>5</sup>

While much lauded in 1883, a year later Dalou's *Mirabeau* proved controversial. The critic Henry Jouin, who had effusively praised the relief, unearthed a Restoration-era print by Auguste Raffet that established the compositional framework for Dalou's sculpture.<sup>6</sup> Despite Dreyfous's assertions to the contrary, Dalou had clearly used the earlier work as the foundation for his design.<sup>7</sup> That said, John Hunisak has rightly pointed out that Dalou made significant alterations to the original composition, demonstrating that claims of outright plagiarism are off base.<sup>8</sup> Moreover, in the context of nineteenth-century decorative sculpture, where the translation and re-manipulation of earlier

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<sup>4</sup> On the State commission see: Archives Nationales, F<sup>21</sup> 2070, 15 October 1881.

<sup>5</sup> The specific interaction is the moment that, in the eyes of nineteenth-century historians, the Revolution began. The Marquis de Dreux-Brézé has just reminded the National Assembly of the King's order that the Assembly disperse. Jean Sylvain Bailly, the President of the National Assembly, answered by expressing his doubt that the Assembly was truly subject to the order. Following Bailly's somewhat philosophical retort, the Count Mirabeau, in a manner far more demonstrative and direct than that of the Assembly President, bellowed the now famous response to Dreux-Brézé, "*nous sommes ici par la volonté du peuple, nous n'en arracherons que par la puissance des baïonnettes.*" With these words, Mirabeau shifted the tone of the debate from Bailly's political theory to the practical concerns of engaging in revolution. If Bailly expressed the philosophy of the Enlightenment, Mirabeau activated its principles and raised the stakes. As Alphonse de Lamartine described Mirabeau, in a passage with which Dalou was likely familiar, "il n'inventa pas la Révolution, il la manifesta. Sans lui elle serait restée peut-être à l'état d'idée et de tendance." Lamartine, *Histoire des Girondins*, 31. Henriette Caillaux notes that Dalou often read Lamartine. Caillaux, *Aimé-Jules Dalou*, 10.

<sup>6</sup> Jouin, *La Sculpture aux Salons*, 96.

<sup>7</sup> Dreyfous, *Dalou*, 211.

<sup>8</sup> Professor Hunisak was kind enough to share his unpublished manuscript on Dalou with me. His discussion of the *Mirabeau* is in his third chapter "*The 1880s: Back in Paris, the apogee of a career.*"



compositions was a common practice, Dalou's recycling of Raffet's print appears significantly less scandalous than Jouin suggested.

Dalou's other entry into the 1883 Salon, *Fraternité* (fig. 1.2), originating in his exile experience, undoubtedly expressed a far more personal sentiment and composition. This relief, too, provoked a series of critical appraisals on the stylistic origins of the sculpture.<sup>9</sup> Yet the competing assertions of the critics had more to do with the tense arguments over national style and the impact of foreign influences than they did Dalou's originality.

*Fraternité* operates through what Rienhart Koselleck may call an interplay between the description of historical structures and the narration of events. For Koselleck, historical structures "illuminate long-term duration, stability, and change," whereas events "can be experienced by contemporary participants ... as a discernable unity capable of narration."<sup>10</sup> While both are necessary for any historical representation, Dalou's project is specifically attuned to creating an image where the viewer experiences both structure and event simultaneously. In fusing these styles of representation, *Fraternité* seeks to negate the dominant cultural contention that the Commune had been an exceptional revolutionary moment.

The vertically orientated relief is rich in neo-Baroque exuberance, scientifically rendered figures, sweeping forms, painterly perspective, and expressive modeling. Dalou's build up of figures and registers takes shape around a fraternal embrace between two nude men – one older and one in the prime of life. Rifles, helmets, horns, and other

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<sup>9</sup> See, for examples, Péladan, "La sculpture civique;" Carjat, "Sculpture, Salon de 1883;" About, "Salon de 1883, XIV;" J. Gautier, "Sculpture. Jules Dalou."

<sup>10</sup> Koselleck, *Futures Past*, 107, 105.

military accoutrements crowd the foreground. To the viewer's right an athletic male nude breaks a saber across his knee. Next to him an older, clothed man lifts his arms and a flag in celebration. The fête recedes into the depth of the composition – raised hands, faces, flags, and hats evoke a celebratory mood.

On the opposite side of the relief, a republican mother tends to two children. Behind her a crowd of men of different races and ages fills the next plane. As the jovial scenes on both sides of the central embrace gain pictorial depth, they merge to create a unified, festive setting that frames the central reunion. Voluptuous representations of Liberty, Equality, and Fraternity crown the arched composition.<sup>11</sup> With sweeping gestures these allegorical personifications descend into the lower register to collect the raised banners, bridging the gap between the Naturalist scene of the physical world and the metaphysical gravitas of the republican tradition.

While broadly defined as Neo-Baroque, Dalou's formal mode in *Fraternité* exhibits a Romantic Naturalism that combined the emotional modeling common to artists like Auguste Prévault with a scientific treatment of forms and musculature that manifested modern concerns. This style departed from the Academic standards for reliefs – dominant since the seventeenth century – operating in a far different aesthetic than the more linear *Mirabeau*.<sup>12</sup> In its exhibition context at the Salon, juxtaposed with sculptures that manifested more conventional styles – including the marble version of Ernest Barrias's synthetic *Les premières funérailles*, Tony Noël's academic *Deux Gladiateurs* and the

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<sup>11</sup> Dreyfous, *Dalou*, 142-3. In a sign of the malleability and room for confusion among republican allegories, Hunisak identifies the figures as Justice, Triumph, and Charity; Cornu seemingly adds an additional figure when he calls them Peace, Fecundity, Liberty, and Equality. Cornu, "Jules Dalou," 243.

<sup>12</sup> Roujon, "Salon de 1883."

Florentine-style *Judith* by Henri Lombard – *Fraternité* demonstrates Dalou’s willingness to depart from dominant formal tastes in pursuit of a style he deemed politically appropriate to his subject.

Here, Dalou’s subject was the Commune and amnesty – issues about which he had a particularly complex attitude.<sup>13</sup> Through connections both in England and in France, the sculptor had had multiple avenues through which he could have pursued a pardon that would have allowed him to return home as early as 1877 or 1878.<sup>14</sup> Yet Dalou turned down these opportunities, preferring to remain free in England rather than live in France, where he believed he would never be able to escape the legacy of the convict’s “casque de forçat.”<sup>15</sup> Throughout these years, Dalou punctuated his series of refusals for an individual pardon with appeals to fairness. In a sentiment that echoed other Communard exiles in a similar circumstance, he told friends that he was unwilling to benefit from advantages that his fame and position afforded him while other exiles did not have the means and connections for the same opportunities.<sup>16</sup>

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<sup>13</sup> Dalou to Cornaglia, 29 August 1878, Louvre Manuscripts, 321. Given the timing and the style of *Fraternité*, the sculptor was certainly alluding to this relief as the sculpture “tout prêt” for the Salon. Of the sculptures that Dalou conceived in England that would have a substantial impact in France – the *Triumph of the Republic*, *Fraternité*, the *Triumph of Silenus*, and the *Bacchanale – Fraternité* is the sole that is at once politically engaged and destined for the Salon. The Mirabeau relief, the other possibility given the timing, can be disqualified as a possibility because Dalou did not have this sculpture in mind until 1880 when Paul Aubé approached him to participate on the monument for Versailles with Train and Genuys.

<sup>14</sup> Dreyfous, *Dalou*, 90-93.

<sup>15</sup> *Ibid.*, 83; on the limitations of pardons and the nuance between a pardon and an amnesty see Joughin, *Paris Commune*, 54-55.

<sup>16</sup> Dalou to Cornaglia, 29 August 1878, Louvre Manuscripts, 321. “far from using new influences, I want to be finished with all these swings. I am very grateful for all those who would want to open the doors to France for me, but there are still many who do not have access to this and who desire it.” See also, *Le Prolétaire*, 1 January 1879.

Dalou's unwillingness to accept a pardon did not mean that he – like many others – was holding out for a general amnesty. In a February 1879 letter to Ernest Cornaglia, the sculptor expressed openness to a partial amnesty system. He supported an arrangement through which the government could provide relief for those who “deserved” amnesty while denying it to those who did not. Dalou does not specify what would distinguish one group from the other. That said, there is a strong implication in the letter that he viewed himself – and his participation in the Commune – differently from how he judged the attitudes of many other English exiles who he termed “gens que j’estime peu en général et dont en tout cas je ne partage pas les idées.”<sup>17</sup> Many in this group called for a “résurrection du mouvement social, marchant seul, sans compromis, sans alliance!” – a sentiment that became the battle cry for many London- and Geneva-based exiles.<sup>18</sup>

Instead of such revolutionary rhetoric, Dalou consistently framed his reflections on 1870 and 1871 as part of an effort to save the Republic. He insisted that he was not – nor had he ever been – a radical.<sup>19</sup> Dalou described his participation in the 1871 uprising with an echo of the spirit of 1848, claiming that he fought to establish an order that would

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<sup>17</sup> Dalou to Cornaglia, 27 February 1879, Louvre Manuscripts, 321. “Men for whom I hold little esteem in general, and with whom I do not share ideas.”

<sup>18</sup> This call for a renewal of the Commune was the celebrated toast at the banquet of the “réfugiés de la Commune à Londres,” in an 1879 celebration of the anniversary 18 March. See *Le Prolétaire*, 29 March 1879. “A resurrection of the social movement, advancing independently, without compromise, without alliances.”

<sup>19</sup> Dalou to Cornaglia, 27 February 1879, Louvre Manuscripts, 321. Dreyfous and Hunisak disagree as to Dalou's level of involvement in the uprising. Dreyfous argues that Dalou's contribution to the Commune was “exclusivement artistique.” Hunisak, however, suggests that Dalou's participation in the Commune was specifically political, believing that by holding a rank in the artists' federation Dalou was not just a participant in the revolt but was an “architect of policy.” Dreyfous, *Dalou*, 44; Hunisak, *The Sculptor Jules Dalou*, 178.

“donner à tous pain, concorde, travail, et nous ouvrir une ère nouvelle, ère de foi et d’amour, de joie et d’enthousiasme.”<sup>20</sup> Paul Cornu concurs, writing that Dalou was never a “communard honteux,” in an appraisal that celebrated his unrepentant attitude and republican convictions.<sup>21</sup>

The legacy of the 1848 revolutions exerted a driving force in Dalou’s 1870s and 1880s worldview. As a reader of Hugo, Lamartine, and Michelet, he was well versed in the political rhetoric of the mid-century revolutionaries, believing – like many others – that 1848 was the progeny of 1789 and 1792, but that the mid-century uprising manifested a more mature revolutionary spirit.<sup>22</sup> He came by these attitudes honestly; his parents represented the prototypical *quarante-huitard* – the men and women who typified the 1848 revolt – and Dalou himself reputedly mounted the barricades to join their fight.<sup>23</sup>

Despite only limited success in their revolutionary endeavors, the *quarante-huitards* achieved an iconic status within popular republican lore. These icons of the artisan class provoked admiration for their ability to merge populist enthusiasm and emotional defenses of the *Patrie* with calls for rationality and philosophical approaches to

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<sup>20</sup> Dalou to Cornaglia, 25 February 1879, Louvre Manuscripts, 321. “To give to all bread, concord, work, and to open a new era of faith and love, joy and enthusiasm.”

<sup>21</sup> Cornu, “Jules Dalou,” 228.

<sup>22</sup> Caillaux, *Aimé-Jules Dalou*, 10; see also a private collection at the Petit Palais Museum that contains a list of books in one of Dalou’s *petits carnets*. Michelet’s 21-volume history of France, and several other texts by the author, is included in what appears to be an inventory of Dalou’s bookshelf.

<sup>23</sup> Dreyfous, *Dalou*, 1-2; Roujon, “Preface,” *Dalou*, ii, vi-v. Dreyfous describes Dalou’s parents: “[Dalou père] était en réalité le prototype de ce qu’on appelle les hommes de 1848 et, – galanterie à part – sa femme l’était aussi.” Dreyfous described Dalou’s participation in the Commune in similar terms, explaining it as the natural decision for a man he described as an “ouvrier de race, travaillant et vivant en ouvrier.” Dreyfous, *Dalou*, 44.

their quest for the ideal republic.<sup>24</sup> Maurice Agulhon argues that this combination illuminated the revolt's "romantisme populaire" – a spirit that called on a mythic construction of the French people and produced a set of populist concerns distinct from the bourgeois goals that Mirabeau activated in 1789.<sup>25</sup>

In the years leading up to the 1848 uprisings, republican artists employed a Romantic aesthetic that manifested many of the political sentiments that would embolden the revolutionaries. François Rude's *Départ des Volontiers, 1792* (fig. 1.3) on the facade of the Arc de Triomphe is one such example, fusing an emotional affirmation of French patriotism with realist concerns.<sup>26</sup> Beyond Rude, Luc Benoit noted that the populist spirituality of Dalou's *Fraternité* echoes the social mysticism that Honoré Daumier conjured in *Les Emigrants* and Victor Hugo evoked in his own *Fraternité*.<sup>27</sup> In each of these politically motivated compositions, the intensity of the formal treatments and the combination of allegory with worldly details reflect an analogous spirit that motivated the revolutionaries of 1848 to popularize the cult of Marianne.<sup>28</sup>

Dalou called on many of these formal tropes in his composition. The animated handling of the relief activates the plaster, adding a forceful energy to the sculpture. This lively formal treatment meshes with the patriotic program to make an emotional appeal to a popular French ethos and a common cause. The nudity and idealized treatment of the central figures appear, at first blush, to remove them from any temporal circumstance, locating their exchange on a metaphysical plane. The difference in the two men's ages

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<sup>24</sup> Agulhon, *1848*, 248.

<sup>25</sup> *Ibid.*, 248-9.

<sup>26</sup> On Dalou's reading list see: Caillaux, *Aimé-Jules Dalou*, 10.

<sup>27</sup> Benoit, *La Sculpture romantique*, 206-7.

<sup>28</sup> On the motivation behind the popularization of the cult of Marianne see: Maurice Agulhon, *1848*, 249.

underscores the transhistorical quality of their interaction. Like the revolutionary spirit, fraternity – a defining trait of French identity for mid-century republicans – passes from one generation to the next.

The political sentiment underlying the formal energy of the relief suggests that Dalou sought to manifest visually the Romantic spirit of mid-century revolutionaries within the tense public sphere of 1880s society. The sculptor made these links explicit in the Salon catalog where he captioned his entry with a quatrain from Pierre Dupont's "Dieu sauve la République." Dupont was a well-known republican lyricist whose poems and songs captured the popular sentiments of the *quarante-huitard* movement. In addition to penning verses that aggrandized the working classes, Dupont established links between the socio-political currents of the 1840s and a transhistorical revolutionary tradition.<sup>29</sup> The section that Dalou selected – "La République règnera / Sur tous les peuples et la terre, / Dans la paix se reposera / De cinq ou six mille ans de guerre," is one such example. It insists that the pursuit of an ideal republic would be a long process, achieved through a series of revolutions that formed a united past, and would surely produce a glorious future.

The sentiment of Dupont's poem presents the revolutionary narrative as a story that both predates and continues beyond 1848. The conservative critic Elie de Mont expressed the obvious parallels between Dupont's lines and the lack of clear chronological specificity in Dalou's relief. Using *Fraternité's* official Salon title – *La République* – De Mont asked "de quelle République il s'agit? de celle de Marat et Carrier?"

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<sup>29</sup> Bonniot, *Pierre Dupont*, 143.

de celle de Juin 48, ou de celle de la Commune?”<sup>30</sup> While de Mont employed the notion of continuation and succession to compare Dalou’s Communard past with Marat’s Terror, the critique reveals the sculptor’s success in partially blurring the temporal specificity of the relief in order to present an atemporal revolutionary structure.

While constructing this broad structural context, the success of Dalou’s effort to subvert the dominant Commune narratives depended on invoking a specific historical moment that would prompt popular or vernacular memories, thereby undermining official constructions of the past.<sup>31</sup> To achieve this end, the sculptor evoked Alfred Roll’s *14 Juillet 1880* (fig. 1.4). In this State-commissioned painting commemorating the first *fête nationale*, Roll executed a broad and colorful canvas that teems with images of class harmony, communal exuberance, and visions of a prosperous future. In the left foreground, men and women joyously dance in the space below an orchestra. A column of soldiers marches through middle ground of the painting, cutting in front of the plaster model of the Morices’s statue of the Republic, which the government had temporarily erected for the 1880 fête. The union of the military parade with the republican festival ceremonially renewed the links between the army and the people after the strife of 1870-71.<sup>32</sup> In the right foreground, members of the bourgeoisie – including the painter – doff their hats and raise their arms in celebration. In an allusion to the national flag, Roll

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<sup>30</sup> Elie de Mont, “Le Salon de 1883,” 507. “Which Republic is this about? Marat and Carrier’s Republic? The one of June 1848? Or the Commune’s?”

<sup>31</sup> On differences between top-down memory and vernacular memories see Bondar, *Remaking America*, 13-20.

<sup>32</sup> Louis Genevray sums up the tone of the festival in writing: “Un souffle de patriotisme a passé sur Paris, si prompt à s’émouvoir; n’oublions point que neuf années seulement séparent le rétablissement de la fête nationale des tragiques événements de 1870-71, et que tous les efforts du pays, à cette date, tendent vers la reconstitution de notre armée et notre défense.” Genevray, *Les Peintres de la vie moderne*, 21.



enlivens the mass of humanity through blue, white, and red accents, emboldening the festive embrace of republican values.

In the early 1880s, Frenchmen understood the celebration of the first national holiday within the parameters of debates on Commune Amnesty. Throughout the spring and early summer of 1880, the French legislature had debated a full amnesty while simultaneously moving towards establishing 14 July as the official *fête nationale*.<sup>33</sup> Nowhere was this more apparent than in the Opportunist leader of the National Assembly Leon Gambetta's speech on the return of Communards. During his remarks, the politician directly called on the upcoming celebration as the ultimate motivation for "closing the book" on the post-Commune decade.<sup>34</sup> The contemporary press expressed similar sentiments, arguing that the national holiday would mean a new chapter in the nation's history. Edouard Lockroy wrote that passage of a general amnesty meant that the French could "donc fêter sans remords le 14 juillet."<sup>35</sup> Opportunist journals encouraged Frenchmen to celebrate the fourteenth of July with open hearts as "il n'y a plus de trace de ce passé."<sup>36</sup> After the final amnesty bill passed the Senate just days before the first *fête nationale*, Auguste Vacquerie described the upcoming festival as "une éclatante manifestation de paix et de fraternité."<sup>37</sup>

The return of the Communards and the emphasis on broad, inclusive republican values of national unity occasioned a celebration that transcended the commemoration of

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<sup>33</sup> Joughin, *The Paris Commune*, 460-465.

<sup>34</sup> Gambetta, "Il n'y a qu'une France et qu'une République," 214.

<sup>35</sup> Lockroy, "L'Amnistie." "Celebrate the fourteenth of July without feelings of guilt."

<sup>36</sup> *La République française*, 12 July 1880. "There is no more trace of this past."

<sup>37</sup> Vacquerie, "La fête." "A brilliant demonstration of peace and fraternity."

any specific revolutionary date.<sup>38</sup> The expressions of communal jubilation took visual form in Paris – and throughout the country – where the *tricolor* flew in the streets and the people massed in shared space.<sup>39</sup> An 1904 account from C. Bessonnet-Favre shows how that day etched itself in the nation’s collective conscience. Bessonnet-Favre remembered, “L’aspect de Paris était des plus brillants et la fête des plus belles... A minuit tous les passages, boulevards, avenues de la capitale présentaient une animation extraordinaire ; on dansait et on chantait partout.”<sup>40</sup> The official memory – vibrantly expressed in Roll’s 1882 painting – was one of social cohesion, patriotism, and peace.

In Dalou’s original composition – a terra cotta sculpted in London before amnesty (fig. 1.5) – he included only a modest background scene of a celebration. It was only after returning to the capital that the sculptor reviewed his relief, adding the diverse and exuberant scene of popular festival that evoked the 1880 fête. Roll, who had been friendly with Dalou since the 1860s, provides a source that offers a visual and thematic antecedent for these aspects of Dalou’s composition.<sup>41</sup> Like Roll, Dalou modeled figures of different races and classes engaged in a manifestation of communal jubilation. They

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<sup>38</sup> Christian Amalvi, “Le 14-juillet: *Du Dies irae à Jour de fête*,” *Les Lieux de Mémoire*, vol. 1, 439.

<sup>39</sup> Sanson, *Les 14 juillet, fête et conscience nationale*, 82-84. See also, Agulhon, *Marianne au Pouvoir*, 147-153; and Olivier Ihl, *La fête républicaine*.

<sup>40</sup> C. Bessonnet-Favre, *Les Fêtes Républicaines depuis 1789*, 260-1. “Paris’s appearance was the most brilliant and its celebration the most beautiful... at midnight all of the passages, boulevards, and avenues of the capital were extremely animated; there was singing and dancing throughout.”

<sup>41</sup> On the friendship between Dalou and Roll see: Hérold, *Roll*, 2. The two artists met when they were both working for the ornamentalist Liénard and formed an immediate and life long friendship. Roll would include a portrait of Dalou in his 1889 *Etats Généraux*, and Dalou would later figure Roll as the embodiment of painting in his monument to Adolphe Alphand (Chapter 3).

raise their arms and national banners, cheering the day's spirit of unity. In the most direct reference to the 1882 painting, Dalou also includes a foreground figure doffing his cap.

With the explicit evocation of July 1880, the fraternal embrace in the foreground gains an aspect of temporal specificity. The man to the viewer's right is well-built, but his folding skin and ripples of softer flesh show the slackening of musculature that advances with age. Dalou compounds these aging effects through a careful modeling of his face, which years mark and a beard covers. The facial hair is an iconographic key to confirm the viewer's initial supposition that this figure represents a revolutionary of 1848. Many republican leaders of mid-century had worn beards as a symbol of their social ideology, and had continued to wear them as a sign of resistance after Louis Napoleon's 1851 *coup d'état*. As a result, the beard became a signal of political opposition during the Second Empire and the term "vielle barbe" became a synonym of *quarante-huitard*.<sup>42</sup> Dalou's use of it here can hardly be incidental; in the transition between the original terra cotta model and the ultimate plaster, he also altered a figure in the right foreground to insist on the presence of the bearded *quarante-huitard* as the standard-bearer of the celebration.

The other man in the central embrace is muscular, young, and clean-shaven. Dalou composes the scene to show him being pulled into the arms of the *quarante-huitard*. Surrounded by the evocation of the popular fête of July 1880, which took steps to rehabilitate the image of the crowd in the wake of 1871 – the younger man's identity as a former Communard becomes evident. With such temporal specificity, the embrace morphs into one that is not just a symbol of brotherhood, but rebounds in the actual hugs of friendship, love, and freedom that the amnesty occasioned. The central men's dual

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<sup>42</sup> Agulhon, *1848*, 247-50.

position as both nude personifications of the republican fraternal tradition and as temporally specific embodiments of the 1880 amnesty is assuredly clumsy – and perhaps shows the limits of the “real allegory” style. Nevertheless, it manifests Dalou’s effort to operate with transhistorical gravitas and contemporary precision.

This image of national union advances a political program that recalls the republican spirit of the day, but not the actual ceremonial circumstances. As Roll’s painting demonstrates, the military parade was central to the festivities – especially in Paris. In a break from Roll’s composition, Dalou offers an aggressively a-militaristic image. In the lower right corner a nude man breaks a weapon over his knee and military effects litter the ground. On the opposite side of the composition, a mother with a child in her left arm bends forward and wraps her right arm around a second boy, preventing him from picking up a gun. The relief’s shift away from the military celebration prioritizes the return of the Communards as the highlight of the day. This expresses a narrative where peace, rather than harmony with the military establishment, defines the new Republic.

Multiple critics understood the image of the mother and children to have specific Commune resonance. Prior to 1871, Parisian youth on revolutionary barricades symbolized the triumph of the people, suggesting the continuation of noble traditions from father to son.<sup>43</sup> Eugène Delacroix’s *Liberté guidant le peuple*, Philippe-Auguste Jeanron’s *Les petits patriotes* (fig. 1.6), and Victor Hugo’s literary portrayal of Gavroche exemplify the revered role that Parisian *gamins* traditionally enjoyed in revolutionary lore. The participation of hundreds of Parisian children during the Commune, however, subverted this construction of revolutionary youth. Henry Fouquier, for instance, insisted

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<sup>43</sup> Yvorel, “De Delacroix à Poulbot,” 42, 44.

that the perversion of France's children during the insurgency destined the nation to be the object of a bloody farce.<sup>44</sup> Others believed that the prevalence of these young *voyous*, the surest sign of the nation's fall from grace, was a threat to the country's future.<sup>45</sup> Roll's 1871 *Execution of a Trumpeter* (fig. 1.7), where the viewer directly confronts a young Communard standing against a bullet-riddled wall awaiting his execution, underscores the bourgeois audience's newly problematic relationship to the *gamin*.<sup>46</sup> In the following year, Pierre Larousse suggested that because of the Commune, Gavroche could no longer exist as an icon of such idealism.<sup>47</sup>

Dalou's treatment of the boy and the mother restores optimistic possibilities for Parisian youth by distancing them from the violence that had perverted their symbolic identity. Indeed, critics described the scene as an "amende honorable" that could rehabilitate the children of the capital.<sup>48</sup> The mother, who visually evokes decades' worth of maternal, republican allegories – such as the central figure in Daumier's *La République* – removes the child from the specter of armed conflict. Outside of a narrative of bloodshed and hostility, the child becomes available as the next recipient of the republican traditions of fraternity and peace – a future agent in the continuing utopian quest for the *République idéale*.

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<sup>44</sup> Fouquier, "Salon de 1883."

<sup>45</sup> See: Chauvaud, "Gavroche et ses pairs."

<sup>46</sup> Special thanks to Dominique Lobstein and Jean-Christophe Castelain for their help in confirming that this painting, atypical of Roll's mature style, belongs to the painter's œuvre.

<sup>47</sup> Quoted in Abélès, "Le gamin de Paris," 12.

<sup>48</sup> "made amends." Jean-Pierre, *XIX<sup>e</sup> Siècle*. On the participation of Parisian youth in the Commune see: Yvorel, "De Delacroix à Poulbot," and Abélès, "Le gamin."

When Dalou exhibited *Fraternité* at the Salon, he was operating in a powerful social site of the nation's dominant milieu. These national exhibitions had long been occasions when government and bourgeois cultural attitudes took shape and announced themselves. Dalou's intervention in the Salon disrupted the dialectic structure that had formed in the years after the Commune. Moreover, his simple participation in the exhibition led critics to continuously invoke his recent past in their evaluations of his work. References to Dalou's Communard actions and his return from exile appeared in nearly every review. In small ways – generally restricted to the physical and textual spaces where Dalou's sculptures appeared – this forced Frenchmen to return to a chapter of the nation's history away from which their leaders had sought to move the country. As *Fraternité* extolled two generations worth of heroes who embodied the popular romanticism of the atemporal *Patrie*, while linking them to the specific histories of 1848 and 1871, the work questioned the bourgeois-proletarian dichotomy and the narrative of revolutionary rupture that had come to define the Commune.

Two years later – at the Salon of 1885 – Dalou treated the relationship of the Commune to the revolutionary tradition through a mix of transhistorical narratives, fissures in that nation's collective memories, as well as the evocation of specific moments from the recent past.<sup>49</sup> This time, Dalou explored these themes in a funerary monument to the professional revolutionary Auguste Blanqui who had died in January 1881 after a lifetime of political agitation and frequent imprisonments. For some, Blanqui had represented the embodiment of violent insurrection; for others he was the model of the

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<sup>49</sup> On collective memories and its intersection with the history, see: Halbwachs, *The Collective Memory*, 50-87, especially 78-87.

ascetic commitment to the revolutionary cause necessary for the establishment of a republic.

The tomb that Dalou constructed shivers with an undercurrent of angst-ridden vigor (fig. 1.8). Operating in the tradition of French *gisant* monuments, the sculpture pictures Blanqui naked on his back under an ample death shroud. His lean right arm, vitalized by its tensed musculature, emerges from the cloth, extending beyond the space defined by the sculpture's simple rectangular plinth. Blanqui's head falls backward and to the right (fig. 1.9). Engorged veins swell in the center of the revolutionary's forehead, seemingly animating his psyche. Instead of the traditional romantic narrative that would have presented a calm end to Blanqui's valiant fight for life, the corporeal energy of the bronze attests to a type of spiritual and physiognomic struggle that still courses through him.<sup>50</sup> This vigor in the revolutionary's body and mind defies the visual expectations for the representation of death, and, in both visual and psychological ways, denies a fluid viewing process.

Dalou began work on the bronze effigy sometime in 1882. When the national subscription undertaken to pay for the monument failed to raise enough funds to fully finance the sculpture, Dalou offered his labors to the committee without hope of proper remuneration.<sup>51</sup> By 1883 the sculptor had finished a model for his statue – not a bust as planned, but a full-length recumbent portrait.<sup>52</sup> Dalou, and sympathetic contemporaries, presented the generosity that led him to produce the work as the mere duty of an artist

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<sup>50</sup> Ben-Amos, *Funerals, Politics, and Memory*, 281.

<sup>51</sup> Le Normand-Romain, "En hommage aux opposants politiques," 78.

<sup>52</sup> Special thanks again to John Hunisak for sharing with me his unpublished manuscript on Dalou. In his third chapter he describes the Blanqui monument and commission.

who chose to participate in the social battles of his era.<sup>53</sup> The sculptor's personal motivation for this intervention, of course, should not be discounted.

In designing his monument Dalou called on a series of compositional references that placed the sculpture in art historical conversation with French funerary traditions. As Hunisak points out, Dalou surely found formal inspiration in Alphonse Dumilatre's tomb of the balloonists Joseph Eustache Crocé-Spinelli and Théodore Sivel (fig. 1.10).<sup>54</sup> This well-known group, which won a first class medal at the Salon of 1878, commemorates aeronauts who plummeted to their deaths in 1875. Three years later the sculptor installed a bronze version at Père Lachaise cemetery.<sup>55</sup> The tomb, a dual *gisant* monument, pictures Crocé-Spinelli and Sivel flat on their backs, clasping hands under a shroud that showed their contours. As Dalou would later do with Blanqui, Dumilatre freed Crocé-Spinelli's right arm from the funerary sheet and turned his head to the right. Though Dalou borrowed the compositional arrangement of this figure for his 1885 tomb, he also tweaked the earlier design to move away from the details and effects that gave the balloonists a sense of bodily calm in their eternal sleep.

Despite the clear similarities between Dalou's monument and this prize-winning sculpture of 1878, critics largely ignored the formal connections between them. Instead they almost universally stressed the relationship between the *Blanqui* and François Rude's renowned 1847 tomb sculpture of mid-century republican journalist Godefroy Cavaignac (fig. 1.11). Rude, who in this instance also donated his efforts to the republican cause, presented Cavaignac on top of an elevated rectangular plinth,

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<sup>53</sup> Geffroy, "Dalou," 321.

<sup>54</sup> Hunisak, *Sculptor Jules Dalou*, 127.

<sup>55</sup> Archives Nationales, F<sup>21</sup> 488.



ornamented with several inscriptions, in a style that Linda Nochlin argues presents “the finality of death as an ultimate fact.”<sup>56</sup> Rude partially covered the journalist with a death cloth but stimulated the fabric’s folds, exposing Cavaignac’s naked chest and enlivening the effigy with a romantic verve that expressed the tomb’s vitality. The calmness of the journalist’s face proves a contrast from the active drapery; critics pointed to it as an expression of his ever-present thoughtfulness.<sup>57</sup> At his side, a pen and a sword comprise the allegorical attributes that contextualize Cavaignac’s modern crusade – and define him as a democratic martyr.

Rude’s sculpture recalled the tradition of *gisant* monuments common to royal mausoleums at Saint Denis. In updating the mode of commemoration, Rude presented Cavaignac free from architectonic trappings and auxiliary figures that create physical and spiritual distance between the viewer and the deceased. Suzanne Lindsey notes that this composition startled viewers who were not accustomed to experiencing funerary sculptures with such visual immediacy. She argues that the site of installation at the cemetery of Montmartre – not in a burial chapel – only amplified this effect and helped the monument take its place as the founding stone of a democratic martyrdom.<sup>58</sup>

Aimé Millet’s 1872 tomb of Alphonse Baudin (fig. 1.12) builds from Rude’s precedent, adding journalistic qualities to the new democratic *gisant* tradition. In December 1851 troops loyal to Louis Napoleon shot Baudin, a representative in the National Assembly, as he stood on the people’s barricade in Paris. Two decades later,

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<sup>56</sup> Nochlin, *Realism*, 65.

<sup>57</sup> Audebrand, “Godefroy Cavaignac, romancier,” 656.

<sup>58</sup> S. Lindsay, “Rude’s Cavaignac Tomb: The Symbolism of Cast Bronze in a Modern Democratic Martyrium,” in *La Sculpture au XIX<sup>e</sup> Siècle, Mélanges pour Anne Pingeot*, 116-7. For a more thorough analysis see the introduction and chapter 6 in Lindsay’s *Funerary arts and tomb cult*.

Millet imaged the fallen republican clothed as he had been when he died on the capital's streets. His head turns to the right, with a bullet hole marking his brow. Despite the evidence of violence, the countenance and bodily composition is serene. Baudin's limp and inert right arm drapes over a stele inscribed with "La Loi." Additional inscriptions provide further edifying context, clarifying the credentials for the assemblyman's martyrdom. The formal reference to the *Cavaignac*, the style of romantic death, and the narrative details suggests the republican context in which Millet intended the sculpture to operate.

When Dalou showed the *Blanqui* in the Salon of 1885 critics were almost universal in identifying the sculptor's manipulation of the modern *gisant* tradition, specifically pointing out similarities the *Blanqui* and the *Cavaignac*. The right-wing author Olivier Merson was among several scribes who censured Dalou for a lack of originality in drawing on such a clearly established precedent.<sup>59</sup> Other critics took a different view, understanding the formal quotation to elevate Blanqui's tomb and its sculptor to the heights of the *Cavaignac* and Rude.<sup>60</sup>

Many critics overlooked the significant difference between the two sculptures – as well as between the *Blanqui* and the *Baudin*. The straining muscles and corporeal presence manifest in Dalou's monument offers a far different construction of death than its predecessors. Whereas the faces of the *Cavaignac* and the *Baudin* are calm and their musculatures are languid, the *Blanqui*'s visage is agitated, its muscles constricted and flexed. The mannered drapery of the *Cavaignac* adds vitality to the portrait of the journalist, but the vital body of the *Blanqui* animates its shroud where the folds and

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<sup>59</sup> Merson, "Salon de 1885."

<sup>60</sup> Gautier, "Salon de 1885."

creases reflect the angles and contours of the revolutionary's body. Moreover, Blanqui's right hand reaches out – fingers curling – attempting to grasp at life, or perhaps a visitor's attention (fig. 1.13).

With its active right arm and the signs of flowing blood, the *Blanqui* has more in common with Auguste Bartholdi's 1872 tomb of National Guardsmen in the cemetery of Colmar (fig. 1.14). In the monument commemorating the vitality and fortitude of French troops who strive against death – hoping in vain to pick up their swords and wage one more fight – Bartholdi imaged a vigorous right arm emerging between two stone sheets that cap the grave. The arm's muscles clench and its fingers dig into the surface. Blood swells in the veins from the effort of resisting the finality of the tomb.

Bartholdi's monument employs the roused arm to communicate ideas of national valor, accelerating a *revanchist* ideology about the continuation of the fight. The *Blanqui*'s vibrancy similarly conveys the notion of unfinished struggle, but because the arm and blood belong to a specific person, not a metonymic abstraction, the tomb complicates ideas of temporal continuity. Indeed, the *Blanqui* effigy appears to refuse its deceased state, subverting the notion that the image of a deceased man would create an inert sculptural environment. With subtle yet palpable vibrancy, the effigy dematerializes the fixity of a sculpted image and engages the audience's psyche. This effect destabilizes the viewing process, producing sublime exchanges where spectators confront the dead but still animate revolutionary.

Since the end of the nineteenth century scholars have associated this set of sculptural concerns with Auguste Rodin.<sup>61</sup> Alex Potts notes that a number of Rodin's

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<sup>61</sup> Potts, *Sculptural Imagination*, 60-101.

contemporaries believed that the artist's work "embod[ied] a distinctively modern psychological sense of becoming that dissolves fixity and boundedness."<sup>62</sup> Rodin achieved these ends often through a manipulation of form that created a *musculature vivante* where the formal animation of muscle and sinew communicated psychological states. This is precisely how Dalou treated the body of Blanqui, but whereas Rodin's sculptures often took the modern condition and psychology as ends to themselves, Dalou's treatment of Blanqui engaged the instability of historical narrative.

Such a formal technique in the handling of Blanqui's effigy dovetails with the growing uncertainties that marked the revolutionary's biography. In the first half of the century Blanqui had risen to national prominence as a leader of a series of insurgencies aimed at overthrowing governments and shepherding in a republic. Always willing to consider violent strategies to accelerate revolutionary progress, Blanqui made himself a constant target of government prosecution. As a result he spent the better part of his life in a series of French prisons. By the 1860s, his history of revolutionary activism and constant incarcerations garnered him a mythic position in the eyes of a new generation of insurgents. They revered him as *Le Vieux* and venerated him as an example of devotion to the cause.<sup>63</sup>

On March 17, 1871 Adolphe Thiers's provisional government jailed Blanqui for his participation in the Parisian uprising of late October 1870. The undoubtedly premeditated timing of this imprisonment – just a day before the unofficial beginning of

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<sup>62</sup> Ibid., 76.

<sup>63</sup> Hutton, *Cult of the Revolutionary Tradition*, 22; Paz, *Un révolutionnaire professionnel*, 133.

the Commune – meant that Blanqui could not actively participate in the spring revolt.<sup>64</sup> Nevertheless, Communards continued to cite him as an example of revolutionary will.<sup>65</sup> They believed he was so crucial to their cause that they offered to trade all of their hostages – including the Archbishop of Paris – in return for his release. The Versailles government concurred about Blanqui’s importance and, fearing that his organizational skills and ability to direct the insurgents would greatly boost their military prospects, denied the exchange.<sup>66</sup>

A year after the Commune, a new government commission sentenced Blanqui to life in prison for inciting civil war.<sup>67</sup> Despite the intended length of this punishment, by the end of the decade a number of socialist groups began to place Blanqui on election ballots for a spot in the Chamber of Deputies. Their hope was that in electing Blanqui to national office they could force the government’s hand and lead it to release *Le Vieux* from prison.<sup>68</sup> The power of his name made such goals too modest. Inside the first campaign – one for a legislative seat from Marseilles – the issues at stake magnified and engaged existential questions about the Republic’s character. In this contentious period of the late 1870s, *Le Vieux* found himself at the center of the national movement for Communard amnesty.<sup>69</sup>

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<sup>64</sup> Parisians did not officially declare a Commune until 26 March 1871, however the revolt essentially began on 18 March 1871 with the assassinations of Generals Thomas and Lecomte on Montmartre.

<sup>65</sup> Hutton, *The Cult of the Revolutionary Tradition*, 86.

<sup>66</sup> Nomad, *Apostles of Revolution*, 68.

<sup>67</sup> Joughin, *The Paris Commune*, 161.

<sup>68</sup> The efforts to force amnesty through the republican value of universal suffrage dovetails with Georges Clemenceau’s Radical republican rhetoric of 1879.

<sup>69</sup> Joughin, *The Paris Commune*, 161-169; *L’égalité* 19 Mai 1878.

In the 1880s – and especially following Blanqui’s 1881 death – divergent efforts to construct politically rich national histories as well as the development of modern radical ideologies began to complicate his reputation. While some maintained that Blanqui represented the most sinister element of France’s revolutionary cult, journals sympathetic to the government – no longer concerned that he could undermine the regime – began to praise his character and resolve in an effort to appropriate his revolutionary fortitude.<sup>70</sup> Certain prominent radicals of the 1870s and 1880s believed that had Blanqui participated in the Commune, he would have been a moderate among the Parisian revolutionaries. Henri Rochefort, for one, suggested that Blanqui’s influence would have prevented many of the Communards’ acts of atrocity.<sup>71</sup> At the same time, new groups of extremists invoked *Le Vieux*’s name to pursue violent class struggle without basing their social agitation in Blanqui’s political ideologies.<sup>72</sup>

Dalou’s tomb monument engages these narrative instabilities. A single thorny crown (fig. 1.15) rests at Blanqui’s feet. Despite its ostensible symbolic power, the wreath exists in the blurred space between allegory and realism. The prominence of the brambles clearly recalls a martyr’s crown, compounding the Christological allusions that the deposition pose and shroud convey. Dalou’s Naturalist inclusion of precisely rendered leaves, however, inhibits the singular interpretation by recalling the actual circumstances of Blanqui’s 1881 funeral when wreathes overwhelmed his cortege on its way to Père Lachaise Cemetery. The monument’s inscription also refuses to elucidate a specific

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<sup>70</sup> Dommanget, *Auguste Blanqui au début de la III<sup>e</sup> République*, 143.

<sup>71</sup> Rochefort and Smith, *The Adventures of My Life*, 433.

<sup>72</sup> Bernstein, *Auguste Blanqui*, 356.

commemorative message about Blanqui. It notes only that public subscription funded the project, providing a vague reference to the tomb's democratic origins.

The limited narrative details – no wounds, no edifying inscriptions, no precise allegorical messages – render Blanqui a martyr with an imprecise meaning. He is available for appropriation by almost any republican or far-left ideology. Gustave Geffroy offered the highest praise for this non-narrative representation. He wrote that it exemplified what art should be, “un commentaire de l’Histoire, -- un commentaire qui parle plus haut que les hommes et les événements.”<sup>73</sup> For Geffroy, the brilliance of Dalou's monument was in its ability to transcend a temporal narrative to celebrate the revolutionary's spirit without the complications of his insurrectionist deeds.

Geffroy, who authored the first major biography of Blanqui and was instrumental in establishing the revolutionary's transhistorical legacy, offers a specifically noteworthy review because he extolled Dalou's sculpture as his model. In fact, he told Blanqui's family that he hoped to “faire littérairement de cette étude sur Blanqui un souvenir qui ait quelques titres à rester à côté du chef-d’œuvre que Dalou lui consacré.”<sup>74</sup> To do so, Geffroy built upon Dalou's representation of Blanqui's Promethean struggle against death. The biographer aggrandized Blanqui with a new epithet, *L'Enfermé* – the Imprisoned one – detailing the specifics of his incarcerations, describing the dankness of his cells, and defining his martyrdom in the terms of Blanqui's role as a noble prisoner in the years before the establishment of true republican governance.

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<sup>73</sup> Gustave Geffroy, *La Justice*, 9 May 1885. “This is what art should be, a historical commentary – a commentary that speaks higher than men and events.”

<sup>74</sup> Martel, *Mes entretiens avec Granger*, 153. “To create a memory of Blanqui through a literary study that may compare to the masterpiece that Dalou devoted to him.”

Geffroy's reaction to the sculpture was not universally shared, but it is helpful in its manifestation of the active mode of viewing that the monument mandated. Because the *Blanqui* effigy refuses death's finality and resists edifying narratives, the sculpture fails to make a specific narrative commentary. It provides the historical structure, but leaves the audience to add the events necessary to complete the historical representation.<sup>75</sup>

As viewers contemplate the monument, they construct histories that align the effigy's formal program with an individual matrix of memoirs about the nation's past, the revolutionary tradition, as well as Blanqui himself. Each viewer produces a specific narrative that harmonizes with the psychologically open form. While Monarchists, Bonapartists, and others entrenched on the French right would likely dismiss Blanqui as nothing more than a vile revolutionary, within the leftist milieu, the shifting nature of Blanqui's legacy and the varied constructions of France's past ensured that the interaction between the monument and its audience would never produce consistent meaning. Indeed, the effigy initially operated only to confirm Blanqui as a type of vague symbol of the revolutionary tradition.<sup>76</sup> It took Geffroy's narrative account nearly a decade later to create a common understanding of the revolutionary's constructed legacy. Until that point, however, the subjectivity of experience created an environment where Blanqui could not be historicized – that is, rendered a finished event to be analyzed. Instead, the tomb unlocked a memorial space that was in a constant state of flux.<sup>77</sup>

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<sup>75</sup> On the need for a union of event and structure in historical representation, see Koselleck, *Futures Past*, 105-7.

<sup>76</sup> Hutton, *Cult of the Revolutionary Tradition*, 24, 161.

<sup>77</sup> On the difference between memory and history see: Nora, "Between Memory and History."



In its sculptural environment, the effigy enters a multifaceted conversation with its installation site and its audience. All monuments can engage these external factors to a certain degree, however the psychological openness of the *Blanqui* necessitates the participation of the viewer. The effigy's destined inauguration space, Père Lachaise Cemetery, added a problematic layer of meaning because its own place in the nation's historic, socio-geographic, and memorial narratives.

Père Lachaise cemetery was Paris's most appropriate ceremonial locale to inter a republican icon. For nearly the first four score years of the nineteenth century, the cemetery existed outside of the socio-geographical bounds of France's dominant sphere. This cultural position was not simply dependent on the cemetery's location in the working-class sectors at the extreme of eastern Paris, but it was also due to the cemetery's function as what Danielle Tartakowsky calls "un panthéon de substitution" for nineteenth-century liberals.<sup>78</sup> The events of 1871 amplified the division between the dominant sphere and the cemetery. It gained widespread infamy – or notoriety depending on the perspective – as a site of violent conflict in the last days of the Commune's Bloody Week, and its eastern wall, where government soldiers summarily executed nearly 150 Communards, became a site where Commune memory solidified.

The Government of Moral Order did its part to accentuate the space as a site of contestation, erecting the double tomb of Claude Martin Lecomte and Jacques Léonard Clément-Thomas on the cemetery's ceremonial axis (fig. 1.16). The two generals, the Versailles government's first martyrs of the uprising, had been interred originally at the cemetery of Saint-Vincent à Montmartre. A year later the government translated their

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<sup>78</sup> Tartakowsky, *Nous irons chanter*, 15.

remains to the more contentious burial site when the reactionary National Assembly committed itself to installing a monument in their memory. Though the sculptor Léon Cugnot and his architect Coquart had originally planned a contemplative memorial, under the regime's direction the definitive tomb became an aggressive pronouncement of the victory of the forces of order over Commune anarchy.<sup>79</sup>

The political transition at the end of the decade, which saw the Opportunist Republic ascend to power, precipitated a deft political gesture that altered the nature of the cemetery's memorial environment. Beginning in 1880, the government unofficially sanctioned Père Lachaise as a site for the commemoration of the Commune.<sup>80</sup> It allowed the red flag to fly on certain days and even tolerated a certain amount of pilgrimage to the Wall. In relinquishing Père Lachaise to those who would celebrate the Commune and its violence – mostly socialists, anarchists, and rebels – the government concentrated the memory of the uprising around an eastern Paris site that highlighted 1871 as a moment of bloodshed, radicalism, and failed rebellion.<sup>81</sup> For anti-Communards, such a narrative reinforced their vision of the Commune as an expression of the boorishness and wantonness of the proletarian character. On the other hand, pilgrims used this memory as a reminder of the martyrs of 1871 and as a call for future proletarian revolts. These efforts teemed with the unspoken undertones – and actual manifestations – of renewed violence, seemingly confirming the criminality and barbarism that the dominant sphere associated with 1871 and its followers.

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<sup>79</sup> Le Normand-Romain identifies a sketch in the Maciet albums of the Bibliothèque de L'Union centrale des Arts décoratifs as Cugnot and Coquart's initial plan. See: A. Le Normand-Romain, *Mémoire de Marbre*, 98 (fn 82).

<sup>80</sup> Madeleine Rebérioux, "Le Mur des Fédérés: Rouge «sang craché»," in *Les Lieux de mémoire*, vol. 1: 626.

<sup>81</sup> Tillier, *La Commune de Paris*, 422.

In 1881 Blanqui's interment intersected with the development of such Commune narratives. The massive public outpouring that lined his funerary procession from the Boulevard des Italiens to Père Lachaise proved that Blanqui still enjoyed an immense popularity with Paris's working class. Despite his move towards a more moderate program in his last years, the day of his funeral saw the red flag of the Commune return to the streets of the capital for the first time since 1871.<sup>82</sup> In the cemetery itself, crowds massed to listen to former Communards such as Louise Michel eulogize the deceased.<sup>83</sup> Cries of *Vive la Commune* and *Vive la Révolution* created further unease as right-wing journals suggested that the "survivants les plus sinistres de la Commune" led the crowd.<sup>84</sup>

According to Blanqui historian Patrick Hutton, Dalou insisted on delaying the official installation of the monument in order to place it in the Salon of 1885.<sup>85</sup> The sculptor's exact motivation for exhibiting the work in this space of cultural meaning produced by the dominant – and largely anti-Communist – bourgeoisie is impossible to determine. That said, Dalou – always feeling unstable in his social position – was most likely thinking of the audience that would see the sculpture and how that would affect his own renown. He understood that the nation's cultural elite was less likely to venture to the proletarian quarters of eastern Paris to view the effigy in the oppressive memorial environment.

The intervention of the *Blanqui* into the Salon sphere marks a departure from the tone of the 1885 exhibition. For instance, Henri Gervex, whom J-K Huysmans called a leader of the so-called "bourgeois-modern" style that dominated the Salon, exhibited *Une*

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<sup>82</sup> Dommanget, *Blanqui: au début de la III<sup>e</sup> République*, 145.

<sup>83</sup> Hutton, *Cult of the Revolutionary Tradition*, 122.

<sup>84</sup> Dommanget, *Blanqui: au début de la III<sup>e</sup> République*, 151.

<sup>85</sup> *Ibid.*, 146; Hutton, *Cult of the Revolutionary Tradition*, 123.

*séance du jury de peinture au Salon des Artistes français* (fig. 1.17).<sup>86</sup> This painting showcases the Salon jury – a group of artists in the bourgeois uniform of frockcoat, top hat, and walking sticks – reviewing a Naturalist nude and a landscape. Gervex’s canvas includes three workers in beige jumpsuits, jotting notes and moving canvases. Their marginality in the scene insists on their position as functionaries doing the bidding of the bourgeois gentlemen whose decisions codify official taste and republican cultural expression. Like Père Lachaise and the city’s workers, they remain removed from the dominant milieu.

Despite the Salon’s distance from the cemetery, both geographically and socially, viewers could not have separated the sculpture from its future space of installation. The Salon catalog noted that the effigy was “Destinée à son [Blanqui’s] tombeau au cimetière du Père-Lachaise,” and reviewers continuously insisted on the monument’s future location.<sup>87</sup> If these details were not enough, three weeks into the national exhibition of 1885, a particularly violent standoff between government forces and Commune pilgrims at the cemetery covered newspaper front pages and made the active memory of the site more profound.<sup>88</sup>

Because of the tomb’s embedded connection with Père Lachaise, in the Salon, the effigy transfers the site of Commune memory from the city’s margins to its cultural center. However, it does so through a sculptural vessel that recalls democratic visual traditions and refuses overtly radical narratives. These collisions offer the possibility of reconsidering the Commune outside of the marginalizing memories active at the eastern

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<sup>86</sup> J-K Huysmans, “Le Salon de 1885,” *L’Evolution Sociale*, 23 May 1885.

<sup>87</sup> See, for example, Lanson, “Salon de 1885,” 324; Noulens, *Artistes français et étrangers*, 210. “Destined for his tomb at Père Lachaise Cemetery.”

<sup>88</sup> *L’Univers illustré*, 15 January 1881, 37; Rebérioux, “Le Mur des Fédérés,” 626.

Paris burial ground, pushing viewers to contend with the revolt's messy link to a broader national history.

A similar disruption of memorial expectations occurred when Dalou finally installed the effigy in August 1885. The sculpture's ambiguities and association with Rude's *Cavaignac* negate obvious narrative links between the tomb and the increasingly militant and extremist tone of the memorial environment. Moreover, because the work had been vetted – and often celebrated – within the republican Salon, the effigy could rekindle the cemetery's traditional role as a pantheon for liberal heroes. It existed in the blurred space between Commune discourse and counter-discourse, forcing a reconsideration of these structural ideas.

A year after Dalou exhibited his *Blanqui*, he continued his exploration of the revolutionary metanarrative with a proposed monument to Victor Hugo for the Pantheon. Hugo, the great author-statesman of France's nineteenth century, died in late May 1885 just as the renewed violence at Père Lachaise impacted the *Blanqui*'s position at the Salon. By the time of his death, Hugo had earned a reputation as the grandfather of the Republic and his passing precipitated a great national mourning. Dalou's response took shape in two related works that he submitted to the Salon of 1886. *Souvenir du 22 Mai 1885* and *Projet de tombeau pour Victor-Hugo, à ériger au Panthéon* enrich one another to commemorate the national icon through his own romantic lenses of history, modernity, art, and revolution.

*Souvenir du 22 Mai 1885* (fig. 1.18) operates as a straightforward depiction of romantic death in which the poet lies serenely on his deathbed under an ample blanket. A

pillow props his head into a comfortable position and his arms lay still next to his torso. His face is calm and the bodily effect is peaceful. At the base of the bed Dalou installed a number of wreaths and palm branches around Hugo's feet, reinforcing his grandeur and marking the passing of a nineteenth-century icon.

The sculptor's portrayal of Hugo is consistent with a number of contemporary depictions of the author's passing, including a 23 May 1885 photograph by Nadar as well as an engraving by Le Riverend and Henri Dochy.<sup>89</sup> Such homogeneity is hardly surprising; Hugo's family and close friends had taken an active role in constructing the romantic narrative of his final days, reporting his last moments to the Parisian press and calling a number of artists to his bedside to capture a final image.<sup>90</sup> Nadar, Le Riverend, Dochy, and Dalou represent only a fraction of the group that numbered nearly a dozen, including the sculptor Alexandre Falguière.<sup>91</sup> Either by chance or by the family's wish, Dalou and his *mouleur* earned the opportunity to sculpt Hugo's funerary mask.<sup>92</sup>

Hunisak argues that by exhibiting *Souvenir* in the 1886 Salon with a title that insisted on Dalou's presence at the writer's deathbed, the sculptor claimed a type of visual authenticity for his second sculpture: *Projet de tombeau pour Victor-Hugo, à ériger au Panthéon* (fig. 1.19). This larger ensemble participated in a type of unofficial competition to erect a monument to Hugo at the newly rebaptized Pantheon.<sup>93</sup> Hunisak suggests that the sculptor employed *Souvenir* to assert his proximity to Hugo, which

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<sup>89</sup> Ben-Amos, *Funerals, Politics, and Memory*, 281; See also, Avner Ben-Amos, "Les funérailles de Victor Hugo," in *Lieux de Mémoire*, Vol. 1, 473-522.

<sup>90</sup> Ben-Amos, *Funerals, Politics, and Memory*, 281.

<sup>91</sup> Emanuelle Héran, "Le dernier portrait ou la belle mort," in *Le Dernier Portrait*, 54.

<sup>92</sup> On the possibility that circumstance rather than the family's initial desire led them to commission Dalou to execute the mask see: "Les fêtes de Centenaire de Victor Hugo," *Le Temps*, 26 February 1902.

<sup>93</sup> Mayo-Roos, "Rodin's Monument to Victor Hugo," 638-9.

could afford him “a proprietary right to the commission for this proposed monument.”<sup>94</sup>

At the very least the evocation of Dalou’s position at the poet’s bedside should have reminded the audience of a clear link between Hugo and the sculptor that few others could claim. Unfortunately for Dalou, if he truly hoped to use *Souvenir* as such a tool his efforts failed. As Amélie Simier notes, “pas un critique ne rappelle sa présence au chevet du défunt, pas un ne souligne qu’il a une légitimité à représenter le mort parce qu’il était là.”<sup>95</sup>

While *Souvenir* may not have been a successful attempt to claim the right to sculpt the Pantheon monument, Hunisak is assuredly correct in asserting that Dalou thought of the relationship between the effigy and his larger proposed project. Indeed, in *Projet de tombeau* the sculptor installed a reduced-size version of the *Souvenir* on the monument’s central axis. The image of the deceased Hugo aligns perpendicularly to an exuberantly ornamented triumphal arch capped by a series of republican and poetic allegories. The model’s complex iconographic program, expressed in a spirited relief and two freestanding sculptures that bookend the central arch, draws heavily on a trinity of Hugo’s 1870s and 1880s publications, as well as on the cultural theater of the author’s funeral.

Dalou’s model elicited a mixed reaction from critics. Some were quick to decry it as an “*esquisse sommaire*,” or an “*ébauche à peine indiquée*.”<sup>96</sup> Others believed that too

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<sup>94</sup> Hunisak, *Sculptor Jules Dalou*, 264.

<sup>95</sup> Amélie Simier, “Fig. 58, Jules Dalou, *Victor Hugo sur son lit de mort*, 1886,” in *Victor Hugo vu par Rodin*, 132. “No critic remembered his presences at the bedside of the deceased, not one emphasized that he had legitimacy to represent the dead because he was there.”

<sup>96</sup> Loustalot, “Salon de 1886- La Sculpture,” 27-28; Geffroy, “Les œuvres décoratives au Salon de 1886,” 361. “Summary sketch.” “A sketch barely indicated.”

many contrasting formal energies marred the composition; Georges Lafenestre wrote that the juxtaposition of the rigid poet, the dry architectural frame, and the exuberant relief proved to be visually unpleasant.<sup>97</sup> For many other critics, however, *Projet de tombeau* suggested that Dalou was the only appropriate artist to undertake the visual hagiography. Comparing Dalou's entry with those of Paul Darbefeuille and Lucien Pallez, Maurice du Seigneur wrote, "La composition de M. Jules Dalou est encore plus ambitieuse mais infiniment mieux comprise; il ne s'agit plus d'un simple bas-relief décoratif, mais bien d'un monument grandiose qui trouverait sa place au Panthéon."<sup>98</sup> For Emile Blémont, the magisterial conception would give form to a national masterpiece, and Paul Fontaine wrote simply that in viewing the model "nous ne pouvons que formuler un vœu devant cette conception admirable, c'est que M. Dalou puisse la mener à bonne fin."<sup>99</sup>

From the time it became clear that Hugo was dying to the day the State laid him to rest at the Pantheon, his death occasioned a national spectacle. Avner Ben-Amos recounts that in the poet's last days his house served as a "who's-who" of republican society as people came to pay their respects – and be seen doing so.<sup>100</sup> Before the State interred the poet, it organized a type of public wake at the Arc de Triomphe where Hugo's body lay in a giant catafalque. Despite the funerary context, the time that the

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<sup>97</sup> Lafenestre, "Salon de 1886," 179.

<sup>98</sup> Seigneur, "Salon de 1886," 473. "The composition of M. Dalou is still more ambitious but infinitely better conceived. It is no longer a question of a simple decorative low relief, but of a grandiose monument that would find its place at the Pantheon."

<sup>99</sup> Blémont, "Salon de 1886," 26; Fontaine, "Salon de 1886." "Before this admirable composition we may only form the wish that M. Dalou may carry it out to a good end."

<sup>100</sup> Ben-Amos, "Le Funérailles de Victor Hugo," 473-522.



body lay in state produced a type of national celebration.<sup>101</sup> A massive official procession took place on the first of June, bringing together the entirety of the Republic's diverse sects and branches to celebrate its hero.<sup>102</sup> An unofficial festival also took place as a seemingly endless parade of visitors from all social classes made pilgrimages day and night, staying to fête the poet, his work, and his Republic. Several observers compared the scene to the 1880 festival of 14 July, complete with an almost carnival atmosphere.<sup>103</sup>

The setting at Etoile was one intended for such cultural theatre (fig. 1.20). Contemporary images show the Arc de Triomphe beneath a veil of black drapery that rises over the summit of the monument, covering Falguière's temporary statue *Triumph of the Revolution*. The cloth sweeps over the southeastern face of the arch (front, left when viewed from the Champs Elysées) and partially masks Jean-Pierre Cortot's *Triumph of 1810*. The sweeping aesthetic continues with the cloth rising to the outside corner of the monument's face. The waves of the drapery imbue the neo-classical arch with an emotional charge that finds sympathy in Rude's *Départ des Volontiers*, which remained uncovered on the structure's southwestern façade. Here, the impassioned gesture of Rude's Marianne drives the viewer's attention to the center of the structure where Hugo's ornate catafalque filled the void.

Dreyfous suggests that this sight had a profound effect on Dalou:

A la vue du catafalque gigantesque, édifié sous l'arc de triomphe de l'Etoile, et au pied duquel reposait le cercueil de Victor Hugo, Dalou eut cette idée que rien de plus grandiose ne pouvait servir de thème au monument que la postérité devrait élever en souvenir de Victor Hugo. Il semble que, à la lumière rouge et flottante des torches de

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<sup>101</sup> Ibid., 504.

<sup>102</sup> Rouge-Ducos, *L'Arc de Triomphe de l'Etoile*, 300-01.

<sup>103</sup> Bessonnet-Favre, *Les Fêtes républicaines*, 261-265.

figures, s'animer sur le fond noir des draperies flottantes  
qui fermaient cette colossale porte de gloire et faire cortège  
de celui que les avait mises hors de son cerveau géant pour  
emplir à tout jamais l'âme du genre humain.<sup>104</sup>

Amélie Simier argues that it is easy to doubt Dreyfous's account of Dalou's sources, especially in light of the author's comments about Dalou's *Mirabeau* composition.<sup>105</sup>

Despite the blurring of fact and myth that runs through the biographer's account, the Hugo funeral yields a unique set of circumstances because Dalou had served on the *Commission des funérailles* that saw to the apotheosis of the author. As part of a three-person *sous-commission* led by Charles Garnier, Dalou assumed responsibility for helping to design and prepare the decorations that would inspire his model.<sup>106</sup>

While the arch that Dalou constructed for the tomb – with Corinthian columns, vegetal trains, *putti*, and a stepped entablature – was no mere copy of Jean Chalgrin's monument at Etoile, it evoked the iconic neo-classical structure. Combined with the inclusion of the *Souvenir* effigy, the composition conjured memories of the May days of 1885 when stories of the poet's death and the conflicts over Commune memory shared Parisian journals' front pages. The subtle references to 1871 surely rekindled memories of Hugo's own conflicted relationship to the Commune.<sup>107</sup>

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<sup>104</sup> Dreyfous, *Dalou*, 214-5. "Upon seeing the giant catafalque, edified under Arc de Triomphe at Etoile, and at the foot of which rested the coffin of Victor Hugo, Dalou had the idea that nothing more grandiose could serve as the theme for the monument that posterity should erect in memory of Victor Hugo. It seems that, in the red light and in the floating torches of faces, the bottoms of the waving black drapery, which shut the colossal door of glory, became animated and created a parade of characters who had emerged from Hugo's giant brain to forever permeate the spirit of humanity."

<sup>105</sup> Simier, Fig. 58, Jules Dalou, *Victor Hugo sur son lit de mort*, 1886," 132.

<sup>106</sup> "La Commission des funérailles," *La France*, 25 May 1885. On the preparations of the Arc de Triomphe see: Loyrette, "Charles Garnier et le décor de l'Arc de Triomphe," *La Gloire de Victor Hugo*, 308-309.

<sup>107</sup> See, for example *Le Gaulois* or *Le Rappel* 24 and 25 May 1885.

The author had spent the duration of the revolt abroad and maintained an ambivalent position throughout. Writing in *Actes et Paroles*, Hugo described himself as being in favor of the Commune in principle but against its execution.<sup>108</sup> This attitude put Hugo out of step with the dominant bourgeois and government discourse, the all-or-nothing nature of which denied the possibility for the ambivalence that defined Hugo's position. The violence that both sides perpetrated horrified the author, but he viewed the revolt as another partial, if failed, step in the path to the ideal republic. This prompted him to be the leading voice of the minority who considered Communards as political insurgents in the mold of previous revolutionaries; he began lobbying for their amnesty almost immediately following the uprising.<sup>109</sup>

The family's plan to inter Hugo at its plot at Père Lachaise served as further ammunition for those who identified Hugo as a Communard supporter. The timing of his death, which coincided with the violence surrounding the anniversary of the Bloody Week, and a week in which two former Communard leaders would be laid to rest at the cemetery, made the proposed burial site even more problematic. Both the extreme right and the extreme left honed in on the planned funeral to restate their attitudes towards the 1871 uprising in a manner that reinforced divisive socio-geographic dichotomies.<sup>110</sup> The government's eventual decision to use Hugo's funeral as a moment to convert the Church of Sainte-Geneviève back into the Pantheon allowed it to sidestep partially the issue of the author's Commune connection. That said, this maneuver engaged a different site of

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<sup>108</sup> Victor Hugo "A MM. Meurice et Vacquerie, 28 avril 1871" *Actes et Paroles, Œuvres complètes*, 788-89.

<sup>109</sup> Joughin, *The Paris Commune*, 495.

<sup>110</sup> Ben-Amos, "Les Funérailles de Victor Hugo," 490-91.

revolutionary conflict, and a building where Communards had boldly flown their red flag in the spring of 1871.

Dalou's composition avoids any direct evocations of these divisive narratives. At the top of the ensemble, the sculptor positioned a singing Apollo, lyre in hand, riding Pegasus. A personification of Liberty, in the pose of Renown, turns her back to the viewer and looks up at the winged horse that elevates just above her head. Truth, Justice, and Love accompany the Greek god in his chariot. At the corner of the monument, to Apollo's right, a woman with an open book – Science – steps on a royal crown and a papal tiara. On the opposite side, a second strong-armed woman, embodying the virtue of Peace, breaks a club over her right knee in an echo of the scene in *Fraternité*. The mix of politics and poetics insists on what Hugo believed to be the inherent duality of his projects, as he equated his sentiments of liberalism with his artistic expressions of Romanticism.<sup>111</sup>

Below this level of the sculpture, Dalou visually engaged Hugo's transhistorical treatment of the revolutionary spirit and the poet's faith in the constant advance of history.<sup>112</sup> The two sculptures outside of the frame both depict excerpts of Hugo's Gothic oeuvre, which convey the author's constitutive version of history. To the viewer's left, Dalou modeled a scene of Quasimodo saving Esmeralda (fig. 1.21), a vignette from the 1832 *Notre Dame de Paris*. In the sketchy composition, Dalou positioned the squat Quasimodo on top of a number of fallen figures. He crouches his legs and straightens his torso as he lifts the heroine away from her site of execution. Quasimodo's animalistic

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<sup>111</sup> Victor Hugo's Prefaces to *Cromwell* and *Hernani* both serve to define romanticism and its relations to nature, truth, and liberalism. See: Victor Hugo, *Théâtre complet*.

<sup>112</sup> Ferguson, *Paris as Revolution*, 155-6; Brombert, *Victor Hugo and the Visionary Novel*, 50-69.

face and unrefined features speaks to his physical grotesqueness, a phenomenon that intrigued Hugo and many republicans in the years before the Second Empire.<sup>113</sup>

Esmeralda is completely without agency as she rests limply in the Hunchback's arms.

Throughout *Notre Dame de Paris* Hugo employs editorial commentary and references to the Bastille, the *pavé*, and the fictional revolt that unfolds in the text to insist on the relationship between his Gothic setting and nineteenth-century circumstances.<sup>114</sup>

The revolutionary spirit of the novel presents 1789 as the realization of the unsuccessful revolt of 1482, and as the progenitor of 1830. For Hugo, and many in his generation, this was certainly not to be the end of the story – these new republicans believed 1830 represented an “aborted” revolution.<sup>115</sup> Far from being a conclusion, the July Days signaled a moment of transition that portended the coming of more fundamental change – a parallel vision to that Dalou explored with the Dupont citation in *Fraternité*.

Dalou's choice to represent Quasimodo operates with multiple levels of heroic iconography. There is the basic virtue of his act, sweeping in to save the beautiful woman just before her death – a move prompted by his genuine love for the Gypsy and his rejection of a judicial system that would see Esmeralda hanged for the crime of another. Moreover, Quasimodo operated as a cherished icon whom contemporaries believed embodied the popular spirit of France. Fyodor Dostoevsky, for one, described him as “la personnification du peuple français du Moyen Age, opprimé et méprisé, sourd et

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<sup>113</sup> See Hugo's preface to *Cromwell*.

<sup>114</sup> On the revolutionary connotations of the *pavé* see: Victor Hugo “Feuilles paginées,” in Victor Hugo, *Œuvres complètes*, 961-2; Also noted in Brombert, *Victor Hugo and the Visionary Novel*, 50-1.

<sup>115</sup> Brombert, *Victor Hugo and the Visionary Novel*, 56.

difforme, mais en qui s'éveille la conscience de son bon droit et de ses forces infinies, encore inentamées.”<sup>116</sup>

In the following years, Hugo amplified Quasimodo's importance for the metanarrative of revolution. Jeffrey Mehlman points to the intertextual modes of description in Hugo's 1834 *Littérature et philosophie mêlées* as an effort to juxtapose Quasimodo with the orator Mirabeau – another figure celebrated for his revolutionary activism and his grotesque physiognomy.<sup>117</sup> Mehlman argues that the difference between the Hunchback and Mirabeau centers on their abilities to articulate for the people – Mirabeau, is a later and more refined incarnation of Quasimodo – just as 1789 is a more mature manifestation of the revolutionary spirit that connects the 1482 revolt in *Notre Dame de Paris* to the nineteenth century.<sup>118</sup>

The vignette on the opposite side of the composition is equally enmeshed in Hugo's constitutive narrative and Gothic œuvre. Here, Dalou captures the climax of the epic poem “Eviradnus” from *La Légende des siècles* (fig. 1.22). The eponymous knight-errant is in the midst of his battle with the Polish King Ladislas and the German Emperor Sigismund. Eviradnus has just throttled Ladislas with his bare hands and begins to confront the Emperor, who has armed himself with a sword. Following the poem's story, Dalou depicts Eviradnus with the body of the recently dead king raised above his head. He is poised to use the body as a club, preparing to bring it down violently on Sigismund. Hugo's verse – “Cette espèce de fronde horrible du tombeau, / Dont le corps est le corde et la tête la pierre. / Le cadavre éperdu se renverse en arrière, / Et les bras disloqués font

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<sup>116</sup> Quoted in Maxime Prévost, *Rictus romantiques*, 118.

<sup>117</sup> Lamartine, *Les Hommes de la Révolution*, 12; Orr, *Headless History*, 148.

<sup>118</sup> Mehlman, *Revolution and Repetition*, 88-89.

des gestes hideux” provides an image far more startling than even Dalou achieved in his modeling of twisting bodies emboldened by fear and anger.<sup>119</sup> Nevertheless, the horror of these lines would have risen quickly to the mind of the 1880s viewer.

As with the pendant statue of Quasimodo, the Eviradnus vignette operates on multiple levels. Eviradnus is not a member of the people *per se* but throughout the poem he serves as the symbol of its noble character and righteousness. Pierre Laforgue has called him the representation of “the Good (le Bien)” and the upholder of traditional values.<sup>120</sup> While the Knight’s actions are vicious, Hugo provides a context that justifies their brutality. He is not simply killing two authoritarians – the references to regicide being quite pointed – but seeking to annihilate what they represent, which Laforgue termed, “the Bad (le Mal),” and the degradation of social values.<sup>121</sup>

Even with its Gothic setting, like *Notre Dame de Paris*’s references to the *pavé*, the Eviradnus poem is full of contemporary allusions. For instance the dénouement of the epoch sees the Knight calmly stepping back after killing Ladislas and Sigismond and declaring, “C’est bien! disparaissent, le tigre et le chacal!”<sup>122</sup> The references to the tiger and the jackal would surely have set off intertextual alarms for the informed reader of Hugo who would recall the author’s *Les Châtiments* in which he described Napoleon III as a fake tiger and his 1851 military chief Marshal Jacques Leroy de Saint Arnaud as a jackal.

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<sup>119</sup> Hugo, “Eviradnus,” *La Légende des siècles*, 264-5. “This sort of horrible slingshot of death / whose body was the rope and the head the stone / the frenzied cadaver bends backwards / and the dislocated arms make hideous movements.”

<sup>120</sup> Laforgue, *La Légende des Siècles*, 80.

<sup>121</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>122</sup> Hugo, “Eviradnus,” 265. “It is good. The tiger and the jackal disappear.”

Within the proposed monument, Eviradnus boundlessness and timelessness underscores Dalou's interest in Hugo's construction of a transhistorical past. Throughout the epic, Hugo calls Eviradnus "le Samson chrétien," compares him to Charlemagne, and places him in a twelfth-century battle to defend the French princess Alix.<sup>123</sup> "Qu'importe l'âge!" Hugo wrote, "il lutte."<sup>124</sup> His place of origin is equally unfixed. Hugo begins the poem by calling him "Eviradnus d'Alsace" but later blurs his geographical roots by noting that he comes from Palestine. This temporal and geographic fluidity contrasts the time- and site-specific identity of the monarchs, revealing one of Hugo's chief narrative concerns in *La Légende des siècles* – the opposition between legend and history.

In his preface to the series, Hugo defines history as the realm of Herodotus and legend the domain of Homer. Unsurprisingly, Hugo groups his volume with the bard of the *Odyssey* and the *Iliad*, suggesting that individual poems "se passent l'un à l'autre le flambeau de la tradition humaine."<sup>125</sup> Each focuses on progress and the turning points in the narrative that develops between the beginning of Christianity, the development of humanism, and the ultimate advance of science.<sup>126</sup> For Hugo, this pursuit is nobler than an account rich in events that details specific temporal periods but does not further the narrative of humanity.

Dalou used the frame of his model's arch to signal a transition from Hugo's Gothic œuvre to a set of writings concerned with the Bourbon regime and nineteenth-

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<sup>123</sup> Ibid., 232-3. "What matter the age, he fights!"

<sup>124</sup> Ibid., 234.

<sup>125</sup> Victor Hugo, "Preface," in *La Légende des siècles*, 5. "Pass from one to another the flame of the human tradition."

<sup>126</sup> Ireson, *Victor Hugo I*, 259.



century politics. At three points on the inner edge of the structure – one at each side of the base of the curve and one at its apex – Dalou installed distinct masks (fig. 1.23). While the sculptor rendered them with sketchy detail, each carries a different, almost fantastic physiognomy and distinguishing attributes. All three faces have open mouths, allowing Dalou to present them as if they were howling. Hugo had evoked the clear sculptural precedent for these images – Germain Pilon’s *mascarons* that decorate Henri IV’s *Pont Neuf* (fig. 1.24) – as popular symbols.

Beyond the formal evocation of art from the Ancien Régime – and therefore a transition away from the Gothic – Dalou’s use of Pilon’s masks signals a reference to Hugo’s 1881 poem “La Révolution,” in which the sculptures play a central role. In this poem from *Les Quatre Vents de l’esprit*, monuments to Henri IV, Louis XIV, and Louis XV come to life, march through Paris, and witness the execution of Louis XVI. Like the two Gothic vignettes, Dalou’s reference to “La Révolution” channels Hugo’s constitutive narrative and defiance of monarchical structures of power. At the end of the poem, the three earlier kings ask Louis XVI who is to blame for his position on the gallows. In a response that suggests the regicide of 1793 was the culmination of centuries of conflict between the people and their monarchs the doomed king responds, “Ô mes pères, c’est vous.”

As with Eviradnus and Quasimodo, the masks had particular resonance in Hugo’s popular mythology. In a lengthy section of the poem, the author anthropomorphized the faces, describing their howls and emboldening them as the mouthpieces of the people’s vengeance. Their grotesqueness, which spoke to nineteenth-century democratic ideals, contrasts the mannered pomp and grandeur of three kings. Moreover, the agency of these

popular objects mocks the powerless personifications of the kings who watch helplessly as their descendent occupies the executioner's scaffold.

*Les Quatre Vents de l'esprit*, along with *Les Châtiments* and *La Légende des siècles*, belongs to a type of poetic trinity that Hugo published between 1870 and 1883.<sup>127</sup> From the late 1870s through the 1880s the union of these texts provided contemporaries with insight into Hugo's take on progress, politics, the role of the artist, and the revolutionary tradition.<sup>128</sup> Dalou turned to the latter two volumes for the scenes that animate the inside of the arch.

Within the frame to the viewer's left, Dalou modeled a scene from *Les Châtiments* (fig. 1.25) – the author's most polemic political attack on Napoleon III. The sculptor had originally designed the vignette to be used as the frontispiece for a national edition of the collection of poetry, and here he recycled the vertically oriented scene.<sup>129</sup> Beginning near the mid-height of the arch and tumbling to the level of Hugo's bed, the vignette depicts a muscular man with a flying cape descending on a pile of anguished and twisting bodies. In a formal program and emotional force that evokes Michelangelo's *Last Judgment*, Dalou presents the hero with his fist cocked – or perhaps holding a blunt weapon – ready to mete out vengeance on those below him.

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<sup>127</sup> A special note of recognition is due to Pierre Georgel who not only clarified the importance of the timing of these three volumes, but also shared his extensive knowledge of the Hugolien œuvre with me in multiple conversations about Dalou's iconographic program.

<sup>128</sup> Hugo had actually composed the latter two volumes in the 1850s while in exile but *Les Châtiments* could only enter widespread circulation in the tumultuous months of late 1870. The success and notoriety of *La Légende des siècles* owes largely to two re-issuings of the volume, in slightly altered forms, in 1877 and 1883.

<sup>129</sup> See Dreyfous, *Dalou*, 213.

The specific image invokes Hugo's poem "Oh ! je sais qu'ils feront des mensonges sans nombre." This verse calls on the precedents of Shakespeare, Dante, and Aeschylus as geniuses who advanced the narrative of humanity. Hugo cites their example to demand that the poet become an *engagé* – an active agent of historical change. The deeply personal lines, written by the exile author attacking his political nemesis, make the poet an instrument of vengeance, and his poems tools to banish the "rascals" and the "bandits" who stand in the way of republican governance. Never doubting his own importance, Hugo used these lines, and the collection of poetry more broadly, to anoint himself the social and political spokesman of France's ennobled people, declaring himself the bard of a popular revolutionary movement that would save the nation.<sup>130</sup>

Opposite *Les Châtiments* Dalou imaged "Pleine Mer" (fig. 1.26) – Hugo's exploration of industry and progress in the nineteenth-century section of *La Légende des siècles*. In the past, Henriette Caillaux has identified this vignette of a boat and bodies as a representation of the author's 1836 poem "Oceano Nox." She likely based the identification on the images of agonized heads to the right of the boat as an illustration of the line "Nul ne sait votre sort, pauvre têtes perdus!"<sup>131</sup> Yet the complex and interrelated allegorical program of the ensemble makes the inclusion of a poem dedicated to lost seamen appear out of place. In fact, reconsideration of the sketchy formal details suggests that the series of heads that likely prompted the "Oceano Nox" identification are actually attached to bodies. The torsos fuse together in romantic modeling as the scene moves from a deeper plane of the relief towards the foreground. Hovering in an ethereal sphere above a scene of a shipwreck, the undefined bodies and distressed expressions evoke a

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<sup>130</sup> VanderWolk, *Victor Hugo in Exile*, 110-150.

<sup>131</sup> Caillaux, *Aimé-Jules Dalou*, 54. "None know your destiny, poor lost heads."

line from “Pleine Mer,” where Hugo describes “Des êtres ténébreux marcher dans des nuées.”<sup>132</sup>

The evocation of the “êtres ténébreux” amplifies the crossing mast and smokestack that lay on the ship, the clearest identifier of the poem and Hugo’s description of its central boat the *Leviathan*. In Hugo’s verse, a combination of seven masts and five chimneys powered a titanic warship of perverted nineteenth-century ideals. Despite such awesome man-made muscle, the ship was no match for the force of nature, sinking in a whirlpool of the sea’s fury, the power of which Dalou conveyed through a set of aggressive waves that emerge into high relief. The imprint of the sculptor’s fingers – something that would have been unlikely in the final monument – testifies to the emotional force of the modeled sea. Bodies twist and turn underneath the boat in a swirl that calls to mind the vortex that felled the audacious vessel.

Though a pendant to *Les Châtiments* and open to possible political readings, “Pleine Mer” is outwardly more concerned with progress and society’s move towards the modern era.<sup>133</sup> It is not an isolated work and operates best in the context of “Plein Ciel,” a poem that Hugo placed after it in his volume. Whereas “Pleine Mer” and its capsized warship evoke the hopelessness and destructive force of progress unconcerned with human toll, “Plein Ciel” celebrates the possibilities of twentieth-century developments that will yield social good. The relationship between the poems is an extension of the poet’s constitutive rationale, but the invocation of a glorious future offers the possibility

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<sup>132</sup> “The mysterious beings walking in the clouds.”

<sup>133</sup> For a political reading of the poem see: Gifford, “Hugo’s Pleine Mer and the ‘Great Eastern’,” 1193-1201.

for the establishment of the utopian republican society through the continued progress of history.

In the center of the relief, vertically aligned between Hugo on his deathbed and Apollo's chariot, Dalou imaged the satyr from the author's poem "Seizième siècle, Renaissance–paganisme" again from *La Légende des siècles* (fig. 1.27). Sitting in Olympian clouds that swell above an area of virtual flatness directly above the poet's effigy, the satyr – another popular hero – leans slightly toward the viewer with an animated pose that amplifies his compositional centrality at the fulcrum of Dalou's iconographic program. Framed by the three *mascarons*, the satyr looks toward Quasimodo, initiating a visual interplay between the three embodiments of France's mythical people – a three-pronged popular connection that Hugo had made explicit in "La Révolution."<sup>134</sup>

Over the course of "Renaissance-paganisme" the once mocked satyr defies the supremacy of the Olympian gods – sketchily evoked in the clouds around him. In a song laced with the rhetoric of the nineteenth-century popular revolution, he sings that man was "fait pour la révolte sainte" which would produce "le sainte ordre de paix, d'amour, et d'unité."<sup>135</sup> The satyr offers a didactic parable that encourages humans to throw off the yoke of kings and renounce superstition in a Promethean effort to transform humanity.<sup>136</sup> He concludes his revolutionary ascent through a bodily transition, transforming from a faun to the god Pan and announcing his – and the natural world's – supremacy over superstition.

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<sup>134</sup> Brombert, *Victor Hugo and the Visionary Novel*, 187.

<sup>135</sup> Victor Hugo, "Seizième siècle, Renaissance – Paganisme, Le Satyre," in *La Légende des siècles*, 426. "Made for virtuous revolt." "The pure order of peace, love, and unity."

<sup>136</sup> Hugo, "Le Satyre," 427.

The vehicle for the satyr's transformation – song – reflects kindly on Hugo's own role in advancing the revolutionary cause. The instruments necessary for his performance evolve as the poem advances. Though he starts with his own tools, he appropriates Mercury's flute midway through his verse. Advancing further in his song, he calls on Apollo's lyre – a reference that would draw the viewer to the chariot group capping the model – for his lines about the evolution of humanity. For Hugo's contemporaries such as Louis Aguezzani, this series of lyrical transitions served as a call for a new type of poetry. Aguezzani writes that beneath the satyr's song, Hugo's message asserted that the next step in humanity's advance necessitated “une lyre nouvelle, non plus celle des Grecs, de Virgile ou de Racine, mais la lyre géante de Victor Hugo – qui se veut un génie poétique aussi vaste que la nature même...”<sup>137</sup>

Playing his lyre to the Olympians, the satyr presents the possibility for art to serve as the catalyst of the revolution – the very idea that Hugo embraced in his poems from exile. Nevertheless, the idea of revolt in the satyr's song – despite its contemporary resonance and explicit references – exists outside of the nineteenth century. As Victor Brombert explains, through its mystical resonances the revolution becomes part of a type of cosmic myth.<sup>138</sup>

The vision of a dehistoricized revolution at the center of the Hugo monument animates much of Dalou's 1880s œuvre. The same notion of the revolutionary tradition activates *Fraternité* and its reference to Pierre Dupont, as well as the tomb of Auguste

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<sup>137</sup> Aguezzani, *Lecture de Le satyre de Victor Hugo*, 93. “A new lyre, no longer that of the Greeks, Virgil, or Racine, but the giant lyre of Victor Hugo, who claimed to be a poetic genius as immense as nature itself.”

<sup>138</sup> Brombert, *Victor Hugo and the Visionary Novel*, 187.

Blanqui where the martyr seems to struggle beyond the grave. Each of these works also rebounds in the space of the nineteenth century to include the Commune as part of this metanarrative. None of these sculptures, with the exception of the secondary image of the fête in *Fraternité*, however, take the events of 1871 as their main point of emphasis.

The destabilizing effect of the Commune takes shape as the ensembles enter ceremonial and memorial environments that structure the relationship between the new Republic of the 1880s and its past. The participation of these works within the matrix of history, memory, space, and the existing Commune discourse causes a disruption that upset the conventional order of things. *Fraternité*, *Blanqui*, and *Projet de tombeau* offer an alternative paradigm through which to view the Commune and therefore the society that evolved from its ashes.

A shifting notion of French masculinity began to emerge in this new society. Traditional heroes of the Church, the army, and the people clashed with the needs and expectations of the republican majority. The bourgeois leaders of the new government espoused a profound anticlericalism; the disasters of 1870-71 had tarnished the army both for its role in the fraternal violence of the latter spring and for the earlier failure in the face of the Prussian advance; and the mythical people who had energized the republican spirit throughout the century exerted less and less influence as ideals of fraternity and a common love for the *patrie* gave way to an evaluation of society rooted in a bourgeois-proletarian dichotomy.

Dalou's project operates without regard for these new circumstances. Instead, it turns on what Henry Roujon calls the sculptor's religion – a profound love for the

people.<sup>139</sup> Dalou's heroes manifest the mystic Romantic populism of the revolutionary tradition, which the sculptor presents as a guide for political and masculine engagement for future generations. Though the sculptures are largely successful in fusing structure and event to present the Commune as a moment of historical continuity, they nevertheless prioritize a past notion of masculine virtue, embodied in the *quarante-huitard* and his descendant, Blanqui, Hugo, the *mascarons*, Quasimodo, and others, as the talismanic catalyst for a future generation. Though Dalou did not see the disconnect in the 1880s, his sculptures reveal larger fractures in France's construction of its history and ideal for the future. They hint at the uncertainties and instabilities of a society struggling to come to terms with a new era of modernity and progress, which seemed increasingly distant from its culture of traditions.

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<sup>139</sup> Roujon, "Preface," i.



## Dalou's Artisan Ideal and the Changing Scope of Parisian Nationalism

With Commune amnesty on the horizon, Dalou began work on a model for an 1879 Parisian Municipal Council competition to erect a monument to the Republic at the Place Château d'Eau. Dalou approached his composition with an eye towards creating a transhistorical national narrative and a vision of France rooted in the tenets of romantic populism and the artisan ideal. Though he did not win the competition, the success of the model for *The Triumph of the Republic* (fig. 2.1) earned Dalou the opportunity to install the group at Place de la Nation in eastern Paris. A decade later, when the government inaugurated a temporary version of the monument in 1889, the specter of a society shifting under the entrenchment of an industrial structure complicated the ensemble's popular allegorical mode. The interaction between the government, the monument, and the socio-geographic landscape manifested the pressures that modernity exerted on France's traditional social and historical structures, exposing profound fissures in emerging constructions of fin-de-siècle national identity. Traditional strategies to legitimize the Republic by promoting a shared historic identity became problematic as the rise of a domestic opposition offered new icons and ideals of masculinity to confront the modern age.

Dalou began his project as an exile in London, conceiving a monument that would mesh centuries of French grandeur with the social concerns of the nineteenth century. He

modeled an image of the Marianne of Popular Revolt atop a vibrant composition that fused three centuries of formal styles in a triumphal chariot ornamented by populist political allegories.<sup>1</sup> The didactic program argued that this version of the Republic was the natural culmination of French history and that its strength depended on the labors and politics of the capital's artisan class. The distinct formal modeling reflected Dalou's Parisian crafts training and his manipulation of period styles united a potentially divisive national history into an integrated testament to the country's power and splendor.

Dalou's version of a republic "en fête," as one contemporary critic described it, broke significantly from the spirit of the proposal that Ferdinand Hérold, the Prefect of the Seine, originally introduced in a Municipal Council meeting on 1 February 1879.<sup>2</sup> Hérold's plan was to commission a "traditional" monument to the Republic in conjunction with a statue to Voltaire that he hoped to install in front of the *Mairie* of the Eleventh arrondissement. The scheme was part of Paris's larger attempt to rehabilitate its image and reposition itself centrally in the discourse of French identity after the bloodshed of 1871. Such efforts to obfuscate the physical and social memories of the uprising, a project that had informed much of the urbanism of the 1870s – including the construction of the Basilica of Sacre Cœur at Montmartre and the preparations for the Universal Exhibition of 1878 – was fundamental to this program.<sup>3</sup> The Municipal Council's new project equally intended to blur the cultural scars of the recent past but through a different process. Rather

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<sup>1</sup> On the distinction of Marianne types in the nineteenth century and the history of the personification, see: Maurice Agulhon, *Marianne au combat*.

<sup>2</sup> Jean Frolo, "Les statues de la République," *Le Petit Parisien*, 11 October 1879, quoted in Imbert, "*Quand Paris dansait avec Marianne*," 48; Conseil Municipal de Paris, "Procès-Verbal, le 1 février 1879," *Conseil Municipal de Paris Année 1879 Procès-Verbaux*, 77.

<sup>3</sup> Best, *Les monuments de Paris*; Jonas, *France and the Cult of the Sacred Heart*, 177-198; Colette Wilson, *Paris and the Commune*.

than simply cover a site of contested historical meaning with a reactionary building project, Hérold's plan obscured the marks of conflict by affirming historical links between the national government, the capital, and Enlightenment philosophy.

This new mode of urban intervention allowed the project to simultaneously address the Commune (the Municipal Council approved the plan on the symbolic date of 18 March 1879, the eighth anniversary of the Commune's beginning) and a broader range of cultural concerns. To many liberal Parisians, Napoleon III and Baron Haussmann's redevelopment of Paris had inflicted a type of imperial violence on the nation's memorial environment well before 1871.<sup>4</sup> An exiled Victor Hugo wrote that the Second Empire's urbanism made the city of his youth – and the Paris that was the locus for the popular heroism of the *Misérables* – a city of “autrefois.”<sup>5</sup> Other Republicans understood the 1850s and 1860s interventions as the extension of Napoleon III's assault on the fabric of Paris and its people. These claims were not without merit, and Haussmann had provided plenty of ammunition for his critics when he combined cavalry-friendly boulevards with a ring of military barracks that the government could employ to sequester the capital's working-class neighborhoods in times of unrest.<sup>6</sup>

The Boulevard Voltaire, which would directly link the two statues of Hérold's plan, operated at the center of these issues. The Empire erected the throughway in the early 1860s – originally naming it for the Emperor's son Eugène. In order to create this new imperial avenue, Haussmann's workers demolished a long-existing working-class

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<sup>4</sup> David Shafer and David Jordan, among others, point to the effects of Haussmannization as a force in the development of the Commune insurgency. Shafer, *The Paris Commune*, 12; David Jordan, *Transforming Paris*, 290.

<sup>5</sup> Victor Hugo, *Les Misérables*, 1862.

<sup>6</sup> Clark, *Painting of Modern Life*, 32-38; Pinkney, “Napoleon III's Transformation of Paris,” 132; Victor Hugo, *Les Misérables*.

neighborhood. More than simply altering the map, this project – and others like it – impacted the city’s human geography. It dispersed a well-established working-class community while prioritizing an infrastructure meant to celebrate the grandeur of the Empire.<sup>7</sup> Hérold’s 1879 proposal sought to take advantage of the ceremonial qualities of the axis, but in a manner that would re-appropriate the city space to help construct visually the new government’s relationship to a venerated national heritage.

In choosing Voltaire as the appropriate pendant for the monument to the Republic, the leader of the Parisian council navigated the Third Republic government’s effort to mold a moderate revolutionary tradition distinct from the Commune. Hérold argued that the programmatic link between the two monuments would cement the new Republic as the progeny of Voltaire, whom he described as “un des hommes qui ont le plus contribué à développer les idées de progrès et d’humanité qui sont le fondement même du gouvernement républicain.”<sup>8</sup> By citing Voltaire’s importance for the underlying philosophy of republican governance – and not for its revolutionary activation – Hérold’s plan offered the new regime an Enlightenment heritage that could be divorced from the contested moments of violence.

At no time was Voltaire’s perceived separation from the history of popular revolt clearer than during the 1878 centenary commemorations of the deaths of both Voltaire and Jean-Jacques Rousseau.<sup>9</sup> Though both men occupied revered places within the republican pantheon, the memorial celebrations of 1878 revealed that republicans

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<sup>7</sup> Harvey, *Capital of Modernity*, 112-113.

<sup>8</sup> Conseil Municipal de Paris, “Procès-Verbal, le 1 février 1879,” 77. “One of the men who most contributed to the development of the ideas of progress and humanity that are the very foundation of the republican government.”

<sup>9</sup> For a discussion of the competing efforts to commemorate Voltaire and Rousseau in Parisian monuments see: Hargrove, *Statues of Paris*, 114-116.

maintained a distinction between the philosophers that engaged the relationship of class politics to revolution. For instance, the historian Jules Michelet declared Rousseau the symbol of the people and an activator of their revolutionary efforts. On the other hand, Michelet reserved for Voltaire a position that remained aloof from the *sans-culottes*' struggle to overthrow the king, presenting him as a less-engaged philosopher of universal republican values.<sup>10</sup> Victor Hugo concurred and extended the description by writing: "La fibre civique vivre en Rousseau ; ce qui vibre en Voltaire, c'est la fibre universelle. On peut dire que dans ce fécond dix-huitième siècle, Rousseau représente le Peuple, Voltaire plus vaste encore, représente l'Homme."<sup>11</sup>

At the time of the 1878 centenaries, the Republicans gaining power were mostly members of the moderate bourgeoisie whom Michelet would likely have described as "libéral de principe, égoïste d'application."<sup>12</sup> Though the historian had leveled this critique at the liberals of the July Monarchy, his words resounded with his followers' descriptions of the Opportunist leaders of the new government; the Radical party and those of so-called *extrême gauche* viewed the fin-de-siècle bourgeois moderates as the progeny of the Orleanist parliamentary model of 1830s.<sup>13</sup> While such criticism is certainly polemic in questioning the Opportunists' republicanism, it meant to draw comparisons between two generations of Voltaire acolytes who espoused a combination

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<sup>10</sup> Jules Michelet, "The Fountain of Social and Political Justice," in *The Influence of the Enlightenment on the French Revolution*, 93.

<sup>11</sup> Victor Hugo, *Œuvres complètes*, Vol. 46, 84. "The civic streak lives in Rousseau; what animates Voltaire is a universal streak. One could say that in the fertile eighteenth century, Rousseau represents the People, and Voltaire, still greater, represents Man."

<sup>12</sup> Noell, *Au temps de la République bourgeoise*, 39-84; Aminzade, *Class, Politics, and Early Industrial Capitalism*, 286-7; Michelet, *Le Peuple*, 135. "liberal in principle, egoist in application."

<sup>13</sup> Stone, *Sons of the Revolution*, 120.

of liberal economic policies and somewhat conservative social tendencies that could inhibit the achievement of a populist agenda.

Unlike the Opportunists, socialists, Radicals and those of the *extrême gauche* prioritized the philosophy of Rousseau. Louis Blanc, for one, argued that Rousseau was the hero of the people because he had shared the day-to-day struggles familiar to the working classes. These conditions had shaped his world-view and allowed him to develop a philosophy that manifested what Blanc believed to be a purer, popular republican spirit.<sup>14</sup>

In response to the socialist adoration of Rousseau, Opportunists sought to marginalize his importance in the first decades of the Third Republic.<sup>15</sup> They argued that Rousseau's concern for the status of the people should be considered a secondary imperative when compared with Voltaire's pursuit of a universal republic. Rousseau's deism also proved objectionable in the fierce anti-clerical circles of moderate republicans.<sup>16</sup> In opposition to Rousseau, and with a reputation for strong anti-monarchist sentiment, Voltaire emerged as a hero who could combat threats from the socialists on the left as well as clerical, Bonapartist, and restoration factions on the right.<sup>17</sup>

Hérolt's suggested site of installation for the monument to the Republic reinforced the universalistic message of its would-be pendant. The Place Château d'Eau occupied a position between disparate spheres of the city. The working classes largely inhabited the areas to the north and east of the square. On the other side, the Boulevard

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<sup>14</sup> Blanc, *Discours politiques 1847 à 1881*, 34.

<sup>15</sup> Delon, "1878: un centenaire ou deux?" 645.

<sup>16</sup> Hargrove, *Statues of Paris*, 114.

<sup>17</sup> Delon, "1878: un centenaire ou deux?" 643-4.

du Temple, which ran into the Place from the south, was a center of leisure and cultural interchange from the Restoration forward.<sup>18</sup> Though it had been home to significant barricades during the street fighting of 1848 and the Commune, the site was a relatively inoffensive memorial environment devoid of a debilitating social or political history.<sup>19</sup>

Former Communard Felix Jobbé-Duval was among several members of the Municipal Council who balked at Château d'Eau as the proper site for the monument. On 18 March 1879 he joined with Municipal Council members L.L. Vauthier and Auguste Harant in a counter-proposal that wished to erect the monument at Place de la Concorde. Vauthier, who introduced the measure, explained that installing a statue to the Republic was a symbolic gesture and that the site of installation was a meaningful component.<sup>20</sup> In his plan, the city council would move Louis Philippe's Obelisk of Luxor to make space for the new monument. The Council would then rename Place de la Concorde, Place de la République and exchange the name of the rue Royal for Avenue de la République.

While Jobbé-Duval sided with Vauthier, he noted that his support for the counter-proposal rested in his objection to Place Château d'Eau, not a commitment to the Place de la Concorde site. He argued that the council would be best served by installing the monument in the space in front of the Hôtel de Ville.<sup>21</sup> Other Council members also voiced their agreement that Château d'Eau was less than an ideal site. In addition to Place

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<sup>18</sup> Dickinson, *Theatre in Balzac's 'La Comédie,'* 33-38.

<sup>19</sup> Germani, "Taking possession of Marianne," 299.

<sup>20</sup> Conseil Municipal de Paris, *Procès-Verbal sur le programme de concours pour l'érection d'une statue de la République sur la Place du Château-d'Eau*, 18 March 1879.

<sup>21</sup> Conseil Municipal de Paris, "Procès-Verbal, le 18 mars 1879," *Conseil Municipal de Paris Année 1879 Procès-Verbaux*, 291. See also, "Conseil Municipal: Séance du mardi 18 mars," *Le Rappel*, 20 March 1879.

de la Concorde and the Hôtel de Ville, some suggested erecting the group in the Tuileries.<sup>22</sup>

Each of these alternatives would have been far more controversial than the locale that Hérold proposed. At Place de la Concorde, the site of Louis XVI's execution and the former Place de la Révolution, exchanging the Obelisk of Luxor for a monument to the Republic would re-open a memorial environment for divisive political contestation.<sup>23</sup> Equally problematic, the square in front of the Hôtel de Ville would have fused the capital's municipal seat of governance with a fully national celebration of the Republican government. Erecting the group at the Tuileries would not only emphasize the national ruptures occasioned by the Republic's victories over monarchic and imperial regimes, but also highlight the burning of Paris during the Prussian siege and the Commune. That harsh specter of modernity, manifest in the scars that marked the shell of the Tuileries palace – and the Parisian city hall – would have created a visual dissonance with the traditional image of the Republic, complicating narratives of national continuity.<sup>24</sup>

After sustained debate, the city council accepted the original program for the monument at Château d'Eau with several small modifications. The commission charged sculptors to create a monument that was to include a representation of Marianne wearing a Phrygian bonnet – a symbol with radical associations that earlier Third Republic

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<sup>22</sup> Conseil Municipal de Paris, "Procès-Verbal, le 18 mars 1879," 291.

<sup>23</sup> See: Porterfield, *The Allure of Empire*, 13-42; Dombrowski, "History, Memory, and Instantaneity," 195-219.

<sup>24</sup> On the Commune and its connections to the phenomenon of Modernity see Starr, *Commemorating Trauma*, 1-5.



governments had outlawed. This figure would enjoy a place on a pedestal that sculptors could ornament with traditional allegories.<sup>25</sup>

Even with the inclusion of the Phrygian cap, many Parisians derided the competition's conservative limits. They suggested that the constraints would inhibit sculptors from any aesthetic or thematic innovations. The formal programs of most of the eighty-three entries, which Stéphane Loysel appraised as bearing an "absolute lack of originality," appear to have vindicated these fears.<sup>26</sup>

Following the initial exhibition of the models in October 1879, the jury selected three sculptors to enlarge their groups for final consideration.<sup>27</sup> Each of these projects manifested the lack of formal and thematic innovation that Loysel bemoaned. The designs of Jean-François Soitoux (fig. 2.2), Jean Gautherin (fig. 2.3), and the brothers Charles and Léopold Morice (fig. 2.4) present the female personification of the Republic as a static presence atop a simple pedestal. Though she wears the Phrygian cap, the figure belongs not to the style of Marianne of Popular Revolt, but instead to the Marianne-type that Maurice Agulhon identified as an invocation of law and moderation.<sup>28</sup> In Deborah Silverman's words, these "sedate Athenian matrons" communicated the fixed power and

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<sup>25</sup> Agulhon, *Marianne au combat*, 224.

<sup>26</sup> Stéphane Loysel. "Le concours pour la statue de la République," in *L'Illustration*, 25 October 1879, 263. Quoted in Hunisak, *The Sculptor Jules Dalou*, 211.

<sup>27</sup> For an overview of the competition entries see: Imbert, "Le concours de 1879 : remarques sur quelques projets présentés," in *Quand Paris dansait avec Marianne*, 12-30.

<sup>28</sup> Agulhon, *Marianne au combat*, 87-198.

consistency of a republic of order.<sup>29</sup> The rest of the formal and allegorical programs followed suit. They operate with a classicizing mode that recalls *le grand style* of eighteenth-century monuments, recycling staid tropes of representing republican values through generalized and atemporal female personifications.

The Morices' group – the eventual winner – is explicit in its effort to construct a specific, moderate, version of history that fuses with the traditional iconographic program. It includes a parade of reliefs around the drum of the pedestal that illustrates a set of non-controversial revolutionary events in the path towards the Third Republic (fig. 2.5). Invocations of popular uprisings in 1830, 1848, and 1871 are conspicuously absent.<sup>30</sup>

Dalou's entry steered a far different course. Rather than using a generic pedestal, Dalou placed his figure of the Republic atop a celestial orb that sat within a triumphal chariot pulled by lions. Capped in a Phrygian bonnet and wearing heavy drapery, Dalou's Republic strides forward extending her right arm to the side while reaching her left arm slightly backwards to hold a fasces. An idealized male nude representing the Genius of Liberty rides on the lions' backs. A modern female nude distributes flowers in the chariot's wake. On the procession's flanks, Dalou included modern personifications that he rendered with Naturalist formal treatments. To the right, Labor is a muscular and bare-chested blacksmith carrying a hammer on his right shoulder and guiding the chariot with

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<sup>29</sup> Deborah Silverman notes that this was the common type of Marianne imagery in the didactic sculpture and medals of the Republic's 1878 and 1879 commissions. Silverman, *Art nouveau in Fin-de-Siècle France*, 176.

<sup>30</sup> There are, however, individual reliefs that depict scenes from 1830 and 1848. The former shows Louis Philippe's ascension to power on 29 July 1830 – not the initial popular rebellion of the previous two days – and the latter depicts the abolishment of slavery in 1848 – and neither celebrates a moment of revolution.

his left hand. His bulging but unrefined musculature and his wizened face mark a type of romantic masculinity that differs from the Genius's idealized form. On the opposite side, Justice pushes the vehicle with her right hand while she cradles a scepter in the crook of her arm. Ornamental vines flow from a central bouquet and intertwine throughout the monument; they harmonize the group with a decorative treatment and signal a politically rich union between monumental art and utilitarian craftsmanship.

Dalou's project was exceedingly well received by art critics and some members of the jury, including one who argued that the model was so superior to its competitors that voting was unnecessary.<sup>31</sup> Despite the critical acclaim, Dalou's model could not accumulate the necessary votes to reach the final round. Nevertheless, the thirteen-member jury never ranked it less than second in any of the ten rounds of polling. While the secret ballot process obscures any definitive understanding of who voted for what group and in what round, the accumulated results suggest that a band of four, led by Jobbé-Duval, never wavered in its support for Dalou's model. A second group of seven remained steadfastly opposed to the ensemble.<sup>32</sup> Following the final vote that saw Gautherin's group advance, Jobbé-Duval moved that the Administration purchase Dalou's *Triumph of the Republic* in order to erect it as a monument elsewhere in the city.<sup>33</sup> The Jury agreed, adding a note to the official minutes clarifying that Dalou's

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<sup>31</sup> Hunisak, *Sculptor Jules Dalou*, 218; Archives de la Seine, VR 152, 14 October 1879.

<sup>32</sup> Archives de la Seine, VR 152, 14 October 1879. Combining with two swing voters who supported Dalou's project at least once, the group of seven dominated the process and advanced the Morices' group first, Soitoux's group second and finally Gautherin's project.

<sup>33</sup> The possibility of the municipal council erecting multiple monuments was already in the minds of jurors, as in the course of the municipal council debate on the location of the proposed monument M. Lafont argued that the monument at Château d'Eau did not

group “avait dû être écarté, malgré ses qualités remarquables et son grand aspect décoratif, comme ne répondant ni aux prescriptions du programme ni aux exigences de l’emplacement désigné.”<sup>34</sup>

Dreyfous suggests that the jury’s criticism of the model ignored the formal and thematic value of the republican message.<sup>35</sup> His account, which at times appears vindictive in chastising the jurists whom he believes voted against Dalou’s project, never mentions Hérold’s original conception of the monument as a pendant to a statue of Voltaire.<sup>36</sup> Instead Dreyfous argues that the jury rooted its concerns for the “exigences de l’emplacement” through a fallacious claim that the oval base of the sculpture would not fit in the Place Château d’Eau.<sup>37</sup> The author’s narrow view of the term “emplacement” restricts its meaning to physical geography. Given the extensive debates concerning the symbolic quality of proposed site, as well as the importance of the memorial union with the proposed commemoration of Voltaire, it is equally possible that members of the jury believed Dalou’s work did not meet the thematic requirements of the space.

Municipal Council member Ulysse Parent’s subsequent description of the model in a presentation about its future installation confirms that contemporaries viewed the project outside the traditional specter of universalistic republican imagery. Speaking to

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preclude the Council from commissioning other monuments to the Republic in other city squares. Conseil Municipal de Paris “Procès-Verbal, le 18 mars 1879,” 293-4.

<sup>34</sup> “La Place de la République,” *Inventaire Général des Œuvres d’Art appartenant à la Ville de Paris*, 610. “Needed to be eliminated, despite its remarkable qualities and its grand decorative aspects, as it responded to neither the instructions of the program nor the demands of the chosen installation site.”

<sup>35</sup> Dreyfous, *Dalou*, 105.

<sup>36</sup> *Ibid.*, 105-106.

<sup>37</sup> *Ibid.*, 106.

the full city council, Parent pointed to a lacuna in Paris's memorial sphere that he said Dalou's group would alleviate.

De quelque côté que nous jetions les yeux, partout, nous voyons traduits par le bronze ou le marbre le souvenir des monarchies éteintes. Chaque règne a eu son *style*. Tous les despotismes ont mis leur estampille sur nos palais avec la fleur de lys, l'aigle et le coq. Les statues des rois se dressent paisiblement sur nos places publiques; la colonne Vendôme, renversée, est de nouveau debout. Mais où pourrions-nous trouver une pierre qui nous rappelât notre grande Révolution, quel-hommage a été rendu à ses grands hommes? Si vous parcourez Paris vous rencontrerez les effigies de Philippe-Auguste, de Saint-Louis, de Henri IV, de Louis XV, de Napoléon III dans le Louvre; vous ne trouverez pas la statue de Danton!<sup>38</sup>

Parent's remarks demonstrate the critical difference between Dalou's proposal and that of the Morices and its ilk. Whereas the Morices' group imaged the desired message of an Enlightenment vision of the new Republic connected to the philosophy of Voltaire and 1789, the Council and the Jury viewed Dalou's ensemble in the context of the First Republic of 1792 and its recently rehabilitated hero Georges Danton.

As Parent continued his speech, he encouraged the Municipal Council to choose a site for the *Triumph of the Republic* that teemed with spatial significance and political gravitas. He quickly dismissed Place de l'Alma and the Place Armand-Carrel as possible sites, instead arguing vehemently that the Council should select the Place du Trône at the

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<sup>38</sup> *Rapport: Annexe au procès-verbal de la séance du 22 juin 1880*. Archives de Paris, 139932, 6. "On any side that we throw our gaze, we see the memory of extinguished monarchies translated in bronze or marble. Each regime had its style. All the despotisms left their mark on our palace with the fleur-de-lis, the eagle, and the cock. All the statues of kings stand peacefully in our public squares; the Vendome Column, once upturned, stands again. But where may we find a stone that reminds us of the great Revolution, what homage has been given to these great men? If you traverse Paris you will encounter the effigies of Philippe-Auguste, of Saint-Louis, of Henri IV, of Louis XV, of Napoleon III in the Louvre; you will not find a statue of Danton."

eastern extreme of the city.<sup>39</sup> In addition to noting that the square would provide sufficient space and a proper perspective for a massive bronze statue, Parent concluded that installing such a dynamic monument to the “*Génie de la Révolution française et la République*” at the specific location would offer unparalleled programmatic benefits.

Parent envisioned Dalou’s group at the Eastern terminus of Paris’s long and monumentally rich East-West axis, in line with the Bastille and its monument to the revolutionary spirit. Parent noted that the Avenue de Vincennes, which flows into Place de la Nation, is the eastern equivalent to the western Avenue de la Grande-Armée where Napoleon’s *Arc de Triomphe* dominates the memorial sphere at Place d’Etoile. For Parent, erecting the *Triumph of the Republic* at Place du Trône would shift the tenor of the monumental program for the entire avenue – and therefore the city itself – by creating a contrast between what he described as Place d’Etoile’s monument to a France “militaire et conquérante” and Dalou’s monument to “une gloire nationale plus pure.”<sup>40</sup>

When the Municipal Council agreed to Parent’s proposal in 1880, it engaged a centuries-long tradition of using the square at the eastern extreme of the city as a space for political theater. Louis XIV initiated this practice in 1670 when he built Place du Trône to stage his ceremonial entrance into the capital with his new bride Marie Thérèse of Austria. For the next six score years, his Ancien-Régime successors continued to employ the site as a space of royal ceremony. Two years before the start of the Revolution of 1789, Claude-Nicolas Ledoux erected two of his massive gates at the square’s east end, delineating the boundary of Paris. The outbreak of revolution saw

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<sup>39</sup> Ibid.

<sup>40</sup> Ibid., 7-8. “Militaristic and conquering;” “A purer national glory.”

insurgents rename the square “Place du Trône renversé,” and several years later the Committee of Public Safety installed a guillotine in the space formerly reserved for royal pomp.<sup>41</sup>

The successive shifts in the national governance in the nineteenth century occasioned new manipulations of the ceremonial environment. Under the Bourbon Restoration, the government restored the Place du Trône moniker. The next regime – the Orleanist July Monarchy of King Louis Philippe – commissioned statues of Saint Louis and Philippe Auguste, medieval French kings with records sensitive to the needs of the people, to stand atop Ledoux’s gates.<sup>42</sup> During the revolution of 1848, the people of Paris once again turned Place du Trône into a space of vengeance, burning the King’s throne in the center of square.<sup>43</sup>

Unsurprisingly, it was Napoleon III and Baron Haussmann who made the most significant nineteenth-century changes to the square and its environs. Initially Haussmann regularized the periphery of the space by adding a series of straight roads that connected the site to adjacent streets.<sup>44</sup> Among these were the wide, avenue-style Boulevard Diderot (built 1848-1853), which extends southwesterly from the Place towards the center of the city, and the Boulevard Prince Eugène (now Boulevard Voltaire). These roads help to accentuate the space’s centrality for the eastern sector of the capital in the same manner that the intersection of twelve avenues at Place d’Etoile accentuates its socio-geographic

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<sup>41</sup> Antoine Amarger suggests upwards of 1300 people were executed at the Place du Trône renversé. See Amarger, *Memoire*, np.

<sup>42</sup> The legacy of these monarchs would have been specifically appealing to King Louis Philippe’s “*Juste Milieu*” agenda. See: Collingham Alexander. “*The July Monarchy*,” 108-115; Duberton. “*The Restoration and the July Monarchy*,” 174-198.

<sup>43</sup> Amarger, *Memoire*.

<sup>44</sup> See: Pinson, *Atlas de Paris haussmannien*, 121. See also page 51, for a schematic detail of Haussmann’s planned “*percements*” for the Place du Trône.

importance. At the same time, this urbanism wreaked havoc on the traditional artisan community who lived in the area. The urban interventions turned the neighborhood into a construction site at the same moment when the influx of new proletarian laborers threatened the craftsmen's time-honored position as the Parisian worker *par excellence*.

As part of a program of aesthetic and social improvement, Haussmann ordered the replanting of the newly circular Place du Trône, where he also added a temporary statue of Victory as the centerpiece of a new fountain.<sup>45</sup> In December 1862, Napoleon III fitted the square with a provisional triumphal arch and commissioned Victor Baltard to erect a massive, impermanent arcade around the site.<sup>46</sup> These projects contributed to the ceremonial environment that saw a massive procession celebrate the inauguration of the Boulevard du Prince Eugène.

After realizing the possibilities for imperial spectacle at Place du Trône, Haussmann proposed erecting a permanent triumphal arch in the square. Though such a monument never materialized, David Van Zanten explains that Haussmann was consciously thinking about the programmatic effect that he would achieve by mirroring Napoleon I's arch at Etoile.<sup>47</sup> With rhetoric that Parent would echo in 1880, Haussmann saw Place d'Etoile and the Place du Trône as the end points of the city's monumental

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<sup>45</sup> In *The Neoclassical Origins of Modern Urban Forests*, Henry Lawrence explained that the planting of trees in the nineteenth century was intended to serve three major functions. First, trees served a naturalist function that related to evolving philosophy. Second, trees provided an aesthetic balance to man-made architecture. Finally, trees – with history as ornament in private gardens – were symbols of luxury. The planting of trees in public urban spaces was therefore evidence of the regime's benevolence. See: Lawrence, "The Neoclassical Origins of Modern Urban Forests," 26-36.

<sup>46</sup> *Du Faubourg Saint-Antoine au bois de Vincennes*, 32-37. The triumphal arch commemorated France's modern victories in the Crimea, Italy, Algeria and Southeast Asia (*Indochine*).

<sup>47</sup> Van Zanten, *Building Paris*, 209-211. Napoleon I built the earlier arch on the western end of the city to commemorate his victory at Austerlitz.



East-West axis. For Haussmann, these termini should naturally serve the same function of celebrating French conquests.<sup>48</sup> By capping each end with a triumphal arch, Haussmann believed Paris would become a more coherently defined imperial city.

Like Haussmann, the Municipal Council understood the importance of the city's central axis as a politically charged space. It altered the thematic tone of the eastern square by renaming it Place de la Nation, ridding the space of a monarchical moniker. Additionally, Parent's appeal to erect Dalou's monument at the newly re-baptized square would soon find sympathy with an 1882 project in which the national government installed a model of Alexandre Falguière's quadriga, *The Triumph of the Revolution* (fig. 2.6), at the summit of the *Arc de Triomphe* at Etoile.<sup>49</sup> Because Falguière's quadriga and Dalou's chariot would both face the center of the city, the government foresaw an effect of Paris being spatially bound by advancing Republican/Revolutionary processions.

Despite these programmatic intentions, the monumental interaction between the Dalou and Falguière groups never took shape. Dalou and his team of *praticiens* did not complete the bronze version of *Triumph of the Republic* until 1899 – and only after they had switched foundries and casting techniques.<sup>50</sup> Because of the delay, the city unveiled a temporary plaster version of the monument – patinated to appear bronze – in September 1889 as part of the centennial celebration of the Revolution and rejection of the Boulanger movement. By this time, Falguière's *Triumph of the Revolution* no longer

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<sup>48</sup> Ibid., 210.

<sup>49</sup> Falguière's full-scale plaster model crowned the *Arc de Triomphe* from 1882-1885. The city never commissioned a bronze edition of the work.

<sup>50</sup> For more on the differences between lost-wax casting and sand casting, with specific discussions of the processes as they relate to the *Triumph of the Republic*, see: Lebon, *Font au sable*. Special thanks to Marie Bouchard for alerting me to this reference. See also Amarger, *Memoire*.

capped the summit of the Arc de Triomphe, as support for the commission and funding of a definitive model had dissipated.

From his earliest work on the model for the monument through his realization of the plaster in 1889, Dalou operated with an attention to historical layering equally complex as that of the Place de la Nation. In his own words, the monument employs an Ancien-Régime approach – “une tendance Louis XIV!!!” – at its very core.<sup>51</sup> This style activates the composition through the central motif of a chariot advancing in a seeming unstoppable path and with an attention to lively ornamental trappings (fig. 2.7). The chariot’s movement, theatricality, and internal energy evoke the majesty and magnificence of France’s *Grand Siècle*, recalling the sculptures that Dalou had studied during visits to Versailles.<sup>52</sup> Dreyfous notes that some viewers also identified similarities between the chariot composition and other Baroque precedents including the paintings of Peter Paul Rubens (fig. 2.8).<sup>53</sup> These effects manifest themselves not only in the animation of the chariot composition but also through the group’s monumentality and its emotionally rich, painterly surface.<sup>54</sup>

The sculptor was certainly aware of the seeming incongruity between this formal style and his republican message. In the model’s earliest stage he prefaced a description of the plan with a warning that revealing the Ancien-Régime character of the program

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<sup>51</sup> Dreyfous, *Dalou*, 102-103. “I need to drop another bomb. The thing [monument] is in the style of Louis XIV!!!”

<sup>52</sup> Demaison, “M. Dalou,” 34; Roujon, “Preface,” iv.

<sup>53</sup> Dreyfous, *Dalou*, 104.

<sup>54</sup> *Ibid.*

was akin to dropping a bomb.<sup>55</sup> Yet the reemployment of the Baroque aesthetic under the guise of republican majesty operated at an emotional level to fuse the Romantic origins of Dalou's nineteenth-century style with the national magnificence of its seventeenth-century progenitor.<sup>56</sup>

Despite the novelty of the composition, Dalou was not alone in turning to the aesthetic of the *Grand Siècle* to celebrate the new government. In Dalou's decade of exile, Neo-Baroque sculpture – including Falguière's *Triumph of the Revolution* – had found a welcoming audience with the Parisian Municipal Council and French Salon juries. The style appealed to politicians and critics who sought a vehicle to communicate republican ideals and national strength in a manner removed from the sphere of recent conflict.<sup>57</sup> Antonin Mercié's much-lauded *Gloria Victis* (fig. 2.9), for example, evokes the triumphant style of the seventeenth century in a sculpture that exudes a sense of power and life, but also a distancing timelessness.<sup>58</sup> The ideal beauty of Mercié's figures combines with the expressiveness of the composition to convey an image of the a-temporal French soldier who nobly and selflessly gave his life for the *Patrie*. In the wake of the French humiliation in the War of 1870, such devices offered didactic possibilities that spoke to a national magnificence in a visual vocabulary that – unlike new realist styles – could disengage from the traumas of the modern era.<sup>59</sup> Yet as the legacy of

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<sup>55</sup> Ibid., 102-103.

<sup>56</sup> On the Baroque influence on Romanticism see: Friedlander, *David to Delacroix*, 127-129.

<sup>57</sup> Peingé, "La contre-réforme républicaine," 21.

<sup>58</sup> Ibid.

<sup>59</sup> Ibid., 22.

Falguière's *Triumph of the Revolution* shows, by the middle of the 1880s the style fell out of vogue.<sup>60</sup>

In developing the remainder of his model, Dalou did not restrict himself to the Neo-Baroque aesthetic. Instead, the sculptor added significant layers of meaning through evoking a series of eighteenth- and nineteenth-century styles. John Hunisak points to Jacques-Louis David's preparatory drawings for the *Triumph of the French People* (fig. 2.10) as a source to which Dalou likely looked.<sup>61</sup> David's chariot manifests the power and progress of a composed, stern, and ordered republic rather than the grandeur and animation of the Baroque odes to monarchy. The composition's neoclassical logic and formal decorum reflect the relationship between late-eighteenth-century political structures, Enlightenment philosophies, and the rational forms. Nevertheless, as another scene centered on an advancing chariot with an entourage of allegories, it shares with the sculptures of Versailles and the Medici cycle a celebration of French majesty.

Like David's drawing, Dalou's chariot conveys a sense of order, organization, and national power through its balanced composition and the seriousness of its main allegories. The formal equilibrium appears far clearer in the full-sized plaster exhibited at Place de la Nation in 1889 than it does in the 1879 model. As he had done several years prior in the London *Charity* group, Dalou borrowed from his Academic background in Francisque Duret's studio to curtail several unbalanced and unrestrained effects in the transition from model to monument. In the full-size *Triumph of the Republic*, every movement that drives a figure away from the chariot balances an equally powerful physical movement that pushes the figure towards the center of the group.

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<sup>60</sup> Janson, *19<sup>th</sup>-Century Sculpture*, 188.

<sup>61</sup> Hunisak, *Sculptor Jules Dalou*, 213.

The figure of the blacksmith provides a prime example (fig. 2.11). As he reaches his left arm forward and towards the center of the composition, his entire body appears to tilt inward. Dalou countered this corporeal effect through the action of the laborer's right hip, which drives away from the center of the group, and the rear thrust of his right shoulder. Turning the blacksmith's head away from the chariot compounds these effects, as Dalou forces the figure's symbolic energy to intervene in a space opposite the sculpture's center.

Such compositional concerns also organize the personifications' relationship to each other. Across from the blacksmith, a figure of Justice matches the laborer's movements. The in-and-out motion between the two personifications offers a type of mirrored formal energy that binds the compositionally opposed figures (fig. 2.12). At the other cardinal points of the chariot's advance, the Genius of Liberty, who twists his torso while stretching an illuminating torch, shares a similar reflective relationship with the image of Peace, who turns and extends her arm to distribute flowers in the chariot's wake (fig. 2.13). At the top of the monument, a representation of Marianne unifies the four lower figures. From almost any viewing angle then, *Triumph of the Republic* manifests an organized composition based on the individual and collectively balanced movements of three personifications. They establish the base level of a stylized-pyramid, which Marianne caps, to produce an effect more often associated with Neoclassical and Academic art.

This use of such a formal style evokes the dominant mode of eighteenth- and nineteenth-century sculpture in the years before Jean-Baptiste Carpeaux, as well as the lasting influence of Dalou's *Ecole des Beaux-Arts* master Duret. Though Dalou resented

his time at the *Ecole*, the lasting effects of Duret's insistence on sculptural logic, idiom, and calculation reveal themselves as Dalou enlarged the group.<sup>62</sup> Applying these rules to the chariot composition, Dalou produced an ensemble that brims with rational energies that contain the emotional exuberance of the Neo-Baroque forms.

Throughout the monument, a flora decorative program links the disparate components of the ensemble. Vegetal vines emerge from the center of the chariot, twisting through the entire monument and ornamenting its surfaces (fig. 2.14). A thick train of laurel leaves and oak blossoms drapes over the lions' harness. It then twists back under the beasts' path in an effect that emphasizes the chariot's progress (fig. 2.15). The vegetal pattern on the blanket that covers the lions' necks echoes the motif of the leaves. A second vine wraps around the base of the central orb, decorating the Republic's support with celebratory flowers.

Dalou's attention to Naturalist ornamentation begins to reveal a populist, Parisian message that reflects modern theories on the decorative arts. Throughout the middle third of the nineteenth century, a number of influential theorists had insisted on the possibility of ornament to produce explicit meaning.<sup>63</sup> Owen Jones, whose seminal book *Grammar of Ornament* appeared in French in 1866, described ornamental sculpture as the "soul of an architectural monument," suggesting that it expressed "the intention of the whole work."<sup>64</sup> In Dalou's monument, the decorative program formally binds the historical and allegorical components of the group while also activating another layer of meaning tied to the inherently political crafts aesthetic of the *Petite Ecole*.

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<sup>62</sup> For a description of Duret's teaching, see: Hunisak, *Sculptor Jules Dalou*, 29.

<sup>63</sup> Labrusse, "Face au chaos: grammaires de l'ornement," 100-101.

<sup>64</sup> Jones, *The Grammar of Ornament*, 154-155.

The *Petite Ecole*, founded as the *Ecole royale gratuite de dessin* in 1767, served Paris's working classes and industrial artists. It was here that Dalou and many of his contemporaries, including Auguste Rodin, enjoyed their first artistic training under the guidance of a Naturalist pedagogy. Teachers at the *Petite Ecole*, including Viollet-le-Duc and Horace Lecoq de Boisbaudran, forced students to use nature rather than tradition as their guide. As Petra Chu explains, Lecoq's novel drawing pedagogy combined "observation, the power of imagination, and the ability to record fugitive effects in nature," in a manner that echoed Rousseau's critique of Academic art education.<sup>65</sup>

Unlike the *Ecole des Beaux-Arts*, which hoped to develop students who would compete for the *Prix de Rome* and produce Academic style painting, sculpture, and architecture, the *Petite Ecole* focused on the industrial and decorative arts. The school's free tuition attracted a working-class clientele who would employ the drawing lessons to develop ornamental aesthetics for French manufactured goods. Given these goals and this student body, contemporaries associated the Naturalist forms of the *Petite Ecole* style with Paris's popular milieu where refined skill and artistry embodied French virtue and culture superiority.<sup>66</sup>

In the second half of the century a number of French artists traced their modern success to their early *Petite Ecole* training. Dalou was one of the most prominent of these sculptors. Depending on formal devices that signaled the *Petite Ecole* aesthetic in a major public sculpture, Dalou undercut the Academic monument tradition through a decorative

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<sup>65</sup> Petra ten-Doesschate Chu, "Lecoq de Boisbaudran and Memory Drawing: A Teaching Course between Idealism and Naturalism," in *The European Realist Tradition*, 279; J-J Rousseau, *Emile, or on Education*, 117-118.

<sup>66</sup> Leben, "La fondation de l'Ecole royale gratuite de dessin de Paris (1767-1815)," in *Histoire de l'Ecole nationale supérieure des arts décoratifs*, 6-63; Wagner, *Jean-Baptiste Carpeaux*, 29-61.

intervention. This ornamental style and crafts aesthetic had traditionally belonged to the milieu of small statuettes, architectural sculpture, furniture, or industrial goods. When Dalou employed it for the *Triumph of the Republic*, he meshed the didactic traditions of classicizing monuments with an aesthetic that evoked a social class outside of the dominant sphere and the *Ecole des Beaux-Arts* environment. He blurred traditional boundaries and manners through which monuments communicated with the public to assert national values. Here, the chariot's representation of French grandeur and rationality now also avows a politically rich allusion to the union of art, industry, and nature as expressed by the skills and labors of the capital's artisans.

In fusing styles tied to specific historical eras and diverse political traditions, Dalou echoed a July Monarchy program that had harmonized France's pasts through a call to a united national history. King Louis Philippe converted the palace of Versailles from an exclusively royal symbol to a museum of French history that included tributes to Napoleon and the bourgeoisie who triumphed in 1789. He also intervened in the public space of Paris through a number of projects that tied the histories of French power and glory – including those with imperial or republican lineages – to the traditions of the contemporary government.<sup>67</sup>

While Dalou supposedly climbed the barricades of 1848 that brought down the July Monarchy, Louis Philippe's socio-political treatment of Paris and Versailles, two locales that Dalou cherished, undoubtedly made a positive impression on the young

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<sup>67</sup> Boime, *Art in the Age of Counterrevolution*, 237-322. On the paintings at Versailles commissioned and installed under Louis Philippe see: Marrinan, "Historical Vision and the Writing of History at Louis-Philippe's Versailles," in *The Popularization of Images*, 113-143; Gaetgens, *Versailles*.



sculptor.<sup>68</sup> Unlike the Opportunists, however, who also turned to the July Monarchy as a guide, Dalou tweaked the moderate and Orleanist vision of historical progress. He employed an allegorical program that showcases the values of 1792, 1848, and 1871, as well as the heroism of the traditional Parisian worker in a manner that evokes a polemic revolutionary narrative that the new government sought to obscure.

On the four sides of the monument, Dalou built allegorical arguments by combining a central figure – Labor, Justice, the Genius of Liberty, and Peace – with secondary figures, and politically rich shields that he applied to the chariot faces. The sculptor significantly modified the series of shields in the transition from the original model to the final group, producing a more nuanced allegorical message. The sense of each argument depends on the fusion of each of the components, and the specificity of the allegorical program as a whole emerges from the dialogue between the groups.

On the chariot's right side Dalou sculpted a massive blacksmith as the allegory of labor. Both its formal qualities and its symbolic thrust challenged conventions of French sculpture and fin-de-siècle politics. The laborer carries a blacksmith's hammer over his right shoulder as he looks beyond the confines of the sculptural space. He reaches his left arm towards the center of the group as if to help steady and advance the chariot's progress. Partially dressed in trousers and sabots, the blacksmith's naked torso manifests the workman's massive musculature. His eyes are set deeply in his hardened face, the crags of which suggest the physical and psychological toll of his years of work.

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<sup>68</sup> Roujon, "Preface."

Dalou's treatment of the laborer builds off a growing nineteenth-century trend in which working themes had become an acceptable subject for French art – especially painting.<sup>69</sup> In sculpture, unlike in painting where Realist and genre treatments of workers emerged in the 1850s, artists had been more reticent to treat the theme outside of depictions of idealized men whose perfected musculature and high-finished elegance contrasted the physicality of their supposed actions.<sup>70</sup> It was only in the 1880s that a new type of sculpted laborer began to emerge, highlighted by the more natural and contemporary representations of proletarian icons by artists including Constantin Meunier (fig. 2.16) and Jean Gautherin.

Dalou's blacksmith (fig. 2.17) operates in a different mode than the idealized figures or even the Realist sculptures of Meunier, whose workers Christian Brinton described as “stalwart man-gods” with “august majesty.”<sup>71</sup> For his part, Dalou disregarded traditional aesthetics of heroism, classical corporeal modeling, and refined finishes. The bulges of the blacksmith's back are masses of muscle and flesh, not clearly articulated anatomical forms. The sculptor treated the figure's face with a similar concern for the massing and stretching of skin instead of idealizing physiognomic features. By emphasizing the cheekbones and brow, Dalou renders the area around the blacksmith's eyes swollen and heavy. The flesh of the cheeks, however, is taut and marked by wrinkles and lines. This bodily treatment – what contemporaries described as “*musculatures vivantes*” – produced meaning that operates on psychological level to

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<sup>69</sup> Hunisak, “Rodin, Dalou and the Monument to Labor,” in *Art the Ape of Nature*, 690.

<sup>70</sup> See, for example Eugène Guillaume's *Reaper* of 1849 and Henri Chapu's *Sower* of 1865.

<sup>71</sup> Brinton, *Constantin Meunier*, 59.

convey the spirit of the subject.<sup>72</sup> Unlike the worker statues that Meunier sculpted there is nothing “august” about this laborer, though it maintains a romantic quality that tempers its Naturalism. It is the idealized representation of sagacity, grit, and determination.

The allegorical argument that Dalou built around the blacksmith contextualizes its engagement with the memorial landscape of Place de la Nation. The *putto* in front of him carries a satchel with a mix of artist’s tools and a large book with worn pages. He bends back towards the larger figure as he struggles under the weight of his possessions. This *putto* connects the blacksmith – a craftsman – to the tools of artistic training. Their interaction highlights the union of art and work that was central to the image of the Parisian artisan who ruled eastern Paris’s Faubourg Saint Antoine and surrounding neighborhoods.<sup>73</sup> For Hunisak, this mélange of attributes was specifically resonant to Dalou, symbolizing the artist’s role in the “service of the Republic.”<sup>74</sup> Indeed, Dalou emerged from a social circumstance and educational background that would have allowed him to draw personal parallels with the image of the *forgeron*; he believed that before he was an artist, he was an artisan.<sup>75</sup>

Dalou’s blacksmith belongs to a tradition operating since the Ancien Régime that guaranteed the autonomy of the craftsman through a corporatist system, revealing a key component of the monument’s nuanced allegorical program. These skilled workers controlled all aspects of their labor – from the ideals of artistry to the more mundane

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<sup>72</sup> Rodin, *L’Art*, 217-219.

<sup>73</sup> On the union of work and art, and its implication for popular politics at mid-century, see: McWilliam, “The artisan community in mid-nineteenth-century France,” in *Politics and aesthetics in the arts*, 140-173.

<sup>74</sup> Hunisak, *Sculptor Jules Dalou*, 221.

<sup>75</sup> Cornu, “Jules Dalou,” 237.

organization of training and work processes.<sup>76</sup> This structure of the pre-revolutionary and pre-industrial society did not disappear with the execution of Louis XVI.<sup>77</sup> Instead, William Sewell argues that in February 1848, corporations were still the fundamental components of the “*République démocratique et sociale*.” The revolutionaries cherished these entities that offered freedom of association, labor unity, universal suffrage, and mutual aid. Sewell shows that the mid-century revolutionaries described the corporations as “constituent units of the new revolutionary state” and “a microcosmic version of the democratic and social republic.”<sup>78</sup>

Despite the failure of the 1848 revolution, the corporatist model informed the political ideologies of the Commune leaders. Though Frederick Engels argued that the 1871 insurrection exemplified a “dictatorship of the proletariat,” Jacques Rougerie has convincingly demonstrated that the people of the traditional artisan milieu, and not a new proletariat, were the primary insurgents.<sup>79</sup> Robert Tombs extends Rougerie’s thesis to show the similarities between the Communards and the typical Parisian revolutionary of 1848, as well as the revolutionaries of 1830 and the *sans-culottes* of 1792.<sup>80</sup> Tombs notes that like their predecessors, the Communards believed that the “superiority of cooperatives under a supportive government would be such that they would displace capitalist industry.”<sup>81</sup> That the organizers of the revolt turned to a largely association-

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<sup>76</sup> Weissbach, “Artisanal Responses,” 67.

<sup>77</sup> Sewell, “Corporations Républicaines,” 195.

<sup>78</sup> *Ibid.*, 196-199.

<sup>79</sup> Engels, “Introduction,” *Der Bürgerkrieg in Frankreich*; Rougerie, *Procès des communards*.

<sup>80</sup> Tombs, *Paris Commune*, 111.

<sup>81</sup> *Ibid.*, 93.

based social and political system when devising their new government is hardly surprising.<sup>82</sup>

Dalou was an active participant in one such organization – the Artists Federation of the Commune. The initial goals of this group were minimally focused with aesthetics. Instead the Artists Federation sought to reform the nation’s arts administration in the spirit of autonomous corporations and cooperation.<sup>83</sup> The organization’s identity as a Federation – and not a *commission* – had finely tuned revolutionary significance.

Gonzalo Sanchez explains that the word *Fédération* had:

kept its complex origins of 1790, when it had both fiercely republican denotations, as in ‘fête de la fédération’ and the ‘bataillons de fédérées,’ and more pejorative Girondist, thus anti-Jacobin, associations, as in ‘fédéralisme.’ Proudhonists and republicans of all stripes had transmitted the valorization of this word, conserving its mixed revolutionary/autonomist significations.<sup>84</sup>

More than just in name, the Federation’s independent and anti-Jacobin leanings were quite visible in the last days of the Revolt when the group of artists sought many exemptions from the Commune’s military actions during the Bloody Week.<sup>85</sup>

In *Triumph of the Republic*, Dalou communicated the blacksmith’s link to this type of corporatist/federalist political tradition through the beehive shield on the chariot face (fig. 2.18). The image of a beehive had a long history as a symbol of labor and even enjoyed a privileged relationship with the idea of the French capital.<sup>86</sup> In the 1850s and

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<sup>82</sup> Johnson, *The Paradise of Association*.

<sup>83</sup> Sanchez, *Organizing Independence*, 43.

<sup>84</sup> *Ibid.*, 45.

<sup>85</sup> *Ibid.*, 54.

<sup>86</sup> Desmaze, *Les Métiers de Paris*, 3.

1860s, because of the growing understanding of the operations and relationships of bees, in certain hands the natural structure became increasingly open for specific politicization.

In a Second Empire exploration of natural history, Jules Michelet wrote a volume on insects that included four chapters on the bee. Michelet describes the species in overtly political terms when he calls the beehive the “veritable Athens” of the insect world. Several sentences later he anthropomorphizes the insect by labeling it “Le peuple, l’élite artiste du peuple.”<sup>87</sup> Michelet notes that unlike the predatory wasp, the bee has a “besoin de se faire une idole nationale dont l’amour l’invite au travail,” and the historian celebrates the bee’s devotion to “la Cité, la patrie,” as well as the “Mère universelle.”<sup>88</sup>

Michelet’s most significant musings on the bee take shape in his reflections on the organizational structure of its community. The author notes that new scientific developments have shown that the beehive is not a monarchy ruled by a king, but is organized around a dominant queen. This queen, however, does not govern or rule. Instead, she is sometimes governed by her subjects and serves primarily as an object of adoration.<sup>89</sup> Describing this community, Michelet writes:

‘Donc, ce gouvernement serait au fond démocratique ?  
Oui, si l’on considère l’unanime dévouement du peuple, le  
travail spontané de tous. Nul ne commande. Mais, au fond,  
on voit bien que ce qui domine en toute chose élevée, c’est  
une élite intelligente, une aristocratie d’artistes. La cité  
n’est point bâtie ni organisée par tout le peuple, mais par  
une classe spéciale, une espèce de corporation.’<sup>90</sup>

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<sup>87</sup> Michelet, *L’Insecte*, 329.

<sup>88</sup> *Ibid.*, 329-30. “The need to make itself a national idol through which love prompts work.”

<sup>89</sup> *Ibid.*, 330.

<sup>90</sup> *Ibid.* “Thus, this government will be democratic? Yes, if we consider it the unanimous devotion of the people, the spontaneous work of all. Nobody commands. But, at its base, we see that in all high matters, it is an intellectual elite, an aristocracy of artists. The city

For Dalou, who had a profound interest in Michelet and other liberal, Romantic historians, it would have been hardly possible to separate the beehive symbol from its political context – the specifics of which resemble the organization of the Commune itself where leaders were almost all members of the broadly defined artisan elite.<sup>91</sup> As the only shield that remained unchanged from the 1879 model to the full-scale plaster of 1889, its consistency signals its fundamental importance to Dalou’s conception of the entire monument program.

By making the corporatist artisan essential to Republican progress, Dalou engaged a discourse of national progress that asserted the primacy of Paris’s popular class. Reading the components of the allegorical argument together, the image of Labor appears as the embodiment of the traditional Parisian worker who manifests the moral strength, artisanal skill, and autonomous position of the nineteenth-century male ideal.<sup>92</sup> The remainder of the monument’s allegorical arguments – including a revolutionary-republican vision of Justice and a Commune-centric meditation on Liberty – clarifies the specific politics of the *forgeron*. It positions him as the talisman of French identity and a leader of the ideal republic.

Across the composition from the blacksmith, Dalou modeled a second modern figure – Justice (fig. 2.19). Her allegorical argument explicates a key aspect of the mid-century philosophies that illuminated the popular republican tradition and Dalou’s vision

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is neither built nor organized by all the people, but by a special class, a type of corporation.”

<sup>91</sup> Tombs, *Paris Commune*, 116. See also chap. 1, fn 22.

<sup>92</sup> Chenut, *The Fabric of Gender*, 193.

of the Commune. Dalou dresses his representation of Justice in a modern bodice and coifs her with a modern hairstyle. Her wide shoulders, muscular arms, and serious facial expression are unidealized; the Academic painter Jean-Leon Gérôme dismissively identified her body type as that of an *ouvrière*.<sup>93</sup> Like Labor, Justice reaches her inside arm to the center of the composition where she holds the chariot, directing its advance. A scepter capped by a hand with two fingers outstretched balances her bodily energy as it crosses her torso, pointing away from the central orb. Justice's hips and waist also bend away from the central group. The position of her feet and the inward angle of her shoulders steady her core and frame the *putto* who advances in front of her carrying a set of scales. In another gesture that recalls the *forgeron*, Justice's wary stare looks past her physical space, extending her presence beyond the sculpture's physical base.

Though tablets and/or a sword were the traditional emblems of Justice, Dalou included neither attribute in his final composition. Hunisak suggests that Dalou avoided the sword because the Franco-Prussian War and the Commune turned him away from militant imagery.<sup>94</sup> The likelihood that Dalou shied away from the tradition *épée* in the effort to construct a non-vindictive and militant image of Justice in the moments surrounding the debate about Commune amnesty also appears very possible.<sup>95</sup>

The issue of the tablets proves denser. Dalou had originally included law tablets as part of the allegorical shield on the model (fig. 2.20). Ten years later, when he modeled the full-sized plaster Dalou removed the tablets, ornamenting the chariot face with only a triangle bisected by a plumb line (fig. 2.21). Conventionally, scholars have

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<sup>93</sup> Archives Musée d'Orsay. Dalou – Archives.

<sup>94</sup> Hunisak, *Sculptor Jules Dalou*, 223.

<sup>95</sup> Special thanks to Pierre Georgel for helping me with this point.



argued that Dalou's removal of the tablets stemmed from the sculptor's feelings towards his forced exile and a belief that laws could be used as tools of malice, and as such they may profane justice. Yet Dalou's exile was not the product of a law but instead the result of a trial verdict.<sup>96</sup> In fact the sculptor had been committed to regaining his status in France only through a legislative act – amnesty – instead of a direct decree such as a pardon.<sup>97</sup>

The equilateral triangle with a plumb line is a traditional Masonic symbol of equality. In the ultimate conception, this icon joins Justice's scepter and her scales as the principle attributes of the allegorical argument. The interplay between the symbols operates within the larger context of the popular revolutionary tradition to signal the possibility of justice being achieved through the establishment of equality, evoking specifically the social politics of the 1871 uprising.<sup>98</sup>

Pierre-Joseph Proudhon was a central figure in mid-century social revolutionary thought that related justice and equality. The entrenchment of Marxism had led to a marginalization of Proudhon, but as more recent scholarship has shown, the philosopher was undeniably one of the most influential thinkers for the insurgents of 1871. To this point Iain McKay notes, "the Commune's vision of a federated, self-managed society and economy owes much to Proudhon's tireless advocacy of such ideas."<sup>99</sup> Gustave Courbet

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<sup>96</sup> Archives historiques de la Prefecture de Police, Série Beaux-Arts, carton 1024, dossier 79414.

<sup>97</sup> Dalou to Corneglia, 30 January 1879, Louvre Manuscripts 321.

<sup>98</sup> Johnson, *The Paradise of Association*, 143.

<sup>99</sup> McKay, *Property Is Theft!* 43-44; Calhoun, *The Roots of Radicalism*, 239-240.

was more direct in pointing to the influence of Proudhon, calling him the Christ of the Commune.<sup>100</sup>

The relationship between justice and equality was fundamental to the thinker's social vision. In his theoretical writings, Proudhon held equality as the guarantor of justice, which he believed was a social principle of order as well as the measurement of good in society.<sup>101</sup> In practical application this meant that existing economic inequality served as a deterrent to social and interpersonal justice. His vision of mutualism, which empowered workers to control their tools and the means of production as well as to create cooperatives, sought to ensure social equality at the intersection of justice and economics.<sup>102</sup>

Proudhon was hardly alone in noting the relationship between the two virtues. For instance Russian anarchist thinker Mikhail Bakunin, who informed the Communards social program through his participation in the International, espoused a similar theory. Influenced by his time in Paris and his engagement with Proudhon, Bakunin extended the analysis of justice and equality to its relationship with freedom. In his *Revolutionary Catechism* of 1866, Bakunin suggested that the institution of freedom through the creation of equality was justice.<sup>103</sup> Rhetoric that linked justice and equality continued in revolutionary-republican circles well after the Commune. In 1900 the Radical Leon Bourgeois, a man whose party represented itself as the inheritors of the popular

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<sup>100</sup> Gustave Courbet, "appel" *Le Rappel*, 7 April 1871.

<sup>101</sup> Woodcock, *Pierre-Joseph Proudhon*, 208-9.

<sup>102</sup> Harbold, "Justice in the Thought of Pierre-Joseph Proudhon," 723.

<sup>103</sup> Skirda, *Facing the Enemy*, 12

revolutionary tradition, argued that equality and justice were interchangeable in the nation's slogan as they were "en vérité la même chose."<sup>104</sup>

Dalou's allegorical argument manifests the two concepts' interrelation. Though Dalou removed the law tablets from the original model, most contemporaries continually identified the figure as Justice. The scepter, which traditionally ornamented justice allegories of royal and imperial French rulers, confirmed this identification. The scales that the *putto* carries, however, are an ambiguous reference because iconographic traditions make them available as signs of either justice or equality. Louis de Meurville was one of the few critics to notice this conflation, writing "La Justice est ici, en même temps, l'égalité, le droit, l'équité, l'impartialité et aussi la tolérance et la bonté."<sup>105</sup>

The build up of these symbols around a modern figure offers the possibility of an allegorical narrative. Proudhon had argued that justice was a universal concept.<sup>106</sup> This implies that it remained present at all stages of human existence, even if its application was inconsistent. Following this precept, the convergence of the scepter and the modern figure becomes legible. The juxtaposition suggests a continuity between past and present. Not only does this echo the formal play between aesthetic styles in the monument, it advances Proudhon's vision that despite different efforts to carry out the rule of law, basic justice transcended the divide between historical periods.

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<sup>104</sup> Bourgeois, "Extrait du compte rendu de la séance du Congrès d'Education Social du jeudi soir 27 septembre 1900," in *Solidarité*, 192. On the Radicals' claims to be the "Sons of the Revolution," see Stone, *Sons of the Revolution*. "In reality the same thing."

<sup>105</sup> Meurville, "L'œuvre de Jules Dalou," 374. "Justice here, is at the same time, equality, law, equity, impartiality and also tolerance and goodness."

<sup>106</sup> Proudhon, *Justice*, Vol I. 42. See also: Lu, "The political theories of P. J. Proudhon," 62.

The sculptor extended the argument through the figure of the *putto*. As the chariot moves forward, the *putto* looks back to Justice to determine his position. The visual interplay suggests a hierarchy between the concept and its activation. By placing the *putto* in a dependent position, Dalou insists on the need for the implementation of equality and justice – the balancing of the scales – to correspond with the broader ideal. Again, this responds to a Proudhonian assertion about the revolutionary tradition. William Harbold explains that the social theorist saw the “affirmation, though not the entire realization of justice,” in the bourgeois revolution of 1789.<sup>107</sup> Harbold points to an extended passage in Proudhon’s *On Justice* in which he explains that the Revolution replaced a structured system of inequality with a call for equality in all civil and religious matters. Despite these intentions, Proudhon believed that the insurgents of 1789 had not established the systems to activate equality and thereby provide real justice.<sup>108</sup> Dalou’s allegorical argument offers a contrast, suggesting the possibility for an actualization of equality and justice in the modern Republic.

From the opposite side of the monument, this allegory adds additional nuance to the blacksmith. Proudhon’s theories on mutualism and equality appealed most directly to skilled workers who sought economic freedom through cooperatives.<sup>109</sup> These workers understood Proudhon’s rhetoric to offer a social model that would succeed where others had failed. It would alter the fundamental economic inequalities that created injustice and break from the nineteenth-century pattern that saw successive revolutions simply shift the

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<sup>107</sup> Harbold, “Justice in the Thought of Pierre-Joseph Proudhon,” 732.

<sup>108</sup> *Ibid.*; P-J Proudhon, *on Justice*, Vol II, 63.

<sup>109</sup> Nomad, “The Anarchist Tradition,” in *The revolutionary internationals*, 60.

rulers at the top of society without altering the social position of the workers.<sup>110</sup> Dalou's artisan would surely have championed this vision.

At the front of the group, Dalou modeled a Genius of Liberty with an idealized physiognomy that signals a mode closer to Academic sculpture, removed from the popular masculinity of the *forgeron* (fig. 2.22). He rests his left buttocks and outer thigh on the back of one of the lions that pulls the chariot. He elegantly twists his body, thrusting his right arm forward to extend a torch illuminating the Republic's progress while simultaneously turning his head back to the center of the group. In creating this pose, Dalou was able to activate the muscles of the Genius's core (fig. 2.23), emphasizing the anatomical precision with which he modeled this figure.

Both Hunisak and Marina Warner identify Augustin Dumont's 1836-1840 Genius of the Bastille on the July Column as the closest precedent to Dalou's figure (fig. 2.24).<sup>111</sup> The two Geniuses are both idealized, young male nudes in the style of traditional representations of the Roman god Mercury. Despite obvious thematic similarities, Dalou's Genius is no mere copy of the earlier example. Dumont's Genius is androgynous and balances lithely atop an orb at the column's apex.<sup>112</sup> Dalou's intensely muscled Genius exudes classical ideas of masculine force, communicating a sense of physical power that is absent in its predecessor.

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<sup>110</sup> Ibid.

<sup>111</sup> Hunisak, *Sculptor Jules Dalou*, 220. Warner, *Monuments and Maidens*, 270. Dumont's figure is sometimes called the Genius of Liberty. Maurice Agulhon dismissed this notion, writing "qui pense jamais . . . à l'appeler Génie de la Liberté?" Agulhon, *Marianne au Combat*, 64.

<sup>112</sup> "Genius" allegories were traditionally "androgynous male nudes." Fusco, "Allegorical Sculpture," in *Romantics to Rodin*, 67.

As Dalou's Genius balances on top of the lions, he stabilizes his position by driving his left arm into the one of the animals' backs. The vertical tension of the idealized musculature draws the viewer's attention to the link between the personification and the animal – a traditional symbol of the people's will.<sup>113</sup> The physicality of the connection suggests that this vision of liberty is dependent on the people's support. The sculptor augmented this treatment of the theme in the shield behind the Genius. Originally Dalou had placed a Louis-XIV-style face in a sun behind the Genius (fig. 2.25) – perhaps caught up in his Baroque tendency – but he switched the shield to the Phrygian bonnet in the later monument (fig. 2.26). This Liberty Cap signaled the popular revolutionary tradition, resounding in the conflicted spaces of Commune memory.

The Phrygian bonnet, originating in Ancient Rome where newly manumitted slaves wore the cap, was a common republican symbol of liberty. The bonnet became polemic attire during the French Revolution, gaining significant symbolic status on 20 June 1792 when a revolutionary crowd forced the red cap onto the heads of the King, the Queen, and the Dauphin. As Richard Wrigley writes, after 20 June the bonnet grew as a symbol of popular identity and a direct retort to the King's authority.<sup>114</sup> For Dalou, a sculptor well-versed in the Romantic history of the Revolution, the impact of replacing the sun symbol of Louis XIV with an icon of organized popular revolt on his monument to the republic was not likely lost.

Throughout the nineteenth century, countless allegorical representations of France and Liberty included the cap. The tenor of this symbol changed during the 1871 revolt when Communards declared it a vital symbol of the uprising. The traditional red color

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<sup>113</sup> Meurville, "L'œuvre de Jules Dalou," 374.

<sup>114</sup> Wrigley, *The Politics of Appearances*, 135-138.

matched the city government's flag, and the insurgents claimed the image of a female combatant wearing a Phrygian bonnet their most important icon.<sup>115</sup> Despite its visual links to the traditional "Republic-Liberty" allegory that developed in the wake of 1792, Communards insisted that the allegorical figure was purely the personification of the rebellion.<sup>116</sup>

After restoring its authority in Paris during May 1871, the Third Republic needed to be wary of visually associating itself with the symbols of radicalism and the Commune. The government outlawed the bonnet in the 1870s and was quick to have police confiscate liberty caps and arrest those who dared wear one.<sup>117</sup> Such preoccupations forced artists to develop novel iconography to respond to the new circumstances.<sup>118</sup> For instance, Angelo Francia created a "semi-official" icon for the state with his 1876 bust *République*, in which a crown of laurels and a star caps Marianne's head.<sup>119</sup>

When the Municipal Council insisted that sculptors incorporate the bonnet into their models for the monument at Château d'Eau, it signaled a new chapter in the history of the liberty cap. Yet by choosing to associate the bonnet with a traditional, passive image of the Republic, the Council and its jury simultaneously tempered some of its radical associations. Nevertheless, the position of the bonnet on the Morices' Marianne reveals a disconnect between the national government and the Parisian authority. In 1880, national police were still vigilant about controlling the symbol in public spaces even as

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<sup>115</sup> Agulhon, *Marianne au Combat*, 185.

<sup>116</sup> *Ibid.*, 186.

<sup>117</sup> *Ibid.*, 224.

<sup>118</sup> Boime, *Art in the Age of Civil Struggle*, 59.

<sup>119</sup> Imbert. "L'image de la République dans la mairie." in *Quand Paris Dansait avec Marianne*, 62.

the capital installed a plaster version of the competition-winning ensemble.<sup>120</sup> Three years later the national government refused to participate in the inauguration of the Morices's group largely due to the liberty bonnet that crowns the figure.<sup>121</sup>

Dalou's decision to employ the Phrygian cap twice in his monument – once on his Marianne's head and once behind the allegory of liberty – is provocative, especially in light of the rest of his allegorical program that asserts popular sovereignty. The radical associations of Marianne wearing the cap had calmed in the second half of the 1880s; nevertheless, the bonnet on the chariot face is still a defiant reference. Isolated as a symbol of liberty, this shield recalls the Commune and its pursuit of popular liberties, including those that the Proudhonian vision of justice and equality evoked, as well as the uprising's desire for municipal sovereignty.<sup>122</sup>

During the Commune most non-Jacobin factions, of which the Artist's Federation was one, understood the revolt's pursuit of liberty to be specifically related to municipal freedom in the wake of the Empire. Haussmann had denied any notion of Parisian independence, writing that "Paris is not a Commune; it is the Capital of the Empire, the collective property of the entire Country."<sup>123</sup> The Commune denied this assertion in the immediate sense, but also rejected the Empire's centralized state more generally. Many Communards followed Proudhon's logic to argue that increased state centralization denied municipal liberty in a manner that created economic inequalities and made social

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<sup>120</sup> McPhee, *A Social History of France, 1780-1880*, 259.

<sup>121</sup> Gildea, *Past in French History*, 39.

<sup>122</sup> Greenberg, *Sisters of Liberty*, 15.

<sup>123</sup> G.-H. Haussmann, *Mémoires du Baron Haussmann* (Paris, 1890), II, 196, quoted and translated in Greenberg, *Sisters of Liberty*, 15.



justice impossible.<sup>124</sup> A number of like-minded groups in other French cities concurred, advancing that cause of French federalism in their support for the Commune.

The representation of liberty posed several thematic problems for Dalou as it intersected with lingering fears about the Commune, especially as critics continued to associate the uprising's calls for liberty with rising anarchist radicalism.<sup>125</sup> In the visual arts, the caricaturist Thomas Nast treated the need to balance liberty and control in his 1886 engraving *Liberty is not Anarchy*. His image portrays the hand of Liberty closing to crush the anarchists' advance. French journals such as *L'Événement* echoed similar rhetoric, contextualizing certain of its *extrême-gauche* positions and claims to a "deep love for the people" by insisting on an "intense hatred of anarchy."<sup>126</sup>

Dalou's powerful assertion of popular liberty forced him to make similar signs that would detach the allegory from anarchist associations. The Genius's nudity and idealized body type frame him unmistakably in an allegorical mode. Unlike the Naturalist blacksmith, who exudes a world-worn masculinity, the Genius is no modern hero who could participate in contemporary debates; he informs, but does not intervene in, the people's sphere. Additionally, as the Genius stretches his right arm to extend his torch, he turns his head towards the elevated Marianne in what seems to be a look for approbation. His fluttering cloak and the flame on the torch blow back towards the center of the group, balancing the energy of his reach. The forward and backward motions operate formally and thematically to maintain the Genius's connection to the Republic, insisting on the importance of the ideal state to guide proper liberties. The harness that attaches the sage-

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<sup>124</sup> Greenberg, *Sisters of Liberty*, 32-39.

<sup>125</sup> See: Boime, *Hollow Icons*, 133-136.

<sup>126</sup> Judith Stone cites *L'Événement's* epigram in her *Sons of the Revolution*, 29.

faced lions to the central chariot augments this effect, manifesting the controlled pull of their popular force.

At the back of the monument, an allegory of Peace anchors the composition. The central figure is a modern female nude with soft flesh and rounded hips. Dalou positioned three *putti* struggling to support a giant cornucopia in the space around her (fig. 2.27). Despite each *putto*'s off balance position – one even falls under the giant horn – they are in a formal rhythm through their arch-like arrangement. The *putti*'s air of playfulness and exuberance complements the relaxed regard of Peace to contrast the sobriety of each of Dalou's other allegorical personifications.

Dalou's formal modeling, rich with *musculatures vivantes*, achieves a serene image of Peace. In the model, the figure's face (fig. 2.28) recalls Carpeaux's dancers on the front of the Opéra Garnier, suggesting the precedent through which Dalou created this representation. Carpeaux's *La Danse* offered a worthy guide; the Second Empire sculpture transferred a physical movement into a marble. Dalou's task bore a relation to Carpeaux's project, but required Dalou to transform a social state into solid matter. To do so, the sculptor modeled a representation of Peace that manifests no sign of physical strain despite the twisting movements of swiveling hips, an arching back, and a turning neck. As Peace stretches her arm backwards to distribute flowers in the chariot's wake, she elongates her bodily line, emphasizing her sensuality. Her long, soft curves extend in a manner typically associated with Ingres or Alexandre Cabanel. Dalou adds no pronounced muscle definition, rendering her body an elegant form absent of abrupt corporeal delineations. Peace is bereft of tension.

The olive branch plaque on the chariot face insists on this meaning. In a manner more direct than the other three shields, the olive branch assigns a straightforward representation of the social idea. This is a subtle change from the original model, which had included a caduceus. The shift to the flora symbol seems to confirm Hunisak's assertion that Dalou hoped to avoid any reference to bloodshed, as the caduceus implies a peace achieved through struggle while the olive branch is absent of such nuance.<sup>127</sup> Neither symbol, however, would directly illuminate the small group of *putti* with an overflowing cornucopia that accompanies the main allegory. This secondary group begins to communicate an additional meaning for the monument's trailing allegorical group.

The cornucopia hooks around Peace's legs, functioning as a physical barrier between the personification and the chariot. Though the figure occupies a space within the sculptural sphere of the cart – and her twisting torso strikes the appropriate formal balance – the extension of Peace's right arm, a reverse echo of the Genius of Liberty's gesture and the turn of her torso away from the center are formal qualities that drive her rhetorical energy outwards.<sup>128</sup> The figure's sash, which appears to be a copy of the Genius's drapery, flows past the back of her legs, insisting on her movement away from the center. Like the cornucopia, she overflows from the group, signaling her secondary function as a symbol of Abundance.

The duality of the figure's symbolism is effective because of its position within the composition and allegorical program of the monument. Unlike the other allegories, Peace does not determine the Republic's course. The polemic nature of Justice, Labor,

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<sup>127</sup> Hunisak, *Sculptor Jules Dalou*, 223.

<sup>128</sup> Demaison termed this effect isolating. Demaison, "M. Dalou," 39.

and Liberty had forced Dalou to be explicit in his meanings to explicate the values he sought to exemplify as tenets of an ideal republic. Peace/Abundance yields a different requirement as it is a dependent allegory –it exists only in the wake of the properly guided Republic – and its meanings may be more flexible. In a very direct way, Peace and Abundance respond to France’s tumultuous military and economic circumstances of the 1870s and 1880s. They work in tandem to suggest that the progress and realization of the ideal republic provides a panacea for the most critical issues threatening France at the fin de siècle. Simply, Peace as Abundance represents the nation’s *bonheur*.

At the apex of the composition, Dalou treats the representation of the Republic as the elevated spiritual figure who unites the four allegories and layers of history (fig. 2.29). In a departure from sculptures with more traditional pediments, Dalou placed his Republic atop a celestial orb evoking an allegorical trope borrowed from images of Victory. In this mythic role, the Republic amplifies the sense of historical culmination that Dalou suggested with the fusion of period aesthetics. Supported by the popular allegorical program, Dalou argues that after a century of revolution, this Republic may guide the nation forward, triumphantly.

Dalou took pains to provide a specific representation of the Republic that could pair with his popular themes. The Phrygian bonnet and chiton, which falls beneath her right breast, are traditional attributes of the Marianne of Popular Revolt – best exemplified in Delacroix’s *Liberté guidant le peuple*. The exposed breast is hardly sexual. Dalou mannered the fallen drapery to insist that it is an artistic contrivance. He then squared her shoulders and waist, emphasizing the Republic’s broad torso, dense

core, and thick legs – all bodily attributes that contrast the female sexual icons of the fin-de-siècle – notably the *Parisienne*. As she confidently steps forward, she stretches her right arm out in a protective and grace-giving gesture and reaches her left hand down to place it on a fasces of unity.

The balance of her pose and the purposefulness of her stride emphasize her bodily and spiritual self-control even as her gown clings to her body and exposes her contours. The lightness of her drapery marks a change the sculptor made in the transition from the model to the monument. In the model Dalou had used fuller clothing that overwhelmed the Republic with pervasive folds and a heavy effect (fig. 2.30). This would have been difficult to execute convincingly in the larger monument. Moreover, by cutting back on the drapery, Dalou rested the expressive power of the Republic in her corporeal form, forward progress, and balance.

In her elevated position, the Republic becomes the focal point and formal unifier of the composition. From each side of the monument there is a similar visual progression from base-level allegory to the apex of the group. The in-and-out movement of each figure guides the viewer's gaze upward from all sides of the composition. The Republic links these regards and the arguments that direct them. At the same time, and in keeping with the allegorical program, Marianne atop the orb remains somewhat detached from the worldly sphere, but in a manner that contemporaries found neither cold nor arrogant.<sup>129</sup>

At the top of the monument, her presence is perhaps akin to the state's role in the federalist society. She inspires and unites the allegories as they enrich each other. She does not, however, exert authority or intervene beyond providing a stabilizing idea and

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<sup>129</sup> Cornu, "Jules Dalou," 239.

common identity. Above a program rich in rhetoric about communalism, social equality, federalism, and popular liberty, Dalou presents his Marianne as the queen of the beehive.

As with the Blanqui tomb, Dalou's willingness to show his plaster *Triumph of the Republic* in 1889 belongs to his perceived duty to engage the social issues of the day through his art. The Parisian Director of Public Works, Adolphe Alphand, initially implored Dalou to inaugurate a temporary version of the monument as part of the Republic's celebration of the centennial of the 1789 revolution. The national exhibition was to be a grand ceremony that served to further legitimate the Third Republic by insisting on its revolutionary origins. The anniversary alone did not sway Dalou, who remained reticent to show his monument before completion. He succumbed only to Alphand's request when the Parisian bureaucrat called on their bond of friendship, and argued that the inauguration of the plaster would serve a socio-political purpose in the nation's campaign against the remaining strains of the Boulangist movement and its doctrines of organic nationalism, militarism, and an authoritarian state.<sup>130</sup>

The rejection of Boulangism struck a chord with the sculptor who had previously joined at least one public manifestation against the General. Contemporaries described Dalou's anti-Boulangist sentiment as an extension of his Commune attitudes, and as a stance that anticipated his later support for Alfred Dreyfus.<sup>131</sup> Moreover, after the 1880s when the Opportunists had ruled over a period of economic downturn and decreasing opportunities for workers, Dalou likely saw the popular republic that he championed as

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<sup>130</sup> Dreyfous, *Dalou*, 128.

<sup>131</sup> Geffroy, "Dalou," 303; Cornu, "Jules Dalou," 235.

an alternative solution for the working class, to whom Boulanger had also appealed through a series of anti-bourgeois, right-wing policies.

Alphand surely proposed the project to Dalou several months in advance of the September celebration, but the exact timeframe is hazy. The lag between Dalou agreeing to install the group and the ceremony needed to be sufficient to allow the sculptor to finish the full-size plaster. In addition, Dalou needed time to learn the proper painting and chemistry techniques to make his plaster appear to be patinated – a task that Dreyfous suggests was quite involved and time consuming.<sup>132</sup> Given that this process likely required several months, Dalou may have already taken the decision to raise the temporary monument in May 1889 when he wrote to Joseph Reinach to clarify his vision of a *fête aux ouvriers*. In his 6 May letter to the anti-Boulangist voice of *La République française*, Dalou amplified his idea for a celebration of workers, which the two men had apparently discussed at an earlier *soirée*. The sculptor wrote that he wanted to celebrate the army of labor for whom the social battles are unrelenting and whose efforts reveal the glory of France, of the Republic, and of humanity.<sup>133</sup> Perhaps the 1889 inauguration of the monument could manifest Dalou's dream.

Despite the sculptor's hopes and the letter to the influential journalist, the ceremony of 21 September 1889 fêted the nation's army and political elite. Even the Opportunist president Sadi Carnot joined the Municipal Council to participate in the national manifestation of republican triumph and unity. The contemporary press described the monument and the ceremony as an incarnation of laudable republican

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<sup>132</sup> Dreyfous, *Dalou*, 128-9.

<sup>133</sup> Dalou to Reinach, 6 May 1889 BnF Manuscripts, NAF13535·IX Dalou-Devaux, F. 4-5.

values.<sup>134</sup> Dreyfous suggested that the events surrounding the inauguration made it one of the most memorable days in the history of fin-de-siècle Paris.<sup>135</sup>

Dalou felt bitterly deceived by the government's military and Opportunist manifestation.<sup>136</sup> In a remarkable journal passage from just days after the event, he offered a blistering critique that derided *Triumph of the Republic* as a monument to "autrefois" and the ceremony as an anachronistic celebration of a bygone era.<sup>137</sup>

Notwithstanding the space reserved for 100 workers who assisted Dalou preparing the monument for the site, the sculptor bemoaned the absence of the army of labor in the celebratory procession. He accused the government of usurping his social program for political ends.<sup>138</sup>

Dalou's reaction to the inauguration exposes a series of fissures within the memorial environment and cultural politics of the 1880s. The late nineteenth century's new demand for readymade goods, an influx of less-skilled laborers into the capital during the Second Empire, and the rise of a professional white-collar class had fundamentally undercut the artisan's cultural position and social power in Paris. The corporatist labor model that had guaranteed him autonomy since the *ancien régime* – and that had fundamentally influenced revolutionary politics – gave way to a new production system. The industrial economy of specialization did not require laborers to become skilled in all aspects of manufacturing. These new circumstances, along with changing

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<sup>134</sup> See for example: E.M. *Le Monde Illustré*, 1; Wollf, "Courrier de Paris;" Archives de la Préfecture de police de Paris; dossier Ba/1024.

<sup>135</sup> Dreyfous, *Dalou*, 130.

<sup>136</sup> Cornu, "Jules Dalou," 243.

<sup>137</sup> Roujon, "Preface," vii.

<sup>138</sup> Dreyfous, *Dalou*, 249.



artistic tastes and the advent of mass production, eroded the system of training that had forged fraternal bonds and established a natural hierarchy among laborers. As these traditional structures dissipated, shop owners no longer needed to be skilled artisans – rather they just needed to be sound businessmen.<sup>139</sup>

The breakdown of traditional working-class social dynamics altered the relevancy of Dalou's allegorical arguments, especially as it concerned the artisan as the nation's representative man. A didactic program that supported associationism and mutualism, modeled on a cooperative structure, was less appropriate for a society with a shrinking craftsman class and a growing proletarian work force. In this new climate, the message of returning modes of production to workers rebounded within the rhetoric of socialism and communism, not popular republicanism. Viewing the new circumstances, Paul Lafargue mocked the artisan's aspirations to artistry and love for labor, and in a fierce Marxian critique damned the artisans' pretensions for helping to inflict suffering on the proletarian masses.<sup>140</sup>

While Lafargue dismissed the modern value of the artisan, the early Opportunist leaders of the 1870s were happy to appropriate him as a symbol of the working-class, even as they redefined ideal labor. In place of the traditional Parisian craftsman, Léon Gambetta and his followers pointed to the efforts of the *nouvelles couches sociales* – a milieu of small business owners, lawyers, small industrialists, journalists, and others – as the type of work that would drive modern French society.<sup>141</sup> This allowed Opportunists

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<sup>139</sup> Weissbach, "Artisanal Responses," 70-71.

<sup>140</sup> McWilliam "The artisan community," 165-6; McWilliam cites: Lafargue, *Le Droit à la paresse* (Paris: Mille et une nuits, 1994), 121-123.

<sup>141</sup> See, for example, Gambetta, *Discours et plaidoyers politiques*, 130-164; On the "calicot class," see Clark, *Painting of Modern Life*, 234-5

to create a new image of the ideal worker who could epitomize the bourgeois constructions of citizenship, as well as secular, culturally cultivated, and militant masculinity.<sup>142</sup>

Even with the development of this new male idol, the pedagogical reforms of the 1870s and the 1880s manifest the dominant culture's continued celebration of the craftsman as the prototype for manual labor. The majority of these texts sprung from an effort to spur national ideas of social cohesion between the bourgeoisie and laborers by constructing a working-class image that was removed from the boorish persona that the middle-class commonly associated with the proletariat. They geared these texts towards working-class students, aggrandizing the intellectual craftsman and demonstrating the social importance of workers' position as fundamental for the success and harmony of the nation.<sup>143</sup>

In matters of governance, the Republic was equally focused on advancing class cohesion. The Waldeck-Rousseau law of 1884, for example, permitted a type of unionization that Republican leaders hoped would quell working-class radicalism by advancing a type of sanctioned communalism and associationism.<sup>144</sup> Despite such rhetoric, the Waldeck-Rousseau law demonstrates that the autonomous Parisian worker no longer embodied an ideal of French masculinity, *à la* the craftsman, but existed as a socially subordinate figure that owed his rights to dominant classes. The 1893 closure of the Parisian *Bourse de Travail*, a syndicalist labor exchange, demonstrated just how tenuous these rights could be.

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<sup>142</sup> Nye, *Masculinity and Male Codes of Honor*, 154-5; on bourgeois constructions of the citizen see: Lehning, *To be a Citizen*.

<sup>143</sup> Tilburg, *Colette's Republic*, 27-30.

<sup>144</sup> Stuart, *Marxism at Work: Ideology*, 207-8.

Such efforts by the Opportunist government were far from a nefarious plot intended to harm the laborers. Most moderates truly valued an ideology of solidarity that promoted class harmony and social cohesion. Yet, as the name implies, the Opportunists were also attuned to what was the most politically advantageous. The lack of laborers at the inauguration of Dalou's monument is case in point. The decision to restrict workers from the ceremony was not the normal *modus operandi* for the centennial celebration. For instance, workers of every type took part in the procession that lauded Augusta Holmès *Ode triomphale* at the Palais de l'Industrie only ten days before the inauguration of Dalou's group.<sup>145</sup> The monument at Place de la Nation offered different spectacle concerns, as the shifting circumstances in the neighboring streets attested to new social and industrial structures of the capital.<sup>146</sup> The marks of proletarianization that the surrounding streets manifested threatened to reveal the rupture between a history where the artisan embodied the masculine ideal and a future where the proletarian worker lacked agency and influence in the ceremonial environment.

Dalou's awareness that his monument exhibited an allegorical program that was inadequate for the modern era manifests a broader rupture in society. The development of modern structures altered more than the roles of social class and modes of production. These new systems offered a new paradigm of French society where – in Reinhart Koselleck's expression – the “spaces of experience” did not align with the “horizon of expectations.”<sup>147</sup> The artisan hero and his embodiment of a popular revolutionary spirit was no longer an applicable icon for the new working class. Calls for social harmony

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<sup>145</sup> Bessonnet-Favre, *Les Fêtes républicaines*, 266-7.

<sup>146</sup> Weissbach, “Artisanal responses,” 69.

<sup>147</sup> Koselleck, *Futures Past*, 255-275.

based on eighteenth-century philosophy were equally less appealing to a working class confronting modern circumstances. Accordingly, the legitimizing possibility of the bourgeois revolutionary tradition became problematic. Hérold's effort to link the rehabilitated post-Commune Paris to an Enlightenment rejection of monarchy and feudal structures did not resound with more modern concerns of revolution and the social conditions of an industrial era. The traditional aesthetic of the Morices' monument and the mid-century idealism and conventional allegorical mode of Dalou's program were equally anachronistic interventions into a modern memorial environment.

Ironically, it was the success of the Boulangist movement's consideration of modern factors that spurred Dalou to realizations about his own efforts and attitudes. Boulangism rejected the Enlightenment liberalism that had defined much of nineteenth-century social theory in favor of an organic nationalist, anti-rationalist, and an anti-positivist ideology.<sup>148</sup> On a black horse as a symbol of French virility and the *Revanche*, General Boulanger appealed to conservatives, workers – many of who had come to Paris from the provinces – and to former Royalists through a rhetoric that extolled the values of the provincial soils as well as the ideologies of social Darwinism and faith in authoritarian politics.<sup>149</sup> This offered a new vision for French society modeled on a rejection of bourgeois liberalism. It rebounded in new expressions of French masculinity such as Jean Baffier's *Jacques Bonhomme* (fig. 2.31) – an unidealized, crass, and

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<sup>148</sup> Sternhell, "The Political Culture of Nationalism," *Nationhood and Nationalism in France*, 22-38.

<sup>149</sup> Hutton, "Popular Boulangism," 85-86; Irvine, *The Boulanger Affair Reconsidered: Royalism, Boulangism, and the Origins of the Radical Right in France*.

Naturalist portrayal of an atavistic, rural everyman whom the Opportunist Republic had betrayed.<sup>150</sup>

Dalou's reaction to the 1889 ceremony prompted him to begin a new engagement with the worker in French society. The next ten years manifested the ways in which he understood the new challenges that Boulangist-style reactions posed to the fabric of republican traditions and popular social rhetoric. As he promised in the wake of the inauguration, he devoted countless efforts to developing a monument to laborers that would celebrate the worker as a hero of the modern cult. Though this ultimate goal never came to fruition, his pursuit of it is revealing as a lens onto art and politics in the 1890s. As Dalou charted a formal and ideologically engaged course through the social and structural dynamics of the century's last decade, he operated within the areas of slippage between dominant modern and anti-modern discourses. This led him to produce a series of sculptures that suggest a new vision of modernity that would anticipate the visual language of twentieth-century social ideologies, and the shifting role of man in an industrial world.

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<sup>150</sup> McWilliam, *Monumental Intolerance*, 13-36.

## Visual Positivism and Radical Contradictions

The first half of the 1890s was a period of transition during which Jules Dalou turned his attention to a new monumental aesthetic that corresponded to modern social evaluations of fin-de-siècle France. Dalou's development of a positivist visual language in a mode of public sculpture that did not lean on the crutch of allegory was an evolutionary process replete with false starts and equivocations. As Dalou matured in his use of the formal style, his sculptures began to reveal cultural ambiguities that impacted republican identity. His monuments exposed a series of inconsistencies in a society that was seeking actively to understand the pressures of the industrial division of labor on constructions of the nation's past and expectations for its future. In a series of commemorations to the nation's new heroes, including Jean-Baptiste Boussingault, Edme-Jean Leclaire, and Adolphe Alphand, Dalou explored the formal capacity of positivist aesthetics to intervene in the memorial landscape, testing the viability of a monolithic construction of work as the ennobling virtue of the nation's representative men.

Following the 21 September 1889 inauguration of the plaster *Triumph of the Republic* at Place de la Nation, Dalou returned home distraught by the ceremony that transpired. In addition to bemoaning the lack of worker participation in the celebration,

Dalou lambasted his own efforts.<sup>1</sup> He wrote in his journal that the *Triumph of the Republic* project “s’agissait de glorifier aujourd’hui pour exalter demain. Il n’y a qu’autrefois d’invité. Moi-même j’ai fait une œuvre d’autrefois.”<sup>2</sup> The sculptor’s critique of his monument as a product of a previous era is especially damning in light of Dalou’s Romantic convictions and his repeated invocations that an artist needed to be of his own time.<sup>3</sup>

The hagiographic biographies of Dalou point to this moment as the origin of his reconceptualization of formal concerns, calling the period that followed the ceremony Dalou’s “*Nephtali*.”<sup>4</sup> Roujon was precise in noting that this reference was not intended as a biblical allusion to Rachel’s struggle with Leah in Genesis 30:8, but as a fin-de-siècle reference to the theorist Ernest Renan, one of France’s most influential positivist thinkers and a central voice in the discourse of national identity.<sup>5</sup> In his popular *Souvenirs d’enfance et de jeunesse* Renan had described his “Nephtali” period as the time at the seminary when he began to question the divinity of the bible and related texts.<sup>6</sup> Over the course of two years, he struggled with the divide between his intellectual convictions and the requirements of the ecclesiastic career for which he planned. He eventually left the church and wrote *La Vie de Jésus*, a biography that subjects the Christian savior to the same historical standards as other figures.

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<sup>1</sup> Roujon, “Preface,” vii.

<sup>2</sup> Quoted in Roujon, “Preface,” vii. “was intended to glorify the present to exalt the future. There were only those from the past invited. Myself, I made a monument of the past.”

<sup>3</sup> Collection Privée, Petit Palais.

<sup>4</sup> Roujon, “Preface,” vii.

<sup>5</sup> Renan, *L’Avenir de la science: pensées de 1848*; Renan, “Qu’est-ce qu’une nation?” Conférence faite à la Sorbonne, le 11 mars 1882, *Qu’est-ce qu’une nation?*

<sup>6</sup> Renan, *Souvenirs d’enfance*, 303.

When Roujon compares Dalou to Renan, he frames the sculptor's attempted conversion as an existential effort. Like Renan, Dalou faced a struggle in operating between the standards of his vocation – didactic programs and Romantic allegories – and his new perspective on the nature of the world. In the wake of the 1889 ceremony, Dalou sought to align himself with the latter set of concerns. He pledged to pursue a new formal style through which he would erect a monument to laborers that would glorify the worker as the hero of the modern cult.<sup>7</sup> Roujon notes that Dalou's new pursuit would lead him to reject “toutes les formules de son habileté comme une armure hors d'usage.”<sup>8</sup> The biographer continues, noting that theatrical allegory, which had been a dominant motif of almost all public monuments in the 1870s and 80s, began to make Dalou nauseated.<sup>9</sup>

The celebratory nature of these biographies and the critical reception of the 1899 inauguration of the *Triumph of the Republic*, which has suggested to some that Dalou was a consistent practitioner of Neo-Baroque sculpture, has led modern scholars to question whether the artist actually pursued a new aesthetic in the 1890s. The installation of Dalou's *Monument à Eugène Delacroix* (fig. 3.1) in October 1890 complicates matters. This group in the Luxembourg Gardens manifests the pinnacle of Dalou's exuberant Romantic-Naturalist mode, glorifying the celebrated painter through a sensitively rendered – though idealized – portrait bust that sits at the apex of a dynamic allegorical composition in the middle of a fountain.<sup>10</sup> The bust itself, which Dalou likely derived from Albert-Ernest Carrier Belleuse's 1864 rendering of the painter, images Delacroix as

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<sup>7</sup> Roujon, “Preface,” viii; Dreyfous, *Dalou*, 249.

<sup>8</sup> Ibid., vii. “rejected all his accepted/authorized formulas as an unusable armor.”

<sup>9</sup> Cornu, “Jules Dalou,” 249.

<sup>10</sup> For a thorough history of the commission see: Simier, “Vingt ans après, ... *Le Monument à Delacroix de Jules Dalou*,” in *Fantin-Latour, Manet, Baudelaire, L'Homage à Delacroix*, 143-157.



a charismatic Romantic hero.<sup>11</sup> An august and wise expression marks his face and a vibrant scarf activates his spirit. The bronze head and chest – Delacroix is here without arms – sits on its own small bronze base that in turn rests on a stone plinth. The central support, which Dalou and his team augmented with a series of rounded edges, undulations, and sweeping lines, provides the composition with an energetic spine.

The monument's allegorical program – composed of mythological figures with idealized modern corporeality – echoes the Romantic verve of the plinth. At the viewer's left, a personification of Time lifts a figure of Glory, who lays palms and a laurel wreath underneath the painter's bust. Across the composition, a crowned Apollo sits at the statue's base. The muscular god has put his lyre down, twisting his torso and head to watch the other figures' efforts. He reaches his arms to the center of the composition, applauding the celebration and encouraging the viewer to do the same.

Though the inauguration date of this monument belongs to the 1890s, seemingly casting doubt on Roujon's assertion, Dalou designed the ensemble in the 1880s. During this period, when the sculptor was working in his studio on the boulevard Garibaldi, he was also preparing compositions such as the 1883 *Fraternité*, the high-spirited *Triumph of Silenus* of 1885, the Hugo tomb project, and the *Triumph of the Republic*.<sup>12</sup> Not only does each of these groups share a Romantic-Naturalist mode, critics consistently

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<sup>11</sup> If Dalou did not know this portrait from its original exhibition, he would likely have seen it in 1885 when it figured in the "Exhibition Eugène Delacroix" at the École Nationale des Beaux-Arts. Simier, "Vingt Ans Après," 156; Thanks also due to June Hargrove.

<sup>12</sup> Dreyfous, *Dalou*, 189.

compared Dalou's handling and composition in these ensembles to the work of a series of painters such as Peter Paul Rubens, Jacob Jordaens, and even Titian.<sup>13</sup>

The painterly aesthetic was specifically appropriate for the *Delacroix* ensemble as a generation of earlier commentators had made analogous comparisons between Flemish and Italian master colorists and Delacroix himself. Indeed, the perceived similarities in the aesthetics of Dalou and Delacroix informed the critical reaction when Dalou received the commission for the Luxembourg Garden group. In a nod to Delacroix's preferences, there had been no open competition for the project, leaving the monument committee to select the artist that it deemed most appropriate.<sup>14</sup> Though Dalou was part of the organizing body – along with other sculptors including Falguière and Paul Dubois – he abstained from the crucial meeting when the committee selected him to execute the ensemble. The journal *L'Événement* suggests that the choice was self-evident, arguing, “M. Dalou est en sculpture en peu ce que fut Delacroix en peinture; ils sont de la même école; qu'on me permette le mot, ils sont tous les deux *la couleur*...”<sup>15</sup>

Amélie Simier is quick to note that in 1894 Dalou expressly renounced such a colorist style.<sup>16</sup> She points to a May journal entry when Dalou affirmed,

En sculpture on se trompe en voulant trop regarder et s'inspirer des peintres coloristes, qui ne dessinaient pas ou dessinaient insuffisamment. La sculpture ... n'a pas grande chose de commun avec la coloration ; elle a sa coloration

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<sup>13</sup> See, for example: Péladan, “La sculpture civique;” Havard, *Le Siècle*, 5 June 1883; Dreyfous, *Dalou*, 104. See also citations of Du Seigneur, Javel, Lanson, Merson, Noulens, and others in Helbronner, “Catalogue Raisoné des sculptures du XIX siècle (1800-1914) des musées de Bordeaux,” 362-368.

<sup>14</sup> Simier, “Vingt ans après,” 145.

<sup>15</sup> *L'Événement* 19 mai 1885, quoted in Simier, “Vingt ans après,” 148. “As a sculptor, M. Dalou is somewhat similar to what Delacroix was as a painter; they are from the same school; they are both, if I may, colorists....”

<sup>16</sup> Simier, “Vingt ans après,” 148.

propre, qui tient surtout du dessin ; le modelé se produisant par les contours. Mieux vaut donc regarder et s'inspirer d'abord de la nature et ensuite des maîtres comme Raphaël, Ingres, etc.<sup>17</sup>

This opinion suggests a stark departure from Dalou's earlier mode. Moreover, it runs directly counter to what Dreyfous describes as the sculptor's preoccupation in England: "faire parler à la sculpture le langage de la peinture et, particulièrement de celle des peintures coloristes."<sup>18</sup>

The distance between the undoubtedly colorist concerns of the 1870s and 1880s and the 1894 rejection of the same lends credence to Roujon's contention that Dalou made a clear transformation in his vision for sculptural aesthetics. This dramatic shift prompts a reconsideration of the consensus that Dalou largely remained unswerving in his treatment of figures and that he derived his composition predominantly through a meditation on the most appropriate historical precedents. Concerns for engaging previous eras of monument certainly influenced the sculptor's process, but in the early 1890s it seems that he was more invested in exploring modern aesthetic and programmatic concerns.

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<sup>17</sup> Dreyfous, *Dalou*, 123. "In sculpture one errs in wanting to find too much inspiration in colorist painters who either did not concern themselves with line or did so insufficiently. Sculpture does not have a lot in common with coloration; sculpture has its own color, which belongs to its design; sculptors model through the creation of contours. It is better then to look to, and draw inspiration from nature before masters such as Raphael, Ingres, etc."

<sup>18</sup> Dreyfous, *Dalou*, 77. "To make sculpture speak the language of painting, and particularly that of colorist painters."

Ironically, as Penelope Curtis and other scholars have pointed out, the *Delacroix* became the prototype for the commemorative strategy of Third Republic France.<sup>19</sup> The combination of allegorical personifications surrounding a pedestal capped with a portrait bust became a formula for the period's monumental sculpture. Countless other ensembles operate with similar organization. For instance, in Laurent-Honoré Marqueste's 1909 *Monument à Pierre Waldeck-Rousseau* (fig. 3.2), two classical nude workers and a figure of Liberty – perhaps meant to represent the unification of workers under the law of 1884 – respectfully and thankfully gaze upwards at a bust of the republican statesman. While Dalou would return to variations of this style at other points in the 1890s, he appears to have made a concerted effort to break from these conventions in most of his compositions of this decade. Indeed, Dalou bemoaned the banality of such an organization when the widow of Charles Floquet compelled him to sculpt a bust-and-allegory tomb monument for her late husband in 1897.<sup>20</sup>

Dalou's first monumental design that portends a new formal style actually predates the inauguration of the *Triumph of the Republic*. The tomb of Victor Noir (fig. 3.3), at Père Lachaise cemetery, operates in a Naturalist mode that contemporary critics lauded for its “effet absolument saisissant de réalité.”<sup>21</sup> Noir lies on a low plinth that only minimally elevates him from the ground. His unbuttoned shirt exposes a gunshot wound in the center of his chest and his face manifests what contemporaries called the tranquility of death. In the twentieth century, Antoinette Le Normand-Romain has noted that the

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<sup>19</sup> See Penelope Curtis's discussion of the group and an 1913 reaction to it in Curtis, *Sculpture 1900-1945*, 42.

<sup>20</sup> Dreyfous, *Dalou*, 209-10.

<sup>21</sup> “Victor Noir,” *Le Rappel*, 13 December 1889. “Its absolutely striking effect of reality.”

formal directness of the *Noir* breaks from more Romantic precedents such as Dalou's own *Blanqui* or Aimé Millet's *Baudin*. To Le Normand-Romain, as well as to the critics who first saw the work at the Salon of 1890, Dalou's *Noir* conveyed a sense of photographic realism and absolute objectivity.<sup>22</sup>

With this monument, Dalou depicted the narrative moment immediately after Noir's January 1870 altercation with Prince Pierre Bonaparte, Napoleon III's cousin. Noir and fellow journalist Ulric de Fonvielle had visited the Prince on behalf of anti-Empire firebrands Henri Rochefort and Paschal Grousset. Following their employers' instructions, Noir and de Fonvielle attempted to arrange a duel between Bonaparte and Rochefort as the culmination of an exchange of libelous newspaper articles. While the exact details of the encounter are somewhat cloudy – specifically with regards to who slapped whom and who provoked whom first – the argument finished with Bonaparte firing a single shot into Noir's chest. The journalist fled the house and collapsed on the pavement where he died from his wound. His death became a *cause célèbre*, elevating Noir to martyr status for republicans. The less-than-rigorous prosecution of the Prince that followed provided further evidence for those who claimed that Empire was deeply corrupt.

Nearly nineteen years later – in January of 1889 – Noir's brother and Auguste Vacquerie of *Le Rappel* led a monument committee to erect a new tomb to the deceased martyr. They quickly commissioned Dalou to sculpt the monument, planning to translate Noir's remains from a cemetery in Neuilly to one in Paris.<sup>23</sup> The sculptor appears to have

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<sup>22</sup> Le Normand-Romain, "En hommage aux opposants politiques," 77.

<sup>23</sup> "Le Monument de Victor Noir," *Le Rappel*, 7 January 1889. The tomb was originally intended for the cemetery of Montmartre. Caterina Pierre has suggested to me that the

finished an initial *maquette* a month after receiving the commission.<sup>24</sup> About ten months later, the committee reviewed the ultimate plaster model, which Dalou submitted to the Salon at the Champs du Mars the following year.<sup>25</sup> In July 1891, the committee inaugurated the tomb at Père Lachaise cemetery in a plot close to that of Auguste Blanqui.

Dalou's monument appears intended to unsettle the viewer by departing from traditional funerary tropes and viewing practices. The *Blanqui* also operated in a mode somewhat outside such traditions, but its nudity and position on a pedestal placed it within the general schema of effigy imagery, even with the sublime effects of the body. In the *Noir*, Dalou pushed his style further from convention. In place of any allegorical allusion or framing devices, Dalou opted for what seemed to be a type of nineteenth-century hyper-naturalism. The audience perceived that it was seeing Noir as he fell – beautiful, young, and guiltless.

Dalou augmented this emotional appeal by placing Noir on a very low base that incites the viewer to change his perspective in order to consider the seemingly unidealized body with its hints of baby fat. The work's proximity to the ground denies the sculpture the type of psychological barrier normally afforded works of art, and which typically insist on their position somewhat removed from the viewer's domain. The state

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decision to install the monument at Père Lachaise stemmed from the willingness of the eastern Paris cemetery to donate the funerary plot.

<sup>24</sup> "Le monument de Victor Noir," *L'Egalité*, 16 February 1889.

<sup>25</sup> "Le monument de Victor Noir," *Le Rappel*, 13 December 1889.

of the patina, rubbed raw in many places, attests to the manner in which the audience has come to interact physically with the portrait as a public cult object.<sup>26</sup>

The novel composition and the seemingly photographic realism distract from the socio-political construction that Dalou effects in the effigy. Descriptions of Noir from the 1870s, both literary and photographic, portray the young man as a large, gruff, and unrefined character.<sup>27</sup> Some reports hold that he was illiterate until the 1860s – if not beyond – and some authors have questioned whether articles published under his byline belonged to his own pen. To these ends, Roger Williams, a biographer of Rochefort, claims that Noir’s writings in *La Marseillaise* were actually not his at all but rather the most vicious expressions of his employers who used Noir’s pseudonym in their most vitriolic prose.<sup>28</sup> Regardless the actual authorship, a quick survey of articles signed “Victor Noir” in the *Marseillaise* in the month before his death reveal a figure – or perhaps the construction of a figure – with a biting tongue whose political commentary exhibited shockingly little decorum, even when compared to the pens of the Emperor’s vicious republican critics.<sup>29</sup>

Though Noir seems to have been a working-class hard man, Dalou modeled him as a modest-sized young bourgeois with small rolls of soft fat ringing his neck. The sculptor took advantage of Noir’s sartorial choices for the day of his assassination – he

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<sup>26</sup> For one argument about the touching of the monument see: Pierre, “The pleasure and piety of touch,” 173-85.

<sup>27</sup> Perhaps most revealing is Jules Valles’s play on Noir’s name and contemporary racial discourse in his constant reference to Noir as “mon negre.” du Camp, *Souvenirs d’un demi-siècle*, 271.

<sup>28</sup> Williams, *Henri Rochefort*, 49.

<sup>29</sup> Victor Noir, *Articles de La Marseillaise signés Victor NOIR*.

wore his finest suit, hat, and gloves to visit the Prince – to reimage his identity.<sup>30</sup> The combination of his bourgeois dress, his soft flesh, and his reputation as a working-class force confuse Noir’s place in the class structure, framing him more as a type of popular hero of mid-century who transcended class divisions.<sup>31</sup>

The formal directness of the *Noir*, which anticipates Dalou’s next monuments, is not a product of any new evaluation of social structure. Rather it seems intended to offer a new visual strategy to revisit a series of ideas rooted in the past. Indeed, the monument was a type of participant in the Boulanger crisis of 1889, which appears to have spurred the monument committee to action. Just days before the organizing group’s first meeting, Vacquerie had drawn clear links between the politics of 1889 and those of 1870 in a front page article for *Le Rappel* titled, “Boulangisme et Bonapartisme.”<sup>32</sup> While twentieth-century scholars such as Zeev Sternhell note the significant distinctions between the two movements, for contemporaries who shared the perspective of Vacquerie, connections between Napoleon III and General Boulanger were both natural and politically advantageous.<sup>33</sup> In evoking the memory of the Empire’s supposed perverse policies, as manifest in Prince Bonaparte’s assassination of Noir, Vacquerie and his peers framed the advance of Boulangism as an equivalent to a regime of murder and corruption.

The *Noir* monument marks the beginning of Dalou’s experiments with more direct aesthetics, as well as the approximate end of the sculptor’s visual engagement with

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<sup>30</sup> Dreyfous, *Dalou*, 209.

<sup>31</sup> Philippe Julian, “Preface,” *Jules Dalou, Exposition 20 Mars-15 Avril, 1965*, 3.

<sup>32</sup> Vacquerie, “Boulangisme et Bonapartisme,” *Le Rappel*, 2 January 1889.

<sup>33</sup> See Zeev Sternhell, “The Political Culture of Nationalism,” in *Nationhood and Nationalism in France*, 22-25.



the politics of 1848 and the Second Empire. The Romantic-Naturalism of the 1880s would continue to emerge in some of his early compositions of the 1890s, especially those with formal roots in the earlier decade. The monument to the agronomist and member of the *Institut de France* Jean-Baptiste Boussingault (fig. 3.4) is one such project that straddles the temporal divide.

Installed in the courtyard of the *Conservatoire National des Arts et Métiers* – less than a third of a mile from the Morices’ traditional model to the Republic – the monument manifests lingering anachronisms even while revealing the beginning of a new mode of social exploration in visual form. The ensemble is a multi-figured group, capped by a bronze bust of Boussingault at the apex of a sober, rose-tinted marble column. At the base of the monument, a Naturalist peasant with matted hair and large sabots leans against the pillar, resting his right hand on a two-tongued hoe. Stationed below the scientist’s right shoulder, this peasant looks across the composition at a personification of Science who supports a book on her knee. She looks back at her modern companion, offering a gesture of instruction. Scientific devices and farming tools lie at the figures’ feet. They add Naturalist ornamentation to the composition, suggesting the program’s deep connection with the worldly – not philosophical – sphere.

When Dalou and the monument committee inaugurated the group in 1895, the ceremony marked the culmination of the sculptor’s eight-year engagement with the scientist’s memory.<sup>34</sup> Before Boussingault’s death in 1887, the sculptor and agronomist had been friendly; in the days following his death, Dalou visited the deceased and

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<sup>34</sup> The work has since been moved to Saint Denis.

sketched his corpse.<sup>35</sup> The next month Joseph Boussingault, Jean-Baptiste's son, wrote to the Director of Fine Arts lobbying for Dalou to receive the commission to sculpt the traditional memorial bust for members of the *Institut*. According to the younger Boussingault, Dalou was the only sculptor appropriate for the task because he had known the scientist in life and had already created a *terre glaise* of the man in death.<sup>36</sup>

Joseph's request proved complex. Only six months earlier the State had commissioned Dalou to execute a posthumous bust of Gustave Courbet.<sup>37</sup> When Boussingault died, Dalou had not yet finished the earlier project and governmental rules prohibited the sculptor from receiving a second State commission until he completed the first. These bureaucratic obstacles did not deter the Boussingault family and its circle. Through the political intervention of the family's friends, Aline Ménard-Dorian and her husband Paul Ménard-Dorian – a deputy in the National Assembly connected to George Clemenceau's *extrême-gauche* opposition to the Opportunists – Dalou managed to receive the Boussingault contract in February 1888, two years prior to delivering the marble Courbet.<sup>38</sup>

The *Boussingault* bust (fig. 3.5) presents the scientist as a mid-century *savant*. Dalou imaged him with broad shoulders, a robust head, and heavy facial features that communicate an aspect of physical gravitas. Boussingault's costume is appropriate for his status as a member of the *Académie de Science*, but the manner in which he wears his

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<sup>35</sup> Archives Nationales, F<sup>21</sup> 2070, Boussingault, 3 June 1887 letter from Boussingault's son to the Director of Beaux-Arts; Fondation Custodia : inv. 1977-A.1673 and 1977-A.1674.

<sup>36</sup> Archives Nationales, F<sup>21</sup> 2070, Boussingault, 3 June 1887, letter.

<sup>37</sup> Archives Nationales, F<sup>21</sup> 2070, Courbet, 19 December 1887, Decree of the Minister of Beaux Arts.

<sup>38</sup> Archives Nationales: F<sup>21</sup> 2070, Boussingault, 17 May, 1887, letter from Paul Ménard-Dorian to the Director of Beaux-Arts.

clothing suggests a lack of personal vanity. Its numerous ruffles and soft edges give the fabric a worn quality, intimating that scientist was not a sedentary scholar. Dreyfous concurs, interpreting the portrait as an effort by Dalou to represent Boussingault as “un homme des champs plutôt que... un homme de cabinet et de laboratoire.”<sup>39</sup> At the same time, Dalou activated the agronomist’s countenance to stress his mental energy. His eyes are half-closed but intense – as if he were narrowing them to concentrate on a specific thought. His protruding chin and the defined masses of flesh at the nose and through the upper cheeks activate his face and suggest an inner vitality that insists on a pensive mind. This treatment of the visage creates a duality between intellectual and physical activities – the combination of which operates within traditional conceits of masculine vibrancy.

The bust maintains a mode of Romantic-Naturalism appropriate for the commemoration of Boussingault – himself a product of an earlier generation. Born in Paris in the second year of the nineteenth century, Boussingault graduated from the School of Mines before traveling in South America with Alexander von Humboldt. Upon returning to France in the 1830s, he taught in Lyon prior to gaining a position at the *Académie des Sciences* in Paris in 1837. Eleven years later, Boussingault served in the republican National Assembly, ostensibly with Louis Blanc’s party. In practice, however, he had maintained a far more conservative record than Blanc and many of the typical *quarante-huitards*. He went so far as to oppose the right to work policy as well as the elimination of capital punishment.<sup>40</sup> Ernest Kahane notes that after Boussingault’s mid-

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<sup>39</sup> Dreyfous, *Dalou*, 191. “A man of the fields rather than a man of the office and the laboratory.”

<sup>40</sup> McCosh, *Boussingault, Chemist and Agriculturist*, 115-116.

century adventure in politics, he became entirely devoted to his scientific works, believing that political pursuits distracted from his ultimate focus.<sup>41</sup>

Moving away from government service, Boussingault concentrated on the connections between science and society. For instance, he believed that his study on the possible uses of excrement allowed for a reconsideration of the relationship between man and capital, offering a different perspective on the ideal of productive labor and individual autonomy.<sup>42</sup> In these interests, Boussingault joined a series of other scientists and doctors, including the republican stalwart Jean-Martin Charcot, who saw connections between laboratory research and nineteenth-century social dynamics.<sup>43</sup>

Some sources suggest that Dalou and Boussingault formed a relationship because of shared political convictions, which, while undoubtedly true to a degree, marginalizes the scientific and social bonds that likely linked the sculptor and the agronomist. Circumstantial evidence demonstrates that Dalou was quite intrigued by the scientific milieu of the Third Republic. In the 1880s he formed relationships with – and sculpted busts of – both Charcot and Boussingault. In these years he also executed a statue of Antoine Lavoisier (whom Boussingault considered a model) for the amphitheatre of the Sorbonne. In the next decade, Dalou exhibited further interest in science and its practitioners. He became a very close friend of the influential doctor Paul Richer, sculpted a sketchy terra-cotta model for a monument at the *Académie de Médecine*, and

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<sup>41</sup> Kahane, *Boussingault entre Lavoisier et Pasteur*, 152.

<sup>42</sup> Simmons, “Waste Not, Want Not,” 73-98.

<sup>43</sup> Goldstein, “The Hysteria Diagnosis and the Politics of Anticlericalism,” 209-239.

carved out precious time to submit to a psycho-medical examination by Edouard Toulouse who was investigating the scientific roots of genius.<sup>44</sup>

Such interests were not unique to Dalou, as science was beginning to exert a crucial influence in French social and visual culture.<sup>45</sup> In addition to artists' engagement with the studies, many cultural commentators and intellectuals turned to the scientific method as a means to evaluate social issues. Politicians, such as the Radical statesman Léon Bourgeois, and sociologists, including Emile Durkheim, linked their evaluations of class relations to organic phenomena in the natural sciences. They wrote about social dynamics in biological terms, calling on the sciences as an impartial gauge against which to judge new cultural ideas.<sup>46</sup>

The monument at *Arts et Métiers* operates at the intersection of natural and social sciences within a changing society. The construction of Boussingault as a *savant*, through a Romantic-Naturalist aesthetic, reveals the shifting identity of heroic republican thinkers in this period. Like the artisan, the romantic poet, and the *philosophe*, the *savant* was slipping from the most privileged rung of *avant-garde* republican icons.<sup>47</sup> The intellectual, who emerged in the last decade of the century as a product of the ruptures of the modern era, had taken his place as the republican hero of the moment. This new figure responded to the circumstances of the fin de siècle while the previous icons were testaments to Dalou's age of *autrefois*.

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<sup>44</sup> Dreyfous, *Dalou*, 230.

<sup>45</sup> See, for example, Larson and Brauer, eds. *The Art of Evolution*; Clair, ed. *L'âme au corps : arts et sciences 1793-1993*; Gage, *Color and Meaning*.

<sup>46</sup> Stone, *The Search for Social Peace*, 30.

<sup>47</sup> On the Intellectual see: Datta, *Birth of a National Icon*, 11-12.

The monument's lower section is incongruous with the bust's subtly outdated social statement. To the viewer's left, a naturally rendered *paysan* (fig. 3.6) suggests a new step towards a positivist visual tradition. This laborer functions without the claims to superhuman proportions that emboldened the *forgeron* at Place de la Nation. The folds of his baggy clothing highlight the undulations of the fabric, suggesting the man's slighter frame. Moreover, Dalou's handling of the peasant's musculature manifests an acute attention to human physiology, which he developed in studying actual workers of the French countryside in a series of visits in the first half of the 1890s.<sup>48</sup> The collarbone protrudes slightly from the workman's shirt and subtle suggestions of pectoral definition appear under the fabric. The corporeal proportions and nuanced anatomical treatments of the lean muscle in the *paysan*'s forearm reject the hulking vision of masculinity communicated through masses of undefined bulk.

The peasant's matted hair combines with the workman's physique to contribute to the photographic quality of Dalou's new Naturalism. His hair is neither coiffed in the dynamic manner of the blacksmith at Place de la Nation nor covered by a marker of his rural labor in the mode of Jean François Millet's reaper. It has been quickly brushed from his brow and suggests the damp stickiness of sweat; the hair appears as the mid-day style of a man who did not consult the mirror. Dalou's attention to a seemingly haphazard effect allows him to highlight the figure's unpretentious character, as well as to fix the interaction between the peasant and the personification of Science as an unposed moment.

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<sup>48</sup> Dreyfous, *Dalou*, 251.

Upon viewing the *paysan* in the days after the 1895 inauguration, Dalou expressed a certain degree of pleasure with his efforts.<sup>49</sup> This is a relatively unique circumstance for a sculptor who consistently found his own work lacking and frequently destroyed casts and models for which he no longer cared.<sup>50</sup> This acknowledgement of success perhaps emerges because the rural worker marks an advance in Dalou's efforts to operate outside of canonical allegorical patterns and the nineteenth-century's proliferation of realist allegories. Not only is he a formally modern and Naturalist figure, his attribute, a humble two-pronged hoe, belongs purely to the worldly sphere of farming tools, offering little in the way of philosophical meaning. The *paysan* then signals a departure from the contemporary mode of monument in which artists made new allegorical compositions by treating idealized figures with modern details or by contextualizing modern figures with classical iconographic poses and traditional attributes.<sup>51</sup>

Despite this direct treatment of the *paysan*, the image of Science (fig. 3.7) is an exemplar of the conventions of realist allegory. This figure is a modern woman whose hair and costume reflect the tastes of the nineteenth century. The cinching of her dress at the waist and the folds of fabric in the torso and across her legs draw attention to her breasts and her pubis as reminders of her womanhood – but not necessarily as symbols of fertility or sexuality. Her bare right foot – peeking out from the flowing fabric that covers her legs – attests to her allegorical station, especially when viewed in the context of the *paysan*'s conspicuous *sabots* that accentuate his Naturalism. The tome on her left thigh,

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<sup>49</sup> Dreyfous, *Dalou*, 193.

<sup>50</sup> E. Lantéri, "Jules Dalou: Sculptor," 380; Dreyfous, "Dalou inconnu," 82.

<sup>51</sup> Plotek, "Allegory in the Age of Realism," 2.

which she barely holds open with an index finger, plays on the traditional images of both wisdom and science, confirming her identity as metaphysical construct. That the book exists in her sphere – not that of the worker as was common in traditional allegorical constructions of labor – signals Dalou’s effort to represent a new narrative.

Science’s downward pointing finger encourages the peasant to consider the dead branch between their feet. To Dreyfous and Paul Cornu, the exchange suggests that the female personification was instructing the peasant that scientific techniques could have rendered the branch fruitful, and that the peasant must use them in the future so as not to waste opportunities.<sup>52</sup> Even without this hyper-specific narrative – perhaps advanced by Dalou himself in conversations with his contemporaries – Science’s gesture elucidates a connection between the peasant and the image of Boussingault above him. The vegetation on the ground represents their shared concern. Boussingault’s research, which presumably sits on Science’s lap, provides the peasant with a tool to improve his production and therefore his quality of life and social station. For this new image of labor, however, the knowledge must be mediated through a second figure.

Though they maintain differing relations to Naturalism and allegory, both the peasant and Science manifest a type of photographic – not painterly – surface effect, evident in Dalou’s subtle treatment of their musculature and in their restrained surface animation and drapery. Compositionally, Dalou echoed these non-painterly effects by trading the theatricality of his earlier groups for a scene dependent on the figures’ absorption.<sup>53</sup> This formal treatment and Science’s gesture reveals a nuanced but

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<sup>52</sup> Dreyfous, *Dalou*, 192; Cornu, “Jules Dalou,” 248.

<sup>53</sup> On absorption, see Michael Fried, *Absorption and Theatricality*.



significant departure from the style of celebration that Dalou had initiated in the *Delacroix*.

In both ensembles, the sculptor represented the monuments' heroes through bravura portrait busts atop high pedestals. Each composition also uses allegorical figures to create a commemorative context at the lower register. That said, the relationship of the personifications to the busts is markedly different. In the *Delacroix* monument the dominant push of the allegorical program is wholly directed to fêting the painter, exemplified by Apollo taking a break from his lyre to applaud. In the courtyard of the *Arts and Métiers*, Science and the *paysan* are seemingly ignorant of the agronomist's presence above them.

The lack of interaction between the two ranges of the composition splits the program into distinct spheres. The central column and the spirit of the monumental environment are the only unifying forces, but neither provides a narrative that shows Boussingault as an *engagé* assisting the *paysan*. Instead Boussingault's scientific work is the force that bridges the gap between the *savant* and the peasant.

The sculptor was tacitly acknowledging a new vision of society with separate social strata when he created a physical separation between the scientist and the rural laborer. Following the rhetoric of mid-century thinkers such as Jules Michelet, Dalou had previously represented all manner of laborers within the popular milieu. Here on the other hand, Dalou does not present Boussingault and the peasant as participants in the same sphere. Instead the composition suggests a hierarchical construction of society where the confident scientist crowns the monument while the rural worker furrows his brow and concentrates intently to understand the *savant's* teachings as mediated through Science.

In breaking from traditional compositional strategies, the *Boussingault* also counters Dalou's traditional treatment of masculinity. The social divide between the two men suggests different essential qualities. The scientist's bust affirms an increasingly anachronistic mode that celebrated the man's physical and intellectual labors as a *savant*. Work, humility, and an interest in science also ennoble the peasant, but he is hardly a figure that prompts reverence; he lacks agency and autonomy as he listens to instruction from Science. While both figures engage labor and intellect, they do so in fundamentally different ways that owe to their separate positions and perceived acumen.

The treatment of Boussingault and the peasant signals Dalou's engagement with new issues surrounding *la question sociale*, which Judith Stone defines as "a polite euphemism for what to do about and for the working class."<sup>54</sup> These concerns would dominate social and political debates until the beginning of World War I, but they were just emerging as an acknowledged political and social problem when Dalou was designing this monument.

France's Radical party, a group composed of the "*extrême gauche*" opposition to the Opportunists, was particularly active in seeking to address the social question. These men, viewing themselves as the "Sons of the Revolution," sought ways to promote social harmony as the modern legacy of those popular campaigns. The party formed a somewhat amorphous group; its projects depended on diverse coalitions that could help express a vision of republican solidarity that would bridge the gap between an economically liberal republican bourgeoisie and France's rising socialist factions.<sup>55</sup>

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<sup>54</sup> Stone, *Search for Social Peace*, 1.

<sup>55</sup> On the Radical's political pursuits and vision of the Revolution see: Stone, *Search for Social Peace*, and Stone, *Sons of the Revolution*.

While they acknowledged a divide between the nation's classes, the Radicals promoted social cohesion as the modern legacy of the revered revolutionary tradition.

For Dalou, the breakdown of the popular milieu and the interaction between the classes had immense personal resonance. As the interaction with the scientific community and Aline Ménard-Dorian's intervention into the early stages of Boussingault commission demonstrates, the sculptor occupied an elevated social position with 1880s France. Indeed, Ménard-Dorian was a fixture in republican society and epitomizes the nineteenth-century forerunner of today's so-called *gauche-caviar* milieu.<sup>56</sup> Dalou's participation with this culture often involved membership on government arts committees – such as the Salon jury of 1884 and the late decade sub-committee charged with supervising the redecoration of the Pantheon. Dalou also made an effort to participate, at least occasionally, in the Third Republic's salon culture, shoulder to shoulder with Emile Zola, Edmond de Goncourt, Jean-Baptiste Charcot, Rodin, Rochefort, Clemenceau, Boussingault, and many others.<sup>57</sup>

The renewal of private salon evenings during the middle and end of the century had emerged in response to a specific desire for the newly empowered bourgeois class to affirm its social and political position by claiming a traditionally aristocratic practice as its own.<sup>58</sup> Unlike the aristocratic gatherings of a previous era, the bourgeois salons of the second half of the nineteenth-century were sites of republican political exchange and affiliation. They symbolized the rise to power of the bourgeoisie, and helped to shape the perception of the men and women of that ruling class. While the salons were not forums

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<sup>56</sup> Martin-Fugier, *Les salons de la III<sup>e</sup> République*, 84-5.

<sup>57</sup> Dreyfous, *Dalou*, 213.

<sup>58</sup> Aprile, "La République au salon," 474.

for the establishment of national policies, they did help to make, and unmake, many politicians and cultural operators.<sup>59</sup>

Dalou's presence in this social milieu complicates his preferred image as a humble laborer, which he actively cultivated by presenting himself as an "ouvrier de race."<sup>60</sup> With the dissolution of the popular icons, 1880s and 1890s understandings about class relations increasingly denied those who physically labored a bourgeois cultural position.<sup>61</sup> Accordingly, as a worker Dalou would seemingly remain excluded from the elevated milieu, but as an artist, who advanced a republican agenda with his art and service on national committees, he occupied a privileged place. The divisions in Dalou's identity appear problematic in fin-de-siècle society where the entrenchment of the bourgeois-proletariat dichotomy marginalized the popular heroes of the mid-century tradition, forcing the sculptor to consider the relationship between diverse classes as it pertained to national identity.

In 1893, the year after he began work on the Boussingault monument, Dalou earned a second commission that offered an opportunity to explore issues of social harmony and class cohesion. Some twenty-years after the death of the businessman Edme-Jean Leclaire, the employees of his house-painting company pursued several modes of commemoration for their patriarch. Initially the leaders of the mutual benefits society that Leclaire founded at *Maison Leclaire* successfully sought to name a new

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<sup>59</sup> Ibid., 487.

<sup>60</sup> Dreyfous, *Dalou*, 44.

<sup>61</sup> This condition is not restricted to this period of French society, though the changing society of the fin de siècle accentuated such circumstances. Rancière, *Le Philosophe et ses pauvres*.

Parisian street after the businessman. Upon receiving the Municipal Council's approval for that request, the workers asked the city for the opportunity to erect a bust of the entrepreneur in the square that would abut the new rue Jean Leclaire in the seventeenth arrondissement.<sup>62</sup> The city directed the appeal to Jean-Camille Formigé, a municipal architect, who turned to Dalou for the project.<sup>63</sup>

The ensemble that Dalou erected, with Formigé's architectural assistance, was far more than the simple bust that the petitioners had requested (fig. 3.8). The artist composed a socially dynamic two-figure scene that takes place on top of a rounded pedestal. The artists inscribed the thick, rounded base with a dedication to Leclaire at the back and an ornamental garland and nameplate on the front. At the upper level of the composition Dalou sculpted a full-length portrait of the businessman. From the top step, he reaches down to grasp the hand and pat the back of housepainter who climbs to a step below him. When Dalou modeled the statue, the painter also carried a large paint bucket filled with paintbrushes in his left hand. Though this attribute is missing in the current monument – the city erected a new cast of the group in 1971 after the Vichy Government melted the original in the 1942 to fulfill the Occupation authority's demand for non-ferrous metals – Dalou's use of it compliments the sculptor's commitment to operating without traditional allegorical attributes.<sup>64</sup> He compounded this real-world decorative treatment by placing a series of house-painting tools at the bottom level of the elevated compositional space. Indeed, as Dreyfous notes, none of the tools at the worker's feet or

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<sup>62</sup> Archives du COARC (*Jean Leclaire*), Comité de Pétitionnement to Paris Municipal Council, 8 March 1893.

<sup>63</sup> Archives du COARC (*Jean Leclaire*) Note pour M. l'architecte des promenades, 21 October 1893.

<sup>64</sup> On the destruction of statues under Vichy, see: Hargrove, *Statues of Paris*, 302-306.

in his hands could claim any pretention to being instruments of high philosophy.<sup>65</sup> They all belong to the worldly – and proletarian – sphere of every day Paris.

The monument's inscription provides a brief outline of Leclaire's actions that garnered him his workers' respect, admiration, and devotion. It notes that the entrepreneur founded his own shop in 1826. Eighteen years later he took steps to improve his workers' health by changing the chemistry of his paint to an oxide-based compound in place of a traditional lead-based one. The text then celebrates Leclaire for organizing a benefits and securities society as well as for providing support for retirement and health care. Finally, the notation praises what the commissioners called Leclaire's *Grand Œuvre*: a system through which his workers could partner with the company in a profit-sharing plan.<sup>66</sup>

The initial moments of Leclaire's biography would have seemed familiar to the majority of his workers. Like many of them, he had originally come to Paris from the provinces in search of work. Soon after his arrival, he found an apprenticeship with a house painter – a fortuitous opportunity that set his career on track. Nevertheless during his years as an apprentice, Leclaire experienced financial and social hardships – as well as conflicts with his employer.<sup>67</sup> These memories informed Leclaire's later management

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<sup>65</sup> Dreyfous, *Dalou*, 147.

<sup>66</sup> FONDE SA MAISON EN 1826 / ET SUBSTITUE EN 1844 / LE BLANC DE ZINC AU BLANC DE CERUSE / POUR PRESERVER LA SANTE / DES OUVRIERS PEINTRES ORGANISE EN 1838 / LA SOCIETE DE PREVOYANCE / ET DE SECOURS MUTUELS / DES OUVRIERS ET EMPLOYES/ QUI LUI ELEVE CE MONUMENT CREE EN 1842 **SA GRANDE ŒUVRE** / LA PARTICIPATION / DES OUVRIERS ET EMPLOYES / DANS LES BENEFICES

<sup>67</sup> Robert, *Biographie d'un Homme Utile*, 10.

of his own company, where he hoped to be judged by the difference in the way he treated his workers from the way his master had treated him.<sup>68</sup>

As he developed his mature attitudes towards work and social relations, Leclaire frequently called on experiences from his own biography. In his 1850 *De la misère et des moyens à employer pour la faire cesser*, he wrote that man only leaves his home because of a major force – normally either conscription or destitution, yet moving does not necessarily shield men from the latter condition.<sup>69</sup> The many mid-century Parisian laborers who followed a similar path from their rural homes to the capital would surely have concurred. Leclaire sought to assist these workers, believing their poverty and hopelessness negated any possibility for positive social interactions and hope for a future.

Contemporaries were quick to cite Leclaire's dual history as an employee and an employer as the source for his great sensitivity towards the condition of the laborer in society.<sup>70</sup> In the 1840s the socialist leader Louis Blanc added an appendix to his celebrated *Organisation du travail* that detailed Maison Leclaire's profit sharing accounts for the year 1843.<sup>71</sup> This was to be a model for other organizations. Leclaire's biographer Charles Robert praised the entrepreneur for insuring and protecting house painters to the same degrees that people insured houses.<sup>72</sup> Leclaire himself had provided rhetoric to support such commendations; he described his management philosophy as one rooted in

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<sup>68</sup> Ibid.

<sup>69</sup> Leclaire, *De la misère*, 1-9.

<sup>70</sup> See, for example, Fabre, *Un Ingénieur social*, 12.

<sup>71</sup> Blanc, *Organisation du travail*, Appendix.

<sup>72</sup> Robert. *Biographie d'un Homme Utile*, 5-6.

an inability to support living and working in close proximity to people who were hostile towards him.<sup>73</sup>

While Leclaire was concerned about the well-being of his workers, and interested in the utopian social theories of Saint-Simon and Charles Fourier, the entrepreneur was adamant that his profit-sharing plan and mutual benefits society were not philanthropic endeavors.<sup>74</sup> He wrote in *De la misère* that concessions given out of a sense of obligation could only produce weak alliances that would break under the smallest pretense.<sup>75</sup> To these ends, he maintained that sound business principles, not social beliefs, motivated his ultimate decision to initiate employee benefits.<sup>76</sup> He calculated that the increased total money he could earn by employing the most able and motivated men, who would have a stake in their efforts, would more than offset the distribution of funds.<sup>77</sup> Insisting on his economic rationale, and by creating strict standards of difference in his association with his painters, Leclaire maintained an unquestioned separation from the workers. In no ways was this partnership one of equals, a reality that became quite clear in any negotiations between Leclaire and his employees.<sup>78</sup>

Dalou was initially hesitant to take the commission for this monument, telling Formigé that he did not see a clear narrative solution to the visual expression of profit

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<sup>73</sup> Boettinger, *Employee Welfare Work*, 98.

<sup>74</sup> Robert, *Biographie d'un Homme Utile*, 47-48.

<sup>75</sup> Leclaire, *De la misère*, 5.

<sup>76</sup> Boettinger, *Employee Welfare Work*, 98.

<sup>77</sup> Because of this economic reasoning, Leclaire initially only opened the benefit program to those skilled painters that he believed would be more inclined to cooperate with the company's management if they could receive increased profits for their commitment and labor. *Ibid.*, 90-1.

<sup>78</sup> *Ibid.*, 92.



sharing.<sup>79</sup> The composition that he eventually found operates in a direct formal language that is quite specific to the relationship between Leclaire and his painters. In the new Square des Epinettes, Leclaire stands at the apex of the monument in a double-breasted frockcoat. Dalou coiffed the entrepreneur's hair with medium length locks that mat across his forehead. The hair on the side of Leclaire's head is voluminous, curling subtly behind his ears to frame his face (fig. 3.9). The features portend Naturalist detail, highlighted by fleshy pockets of skin underneath the eyes – a treatment that became commonplace in Dalou's portraits of older, wise men – and the thickening and wrinkling of the skin on either side of the nose and mouth. This posthumous representation of Leclaire's countenance lacks the psychological complexity that Dalou had inscribed in the Boussingault and Charcot busts. As it is not an isolated image, however, it is not required to operate as a singular expression of the man's character in the same way.

In this case, Dalou's treatment of Leclaire's total appearance offers the best insight into his image and social attitudes. His frockcoat identifies him as a gentleman; its length – ending below the knee – adds a quality of precision to this description. Too short to be considered a coat “à la propriétaire,” the garment places him within a modern stratum of the bourgeoisie that continued to actively work in white-collar professions.<sup>80</sup> The distinction is specifically important in the context of Dalou's interest in writers such as Proudhon, who lambasted landlords and others who profited simply through the labor of workers as thieves.<sup>81</sup>

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<sup>79</sup> Dreyfous, *Dalou*, 147.

<sup>80</sup> On different length frock coats see: Perrot, *Les Dessus et les Dessous*, 203-212.

<sup>81</sup> Proudhon, *Qu'est-ce que la propriété ?*

Leclaire's cravat and lack of a hat echoes this sartorial positioning. Dalou simply wrapped the tie around Leclaire's neck with little of the flourish that marked the high fashion of the era. As with the coat, this style of attire positions Leclaire as a serious man who belonged in the bourgeois sphere but gave little heed to what contemporaries – especially workers – could call its dandified or usurious conceits.<sup>82</sup>

Dalou extended the picture of Leclaire as a sober representative of the bourgeoisie through the interplay between the entrepreneur and the housepainter (fig. 3.10). Leclaire bends slightly at the waist to make direct eye contact with the worker. Pursued lips, which perhaps hint at a smile, mark his serious but restrained expression. His heavy eyes reveal his concern for the laborer's station. Leclaire formally rests his left hand at the back of his employee's right shoulder and with his right hand grasps the painter's left wrist in a firm but fraternal shake. Holding the painter's arm, Leclaire appears to be helping the man advance to a step between the lowest level of this composition and his own position at the group's apex.

As with his representation of the *paysan* on the Boussingault monument, Dalou modeled the housepainter with directness and Naturalist features. His face is unidealized and his musculature – especially in the forearms, bare beneath the rolled sleeves – suggests a study of bodies shaped by the repeated stresses and strains of manual labor. A long smock covers his bare chest and trousers. The length of the garment visually echoes Leclaire's frockcoat, harmonizing the composition, but the difference in style, material, and tailoring insist on the two men's dissimilar stations. The painter's expression underscores the meaning that the sartorial discrepancy insinuates. He looks up to Leclaire

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<sup>82</sup> Perrot, *Les Dessus et les Dessous*, 203-212.

with his head back, mouth agape, and eyes wide (fig. 3.11). This is a regard of profound appreciation and a sense of dependence.

When Dalou unveiled the Leclaire monument in 1896, he was exhibiting two new figures in his social œuvre. He again traded the vision of a popular society united by what Michelet called a “sentiment de la France,” or “idée de la Partie,” for a scene modeled from the interactions across a clear bourgeois-proletarian divide. The painter was an employee of a major industrial house, and therefore lacked the autonomy that the artisan cherished. Leclaire, too, was not the popular hero of mid-century. He was an honorable and sensitive industrialist who ran a successful company from outside the workers’ milieu. Like the painter, he is not an autonomous hero, as he owes much of his success to the proletarian laborers of his employees.

Dalou’s treatment of the Leclaire-painter interaction rebounds within the sphere of *la question sociale*. The year before the city inaugurated the ensemble, Léon Bourgeois led the first all Radical government of the Third Republic to power under the doctrine of *Solidarité*. Bourgeois’s theory argued that the individuals of a society were mutually dependent, and the success of any individual depended on his participation in a larger social group. Accordingly, each man was a debtor to society. Bourgeois suggested that the moral imperative of *Solidarité* was to arrange social debts and credits more equally among the populace – a concept that the politician called justice.<sup>83</sup>

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<sup>83</sup> On *Solidarité* see: Bourgeois, *Solidarité*; Buisson, *Politique Radicale*; Hayward, “Solidarity: The Social History of an Idea,” 261-284; Hayward, “The official Social Philosophy of the French Third Republic,” 19-48; Stone, *Search for Social Peace*, 25-36; Blais, *La solidarité*.

Bourgeois refused claims that Radicals hoped for class leveling or collectivism. As the self-proclaimed inheritors of the Revolution, Bourgeois and his followers sought a way to make individual liberty gel with social justice. Indeed, Bourgeois supported ideas of economic liberalism, but only in so far as they informed economic policy. He argued that traditional liberal theory ignored social conditions and therefore failed the moral obligations of a republican society to free workers from positions of dependency that restricted their liberty.

The political tenets of *Solidarité* find sympathy in the contemporary study of fin-de-siècle society by the sociologist Emile Durkheim. Judith Stone has drawn this parallel specifically with regard to Durkheim and Bourgeois's shared view that society was fundamentally "a concrete reality that could be dissected and analyzed," as well as improved.<sup>84</sup> In Durkheim's 1893 *De la Division du travail social* the sociologist calls on work by economists and scientists to back his claims that the division of labor is fundamental for social order. He argues that the ideal man should neither search for autonomy nor be interested in everything. Instead he should prepare himself "to fulfill usefully a specific function."<sup>85</sup> At the same time, Durkheim stressed that the division of labor was a source of solidarity, as men engaged in a specific task would understand how that action contributed to social cooperation and cultural advance.<sup>86</sup>

Stone points out that Durkheim and Bourgeois were not collaborators. They were two like-minded individuals who reacted similarly to the social disruptions of the fin de siècle. Dalou also participated in this intellectual climate and while he enjoyed a personal

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<sup>84</sup> Stone, *Search for Social Peace*, 30.

<sup>85</sup> Durkheim, *The Division of Labor*, 3-5.

<sup>86</sup> *Ibid.*, 308.

relationship with Bourgeois he may not have known Durkheim or his writings. Dalou's precise political philosophy of the 1890s is somewhat vague – aside from his continued republicanism and his support for Alfred Dreyfus. Little concrete evidence suggests that he was a member of the Masons or the *Ligue des droits de l'Homme*, though modern scholars frequently associate him with these groups that Madeleine Rebérioux affirms as foundational forces in the establishment of a Radical political block at the turn of the century.<sup>87</sup> That said, Dalou's vision of the revolutionary tradition as well as the interchange he sculpted between the two figures in the Leclaire group (and the contemporary *Alphand* monument), suggest that Dalou may have found *Solidarité* an appealing program.

Despite these apparent convictions, Dalou's formal representation of Leclaire and his employee unconsciously reveal the tensions that bubbled beneath the solidarity doctrines. Nathalie Bondil suggests that the interaction between the two men “stand[s] half-way between paternalistic and charitable discourse.”<sup>88</sup> Her argument justly draws attention to the manner through which the group reinforces a multi-tiered social structure, with the painter's rise dependent on the assistance of the entrepreneur. The exact circumstances of the interaction, which the history of the commission and Leclaire's biography convey, however, seem to counter such a reading. In the context of the specific narrative, the group still successfully testifies to the cohesion within the Maison Leclaire.

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<sup>87</sup> Ginepro, “Dalou ou le Naturalisme en sculpture,” 40. In his unpublished manuscript John Hunisak argues that Dalou was likely a Mason. Neither Amélie Simier nor I have ever found evidence to support this, yet there is no doubt that Dalou was friendly with many in the Masonic orders. Moreover, a group of Masons participated in the 1899 inauguration of the *Triumph of the Republic*. Madeleine Rebérioux, *La République radicale ?* 42-44.

<sup>88</sup> Bondil, “The Representation of Poverty,” 70.

Nonetheless, the potential for social strain, as Bondil identifies it, is evident in the interaction – especially in the inequality of the sentiments expressed. Here, it seems that social cohesion depends on the bourgeoisie’s concern for their employees and the workers’ appreciation of help. Such an imbalance could prove divisive in highlighting a social harmony achieved through laborers’ dependence and subordination.

The vagueness of the formal program makes the monument’s function in the memorial sphere problematic. The visual positivism, which counts heavily on viewers understanding a unique relationship, jeopardizes the sculpture’s power as a broader cultural commentary that could illuminate universal issues surrounding *la question sociale*. As the *Leclaire* operates with its precise narrative in a culture where workers and employers were becoming further entrenched in their oppositional positions, the group appears as an exception to the tenor of contemporary class dynamics. It functions as a quixotic expression of hope and exacting representation of one narrative rather than a didactic guide for a new social paradigm.

Dalou’s contemporary monument to Parisian city planner Jean-Charles-Adolphe Alphand (fig. 3.12) offered a further opportunity to reimaging monumental aesthetics in the context of *la question sociale*. Though the city did not inaugurate the group on the wide tree-lined avenue de Bois de Bologne (now Avenue Foch) until 1899, Dalou began work on this task simultaneously with the *Boussingault* and *Leclaire* monuments. As with the *Leclaire* group, Dalou undertook this project in partnership with Formigé who had previously worked for the city planner. Dalou, too, had shared a close relationship with

the man affectionately known as “Père Alphand.”<sup>89</sup> The planner was an admirer of Dalou’s œuvre and personal character, and had called on their bond of friendship and republican spirit to convince the sculptor to exhibit a plaster version of the *Triumph of the Republic* in 1889.<sup>90</sup> For his part, Dalou was also a great enthusiast for Alphand’s work – not only as a fixture in the republicanization of the public sphere – but also as a man of science and spirit.<sup>91</sup>

The impetus for the monument arose the year after Alphand’s death in 1891. Théodore Villard, a Parisian municipal counselor committed to using urbanism to encourage social solidarity, initiated a monument committee to raise a commemorative group in the planner’s honor.<sup>92</sup> Villard and Gustave Mesureur – the committee president and Minister of Commerce and Industry under Bourgeois’s 1895 government – led a group of Radical and left-leaning artists, politicians, engineers, and intellectuals.<sup>93</sup> Dreyfous argues that the committee quickly chose Dalou as the obvious sculptor best able to commemorate Alphand – not only because of his reputation as the leading public monument maker of the period, but also because of the mutual admiration between the two men.<sup>94</sup> The timing of the project, and Dalou’s place within the circle of commissioners, raises possibilities that the sculptor contributed to the plans to form a committee and erect a commemoration.

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<sup>89</sup> Delaporte, “Jules Dalou,” 302.

<sup>90</sup> Dreyfous, *Dalou*, 150.

<sup>91</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>92</sup> Shapiro, *Housing the Poor of Paris*, 118.

<sup>93</sup> *Inauguration du Monument élevé à ALPHAND par ses Amis et ses Admirateurs avec le concours de la Ville de Paris, du Département de la Seine, et de l’Etat, Le 14 Décembre 1899.*

<sup>94</sup> Dreyfous, *Dalou*, 150.

In developing the monument, Dalou turned to stone rather than his traditional bronze. He designed the composition around an ornamented exedra that rests on a stepped base. At the center of the exedra, Dalou placed a multi-tiered pedestal that rises gracefully to a height equal to the top of the frame. “Alphand / Directeur de Travaux / de Paris” and the Parisian crest ornament the plinth’s front. On top of the pedestal, Dalou fixed a full-length image of Alphand striding forward. Portraits of four men who serve as symbols of sculpture, painting, architecture, and engineering surround the plinth’s base in a format that recalls *ancien régime* sculptures of a monarch surrounded by the four virtues. Despite their roles as embodiments of specific crafts, the men – the painter Alfred Roll, the architect Joseph-Antoine Bouvard, the engineer Edmond Huet, and Dalou himself – are readily identifiable as Alphand’s chief municipal collaborators.

On the inside face of the exedra, Dalou modeled a near continuous relief of manual laborers engaged in a variety of tasks. The central grouping splits the frieze, allowing Dalou to divide the scenes between building and construction labors and gardening and field works. The semi-circular frame of the monument, its stepped structure, and the relief sculpture invite the viewer into the monument’s space, heightening the interaction between the stone and the audience. The formal engagement with the viewer continues at the back of the ensemble where a bench wraps the length of the monument.

The monument to Alphand is one intended to honor the man that contemporary Frenchmen credited with transforming Paris from a city of kings into a democratic



capital.<sup>95</sup> After the fall of the Second Empire, Alphand continued the redevelopment of the city with an eye towards creating a republican social sphere. He devoted massive attention to establishing public parks such as the Parc Monceau, the Bois de Vincennes, Bois de Boulogne, and the Parc de Buttes-Chaumont, championing these green spaces in his seminal book *Les Promenades de Paris*. He also continued the Empire's pattern of planting trees on new Parisian boulevards as part of both an aesthetic and sanitary program. In addition to his work with gardens and green spaces, the planner led a number of urban renewal projects, including the development of a series of city squares such as those at the Batignolles or Temple. Additionally, he helped organize the preparation of Paris for the *Expositions Universelles* of 1878 and 1889, as well as the redevelopment of the municipal infrastructure after the Prussian siege and the Commune.

In the early stages of the project, Dalou struggled to capture the right effect for the posthumous representation. He turned to Alfred Roll, who had exhibited a brilliant portrait of Alphand in 1889 (fig. 3.13), for guidance. Roll gave Dalou access to his preliminary drawings from Alphand's modeling sessions, and Dalou's subsequent portrait shows the profound influence of the painter's study.<sup>96</sup>

Roll's portrait of Alphand fixes the planner in the middle of a worksite with the dome of Val de Grace rising above his right shoulder and two manual laborers behind him to the left.<sup>97</sup> In a manner typical of Roll's portraiture of the period, the painter distinguishes his subject from the surrounding figures through posture, attire, and a painterly play between crisp formal details and hazy background scenes. Alphand

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<sup>95</sup> Hunisak, "Images of Workers," in *Romantics to Rodin*, 57.

<sup>96</sup> Dreyfous, *Dalou*, 160.

<sup>97</sup> Special thanks to James Hargrove for identifying the dome.

emerges from the fog wearing a long dark coat and an equally dark top hat. The painter emphasized Alphant's wide jaw, narrow eyes, and the undulations in the tone of his beard and mustache. The planner's eyes flit to the left and his lips press together as he glances attentively, but not necessarily intensely, to a space beyond the picture plane. In his left hand he holds a series of documents and his right hand is partially imbedded in his coat pocket. A hint that the right hand is either entering or exiting the pocket enlivens the right arm. Alphant's glasses, temporarily balanced slightly askew on a covered button of his jacket subtly underscore the painting's pregnant tone. Despite the stillness of the rendering, Roll's image captures the subtle energy of a man in active contemplation.

Dalou borrowed heavily from Roll's physical portrayal of Alphant (fig. 3.14), especially for the facial details for which the sculptor praised Roll's image as achieving a "tournure absolument vraie."<sup>98</sup> Like Roll, Dalou also chose to represent Alphant in the midst of his labor, but with a markedly different tone. Rather than employing a pensive pose with an undercurrent of vigor, Dalou pictures Alphant dynamically stepping forward and gesturing with his right hand to the men below him. As he advances, he ducks his bald head to his left to direct his gaze at a blue print that Bouvard holds in front of him. His eyes narrow in intense concentration.

Dalou established further, albeit subtle, variations from the Roll portrait in representing Alphant's attire. Instead of a frockcoat, which could suggest a more sedentary bourgeois spirit, Dalou dressed the planner in what Dreyfous called his customary thigh-length morning coat, clasped with a single button just below the neck.

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<sup>98</sup> Dreyfous, *Dalou*, 160. "An absolutely correct appearance."

As Alphand moves forward, the coat flashes open, accentuating his dynamism and energy. Dalou also insisted on Alphand's intense concentration through his treatment of the planner's hat – a less formal bowler or derby hat rather than a proper top hat – that he scrunches carelessly in his left hand.

This image of Alphand embodies the spirit of a man who described himself as “pas un personnage en bois assis sur une chaise directoriale, mais un directeur en chair et en os, agissant, ayant une initiative personnelle.”<sup>99</sup> Dreyfous, who recounted Alphand's self-appraisal, concurred and recalled seeing the planner working until the very last minute on inauguration days “sans idée de pose, endosser la blouse et, allant de l'un à l'autre, veiller aux travaux de la dernière minute...ne craignant jamais de mettre-lui même la main à la pâte.”<sup>100</sup> While the monument represents Alphand in a manner perhaps slightly more refined than if it had shown him digging in the dirt, it is nonetheless the portrait of an active worker.

The critic Gustave Geffroy found Alphand's elevated position somewhat bizarre in relation to his interaction with the lower level of collaborators.<sup>101</sup> François Thiebault-Sisson, who preferred the allegorical style of the Dalou's *Delacroix*, called the Alphand arrangement illogical realism.<sup>102</sup> These critics' complaints focused on the unrealistic worksite composition, and both suggest that there were less drastic means of distinguishing the planner from his assistants while maintaining a more truthful representation of laboring relationships. Dalou, however, does not seem to have deemed a

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<sup>99</sup> Ibid., 151. “Not a wooden character resting in a directorial chair, but a director in skin and bones, acting and owning a personal initiative.”

<sup>100</sup> Ibid. “without posing, wearing a worker's smock, and going here and there, watching over the last-minute work...never hesitating to get his hands dirty with the work.”

<sup>101</sup> Geffroy, “Jules Dalou,” 224.

<sup>102</sup> Thiebault-Sisson, “Jules Dalou,” 149.

faithful real-world representation as the monument's chief focus. In fact, he insisted on the constructed nature of his composition by modeling a canvas tarp on the sides of the pedestal.

The image of fabric offers more than just a witty play on the traditions of Baroque drapery. The cloth itself has several eyelets, including two in which Dalou sculpted threads of rope with frayed ends (Fig. 3.15). The suggestion is that the rope, which would have held the tarp together in front of the plinth, has recently been cut. As the tarp falls to the sides, the central pedestal emerges as if it had just been unveiled. The ceremonial presentation of the statue's base insists on its objecthood. In this context, the relationship between the tiers of figures and the raised position of Père Alphanth suggests not simply a conversation between the planner and his collaborators, but a mannered presentation of types of figures in the Republic's memorial environment.

Alphanth's right-handed gesture and his focused attention mitigate some of the formal discontinuity that his elevated position causes. The movement of the men at the lower level, all of whom seem to shift their position in response to Alphanth's actions, further reduces the compositional tension. Roll, whose portrait Dalou positioned just behind that of the architect Bouvard on Alphanth's left, leans back and turns his head to have a better view of Alphanth's demeanor. On the opposite side of the composition, Dalou, whose own portrait is stationed behind the engineer Huet, mirrors the painter's actions. For his part, Huet leans against the pedestal and looks across the composition to personally inspect Bouvard's plans. The divergent reactions begin to reveal that Alphanth's assistants were men of distinctly different characters, while the organized asymmetry creates a palpable energy that activates the composition.

The two figures to Alphand's right manifest the most striking disparity in personal temperament. At the rear of the couple, Dalou positioned his self-portrait (fig. 3.16). The representation of his face comes largely from a life-cast that the sculptor commissioned from his assistant Amédée Bertault, who apparently made himself sick with stress when applying plaster to his patron's visage.<sup>103</sup> The severity and intensity of Dalou's gaunt appearance prompted Dreyfous to clarify that Dalou was actually a good-humored man and quite willing to relax – qualities surely not visible in this portrait that the author called morose.<sup>104</sup> Dalou's pose mirrors the force of his expression, teeming with energy. He stands with his legs primed – one on the pedestal's base and the other bent, melding into the frieze behind him as he intently looks up at Alphand. His hammer and chisel are in hand; he appears ready to spring immediately to action.

The long and oversized v-neck smock and the humble tools of the sculptor's trade are strong assertions of Dalou's working-class persona. The shirt descends to his knees and engulfs him. Its inordinately deep v-neck – open to his abdomen – exposes his slight, bare chest. A contemporary photograph of Dalou in his studio, published in the *Revue Illustrée* of November 1899 (fig. 3.17), images the sculptor in a similar work shirt. Unlike in the monument, however, in that picture Dalou wears a vest and cravat underneath his smock. Though both images construct the sculptor's image as a physical laborer, the stone statue operates without the formality and hints of middle-class decorum that the studio portrait suggests.

In the middle of the physically demanding act of sculpting, Dalou may not have worn a vest and a tie. Indeed, the tools that Dalou holds – a mallet and chisel – insist on

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<sup>103</sup> Dreyfous, *Dalou*, 161-2.

<sup>104</sup> *Ibid.*, 161.

the physicality of his actions, while also revealing Dalou's self-fashioning. Like the vast majority of nineteenth-century sculptors, Dalou charged a team of *praticiens* to undertake the brute work of carving for his stone and marble projects. In the case of the *Alphand*, Dalou may well have tasked himself with the finishing work, but he certainly was not paring the frieze from solid rock himself. In the broad sense, Dalou's cultivation of his image as a manual laborer is consistent with a number of his contemporaries and mentors including Rodin and Carpeaux, and operates within a larger discourse of sculptors seeking to identify with the working class.<sup>105</sup> On the monument itself, Dalou's image as a laborer creates room for slippage between his portrait and the images of manual workers embedded in the surface of the exedra, especially where the sculptor's foot melds into the semi-circular frame.

Dalou's vigor stands in marked contrast to the portrait of Huet (fig. 3.18) who exudes calm contemplation. Unlike the bald Dalou, whose lack of hair accentuates the severity and angularity of his features, Huet appears a well-coifed gentleman. He wears a high collared, crisp shirt beneath his double-breasted, buttoned coat. The closure of the jacket distinguishes his attire from that of Dalou, Roll, Alphand, and Bouvard whose looser garments free the men to move easily. Huet's straight legs, positioned against one another, compound this effect as they convey a bodily tranquility that denies him the possibility of immediate action. His only visually apparent effort appears to be in stretching his neck slightly to see the architect's plan without changing his position against the pedestal.

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<sup>105</sup> Wagner, *Jean-Baptiste Carpeaux*, 10.

Though the portraits of Dalou and Huet are studies in contrast, both men belonged to the elite guard of Alphand's team. The Parisian Municipal council had chosen Huet to succeed Alphand as *Directeur administratif des travaux de Paris* – a quite natural choice given contemporaries' evaluations that Huet was Alphand's "alter-ego."<sup>106</sup> Huet also served as one of the leaders of the Alphand monument commission and seems as committed as Dalou to honoring his predecessor with a monument that speaks to his republican virtue.

On the opposite side of the composition, Bouvard and Roll fit between the extremes of Dalou and Huet. Bouvard (fig. 3.19) was another one of Alphand's chief assistants and his successor as the *Commissaire général des fêtes* and *Inspecteur général des services municipaux d'architecture*. He too served on the monument committee. In Dalou's monument, the well-coifed Bouvard wears a short morning coat, the opening of which creates space for him to raise his right leg to the lip of one of the pedestal's undulations. His left leg remains entrenched in a trailing register of depth. The position of his legs, and the twist of his torso represent Bouvard maneuvering to place his plans in Alphand's view, a gesture that catalyzes the monument's narrative

Behind the architect, Alfred Roll holds his painter's palette and brushes in his left hand. Dalou spent significant time on the portrait of Roll (fig. 3.20), both in his efforts to capture the man's physiognomy and also because the two men enjoyed the modeling sessions as a time to reconnect.<sup>107</sup> As with his own self-portrait, Dalou modeled Roll wearing a long smock over his torso, beneath which the painter sports a jacket and cravat – clothing appropriate to his station as a bourgeois artist and to his craft as a painter. At

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<sup>106</sup> Berton, Ossadzow, and Fillole, *Fulgence Bienvenüe*, 14.

<sup>107</sup> Dreyfous, *Dalou*, 159.

the back of the group, Roll leans into the rounded corner at the intersection of the pedestal and the exedra, resting his left arm against the barrier. From this position, he turns his head up to view Alphand's reaction to Bouvard's plans. In a gesture that is a microcosm of the calmness of his entire portrait, Roll languidly folds his right arm against his stomach as a paintbrush dangles between his fingers.

The four men of the middle level of the composition comprise a diverse group of artists and intellectuals. Nevertheless, Dalou appears to be the outlier with his self-portrait as manual laborer. Visually, he seems to have little in common with Huet and Bouvard, finding only slightly more sympathy in the portrait of Roll. His station among the three other men, who appear to be embodiments of the modern republican bourgeoisie, confuses the stratification of the social structure. It suggests the possibility of a manual laborer to exist within a bourgeois sphere – a circumstance that subverts the social dichotomy that dominated the era. Nevertheless, there remain key differences between Dalou and those on the monument's exedra; Dalou, for one, is not anonymous – he is a member of the cultural elite who wielded a power that extended beyond the brute force of his hammer and chisel.

This dissonance between Dalou and his peers suggests that the presumed separation of society based solely on a division of laborer was too simple an analysis. Of course, both the Radicals and Durkheim accounted for multiple tiers in their social organization, yet their evaluations only took types of work into account. This shortcoming in the sociological analysis would occupy the next generation of thinkers, including Max Weber who argued that a person's place in society also depended on his



access to power, his image, and his reputation.<sup>108</sup> Dalou could not have been aware of Weber's theories, which were written after the sculptor's death, but his ambiguous identity – between a manual laborer and a respected cultural shaper – exposes many of the complexities that prompted reconsiderations of the fin-de-siècle's areas of social slippage.

Dalou's treatment of the individual workers on the inner face of the monument's frame is also a problematic intervention into class discourse. The frieze marks one of the first inclusions of a sensitively rendered, but unsentimental, Naturalist worker program in French public monuments. Dalou organized the relief in two halves, each comprising multiple planes of depth through which the various narrative scenes weave. In the overlapping of figures, vignettes, and movements, the sculptor creates a sense of dynamic action. His detailed, if inconsistent, modeling of musculature and attitudes reveals the profits of his contemporary efforts to design a *Monument to Laborers* – a task that sent him to multiple cities in the French countryside to study working conditions and laboring types – and which had already paid off with his rendering of the *Boussingault* peasant.

On the face of the exedra, to Alphand's right, Dalou portrayed a series of gardening men (fig. 3.21). At the outside edge of the composition, a group of five works together in an effort to lay sod. One man faces away from the center and digs while a second man, oriented towards the middle of the monument, bends over with a rectangular piece of turf in his hands. Behind these two figures, an older man with a large head frowns as he looks down to his left hand where he holds a watering pail. Another older

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<sup>108</sup> Weber, *The Theory of Social and Economic Organization*.

man wearing a hat seems to be speaking with the water-pail worker. A fifth figure, who carries a sack over his right shoulder, leans his head into the group. In this vignette, the three men whose clothing is visible all wear baggy work shirts with rolled sleeves. Their forearms are thick, but the musculature is unrefined. Dalou echoes this corporeal treatment in the sack-carrier whose heavy shoulders lack the delineations that would highlight the contours of the deltoid muscle.

Adjoining this group of figures is a series of smaller groups or individuals engaged in other planting tasks. An older bearded man carries a wicker basket holding a young tree. Far from a Herculean laborer, the man needs to lean back and balance his load against his legs as he inches forward. Next to him, a shirtless man advances a wheelbarrow into a deeper plane of relief. Unlike his handling of the sod-figures, Dalou carefully modeled this man's anatomy. He visually stressed the V of his well-defined triceps and highlighted other muscular nuances.

Dalou continued his method of mixing groups and individuals on the opposite side of the composition where laborers engage building and paving tasks (fig. 3.22). Emerging from the center of the monument, four men in varying degrees of relief carry a beam on their right shoulders and march into the depth of the exedra. In front of them, a man with rolled sleeves brings his hammer down while a middle-aged figure next to him stirs cement. Such scenes continue to the edge of the composition where a worker holds a trowel over a wheelbarrow as he stands next to hastily arranged pile of bricks. As with the gardening composition on the opposite side, the arrangement of builders includes the young and the old, the bearded and the clean-shaven, and the strong and the struggling.

These figures were not the first Naturalist-style laborers in European public monuments. In addition to Dalou, who had already treated his *paysan* and housepainter in a similar manner, in 1882-83 the Italian Vincenzo Vela had executed a Naturalist memorial to workers lost in the construction of the Gotthard Pass (fig. 3.23). Additionally, Constantin Meunier executed several projects that aggrandized the modern laborer in a similar formal style (fig. 3.24). Neither Meunier nor Vela, however, places his workers in conversation with other strata of society as Dalou does here and in the *Leclaire*. Moreover, both Vela and Meunier (perhaps unintentionally) reinforce the workers' distance from the dominant bourgeoisie in their efforts to evoke a certain amount of sentimentality and compassion for their subjects. Dalou's 1890s monuments – and specifically the Alphand and Leclaire groups – are novel in the manner that they evacuate sentimentality and physical separation, even as they manifest the modern conditions of social difference.

Dreyfous argued that the finished Alphand reliefs did not achieve the same depth and strength of representation as Dalou's *esquisse*.<sup>109</sup> Other critics concurred that the formal treatment was not up to Dalou's normal standard. Maurice Demaison suggested that as a whole, the monument “n'a pas la même liberté, la même franchise que plusieurs autres, sorties de la même main.”<sup>110</sup> Dreyfous largely blamed the state of Dalou's health, though the stone surface of the monument is perhaps as much of a factor.<sup>111</sup> Not only is the material not as revealing as bronze or marble would have been in manifesting the nuances of Dalou's program, it is also one with which Dalou was less experienced. The

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<sup>109</sup> Dreyfous, *Dalou*, 168.

<sup>110</sup> Demaison, “M. DALOU,” 44. “Does not have the same liberty, the same directness as many others that the same artist's hand produced.”

<sup>111</sup> Dreyfous, “Dalou inconnu,” 72.

rationale for the sculptor's decision to use stone is unclear. That said, the material's evocation of France's stone-carving tradition, the practitioners of which Dalou had cited as his example of ideal medieval laborers, provides an appealing possibility.<sup>112</sup>

Despite these criticisms, commentators, including Demaison, insisted on the innovation of the formal arrangement and the directness of the group.<sup>113</sup> Louis de Meurville offered similar accolades for the monument's originality, describing the arrangement as novel and ingenious in its simplicity, eloquence, and realism.<sup>114</sup> For all the praise of Dalou's new conception of a realist monumental composition, critics seem to have largely overlooked the bench at the back of the exedra.

For formal reasons, the site of installation had displeased both Dalou and Formigé. The monument committee had other priorities, seeming to be more concerned with the programmatic perspective that the ensemble would facilitate.<sup>115</sup> At the group's inauguration in 1899, Mesureur declared that from his place on the monument, Alphand could "contempler la ville de Pierre sans limite et les perspectives sans fin de son Bois de prédilection."<sup>116</sup> The bench at the back of the monument allowed viewers a similar perspective to consider the planner's Paris. Yet this vision of the democratized capital reveals only a bourgeois quarter and site of leisure, isolated from the working class neighborhoods to the east of the city and beyond the municipal limits.

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<sup>112</sup> See chapter 4, note 3.

<sup>113</sup> Demaison, "M. Dalou," 44.

<sup>114</sup> De Meurville, "L'œuvre de Jules Dalou, 2<sup>e</sup>" 21.

<sup>115</sup> Dreyfous, *Dalou*, 166.

<sup>116</sup> "Discours de M. G. Mesureur, Président du Comité," *Inauguration du Monument élevé à ALPHAND par ses Amis et ses Admirateurs avec le concours de la Ville de Paris, du Département de la Seine, et de l'Etat, Le 14 Décembre 1899*, 9. "Contemplate the city of stone without any obstruction as well as the unending perspectives of his favorite forest."

The Alphan Monument echoes many of the structural inconsistencies between the social ideals of the left and the social realities of the Republic that plagued efforts to bridge the gap between workers and the bourgeoisie. The formal program seems to image the seemingly ideal division of labor that would produce social solidarity and class cohesion, but as Demaison notes, the execution belies this effect because the figures of the three distinct tiers do not manifest truly intimate connections.<sup>117</sup> The barriers in the composition parallel the circumstances of the neighboring bourgeois sphere around the monument. Ostensibly, the bench offers a view of the Paris that Alphan and his collaborators – the manual workers included – democratized. The actual vistas, however, are ones that capture an area of cultural difference where the new buildings, homes, and population of the avenue du Bois de Boulogne demonstrate the social separation of the working class and the bourgeoisie.

In many ways, this inconsistency between the reality of class division and the rhetoric of class harmony has echoes in the front of the ensemble. Dalou's manual laborers entered the monumental environment of modern Paris – a sphere that had largely been reserved for kings, aristocrats, politicians, martyrs, and the heroes of the new republican meritocracy – but their tertiary position in the composition's hierarchy suggests a limited claim to the ceremonial space.

Each of the men in the *Boussingault*, *Leclaire*, and *Alphan* ensembles manifest an expression of laboring idealism, yet the disparity in their social positions and the types of work that aggrandize them suggests an inconsistent masculine ideal. Whereas the

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<sup>117</sup> Demaison, "M. Dalou," 44.

popular heroes of the 1880s communicated an idea of French identity connected to the revolutionary tradition, which allowed them to transcend class barriers, the ambiguity between the types of the 1890s figures insists on class difference and inconsistent constructions of masculinity. Even with rhetoric and social concerns that sought to forge class harmony, the undercurrents of tension, the naivety of certain sociological extrapolations, and the dissonance between the rhetoric and the reality expose a litany of contradictions that undercut the figures' ability to serve as exemplars of the nation's virtue

Dalou's new aesthetic also proves less than totally successful in expressing cultural values and representing the worker as the nation's representative man. Beyond the social questions that shifted the definition of productive labor and divested it among a series of distinct types, the focus of Dalou's positivist style incorporated a scientific approach to revealing cultural realities and policies. This was a new goal for public sculpture, which had traditionally explored the sphere of ideals. The exacting detail and Naturalism at times prevented Dalou's works from successfully engaging larger themes. When they did, they often exposed social contradictions and necessitated compositions that offered an unconvincing vision of worldly realities.

In the last years of his life, Dalou continued to refine his social and formal ideas. In his ultimate plans for a *Monument to Laborers* and in his *Grand Paysan*, he offered a completely new visual ideal that seems to manifest a maturation and consideration of the aesthetic lessons he learned in the early 1890s groups. The formal inconsistencies of the *Boussingault*, *Leclair*, and *Alphand*, however, are dynamic evidence of the sculptor's engagement with his time. Dalou's monuments that expose formal and social

ambivalence, equivocation, and ambiguity reveal the modern experience in the way that many lived the period – as a moment of profound uncertainty.

## Gendering Modernity/Modernizing Masculinity

Four years before his 1902 death, Dalou wrote in his journal, “Je crois avoir enfin trouvé le monument aux ouvriers que je cherche depuis 1889. La disposition générale tiendrait de l’insigne de Priape.”<sup>1</sup> The mark of that Greek god, an oversized tumescent phallus, certainly influences Dalou’s final model, yet the complete ensemble is far more than a simple phallic column meant to glorify the power of the worker. Instead, the program reveals the culmination of the sculptor’s decade-long search for a new sculptural idiom that could offer a vision of virility in the modern age. In this project, Dalou attempted to operate in a purely scientific visual language through which he would communicate 1890s realities along with universal ideals about man in the age of progress. The juxtaposition of the model of the *Monument to Laborers* and the *Grand Paysan*, a contemporary statue modeled in much the same spirit, manifests the sculptor’s departure from customary modes of visual expression. Exploring symbols of masculine power and industrial prowess, Dalou tested the limits of the figurative monument tradition, engaging social, cultural, and industrial contradictions that marked the dawn of the twentieth century.

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<sup>1</sup> Dalou, 15 March, 1898, cited in Dreyfous, *Dalou*, 256. “I believe that I have finally found the form of the Monument to Laborers for which I have been searching since 1889. Its general character will be the sign of Priapus.”



Despite his commitment to the project, Dalou was never successful in finding external support in order to erect the monument – nor was he particularly active in seeking it. Nevertheless, in 1898 – four years before his death – Dalou cast his final thoughts for the ensemble in plaster (fig. 4.1). The model proposed a thirty-meter tall, tapering, cylindrical column with chains of workers’ tools in low relief ornamenting its sides. Naturalist representations of laborers encircle the pillar’s base in a series of niches that sit above the square plinth that supports the central column. On each side of the base, Dalou inset a relief depicting the quotidian efforts of workers of diverse genres – highlighting metallurgical, rural, marine, and factory laborers. The decorative program, composed exclusively of realist motifs, manifests the sculptor’s unwavering commitment to worldly ornamentation, which denies the socio-political flexibility that allegory offered in ensembles like the *Triumph of the Republic*.

By the time Dalou cast this ultimate vision for the model in 1898, he had already revealed his efforts to sculpt with a new formal style in a series of monuments designed earlier in the decade. His mission to rid his œuvre of allegories took shape – with varying degrees of success – in the *Boussingault*, *Leclaire*, and *Alphand* groups.<sup>2</sup> In each of these projects, the mandates of commissions constrained the sculptor’s ability to concentrate exclusively on the laborer. Moreover, his formal experiments exposed the aesthetic tensions between positivist visual programs and the representation of broad cultural ideologies. The *Monument to Laborers*, on the other hand, was atypical in that Dalou could operate without committee interference, the restrictions enforced by a predetermined location, and the narrative themes that biographies specified. In many

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<sup>2</sup> On Dalou’s objection to allegory see: Roujon, “Preface,” vii; Dreyfous, *Dalou*, 249; Chapter 3 of this project.

ways, this independence makes the project most similar to the *Triumph of the Republic* and *Fraternité* as a visual expression of the sculptor's psyche and attitudes towards both society and monumentality.

Before he could envision his Priapic tower, Dalou needed to clarify his own attitudes towards work and sculpture in the modern era. Roujon describes the influence of the cult of the medieval craftsman in the sculptor's initial approach to representing the new age. He writes that Dalou:

tendit la main aux artisans du Moyen âge, aux tailleurs de Pierre du soubassement d'Amiens, aux tumbiers bourguignons, à tous ces imagiers anonymes de la vieille France qui sculptaient aux porches des cathédrales le drame sublime du travail et l'éternel poème de la vie. Il se sentit leur héritier légitime.<sup>3</sup>

Beyond signifying a formal shift away from the Neo-Baroque exuberance that inflected the sculptor's Romantic spirit and 1880s monuments, this medievalism responds to an international interest in pre-industrial societies – especially as it resonated within the contemporary discourse of working-class circumstances and national identities. For instance, British critics such as John Ruskin and William Morris, with whom Dalou was familiar from his London period, argued that in a pre-modern era man pursued and enjoyed his labors outside of the degradation of modern civilization and its structures.<sup>4</sup>

In turn-of-the-century France, Laura Morowitz notes, there had been “a chauvinistic reclaiming of the Middle Ages,” through which Frenchmen turned to the medieval past to

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<sup>3</sup> Roujon, “Preface,” viii. “extended his hand to the artisans of the Middle Ages, the stonemasons who were the foundations of Amiens, to the Burgundian “tumbiers,” to all the anonymous image makers of old France who sculpted the sublime work and the eternal poem of life on the porches of her cathedrals. He believed himself to be their legitimate heir.”

<sup>4</sup> Donovan, *Williams Morris and the Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings*, 17; Harvey Jon Press, *Art, Enterprise and Ethics*, 208.

find “national symbols whose origins, inspiration and achievements came to be championed for a variety of political purposes and from a host of perspectives.”<sup>5</sup>

Like Dalou, Auguste Rodin had a profound interest in the work of Gothic artists. He was less interested in them as part of a polemic exploration of modernity or as examples of ideal workers, but instead as icons of innocent artistry. Like J-K Huysmans and many of the fin-de-siècle *avant-garde*, Rodin credited their attitudes, thoughts, and “naïveté charmante” for ennobling France’s Gothic cathedrals with a benevolent spirit that manifested the connection between ideas and art.<sup>6</sup>

Dalou’s vision, as Roujon tells it, is slightly different from that of Rodin. Rodin refers only to “*imagiers*” – image-makers – as exemplars of men who created *chefs-d’œuvre* by culling inspiration from the elevated realm of ideas. Dalou, on the other hand, groups the *imagiers* with a series of artisans who sculpted “le drame sublime du travail et l’éternel poème de la vie.” The distinction is subtle but significant. The invocation of the stonecutters and *tumbiers*, as well as the sublime drama of work, places Dalou’s emphasis on beauty as a product of labor.

Calling on the pre-modern, medieval craftsman as his new model of the ideal laborer, Dalou engages a strain of anti-modern discourse that rejected the Bourgeois Republic’s calls for progress, as well as its redefinition of valuable work through industrial structures. Rather than celebrating the modern condition – what Baudelaire described as “the ephemeral, the fugitive, [and] the contingent” – Dalou’s rhetoric

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<sup>5</sup> Laura Morowitz, “Medievalism, Classicism, and Nationalism: The Appropriation of the French *Primitifs* in Turn-of-the-Century France,” in *Nationalism and French Visual Culture*, 225.

<sup>6</sup> Rodin, *L’Art*, 137.

aggrandizes the manual labors and artisans of the Gothic cathedrals for creating France's most lasting and celebrated monuments.<sup>7</sup>

This vision occasions potentially problematic intersections with extremist parties in France, which rejected the Republic's image of the modern age. For instance, right-wing nationalist parties, whose politics were often diametrically opposed to those of Dalou on the fin-de-siècle's most polemic conflicts, seized on pre-modern and pre-Enlightenment discourses to amplify their nativist, atavistic, and organic doctrines. Dalou's refusal of certain modern currents demonstrate neither the reactionary politics commonly associated with anti-modernism and proto-fascist rhetoric, nor the interest in colonial authenticities, primitivism, and classicism that embodied much of the artistic exploration of these themes.<sup>8</sup> Instead, Dalou's anti-modern ideas, strong republicanism, and desire to be of his own era illustrate an alternative vision of the new age that reconsiders the ideals of progress in a manner that questions conventional understandings of man's place in the industrial era.

In a departure from many of his efforts in the 1890s, Dalou created his plans for the perspective *Monument to Laborers* without the assistance of the architect Jean-Camille Formigé. Working both as the architect and sculptor, Dalou had total control of the ensemble, allowing him to assert it as his exclusive intellectual property.<sup>9</sup> This

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<sup>7</sup> Baudelaire, *The Painter of Modern Life*, 12.

<sup>8</sup> See: Neil McWilliam, "Action française, Classicism, and the Dilemmas of Traditionalism in France, 1900-1914," in *Nationalism and French Visual Culture*, 268-291. On connections between anti-modernity and primitivism see: Fred R. Myers, "Introduction to Part One: Around and About Modernity: Some Comments on Themes of Primitivism and Modernism," in *Antimodernism and Artistic Experience: Policing the Boundaries of Modernity*, 13-25.

<sup>9</sup> Dreyfous, *Dalou*, 250.

independence may well have contributed to Dalou's difficulties in finding an appropriate architectonic design. After several iterations, including a first that Dreyfous describes as "un peu ridicule," Dalou only settled on the ultimate conception late in the decade.<sup>10</sup>

As Dreyfous notes, Dalou's first effort for the monument was somewhat nonsensical. In this initial plaster sketch (fig. 4.2), Dalou presented a peasant horseman on a high base that itself rested on a series of steps. Around the plinth Dalou modeled sixteen individual workers representing a variety of professions. Beneath these figures the sculptor added a decorative fringe under which he sculpted a continuous frieze that showcased the daily tasks of factory, farm, sea, and mine workers.

The monument's architectonic configuration would have produced a peculiar viewing environment, which would likely not have supported enlargement to a monumental scale. To examine the horseman high above ground, the viewer would need to maintain a distance that would limit his interaction with the complex ornamental program that extolled a vision of universal manual labor. In approaching the monument in order to attempt to investigate the revealing decorative sculpture – issues of perspective would be problematic here – the viewer would lose sight of the horseman. From this close proximity, he would have simply seen the underside of the animal and the bottom of the peasant's feet – hardly an image that triumphantly asserts the worker's heroism.

Despite the formal shortcomings of the initial effort, the ornamental program of the horseman-peasant design manifests Dalou's commitment to an unambiguous visual celebration of laborers outside of the traditions of allegory. The exclusivity of a

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<sup>10</sup> Ibid.

decorative motif drawn from the worldly sphere demonstrates Dalou's dedication to such a scientific visual language as early as 1890 – a number of years before he used a similar program in the *Leclaire* monument. Throughout Dalou's many shifts in form and ideas about modernity and the *Monument to Laborers* in the next decade, this combination of stand-alone workers, quotidian reliefs, and workers tools remained consistent throughout the entire process as the exclusive decorative language.<sup>11</sup>

The novel ornamental system notwithstanding, the general motif of this design reveals Dalou's struggle to break free from established monument traditions. At its most basic, this model operated within an equestrian idiom that had reigned since antiquity. Moreover, Constantin Meunier had recently exhibited his own eighty-four centimeter tall worker themed equestrian statue – *L'Abreuvoir* – at the Brussels Exposition Triennale in 1890. Meunier's statue would go onto become a public monument in 1899 when it took a place in the square Ambiorix in Brussels (fig. 4.3), but its monumental destiny was implicit from its earliest exhibition when it was shown as “*motif décoratif pour un abreuvoir public.*”<sup>12</sup>

Though it relies on an extensive equestrian tradition, Dalou's composition was not entirely derivative of past examples. His plodding horse and humble hero, who may be actively laboring – the sketchiness of the early design prevents a definitive reading of the gesture of the peasant's right hand – communicate none of the grandeur of the Bourbon kings or even Meunier's muscular, bare-chested, and ennobled modern peasant. Nevertheless, Dalou's concept failed to connect with modernity on its own terms,

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<sup>11</sup> Dreyfous, *Dalou*, 249.

<sup>12</sup> Fontaine, *Constantin Meunier*, 105. “Decorative motif for a public sculpture of a horse at the trough.”

offering instead a pointed rejoinder to existing monumental norms without suggesting a new visual paradigm for the turn of the century.

While Dreyfous argues that Dalou began to tweak his design as early as 1891, not until 1895 did a second plaster sketch reveal a significant change to the monumental scheme.<sup>13</sup> In the interim, a number of factors conspired to alter Dalou's vision of modernity, the worker's condition, and the role of art in an age of science. The relationship that the sculptor developed with Doctor Paul Richer was among the most significant.

Richer had begun his medical career as a student of the famed neurologist Jean-Martin Charcot at the Salpêtrière. Charcot and Richer shared an interest in the relationship between art and medicine, specifically the visual representation of hysterics. In 1887, the two men published *Les Démoniques dans l'art*, a "retrospective medical" text, rich with anticlerical arguments, that explored the manifestation of the visual signs of nervous disorders in Renaissance and Baroque renderings of Christian supernatural episodes.<sup>14</sup> The two men also employed art as a modern investigative tool in a process during which Richer made sketches after patients who were in the midst of hysteric episodes with Charcot subsequently using the visual evidence to confirm his diagnoses.<sup>15</sup>

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<sup>13</sup> Dreyfous, *Dalou*, 251-2. During these years Dalou also modeled a modified version of the peasant-horseman monument that he conceived as a monument to the *paysan* – a project that relates to, but is distinct from, the overall monument to laborers.

<sup>14</sup> J. Charcot and Richer, *Les Démoniques dans l'Art*; Goldstein, "Hysteric Diagnosis," 234-6. Goldstein attributes the term "retrospective medicine" to Emile Littré and notes that Charcot and Richer cite Littré's 1869 article "Un Fragment de médecine rétrospective," from *Philosophie positive* in *Les Démoniques*.

<sup>15</sup> Silverman, *Art Nouveau in Fin-de-Siècle France*, 100.

In addition to his medical career, Richer was also an accomplished sculptor who exhibited in the Paris Salons of the late nineteenth century.<sup>16</sup> After several submissions to the national exhibition in the second half of the 1880s, the doctor earned his first official recognition for his *Le Faucheur* in 1889. The jury awarded him an honorable mention for this plaster representation of a reaper, which the State then bought and installed in the Musée des Beaux-Arts in Chartres – the doctor’s native city. According to his unpublished memoir, Richer believed that Dalou was influential in the jury’s decision.<sup>17</sup> Dalou’s lack of a position on the year’s Salon jury, however, clouds the details of his involvement.<sup>18</sup> That said, Dalou would likely have been drawn to Richer’s subject as well as to the artist’s Naturalist formal style. He may also have felt a type of kinship to the doctor because they shared a mutual friend in Charcot.<sup>19</sup> Because of these affinities, Dalou surely could have exerted pressure on the deciding body through various channels, but no concrete evidence seems to exist which would document his intercession.

Richer’s memoirs reveal that he, surprisingly, did not know Dalou at the time he exhibited *Le Faucheur*.<sup>20</sup> The very formal tone and content of two extant letters that Dalou sent Richer in June of 1890 and April 1891 seems to confirm that their friendship

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<sup>16</sup> Pierre Sanchez *Les Catalogues des Salons*, volumes I – XXI and Gaïte Dugnat’s *Les Catalogues des Salons de la Société Nationale des Beaux-Arts*, Volumes I-VI, provide an invaluable resource for research into the Paris Salons of the nineteenth century and early twentieth-century.

<sup>17</sup> Richer, *Mémoires*, 37.

<sup>18</sup> It appears that after a disastrous turn as a juror in 1884, when his critiques were cited as the reason for at least one sculptor’s suicide, Dalou never again participated as a member of the jury of the *Société des artistes français*. See, Alexis André, *Souvenirs*, 55, Archives du Musée d’Orsay.

<sup>19</sup> In addition to occasionally joining the group of liberal artists, statesmen, writers, and *savants* at the doctor’s weekly Salon, Dalou studied Charcot in order to model an intimate bust for the Salon of 1884. See *La Leçon de Charcot*, 32, 39; Larson, *The Dark Side of Nature*, 145.

<sup>20</sup> Richer, *Mémoires*, 37.



did not start – or perhaps did not blossom – until at least the middle of 1891.<sup>21</sup> Richer’s exhibition decisions in the first years of the decade also appear to validate this timeline.<sup>22</sup> Given that they both occasionally attended Charcot’s Salons in the 1880s their lack of acquaintanceship is unexpected. Moreover, it contradicts the existing art historical understanding of their liaison.

Dreyfous notes their close friendship but – perhaps in an effort to portray Dalou as an independent genius – never suggests that Richer may have had an influence on the sculptor, hardly mentioning Richer’s artistic career at all. This scholarly narrative has continued in the twentieth century, typically minimizing Richer’s sculptural talents. Often scholars simply label him as Dalou’s student. The accounts that do credit Richer for encouraging Dalou to choose rural subjects in the 1890s habitually ignore the doctor’s independent volition to begin sculpting before he met Dalou.<sup>23</sup>

Evidence of the later beginning of their friendship, and an acknowledgement of Richer’s independent theories on art, compels a reconsideration of the exchange of philosophical, artistic, and social influences between the two men. By the time Dalou and Richer became friendly, the doctor was well-established in artistic circles both for his sculpture and his writings that followed *Les Démoniques*. His 1890 *Anatomie Artistique*, for instance, offered a new guide for the representation of canonical bodies that emerged from Richer’s dual medical and artistic studies. The essays and drawings in *Anatomie*

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<sup>21</sup> Dalou to Richer, 30 June 1890, and 1 April 1891. Archives du Musée du Louvre, S<sup>30</sup>, *Aimé-Jules DALOU*.

<sup>22</sup> In 1890 and 1891 Richer continued to exhibit at with the *Société des artistes français*, which Dalou had left in 1890 to reform the Société Nationale des Beaux-Arts, following Ernest Meissonier, Puvis de Chavannes, and others. Richer says that it was Dalou’s counsel that prompted him to submit his sculptures to the Salon of the *Nationale* in 1892 and 1893. Richer, *Mémoires*, 39.

<sup>23</sup> Durey, “Le Réalisme,” 365.

contributed to the development of modern morphology – the investigation of the body’s exterior forms – that Richer said could be used to “reconstituer la synthèse.”<sup>24</sup> Whereas typical anatomical texts – both those for doctors and for artists – focused on the inert body or cadaver, Richer’s study focused on the active body under the effects of movement. He argued that the sketches that make up the morphology section provide the necessary visual and textual information to help artists precisely render the poses – rather than the people – that they chose to depict.<sup>25</sup>

Critics of Richer’s *Anatomie* noted that artists must be wary of an overreliance on the rules that the doctor advanced in his book. To Jean-Léon Gérôme, who wrote directly to Richer in 1892, the doctor’s study threatened to make art too scientific and threatened to produce works of art with no individuality or vivacity.<sup>26</sup> Though Richer addressed Gérôme’s criticisms by noting that his canon of forms and movements was nothing more than a scientific abstraction – a guide and a standard from which artists must diverge – his later 1890s studies suggest that he understood the potential shortcoming of some of his original propositions.<sup>27</sup>

In the following years, Richer’s studies grew to include physiological and anthropological dimensions that reflected nineteenth-century trends in evolutionary and social theory. Believing that a person’s circumstance – specifically his *milieu* – informed the development and proportions of his body type, Richer incorporated a new set of

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<sup>24</sup> Richer, “Avertissement,” in *Anatomie Artistique*, vii-xv. “Reconstitute the synthesis.”

<sup>25</sup> *Ibid.*, xiii.

<sup>26</sup> Richer reproduces both Gérôme’s letter and his response in their entirety in the Avant-Propos to his *Canon des proportions du corps humain*.

<sup>27</sup> Richer, “L’Anatomie dans l’art, Proportions du corps humain, canons artistiques, et canons scientifiques,” extrait de la *Revue Scientifique*, 37-38.

investigations.<sup>28</sup> He cast aside his scrutiny of the ideal type to explore bodily differences – for example those between men and women, the old and the young, the sedentary and the active, or the sick and the healthy. He counseled artists to do the same: “Sortez parfois de votre rêve,” he wrote, “c’est dans le milieu qui vous entoure autant qu’en vous-mêmes que vous trouvez les formules de l’art nouveau.”<sup>29</sup>

This style of inquiry advanced a vision of modern art far removed from the growing Symbolist currents of the 1890s. Rather than address the pressures of modernity through a call to individualism and subjective representations, Richer’s argument took the opposite tact. It called on science to show concrete truths that should inspire artists, a call that directly confronted the Symbolist belief of science as tool to unlock invisible realities.

Richer’s call to arms also invoked a larger discourse about the role of the artist in the modern age, something that acutely impacted Dalou as a maker of public monuments. The leaders of the Bourgeois Republic widely assumed that the fin de siècle was an age that progress and science defined. The pursuit of such knowledge threatened art’s position as a communicator of cultural values, especially with moves towards more subjective aesthetics. Ernest Renan even predicted that the entrenchment of the new age would lead to the disappearance of “grand art.” To these ends, in 1876 he wrote:

Le progrès de l’humanité n’est aucune façon un progrès esthétique. La nature atteint son but par la vertu, par l’art, par la science, surtout par la science. Il viendra peut-être un temps (nous voyons poindre ce jour) où un grand artiste, un

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<sup>28</sup> Philippe Comar, “Une leçon d’anatomie à l’Ecole des beaux-arts,” in *Figures du corps, Une leçon d’anatomie à l’Ecole des beaux-arts*, 57.

<sup>29</sup> Richer, “L’Anatomie dans l’art, Proportions du corps humain,” 39. “From time to time you must leave the realm of dreams. It is in the environments that surround you as much as in yourselves that you will find the formulas for art.”

homme vertueux seront choses vieilles, presque inutiles ;  
le savant, au contraire, vaudra toujours de plus en plus. La  
beauté disparaîtra presque à l'avènement de la science ;  
mais l'agrandissement de la science et du pouvoir de  
l'homme sont de belles choses aussi.<sup>30</sup>

Richer was well aware of Renan's prediction, frequently citing it in various speeches and texts. At a certain level he agreed with the philosopher's evaluation of the age. He recognized the fundamental role of science and progress in society, acknowledging that their advances led to many circumstances where machines had taken the place of man. He even seems to support Renan's claim that the extension of science and industrial power were in fact "belles choses." Despite similar evaluations of the modern circumstance, Richer refused the opposition that Renan declared between science and art, and more specifically the *savant* and the artist.

Speaking at an *Association française pour l'avancement des sciences* conference in 1893 Richer formally rejected Renan's assertion, declaring:

l'art n'est point appelé à disparaître devant le progrès  
scientifique. Je pense au contraire ... qu'il doit trouver dans  
la science son plus ferme appui, ses plus puissants motifs  
de renouveau et ses variées causes d'éternelle jeunesse."<sup>31</sup>

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<sup>30</sup> Renan, *Dialogues et fragments philosophiques*, 84-85. "The progress of humanity is in no respect an aesthetic progress. Nature achieves its goals through virtue, art, and science, especially science. There will come a time, perhaps (we see that day dawning) when an artist, the virtuous man, will be antiquated and almost useless. The savant, by contrast, will be worth more and more. Beauty will almost disappear under the advent of science, but the growth of science and the power of man will be beautiful things as well."

<sup>31</sup> Richer, "L'Anatomie dans l'art, Proportions du corps humain." "Art is hardly called to disappear before scientific progress. Instead, I think it must find in science its strongest support, its most powerful motifs of renewal and the varied reasons for its eternal youth."

Science, to Richer, took the goal of instruction as its mission. On the other hand, Art could free itself from such utilitarian constraints so that it could pursue the representation of an ideal.<sup>32</sup>

Richer developed these ideas in a number of visual projects in the first years of the 1890s. While the slightly mannered movements of the *Premier Artiste* (1890) (fig. 4.4), demonstrates some of the shortcomings of an over reliance on the morphological texts, subsequent sculptures and statuettes, including those that Richer sent to the Salon of the *Société Nationales des Artistes Français* in 1892, demonstrate a more nuanced balance between art and science. According to Richer's memoirs, he had sculpted these five statuettes – a sower, a blacksmith, a reaper (fig. 4.5), a lumberjack, and a laborer – during his vacation the previous summer while he was thinking of his forthcoming study into physiology.<sup>33</sup> The manner in which the diversity of the workers' daily tasks marks Richer's representation of their forms, musculature, and attitudes anticipates a project that Dalou would begin in the summer of 1894.

In the year after the doctor exhibited these statuettes, Dalou and Richer shared a bond that likely depended more on personal affinity than professional influence. In May of 1893, Dalou suffered a serious illness that left him bed-ridden for almost two months. Richer frequently attended Dalou's bedside, on occasion sitting in during the sculptor's meetings with other doctors.<sup>34</sup> In addition to the physical symptoms that would endure for

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<sup>32</sup> Ibid., 39-40.

<sup>33</sup> Richer, *Mémoires*, 40.

<sup>34</sup> At the end of May 1893 a team of doctors diagnosed Dalou with a rheumatic fever – a condition that affects a patient's heart, joints, skin, and brain. On the first of June the condition left Dalou with limited sensation in his left arm and a feeling of paralysis in his

the sculptor's remaining years, the illness had a profound impact on Dalou's psyche. Because he had so often worked without significant remuneration – instead donating his time to causes in which he believed – Dalou became constantly worried about the financial position in which he would leave his wife and daughter after his death.<sup>35</sup> The lingering effects of the illness, fears of his own mortality, and the added financial stress seriously affected Dalou's attitudes towards his own existence and the modern experience.

In the summer of 1894 his fragile health led Dalou to spend three months in the French countryside in the small town of Grenonvilliers, near Orsay. This was not the first time Dalou ventured to rural France. In 1891 he had spent nearly two weeks in a Normand port town near Sainte-Adresse; a year later he spent a fortnight in the Lorraine city of Toul with his friend Albert Liouville. After recovering from his illness in 1893, Dalou again spent a short time in the country. These initial trips informed his earliest decorative efforts for the *Monument to Laborers*. Dalou made sketches and took notes about the metalworkers (in Toul) and marine laborers (in Normandy), which he used as research for his monument. The sculptor remarked on the physical qualities of the laborers' efforts, their frank gestures, and their attitudes – which he called sculptural.<sup>36</sup>

The 1894 trip was fundamentally different. These three months were the most extensive time Dalou spent in rural France, and the first time he developed relationships

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right leg. Three weeks later he suffered what he described as a “violente congestion au cerveau,” that affected his vision for at least a year. Dalou's *petits carnets* 17 May 1894-21 June 1894, as reported by Dreyfous, *Dalou*, 152-3.

<sup>35</sup> *Ibid.*, 222.

<sup>36</sup> *Ibid.*, 251.

with the nation's peasantry.<sup>37</sup> According to Dreyfous, Dalou enjoyed immensely his sojourn in Grenonvilliers, both as a break from the pressures of Paris and as a turning point for his vision of modernity and its relationship to workers.<sup>38</sup>

Using a method similar to that which Richer employed for his 1892 statuettes, Dalou began to model in clay during his 1894 vacation.<sup>39</sup> This allowed him to prepare preliminary models with the natural movements and attitudes of his subjects fresh in his mind. When he occasionally returned to Paris throughout the summer, he would hire a model to assume some of the poses he had seen in Grenonvilliers, executing more polished terra cotta statuettes in his studio.<sup>40</sup> At some point during that year – perhaps during the vacation – Dalou also began to incorporate photography into his research method.<sup>41</sup> This is hardly a surprise given that Dalou's contemporaries – including Rodin and Edgar Degas – were well-versed in uses of the medium, but the timing again suggests the influence of Richer who had begun to incorporate photography in his Salpêtrière studio – both for his art and medical studies – in 1893.<sup>42</sup>

The new investigative methods and formal techniques that Dalou refined in Grenonvilliers found visual expression in a series of terra cotta statuettes that he modeled during and shortly after his vacation. These studies make up the majority of the Dalou collection conserved at the *Petit Palais*, and are the models for a series of posthumously-

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<sup>37</sup> Ibid., 251-2.

<sup>38</sup> Ibid., 254-5.

<sup>39</sup> Ibid., 252.

<sup>40</sup> Ibid.

<sup>41</sup> A private collection conserved under the direction of the Petit Palais contains almost fifty of photographic images, organized under the rubric “Documentation photographique de Dalou pour le monument aux travailleurs.” This font includes at least one photographic post card, as well as a host of posed and candid shots documenting the labors of miners, fieldworkers, seamen, and other workers

<sup>42</sup> Richer, *Mémoires*, 40-41.

cast bronzes that have defined Dalou's place in the art markets of the twentieth century. In their 1890s context, however, they reveal the sculptor's Naturalist methodology along with his concern for capturing the physiological and psychological effects of workers in motion. Hunisak notes that they communicate an "urgency and sculptural vigor" beyond anything else in the artist's oeuvre.<sup>43</sup> An early-twentieth-century photographer reportedly claimed that she saw one moving.<sup>44</sup>

A look at a series of statuettes that demonstrate steps in the grain or hay baling process is revealing. The first shows a woman who gathers a bundle of grain (fig. 4.6). The abundance of the crop seems to overwhelm her as she leans over the pile. Her body zigs and zags – the legs bend forward from the ankle, backwards at the knees and forward again through her waist and torso. The cut stalks extend beyond her frame, threatening to fall from her reach. Wielding a small tool in her right hand, she hooks the bottom of her bundle while she drives her left hand into the bale. She pushes and pulls at the gathering crop, compressing it, straining to add more stalks, seemingly hoping to keep it orderly enough to allow her to lift it smoothly.

Dalou captures a sense of her physical exertion by briefly detailing the distended veins of her right arm. In addition to this somewhat conventional trope, Dalou hones in on the effect of effort by adding a piece of clay to the top of the left forearm. This bulge, which the sculptor did not fully integrate with the rest of the arm – perhaps added after the initial modeling – emphasizes the movement of the woman's wrist and the resultant animation of her musculature. Dalou augments this image of strain by tilting her body to the left. In a full-scale sculpture, the angle would unbalance the composition. Here, it

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<sup>43</sup> Hunisak, *The Sculptor Jules Dalou*, 235.

<sup>44</sup> Dreyfous, "Dalou inconnu," 77.



captures the fleeting moment when her entire body contorts to gain more leverage for lifting the bale.

A second statuette images a male *botteleur* (fig. 4.7) working the same job but with a thoroughly different attitude and effort. Rather than bent over at the waist, this figure gathers his crop from his knees. The pile is significantly less abundant and he emits a far calmer formal energy. While his forearm bulges like that of the straining woman, his languid action suggests that this is one of many bales he will gather. The mannered musculature of the man's back contends that these repeated movements have shaped his body. To convey the rising of the shoulder blades, which result from the position and activation of the *botteleur's* arms, Dalou modeled a deep line down the middle of the man's back, emphasizing the lower position of his vertebrae. At the top of this crevasse, Dalou concentrated further attention on small corporeal details, highlighting the movement of the shoulders.

A third terra cotta (fig. 4.8) appears to demonstrate the next step in the process. Rather than gathering the crop, the woman hunches, hugging the bundle that she prepares to lift. Her torso folds over the grain, her right arm grasping her crop from behind while her left arm bulges as it reaches over the top. The moment that Dalou captures is not her actually lifting the pile but instead the pause before the action. Head cocked to the side and mouth agape, the woman appears to be inhaling before the next moment of her strain. Dalou insists on this instant through the arrangement of the body. The combination of a slight bend in the knee, the forward position of her hips, and the lack of arch in her back deny the possibility that she is already motion.

Dalou, who believed that artists should not show their sketches, would likely be put off at such a detailed analysis of these terra cottas, and it is important to not treat these statuettes as an expression the artist's formal style.<sup>45</sup> They demonstrate Dalou's attention to minute details that capture the physical efforts of labor as well as different psychological states involved in the process. The first shows the complete exertion necessary for the task, the second manifests a type of ennui that develops from the repetition, and the third highlights a stolen moment of respite and a suggestion of labor's toll. Dreyfous argues that Dalou was not sure how these works would operate in his ultimate monument, thinking of them only as physical and psychological studies.<sup>46</sup> Despite no apparent public plans for these terra cottas, Dalou continued to develop similar statuettes and more polished small statues in the next years.

Dalou's observation and meditations on these laborers in Grenonvilliers informed more than just his formal approach. Hunisak writes that the contrast between the rural workers' dignity and the "artifice" of the artist's trade struck Dalou.<sup>47</sup> In fact, he returned to the capital with a new attitude towards his native city. Writing in his journal upon his arrival in Paris on 12 October 1894 he noted:

Retour de la campagne ! laquelle m'a bien profité, aussi bien au moral qu'au physique. Je viens de passer là trois mois magnifiques, non pour le temps qu'il a fait ... mais pour la paix que j'y ai savourée et le charme profond de la nature.... Que de belles choses à faire là. Combien la vie de Paris me semble cruelle et insupportable.<sup>48</sup>

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<sup>45</sup> Dreyfous, *Dalou*, 62, 252.

<sup>46</sup> *Ibid.*, 252.

<sup>47</sup> Hunisak, *The Sculptor Jules Dalou*, 238.

<sup>48</sup> Dalou, *Petits carnet*, 12 October 1894, Cited in Dreyfous, 223. "Return from the countryside! Oh how I benefited from it, both in terms of my morale and my physical

This is a fairly startling reconsideration of the city for which Dalou had so longed while in London and whose traditional icons he had presented as the lifeblood of the nation in *Triumph of the Republic*.

Much of Dalou's attitude must emerge from his need to accept a number of commissions solely to ensure his family's financial solvency. The clash between his yearning to honor workers, whose simple dignity he admired, and his need to execute private commissions for profit surely troubled the artist. Indeed, he found himself at a clichéd crossroads between aesthetic principles and capitalist needs, between a desire to create and producing for desires. Because of financial choices he had made throughout the 1880s, in the last decade of his life Dalou struggled to maintain the type of autonomy he had previously associated with ideal labor.

The sculptor's disillusionment with Paris likely also stemmed from the growing disconnects between France's traditions and its modern experiences, which challenged the conventional role of monuments in the fin-de-siècle capital, threatening his legacy. Western culture has typically looked to monuments as permanent, quasi-religious icons, functioning in a sphere removed from the ephemerality of everyday experiences.<sup>49</sup> By the end of the 1890s, Dalou seems aware of the (potential) fallacy of this promise. Commenting on Albert Bartholomé's *Monument aux morts* at Père Lachaise, Dalou reportedly noted "à l'abri des passions humaines, des fluctuations politiques, ce beau

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health. I just had three fantastic months, not for the weather, but for the peace that I could savor and the profound charm of nature. Nothing but wonderful things to do. Life in Paris seems cruel and unmanageable."

<sup>49</sup> Savage, *Monument Wars*, 6-7.

morceau à toutes les chances de durée. La stupidité seule saurait l'atteindre."<sup>50</sup> This echoes quotes Dalou gave Philippe Dubois in 1898 with regards to the *Monument to Laborers*. Citing Proudhon's attitudes about modernity and tradition, Dalou told the journalist "Rien de ce qu'on fait maintenant ne restera... L'art, comme le reste, doit se transformer."<sup>51</sup> Dreyfous, who may well have had insight into the sculptor's thoughts, linked these sentiments with Dalou's fears about the future of his own monuments – including the colossal group at Nation.<sup>52</sup>

With anxieties about monuments' viability and his fresh experiences in Grenonvilliers in mind, Dalou spent the middle years of the 1890s reworking the architectonic frame for his *Monument to Laborers*. In this process Dalou turned to Proudhon's 1860s writings about the role of art and its future direction. The sculptor filled a page and a half of his 1895 journal with quotes from the socialist theorist's *Du principe de l'art et de sa destination sociale*.<sup>53</sup> On adjoining pages, Dalou sketched four different images of laborers working on diverse tasks, indicating that he was engaged simultaneously with the text and the *Laborers* project.

The overwhelming majority of the nine quotes that Dalou transcribed cites Proudhon's meditations on the "ideal in art" or refers to paragraphs where it is the writer's central concern. Among the selections that Dalou notes is the philosopher's basic

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<sup>50</sup> Dreyfous, *Dalou*, 139. "Even with human passions and political fluctuations, this beautiful piece has every chance of lasting. Only stupidity would touch it."

<sup>51</sup> Dubois, "Chez Dalou." "Nothing that we make today will last. Art, like everything else, must transform."

<sup>52</sup> Dreyfous, *Dalou*, 139.

<sup>53</sup> Aimé-Jules Dalou, *Album: notes manuscrites*, Louvre, D.A.G. (fonds Orsay) RF 51873 folio 22 verso; 23 verso.

definition of art as “Une représentation idéaliste de la nature et de nous-mêmes, en vue du perfectionnement physique et moral de notre espèce.”<sup>54</sup> To best explicate the nuance between nature and the ideal, Proudhon noted that the ideal Frenchman would be “la notion ou type purement intelligible de l’homme français; ce n’est ni Pierre, ni Paul, ni Jacques, né en Provence, en Gascogne ou en Bretagne; c’est un être fictive,” who could manifest all the positive and negative characteristics that define the subject.<sup>55</sup>

Proudhon argued for a distinction between the artist and the philosopher with regards to the ideal. Unlike the latter, whom Proudhon dissuaded from departing from a very precise and rigorous discussion of nature’s realities in order to express its formulas, Proudhon charged the artist with exciting viewers’ sensibilities through the expression of nature’s ideals.<sup>56</sup> Though the theorist’s subsequent discussion becomes muddled in his efforts to nuance his vocabulary in a manner that allows for an artist to at once have creative license while remaining tied to nature’s precepts, his text sets the stage for subsequent discussions of the ideal in art within an age of positivist philosophy.

Paul Richer echoed theories similar to those of Proudhon in several texts, including his 1895 preface to *Physiologie artistique de l’homme en mouvement*. He wrote,

Mais n’oubliez jamais que l’art n’a point le même but que la science, qu’il n’est point chargé de nous instruire, qu’il ne doit être ni pratique ni utilitaire, et que sa mission est de nous entraîner à sa suite, loin des déboires, des misères ou

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<sup>54</sup> Archives du Petit Palais, Dalou, Carnets-Louvre. “An idealist representation of nature and ourselves, in view of the physical and moral perfection of our species.”

<sup>55</sup> Proudhon, “Du Principe de l’art est de sa destination sociale,” in *Controverse sur Courbet et l’utilité sociale de l’art*, 49. “The notion or type purely intelligible of the Frenchman; it is neither Pierre, nor Paul, nor Jacques, born in Provence, in Gascony, or in Brittany; it is a fictive being.”

<sup>56</sup> *Ibid.*, 53-4.

des hontes de chaque jour, vers les hautes et pure régions  
qu'habite l'idéal.<sup>57</sup>

In these terms, the difference between science and art was in the appropriate mode of representing nature's realities. The former required precise formulas that could illuminate nature's quotidian qualities and the latter relied on interpretive strategies that would express the dynamism of its essential structures. Dalou echoed Richer's sentiments in his own words, telling Jean Tild, that art depended on the interpretation – not the copying – of nature. He declared, “C'est *l'esprit de la nature* qu'il faut trouver, à sa façon, selon les besoins de son sujet, et aussi ceux de son temps. Mais s'efforcer d'en rendre strictement la lettre est une erreur grossière.”<sup>58</sup>

Translating these standards into monumental form was far from straightforward. Dalou's *Monument to Jean Leclaire*, for instance, relied too heavily on the scientific precision of the interaction between the employee and employer and therefore struggled to communicate the fundamental values of *Solidarité* and class harmony that could be broadly applicable. The *Monument to Laborers* project was still more complex; Dalou sought to represent the ideal of what he called the modern cult. This was not simply the task of finding a visual form for a type of social interaction, or interpreting the central characteristics of a group of people who presented themselves in the natural world. Instead, Dalou was intent on capturing the representation of an ideal that did not manifest

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<sup>57</sup> Richer, *Physiologie artistique de l'homme en mouvement*, 24. “But never forget that art does not have the same goal as science, which is charged with instructing us, art has no similar mission, it need not be practical or utilitarian, and its mission is to lead us, far from the disappointments, the miseries or the shames of the every day, and raise us to the pure regions of the ideal.”

<sup>58</sup> Quoted in Jean Tild, “Genèse d'un œuvre,” 181. “It is the spirit of nature which the artist needs to find, in his way, according to the needs of the subject and those of the era. But to struggle to strictly render nature to the letter is a significant error.”

itself visually in the phenomenological sphere, but determined the nature of the world itself.

In 1895 Dalou cast a second model of the monument (fig. 4.9) that demonstrates the sculptor's efforts to think in more grandiose forms. He transformed the original base of the equestrian ensemble into a tall octagonal pillar. Relief sculptures of workers' tools intertwining up the eight sides heavily ornament the central pier, which sits on a multi-tiered octagonal pedestal. At the base's uppermost level, Dalou carved a series of niches in which he installed sculptures of individual laborers. Each of these workers, who would represent different trades, was to be two and a half meters tall. Below these workers, Dalou covered a lower section of the plinth with a continuous frieze representing scenes from their daily lives.

The sculptor's formal precedent for developing his monument through an eight-sided tower is vague. Dreyfous compares it to a victory column, but those that figured prominently in French art historical discourse at the time – Trajan's Column and the Vendôme Column – are both cylindrical.<sup>59</sup> There are a number of octagonal piers in the cathedrals of northern France, but Dalou's familiarity with any specific precedent is far from clear.<sup>60</sup>

Dreyfous suggests that Dalou was disappointed in the effort. The sculptor opined that the model lacked simplicity and sobriety – a fair assessment given the visual heaviness of the octagonal pier, which appears stunted under its plethora of edges and

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<sup>59</sup> Dalou, *Dreyfous*, 253.

<sup>60</sup> Bumpus, *The cathedrals of northern France*, 90.

burdened by its decorative program.<sup>61</sup> The high relief of the work-tool ornamentation, and the shallowness of the workers' niches render the surface busy and conspicuous. The layering of protrusions on the base would also have placed the friezes in shadows, which would have obscured their legibility.

Despite being a second architectonic failure, this model hints at the eventual form and ornamentation of the ultimate conception. Dalou rendered the niche figures more clearly and in a manner that reveals the fruits of his studies in Grenonvilliers. That said, the figures do not correspond with any individual terra cotta that the sculptor modeled during any of his vacations. Instead, they represent the product of an amalgamation of each study – an interpretation of the characteristics of the different types of laborers.

The workers are a heterogeneous group (fig. 4.10). Dreyfous them as “le puddleur, le cingleur, le débardeur, le boulanger, le paveur, la balayeuse, le scaphandrier, le tonnelier, le tueur, le semeur, le charretier, le terrassier, le bardeur avec son cric, le pêcheur, le fort de la halle.”<sup>62</sup> The variety of professions and the horizontality of the arrangements suggest a diversity of figures that each contributes equally to the representation of ideal labor at the end of the century. Some of the figures – a butcher, a baker, and a gardener, for instance – are both geographically and temporally universal. Laborers like the fisherman, pre-date the modern currents, but belong to specific regions of the nation. Figures like the puddler find their place on the monument exclusively within the history of industrialism, yet their identities deny any regional specificity. Still others weave their way in and out of the modern narrative. The paver, for instance,

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<sup>61</sup> Dreyfous, *Dalou*, 254.

<sup>62</sup> Ibid. “The puddler, the fire-striker, the stevedore, the baker, the paver, the sweeper, the diver, the cooper, the executioner, the sower, the carter, the excavator, the worksite transporter, the fisherman, the strongman of the marketplace.”



represents a long-standing profession, the development of which intersects with the temporal, geographic, and revolutionary effects of the modern era but does not entirely depend on it.

Unsatisfied with the octagonal arrangement, Dalou continued to modify his design throughout 1896 and 1897. In April 1897, perhaps sensing competition from Rodin, Meunier, and others who were beginning to make noise about creating their own monuments to labor, Dalou resolved that the future was at hand and he needed to finish his monumental composition before someone else could execute the project.<sup>63</sup> Less than a year later, the Inspector of Beaux-Arts, Armand Dayot, created further competition when he initiated a similar project that he hoped would serve as the centerpiece of the 1900 Universal Exposition. The exact timing for the origin of Dayot's concept is not clear, but he made his desires public in an open letter to the sculptor Jules Desbois in March of 1898. Suggesting that he was revisiting an earlier conversation between he and Desbois, Dayot called for a monument that would unite architecture and sculpture to communicate the apotheosis of work.<sup>64</sup>

As the showpiece of the new century's first international exhibition and a marker of early-twentieth-century French identity, the inspector envisioned this architectonic celebration of human effort as the symbol of the new age. He focused his project on the technological advances of the nineteenth century, hoping to commemorate the "grands découvertes du siècle... les chemins de fer, le télégraphe, le téléphone, le phonographe,

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<sup>63</sup> Hunisak, *The Sculptor Jules Dalou*, 235-6.

<sup>64</sup> Dayot, "A la Gloire du Travail: Lettre à un sculpteur," *Le Journal*, 21 March 1898.

les rayons X. La Science, l'art universel seraient représentés.”<sup>65</sup> He wanted the century's “énergie créatrice” to embolden the monument – to express the sense of fraternity between miners, farmers, philosophers, and *savants* that he suggested marked the period's progress.

According to his public correspondences with Desbois, Dayot could not imagine tasking one artist with such an immense job.<sup>66</sup> Instead, the inspector hoped that a union of artists and *praticiens* would collaborate to produce what he initially proposed as a column of labor in the style of the monument at Place Vendôme. The Belgian sculptor Constantin Meunier was near the top of Dayot's list, which also included a range of artists with divergent styles and politics including Alexandre Falguière, Auguste Rodin, Jean Baffier, Camille Claudel, and – naturally – Dalou.

The centrality of the Meunier in Dayot's conception suggests a specific type of laboring image. The Belgian sculptor was gaining a reputation throughout Europe and America for his 1880s and 1890s portrayals of laborers that Melissa Dabakis describes as the bourgeois notion of “the perfect modern worker: productive, efficient, and, above all, submissive.”<sup>67</sup> The *Marteleur* of 1886 (fig. 4.11), for instance, is a life-size sculpture of a large metal worker leaning on his pincers in a short moment of respite. His well-muscled shoulders and enlivened torso lend his body a sense of nobility that marks him as a modern hero. The hand-on-the-hip pose and the vitality of his form suggest that the momentary pause is not caused by physical exhaustion. He is assuredly tired, but the

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<sup>65</sup> Dubois, “L'Apothéose du travail, chez M. Armand Dayot,” *L'Aurore*, 31 March 1898. “The great discoveries of the century... the railways, the telegraph, the telephone, the phonograph, the X-Ray. Science, the universal art would be represented.

<sup>66</sup> Dayot and Desbois, “A la Gloire du Travail,” *Le Journal*, 2 April 1898.

<sup>67</sup> Dabakis, *Visualizing Labor*, 105.

respite seems imposed not chosen. Despite the realistic formal qualities, and a narrative that places him squarely within the industrial discourse of the fin de siècle, the high-finish of the elegantly cast bronze separates him from the natural world. He belongs to a modern narrative of gallantry, valor, and proletarian pride. The contrast between his masculine vigor and the overwhelming forces of industrialism, which contribute to the monument as an absent presence, led Gustave Geffroy to describe this *Marteleur* as “le rêve d’une représentation moderne du travail.”<sup>68</sup>

After Dayot published his letter to Desbois, journalists hurried to interview the perspective sculptors. Whereas the majority of artists, including Rodin and Baffier, expressed openness toward the project, Dalou refused to even consider participating. He worried that a communal project among artists of such diverse styles and politics would render the visual program illegible. Pointing to the opposition between Falguière and Baffier as but one example, Dalou opined, “Les sculpteurs ne parlent pas tous la même langue. Ce sera le tour de Babel.”<sup>69</sup> He also dismissed the originality of Dayot’s idea. In a sentiment he would repeat when he spoke directly to the Inspector later in April, Dalou told the scribes that he had been working on such a project for nine years and was closer to the execution stage than the creative beginnings.<sup>70</sup>

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<sup>68</sup> Geffroy, “Salon,” *La Justice*, 30 June 1886. “The dream of a modern representation of work.”

<sup>69</sup> Dubois, “L’Apothéose du travail,” *L’Aurore*, 9 April 1898. “The sculptors do not all speak the same language. It will be the Tower of Babel.”

<sup>70</sup> *Ibid.*

Just six days before Dayot's letter, in fact, Dalou apparently wrote in his journal that he had settled on the definitive form for his monument.<sup>71</sup> The timing, as Dreyfous recounts it, certainly seems convenient in light of the growing interest in such a project. Dalou's vision nonetheless manifests a significant thematic departure from the monument that Dayot envisioned. Dalou's Priapic program employs a sober decorative treatment of workers tools in very low relief on a colossal column. Individual laborers in niches surround the pier, and four quotidian friezes of workers' actions ornament the base. The column itself would have neither a statue nor a platform at its apex. This unadorned crown differs from traditional victory columns – the Vendôme Column or Trajan's Column specifically – accentuating the monument's tapering shaft and bulbous top. In the past, scholars such as Maurice Agulhon have suggested that this formal arrangement functions in an abstract motif.<sup>72</sup> Dalou would likely have disagreed with Agulhon's contention. In his journal he indicated the real-world origins of the column's forms, linking the cylindrical shaft to both a phallus and a factory pipe.<sup>73</sup> Contemporaries would have had little trouble identifying either.

After experimenting with several other ideas for the top of the column, including an inversed Doric capital, the sculptor settled on a rounded dome that unambiguously calls to mind the anatomy of the glans – the rounded form at the distal end of the penis.<sup>74</sup> As the acme of the tall shaft, this cap renders the structure a – somewhat stylized – representation of the male sex organ. By invoking a scientific and anatomical visual

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<sup>71</sup> Dreyfous, *Dalou*, 256.

<sup>72</sup> Agulhon, "Propos sur l'allégorie politique," *Actes de la recherché en sciences sociales*, 31.

<sup>73</sup> Dreyfous, *Dalou*, 256.

<sup>74</sup> Drawings in the *Collection Becker*.

vocabulary, Dalou operated within a discourse of biological fertility and propagation, somewhat removed from the traditional phallic connotations of cultural power and control normally ascribed to monumental columns – and sculptural production.

Dalou was certainly not exceptional in using male sexual imagery as a driving force in 1890s French monuments. The expressive brilliance of Rodin's *Balzac* for instance (fig. 4.12), rests on the doubling of such allusions. Underneath his monk's robe, Balzac grasps his penis in a visual reference to his claims that his sexuality was the root of his artistic genius, and his assertions that masturbation was a necessary spur for literary creation.<sup>75</sup> Rodin amplifies the sexual imagery through the general form of the statue. As Albert Elsen points out,

side views of the final *Balzac* evoke a phallic shape, an investment of the entire sculpture with the significance of the earlier gesture of the hand grasping the penis and consonant with the virile image of Balzac as creator of his own world. ... Rodin had raised the portrait of a writer to the symbol of creation."<sup>76</sup>

If such an emphasis on sexual exuberance communicated the creative genius of *grands hommes* such as Balzac, Victor Hugo, or Gustave Flaubert, it ran counter to developing bourgeois norms that encouraged sexual moderation and associated masculinity with sobriety, self-control, and decorum.<sup>77</sup> These evolving gender mores – and the effort to flaunt them – emerged within a period that scholars have long addressed as a fin-de-siècle crisis of masculinity. The factors for such a condition are as diverse as the impact is broad. A maturing feminist consciousness, the disasters of the *année terrible*, a declining French population, a rejection of the Imperial cultural of decadence,

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<sup>75</sup> Elsen, *Rodin's Art*, 375-6.

<sup>76</sup> *Ibid.*, 385.

<sup>77</sup> Garval, "A Dream of Stone," 61; Garb, *Bodies of Modernity*, 34-35.

fears of the criminality amongst the working classes, and concerns about the physical effects of *intellectualism* and *embourgeoisement* among other factors conspired to make this effect totalizing. As these engines of modernity revved, France fretted over the virility of its men.<sup>78</sup>

Dalou's model operates within a nuance of this discourse. Throughout the nineteenth century, virility and masculinity were not exact synonyms. As Alain Corbin explains, virility was an ensemble of characteristics that organized and nourished a healthy society; it ordered the representation of the world and fixed structures of dominance.<sup>79</sup> This was not necessarily tied to the biology of the masculine, but in a culture with deeply seated ideas about the social power of the male icon – the genius, the general, the writer, the emperor, the monarch, the artisan, the bourgeois – virility grew a close association with the biologic traits of masculinity. At the end of the nineteenth century, concerns for men's sexual potency were intimately tied to the discourse of national advance.

In the same period, anxieties about the France's industrialism echoed many of the concerns for national progress. French production was advancing at a much slower rate than that of its competitors and factory conditions were spurring calls for socialist reaction. As Debora Silverman describes the situation:

If the concentration of the socialist menace in the advanced sectors of metallurgy, mining, and chemicals turned some among the republican elite against technological modernism, the possibility of French industrial stagnation shattered the illusion that heavy industry and technology

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<sup>78</sup> Forth, *The Dreyfous Affair*, 7.

<sup>79</sup> Corbin, "Introduction," in *Histoire de la Virilité*, Vol II, 9.

would provide the basis for French national ascendancy and economic vitality as the twentieth century beckoned.<sup>80</sup>

Dalou's column forges a connection between anxieties over the nation's masculinities and the competing attitudes towards industrialism and progress. The shaft of the column, which tapers towards the top, evokes a smokestack – the very form to which Dalou compared it.

Contemporaries would have understood the visual subtlety of the design; they were accustomed to seeing factory pipes and other industrial architecture dotting the fin-de-siècle landscape in interventions that engaged questions of national identity. In visual culture, such industrial motifs frequently spoke to the changing socio-cultural fabric of France. They played a central role in certain canvases, such as Paul Cézanne's *Factories near the Mont du Cengle* (fig. 4.13), while in others, such as Edgar Degas's *Racehorses before the Stands* (fig. 4.14), their presence underscores how completely industry pervaded the modern condition.<sup>81</sup>

Whether in the landscape or on the walls of an exhibition, the smokestack amplified many of the hopes and fears that industrialism produced. In the paintings of Cézanne and Degas, the insertion of the factory pipes into landscapes already rich with significance for the national identity provokes a meditation on the effects of modernity on French character. In Dalou's studio, his model elides such political questions because it exists in a type of symbolic vacuum where the site-specific context, which factored so heavily in creating a level of meaning for *Triumph of the Republic*, exerts no influence. In the place of such an emphasis on politics and national identity, Dalou's model, which he

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<sup>80</sup> Silverman, *Art Nouveau in Fin-de-Siècle France*, 52.

<sup>81</sup> Rubin, *Impressionism and the Modern Landscape*, 121-147.

knew he may never erect but tirelessly pursued nonetheless, promotes a consideration of the definition of the modern condition and the role and form of monuments destined to represent it.<sup>82</sup>

Gillian Darley writes that within industrial architecture, smokestacks communicate the “always evanescent notions of modernity [with] its radical potential exaggerated far beyond the realizable.”<sup>83</sup> In an impressionist canvas, where the painterly details emphasize notions of ephemerality, such factory architecture harmonizes with the greater project. That said, because of the traditional role of monuments in Western culture, the smokestack as a central motif in Dalou’s project complicates the symbolism of the factory pipe as it relates to both cultural stability and social change. The sculptor’s conflation of the glans and the tapering shaft seems to offer a potential bridge between constancy and transition.

The penile imagery at the top of the column renders the smokestack, itself already a symbol of the modern experience, an instrument of fertility, creation, and virility. That is, what organizes and structures society. Monumentalizing the smokestack as a tool that stabilizes cultural values acknowledges the entrenchment of the ephemeral modern condition. This is fundamentally different than what Dayot and his sculptors would suggest in their plan to erect a Tower of Labor for the 1900 exhibition. In fact, Dalou lashed out at what he called the inspector’s hope for a monument that operated in an antiquated visual language. As he told journalists, “De quoi parlent Dayot et ses futures collaborateurs? D’un arc de triomphe ou d’un temple antique? Ce ne sera guerre nouveau,

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<sup>82</sup> Dreyfous, *Dalou*, 256.

<sup>83</sup> Gillian Darley, *Factory*, 10.



cela. Nous nous obstinerons donc toujours à vivre sur le passé?”<sup>84</sup> Rodin’s proposed project (fig. 4.15), despite its modern visual language and novel exploration of the phenomenological possibilities of experiencing architectural sculpture, is a case in point.

Drawing its formal influences from the Tower of Pisa, the great staircase of the Chateau de Blois, and other well-known antecedents, Rodin’s model manifests a heavy debt to the visual forms of the past. Such a reliance on the formal precedents is natural in an artist who, despite his modernity, maintained a complex relationship with the aesthetics and artists of earlier centuries.<sup>85</sup> Rodin’s own paradoxical attitudes towards the past and the future mirrors Dayot’s vision for the project as something trapped between tradition and progress. Both men shared the goal of erecting “l’œuvre éternel,” a monument to the glory of “l’effort humain, de la pensée humaine éternellement en marche vers l’inaccessible idéal.”<sup>86</sup> Such a project belongs to a philosophical narrative that maintains a faith in an ideal that exists outside of phenomenological experience of man.<sup>87</sup> In their shared vision, that which is inaccessible occupies the highest position to which man should aspire.

In Rodin’s project, figures of benediction embody this paradox as they crown a composition that organizes a hierarchy of labor through a climbing frieze on the inside of an immense tower. Rather than providing a divine message, the winged figures frame the most exalted space at the apex of the ensemble for an apotheosis of man. As Rodin’s

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<sup>84</sup> Quoted by Dubois, in “chez Dalou” 9 April 1898. “What do Dayot and his future collaborators talk about? A triumphal arch or an antique temple? That will hardly be new. Will we always persist to live in the past?”

<sup>85</sup> See: James Hargrove, “Contextualized Vision: Rodin and the Influence of the Past,” *Journal of the Cantor Arts Center Stanford University*, 128-140.

<sup>86</sup> Dayot, “A la Gloire du Travail.” “The human effort, of human thinking that advances continuously to the inaccessible ideal.”

<sup>87</sup> Dubois, “chez M. Armand Dayot,” 31 March 1898.

contemporary Ricciotto Canudo explains it, in the sculptor's *Tour de travail* "Man acquires rights hitherto reserved for the gods."<sup>88</sup> Much like a Christian's efforts to follow in the steps of Christ, to achieve such divine heights seems hardly possible. The space of man's apotheosis – which Rodin isolated through physical distinction and as the culmination of his program – exists in a realm even beyond the celebration of ideas and the expression of the labors of genius; beyond the capabilities of history's most revered and secularly beatified men.

Dalou's project fundamentally shifts this paradigm by detaching man from the pinnacle of cultural achievement and by imbuing the symbol of the age with the monument's prevailing force. More than offering a novel sculptural idiom, Dalou's project undermines the traditional representation of man's cultural position. By monumentalizing the supremacy of science and industry, reducing the worker to an ornamental motif, the phallic smokestack relegates man to a subordinate status – one where he lacks the ability to definitively impact his circumstances. In fact, Dalou insisted on this dynamic in his journal, describing the Priapic factory pipe as the prison to which laborers are bound from the cradle to the grave.<sup>89</sup>

In the months before Dalou finalized his ultimate model, Paul Richer published *Dialogues sur l'art et la science*.<sup>90</sup> Though Richer never mentions Dalou or his monument directly, he alludes to the sculptor's past œuvre in a manner that suggests that, at a minimum, Dalou was fully aware of Richer's arguments and certainly agreed with its

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<sup>88</sup> Ricciotto Canudo, "Our Trajan's Column: Rodin's Tower of Labor," *Le Censeur*, August 3, 1907. Cited in Butler, *Rodin*, 123.

<sup>89</sup> Dreyfous, *Dalou*, 256.

<sup>90</sup> Paul Richer, *Dialogues sur l'art et la science*.

contentions about the direction of art. Even more likely, Dalou actively informed Richer's thoughts as he expressed them here.

*Dialogues sur l'art et la science* is an anomaly in Richer's 1890s and 1900s writings. For the most part, Richer began his texts with an introduction that explored the links between science and art before launching into a specific anatomical, physiological, or morphological study. Even in texts that extend the arguments about the intrinsic connections between the two disciplines, Richer maintains a first-person narrative argument to arrive at his point. Here Richer shifts methods to operate through a fictive conversation between a master and a misguided pupil – Pamphile and Callias – which signals a philosophical mode of literary expression.

The choice of protagonists must have amused the classically-versed Dalou. Not only did Richer pit Callias, an aristocrat, against Pamphile, a worker, the opposition also reflected Aristotelian discourse about learning. The Greek philosopher had used Callias as an example of a “particular,” someone who was disconnected from scientific knowledge. Pamphile, on the other hand, serves as a model of scientific investigation. For those who missed the classical references, Richer made the two characters' positions very clear in the first paragraphs. Callias quickly identifies himself as the misguided pupil, beginning the debate by invoking Renan's oft-cited prediction that the advance of science would relegate artists to the sphere of the past, while Pamphile offers a challenge to that contention that echoes Richer's own expressions.<sup>91</sup>

Though neither Callias nor Pamphile names Dalou directly, the text includes an explicit reference to the sculptor's *forgeron* on the *Triumph of the Republic* and perhaps a

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<sup>91</sup> Richer, *Dialogues*, 5.

somewhat subtler invocation of the sculptor's Apollo from the *Monument to Delacroix*.<sup>92</sup> These allusions come in the context of a changing time and the difference between Greek art and art in the age of science. Given his intimacy with Dalou, Richer would have been very unlikely to point out these specific works – at least one of which Dalou described as belonging to *autrefois* and the other of which functions in his last traditionally allegorical monument – without the sculptor's consent.

As the text takes shape, key aspects of Dalou's 1890s aesthetic philosophy and attitudes (which Dreyfous's biography and other contemporary texts preserve in snippets), mingle with Richer's own dictums. For instance, Dalou was quite critical of Rodin's willingness to show seemingly unfinished works. *Le Cri de Paris* writes that in describing his one-time friend, Dalou claimed that Rodin was

gâté par les stupides *gendelettres*. Dès que dans un bloc d'argile, il a pétri un nez, un genou, un doigt de pied, ses thuriféraires s'écrient : « Admirable ! Merveilleux ! Inouï ! Oh ! maître, ce doigt de pied fait comprendre l'univers. N'y touchez plus ! » Naturellement cet encens l'a grisé et il ne fait plus rien de bon.<sup>93</sup>

In her discussion with Callias, Pamphile derides the same phenomenon in contemporary sculpture. She suggests that artists may falsely find expressions of profound emotion and sincerity in sketches despite their insufficiencies and imperfections. In a specific echo of Dalou's comments, she declares that the artist's enthusiasm for such forms “se traduit naturellement par des exclamations dithyrambiques suivies de conseils. L'œuvre est parfaite. Il n'y fait plus toucher, tout nouveau travail ne pourrait que diminuer

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<sup>92</sup> Ibid., 36.

<sup>93</sup> “A la nationale,” *Le Cri de Paris*, 18 April 1920. “Spoiled by the stupid intellectuals. As soon as he has molded a nose, a knee, a toe from a block of clay his admirers write ‘Admirable, Marvelous, Unprecedented! Oh master, this toe clarifies the universe. Don't touch it anymore!’ Naturally this incense intoxicates him and he does nothing else well.”

l'impression si vive qui s'en dégage. Et l'artiste se laisse convaincre.”<sup>94</sup> She then denigrates such work as the product of artists who are nothing more than “grands enfants, vaniteux et crédules,” who – unlike those who are not so naïve – dishonor art.<sup>95</sup>

Later in the text, Pamphile echoes a journal entry that Dalou wrote in 1894 in which the sculptor cautioned his peers against culling too much inspiration from painters.<sup>96</sup> At other instances, her assertions that molds from nature and photography are not art recall Dalou’s injunction that “Ni moulage sur nature ni photographie ne sont et ne seront jamais de l’art.”<sup>97</sup> Similar examples permeate the rest of the short text. The repeated invocation of Dalou’s principles, however, does not suggest that Richer was simply creating a philosophical discourse for his friend. Richer’s own theories emerge in independence of those of Dalou. Pamphile’s repeated discussions of athletes as the new canonical model seem specifically attuned to Richer’s contemporary project of sculpting a number of statuettes of weightlifters, wrestlers, footballers, and runners.<sup>98</sup>

The last section of the *Dialogues* provides the most revealing insight into Richer’s – and likely Dalou’s – vision of art and modernity. Following a long discussion of the need for art to reflect the circumstances of the new age, Richer expresses wariness about predicting what “art nouveau” would be. He suggests that the golden age of nymphs and goddesses has passed, so too has the age of faith that gave rise to the great cathedrals of

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<sup>94</sup> Richer, *Dialogues*, 23-4. “Transfers naturally by following the advice of extravagant exclamations. The work is perfect. Do not touch it again, all new work on it can only diminish the impression of life that emerges. And the artist lets himself be convinced.”

<sup>95</sup> *Ibid.*, 24. “Big children, vain and gullible.”

<sup>96</sup> Dreyfous, *Dalou*, 123; Richer *Dialogues*, 27-28.

<sup>97</sup> Tild, “Genèse d’une œuvre,” 180. “Neither casts nor photography are and never will be art.”

<sup>98</sup> Richer exposed a number of bronze editions of these works in the late 1890s, including at the *Société d’édition artistique* in 1899 or 1900. See Paul Richer, *Athlètes*.

the Middle Ages. These sentiments echo Dalou's own, which he expressed to Dubois in April 1898. At that point, he told the journalist that religion had long given rise to art from pagan temples to Gothic cathedrals. At the dawn of the twentieth century, Dalou continued, "les religions ont vécu. Il faut s'inspirer d'autre chose, trouver une autre idéal."<sup>99</sup> For Richer the new ideal would be that of science, which he argued had dominated and erased the spirits of the past.<sup>100</sup>

While Richer's contention that the nineteenth century was the age of science is hardly remarkable given that Renan wrote the *Avenir de science* nearly fifty years prior, his subsequent tone towards the future is noteworthy. In dour terms he writes that on the dawn of the twentieth century, science "poursuit sa marche fatalement, irrésistiblement. Noble est son but, hautes ses visées; mais, tel un conquérant, elle laisse parfois derrière elle des deuils et des désespoirs."<sup>101</sup> He continues his description of the new age, providing a visual description to amplify his reference:

Notre âge est l'âge de la houille et du fer. La noire fumée du charbon nous couvre d'un voile qui trop souvent cache le ciel à nos regards. Mais la dignité de l'homme grandit dans la souffrance, et le travail mettra toujours à son front la divine auréole qui anoblit et glorifie.<sup>102</sup>

To cap his portrayal of an era of industry, symbolized by the smokestack and its excretions, Richer makes one final pronouncement on the future of art that cannot help but draw to mind Dalou's conception for a thirty-meter tall colossus that signifies the

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<sup>99</sup> Dubois, "L'Apothéose du Travail." "Religions have run their course. It is necessary to develop inspiration in something else, to find another idea."

<sup>100</sup> Richer, *Dialogues*, 47.

<sup>101</sup> Ibid. "Fatally and irresistibly continues her march. Her goal is noble, her aims are high; but conqueror that she is, she sometimes leaves mourning and despair behind her."

<sup>102</sup> Ibid. "Ours is the age of coal and iron. The black carbon smoke covers us in a veil that too often hides the sky from our view. But the dignity of man grows in sufferance and labor is always at the front of the divine halo that ennobles and glorifies."

imprisonment of the modern age. “Je ne sais si l’art qui naîtra de là sera gai,” he writes, “mais à coup sûr il sera grand.”<sup>103</sup>

Dalou’s *Grand Paysan* (fig. 4.16), a work that the sculptor kept hidden in his studio until his death, gives visual form to the identity of the worker and the modern condition that Richer expressed in his last pages. Dalou appears to have begun work on the statue at the same time that he resolved to finish his *Monument to Laborers* through a Priapic composition; this timing also coincides with the period during which Richer was finishing *Dialogues*.<sup>104</sup>

In a shirt that hangs loosely off his narrow but muscled shoulders, this anonymous laborer turns his bowed head to the left and gazes melancholically towards the ground. With his feet shoulder-width apart, the *Paysan* lets his right arm fall flaccidly in front of his right leg. Bending his left arm inward, he reaches lethargically across his body to roll his right sleeve. Narrow veins distend across his newly revealed flesh, mirroring similar scars of age that mark his already bared left forearm. His shirt’s deep v-neck exposes his slight chest, and his oversized clothing, which wrinkles and bubbles, accentuates his slenderness. The man’s matted hair, craggy face, and slightly swollen hands accentuate these markers that signify the toll that his labors have taken on his body and his psyche. Though the statue bears many similarities to the workers that Dalou imaged for his niches in the monument – both in its formal qualities and its theme – it was a distinct sculptural project; it enriches the *Monument to Laborers* but does not participate in the ensemble.

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<sup>103</sup> Ibid. “I do not know if the art that will come from this will be gay, but it certainly will be grand.”

<sup>104</sup> Dreyfous, *Dalou*, 247.

Dreyfous claims that Dalou worked on this statue in complete isolation – not even telling Richer or Becker.<sup>105</sup> This contention seems specious at best. Dalou and Richer both worked with the same model – whom Tild notes Dalou called to pose more than fifty times – and Richer appears to have known exactly where in Dalou’s *atelier* he needed to search to find the sculptor’s last *chef-d’œuvre* when it was time to send it to the Salon.<sup>106</sup>

Like the niche statues on the *Monument to Laborers* model, the *Grand Paysan* illuminates the manner in which Dalou employed his small statuettes. Countless terra cottas left in Dalou’s studio capture men of different occupations pausing, looking to the side with an effect of resignation (fig. 4.17), while others show men rolling sleeves. Each serves as a source of information for Dalou, but none is a direct model for this ultimate figure. The terra cotta that best mimics the pose, for example, is a thick-bodied, strong-armed worker who carries a set of formal qualities that render him distant from the *Paysan*. That said, the commonality of the pose among diverse laborers suggests that in his ultimate statue to modern masculinity, Dalou sought to capture a universal condition of the worker’s circumstance.

A gardener’s hoe lies untouched between the *Paysan*’s feet. His distance from the idle tool and his weary rolling of the sleeve gesture presents him preparing to begin his work. The evident fatigue and resignation that characterizes his approach to the day communicates a psychological gravitas that is unique in contemporary worker images. It is certainly far removed from the muscular and forceful *forgeron* that Dalou sculpted in

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<sup>105</sup> Ibid.

<sup>106</sup> Tild, “Genèse d’un œuvre,” 183. Dreyfous, *Dalou*, 247-8.



the *Triumph of the Republic* – a figure that literally advances the chariot of national progress – and is equally divorced from works by artists such as Meunier.

The *Grand Paysan* exudes none of the majestic vitality of the ennobled proletariat nor does he participate in other contemporary expressions of modern masculinity through a demonstration of self-control, dueling, or the physical robustness of militancy and sport.<sup>107</sup> Instead, the *Paysan* is a modern man who appears defeated before he starts his efforts. His dignity only reveals itself as perseverance in the absence of hope. He is a symbol of humility and anonymity. In his suffering, he manifests precisely what Dalou and Richer expressed as the ennobled worker's tormented position in the age of science.

In treating the *Paysan* as the ideal of the laborer at the end of the nineteenth century, Dalou breaks from the conventional working-themed narratives about industrialism that depended on the role of the proletariat. Nevertheless, representing the peasant as the era's representative man still engages a discourse about French identity. Beginning with the increased political involvement of the rural population, which spurred Napoleon III to power, the second half of the century witnessed a significant shift in the relationship between the people of France's center and its margins.<sup>108</sup> As the extension of railroads and communication allowed for stronger connections between the various regions of the nation, the image of the peasant shifted.

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<sup>107</sup> Lagneau-Ymonet, "La masculinité d'affaires. Le cas de la Bourse de Paris," in *Hommes et masculinités de 1789 à nos jours*, 113-127; Nye, *Masculinity and Male Codes of Honor in Modern France*.

<sup>108</sup> Among the most prominent recent examples see: Weber, *Peasants into Frenchmen*; Lehning, *Peasant and French*.

In his revisionist and romantic opus, *Peasants into Frenchmen*, Eugen Weber notes that as rural France became more integrated with Paris, “peasants were studied as a vanishing breed; their culture was dissected and their sentimental value grew.”<sup>109</sup> James Lehning suggests by the end of the century, the peasant was a vehicle through which Parisian authors, artists, and politicians revealed the ambivalences in France’s effort to codify national identity within the new social structures. As an object of inquiry, the rural man could be used to navigate the cultural insecurities that the development of modernity produced.<sup>110</sup>

Though there was a long history of sympathetic representations of peasants in French art, by the last decades of the century two leading strains of imagery existed. In a manner that paralleled much of the modernist and anti-modernist social and political discourse, Naturalist artists explored timeless notions of peasant life in large canvases that wowed at Paris’s Salons, communicating inclusive French values and historical continuity while brimming with a sense of nostalgia. On the other hand, nationalist artists, such as Jean Baffier, highlighted connections between peasants and pre-industrial society to mold works that could be atavistic in speaking to a growing right-wing “blood and soil” vision of French identity.

Jules Bastien-Lepage’s *Le Père Jacques* (1881) (fig. 4.18), an example of the former type, presents an aged man carrying a large bundle of sticks on his back while a child plays in the flowers before him. By mirroring the tones of the man’s pants with the colors of the trees and blending his legs and *sabots* into the underbrush of the foreground, Bastien-Lepage forges a visual connection between the rural laborer and the nature from

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<sup>109</sup> Weber, *Peasants into Frenchmen*, 472.

<sup>110</sup> Lehning, *Peasant and French*, 20-21.

which he emerges. Gabriel Weisberg argues that *Père Jacques* belongs to a set of images that rendered rural types “larger than life.” Like Meunier’s peasant heroes such as *Le Faucher*, *Père Jacques* recalled Jean-François Millet’s celebration of traditional values.<sup>111</sup>

As tempting as it is to read the contrast between Père Jacques carrying wood and the girl picking flowers as a symbol of the transition between the past and the future, the painter’s treatment of the girl obscures her position. In an echo of the pose of the older man, the girl’s left leg and shoe remains somewhat visible while the right leg fuses with the sticks, plants, and flowers of the underbrush. The visual interplay extends to their shared hunched poses, both angled toward the left of the picture plane. Perhaps more significantly, the girl’s activity – collecting and carrying nature – mirrors the work that Père Jacques has just completed. While she may signal, as Weisberg suggests, “hope for the future,” it is not necessarily because she will break from the past but instead because her connection with Père Jacques communicates a tone of continuity and timelessness.<sup>112</sup>

On the walls of the Paris Salon of 1882, *Le Père Jacques* provides an image of the rural laborer that speaks to the notion of the countryside as the location of traditional values of hard work, proximity to nature, and constancy. Such a vision necessarily implies a culture that operates independently of modernity’s advance. The continuity between the man and the girl insists on the longevity of peasant culture, a reassuring projection in the face of industrial changes, providing Frenchmen a communal ancestry and a sense of stability in a transient world. At the same time, the peasant’s position

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<sup>111</sup> Weisberg, *Illusion of Reality*, 49.

<sup>112</sup> *Ibid.*

outside of the ephemeral and contingent sphere identified him as an “other” that helped the Parisian bourgeoisie define itself as modern.<sup>113</sup>

Outside of moderate bourgeois milieu, the celebration of rural culture helped shape an anti-modernist reaction. The Boulangist movement, for instance, had also turned away from Paris as it advanced its organic nationalism. In the following decade, the right-wing successors of Boulangism continued to reject the primacy of the individual over society, vilified liberal politics and bourgeois rationalism, and looked beyond the capital to find the root of France’s core values.<sup>114</sup> Jean Baffier’s *Jacques Bonhomme* and *Travailleur de la terre* (1890) (fig. 4.19) are among his many sculptures that imaged peasant culture in a fashion that employed the peasant-savage type as a tool of right-wing fortitude. Both figures, whose beaten bodies deny the idyllic vision of rural culture, present a vision of the peasant that is removed from the popular nostalgia of a timeless sphere. Baffier’s men resolutely confront the modernity that threatens to marginalize them. As Neil McWilliam writes about the proto-fascist nationalism and reactionary politics manifest in the sculptor’s program, the images of peasants and craft tradition invoked the countryside “both as a transcendent value exposing the moral degeneracy of contemporary life and as a universal restorative for the nation’s ills.”<sup>115</sup>

The Naturalist and the nationalist peasants share a claim to universality, which also illuminates Dalou’s choice to concentrate the ideal of labor within the rural worker. Yet Dalou’s peasant fits uncomfortably with the politics associated with the bourgeois

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<sup>113</sup> See: Jacques et Mona Ozouf, “*Le Tour de la France par Deux Enfants: Le petit livre rouge de la République*,” in *Lieux de Mémoire*, 291-321; Lehning, *Peasant and French*, 22-29.

<sup>114</sup> For a discussion of fin-de-siècle French nationalism see: Sternhell, *La Droite Révolutionnaire 1885-1914*; Tombs, ed. *Nationhood and Nationalism in France*.

<sup>115</sup> McWilliam, *Monumental Intolerance*, 213.

Salon and right-wing discourses. The *Grand Paysan* is neither timeless nor savage – instead manifesting the marks of the industrial age in his Naturalism and weariness, as well as emitting a resignation that denies any brutish tendencies. This signals a departure from Dalou’s mid-decade evaluation of the conditions he witnessed at Grenonvilliers, where rural culture offered an antidote to the perils of Paris; the *Paysan* hardly suggests a man entrenched in a milieu teeming with the profound charm of nature and only wonderful things to do.<sup>116</sup> His impotence subverts the seemingly limitless possibilities for the future by showing the deleterious effects of bourgeois progress on a man who was to embody national heritage and communal identity.

Because Dalou’s *Paysan* does not obviously conform to any of the established forms, it resists entrance into any dichotomy that would have it intervene in a specific political debate. Instead, it rests in the realm of social concerns about the condition of the laborer at the dawn of the century. It is therefore in the context of the model for the *Monument to Laborers*, the work that is its close contemporary, that the *Paysan* finds an appropriate rejoinder. In the model for the phallic group, the niche figures’ horizontal arrangement negates distinctions among laboring types. As a result, questions of geography, connections to modernity, and other distinguishing traits dissipate. Each of these professions falls victim to the age of coal and iron, subject to the unyielding advance of science. As the representation of the ideal worker, the *Grand Paysan* becomes a type of everyman – or at least every laborer – who enriches the proposed monument by demonstrating the effects of industry. The manner in which the two works function in

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<sup>116</sup> Dreyfous, *Dalou*, 223.

concert recalls the final paragraphs of Richer's *dialogues* where he discusses the perseverance of the worker as the attribute that would ennoble the new world order.

The juxtaposition of the *Grand Paysan* and the model for the *Monument to Laborers* contests the viability of the traditional relationship between man and the new age. In gendering modernity as masculine, the *Monument to Laborers* ascribed virility to the unyielding advance of science and progress. In its shadow, the *Grand Paysan* operates in a formal vocabulary of social and cultural impotence. This is hardly an optimistic idealization of modern masculinity. For Dalou, it seems, evaluations of modernity that asserted machines had replaced men were not simply a description of the industrial system. Instead, they suggested the fundamental inversion of structures of power that the modern era brought to bear on fin-de-siècle culture.

Yet for all of Dalou's effort to operate in a new visual idiom to express this condition, his model for the monument is an example of a late nineteenth-century inability to fully maneuver within the structures of this paradigm. Unable to find a phenomenological form that could express the power of the new age without calling on markers that belonged to the heroes of the past, Dalou uses a signifier of masculine fertility to image the virility of the age of science. The dialogue between the *Grand Paysan* and the *Monument to Laborers* then suggests that Dalou found limits to the Naturalist and figurative tradition's ability to address the challenges of the new age, as well as to man's capacity to affect it. These conflicts, which rebound in the modern spaces of ambiguity at the intersections of French heritage and its faith in progress, create a subtext for the socio-artistic concerns of the early twentieth century. The formal

incongruities serve as a harbinger of visual abstraction, and the image of masculine impotency offers a new prism through which to see a belle-époque culture where men insisted on their power, control, and dominance in the face of a new age.

## Epilogue:

### Dalou and the Question of Modernity

In 1904 a bronze cast of the *Grand Paysan* entered the Musée du Luxembourg in Paris. This is a remarkable acquisition as Dalou had always resisted having his work exhibited at the museum in a protest to its art politics.<sup>1</sup> A 1 March 1904 letter from one of the museum's curators to its director acknowledges this circumstance, but insists that Dalou had specifically chosen the Musée du Luxembourg as the destination for his humble peasant statue. The curator writes that Dalou hoped the *Grand Paysan* would serve as a testament to his work for future generations of artists.<sup>2</sup>

Though there is no clear corresponding document verifying the curator's assertions, it is certainly plausible that this was truly the sculptor's wish. Dalou's desire to use the *Paysan* as a type posthumous self representation appears to inform Richer's decision, made with the consent of the other executors of Dalou's will, to exhibit the work at the 1902 Salon as a type of eulogy.<sup>3</sup> It also supports Hunisak's later claim that

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<sup>1</sup> Archives du Louvre S<sup>30</sup> *Silène, Paysan*. In 1897 Dalou insisted that the cast of the *Triumph of Silenus*, ordered after he exhibited the work in 1895, be installed outside of the museum, as he did not agree with the institution's artistic politics.

<sup>2</sup> 1 March 1904, Archives du Louvre S<sup>30</sup>, *Paysan*.

<sup>3</sup> Dreyfous, *Dalou*, 247-8.



“for Dalou, this figure assumed the character of a memorial to his own career and beliefs.”<sup>4</sup>

As an autobiographical statement, the anonymous and impotent *Grand Paysan* reflects a vision of the artist that seems antithetical to subsequent definitions of the modernist sculptor, especially as embodied by Dalou’s rival Rodin. In fact David Getsy writes that Rodin’s reputation as the first sculptor of modernity developed from his anonymous handling and the elision between his sculptural production and his sexual potency.<sup>5</sup> The *Gates of Hell* is a prime example, serving as a testament to the perceived genius of the sculptor himself – cementing its author as a virile creator, identifiable through the marks of his physical touch.

Comparisons between Dalou and Rodin have informed both of their reputations. Their personal enmity and legitimate distaste for the other’s sculptural visions have accelerated the discourse that highlights their contrast. Given the binary and adversarial understanding of their relationship, assertions that Rodin is the first sculptor of modernity necessarily deny Dalou a place among modern masters. The 1899 inauguration of the *Triumph of the Republic*, that monument to *autrefois*, at the end of Dalou’s life seemingly confirms these evaluations.

Dalou’s claim to the pantheon of modern artists earns further scrutiny because of the works that have defined his identity in museums and galleries. In the years after his death, the executors of Dalou’s will commissioned numerous bronze casts of his terra

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<sup>4</sup> Hunisak, *Sculptor Jules Dalou*, 237.

<sup>5</sup> Getsy, *Rodin*, 59-171.

cottas in order to provide financial support for the sculptor's handicapped daughter.<sup>6</sup>

These posthumous statuettes (fig. 5.1) have filled exhibition and auction catalogs, serving as Dalou's entry into countless museums. They also have distorted the sculptor's reputation.

In their new medium these bronzes exist as finished sculptures rather than simple studies. Dalou's handling – rich with the marks of his own hand that never exist in his completed works – and the effect of the *non-finito* evoke comparisons to many of Rodin's projects, and an aesthetic that Dalou and Richer explicitly disavowed. While dynamic markers of Dalou's sculptural procedure, and studies of psychology and physiology, these works do not communicate the type of modern gravitas that animated the seemingly comparable – and superior – works in Rodin's œuvre; nor were they intended to.

These standards of modernity by which Dalou is typically judged often obfuscate his concerns and conception of the new age. Unlike many of his *avant-garde* peers, Dalou remained firmly committed to using his art to engage directly the era's social questions. In the middle of the 1880s, he had told Paul Gauguin “la sculpture sera républicaine ou ne sera pas,” and a decade later Dalou continued to fill his notebooks with Proudhon's writings from *Du principe de l'art et de sa destination sociale*.<sup>7</sup> These concerns led Dalou away from the fantastic, psychological, and purely visual spheres of art in which many of his contemporaries were working.

When the *Grand Paysan* entered the Musée de Luxembourg, the museum's curator noted that the work would represent Dalou “tel qu'il désirait être connu, sous la

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<sup>6</sup> See: Cadet, "L'édition des œuvres de Dalou par La Maison Suisse," 97-110.

<sup>7</sup> Gauguin, *Avant et Après*, 132.

forme réaliste et populaire qu'il avait toujours rêvée – sans pouvoir définitivement l'atteindre.”<sup>8</sup> The clause after the dash proves most revealing. The notion that Dalou – or his work – could never definitively reach its highest goal appears fitting in a way that exposes the profound disconnect between Dalou's vision of modernity and that which was expected by the dominant sphere of the Parisian art scene.

Man's failure to achieve the highest realms of the fin de siècle seems precisely to be the discourse in which Dalou's *Grand Paysan* and the model for the *Monument to Laborers* function – a humbling end to Dalou's twenty-year meditation on the identity and position of the laborer in the age of science and progress. After the sculptor's countless equivocations, in these ultimate works Dalou rejected the traditional visions of control, power, recognition, and supremacy to which man typically aspired. Instead, Dalou's twin projects commemorate a bleak understanding of the new age. His modernity was one where man could not reach the world's highest peaks; the age of science and the dominance of industry had supplanted man's virility and limited his potential for genius. For Dalou, the role of art was to express the nature of these new circumstances and to create a representation of nature's ideal as it was, not as one may have hoped it to be.

Dalou was not a modern sculptor in the mode of Rodin. His engagement with modernity, however, was equally profound and revealing for the concerns of the new century. Dalou's interventions into Parisian sites of meaning reveal the shifting social conditions that marked the dénouement of a period in which European cultures called on

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<sup>8</sup> 1 March 1904, Archives du Louvre S<sup>30</sup>, *Paysan*. “as he would have liked to be known, under the realist and popular form that he always dreamed of – without ever being able to definitively achieve it.”

modified visions of seventeenth- and eighteenth-century traditions as appropriate responses to early-twentieth-century structural instabilities. His model for the *Monument to Laborers* and the *Grand Paysan* forecast a new age, marked by the dominance of progress over man. Their formal programs demonstrate the limits of the figurative monument tradition to address the challenges of the age of science and industry. In so doing, they anticipate the aesthetic theories of the early twentieth century that sought new formal mechanisms to contend with social realities. Moreover, the presentation of man's impotency in the face of progress provides a stark rejoinder to the cultural politics of the early twentieth century when European nations boasted of their virility in the build up to a war that would actualize the destructive potential of the new era.

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