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Abstract/Résumé analytique

The Utopian Mayeux: Henri de Saint-Simon meets the *bossu à la mode*

Elizabeth K. Menon

Monsieur Mayeux was a fictional hunchback dwarf found in visual and literary media during and after the period of the July Monarchy (1830-1848) in France. Many artists, among them Honoré Daumier, and writers, including Victor Hugo and Alfred de Musset, popularized the hunchback. Mayeux was a unique "type" capable of addressing a diverse public on several simultaneous levels. The ambiguities inherent in his physical and psychological characteristics aided individuals who "used" him to sell a product or advocate a political position. With Saint-Simonism we can witness Mayeux being used to address both sides of the same argument. Although he was an unlikely "hero," the hunchback dwarf was uniquely qualified to address topical issues of the period, including the increasing popularity of the social system of Henri de Saint-Simon. Mayeux appeared as a primary character in a series of texts and lithographic prints that commented directly or indirectly on Enfantin's effective marketing of a reconfigured Saint-Simonist doctrine in the opening years of the July Monarchy. As an ironic choice — partly because of Enfantin's connection of physical beauty to moral uprightness — Mayeux evoked discussion. In addition, part of Saint-Simon's conception of God was as a harmoniser of all antitheses and the "sciences" of physiognomy and phrenology had informed the religious philosopher's ideas as much as it had helped shape Mayeux's physical form. Since he had a reputation in prints as being a womanizer. Mayeux helped criticize the concept of love promoted by Saint-Simonists. As "everyman" representing the lower and middle classes, Mayeux would necessarily be concerned with utopian theories proposing societal changes to benefit the disenfranchised. Those critical of Enfantin took advantage of Mayeux's personal ambiguities to expose the inconsistencies within the Saint-Simonist doctrine.

Monsieur Mayeux était un nain bossu fictif qu'on retrouvait en France dans les arts visuels et littéraires de la période de la monarchie de juillet (1830-1848). Plusieurs artistes et écrivains, dont Honoré Daumier, Victor Hugo et Alfred de Musset rendirent le bossu populaire. Mayeux était un genre de personnage qui pouvait s'adresser à un public varié à différents niveaux simultanément. Les ambiguïtés inhérentes à son caractère physique et psychologique facilitèrent la tâche des individus qui se servaient de lui pour vendre un produit ou pour préconiser une opinion politique. Avec l'arrivée du saint-simonisme nous pouvons remarquer qu'on se servait de Mayeux pour débattre les vues opposées d'un même argument. Quoiqu'il fut l'image invraisemblable d'un héros, le nain bossu était exceptionnellement qualifié pour discuter de sujets d'actualité de l'époque, y compris le système social de plus en plus populaire de Henri de Saint-Simon. Mayeux apparaît comme personnage principal dans une série de textes et de lithographes qui commentaient directement ou indirectement le marketing efficace d'Enfantin d'une nouvelle représentation de la doctrine saint-simonienne au début des premières années de la monarchie de juillet. Choix ironique — en partie à cause du lien qu'Enfantin faisait entre la beauté physique et l'intégrité morale — Mayeux suscitait la discussion. De plus, un des concepts de Dieu de Saint-Simon était d'un être qui harmonisait toutes les antithèses et que les "sciences" de physiognomie et de phrénologie avaient informé les idées religieuses du philosophe, de même qu'elles avaient aidé à former la figure de Mayeux. Puisque sur les gravures il avait la réputation d'être un coureur de jupons, Mayeux devint le conduit de la critique du concept de l'amour tel que présenté par les saint-simoniens. En tant que "monsieur tout le monde" représentant la basse et la moyenne classes, Mayeux se préoccupait forcément des théories utopiques proposant des changements dans la société pour le bénéfice de ceux qui étaient privés du droit électoral. Ceux qui critiquaient Enfantin tirèrent profit des ambiguïtés personnelles de Mayeux pour mettre au jour les inconsistances au sein de la doctrine saint-simonienne.

Elizabeth K. Menon

THE UTOPIAN MAYEUX: HENRI DE SAINT-SIMON MEETS THE *BOSSU À LA MODE*

During the July Monarchy, a fictional hunchback dwarf named Mayeux (fig. 1) became a popular commentator on political and social life in France.¹ Much like England's John Bull, Mayeux represented the silent majority of the French population, which was dissatisfied with the past but afraid of the future. Artists and writers quickly seized upon the popular icon of Mayeux to interpret for their audience the significance of the *trois glorieuses*. As a popular icon, Mayeux's image appeared in lithographic prints, books, pamphlets, journals, plays, and song sheets, and he was immortalized in the form of statuettes, candlesticks, and other decorative art objects. In prints and literature Mayeux was used both to poke fun and to provoke awareness of political and social issues. His repeated appearance in serials and novels appealed to a wide audience that eagerly followed his thoughts and adventures. Although he was an unlikely "hero," the hunchback dwarf was uniquely qualified to address issues critical of the July Monarchy, from government censorship of the press to intimate relations between the sexes, to the utopian social system of Henri de Saint-Simon. The artists and writers who created Mayeux strategically imbued him with an appearance and motivations that would make him function as a popular hero for the French public after the July Revolution.

Charles-Joseph Traviès (1804-1859), J. J. Grandville (1803-1847), and Honoré Daumier (1808-1879) were among the many artists who drew Mayeux. Dozens of anonymous authors wrote about him or were influenced by this phenomenon. The list includes Eugène Sue (1804-1857), who based his character La Mayeux in *Le Juif errant* on this well-known figure.² Honoré de Balzac (1799-1850) featured Mayeux in two of his earliest articles in *La Silhouette* and *La Caricature*.³ In *Les Misérables*, which takes place during the July Monarchy, Victor Hugo (1802-1885) noted that "Paris a un Ésope qui est Mayeux."⁴ Hugo was likely influenced by

¹For more information on the history and significance of Mayeux, see Elizabeth K. Menon, *The Complete Mayeux: Use and Abuse of a French Icon* (Berne, 1997). This text discusses how Mayeux's interpretation and meaning changed over time due to his connection with the July Monarchy.

²See Alfred Nettement, *Études critiques sur le feuilleton-roman* (Paris, 1847).

³"M. Mahieux au bal de l'Opéra," *La Caricature* (3 February 1831), with the pseudonym Alfred Coudreaux, and "M. Mahieux en société," *La Caricature* (6 January 1831), with the pseudonym Eugène Moriseau. Both articles are reprinted in *Histoire des oeuvres de H. de Balzac suivie d'un appendice par le V^e de Spoelberch de Lovenjoul* (Paris, 1888), pp. 262-67.

⁴Victor Hugo, *Les Misérables* (Paris, 1862); see part III, chapter X, "Ecce Paris, Ecce Homo."

Mayeux's popularity when developing his protagonists Quasimodo for *Notre Dame de Paris* (1831) and Triboulet for *Le Roi s'amuse* (1832), and he specifically featured the hunchback in his *Chansons des rues et des bois* (1865).⁵ Both Champfleury (1821-1889) and Charles Baudelaire (1821-1867) described the Mayeux character as a "type" within the history of caricature while Théophile Gautier reviewed the theatrical production *Les Caravanes de Mayeux* in 1843. By the time Edmond de Goncourt (1822-1896) recalled Mayeux in his *Journal* in 1883 and in 1885, any person with a hunchback could be called a *mayeux*.⁶

One index of Mayeux's popularity is that his image appeared in nearly three hundred different lithographs. In 1831 alone, 25 per cent of the entries in the *Autorisation d'estampes avec ou sans texte* contained at least one print of Mayeux.⁷ In that same year, a crucial period in the development and use of Mayeux, more than forty thousand books and pamphlets were printed featuring him as the central character. More than thirty articles about Mayeux or supposedly "written" by him were published in journals such as *Le Figaro*, *Le Temps*, *La Silhouette*, *La Caricature*, *Le Charivari*, *Le Siècle*, *Le Corsaire*, and *La Charge* from 1830 to 1833. The journals *Mayeux* and *Le Vritable Mayeux* each circulated two thousand copies per issue.⁸ Again in 1831, five different theatrical productions featured Mayeux as a central character or included him in a supporting role. Careful examination of current productions listed in the *Courrier des Théâtres* reveals that in the first half of 1831, scarcely a night went by when a production featuring Mayeux was not performed.

Mayeux's origin can be traced to a long line of hunchbacks, court fools, and clowns in European culture. A prevalent ancestral figure is doubtless found in the writings of Rabelais. Mayeux, as a nineteenth-century icon, might be viewed in terms of updating Rabelaisian tradition — still linking popular culture, verbal and visual caricature, scatological imagery and the psychology of laughter, though in more restrained and less poetic terms. The fool's freedom to tell the truth, poke fun, and indulge in licentious behaviour without incurring anger or blame most likely was a primary consideration in creating Mayeux. Through his foolish, innocent eyes, Parisians could safely view themselves and their government. Perhaps Mayeux's popular success as a symbol for the disenfranchised Everyman of France was partly due to the fact that his grotesque form was only marginally based on reality. He was not a caricature of an individual, rather he was a "type" developed to interact both with other imaginary characters symbolizing principles and issues of the period and also with satirical representations of political figures including King Louis-Philippe.

⁵On the impact of M. Mayeux on Hugo see Elizabeth K. Menon, "Victor Hugo and the Hunchbacks of the July Monarchy," *Studies in the Humanities* 21, no. 1 (July, 1994), 60-71.

⁶Monaco edition, vol. V, 152; vol. VIII, 39, and vol. XIII, 89.

⁷Paris, Archives Nationales (hereafter abbreviated AN) *F/18 (VI) 12.

⁸AN series F/18/95 (Mie). Publication figures for the pamphlets and books were derived from registers in the series F/18/43-119 (Déclarations des imprimeurs parisiens).

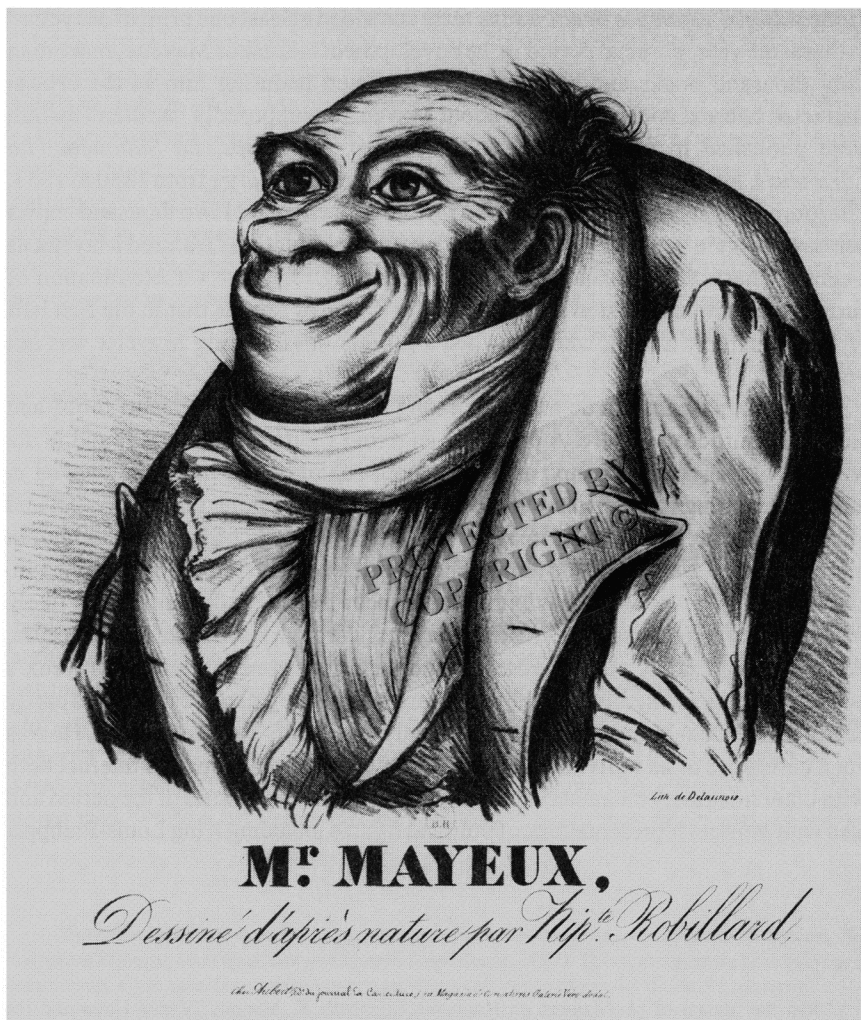


Fig. 1. Hippolyte Robillard, *Mr. Mayeux, Dessiné d'après nature par Hipte. Robillard.* (Lithograph, 1831). Photograph, Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris.

Mayeux's physical form was meant to underscore society's sense of unease during the transitional period between governments. The ideas of Johann Lavater, Franz-Joseph Gall, and Baron Cuvier readily applied to caricature and soon contributed to the development of Mayeux's physical and mental characteristics. Artists utilized the sciences of physiognomy, phrenology, and comparative anatomy to give Mayeux physical features and facial expressions that would communicate his internal motives and morals. The pseudo-science of phrenology concentrated on convex and concave areas of the human skull, while physiognomy examined differences in human anatomy and facial features. Traviès and other artists quite possibly referred to illustrations in books by Lavater and Gall to arrive at Mayeux's specific physical form. At the same time, the physical characteristics of hunchbacks may have been well enough known that artists did not need to resort to such visual sources. Either way, certain facial and physical features found in these books also appear in prints of Mayeux. His low forehead, protruding chin, and thick lower lips recall physiognomic features that Lavater described as indicators of naïveté, wit, and energy. The retreating forehead denoted superiority of imagination and wit, while his projecting eyebones indicated wisdom and great understanding, and his nose "great sense and nothing more."⁹ The protruding lower lip negatively suggested a lack of reason and solid judgment. The disproportion between the upper and lower lip was a sign of "folly or wickedness."¹⁰ Judging from this, Mayeux exhibited characteristics associated with court fools: naïveté and lack of judgment combined with imagination, wit, energy, and ingenuity. Moreover, such fools were often understanding and wise, despite their proclivity for folly.

Mayeux was also designed as a character "type" capable of addressing a diverse nineteenth-century public on several levels simultaneously. His ungainly physical form facilitated his dual role as both mocker and mocked. The ambiguous qualities in his physical and psychological make-up enabled various and sometimes conflicting messages to be conveyed. Those who spoke through Mayeux were protected by their anonymity and often modified the hunchback's characteristics to suit their own purposes; the "meaning" of Mayeux therefore did not remain static throughout the century. Since artists and writers with different political viewpoints utilized this imaginary character, his significance altered from print to print, from story to story. Mayeux's relatively long survival for a fictitious character in popular French culture was due to this chameleon-like nature, as well as to his ability to educate, agitate, and entertain his audience. Examination of texts, lithographic prints, and other cultural productions in which Mayeux appeared can reveal much about the social, cultural, historical, and political nature of July Monarchy society. An unusual and complicated print (fig. 2) presents an example of the way that Mayeux was shown to be a part of the significant events and concepts of the 1830-

⁹Johann Caspar Lavater, *Essays on Physiognomy*, trans. Henry Hunter, vol. 3 (London, 1789), p. 370.

¹⁰Johann Caspar Lavater, *Essays on Physiognomy*, trans. Thomas Holcraft (New York, n.d.), p. 475.

1833 period and specifically introduces a primary issue to be examined in this essay: Mayeux's relationship with Saint-Simonists, Republicans, and "liberated women."

In the print, a voyager happens upon a collection of items in space suggesting a museum of natural history. These symbolic relics describe events, groups and individuals recognizable from the first years of the July Monarchy. The costume of Père Enfantin (the Saint-Simonist leader), a patriotic saw, the nose of a Republican, and the skin of a liberated woman are but a few symbolic items to be found here. The lobster in the upper right was a symbol for Charles X, the deposed King, who was accused of "walking backwards" in terms of human rights and equality during his reign. The "patriotic saw" likely referred to Persil (called "per-scie" in the satiric press) and his responsibility for censorship under Louis-Philippe. The "republican nose," reminiscent of costumes belonging to the Théâtre des Funambules, describes the character of the Republicans, best known for their biting caricatures of government leaders. The objects found in the print were perceived as artifacts in 1833 due to drastic changes that had occurred in the few short years since the July Revolution. It was a period characterized by uneasy transitions within government, broken promises, and mismatched goals.

Many of the objects suggest a "shedding" of past enthusiasms or current faddish notions. This can be said of the Saint-Simonian costume on two counts. First, the "religion" had not become popular until after the spiritual leader had passed away in 1825. Second, Enfantin, who had assumed the role of spiritual leader for the Saint-Simonists during the July Monarchy, was imprisoned in December of 1832, which resulted, for all practical purposes, in the dissolution of the movement.¹¹ The African voyager displaying the skin of the liberated woman has several underlying meanings. It indicates an ominous future for the traveller, through its allusion to the abolition of slavery in the French colonies and the suggestion that the African will, in the long run, have no more freedom than women who were "freed" by the doctrine of Saint-Simonism. Further, Saint-Simon himself had described the necessity of "a change of skin" upon the occasion of his retirement, conceding that his system (as it was conceived prior to 1825) was not capable of attracting followers.¹²

The area of the print containing the greatest range of interpretations is at the left, where Mayeux stands encased in a large jar — resembling those used to preserve specimens in formaldehyde solution — which indicates the freakish nature of his deformity. He becomes an artifact with these other remnants of early July Monarchy society as an indication that his popularity had decreased significantly since its 1831 peak. In fact, by 1833, documents had appeared that announced his death (or retirement) due to the forces of censorship (literally poisoned by Persil) or *ennui* (caused by "ingrown revolution"):

¹¹Arthur John Booth, *Saint-Simon and Saint-Simonism: A Chapter in the History of Socialism in France* (London, 1871), p. 190.

¹²Henri de Saint-Simon, *Oeuvres de Saint-Simon & d'Enfantin* (Paris: Dentu), vol. IX, p. 19.



Fig. 2: Signed H.D. (HonoréDaumier?) “Un jour le voyageur, aux petites maisons où dorment les débris de tant de mirmidons,curieux d’admirer leur visible dépouille, en secouera gaiment la poussière et la rouille, et, pensant aux hauts-faits de ces nombreux zéros, avec hilarité contempera leurs peaux.” (Virgile trad. Libre).Appeared in *La Charge* in January of 1833. Photograph, Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris

Celui qui, pendant si long-temps, occupa tout Paris de ses prouesses, de ses aventures, de ses infortunes; cet homme bruyant, malencontreux et railleur, qui nous fournissait une épigramme pour chaque sottise, une moquerie pour chaque déception, un trait malin pour chaque douleur; celui qui a le mieux jugé les événements de notre époque, qui semblait avoir personnifié en lui nos colères, nos enthousiasmes, nos crédulités; le type de 1830 et de 1831; le masque dans lequel, nous tant que nous sommes, nous pouvions sans chagrin nous reconnaître, parce que nous placions sur son compte, je dirais mieux, sur son dos, toutes nos folies, toutes nos bévues; l'homme populaire enfin, à qui nous devons d'avoir ri pendant les dix-sept mois qui viennent de s'écouler, Mayeux est mort de 23 décembre 1831, jour de Sainte-Victoire. Il est mort d'ennui, de tristesse, de consumption, d'une maladie dévorante et indéterminée, à laquelle les médecins, toujours savants pour qualifier ce qu'ils ne peuvent guérir, ont donné le nom de "révolution rentrée."¹³

The jar is labelled "L'Apollon moderne" as a reference to his popularity, by suggesting that the hunchback had achieved the status and recognizability of a Greek god. Because the Apollo Belvedere was determined by Johann Winckelmann to prove the superiority of the art of the classical past and was thus accepted as a symbol of the Neoclassicism, the phrase "modern Apollo" also alludes to the Romantic movement's replacing of ideal "beauty" with ideal of "ugliness" now associated with Hugo's Quasimodo from *Notre Dame de Paris* (1832).

Ironically, the declaration of Saint-Simonism as a religion in 1829 had included a proposal for the solution to the "debilitating division between romanticism and classicism, each of which was held to be a complementary, though partial, expression of the same fundamental truth."¹⁴ Furthermore, while Saint-Simon had not been greatly concerned with external appearances, equating the notion of goodness with effective functional ability, under *Enfantin* physical beauty became an important indicator of moral uprightness.¹⁵ This shift provides one reason why Mayeux would become an effective commentator on Saint-Simonist philosophy, because there were inconsistencies within this doctrine, especially as it was reformulated and effectively marketed by *Enfantin* in the opening years of the July Monarchy. As we will see, Mayeux would have been appreciated by Saint-Simon, but could not find favor with *Enfantin*. Since Mayeux had become a humorous "everyman" for the largest portion of the population in France, the lower-middle and lower classes, it is not surprising that the hunchback would be used to address utopian theories which proposed societal changes to benefit the disenfranchised.

¹³Anais de Raucou Bazin, "Nécrologie," *Paris, ou le Livre des Cent-et-un*, vol. 3 (1831), pp. 361-62. Republished in *L'Époque sans nom; esquisses de Paris 1830-1833* (Paris: Alexandre Mesnier, 1833).

¹⁴Neil McWilliam, *Dreams of Happiness: Social Art and the French Left 1830-1850* (Princeton University Press, 1993), p. 77.

¹⁵*Ibid.*, p. 84.

The hunchback was a potent critic of these social doctrines for many different reasons.

First and foremost, Mayeux was effective due to his physical form as a hunchback, since part of Saint-Simon's conception of God was as a harmoniser of all antitheses. "Saint-Simonian analysis in virtually every area identifies a series of dichotomies — epistemological, sociopolitical, historical, religious, sexual — to which it offers resolution and hence the achievement of harmony."¹⁶ Furthermore, hunchbacks were destined to be connected to Gothic revivalism as a part of the Romantic movement in art and literature. The Gothic period was important to Saint-Simonists because it was then that religious thought and the visual arts and architecture were united in purpose and form — especially in the great cathedrals of Notre Dame in both Chartres and Paris. It was also a period that effectively solicited the believer's emotions.¹⁷ Joncières, a writer for the Saint-Simonist paper *Le Globe*, appreciated Victor Hugo's ability to infuse his characters in *Notre Dame de Paris* with emotions that the artist must have experienced himself. The author posed a question indicating the importance of the notion of opposites: "Quasimodo se pare, se fait beau, cache sa laideur physique par la beauté de son âme qu'il étale complaisamment?"¹⁸ An author using the name "Saint C" suggested careful study of Hugo's writings and corroborated the importance of artists' psychological connection with their subjects: "La beauté et l'originalité de leur art est dans cette vive et profonde assimilation de leur sublime nature avec leurs créations; ils ont jeté dans l'art leurs passions, leurs souffrances, leurs amours, toute leur vie; ils ont donné à leurs oeuvres toute leur personnalité . . ."¹⁹

Mayeux was connected even more closely with Saint-Simon and his doctrine because the "sciences" of physiognomy and phrenology had informed the religious philosopher's ideas as much as it had shaped the physical form of the hunchback. The July Revolution enabled François Joseph Victor Broussais, friend of Henri de Saint-Simon and inventor of physiological medicine, to claim a place among the Paris Medical Faculty. His beliefs were largely based on Pierre Jean Georges Cabanis's (1802) studies of the relationship between man's physical appearance and his moral behaviour.²⁰ Broussaisism, which would be decried as heretic in medical circles beginning in 1829, temporarily usurped the work of the man now considered part of the "tradition" of pathological anatomy — Xavier Bichat. Henri de Saint-Simon read Bichat's writings and believed he found there a sound scientific basis (or, more appropriately, source) for his determination of three social functions and three social classes. The scientists or savants corresponded to Bichat's "brain man,"

¹⁶Ibid., pp. 87-88.

¹⁷Ibid., 68.

¹⁸X. Joncières, "Littérature. A-propos de Notre-Dame de Paris, Roman par M. Victor Hugo," *Le Globe*, January 27, 1832, p. 4.

¹⁹Saint-C., "Beaux-Arts. Philosophie de l'art. La Vie poétique et la vie privée," *L'Artiste*, 1832, vol. 4, pp. 269-71.

²⁰Pierre Jean George Cabanis, *Rapports du physique et du moral de l'homme*, 2 vols. (Paris, 1824).

while the industrialists represented “motor man” and the artists and teachers reflected “sensory man.”²¹ Saint-Simon also counted Joseph Gall among his friends, and thus was likewise familiar with the pseudo-science of phrenology.²²

In addition to being created from these scientific theories, the hunchback Mayeux also had a connection to Saint-Simon because of his status as an outcast and an underdog. Significantly the concept of alienation was used to identify possible recruits to the religion: “Individual alienation frequently emerges as a central motive in inspiring allegiance to Saint-Simon. Frustration at unfulfilled promise, acute consciousness of the difficulty of social insertion, grievance over professional setbacks — all are explained in terms of a hostile social environment, dominated by egotism and greed.”²³ The religious leader has been described as an outcast himself (especially during the early years he was formulating his philosophy), yet later his ideas rose to prominence and he was highly regarded. Saint-Simon defied all odds when he attempted to commit suicide in 1823. He shot himself seven times in the head, yet lived. Two years later, on his deathbed, he realized that his system could succeed if put aggressively into motion at that moment. He repeated the phrase to his followers: “the pear is ripe, you must pluck it now,”²⁴ in retrospect itself an ironic statement given the persistent caricaturing of Louis-Philippe during the July Monarchy as a *poire* frequently under threat of attack by Mayeux.

Yet another reason for the hunchback’s strength as a critic of Saint-Simonism rests in his reputation as a “popular” figure whose purpose is to educate, as well as to entertain, the very audience that Saint-Simonism hoped to embrace. In fact, he could be seen to symbolize what is now called “popular religion,” which can be described as “the religious behaviour of the mass of the population, in so far as this differs from the model offered by a clerical or lay elite.”²⁵ Saint-Simon’s early writings identified the proletarians as those who were ignorant (or naive, like the foolish Mayeux), and his mature oeuvre demonstrates his intent to improve the social, political, and moral environment for that class. As for the “popular” (or lower-class) nature of Mayeux, it seems that Saint-Simon believed that popular literature better reflected issues in society than the “high” art of the Salon.²⁶ Saint-Simon demonstrated his knowledge of the potency of popular culture when he chose to design a deck of playing cards, replacing Kings and Queens with “revolutionary

²¹Frank Manuel, *The New World of Henri Saint-Simon* (Harvard University Press, 1956), pp. 300-1.

²²Gall, in fact, performed the autopsy on Saint-Simon following his death in 1825. According to Manuel, Gall “found a brain with a large surface. He thought he could discern signs of a total absence of any quality of circumspection joined to an indefatigable spirit of perseverance” (pp. 365-66). McWilliam discusses the connection of these theories to Saint-Simonist thought on pp. 11, 32-33, and especially 39-40.

²³McWilliam, p. 96.

²⁴Manuel, p. 365.

²⁵Ralph Gibson, *A Social History of French Catholicism 1789-1914* (New York, 1989), p. 134.

²⁶Manuel, p. 347.

virtues of liberty, equality and fraternity.”²⁷ These cards were designed, like Mayeux was, by the artists and writers who created him to educate and entertain simultaneously. In 1832 the Saint-Simonists would utilize the propagandistic properties of popular culture images when they mass-produced a lithographic portrait of *Enfantin* in an attempt to inspire faith and recruit new members.²⁸ While *Enfantin*’s reconfigured version of the religious philosophy would focus primarily on the visual effectiveness of paintings, it is clear that the power of caricature was well-enough understood so that it could be described to the readers of *Le Globe* in 1832. The anonymous author credits the artist Charlet with the removal of Charles X, adding that:

L’art, pendant toute la restauration, se cache sous le masque de l’ironie, lance ses sarcasmes comme autant de tirailleurs autour du trône jusqu’à ce qu’il s’écroule; en un mot l’art, pendant la restauration, est affiché aux carreaux de Martinet et d’Aubert ou exposé sur la scène en costume d’acteur satyrique.²⁹

Whether in the form of popular culture paraphernalia or the “high” art of painting and sculpture, artists were responsible for the creation of visual propaganda and, for this reason, found themselves in an enviable position within Saint-Simon’s proposed social order, becoming a “prophet” or “priest” who enjoyed privileged insight and were charged with ensuring that both the system and its proponents would stay on a solid course.³⁰ In 1831, *Le Globe* announced that artists needed to take their responsibility seriously: “L’artiste aujourd’hui a perdu le sentiment de sa mission, de l’importance de son action dans la société; aussi a-t-il perdu toute puissance d’inspiration, toute influence légitime et populaire.”³¹

Mayeux symbolized the “artist” through his appearance in both visual media and in theatrical productions. He also played the artist’s role in several caricatures in order to expose the dangers of censorship under Louis-Philippe’s government. As a marginalized figure, Mayeux belonged to the fringe society of Bohemia, which, as McWilliam describes, “refracted complex, often contradictory, projections of the artist’s place in a nascent industrial society, setting up a resonant dialectic of subversion and containment in which critiques of bourgeois values could ultimately be deprived of their more corrosive implications.”³² Mayeux functions within that dialectic, due to his nature as a figure “invented” as a mouthpiece for artists and writers within the realm of popular imagery and literature.

Mayeux’s characteristics as a hunchback whose design is based on the sciences of physiognomy and phrenology, as an outsider, and through his appearance in

²⁷McWilliam, p. 49.

²⁸Ibid., p. 87.

²⁹Anonymous, “De l’art, à propos de la liste civile,” *Le Globe*, 6 janvier 1832, p. 2.

³⁰McWilliam, p. 16 and 63.

³¹“De l’art, à propos de la liste civile,” *Le Globe*, 6 janvier 1832, pp. 1-2. On the subject of the Saint-Simonist response to the Salon of 1831 see Nicos Hadjinicolaou, “Art in a Period of Social Upheaval: French Art Criticism and Problems of Change in 1831,” *Oxford Art Journal*, 6, no. 2 (1983), pp. 29-37.

³²McWilliam, p. 28.

popular culture media, made him effective in exposing Saint-Simonist doctrine as flawed. The hunchback should have, by the above argument, made the perfect test-case for their community. But instead of being celebrated as a symbol for potential growth, Mayeux was singled out as representative of what was wrong with the direction society was taking in 1831 and 1832. Mayeux could not find favor like Hugo's Quasimodo had, because he had a critical voice while the deformed protagonist of *Notre Dame de Paris* did not. For this reason, Mayeux became an issue of contention by Saint-Simonians who were in the process of recruiting new members, for Protestants, who had come under attack (as had Catholics) by this new philosophy, and for Republicans (with whom Mayeux is most frequently associated) who were anti-clerical and especially anti-catholic due to that religion's association with past monarchical reign in France. It is with Saint-Simonism (a "social" concern with religious and political implications) that we can witness Mayeux being "used" by advocates on both sides of the same argument. Mayeux appears in documents that support Saint-Simonism, criticize it and criticize the criticism of it.

Anais de Raucou Bazin, in a short discussion on the role of religion among the bourgeois of the July Monarchy from *L'Époque sans nom: esquisses de Paris 1830-1833*, hinted that faith was not of great importance to this class of society:

A ce propos, allez-vous me demander si le bourgeois de Paris est religieux? Plaisante question. Il s'est marié à l'église; il a fait baptiser ses enfans. Il trouve même fort convenable que sa femme aille le dimanche à la messe. C'est un bon exemple, et il vous dira, si vous le pressez, qu'il faut de la religion pour le peuple.³³

Just prior to Louis-Philippe's rule, the French middle class had begun subscribing to the enlightenment version of religious skepticism called "Voltairianism"; attendance of young people in church had noticeably declined. This was a consequence of the church's alliance with the *ancien régime* at the time of the 1789 revolution, the attempt by the Jacobins to fill the vacuum left by the ousted church with organizations like the Cult of the Supreme Being, the domination of the church by Napoleon Bonaparte and the dying out of the faithful, older members of the middle class. The result was a generation (and a class) that drew its beliefs from the eighteenth-century philosophes.³⁴ The 1830 Revolution was instigated by a society that was turning from the Church, fostering rampant anticlericalism.

A Mayeux print (fig. 3) demonstrates the prevalence of anticlericalism under the July Monarchy, by alluding to the famous anticlerical play, Molière's *Tartuffe*, whose title is written on the wall next to the figures. Molière, always popular among the French intelligentsia, created plays that satirized "specific symbolic types: pedants, doctors, lawyers, misers, hypocrites and sycophants."³⁵ Mayeux addresses the actor who is playing Tartuffe, charged with revealing the hypocrisy

³³Bazin, p. 54.

³⁴Adrien Dansette, *Religious History of Modern France* (Edinburgh: Nelson, 1961), p. 189.

³⁵*Ibid.*, p. 310

within organized religion. *Tartuffe* experienced a revival during the period of the July Monarchy because it expressed the feelings of many members of society who had lost their faith in the church. Mayeux comments on the popularity of the play as well as the ideas contained within it when he exclaims to the actor “the most deformed are not the most hideous to look at.” More specifically, this print reminds us that *Tartuffe* was performed at the Comédie Française on April 21 — the night before the image was registered in the *dépot légal*.³⁶ The print, on yet another level, comments on Mayeux’s appearance and didactic purpose through a dual meaning in the caption, which indicates his grotesque nature is less hideous to view than the realities he is used to expose. In this sense, the hunchback functions as a scapegoat, simultaneously revealing and deflecting the expected response from the viewer: anger and disgust.

Under Louis-Philippe, Catholicism was not supported by the monarchy but was recognized as the religion of the majority of French people. Saint-Simon had acknowledged the power of Catholicism when he reconsidered his recruitment tactics, adopting a more “religious” appearance and directly debating Catholic and Protestant faiths in his *Nouveau Christianisme* (left unfinished with his death in 1825). Skepticism among the middle class was gradually transmitted to the working and lower classes during the early years of the July Monarchy, creating an environment beneficial to the growth of Saint-Simonist membership under Prosper Enfantin. In 1831 in *Le Globe*, “Religion St. Simonienne” was declared as a reconciliation of the spiritual and temporal in a unique society, announcing: “la religion de l’humanité, religion vraiment définitive, vraiment une et universelle, parce que, réglant l’ordre temporel aussi bien que l’ordre spirituel, elle saura concilier tous les intérêts privés avec tous les intérêts généraux.”³⁷ Pierre Leroux, in “France. Profession de foi,” announced that *Le Globe* was to become the organ of Saint-Simonism, presenting to its French public scientific, literary, and philosophical works, giving the public enough information so they could make informed decisions. Science, philosophy and art would be presented together to the people. Their namesake Saint-Simon had been interested in the philosophical investigation of systems that influenced morality in addition to religion and politics. While what he pursued could be considered theoretical, Saint-Simon strove to connect his ideas to scientific knowledge and at the same time promote philosophy itself as a science. Saint-Simon believed that what is called a society consists of a myriad of interdependent individuals; each person was unique, but was not capable of existing outside of a communal context.

³⁶“Comédie Française,” *Courrier des Théâtres*, April 21, 1831, p. 1. *La Rue Quincampoix, ou l’Origine des Mayeux* is also given brief notice in *Le Globe*, June 12, 1833, noting “Le vaudeville roule tout entier sur des bosses et des bossus. C’est un tissu de coqs-à-l’âne et de méchancetés politiques fort innocents” (655, Théâtre Molière).

³⁷“Religion Saint-Simonienne. Prédiction du 11 Septembre, par M. Transon. Politique. – Morale. – Religion,” *Le Globe*, September 12, 1831, pp. 1-2.



Fig. 3: Michel Delaporte, *Mr. Mayeux anticongréganiste* “-Nom de D . . . ! les plus mal faits ne sont pas les plus hideux à voir . . .” (Lithograph, 1831). Photograph, Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris



Fig. 4: Signed DMP (Michel Delaporte?), “Le Poiricide et le ___ où comme on va de fil en aiguille.” (Lithograph, appeared in *La Charge* no. 6, 1832). Photograph, Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris.

The first documents in which Mayeux comments upon this type of religious philosophy appeared in the satirical republican journal *Le Corsaire* in February and April of 1831.³⁸ Saint-Simon had, during his lifetime, condemned “liberals” as a violent, dangerous element within society, intent on causing revolution rather than finding harmony.³⁹ Partially because the July Revolution was staged without a clearly identified leader (although the Republicans and Saint-Simonists alike favored Lafayette), the resolution of the conflict was a conservative compromise, with Louis-Philippe only partially removed from the monarchial tradition. As such, the July Revolution could only be condemned as a failure by Saint-Simonists and Republicans alike. Yet the Saint-Simonists could rightly blame the violence of the revolution itself upon the Republicans, who had used the popular press effectively to incite hatred of the monarchy among the lower classes without whose participation the revolution could not have taken place. However the reason that the Republicans used Mayeux to ridicule the Saint-Simonists in 1831 was likely a specific declaration by *Enfantin*:

Nous AIMONS les *républicains* parce qu'ils *aiment le peuple*, parce qu'ils *veulent le progrès*, parce qu'ils sont *généreux, enthousiastes et braves*. Mais NOUS NE SOMMES PAS RÉPUBLICAINS, parce que les *républicains* veulent un *progrès désordonné*, parce qu'ils haïssent les *légitimistes* et méprisent le *juste-milieu*, parce qu'ils ne savent point en quoi consiste le *véritable intérêt* du peuple."⁴⁰

Enfantin went on to profess appreciation for the legitimists (for their love of order and dignity), but distaste for their lack of understanding of rights for the poor and the necessity of progress. Similarly, the *juste-milieu* was given positive note for its order, peace and tranquility but condemned for its inability to prosecute Republicans and Carlists for their violent acts.⁴¹ The Republicans grasped for a symbol familiar to them, namely the hunchback Mayeux, utilizing him in their response because of the ironic connections between him and the Saint-Simonist philosophy.

The first article in *Le Corsaire*, entitled “Monsieur Mayeux Saint-Simonien,” (February 11, 1831) juxtaposes Saint-Simonism with Christianity in direct satirical reference to Saint-Simon’s unfinished but posthumously-published *Nouveau Christianisme*. It utilizes the form of an open letter, which mimicked the format of many of the communications from *Enfantin* to the followers in *Le Globe*. Mayeux’s remarks in this letter are tinged with sarcasm that reveals the anonymous author’s

³⁸Sarcastic critiques of Saint-Simonism appeared frequently in the Republican journal *Le Figaro*. See for example, “Les Saint-Simoniens. Les Arts.” *Le Figaro*, April 17, 1832, pp. 2-3 and “Les Saint-Simoniens. Appel aux poètes,” *Le Figaro*, April 9, 1832, pp. 2-3.

³⁹Manuel, p. 289.

⁴⁰Saint-Simon, vol. 7, pp. 116-17.

⁴¹Similar complaints of violence and disorder on the part of the Republicans was voiced in *Le Globe*. See “France: Les Républicains,” *Le Globe*, 5 juillet, 1831, p. 1 and “France: Chances du parti Républicain,” *Le Globe*, 15 mai, 1831, p. 1.

skepticism of the Saint-Simonist ideals in *Nouveau Christianisme*.⁴² Mayeux's version began:

Mes fils et mes filles,
 Les privilèges, le christianisme et les dos plats sont pour que vous
 le sachiez, en opposition manifeste avec les intérêts et les besoins
 de la société. A la place de cette triple plaie, vous allez voir
 poindre le règne de la capacité, du saint-simonisme et de la bosse.
 Je vous engage à donner dedans.⁴³

Mayeux structured his letter as a tri-partite critique of "privileges", "Christianity", and "flat backs," all references to the primary social concerns of the Saint-Simonians. In the first section he discusses the evils of feudalism and inherited wealth. He makes clear that it was society's elders whose ignorance and superstition allowed this situation to exist, allowing all types of privileges to become "la bête noire de l'humanité progressive." In his discussion of heredity and privileges, Mayeux compares most of society to sheep who are lined up to be sheared to make clothes for the wealthy, or worse, killed for their dinner. Mayeux calls on "the people" to abandon the government and adds that if Saint-Simonian pamphlets had been circulated sooner, perhaps such drastic measures would not be necessary.

Even worse than people with "regular" privileges, according to Mayeux, are those individuals who inherit vast fortunes — especially bankers and industrialists and others who pretend that they have acquired their fortunes through years of hard work. These individuals can afford all the comforts, travelling in coaches and frequenting balls. Mayeux, as a member of the lower classes, is not as fortunate. Mayeux specifically attacks the *bal de l'Opéra* (always sponsored by the Royal family) for wasting money that could have better served the poor. As for Christianity, Mayeux deems it just as bad as privilege. Unlike Christianity, Saint-Simonism will freely unite all people and without sacrificing science, art and industry. In addition, Christianity presents much too rigid a moral stance. Mayeux decries the hypocrisy that exists within Christianity. He suggests that Christianity obtains converts through its demonstration of false miracles, to which Saint-Simonism does not subscribe. Saint-Simonism is deemed superior due to its goal of the unification of individuals, each of whom finds a secure place in a communal

⁴²The purpose of Saint-Simon's *Nouveau Christianisme* (1825) was to recover dissenters from Christianity to his rehabilitated version, to correct ills caused by way that Catholicism and Protestantism has been practised and to address persistent superstition, which also represented a mutation of positive religious sentiment. Improvement of the situation of the poorest classes was the primary goal of the *New Christianity*; it was the situation of the poor that demonstrated the failure of Catholicism and Protestantism. (87) The *New Christianity* is presented in form of a dialogue between a reformer and a conservative. Saint-Simon (as the reformer) states that Catholicism has survived and prospered through trickery and its power is deemed material in nature. (88) The conservative eventually proclaims his conversion to the *New Christianity*. The dialogue, of course, is constructed and the "Conservative's" role in the dialogue is manipulated as a foil so that Saint-Simon can make his points and be seen to address (before the fact) possible criticisms which could arise as result of the publication of the philosophy. Significantly the "flatbacks" (the conservatives) are not allowed to voice their opinions within Mayeux's open letter.

⁴³"Monsieur Mayeux Saint-Simonien," *Le Corsaire*, February 11, 1831, p. 3.

society. After enumerating how the choice of religion will effect two groups (those who work and those who don't), Mayeux concludes that Christianity has no common or "communal" sense. Furthermore, according to the hunchback, Christianity has impeded progress while Saint-Simonism encourages the advance of science and industry.

Embarking on his third point of contention, Mayeux remarks that if one walks in the level countryside one will eventually cry out for a mountain. Mayeux's back, of course, is "the mountain." Those without this mark of distinction are compared to a wilting flower whose long, slender stem can only support a sickly and pallid flower. He then reminds the "flat backs" that this flower is their brain. Soon, says Mayeux, the humpback and Saint-Simonism will invade the country, one carrying the other. He adds that since society now has the ability to straighten-out spinal deformities, it is only a matter of time before it will have the ability to create them. Everyone will come to know the positive side of having a hump on their back. What is it good for? Well for one thing, it can protect you during a fall, says Mayeux — better to fall on this bump than to fall on your head. (Symbolically Mayeux here refers to his status as a hunchbacked protagonist for the lower classes, his ability to speak the truth and his existence as a "cushion" or scapegoat protecting his users).

In the letter, Mayeux adds that Saint-Simonists and indeed all the classes of society will come to see the advantage of having a hump (a symbolic agent of truth) — even to the point that the fabrication of prostheses may become popular. Mayeux proposes that he be elected to the highest possible office within this new religion; he wants to become a universal pontiff. Nowhere could a better candidate be found. He says that he will take to the job like a fish to water and everyone will have bread — a reference to the biblical story where Jesus Christ feeds multitudes with a few fish and a loaf of bread. In this century of lampoons, the people, Mayeux says, owe it to themselves to elect a pope with a "good back," meaning a hunchback. One year later, in 1832, Enfantin would proclaim himself to be "pope of the Saint-Simon Religion."⁴⁴ Mayeux promises that if he is elected, the idle rich will quickly turn over their property and possessions that can then be distributed to the poor.

Mayeux's determination that the "flatbacks" (Louis-Philippe and his bourgeois cohorts by implication) have sickly flowers for brains is drawn from Saint-Simonism's claims that the savants (the scientists) should determine social constitutions, not a King.⁴⁵ Savants, as a rational force, "would demonstrate the possibility of harmonizing the interests of all the economic strata among the industrials, the rich few as well as the proletarian mass, by increasing the well-being of everybody at the same time."⁴⁶ While fundamental to Saint-Simonist doctrine because of their knowledge of the keys to progress, the creativity of the savants could nevertheless present problems — after all they had organized the ousting of

⁴⁴McWilliam, p. 55.

⁴⁵Mark Blaug, ed., *Dissenters: Charles Fourier, Henri de Saint-Simon, Pierre-Joseph Proudhon, John Hobson*, *Pioneers in Economics*, 31, Elgar Reference, 1992, p. 46.

⁴⁶Manuel, p. 319.

the aristocracy in 1789 without having planned anything in its place.⁴⁷ Saint-Simon, in a so-called “parable,” hypothesized what would happen if France lost the top fifty chemists, poets, artists, etc., calling them “the flower of French society.”⁴⁸ Were they gone, the result would be a body without a soul (or, in Mayeux’s words, a sickly bloom on a slender stem). In contrast, were France to lose the fifty most visible members of the aristocracy, according to Saint-Simon, it would be a shame, but would not cause chaos.

Saint-Simonism was the only group other than the Republicans to which Mayeux was directly linked in art or literature. There are elements of Saint-Simonian philosophy that clarify why Mayeux appeared to be both a proponent and critic of this philosophy. While they did not participate directly in the July Revolution, the Saint-Simonists were involved from 1830 to 1832 (Mayeux’s peak period) in the distribution of hundreds of articles and pamphlets calling attention to the condition of the working class. The question with which they were concerned was “the social question.”⁴⁹ Bazard, one of the leaders espousing this philosophy, stated that “the events we have witnessed do not in the least constitute a social revolution.”⁵⁰ The Saint-Simonists wanted to overturn the rights of inheritance which allowed landowners to live off the labours of the underprivileged. Like Mayeux, the Saint-Simonists repeatedly attacked Louis-Philippe’s government for ignoring “the people” who had fought on the barricades. The bourgeois were defined as landowners and industrial moguls — those who depended on the working class for their wealth.⁵¹ This definition, then, would suggest that only the upper-middle class were members of the “bourgeoisie” and would place the “petit-bourgeois” with “the people.” Saint-Simonism appealed to the middle-class, particularly the radical faction of the “petit-bourgeois” who felt dissatisfied with the results of the July Monarchy.⁵² Thus there were aspects of Saint-Simonist doctrine and practice that the Republicans believed in as well. A second article, “M. Mayeux chez les Saint-Simoniens,” published in *Le Corsaire* in April, 1831, again attacked hereditary privilege (which both groups agreed should be abolished) and advocated communal unity (really only a component of Saint-Simonism). The satirical Republican journal, the *Corsaire* examined both the positive and negative sides of Saint-Simonism, using Mayeux as a natural spokesperson due to his own ambiguous and contradictory nature.

The two articles on Mayeux that appeared in the Saint-Simonist journal *Le Globe* in 1832 expressed a very different opinion of the hunchback. The author of

⁴⁷Ibid., p. 247.

⁴⁸Extract from *The Organizer*, translated in Ghita Ionescu, ed., *The Political Thought of Saint-Simon* (Oxford University Press, 1976), p. 139.

⁴⁹James Briscoe, “The Unfinished Revolution: The Saint-Simoniens and the Social Question – Origins of Socialist Debate in the July Monarchy,” *The Consortium on Revolutionary Europe 1750-1850*, Proceedings (1984), p. 232.

⁵⁰Quoted in Briscoe, p. 232.

⁵¹Shirley Gruner, “The Revolution of July 1830 and the Expression ‘Bourgeoisie,’” *The Historical Journal*, IX, 3 (1968), pp. 462-71.

⁵²H.A.C. Collingham, *The July Monarchy* (New York: Longman, 1988), p. 45-49.

the first, identified as G. Cazavan, wrote a series of articles dealing with morals as they were degenerating within July Monarchy society.⁵³ The purpose of Cazavan's article, entitled "Monsieur Mayeux," was to discuss the degeneration of religious philosophy since the time of Ancient Greece. Bringing the issue to the present, the focus is turned to Mayeux who is used as proof of this degeneration in society:

Alors la chair, affranchie du joug de la réprobation évangélique qui avait pesé sur elle pendant dix-huit siècles, se releva mutilée et grotesque, et se rua en débordements licencieux et repoussants. Mayeux! voilà l'homme tel que l'anathème chrétien et la révolte contre cet anathème l'ont fait, hideux de corps et de cynisme. Chez lui l'organe encéphalique, siège de la pensée, s'est accrue au détriment des autres organes, sa tête a autant de volume que son dos, ses membres sont grêles, le tronc est voûté sous le poids d'une caducité précoce; Mayeux a beaucoup d'esprit, l'esprit facétieux, se jouant de tout, disant effrontément son avis sur les hommes et les choses, censurant à tort et à travers, mais ne respectant rien, ne croyant à rien, blasphémant le nom de Dieu; et par dessus tout, Mayeux est un sybarite sans moralité et sans pudeur. N'est-ce pas là le type de bien des gens? Il y a un sens profond dans l'effigie de ce burlesque et malencontreux bossu qui vous poursuit et vous obsède de toute part.⁵⁴

The artists who are responsible for placing Mayeux in prints are called into question for their participation in the collective creation of this ugly, deformed individual. The author believes that Mayeux is a symbol of monotony — since he is seen so often that people are growing tired of him. But Mayeux is also interpreted in this article in the broadest sense — as a representation of "society" made up of all men of all classes. After addressing several specific prints that feature Mayeux, and after comparing him to Alcibiades and Socrates,⁵⁵ the author suddenly realizes that he is guilty of placing an imaginary personage in real life, as if he truly existed. He explains: "From a historical painting, I have made a caricature. I have done what art did, 'ed anch'io son pittor.'" With this statement, the author changes the subject to that of art which is being destroyed, or so he believes, by the inclusion of grotesque elements. He calls upon artists to follow the advice of Saint-Simon, who is the only person capable of curing physical and moral infirmities. The author closes his article in a way that suggests that Mayeux can be considered the personification of criticism:

⁵³Following the Mayeux article Cazavan penned "Morale. Protestation contre la morale chrétienne. – Rabelais," *Le Globe*, February 9, 1832, p. 1, in which he focuses on the book *Gargantua* as moral criticism pertinent to July Monarchy society. It is ironic that Cazavan appreciated Rabelais, given his vitriolic denunciation of Mayeux.

⁵⁴G. Cazavan, "Monsieur Mayeux," *Le Globe*, January 8, 1832, p. 4.

⁵⁵The attitude and language of Socrates is compared to that of *Enfantin* in the *Oeuvres*, vol. 8, 3-6. Mayeux, on the other hand, had been compared to Socrates because supposedly each had a "démon familier" — which in Mayeux's case was lodged in his hump. See "Mayeux devant l'Apôtre de la liberté," *Mayeux*, première livraison (July 12, 1831), p. 1-2.

Le criticisme a désenchanté le monde, il a détruit toutes les illusions, toutes les croyances, toutes les espérances, qui sont la vie des arts et de la société; le criticisme a mis à nu toutes les plaies, sans baume pour les guérir, sans linceul pour les dérober aux yeux. A sa suite l'art ne représente plus que des diableries, l'horrible et le grotesque. Comme la société, l'art a été crucifié, et se débat aux enfers maintenant, en attendant l'appel du rédempteur. Il n'y a que le sentiment religieux, que Dieu qui puisse racheter, régénérer l'un avec l'autre. La voix de Saint-Simon aura plus de puissance sur les infirmités morales et physiques du monde actuel que tous les bagnes et les maisons orthopédiques. Que d'autres s'arrêtent à vider les égoûts; nous, nous travaillons à purifier la source.⁵⁶

Cazavan was concerned with Mayeux's use of profanity, his satiric nature and his presence in the popular media, which, while helpful when used to spread the Saint-Simonist cause, could simultaneously be viewed as furthering the degeneration of art and those who created it. Similarly, under other circumstances a person with deformities could have presented a welcome challenge to the Saint-Simonist philosophy — an opportunity for reconciliation of disparate elements and the creation of harmony out of chaos through faith. It was likely this irony that made Mayeux of enough concern to warrant comment in a public forum.

A second, this time anonymous, article in *Le Globe* was titled "Du ridicule" and was more concerned with Mayeux's status as a critic and a mocker than as the representative of a degenerative society. The author begins by analysing the properties of ridicule in general — its prevalence and its power:

Le ridicule est aujourd'hui l'arme la plus commune, la plus facile, la plus redoutable. Quelque part que vous alliez, vous êtes certain d'y voir le ridicule faire les frais de toutes les conversations. C'est par le côté ridicule qu'on s'habitue à envisager les gens. C'est à se moquer les uns des autres qu'on occupe les réunions: épier les disgraces du corps et de l'intelligence, et les étaler avec ironie, c'est le train du monde.⁵⁷

Mayeux is deemed the symbol of 1832; he is representative of an era that is, itself, hunchbacked:

... quand les hommes en sont réduits à une constitution débilitée et qu'ils sont tous bossus et cagneux tant au physique qu'au moral, ils ne songent plus alors qu'à se moquer de leurs difformités. Notre époque est bossue, Mayeux court les rues; c'est le plus haut symbole de 1832. Il n'est point étonnant que la bosse soit le sujet de toutes les conversations et alimente la satire.⁵⁸

⁵⁶Cazavan, p. 4.

⁵⁷Anonymous, "Du ridicule," *Le Globe*, March 8, 1832, p. 4.

⁵⁸*Ibid.*

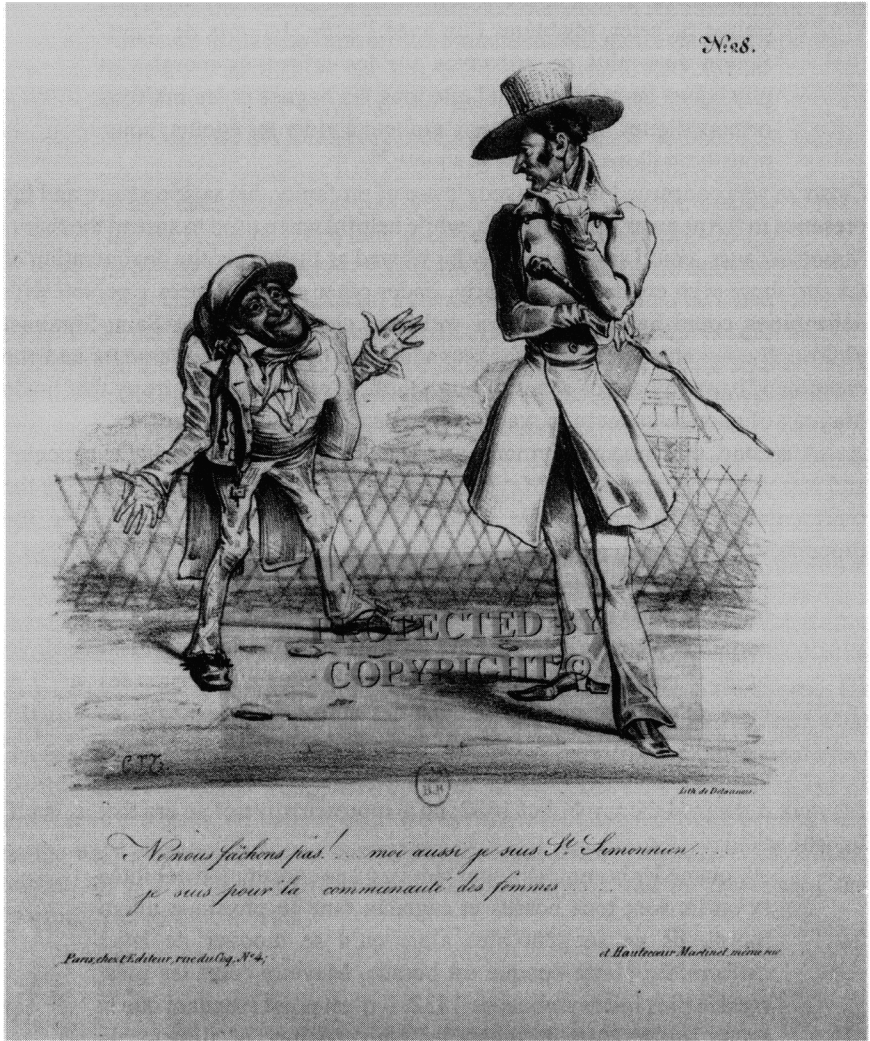


Fig. 5: Charles-Joseph Traviès, *Histoire Complète [sic] de M. Mayeux no. 28*.
“Ne nous fâchons pas! . . . moi aussi je suis St Simonien . . . je suis pour la
communauté des femmes . . .” (Lithograph, 1831). Photograph, Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris.



Fig. 6: C.J. Traviès, *Facéties de Mr. Mayeux pl. 2* “-Dur comme un roc . . . Femme charmante . . . Dur comme un roc!” (Lithography, 1831). Photograph, Bibliothèque, Paris.



*Dur comme un roc... femme charmante.....dur
comme un roc.....tonnerre de D.....*

Fig. 7: Illustration for *Douze journées érotiques de M. Mayeux* (1831).
Bibliothèque Nationale, Collection Enfer. Photograph, Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris.

It is interesting that, as far as the Saint-Simonists were concerned, Mayeux had only become worthy of comment in 1832 — when his popularity in Republican journals had dropped off significantly. There are several possible explanations. Perhaps the Saint-Simonist followers were sheltered from the Mayeux literature and prints during the height of his popularity, or they did not think to use him themselves until his popularity was in decline. It is also possible that the use of Mayeux as a Saint-Simonist representative by the Republicans at *Le Corsaire* angered the sect and they chose to respond by attacking Mayeux as an example of what was wrong with society. Since the Saint-Simonist movement was strongest in the “liberal professions” and the “commercial middle class,”⁵⁹ it was not surprising that Mayeux would be used both by those in the sect and those opposing it in a literary battle waged in the daily newspapers. Before long, individuals subscribing to other religious faiths would join in this discourse by publishing items in their own periodicals.

In 1833 a long piece appeared in *Le Siècle* which commented on the Christianity/Saint-Simonian debate. *Le Siècle* was a Protestant publication, and as could be expected, decried Saint-Simonism as a religion. Protestantism, to which roughly two percent of the population subscribed, was not a threat to Catholicism in France.⁶⁰ Nevertheless Protestants found their religion (though not their founder, Martin Luther) under attack by Saint-Simon in his *Nouveau Christianisme*. The lengthy article in *Le Siècle* contained but one section that attacked Mayeux; this portion was reprinted in *La Charge* — a satirical Republican publication that had featured a print of Mayeux about to stab Louis-Philippe in the back (fig.4). To the left of the king hangs a poster that shows the stabbing of a pear. A dog urinates on the poster, adding scatological insult to the real injury depicted. The print’s title, “Le Poiricide et le _____ ou comme on va de fil en aiguille,” offers multiple meanings. The blank in the text could appropriately be filled in with the word “régicide.” It is possible that this print led to the censoring of Victor Hugo’s play *Le Roi s’amuse*, the plot of which revolved around the desire of the court fool to stab his master, the king.

The portion of the *Le Siècle* article criticizing Mayeux, reprinted in *La Charge*, then, was meant to ridicule the ridicules — in other words to “pull a Mayeux” by allowing Protestants to criticize Saint-Simonists within a Republican forum. The article warned of the plague that was threatening society (Saint-Simonism) and linked Mayeux to this threat:

. . . Un ennemi, contre lequel nous voudrions en vain entourer Paris de retranchemens, est au milieu dans nos théâtres; que dis’je! jusque dans nos écoles! . . . Cet ennemi, c’est l’esprit corrompu, corrupteur, sans principe aucun: c’est à la fois et ce fat qu’on admire, et Mayeux dont on rit; Mayeux qui n’effraie plus, même l’enfance; Mayeux, qu’on croyait mort, et qu’en effet

⁵⁹McWilliam, p. 90.

⁶⁰Gibson, p. 2.

les traits plus piquans auraient percé, de part en part, s'il n'était cuirassé d'impudence.⁶¹

To the religious right, Mayeux represented drunkenness and immorality. This dangerous type could be seen in many different forms within society, not just the hunchback. The article implored writers and artists to restrain themselves for the good of the country. While some thought that liberty was enough, the author believed that liberty without morals was pointless. The author calls for a return to the Church to save people from themselves and predicts that when a new generation could succeed in replacing immoral and futile Voltairianism, Mayeux would finally have been put to rest. This author, through his interpretation of Mayeux as drunken and immoral, suggests a genealogical link to Priapus, a fertility god said to be the son of Aphrodite, the goddess of love, and Dionysus, the god of wine and debauchery. In visual representations Priapus is depicted as a grotesque deformed creature holding a phallic symbol. Mayeux's similarity to the Greek deity was frequently exploited by artists and writers intent on criticizing another aspect of Saint-Simonist philosophy — its attitude towards sex and male-female relationships.

The Saint-Simonists held the concept of love (both of self and others) to be central to their doctrine. To some, however, Saint-Simonism became a “religion of pleasure” resulting in scandal and police intervention in gatherings that were more social or even sexual than religious in nature.⁶² In fact, Enfantin had had to defend the group's policies in front of the Chamber of Deputies and he was repeatedly charged with licentiousness.⁶³ Enfantin's “equal but different” roles for the sexes, could also be interpreted as a type of early feminism, since his new morality depended on harmony between the sexes, with each gender assuming a specific role in the creation and retention of that harmony.⁶⁴ Mayeux alluded to the role of women in this philosophy and also hinted at the pre-feminist ideals espoused by Enfantin in a print where he addresses a man who resembles Charles Fourier (another utopian socialist philosopher) and declares “Ne nous fâchons pas! . . . moi aussi je suis St Simonien . . . je suis pour la communauté des femmes” [fig. 5]. His statement is ironic, not only because it connects Fourierism and Saint-Simonism, but also because of Mayeux's favourite activity — he was frequently featured in prints in the pursuit of the women of Paris and appeared in two pornographic books, *Les Douze journées érotiques de Mayeux* (1831) and *Les Amours secrètes de Mayeux* (1832), which were circulated by the French underground press. Since sexually explicit prints were banned during the July Monarchy, artists found ways

⁶¹“Mayeux, l'opinion, la religion, etc.” *La Charge*, March 31, 1833, pp. 2-3. Reprint of a portion of Leroy Onésime, “L'Opinion publique (fragment),” *Le Siècle* 1 (1833), pp. 351-57.

⁶²Paul Thureau-Dangin, *Histoire de la Monarchie de Juillet* (Paris, 1884), vol. 1, p. 235.

⁶³Arthur John Booth, *Saint-Simon and Saint-Simonism: A Chapter in the History of Socialism in France* (London, 1871), p. 171.

⁶⁴See V. Mercier, “Morale. Le Monde, les femmes et nous,” *Le Globe*, February 6, 1832, p. 1.

to express sexual ideas covertly, often walking a narrow line between respectability and vulgarity.⁶⁵

The lithographic artist Charles-Joseph Traviès' involvement with the Saint-Simonist community undoubtedly contributed to the production of the great number of prints involving sexual relationships and also sheds light on the significance of the pornographic prints and literature. Several of Traviès implicitly pornographic prints were made explicit in *Les Douze journées*. Each of the twelve chapters in this text consists of a short narrative that ends with an illustration and caption that serve as the moral to the story. The illustration accompanying chapter one is similar to the Traviès print; both carry the caption "Dur comme un roc . . . Femme charmante . . . Dur comme un roc!" (figs. 6, 7). In this story, Mayeux goes to the restaurant of a brothel following an orgy in order to regain his strength with truffles and wine. Meanwhile, the army arrives in Paris and "occupies" all of the rooms. Waiting his turn outside a room, Mayeux spots a chambermaid, to whom he says: "hard as a rock, charming girl, hard as a rock!" In the Traviès print, Mayeux's anatomy is not revealed, his hat is rather conspicuously placed over that part of his body.

The illustrations to the other pornographic Mayeux text, *Les Amours secrètes de M. Mayeux écrites par lui-même*, are very different. In their amateurish, primitive quality they resemble the *images d'Epinal*. Mayeux writes this tale "in his own voice" because people were attacking him and were making up stories about his personal life; as in many of the other texts, he sets the record straight, with a graphic description of his sexual exploits. In this story the hunchback's behaviour is in part explained by the fact that he was abandoned, then unofficially adopted by a Madame of a brothel. Mayeux recounts his sexual activities with several mistresses, beginning with the loss of his virginity. There are passages that suggest that the author was familiar with the writings of the Marquis de Sade. The last several encounters related by Mayeux in *Amours secrètes* documents a downward spiral resulting from his continued amoral behaviour. The text concludes with the following admission by Mayeux:

Je vais donc cesser cette vie de garçon de laquelle pourtant je n'ai pas à me plaindre, puisque, par un hasard bien grand, je ne fus pas atteint du remords qu'aurait pu me causer cette maladie vénérienne dont bien des jeunes gens semblent se glorifier; j'en suis exempt à jamais puisque je veux être fidèle à ma femme, et vice versa.⁶⁶

⁶⁵While it is difficult to determine the pervasiveness of pornographic material during the period when the books were printed, catalogues listing condemned writings and prints reveal that the overwhelming majority were cited for political rather than moral offenses. In fact, there is no record of convictions for the possession of the two Mayeux books for a full fifteen years after their appearance. We can assume that part of the reason they were not censored as often as the political works is that the pornographic works were not subject to as wide a distribution, nor was their purpose to influence public opinion about major issues. See Fernand Drujon, *Catalogue des ouvrages, écrits et dessins de toute nature poursuivis, supprimés ou condamnés depuis le 21 Octobre 1814 jusqu'au 31 Juillet 1877* (Paris, 1879) and also *Catalogue des crits, gravures et dessins condamnés depuis 1814 jusqu'au 1er Janvier 1850* (Paris, 1850).

⁶⁶*Les Amours secrètes de M. Mayeux écrites par lui-même* (Bruxelles, 1832), p. 36.

While Mayeux's final statement does not negate the lewd nature of much of the text, it does suggest that the author believed that marriage was an institution that would "save" men from a pointless life of philandering. Marriage enabled Mayeux to conquer his sexual appetites inherent in his nature as a hunchback, and politics replaced a parade of women as his primary focus. The July Revolution shocked Mayeux, like many young people of France, into action. *Amours secrètes* also shows the uneasy translation of the conventions of the eighteenth-century "roman érotique" into a popular format. Like the work of the Marquis de Sade, the text consists of a series of graphically described sexual encounters with political and social commentary inserted for good measure. Unlike the work of de Sade, however, *Amours secrètes* is comparatively brief and lacks literary polish.

Numerous religious references in the pornographic Mayeux books (and, for that matter, in those of Sade) reflect tensions in the changing relationship between church and state in France during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Certain groups of people at this time rejected the country's dominant religion of Catholicism and determined their own rules regarding morals. One of these sects was Saint-Simonism, which, simply put, advocated liberty, equality, and "free love." The presence of the pornographic literature and both suggestive and explicit prints suggest a linking of Saint-Simonist activities with the abnormal sexual drive of the hunchbacked creature — thus suggesting by visual association the perceived perversity of the Utopian's approach to love and, more precisely, coital relationships.

Mayeux was used by artists and writers who were alternately criticizing or promoting Saint-Simonist philosophy as a viable alternative religion or commenting upon individual aspects of that philosophy. The hunchback's appearance in this forum was also important to his continuing development as a character type representing the lower and lower-middle classes. Since Saint-Simonism was a genuine religious alternative for that segment of society, Mayeux, by his very definition, was required to comment upon it.⁶⁷ Yet, the extremely negative interpretation of Saint-Simonism and criticism of Mayeux as its spokesperson as shown by the article in *Le Siècle* demonstrated that there were large factions in society who did not want this new "religion." They considered it a deformation of society and rejected it as well as the hunchback who they considered its representative.

Mayeux represented, and his physical form corroborated, the unease and anxiety within society which characterized much of the art and literature of the period 1830-1848, of which his interaction with the philosophy of Saint-Simon represented but a small part. Because of his popularity, Mayeux could and indeed was expected to try on the costumes of various political groups and to voice his opinions. Because his creators primarily subscribed to a Republican, liberal

⁶⁷Today it is more likely that Saint-Simonism would be called a political ideology and could be compared to Utopianism, Communism etc. During the period, however, Saint-Simonism was called a religion. See Michel Chevalier, "Religion Saint-Simonienne," (1831) *Les Révolutions du XIXe siècle*, vol. V (Le Mouvement social à Lyon – 1).

viewpoint — so did Mayeux. The various symbolic meanings rested on his status as a hunchbacked fool marginalised by society. When he was placed in interaction with the theories of Saint-Simon, he criticized individuals who adhered to Utopian philosophies by personally adopting their perspective and then revealing them as being flawed, distorted or grotesquely humorous, like himself. A large part of Mayeux's popularity was fuelled by his ability to function in two major ways: to educate and agitate on the one hand and to entertain on the other.

While he possessed the dual nature of mankind — both good and bad — his presence in a large amount of nostalgic collectors' items demonstrates that the positive side of his nature was the dominant one. Mayeux was not just a Mr. Hyde but also was a Dr. Jekyll — and capable of blurring the lines between the two. The choice of this kind of figure as a “hero” or everyman was significant for the period leading up to and following the July Revolution. He was a reflection of this society which had participated in a revolution without a clear thought for the future. He was a personification of hopes and desires unrealized at the start of a new political regime. He embodied the humour that the French often grasped in moments of personal, political and social crisis and demonstrated their ability to mock not only those in power but themselves, as they struggled individually and collectively with Utopian philosophies that promised an unlikely salvation from their predicament in a country made up of the poor, but controlled by the rich. The Saint-Simonists' representation of society in terms of contrasting pairs of characteristics, and the rise to dominance of the proletariat/bourgeois dichotomy within Saint-Simon's theories served to further stratify society through identification and labelling of differences rather than providing the unification and harmony that each promised. Mayeux could be used as a device to reveal inherent ambiguities in the Utopian agenda, but he could not fully embrace these philosophies because it could not be adequately proven, in his opinion, that they would benefit all classes of society equally. The hunchback's allegiance, after all, was with “the people,” the disenfranchised masses, who, as history has since proven, could not be helped by Utopian theories.

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