



WORDS INSTEAD OF WEAPONS

The Historical and Cultural Significance of Committed Poetry in France

February Revolution 1848

• Alphonse de Lamartine –

Chosen to officially declare the Republic, ensured the continued use of the "Tricolore" as the national flag of France

January and November 2015

Following the terrorist attacks on 7th of January and the 13th of November in Paris, thousands of people paid tribute to those who had been injured and killed.

Amongst the memorials, were quotes from Paul Éluard's 'Liberté'



French Revolution 1789 – 1799

• André Chénier –

Executed 25th July 1794 by the order of Robespierre

3rd April 1942

• Paul Éluard –

In the midst of WWII, Éluard publishes his poem 'Liberté', thousands of copies of the poem were subsequently parachuted into occupied France by the British Royal Air Force



La Poésie Engagée

This project is dedicated to considering the origins and tradition of *La Poésie Engagée / Committed Poetry* – a form of French poetry in which a poet engages with the political and social conflicts of their time and utilises their literary abilities to share their political sympathies and personal ethics. A complex and intriguing jewel of French Literature, this project reflects upon three key periods of French history in which *La Poésie Engagée* was founded and developed. Upon analysing key poets from each period, as well as the relevant social and historical contexts which inspired them, this project will conclude by contemplating and identifying the relevancy of *La Poésie Engagée* within the current social and political climate of modern France as well as the legacy of *Le Poète Engagé*.



“The choice, the ability to take part, to see the necessity of taking part” [1]



[1] Aubert, Nathalie and Nicolas Wanlin, *Histoire de la poésie: XIXe–XXe siècles* (Paris: Presse Universitaires de France, 2014), pp.228