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Thomas Bouchet, Vincent Bourdeau, Edward Castleton, Ludovic Frobert and François Jarrige, eds., *Quand les socialistes inventaient l'avenir. Presse, théories et expériences, 1825-1860*. Paris: La Découverte, 2015. 408 pp. Index. 25€ (pb). ISBN 978-2-7071-8591-4.

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This book seeks to bring together two histories--the history of French socialism and the history of the rise of modern mass journalism. It is a collection of articles produced by five editors and twenty-eight contributors which is striking both for the consistently high level of the individual contributions and for the success of the editors in maintaining coherence and focus through the organization and design of the book and the excellent unsigned essays linking the separate sections together. Since one of the book's many virtues is that it makes us look at the early history of socialism with a fresh eye, a little background is in order.

The word "socialisme" first appeared in France in the early 1830s to refer to a variety of plans and theories of social organization seeking to replace the egoism, individualism and competitiveness of post-revolutionary society with a more humane and egalitarian form of community which would usher in a new age of class harmony and social justice. In the next two decades a "socialist movement" began to take shape, and socialism came increasingly to be seen as an economic doctrine focusing on the difficulties of the new industrial working class and emphasizing the importance of cooperation, planning and public ownership as opposed to the competition and profit-seeking of individual entrepreneurs under capitalism. At the beginning, however, the first socialists were looking for order and authority in a world torn apart by revolution, and their ideas were presented as a remedy for the collapse of community as much as for any specific economic problem.

The shaping of early French socialism took place at exactly the same time as the emergence of a new type of mass journalism in France with the rise of large-circulation daily newspapers. The first two such papers were *La Presse*, founded by Emile de Girardin, and *Le Siècle* of Armand Dutacq. These papers, which lasted well into the twentieth century, were founded on the same day, July 1, 1836. Taking advantage of technical innovations in printing and publishing, Girardin and Dutacq were able to cut costs and lower subscription rates through the publication of advertising and to attract new readers through the regular publication of *romans feuilletons*. Both of these papers rapidly outstripped their competition, their daily circulation rising from the norm of under ten thousand to over 30,000 in the 1840s.

At the same time the number of small papers increased significantly, and a newspaper (whether daily, weekly or monthly) became an important adjunct for a wide variety of political and social groups and parties. Thus at Lyon there were just two newspapers at the end of the Restoration, but shortly after the July Revolution a reader could choose between Legitimist, Orleanist and Republican papers, and satiric and artistic journals as well as a women's journal and a journal published by and for Lyon's *canuts* or silkweavers. Socialists quickly became wedded to what Constantin Pecqueur called the "new medium" of journalism. The Fourierist Victor Considerant asserted that "the journal is the pivot of propaganda" and

that any new idea must create for itself “its own periodical press. . . . That is the only way, today, to acquire publicity, plausibility and power” (p. 16). Likewise, for the socialist Pierre Leroux “no democratic and no true and legitimate government is possible without the preparatory work performed by the press” (p. 33).

The premise on which this book is based is that these two events--the emergence of socialism and the rise of the new periodical press--were closely related. As the editors write in their introduction, “The invention of socialism accompanied the emergence of a new periodical press [and] paralleled the appearance of multiple written supports--journals, books, brochures and almanachs” (p. 8). The aim of the book is two-fold. First of all, the authors study the role played by the press in constituting and spreading socialist theory. Secondly, they seek to use the press as a privileged “vantage point” on the development of socialist theory and practice.

Each of the chapters in this book consists of a study of one or several newspapers published by the followers of a particular socialist leader or (in the language of the time) “chef d'école.” Each chapter notes the life-span of the journal, its relation to the ideas of its founder, its circulation, its content and rubrics, and (insofar as the sources permit) the nature of its financing, the character of its audience, and its network of contributors. We learn, for example, that during the mid-1840s, the period subsequently regarded as the heyday of socialist journalism, circulation figures remained relatively modest, ranging from 700 for *L'Atelier*, the monthly produced by the working-class followers of Buchez, to over 2000 for the Fourierist daily, *La Démocratie pacifique* and about 3000 for Cabet's weekly *Le Populaire*. But in 1848 circulation exploded. As Edward Castleton shows in his richly informative article on all four of Proudhon's journals, the first, *Le Représentant du peuple*, had a press run of 4000 to 5000 copies in April 1848, 8000 in mid-May, 20,000 in late June, and 60,000 in August at the time of his much discussed parliamentary joust with Adolphe Thiers. One article published by Proudhon in August 1848, his celebrated “Les Mandarins,” was separately published in a run of 300,000 copies!

Some of the most interesting articles, such as François Fourn's fascinating study of Etienne Cabet's *Le Populaire* take us close to the experience of a community of readers. We learn that in its first iteration (1833-1835) *Le Populaire, journal des intérêts politiques, matériels et moraux du peuple*, had the backing of many liberal and republican *notables*, including Lafayette and Voyer d'Argenson, and was sold in the street on Sundays for two *sous* by a small army of twenty-four criers. Its readers came from a variety of social classes, and many of them were just curious. When Cabet began to publish the second *Populaire* (1841-1851), he was just back from exile in England where he had become a utopian communist and had written what would become the most widely read French utopia of the nineteenth-century, *Le Voyage en Icarie*. Most of his followers now belonged to the working class, and he saw the role of his journal as the creation of “a kind of social and political religion that would unite individuals in the same sentiment and the same thought” (p. 203). Cabet encouraged his readers to address each other as “brothers” like the early Christians and to gather together to read *Le Populaire* out loud and collectively. But François Fourn shows that Cabet's followers soon began to imagine “new forms” of fellowship and “to give life to their community of readers” in their own way. Neither willing nor able to submit to the dictatorship of “le père Cabet,” they engaged in acts of resistance to government and authority that he found frightening. “It was,” concludes Fourn, “because he feared losing control of the virtual community formed by the readers of *Le Populaire* in France, that, barely a few weeks before the outbreak of the February Revolution, [Cabet] summoned them to emigrate en masse with him to the United States” (pp. 213-15).

The book is organized chronologically and divided into three parts. The first part covers the period 1825-1835, the latter half of which was marked by a flowering of the press made possible by the liberalization of press laws following the July Revolution. The first period begins with the Saint-Simonian press and with thoughtful and incisive articles by Philippe Régnier and Michel Bellet. Régnier discusses “the joint invention of the militant journal and of socialism” in *Le Producteur* and

*L'Organisateur*, while Bellet focuses on the confrontation of political economy with “the social question” and the elaboration of Saint-Simonian economic ideas in *Le Globe* after its take-over by Michel Chevalier and the Saint-Simonians. Also relating to Saint-Simonism is the article on the *Revue encyclopédique* by Aurélien Aramini and Vincent Bourdeau. Here the authors show adeptly how three former Saint-Simonians, Pierre Leroux, Jean Reynaud and Hippolyte Carnot, refashioned the somewhat stodgy monthly founded in 1819 by Marc-Antoine Julien and turned it for four years (1831-1835) into a refuge for dissident Saint-Simonians in which “the project of the unity of the sciences” was treated as “indissociable from the project of the political unification of humanity” (p. 87).

Most of the other articles in this first part concern short-lived but important journals that sprang up in the aftermath of the July Revolution with the intention of creating a following for the ideas of their founders. Here the emphasis is often on the multiplicity of roles assumed in practice by these journals. Thus Ludovic Frobert and Marie Lauricella show that while *L'Européen* of Philippe Buchez sought to elaborate a whole “physiologie sociale,” one of its main achievements was to lay down the foundations of a conception of a producers’ association that was to be regarded as Buchez’s most important contribution to the emerging socialist tradition. Olivier Chaïbi shows that the Fourierist newspaper *La Réforme industrielle* played a dual role in promoting the ideas of Charles Fourier and drumming up support for an actual community to be created along Fourierist lines outside Paris at Condé-sur-Vesgre. François-Vincent Raspail’s daily paper *Le Réformateur* (1834-1835) is presented by Jonathan Barbier and Ludovic Frobert both as responding to a “thirst for information” on the part of its working-class readers and as assuming the role of “advocate for republican martyrs” in the court of public opinion. Then there is the best known of the journals of the early 1830s: Félicité de Lamennais’s *L’Avenir*. Sylvain Milbach alludes to the story of Lamennais’s disastrous trip to Rome with Lacordaire and Montalembert to seek the support of the pope for their journal. But his main concern in this lucid article is to provide a nuanced account of the libertarian Christianity articulated in *L’Avenir*.

The first part concludes with articles on two quite exceptional periodicals, each of them a pioneer in its field. Stefania Ferrando and Bérengère Kolly discuss *La Femme libre* (1832-1834), founded by Désirée Veret and Reine Guindorf, both of whom had passed through Saint-Simonism and Fourierism on their way to the creation of this “first French feminist periodical.” Finally, in an article distinguished by a careful and remarkably concise mapping of the structure and history of the Lyon silk industry, Simon Hupfel and George Sheridan discuss the “first working-class journal in French history,” *L’Echo de la fabrique*. This weekly paper, read by Lyon’s silkweavers or *canuts* and edited by *chefs d’atelier*, the most prosperous and skilled of the *canuts*, appeared regularly for almost three years and gave the *canuts* a voice during the two great insurrections of 1831 and 1834.

The second period (1836-1847) was marked by less rapid growth in the number of journals, but it was also the period in which the major socialist doctrinal works were published. The year 1840 alone saw the publication of Louis Blanc’s *L’Organisation du travail*, Cabet’s *Voyage en Icarie*, Pierre Leroux’s *De l’Humanité*, and Proudhon’s *Qu’est-ce que la propriété*. Socialist journals played a major role in preparing audiences for the publication of such works. The journals were also in some cases the venue in which major works were published. Louis Blanc’s celebrated *L’Organisation du travail* appeared first in his *Revue du progrès*, Cyrille Ferraton notes, and only later as a brochure and finally as a book. And as Nathalie Brémand shows in her article, Pierre Leroux’s *Revue indépendante* thrived in the 1840s by offering its readers a mixture of novels by George Sand (published in installments) and major articles by Leroux himself.

How to characterize the politics of the various socialist movements of the 1840s? What emerges from this volume is a strong sense of the diversity and range of early socialist politics. After the February Revolution almost all socialists were democratic republicans. But prior to 1848 there was no consensus. There was in fact a world of difference between the moderate Christian socialism and moderate republicanism of Buchez and his followers as described in the articles by François Jarrigues, Marie

Lauricella, and Claudia Giurintano and the radical republican socialism of the editors of *La Réforme*. As Andrea Lanza points out, the editors of *La Réforme* never missed an opportunity to denounce the governments of Thiers and Guizot and to distance themselves from the moderate republican *Le National*. On the other hand, the Fourierist Victor Considerant dedicated his major work, *La Destinée sociale*, to Louis Philippe; and it was only after 1845 and the atrocities committed by French troops in the Algerian caves of Dahra that the Fourierist daily, *La Démocratie pacifique*, turned against the July Monarchy. The “Algerian question” was in some respects a thorny issue for the early French socialists. But it is worth noting that both of the articles here that touch on Algeria—Abdallah Zouache’s “Le Projet colonial saint-simonien. *L’Algérie* d’Enfantin” and Naomi Andrews’s study of Pierre Leroux’s *La Revue sociale*—emphasize the overall commitment of the socialists to the colonial project and to the vision of an “Algérie française.”

Another general impression one gets from the articles on journals published prior to 1848 is that of the weight of the constraints imposed by the July Monarchy on free association and freedom of expression. The *cautionnement* (security deposit) imposed on Parisian journals was so high that some socialists had their journals published in the provinces and then shipped to Paris. But as Alain Maillard tells us in his fascinating article on the communist press, this did not spare Albert Laponneraye, the editor of the journal *L’Intelligence*, from prosecution and prison. Given the *cautionnement*, the stamp tax, and court costs, not to mention the expense of publishing and mailing, the cost of producing a few hundred—or at best a few thousand—copies of a newspaper or journal was prohibitive, and even the most successful editors had to scramble to keep their journals in print.

The Fourierist *Ecole sociétaire*, elegantly studied here in fine articles by Thomas Bouchet and Bernard Desmars, is a good example of the kind of resourcefulness it took to publish a daily paper for almost a decade and, at the same time, to coordinate a national movement with significant branches outside of France. The Fourierists were initially dependent on individual benefactors, most notably Clarisse Vigoureux, herself one of the very first disciples of Charles Fourier. After her brother’s bankruptcy in 1840, they were able to turn to a rich Scottish expatriate, Arthur Young, for financial help. At the same time, in June 1840, they created a joint stock company with the dual mission of propagating and realizing Fourier’s theory. With the creation in 1843 of a daily paper, *La Démocratie pacifique*, modeled in some respects on the original (pre-Saint-Simonian) *Globe*, the Fourierists indicated their desire to reach out beyond the confines of their movement and, in Desmars’s words, “to impose Fourierist ideas in the public sphere” (p. 190). To make this possible, more funds were needed, and in 1846 the Fourierists asked that every partisan of Fourier’s ideas make a modest monthly payment to a “Societary Fund” (*Rente sociétaire*). This scheme actually worked relatively well. In due course, and supplemented by larger contributions from individual benefactors, it helped fund the creation, along with *La Démocratie pacifique*, of a host of supplementary periodicals: a monthly theoretical journal, *La Phalange*, a newsletter, *Le Bulletin phalanstérien*, and an annual *Almanach phalanstérien*. By 1848 the Fourierists had reached a large, respectable, and relatively affluent audience. Their message of “peaceful democracy” was explicitly anti-revolutionary. But when the revolution came, they embraced it.

With the third part of this volume we enter the Second French Republic. The abdication of Louis Philippe on February 24 and the proclamation of the Republic the next day resulted in the immediate end of all censorship and the releasing of a flood of printed matter, including 200 new newspapers in Paris in just a few weeks and seventeen new papers in the single department of Le Nord. The press became for a short time “an essential political instrument, a veritable Parliament outside the Assembly” (p. 266)—at once a watchdog and a creator of plans for a new society. For a short time, the editors tell us, the press was “taken over by the socialist idiom” (p. 11). Of course it was a very short time—just four months from the beginning to the end of the radical moment of the Second Republic. Already after just two months, after national elections were held, on April 23, it was evident that the future of the Republic was to be determined by a conservative National Assembly, most of whose members were monarchists. Two months later, from June 23 to June 26, the crushing of the insurrection of the Parisian

poor brought an end to the radical hopes of February. Throughout most of the summer of 1848 Paris remained in a state of siege; journals were suspended or suppressed; editors and journalists were imprisoned or in some cases (notably that of Louis Blanc) forced into exile; and the *cautionnement* was restored. By the end of the summer close to half the socialist press was gone.

This final period in the history of early socialist journalism is so full of stories to tell and newspapers and journals to write about that the editors can only offer a sampling. There is a fine article by Andrea Lanza on two journals that sought in different ways to bring together the socialist and republican traditions: Eugène Baresté's *La République* and Théophile Thoré's *La Vraie République*. There are also excellent articles on several of the many ephemeral journals that did not survive the June Days: Samuel Hayat's article on the working-class journals, the "red journals" of the spring of '48, and Bérengère Kolly's article on *La Voix des femmes*, whose contributors included several women who had participated in the creation of *La Femme libre* a dozen years earlier. There are other ephemeral journals that might have been included, for instance, Joseph Sobrier's *La Commune de Paris* which is interesting not only because it was influential in its time but also because it was an important source for the long chapter on 1848 in Flaubert's *Education sentimentale*.

Particularly impressive are the three articles in this concluding part. Edward Castleton's untangling of the bibliographical and ideological knots surrounding Proudhon's important participation in the journalistic life of the Second Republic will be of great value to anyone trying to make sense of just what Proudhon was up to in 1848. I was also much impressed by Sylvain Milbach's elegant and admirably concise article on Lamennais's paper, *Le Peuple constituant*, and especially by Milbach's sensitivity to aspects of Lamennais's thought that make him hard to place politically. Finally, I learned much from Vincent Bourdeau's thoughtfully conceived article on three journals founded in 1849 by Louis Blanc, François Vidal and Constantin Pecqueur. These three individuals were the guiding spirits of the Luxembourg Commission, the "parliament of labor" which took on itself, at the outset of the February Revolution, the task of proposing means for the organization of labor that would make use of earlier socialist reflection on work and workers' associations. The work of the Luxembourg Commission never really got off the ground; and Bourdeau's article focuses on the different ways in which these three individuals attempted to resurrect traditions of experimentation in the organization of labor that had been initiated by the Commission. Especially interesting is his treatment of Pecqueur's effort in his short-lived monthly journal, *Le Salut du Peuple*, to elaborate principles and applications that were tried out only in an ephemeral way at the Commission.

Finally and as a kind of coda, the volume concludes with two articles about socialist journals produced in exile during the Second Empire: Thomas Jones's article on Charles Ribeyrolles's weekly paper, *L'Homme* (1853-1856), and Michel Cordillot's article on Joseph Déjacque and his monthly journal *Le Libertaire* (1858-1861). Each of these journals was essentially the work of a single individual, and each of them is shown to be an effort to breathe life into a French radical tradition in an alien environment—Jersey and London in the case of Ribeyrolles, New York City in the case of Déjacque. Jones argues that for all his difficulties and failures, Ribeyrolles could tell himself that his journal established an "indispensable link" among the members of the European emigration: "Each week, during the difficult early years of the Second Empire, he offered exiles a rallying cry at the same time as a cry of defiance against Bonaparte" (p. 360). By Michel Cordillot's account, Déjacque could not give himself that consolation. More an anarchist than a socialist, alienated from much of the French exile community in America, Déjacque was a fiercely original thinker, too much of a "libertarian" (to use his neologism) to collaborate for long with anyone.

Taken as a whole, this collection is impressive for its coherence, its breadth, and its originality. Much of the best historical writing on early socialism has focused on particular schools, movements and thinkers; and there is a great void between that writing and the general surveys in which all the thinkers and movements are lumped together as "utopian" or "pre-Marxist" or "romantic" socialists. What this

volume does is to give us a sense of the broad outlines and general patterns while, at the same time, allowing us to see the diversity of early socialisms. And the focus on the relations between socialism and the press allows us to appreciate that diversity not only in terms of ideology but also in terms of propaganda strategies and audiences and modes of organization. This book is a major contribution to a long overdue reassessment of early French socialism.

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