Succès de Scandale: the Role of Satire in French Society

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SUCCÈS DE SCANDALE: THE ROLE OF SATIRE IN FRENCH SOCIETY

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By Connor T. Holeman

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Abstract

The purpose of this thesis is to describe French satire, how it has illustrated changes and issues in society, and also how it has influenced political identity in France. Beginning with the principles of the Enlightenment, this thesis seeks to understand the important role that criticism has played in regards to established institutions. Satire has always pushed the limits of the taboo, serving as an indicator for what is acceptable and what is not. In the nineteenth century, decades of governmental change following the 1789 French Revolution gave satire a voice through its honesty and blatant judgment. During this time, issues of freedom of speech and the role of government were important factors, and the public officials demanded legal repercussions for the actions of satirists. In the twentieth and twenty-first centuries, satire has targeted other societal institutions rather than government, and in particular, religion. Immigration, terrorism, and the notion of laïcité have been integral to recent discourse in French society. The 2015 terror attacks on the offices of satirical magazine Charlie Hebdo demonstrated the ways in which the stakes have been raised for satire. While satire is an analysis of current events, it is also a provocateur, bringing attention to the issues of the time. This thesis compares the satire of the post-Revolutionary period with the satire of today to show that while issues change, the role of satire remains an integral part the mainstream culture.
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I. Introduction

This thesis is about French satire, how and why it conveys French identity. From the nineteenth century until today, satire has been a lasting and powerful art form that has illustrated, articulated, analyzed, and caused issues in French society. In France, satire has been a succès de scandale; controversies surrounding satire has made it an enduring phenomenon. The ideas of this thesis will be broken down chronologically into chapters about satire in nineteenth century and twenty-first century France. The first chapter will be about the journal La Caricature, with cartoons from the founder Charles Philipon and the renowned satirist Honoré Daumier. The chapter will then be broken into subsections, the first being a brief historical context. The satire I discuss for this period will be the works produced in response to the July Monarchy and the reign of King Louis-Philippe, the Duke of Orleans, in the early nineteenth century. The major issues regarding freedom of speech, censorship, and the rights of the Revolution during this period will have a subsection as well. In particular, I will be analyzing a poire cartoon, Soap Bubbles, and Gargantua. There will be a section dedicated to each of these, which will provide a detailed visual analysis of what is in the image, and what was trying to be conveyed. The last subsection will be about the implications of the satire, what changes were made as a result, and what the lasting impact has been. The second chapter will discuss the modern satirical journal Charlie Hebdo. As with the nineteenth century, I will provide some context for the satire. There will also be a section on the issues that concern Charlie Hebdo, such as freedom of religion, secularism, immigration, and terrorism. For the image analysis, I will look closely at
the cartoons about Muhammad that inspired the 2015 terror attacks at the *Hebdo* headquarters in Paris, as well as the cartoons drawn in response to the attacks. Lastly, there will be a subsection dedicated to the implications of the cartoons and attacks for satire in French society and political identity. In the conclusion, the third chapter, I will summarize the differences and similarities between nineteenth and twenty-first century satire. I will review the ways in which French identity has changed, and the various issues that were and are in play for each time period. Finally, I will make comments regarding the future of satire in France. Throughout the thesis, the overarching theme will revolve around how satire is representative of French political and cultural identity, and what satire reveals about France in general. For the nineteenth century, the research of Amy Wiese Forbes and Robert Goldstein will be particularly useful as I look at the background, content, and effects of the satire regarding the political changes surrounding the July Monarchy. The sources for the twenty-first century and *Charlie Hebdo*, on the other hand, will consist of news reports following the attacks in 2015 because the effects of this satire are so recent and ongoing. The works of Nik Kowsar, Jacob Hamburger, and Eoin Daly will be particularly useful in assessing the issues of secularism and *laïcité* in French society today. Other sources consulted will include topics regarding the actual satire and various academic works about French political controversies, such as freedom of speech and the contentious immigration and religious problems of today. Overall, this thesis will provide the ways in which satire has both reflected upon and influenced important events, people, and institutions.
II. Chapter 1: Satire in France

In France, the history of art and politics is as old as the nation itself. Since the time of the French Revolution, particularly in the nineteenth century and the past few decades, France has undergone radical transformations, both politically and culturally. To make sense of these changes, artists have used their paintbrushes and pens to make sense of the chaotic world around them and to interpret the transformations.¹ This means that the artistic world has been a place in which historical events could be contemplated, analyzed, and criticized. Artists, as members of French society but also as observers, have had the advantage of being present to see what is there, yet distant enough to pass judgments with their works. Out of the complex political issues from France’s past, artists have created ways to visually address events that are not possible through other outlets like other cultural expressions such as music or literature. Art, as a visual entity and the product of the artist’s imagination, provides a vivid illustration of the identity of culture, that we cannot get from other sources such as literature; in other words, the power is in the tangible visibility of what the artist conveys.² Art is a broad term, but here, it is useful to consider classical philosopher Plato’s thoughts on it: he said that the artist’s task is to “articulate absolute truths lying eternally beyond and independent of their changeable, relative manifestations in the world.”³

This thesis will examine the period of post-Revolutionary France, the early nineteenth century, and contemporary France, to demonstrate how art is the product of its environment and a representation of reality, or rather certain perspectives on reality. Certainly in France, all types of art can be used to show its history and its changes over time, particularly politically. The French culture has traditionally been rich in the art world; some of history’s greatest painters, sculptors, writers, poets, directors, and musicians have hailed from *l’Hexagone*, and today, the country remains a bastion of culture. Today, artistic institutions such as the Louvre Museum, Musée d’Orsay, and the Cannes film festival are evidence of the centrality of art to French society, and this cultural phenomenon is not new.

Especially during the period of time surrounding the French Revolution did art and politics become “inextricably bound,” as the manifestation between how the world was seen and how that was communicated through artistic means was consolidated.

During this age of revolution, artists became part of the elite culture, and so their involvement in politics developed, giving them a certain power in the ways in which they portray the reality around them. Art became more publicized, and “low” art like satire, as opposed to commissioned paintings and sculptures, became a more legitimate art form. For the first time, art commented simultaneously on events and ideas as they unfolded.

This was a crucial moment for art and politics in France, and it is during this time

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6 Ibid, p. 11.
that the politics of the age begin to be best understood through art. The culmination of art and politics took place during this time largely as a result of the new freedom enjoyed by artists to use their works to freely express their ruminations on liberty. Inspired by the principles of the Enlightenment and the ideas of the *philosophes*- freedom of religion, freedom of press, and freedom to pursue new knowledge without the restraints of government oversight- artists joined the ranks of the intellectual elites and used their freedoms to pursue what they considered to be “truth.” The precedents established by the Enlightenment had, in the eighteenth century, been instrumental in the proliferation of social institutions such as the salon and developments within the academy. The philosophy concerning rule by the people and separation of church and state, and above all, of reason, gave artists the confidence that they could make changes in the post-Revolutionary period. Indeed, the Enlightenment, and then the Revolution, provided “new keenness to the thinking of peoples and new life to the spirit of liberty.”

Another part of this relationship between art and politics is the notion of pushing the limits of taboo, of testing what is acceptable in the public realm. Satire was a form of art that played off the ideas of the Enlightenment, as it tested the legitimacy of government and religious institutions. Though satire had been present in French society before the Revolution, it was afterwards that satirical works began to challenge what was considered art and what should be allowed as art. Artists

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7 Ibid, p.17.
9 Ibid, p. 29.
used caricature to help the common people understand events that were happening, and to represent what could not be put into words. Satire, in this time, became a “political aesthetic.” Known in France as the “Ninth Art,” satire, including caricatures and political cartoons, traditionally has been the primary way of pushing the limits of taboo. Satirical works have significantly shaped perception of historical events in France, and its basis in Enlightenment principles has made it a strong cultural force in French art and politics. Satire embodies the idea that the people have the right to criticize their rulers, and so it became intensely associated with republican ideals.

Before the Revolution, satire was used in art to criticize aspects of society such as fashion, norms, social behaviors, and the like. Drawings similar to political cartoons were used in Gallic France, and press drawings were popular throughout the Renaissance in France. *The Dance of the Dead* by Guyot Marchant in 1485 (Figure 1, Appendix A) mocked the ritualistic *danse macabre*; *Masquerades* by Robert and Jean Jacques Boissard in 1597 (Figure 2, Appendix A) made a caricature out of fashion; and *Gobbi* by Jacques Callot in 1622 (Figure 3, Appendix A) was also a caricaturized representation of the fashion of its time. These are examples of pre-Revolution satirical works that critiqued aspects of French society and customs; the

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major difference is that they mocked people and society as a whole. It was not until 1789 that satire was used in an overtly political way, but it was certainly a concept that French people had been familiar with.

What is satire, exactly? Satire has existed since antiquity to address problems in society. There is no single definition for the term, and it has meant different things to different people at different times. This means that it is an “aesthetic manifestation of a universal age,” taking on certain meanings that apply to contemporary circumstances. Matters such as religion, culture, and above all politics have been criticized using satire. Beginning with The Satire of the Trades in Ancient Egypt, Menippean satire in Greece, the works of Quintillian in Rome, the Canterbury Tales in medieval Europe, and the works of Jonathan Swift during the Enlightenment, the use of satire has persisted as a cultural phenomenon.

According to an encyclopedia definition, satire is “an art form that humorously mocks, ridicules, and scorcs individuals and political or social practices.”

However, it is not always humorous or meant to evoke laughter, but rather is a way to draw attention to a certain contention by provoking reflection. It certainly can make light of issues considered to be serious. This, though, is largely dependent on what people find funny, which is idiosyncratic and varies greatly according to context; it is also the reason that satire can create problems and

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provoke much different reactions, such as anger or offense.\textsuperscript{21} It is, in short, a method of criticism. Typically, satire arouses pessimism in its audience, by pointing out the flaws and shortcomings of its respective topic. It is an art form that plays on emotions—sometimes anger, indignation, guilt, even malice.\textsuperscript{22} According to George A. Test in his work \textit{Satire: Spirit and Art}, because it is intrinsically confrontational, satire is often unsettling or upsetting. The nature of it is meant to get a reaction out of people, whether that is laughter or outrage. Satire is always criticizing something, and depending on where the viewer stands in relation to what is being criticized can affect how the satire is perceived or received. It is supposed to cause its audience to pay attention, to reflect, and the sentiments that are conveyed by the satirical work can serve as a reminder that the world and its people are imperfect.

Satire manipulates various forms of humor to make its purported statement. Wordplay, irony, slapstick humor, innuendo, parody, black humor, farce, and especially exaggeration are some of the typical comic methods used by satirists to mask the message that lies beyond the humorous façade.\textsuperscript{23} That is the genius of satire; it blends together all sorts of elements from humor, judgment, and criticism to create something that people can see and relate to. It also requires a certain preexisting knowledge of its audience. Satire is often composed of references to current events or societal elements, and so the audience must be familiar with the subject matter to really “get” the point. For this reason, satire is often produced in newspapers or periodicals, with new editions each week or month. In this way, the

\textsuperscript{22} Ibid, p. 2.
\textsuperscript{23} Ibid, p. 23.
A satirist seeks to put forth what they believe to be true about some aspect of the world—whether or not that is understood is completely dependent on the viewer. Many factors can contribute to how the satire is perceived or accepted, especially the cultural context. This also implies that satire is transient and because it plays on contemporary references, it leaves a historical legacy that gives glimpses into the zeitgeist. The mocking of individuals and institutions give the viewer a sense of what the collective identity at the time was. While literary accounts of history convey what happened, works of satire convey an understanding what happened and what was felt about it. Satire is a brilliant characterization of the moods and sentiments felt by various people, and it allows for a certain imaginative discourse for the audience. The purpose for the satirist is to make people really see, and to think about a certain person or idea in a new way.  

The danger of satire is that those negative emotions it engenders can have strong effects on people, and the satirist produces his work with the knowledge that he might find enemies in the figure or institution that he satirizes. Because it is a form of deep criticism, it can be seen as an assault on some valued norm or idea, yet this is the point, to shame and ridicule to the extent of causing some reaction. The purpose is to expose problems, which in turn can cause even more. It provides a view of the world and of humanity that may or may not be what people want to see or believe. Despite its provocative nature, satire certainly demands attention and

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usually receives it. An “artful attack”, satire is used as a weapon, against some person or institution. It has often been debated as to whether or not satire, caricature, and political cartoons truly qualify as art, but the best argument for it is that “art is a representation or reflection of life but sometimes reduces to absurdity attempts to understand it on those terms.” The complexity and diversity of satire require a great deal of creativity and a bit of ingenuity; the brilliance of satire is that it must make something serious seem inconsequential, using humor or ridicule to mask criticism or offense.

It is a delicate balance to strike in order to properly convey its message. The weaving together of taboo, judgment, humor, ridicule, discontent and laughter provide an unusual and sophisticated product. Political cartoons especially can say more than any book or article by the power of the visual. Unlike other common forms of art, such as portraiture or paintings, there is a concrete connection between the artist and the audience. Satire is not merely observed, but requires active engagement. The audience must really understand what the artist is saying; otherwise, the satire does not work, does not serve its purpose. Moreover, it is not just connections with the artists that the audience must make, but also connections with the outside worlds of politics, ethics, prejudices, religiosity, or the like. Satire also has historically enjoyed a greater deal of autonomy and freedom compared with other art forms or documentations, because it manipulates the content into saying something without saying anything at all. It can be ambiguous, imprecise

27 Ibid.
28 Ibid.
even, though it is usually very intentional in its expression. This is common in satire that targets public officials, as the person may not be explicitly portrayed, but there is an understood meaning as to whom it is and what they are being criticized for. An example of this is the poire satire of nineteenth-century France that ridiculed King Louis-Philippe, which will be discussed at length in the first chapter of this thesis.

Therefore, it is natural, that France, a country known for its artistic scene, lively political discourse, and pushing the limits of taboo, would have a legacy of satirical influence. Art, in this case satire, does offer insight into historical events and sentiments. With France, satire can provide an understanding of the ever-changing political climates and the evolution of political identity. Satire is engrained in French culture, and so by examining satirical works, their context, their inspiration, and their reception, certain issues over time can be much better understood. Looking at the past for reference is helpful in determining the potential for outcomes now and in the future. Controversies with satire everywhere, including France, have shaped the way history is viewed, and continues to do so. Beginning with the French Revolution in particular, satire has shown itself to be an indicator of the sentiments in France, which have been difficult to navigate due to the tumultuous decades of government transitions that followed.

The nineteenth century was a profoundly prolific era for French satire, much of it inspired and affected by the unstable political life. Regimes were overthrown by domestic revolutionary actions and outside forces in the years 1814, 1815, 1830,
1848, and 1870, along with repeated uprisings in the period of 1815-1852.\textsuperscript{29}

Satirical artists Honoré Daumier and Charles Philippon produced images in their periodical \textit{La Caricature} to address and respond to the ongoing changes in society.\textsuperscript{30}

For them, criticism was directed toward the government, toward the authority figures who believed themselves to be above judgment such as the King Louis-Philippe. They faced challenges, in particular the battle for freedom of expression, and the evolving laws pertaining to what was allowed to be said. Daumier and Philippon defended the ideals of the Declaration of the Rights of Man, even as they faced legal punishments and imprisonment for their actions. The circumstances of their trials and lawsuits were fleeting, but the legacies of their efforts remain. Their satirical works \textit{Gargantua} and \textit{La Poir} among others, demonstrate how pushing the limits of freedom of expression had a lasting effect in France.

Centuries later, satire and its controversies remain relevant in French society. Today, the satirical journal \textit{Charlie Hebdo} is a modern form of the tradition that Daumier and Philippon established and consolidated in the nineteenth century. Much about the satirical works is paralleled with nineteenth century drawings, and the outrage certainly remains the same. However, the context is much different in modern-day France. Satirists and political cartoonists today address much different issues and face much different challenges. Though the chaotic governmental changes have, for the most part, ended in France, changes in population and demography overwhelm political discussions and conflicts. The topics of religion,


radical Islam, and immigration dominate the subject matter of satire. So, political cartoonists such as those at *Charlie Hebdo* often direct criticism at religious institutions, which perhaps pushes the limits of taboo even further than the addressing of governmental institutions in the nineteenth century; this will be discussed at length later. For many in France today, there is a fine line between satire and blatant offense, but the issue is where that line should be drawn. These cartoons have opened debates about the laws of secularism in France, separation of church and state, and religious freedom. Yet today, stakes are even higher surrounding these issues. The events of January 2015, the killing of several satirical artists, are evidence of just how dangerous and powerful satire can be. The *Charlie Hebdo* attack in 2015 revealed deep problems in French society that had not been addressed prior to the scandals surrounding images mocking Islam and the prophet Muhammed. Nineteenth century satirists risked much with their work, as well. They faced legal repercussions for speaking out against an oppressive government, and often gambled the success of their careers. Today, however, the consequences for going too far, though that is highly subjective, are more serious than ever.

By examining nineteenth and twenty-first century satire and political cartoons, it will be clear the ways in which art has remained a force in French society and political life. Questions surrounding the notions of what French political identity is and has been persist as satire continues to be a *provocateur* in the public realm. France today looks much different than post-Revolutionary France, and yet that idea of challenging institutions is still present. The shift from battles with the government to battles with religion and the public is telling of how very different
things are. And yet, the satire remains, as political cartoonists continue to tell
history and to shape it. The jump from the nineteenth century to the twenty-first is a
large one, but the fact that satire is just as, and perhaps more, important today than
ever really shows the place of art in the French political context. Satire, with its
sometimes shocking, occasionally disturbing, and always thought-provoking
content, is, in short, an illustration of France.
III. Chapter 2: Nineteenth Century; Satire and Government

a. Context

Nineteenth century France was a time of great political upheaval and uncertainty. The Revolution of 1789 left an atmosphere of radical change in the nation that followed into the early 1800s and shaped the way that government was viewed by the people. The democratic promises of the Revolution and the Declaration of the Rights of Man and Citizen promoted ideas about the operation of governmental institutions, and the roles that people were meant to play in their political circumstances.31

“The free communication of thoughts and of opinions is one of the most precious rights of man: any citizen thus may speak, write, print freely, save to respond to the abuse of this liberty, in the cases determined by the law.”

-Declaration of the Rights of Man and Citizen

During the Revolution, as early as the 1790s, though, the political compromise between the old monarchy and the new republicanism began to unravel as two very political ideologies came into discord with one another. The decades following the Revolution would see great turmoil politically, as disagreements about the right to rule ensued. In 1792, Revolutionaries declared that France was then a republic, governed by the rule of the people without a reigning monarch, the king. They advocated for a strong relation between the people and their representatives, eschewing the aristocratic society for one in which all citizens were considered

equal. This was not a universal ideal, however, and support for the monarchy persisted. Though it became important that a compromise needed to be met to ensure stability, this did not happen. Rather, the disagreement led to broad disunity within French society. In order to uphold the spoils of the Revolutionary War, supporters of the republic went to great length to protect what they considered to be the right way to govern.

While many people believed in those ideas put forth in the Declaration of the Rights of Man—particularly the participation of citizens in the legislative process, the restriction of the monarchy, and the freedom of speech and the press—many became disillusioned by the activities of the Revolutionaries. Even before the period of Napoleon with the Reign of Terror, the republic lost support. The formation of the Napoleonic dictatorship only worsened the situation. Then, when the Bourbon Restoration established a new conservative monarchy with King Louis XVIII in 1815, it became more apparent that the promises of the Revolution had fallen short. Divisions became more deeply entrenched as Republicans organized themselves underground, allying themselves with the Bonapartistes. Together, these groups sought to overthrow the new Bourbon monarch under the “ultraconservative” government. Though they remained suppressed and republicanism lost much of its influence in politics, the presence remained, albeit subtly.

Even by the 1830s, France had not recovered from the Revolutionary disorder nor had the government settled into what was supposed to be a

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34 Ibid, p. 80.
democracy.\textsuperscript{35} So great was the political divisiveness that it led to crisis, the republican influence again began to emerge, and a new revolution took place in 1830. In the aftermath of the 1830 revolution, elections were held once again. However, despite the fact that the liberal opposition to the Bourbon monarchy won most of the seats in the new Assembly legislative body, the fight was not yet over.\textsuperscript{36} Bourbon government officials reacted to the liberal, republican victory by establishing the July Ordinances, which restricted the authority of the legislative process and put even tighter restrictions on the liberty and political participation of the people. By the end of July 1830, violence again broke out as the public lashed out against the oppression of the government. After just three days of barricades in the streets of Paris, the ultraconservative Bourbon monarchy of King Louis XVII collapsed and it was then that the July Monarchy was established.\textsuperscript{37}

It was another important moment in French history, as it showed just how fleeting political structures could be. The July Monarchy brought together those republicans who had overthrown Louis XVIII and the monarchists who opposed the Bourbon regime, and it was agreed that a constitutional monarchy was to be set in place, led by the Duke of Orleans, Louis-Philippe.\textsuperscript{38} It was during this era, the 1830s, that satire began to take precedence as a regular part of the political discourse. The past decades’ revolutionary events had seen the rise and fall of the freedom of speech and freedom of the press. Yet, this disharmony between the governmental changes had actually given voice to more people, those who had taken advantage of the

\textsuperscript{35} Ibid, p. 18.  
\textsuperscript{36} Ibid, p. 80.  
\textsuperscript{37} Ibid, p. 81.  
\textsuperscript{38} Ibid.
uncertainty to see how unstable the institutions of authority had been. As stated in
the introduction, satire had a long history in France, but in the political culture of
the 1830s and the July Monarchy, the presence of satire became especially
engrained. This was a time of proliferation for satire, which had been stifled in the
previous years, but now had plenty of material for subject matter and a ready
audience following the disappointments of the post-revolutionary period. The shifts
from monarchy to democracy inspired a great deal of satire, and the satirists used
their works to illustrate the new “normal,” to try to make sense of a confusing time.

Though the Revolution was based on the idea of liberty, including freedom of
speech, revolutionaries questioned the acceptability of satire even in 1789.39 On July
31, 1789, censorship for caricatures was established, and this declaration was
repeated in the Constitution of 1791 and in the Constitution of 1795.40 While
satirists enjoyed freedom to mock “the drama of the Revolution” in the years from
1789 to 1792, the “humor” soon became seen as threatening. So, under the first
French republic, satire was limited. This restriction on freedom of speech was just
part of the neglected revolutionary ideals. From 1794 to 1800, satire again began to
emerge as a force in society, but it avoided politics and focused on subject matter
regarding society, such as fashion and etiquette.41 While satirists enjoyed this
limited freedom for several years under the Directory government, the reign of
Napoleon brought about another period of censorship for the press, including satire.

39 Ibid.
Ohio: Kent State University Press. p. 55.
41 Ibid.
By 1811, Napoleon had reduced the number of published newspapers to just four. Strict laws prevented any form of freedom of speech, to the extent that groups of secret police were formed to ensure no unapproved periodicals were published discretely.\footnote{Ibid, p. 77.} Then, under the Bourbon Restoration, some satire was tolerated with the lifting of censorship in 1814, though what was “acceptable” to be published was still regulated. However, the revolution of July 1830 was, like the 1789 Revolution, based largely on the ideas surrounding liberty and freedom of expression. As the ultraconservative government crumbled and the authority of the July Monarchy was established, laws restricting satire were abolished completely. This freedom, combined with the advent of lithography, a new print technology, made it possible for the first time to have satire published regularly in the press.\footnote{Ibid, p. 91.} It was an important time for satire, as the regular publication allowed for commentary on current issues, and satirists began to do just that. Before, satire had not necessarily dealt with very current issues, because it had not been possible to produce newspapers so quickly or so freely. So, in 1830, print satire took off as an art form in France, and also as a means by which people got their news. Though censorship of the press and satire reemerged in 1831, the year 1830 was really important because it provided a window of opportunity for satire to emerge as a force and grow in popularity. Because it then became such a public form of criticism, satire established itself as part of the normal political discourse, an “aesthetic” that helped citizens understand the ongoing events.
One man, Charles Philipon, dominated the satirical industry in the 1830s. As a member of a middle-class family from Lyon, Philipon had the opportunity to study drawing at l’École Imperiale des Beaux-Arts de Lyon. His father, a wallpaperer and hat maker, was a fierce supporter of the 1789 Revolution, and he no doubt greatly influenced the political views of his son. In the early nineteenth century, Charles Philipon worked in Paris as a lithographer for a number of periodicals. His career as a political cartoonist began when he acquainted himself with the liberal satirists he met while working as a satirist at the newspaper La Silhouette, where he stayed until early 1830.\textsuperscript{44} It was after the Revolution of July 1830 that he was inspired to start his own satirical business. His periodical La Caricature was published weekly from the years 1830-1835.\textsuperscript{45}

From its conception, La Caricature was meant to criticize the July Monarchy, though Philipon cunningly described his journal as “moral, religious, literary, and scenic.”\textsuperscript{46} The July Monarchy was not the just and fair form of government that had been hoped for, and Philipon wanted to use satire to critique the government for its “illegitimate origins, crude behavior, pervasive egoism, and repressive policies.”\textsuperscript{47} He wanted to reveal that what the July Monarchy claimed was freedom of speech and freedom of the press was in fact a façade; in the early 1830s, satire was the only outlet that challenged those claims. Honoré Daumier was another notable figure of La Caricature; he joined the ranks of Philipon soon after the periodical was

\textsuperscript{46} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{47} Ibid.
established. Having spent much of his life in Paris with his poet father, Daumier was educated in lithography and had experience in publishing. He too, found inspiration for political caricature after the Revolution in 1830, and soon proved himself to be one of the most prolific satirists of the time. Indeed, some of his works in Philipon's *La Caricature* would become the most shocking and powerful of any produced.\(^{48}\)

The nature of satire is that it says something critical while masking it with humor. It was difficult for the July Monarchy to really say what satire was allowed and what was not because it was often unclear what the message of the satire was trying to convey. After censorship was abolished in 1830 with the Charter, the public began to expect their right to free speech, and satire was the epitome of that. It finally gave a voice to those republicans who had been forced into silence for so long, providing another opportunity to have an out for oppositional views contrary to the rhetoric of the July Monarchy and Louis-Philippe.\(^{49}\) Additionally, Charles Philipon touted his journal as “political right,” while being artistic and entertaining at the same time.\(^{50}\) His satire, he claimed, was absurd, but this was because the government also was absurd. Though Philipon and the satirists at *La Caricature* did not necessarily begin as a republican cause, it certainly leaned that way as the regime of Louis-Philippe became increasingly oppressive. The efforts of the July Monarchy to control and limit satire actually brought the causes of the republicans in closer alliance with satirists, because they both rallied around the right to


\(^{49}\) Ibid.

\(^{50}\) Ibid.
expression.\textsuperscript{51} The promises of the 1789 Revolution remained ever-present in the minds of the French public, and the hypocrisy of the governments that followed, particularly the July Monarchy which had claimed to be more open, created a need for the reflection and evaluation that satire provided. Above all, the purpose of \textit{La Caricature} was to reveal the “truth” behind the appearances put on by the political institutions of the time.

Satire did not, however, have the freedom that had been hoped for in 1830 with the lifting of censorship restrictions. As the industry of the satirical press took off, it became evident that satire was a real political power in France, and its critique of the July Monarchy demonstrated how it became intertwined with the liberal values that promoted transparency in the political processes. In previous years, the republican cause had been ambiguous due to a lack of organization and a lack of public presence. Satire, though, helped to clarify those ideas and coordinate opposition in a civil and artistic manner. It brought together a coalition of thinkers, supported by its readers, to strategize ways to deal with the political issues of the corrupt monarchy.\textsuperscript{52} Moreover, satire educated the people, helping them to form their own ideas about government and politics. The early nineteenth century was a time in which many French people were not completely literate.\textsuperscript{53} For example, a study by Robert Goldstein showed that over fifty percent of army recruits in France during the early nineteenth century were illiterate.\textsuperscript{54} Other data reveal that in 1820,

\begin{flushright}
\textsuperscript{51} Ibid. \\
\textsuperscript{52} Ibid. \\
\textsuperscript{54} Ibid.
\end{flushright}
around sixty-eight percent of the general population were illiterate. Satire proved especially powerful in that it allowed those who could not read books or newspapers to develop an understanding of what was happening in the world around them.

Another aspect of the proliferation of print satire is that it was often viewed in a collective setting, with people gathered around newsstands in city streets. There, they were able to together view, debate, and discuss what the message of the satire could be. This collective viewing of an image is different than reading something, which is typically a more solitary activity that is done within private quarters of home or work. The significance of the illustrated over the written is also evident in the fact that the printed word not censored after the year 1822, but satire and political cartoons continued to be regulated. In the years 1815 to 1880, over twenty French caricature journals were prohibited, and nearly every notable French caricaturist, including Charles Philipon and Honoré Daumier, underwent prosecution and often imprisonment for their “seditious” images. Even just the years between 1831 and 1835, after the reinstatement of satirical censorship, La Caricature was seized twenty-eight times, prosecuted nine times, and Charles Philipon was himself prosecuted six times.

The images of satire provided a concrete illustration that had a greater impression on readers than just the written word- here, we can see the theory that a

56 Ibid.
58 Ibid, p. 72.
picture “is worth a thousand words” to be true, because these images put forth new ideas that allowed people to not just read something, but to study an image and develop their own understandings and imaginings of it. In this way, French citizens became more engaged in political life because they “engaged in a practice of questioning political and social legitimacy.” Illiterate adults in France had a new capacity to participate, even if it was only be being cognizant of the institutions that governed their lives. Uncovering the “truth,” or at least the facts of the matter, became much easier with satire’s ability to influence a large number of people. The ambiguous and deceptive nature of satire also helped to familiarize people with the process of “uncovering” something that was hidden, and Amy Wiese Forbes, a scholar of the nineteenth century French satire, argues that this in turn helped people to better see past the illusions of the July Monarchy.

Satire brought about a new way of thinking, with skills to assess and analyze what was being told. It was an active process, not just passive information consumption. This new political awareness of the general public was what provoked the increasing regulations on satire by the July Monarchy; the government was no longer able to hide what it had previously concealed and that instilled fear in many public officials, particularly for King Louis-Philippe, the Duke of Orleans. The caricatures that ridiculed him were perceived as a threat to the stability of the

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62 Ibid, p. 35.
nation, especially because of the exposure to the lower classes. Satire also brought more people together, as there was something unifying about the strange humor it employed. Whether they laughed or were offended, the cartoons certainly opened dialogue concerning the government that had not existed before the popularity increase of satire.

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b. Images

One of the first notably contentious work of satire from the 1830s was the “Soap Bubbles” cartoon published by Charles Philipon in February 1831. This particular drawing was significant because it was one of the main reasons that the 1830 Charter of freedom of the press was again restricted to limit the autonomy of satirical journals like La Caricature. It brought an abrupt end to the brief period of no censorship, and again made the careers of satirists more difficult by placing limitations on what could be published for French citizens to see and read. At the time “Soap Bubbles” was published, La Caricature was the most popular satiric newspaper in France, and so it had a great deal of attention placed on it. Philipon drew inspiration from the 1734 painting Soap Bubbles by artist Jean-Baptiste-Simeon Chardin. (Figure 5, Appendix A)

This work was meant to be a representation of the transience of life, and Chardin had painted it just after his wife and young daughter died. He chose the bubble to demonstrate how fragile life was, in juxtaposition with the stone in the painting. The bubble stands in stark contrast with the more angular elements of the painting. Chardin wanted to depict the fact that nothing lasts, but that life must still be appreciated. We can see elements of nature with the tree leaves against the stone. The figure is standing inside, though he leans out the window with the bubbles. These two elements, the contrast between tree and stone, indoors and

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outdoors, also provoke the idea of the temporary with the permanent. In the painting, the man’s face is cast down, blowing the bubble down instead of up, giving indications of the solemnity and sadness he experienced. Philipon’s “Soap Bubbles” was a crude reinterpretation of this, showing that “nothing lasts” also included the promises of the Revolution. The beauty of Chardin’s work is gone in the cartoon, replaced by a dark humor that connotes dissatisfaction. This cartoon, though, really tested the limits of the freedom of the press, and it took the political aspect of satire to a whole new level. “Soap Bubbles” was a drawing of a man, with a bored and disaffected expression on his face, blowing bubbles mindlessly through a toy pipe.

Unlike the Chardin painting, the figure looks up, directly at the viewer. It is not a face mired in thought, but rather a blank stare. As a lithographic drawing, it has no color, but it is certainly realistic. The shading and chiaroscuro give it a depth and space that make the figure proportional. The light is at play in the man’s clothes, the bubbles, the table, and even the bowl. We see little background, though it appears to be a domestic setting; and the only objects are the table that the man is resting on and the materials with which to blow bubbles. Clearly, the focus is supposed to be on the figure and the bubbles. There is also life in the drawing; the three-dimensionality of the man and the bubbles highlight the contrast between his still form and the floating bubbles. It is a still moment, yet we can imagine the soft floating of the bubbles as they are being blown.

The bubbles each had a phrase on it that signified a theme from the 1789 Revolution: freedom of press, popular elections, no more sinecures, and mayors elected by the people. The bowl on the table of the bubble mixture is labeled
“mousse de juillet,” or “foam of July.” As a satirical work and a political cartoon, the drawing is meant to be a mixture of the realistic with the bizarre; it does not make sense for someone to be blowing bubbles with words on them, but it is not so absurd as to confuse the viewer. The illusory bubbles are larger-than-life, emphasizing the importance of the words on them. The joke was that this drawing represents the government, mindlessly letting the promises of the Revolution disappear into thin air as if they were bubbles being blown. Each right that had been designated to French citizens under the Declaration of the Rights of Man and Citizen was as evanescent as bubbles, and the July Monarchy was letting the democratic rights disappear quietly, both knowingly and insouciantly.

Though the man was supposed to be depicted as an anonymous figure, he bore a striking resemblance to the King Louis-Philippe with his curly, coiffed hair, long, straight nose, and his regal dress. The knowing eyes look directly at the viewer, adding a psychological element to the cartoon that really draws attention to the figure and his almost mocking expression. This paralleled with the idea that the French government was taking advantage of the people by failing to uphold the compromise between the monarchy and the republic. While Philipon never admitted to it and it was not stated anywhere in the cartoon, it was obvious to many that it was a caricature of Louis-Philippe. The officials of the July Monarchy were, of course, outraged by this offense. While censorship had been abolished in 1830, there was still a restriction on representing the monarch that had been put in place.

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68 Ibid.
in November 1830; in satire, there has always been a tradition of mocking things in the abstract and not literal persons.\textsuperscript{69} For instance, it was acceptable to satirize the monarchic form of government but not the actual king. So, this portrayal of the Duke of Orleans in such an unflattering light certainly opened the door to greater surveillance of what was produced in satirical journals. For Charles Philipon, it was just the beginning.

The reactions to “Soap Bubbles” from the July Monarchy were severe. It is hard to say what the reaction was by the people, though the reaction from the government is clearer. While Philipon had hoped to call attention to the increasing censorship of the government, his actions of disrespecting King Louis-Philippe through satire only increased restrictions on freedom of the press. This, in turn, began a cycle of repression and more criticism; it seemed that the more satire produced, the more restrictions were put in place, causing more satire to be produced regarding the restrictions. Though \textit{La Caricature} was meant to thrive off of the republican freedom that it had been founded upon, the oppressiveness of the July Monarchy gave artists more material was to produce quality satire that would resonate with the French citizens. So, when Philipon went to trial at the \textit{cour d’assises} in Paris in May 1831 for publishing the slanderous content of his “Soap Bubbles” drawing, he used it as another opportunity to shed light on the injustices of the government. The trial was publicized, and so citizens were able to observe the process and make their own judgments. The \textit{Gazette}, a daily French newspaper, especially covered the trial, and would continue to carefully review all matters.

\textsuperscript{69} Ibid.
concerning satire from then on out. Philipon’s lawyer, Eduard Blanc, gave an amusing defense that again ridiculed the government, accusing them of making “juvenile” charges and of being “silly” by taking the satire so seriously.\textsuperscript{70}

The July Monarchy had charged Philipon for “conspiracy,” and the trial demonstrated this to be somewhat of joke by taking the satire so seriously; in the end, the trial was about the freedom of the press to publish political criticism without retribution. The large support network behind \textit{La Caricature} evidenced how satire was being viewed as a symbol of justice, the “citizen’s right to debate politics.”\textsuperscript{71} However, the jury reached no real consensus on whether or not the press should have some semblance of reverence for Louis-Philippe, as the head of the French state. He was convicted, but it was also a victory for the satirist in another way. There was still divisiveness about how to treat satire, though most importantly, this trial opened more debate about key issues. It was made clear to Philipon and his fellow satirists that the fight to abolish satire made it all the more popular –\textit{un succès de scandale}, and trials and legal procedures became a whole new venue in which to work for political cartoonists.\textsuperscript{72} And, because of the courtroom drama, satire became increasingly politicized.

The new legal consequences of the satirical works again consolidated their importance in French political identity. Satire soon became associated with individual rights, and Philipon used his punishments to manipulate the rhetoric surrounding the July Monarchy further. In light of the publicity \textit{La Caricature}

\textsuperscript{70} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{71} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{72} Ibid.
received over this first trial, the actual political consequences were insignificant. More importantly, the attention that the trial received and the controversy over a cartoon only emphasized the self-consciousness of the July Monarchy.

Another significant satirical work of the time was *Gargantua* by cartoonist Honoré Daumier. (Figure 6, Appendix A) This drawing, published in *La Caricature* in December 1831, again created controversy about satire; in particular, it provoked discussion over how to distinguish “truth” from lies, satire from slander, and who should have a voice in determining these issues. It was based on the writings of François Rabelais, whose sixteenth century novels were about the giant Gargantua and his son. This too was a satirical work, as it was a fictional mockery of the Renaissance time period.73 *Gargantua* was just one of many cartoons published after the Philipon trial, as satirists continued to push the envelope in order to create art that held powerful meaning. Like *Soap Bubbles*, *Gargantua* was also about what could be depicted in satire.74

At this point, as the French people began to look more and more to satire as a real news source of information and as a way to develop opinions, the government was simultaneously looking to satire as a “litmus test” to uncover “conspiracies” against the July Monarchy.75 *Gargantua* abandoned the realism of Philipon’s *Soap Bubbles* to embrace a more ridiculous, yet poignant, image. In the cartoon, we see a man of enormous proportions on a throne, a conveyer belt of baskets of money

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75 Ibid.
being transported into his open, gaping mouth. As they enter his mouth, they appear to be a loaf of bread or a baguette. We know that these objects are some form of money because of the man at the bottom of the throne, collecting items and placing them in a basket. This could also be a play on the term *blé*, which literally means wheat but also is a slang term for money.

At the bottom of the belt, there are rugged-looking people standing, giving money, or having money taken, to be put into the mouth of the terrible figure. We can barely make out the expressions of the people putting their items and valuables into the basket of a lackey, and they seem to be shocked, angry, and upset. They are giving all they have to the gargantuan man. One figure sits on the ground with a child, suggesting poverty of those depicted despite the vast wealth depicted entering the mouth of the gargantuan, a massive figure, larger than the buildings shown, with a huge torso and spindly legs. Upon further examination, we can see that the “throne” of the monster is not a throne at all, but rather a large *chaise percée*, or toilet. This we can tell because of the “excrement” under him in the form of papers being collected by another group of figures; these people are distinguishable from the other group. They are taking, not giving. They are well dressed and busy as opposed to the other despairing group. Those by the seat are collecting and receiving, not giving and being taken from.

In the background, though it is small, it is very clearly the Parisian skyline, with the silhouette of Notre Dame perceptible. On the left is the building of the

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National Assembly, the legislative body of the July Monarchy. Its Greek architecture and the flag of France make it readily perceptible as a governmental institution. The lithograph is drawn with three-dimensional proportions, so we get a feel for the size and the space in which the figures stand. The shading of adds depth to the space, which is proportional with the drastic exception of the gargantuan figure. It is a vast scene, though the tiny background and the small figures emphasize the sheer enormity of the central figure. It is drawn in a perspective that makes the large mouth the clear focal point of the drawing. Another interesting aspect is the size of the people on the ground compared to one another. The poor group giving up their possessions is more readily visible than those beneath the giant; this also draws attention to what is happening in the cartoon, emphasizing the “stealing” and consumption, while minimizing the figures in the background.

These elements are important, because they contribute to what the satire was actually about. The bizarre and frightening giant being depicted is none other than King Louis-Philippe. This is evident in the shape of his head, which was often depicted in satire as a pear, the elaborate hairstyle, and the manner of clothing. Philipon’s close resemblance to the pear led him to become known as the “first fruit of France.” The drawings of Louis Philippe as a pear in La Caricature caused the fruit to become a ubiquitous symbol that began to be used in graffiti and other forms of art all over Paris. (Figure 7, Appendix A) It was a shocking portrayal indeed; a hideous and wretched monarch on his toilet-throne, being fed the funds of the

\[ \text{Ibid, p. 12.} \]
\[ \text{Ibid, p. 129.} \]
\[ \text{Robert Justin Goldstein. 1989. } \textit{Censorship of Political Caricature in Nineteenth-Century France.} \text{ Kent, Ohio: Kent State University Press. p. 77.} \]
nation's poor and desolate. The figures beneath him were meant to be his ministers and other governmental officials. They are grappling for the dropped coins beneath him, desperately snatching up whatever small benefit they can find, bent over and positioned on the ground. The papers beneath the “throne” are favors and rewards, given to those who were part of and loyal to the July Monarchy.\(^{81}\)

The actions taking place in the cartoon were a shocking accusation. Daumier was denouncing the King for taking money from the poor, keeping the riches for himself and for his supporters. In this way, Louis-Philippe was shown as being a real threat to French citizens, taking what they had earned and wasting it on government spoils. Daumier meant to reveal the corruption of the July Monarchy's financial policies, and the injustice being done behind the closed doors of the National Assembly.\(^{82}\) This serious proposition toed the line dangerously. Though the drawing was comical in its exaggeration of the king, his ridiculous position and his clamoring followers, it also spoke to society in the way normal French citizens were depicted. The general public was supposed to identify with the poor in the cartoon, giving all they had to the state institution.

As per satirical tradition, this piece used humor to mask darker feelings. When people saw the poor being forced to give what they had to the wealthy and greedy monarch, it also inspired sentiments of anger and disbelief. Because satire came to be considered as a real source of news, people really observed the injustices that were being done to them, even if they were unsure precisely what those

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injustices were. Daumier claimed that it was about "budget personified" and absorbing taxes, but of course, everyone, including the July Monarchy, saw through that.\textsuperscript{83}

Despite Daumier’s clever remarks about his satire, the government was more infuriated than ever. They saw it as a “clear offense to the person of the king,” and had no doubt that the French people would see the figure of the king in it.\textsuperscript{84} This again played on the fear of transparency that Louis-Philippe had, and also revealed that satire continued to be seen as a legitimate part of the political realm. Works such as these continued to give a voice to those who knew they were not being treated as promised by the French government, and so satire was a danger to the perseverance of the monarchy. The controversy about the deceptive “truth” of satire only deepened.

This time, a new discussion began in regards to the government being inseparable from the king; by depicting Louis-Philippe and his officials as he had in \textit{Gargantua}, Daumier revealed that there was no separation of powers as there was supposed to be under the so-called constitutional monarchy. Members of the National Assembly did not answer to the people, but were only tools being manipulated by the king. As a result of \textit{Gargantua}, Daumier received a prison sentence of six months, which he served in the Sainte Pelagie prison, and a fine of five hundred francs by public prosecutors working for the government.\textsuperscript{85} However, the \textit{Gazette} documented the proceedings as it had with the trial of Philipon earlier

\begin{flushleft}
\textsuperscript{83} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{84} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{85} Ibid.
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that year, and this again allowed the French people to judge the matter for themselves. Like Philipon, Daumier won the support of the public and received clemency appeals. The trial revealed the deep fear of opposition, and the egregious overreaction to the cartoon by Louis-Philippe made the public even more skeptical and aware of the July Monarchy’s double standards. With the *Gargantua* trial, satire showed itself to be capable of destabilizing the broad perception of government with the absurd representation of the king as a rapacious behemoth.

The association of freedom of the press with the legitimacy of the government continued to be an issue. The next year, 1832, *La Caricature* was prosecuted as a journal, collectively, after the government accused it of political conspiracy, a means to unravel the fabric that the July Monarchy government had put into place.86 While Charles Philipon, Honoré Daumier, and the other satirists of *La Caricature* continued to assert that satire was only “ridicule” and “an acceptable form of truth-telling” due its humorous nature, this trial changed the game. Unlike with previous trials, the courts this time ruled against Philipon and *La Caricature*, on the charges that he had made allusions to actual events and people instead of ideas in the abstract. This landmark decision “institutionalized satire as an act of meaningful opposition,” and really confirmed the important place of satire in French life.87 While the prosecution brought more government scrutiny to satire and proved the consequences for satire to be more severe, the industry of satire continued to thrive. Satire acted as a mirror, revealing the July Monarchy government to be a traitor to the precedents established by the Revolution. It also

86 Ibid.
87 Ibid.
was more and more a way to educate the French public in a way that was free of restrictions put in place by the government. Certainly, satire encouraged the viewpoint that was held by the artist that drew it, but it still contributed to new ways of critical thinking and the analytical skills needed to address the ongoing political problems.

In 1833, the government again took the satirical journal to trial, and the courts ruled that officials were allowed to censor a newspaper’s contents before publication in order to control what was produced. *La Caricature* again went to trial in 1834, facing more charges about press violations, and more censorship regulations were put into place.88 The relationship between press freedom and the larger ideas about republican values continued to be upheld. The more restrictions that were placed on the satirical journals, the more outraged French citizens became. The laws passed to limit what could be said in criticism of the government also represented the repressed liberty of the individual. During one of the trials, a public official stated, “before overthrowing a regime, one undermines it by sarcasm; one casts scorn upon it.”89 Louis-Philippe was not being overthrown at this moment, but opposition was definitively mounting. In 1834, the demands of the public were shown when a series of demonstrations and uprisings took place in the cities of France, such as Paris and Lyon, in response to the censorship laws that were supposed to have been abolished in 1830.90 In a vicious cycle, the response of the

88 Ibid.
July Monarchy was to impose yet more laws, this time directly targeting satirists. Legislators passed a law stating that satirists accused of “conspiracy,” or opposition to the government, would not receive a jury trial, and would be forced to have a criminal tribunal. The stated goals of the strict censorship were “the protection of the existing political, social, economic, and moral order.” This completely contradicted the principles of the constitutional monarchy and the previous laws that had been set in place to ensure freedom. Such a blatant dishonoring of the desire of the French people and of the right for satirists to comment on the issues of the day only reinforced again the role of satire and the critical spirit in French political life, and its success would continue despite these setbacks.

Though the government of King Louis-Philippe continued to disappoint the French public because of the abandonment of republican principles, lack of honesty, and the disregard for the agreements set in place with the constitutional monarchy, the satire produced to criticize these issues did not disappoint at all. The autocracy of the regime, the economic issues, the corruption, the neglect of the poor, and the disregard for the working class were all contributing factors to mounting dissent. Attempting to limit the reaches of satire was one way that the government tried to quell the resentment that so many people were feeling towards the July Monarchy. However, the trials of the early 1830s were in many ways “spectacles” and only created greater interest in the satirical works of Philipon and Daumier. The

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91 Ibid.
circumstances in France seemed hopeless by the mid-1830s, but as always, *La Caricature* used art to make sense of what was happening and give the French people recognition that it was not acceptable. Matters became more serious as the frustration of the people grew deadly; during the reign of Louis-Philippe, regicide was attempted eight times.\(^{94}\) As the government defined political conspiracy threats more broadly through state institutions, a new divide was opened between the right of free speech and protection from harm.\(^{95}\) Despite the new and intense scrutiny that this brought with it, *La Caricature* did shy away from the challenge of confronting the double standards of the July Monarchy government.

In January of 1834, Honoré Daumier published a cartoon called *The Past, The Present, The Future* to channel some prevalent sentiments, especially the increasing sense of hopelessness being felt by many. (Figure 8, Appendix A)

In this work, we can observe the direct address that Daumier makes in this depiction of Louis-Philippe. Gone are the earlier subtleties of “Soap Bubbles”, and this is a step farther from the misty figures of *Gargantua*. Easily distinguishable by the aforementioned pear figure of Louis-Philippe, this is a caricaturization of the King in clear terms. We see the figure of the man, the mocking pear form that was by this point a well-known representation of the King, dressed in what appears to be fanciful attire, with three different faces. Also as before, Daumier accentuated the ridiculous hairstyle, forming it to look like the stem of a pear, and also not

\(^{94}\) Ibid.

coincidentally a bit like a pile of excrement. Unlike both *Soap Bubbles* and *Gargantua*, there is no other subject matter besides the one figure. The shading, play of light, and multiple faces give the drawing a three-dimensional form, and the focus is completely on the face. Daumier used shading to create lines and wrinkles, giving the figure the appearance of being both very large and unintelligent. The expressions on each of the three faces, which get progressively older and uglier from left to right, convey varying thoughts and emotions.

Like “Soap Bubbles,” words are used to help interpret the meaning of the drawing. Beneath Louis-Philippe, we can see the words “Le passé, Le present, L’avenir,” in English, “The past, the present, the future.” These three words are meant to correspond with each of the three faces respectively. The representation of Louis-Philippe with three faces is a play on the Ancient Roman figure of Janus, the god of transitions. In Antiquity, Janus was often depicted as having two faces, one looking back to the past and one looking towards the future. This also suggests that Louis-Philippe is “two-faced”, or deceitful. (Figure 9, Appendix A) The Venetian Renaissance artist, Titian, also used the three-faced figure in the sixteenth century. His work “Allegory of Prudence,” has often been interpreted to symbolize the wisdom that is developed with age and life experience. (Figure 10, Appendix A) The Latin inscription on it reads, “From the experience of the past, the present acts prudently, lest it spoil future actions.”

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Indeed, Daumier was using the themes from these works, signifying a time in French history that was transitional and uncertain. It was symbolic of the systemic dissatisfaction with the behavior of the July Monarchy, capturing the sentiments felt by so many of the abandoned promises that had once provided so much hope. The “past,” youthful face of Louis-Philippe is shown as happy and smiling, signaling the time after the Revolution that had seen a convergence of values to better represent the French people, the time of his election as King. Indeed, his reign had started on a very positive note, with hopes that this government would combine the best values of both the monarchy and the republic. The “present” face, older with lines and wrinkles, and more hideous, was contorted in concern, representing the current disquietudes among the public. The “future” face is sordid and disgusted, suggesting that without change, the future would be bleak and continually disappointing. This face is also more difficult to make out with its blurred and shaded features than the other two, which perhaps indicates the uncertainty regarding what was to come.

The dark shadows surrounding the faces give the viewer an impression of movement; in this transition time for France, people were looking back to the misleading of the past while at the same time wondering what the future would have in store. The middle face, in all its ugliness, really captured the dissent following the uprisings in the cities in response to the ever-increasing tyranny of Louis-Philippe. He had begun as a well-liked, “citizen” King, and had transformed into a derelict autocrat; it seemed around the time that this was published, he was good only as material for satirical works such as this.
c. Implications

The 1830s saw a period of widespread discontentment with the politics of King Louis-Philippe and the July Monarchy. The values of Republicanism were translated into the satirical images produced by the artists at *La Caricature*, which served as a uniting mechanism for a divided people. The “critical habit of mind” inspired by satirical works served perhaps most importantly as a way to educate the French public and to set a new precedent of political criticism.\(^99\) The power of satire and its influence is evident in the escalating surveillance and restriction, the copious amounts of legislation dedicated to satire throughout the early nineteenth century. King Louis-Philippe was criticized in ways that had never been done so before, and though satire was restricted, the brief censorship abolitionment in 1830 gave the window of time needed to really launch the art into the world of political discourse. Even if something was not technically acceptable, artists like Philips and Daumier said it anyway because the purpose was to shed light on the lies being told by the government, and on the negligent policies that put an end to the hopes of the Revolution.

All the while, the trials of the satirists were publicized, contributing further to the unconventional education of the public. In many ways, satire turned the government against itself; the outrage, fear, and harsh retributions only made matters worse for the cause of the July Monarchy. Even after the uprisings of 1834, the government continued to limit the reach of satire, all throughout the reign of Louis-Philippe and even the nineteenth century. The September Laws, passed in

1835, prohibited political satire entirely, and demanded that any artist who violated this would be tried by tribunal decision. Additionally, the September laws greatly increased the amounts of fines and the lengths of imprisonment for the “criminals” who violated the laws.\textsuperscript{100} This, combined with the 1834 uprisings, really changed the relationship that existed between satirists and the government, and between satirists and republicans. There was no longer any tolerance in regards to political satire, and the causes of republicans aligned more closely with the causes of satirists. The stripping of freedom of the press was instrumental in consolidating opposition to the monarchy. In a way, protecting satire was protecting the “victory of the Revolution and its progress,” and so that made the fight for freedom all the more potent.\textsuperscript{101} Attempting to suppress the proliferation of satire only made it a more powerful form of communication, thus tying it closer with the revolutionary project.

After the 1830s ended, satire was forced to turn away from overtly political statements.\textsuperscript{102} However, when the Revolution in 1848 brought an end to the July Monarchy and the reign of Louis-Philippe, satire was not forgotten or abandoned completely. \textit{La Caricature} had succeeded in undermining the attempts of Louis-Philippe and his officials to exploit the French people. With the events of the early nineteenth century events articulated by satirical drawings, people in France had been able to form their own political opinions, and those after that were able to look back on the work of Philipon, Daumier, and others to remember the popular

\begin{flushright}
\textsuperscript{100} Ibid, p. 18.
\textsuperscript{101} Ibid, p. 27.
\end{flushright}
perceptions of that government. Satire really left its mark on French life, and it showed its power as both an art form and as a political tool. The constant political changes in France in the post-Revolutionary period allowed satire to grow as a form of representation and become a legitimate part of the political culture. Throughout the rest of the nineteenth century, satire continued its struggle to maintain its presence as an important element in French political culture. The censorship put into place in 1835 with the September Laws ended in 1848 with the Revolution, it was imposed again in 1852, ended in 1870, and was put back into place in 1871.\textsuperscript{103}

From 1852 to 1881, the Bureau of Printing and Bookstores of the Police Division of the ministry declared that any caricature had to receive written consent from the person or institution that it wished to criticize; additionally, journals were often seized for anything that could be even somewhat considered to be offensive.\textsuperscript{104} Fines and prosecutions often followed the seizures. Freedom of the press was not guaranteed entirely until the Press Law of 1881 was put into place, finally fulfilling the long-awaited Revolutionary promise.\textsuperscript{105} A popular saying during nineteenth-century France was “ridicule kills,” and this was evident in the constant battle for freedom of expression. The government, both the July Monarchy and those that followed it, considered satire to be capable of inspiring the people to retaliate, and they did just that, often provoked by the injustices they observed through satirical works.

\textsuperscript{103} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{104} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{105} Caroline Rossiter. 2009. “Early French Caricature (1795-1830) and English Influence.” European Comic Art 2 (1): 41-64.
It is impossible to say the exact degree of influence satire had over the people, but it is certain that journals like *La Caricature* were widely read, and that the reactions of government institutions to silence the voices of satirists were strong enough to affect policy. Moreover, the willingness of Charles Philipon and Honoré Daumier to go to trial time and time again and to also face imprisonment for months at a time says something about how important they considered their work to be. By looking at the satire of the early nineteenth century, we can observe how sensitive politics were during this time, and we can see how public opinion began to be a contributing factor to the contemporary events. Always, “liberty” was the vital issue surrounding conflicts of satire and freedom of the press. The ideals of the Revolution, considered threatening by the government and considered essential by the people, were always propagated in satire. As Philipon and Daumier demonstrated, breaching the limits of taboo and saying the things that no others had the courage to say were in the end just as significant as they had hoped.

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IV. Chapter 3: Twentieth and Twenty-First Century; Satire and Religion

a. Context

Since the latter half of the twentieth centuries, some issues that have been at the forefront of French society are immigration and freedom of religion. These two issues are deeply connected in France, which is today a secular country that many immigrants from all over the world call home. In particular, the issues surround France’s prominent Muslim population and the presence of Islam. Today, France is home to Europe’s largest Muslim population, with 6.5 million Muslims, making up around ten percent of the total population of 66 million. In terms of religious popularity and practice, Islam is second only to Catholicism. France today looks very different than it did during the nineteenth century, or even just a few decades ago. This has changed cultural and political life in the country, and these changes have led to divisiveness concerning identity.

To begin, an understanding of religious matters in France is necessary to assess the ongoing problems surrounding immigration and nationality in the country. The term laïcité, which roughly translates in English to mean “secularism,” is today a notion that is considered to be very French, something that defines the country. The modern French model of society is partly founded on the works of the Enlightenment philosophers Jean-Jacques Rousseau, Voltaire, and Montesquieu. Rousseau’s lasting idea was that France is a society of assimilation, in which

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equality, rather than liberty, is emphasized.\textsuperscript{109} This is very different than the British or American ideas of liberty being placed above other values; based on the teachings of John Locke and Thomas Hobbes, Americans and the British adhere to the idea of "natural" rights endowed by the Creator, protected by the government.\textsuperscript{110} The ideas of the French Enlightenment such as those of Rousseau helped inspire the 1789 Revolution, in which the monarchy was overthrown to declare a republic lead by the people. For France, in other words, the people, and no other higher power, were sovereign. Article X of the Declaration of the Rights of Man and the Citizen declared that each citizen had the right to follow their own religion, apart from government interference.\textsuperscript{111}

Though it was not called \textit{laïcité}, at the time, it would be the precursor to the later official stance on the issue. The strong ties between the monarchy and the Catholic Church, which had always wielded great power in France, were broken in place of a government driven by individual rights instead of divine rights.\textsuperscript{112} Before 1789, the Catholic Church had been a major aspect of the governmental system in France, but this changed after the Revolution.\textsuperscript{113} The place of religion in French life changed with the shifting governments throughout the eighteenth and nineteenth


centuries. For example, in 1801 Napoleon Bonaparte’s Concordat with the Pope in Rome again joined the Catholic Church with the State during his reign as emperor of France. He restored power to the church, and clergy were paid salaries by governmental funds. Therefore, much of the nineteenth century saw the Catholic Church guiding the policies of the state, which was a repression of the republican ideals.

However, the 1905 Law of Separation of Churches and State officially consolidated the “religious neutrality of the state,” and it stipulated, “The Republic guarantees liberty of conscience within the sole limits of public order... it neither recognizes, nor remunerates, nor subsidizes any religion.” The main terms of the law were that: no religion could be politically or financially supported by the state, everyone had the right but not the obligation to follow a religion, therefore religious education at school was strictly forbidden, and religious symbols could not be placed in public spaces. This ensured the principle of equality, allowing a common civic status to all citizens regardless of their beliefs or backgrounds. It also provided the freedom of individuals to practice their own beliefs without oversight.

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117 Ibid.
119 Ibid.
In this way, it was supposed to reconcile two of the main principles of the Revolution, equality and freedom.\textsuperscript{120}

More importantly, secularism was understood by the French to mean “freedom from the moral authority of a single, dominant religion.”\textsuperscript{121} The 1946 post-war Constitution officially included the term \textit{laïcité}, and it declared a reaffirmation of the rights set forth by the 1789 Declaration of Rights. It named France “an indivisible, secular, democratic, and social Republic.”\textsuperscript{122} Another Constitution in 1958 added to this that all citizens were to be considered equal before the law, despite differences of race, origin, or religion, and said that the Republic would be respectful of all beliefs.\textsuperscript{123} From then on, \textit{laïcité}, or constitutional secularism, has been considered foundational to the republic, refiguring the relationship of religion to the public and the state. With the exceptions of the 1941 repeal by the Vichy government and the restoration by Charles de Gaulle after the liberation, the law declaring separation of church and state, and thus secularism remained unchallenged, at least until the 1970s.

The 1970s saw the culmination of the conflict between religion and immigration. It was during this period that the demography of France began to change dramatically, and while the French had consistently been a primarily

\begin{thebibliography}{9}
\bibitem{123} Ibid.
\end{thebibliography}
Catholic population, this was no longer the case. In turn, the 1905 law that had been targeted at the Catholic Church began to face issues in light of the changing national identity of France. The population shifts that became prominent in the 1970s were the result of several decades. It began before this, in the 1950s, at the end of World War II. Muslims from North Africa began to arrive in France in order to fill labor needs in the post-war period. In 1962, Algeria won independence from French colonialism, ending the French Empire and creating another reason for immigration to France. It was at first an ideal situation; the immigrants were able to take advantage of the economic boom that followed the war and to escape the instability that ensued at the end of colonialism in North Africa. France also benefited from the much-needed labor that accompanied the rapidly developing economy.

It was understood in this post-war and post-colonial period that the arrival and the employment of these almost exclusively male North African immigrants would be temporary, and that when the economic needs were met, they would return home to their own countries, families, and cultures. For the most part, they were unnoticed by the rest of the French population; they were simply part of the workforce. However, the immigrants stayed in France, bringing their families with them to seek better lives. From 1962 to 1974, the number of Algerian immigrants in

126 Ibid, p. 10.
France increased from around 350,000 to more than 700,000. The Algerian population in France continued to grow with the decree for *regroupement familial* that was instituted on April 29, 1976 under Prime Minister Jacques Chirac, allowing the families of workers from North Africa to move to France. The policy was implemented in the hopes that families would not want to join such a desolate economic situation. Yet, this had the opposite effect and resulted in thousands of people leaving North Africa for France and completely overwhelming the administrative capabilities of the French state. It was a disaster for both immigrants and the French government, as there were simply not enough resources to accommodate the mass number of people who arrived. The decree has since been amended, both in 1977 and in 2006, to establish certain stipulations that workers must meet in order for their families to relocate to France with them. The immigration would not be reversed, though, as the presence of Algerians and other North Africans only increased.

Throughout the 1970s, France experienced an economic downturn, putting an end to *Les Trentes Glorieuses*, a period of great prosperity that had lasted from 1945 until 1975. It was at this time that the immigrants from North Africa began to be really noticed by French citizens and officials for the first time. As technology decreased the need for the manual labor of the post-war period, many immigrants

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131 Ibid.
were left unemployed as well, creating a new “underclass” of impoverished immigrants in urban areas.\textsuperscript{132} The North African population in France lived in poor housing on the outskirts of large cities such as Paris, reinforcing their isolation from most of France. The conditions were not amenable, yet the families came anyway. This realization of their lasting stay in France also came with the realization of their very different culture; their status as the “other” seemed to become a reason for why they did not belong. Most of the immigrants were Muslim, which was seen by many to be in opposition with the Western French culture. Before the interwar period, France had received immigrants primarily from neighboring, European countries, which were very similar culturally; these Europeans had primarily been Catholic like the majority of France also. Even before 1968, over half of foreigners living in France were from Belgium, Italy, or Spain.\textsuperscript{133} However, the large movement of North Africans, increasing by hundreds of thousands, was a shock to the identity of France. By 1982, Muslim Algerians made up the largest national group in the country.\textsuperscript{134} France was secular, but had been accustomed to Catholicism. The presence of Islam was new and very different from the status quo.

More and more, France experienced identity conflicts, and the precedent established by the 1905 Separation of Church and State law was challenged. Though it had granted the right for French people to practice their own religion without government interference, the situation was seemingly different for the Muslim immigrants. People did not see Islam as an “acceptable” form of religion, despite the

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{133} Ibid, p. 9.
\item \textsuperscript{134} Ibid, p. 50.
\end{itemize}
clear terms of the law. Debate over these issues continued, and by the mid-1980s, it became evident that the immigrants from former French colonies in North Africa were there to stay permanently. This immigrant population in France continued to grow; by the late 1980s, forty percent of foreign habitants in France— one and a half million people— were from Algeria, Tunisia, and Morocco. In addition, there were another one and a half million Franco-Maghrebis, people who were of North African origin but had been born in France. A poll from 1985 showed that over half of all children born in France had immigrant, non-citizen parents. The immigrants who had first gone to France to pursue work had stayed, bringing their families and making new ones. In 1992, a public opinion poll showed that two out of three French people were concerned with the rising influence of Islam in France. Additionally, it was clear that the immigrants did not wish to change their own customs to adapt to French secular culture. Other studies show that, throughout the 1990s, immigrants from North Africa identified strongly with their Muslim faith.

The minority and immigrant communities in the cities began to call for their own rights, to exist apart from the dominant French culture and practice their own cultural, social, and religious ways of life. Clearly, it was to be a permanent move.

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137 Ibid, p. 10.
138 Ibid, p. 119.
139 Ibid, p. 122.
Indeed, the identity of France was changing despite fears that this new aspect of French society was a threat to the national unity, Republican values, and the institutions that had been fought for over two centuries, since the 1789 Revolution. Here, lack of assimilation became the issue, as two very different cultures, the Muslim North African culture and the secular French culture, struggled to coexist alongside one another. Certainly, unfavorable views of Muslims began in France at the economic downturn of the seventies and the end of the post-war boom, but events that occurred throughout the end of the twentieth century only made matters worse. There was even an official ban on immigration in 1974, though this was overturned in 1978 by the Conseil d’État, allowing continued immigration and thus continued population changes.\textsuperscript{141} The conflicts in the Middle East following the period of decolonization in the 1960s, such as the oil crisis in the 1970s, the Iran hostage crisis, the 1989 fatwa condemning Salman Rushdie, the 1991 Algerian conflict, the 1995 terrorist attacks in France by the Algerian Armed Islamic Group, and then finally the 2001 World Trade Center attacks in the United States perpetuated negative and even hostile sentiments towards France’s Muslim population.\textsuperscript{142} This hostility sometimes turned violent; in 1972, a law was passed that made racial and religious hatred crimes illegal, in response to increasing attacks on Algerians.\textsuperscript{143}

\textsuperscript{142} Ibid.
Before the arrival of North African immigrants, conflicts between church and state in France had typically been between citizens and the Catholic Church. Essentially, the French wanted to prevent the Catholic Church from having too much power in the government, as it had had in the days of monarchy.\textsuperscript{144} At the end of the twentieth century, however an entirely new conflict developed, as France struggled to cope with the existence of Islam within its society. It is an issue that continues to the present day, and the ideas that official separation of church and state were originally based on no longer apply here. The refusal of many French people to accept Islamic culture as part of their own, and the desire for French Muslims to be both French and Muslim have made religious laws much more complex.

The tension over these issues came to a head in 1989, when three Muslim girls were expelled from a public school in Creil when they refused to take off their Islamic headscarves after being told to do so by the principal. The headscarves, he claimed, were an assault on the “secular character” that public schools in France adhered to. Though the Conseil d’État ordered the girls to be reinstated at the school, this sparked the greatest controversy over laïcité yet.\textsuperscript{145} Commonly referred to as “l’Affaire du Foulard,” the debate over whether Islamic headscarves and other items of clothing should be allowed in schools ensued across the entire country throughout the next decade and turned into a political crisis.

Then in 2004, a new law declared: “In public [schools], the wearing of signs or clothing by which students ostensibly manifest a religious affirmation is

\textsuperscript{145} Ibid.
prohibited.”146 In 2011, this law was extended to include the burqa, niqab, cagoules, and masques in the ban. Moreover, it was not just in schools that these Islamic clothing articles were prohibited, but in almost all public spaces.147 The situation worsened as the government appointed full time “scarf mediators” in some schools.148 Many French feminists rallied behind the government efforts, seeing the headscarves and other Islamic practices as patriarchal and detrimental to the status of women, which again spoke to the importance of equality within French society, even between men and women.149 The concept of laïcité was being questioned continually, and it was causing a deep tension to exist between Muslims and the rest of France. This tension would only continue to worsen into the twenty-first century, as Islamic terrorism became an issue not only in France, but also across the Western world.

149 Ibid.
b. Satire

As the conflicts over religious identity in France ensued, the satirical industry in France continued to observe and interpret what was happening. The rise of twentieth century satire began around the same time as decolonization, mass immigration to France from North Africa, and the student movements such as in 1968. *Charlie Hebdo* began in the 1960s, and was at first called *Hari-Kiri*. Founded by François Cavanna, the satire publication sought to “build a more open and permissive society by ruthlessly attacking taboos and symbols of authority”. It was in many ways the result of May 1968, representing a new era of a more liberal society established by radical proponents of free speech. At that time, the main targets of ridicule were the Catholic Church, the French military, and, of course, the French leader Charles de Gaulle, though other members of the government were not excluded from the magazine's explicit criticism.

Since its inception, the magazine has been unique in its unabashed perspective on society. Its controversial political cartoons showed the ways that freedom of speech is tied together with emotional power, speaking to sentiments otherwise ignored by most other forms of expression. Certainly, the magazine has run the gamut of provocative and often shocking interpretations of divisive issues: minorities, natural disaster victims, religious symbols, war victims, and political leaders are just some of the topics that the magazine has brazenly derided in its cartoons. These cartoons have simultaneously illustrated, critiqued, and opened

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151 Ibid.
discussion on contentious issues. Though satire was present throughout the decades, it did not have the same political voice that it had enjoyed in the nineteenth century. In the nineteenth century, the turbulent series of governments had given satire a voice to educate the people and to criticize officials and institutions.

In 1970, Hara-Kiri took on its new and current name of Charlie Hebdo after an issue mocking the death of Charles de Gaulle prompted the French interior ministry to enforce a law that prohibited the sales of “indecent material” to minors; this was a way to essentially ban the paper. And so, the staff devised a new alias for the satirical publication. By combining the name of the popular comic strip Charlie Brown with the French word for weekly, hebdomadaire, a new magazine called Charlie Hebdo was born. The scandal and attempted censorship produced a renewed sense of duty to defend and blatantly wield the right to free speech. The writers and cartoonists at Charlie Hebdo did feel, and have always felt, a deep sense of obligation to tackle sensitive subjects that other forms of media avoided. So, each week, sixteen pages of editorial cartoons are produced. Writers, editors, and artists work together to combine political and culture articles with cartoons, and each week, a carefully designed cover is chosen to best represent current events or issues. This collaboration has made Charlie Hebdo consistent in its mission and production, and its staff always remains loyal to the struggle against censorship that gave it life. This commitment is what made the publication successful, yet the controversies it provokes have also been a constant force in shaping it. In modern

\[152\] Ibid.
\[153\] Ibid.
day, however, the French government has stabilized into a lasting Republic, and so the role of satire has changed.

The 1990s were a challenging time for *Charlie Hebdo* in terms of its content and reception. Its freedom of expression again came under fire when the group “Alliance Général Contre le Racisme et pour le Respect de l’Identité Française et Chrétienne” (AGRIF) took legal action against “hate speech” about Catholicism. This was a far-right group, anti-Republican, anti-secular, and anti-multicultural; for them, the 1905 law separating church and state was invalid, and so the criticism of the Catholic church was seen as a direct attack on the religion.\(^\text{154}\) This began the debate about what defined freedom of expression in France, and what differentiated it from actual hate speech. According to the notion of *laïcité*, there is a clear distinction between a religion and its adherents; the argument for hate speech is only valid when public injury is done to an individual or individual group’s race, religion, or ethnicity.\(^\text{155}\) Additionally, the separation of church and state permits gives precedence to individual rights, as opposed to religious institutional rights. Those individual rights include freedom of speech and expression, and thus freedom to “blaspheme” against religious institutions as long as individual considerations were preserved. The courts ruled in favor of *Charlie Hebdo*, stating that the magazine had published legitimate satire and not hate speech with its cartoons.\(^\text{156}\)

The seriousness of the divide in French religious identity culminated in the events of January 7, 2015. That day, two men, Cherif and Said Kouachi, forced their

\(^{154}\) Ibid.  
\(^{155}\) Ibid.  
\(^{156}\) Ibid.
way into the offices of *Charlie Hebdo* and shot and killed the editor, Stephane Charbonnier; cartoonists Georges Wolinski, Jean Cabut, Bernard Verlhac, Philippe Honoré; three members of the editorial staff, and two workers.\(^{157}\) During the attack, the brothers announced themselves as members of the terrorist group al-Qaeda, and declared that they were seeking revenge on the Prophet Muhammad for the “blasphemy” that had been published in the *Charlie Hebdo* magazine.\(^{158}\) It was the worst security crisis in France in many decades, and the difficult issues that had existed in France could no longer be ignored. Satire, something that had been an important aspect of French culture since the Enlightenment, had always pushed the limits of what was acceptable, but now showed itself to be deadly.

The initial reaction to the *Charlie Hebdo* attacks was one of unification and support. As the Eiffel Tower went dark in commemoration and grief for the victims, the entire world lit up in support of the terror-stricken French nation. The viral Twitter hashtag “Je suis Charlie”-“I am Charlie”- became the rallying cry of people all over the world as they expressed support for the victims and for France.\(^{159}\) Four million people all throughout France, especially in Paris, marched in solidarity, along with French officials such as President Francois Hollande and an eclectic mix of international leaders like Russian President Vladimir Putin and Palestinian Authority leader Mahmoud Abbas.\(^{160}\) All throughout the Western World, in Europe and North America, social media was flooded with images of “Je suis Charlie”,


\(^{160}\) Ibid.
demonstrating the extent of support and acknowledgment of the disastrous trials that France had undergone.161

Just overnight, Charlie Hebdo became the most recognizable name in the world. Before the attacks, the satirical publication had sold on average around sixty thousand copies per issue, and had a modest presence on the Internet. However, following the attacks, the magazine began to sell by the millions, accumulating a now global audience.162 For a short time, people of all ethnicities, cultures, languages, and nations were brought together in memory of those who had died, particularly of those Charlie Hebdo journalists. The attacks had been perceived not as an attack against the magazine, but against the values of the French Republic and the character of the West.163 It soon became not a crime, but a “struggle between different ideologies.”164 Only a few years before the attack, the then-editor and main target of the Kouachi brothers, Stéphane Charbonnier, told Der Spiegel magazine that: “We publish caricatures every week, but people only describe them as declarations of war when it’s about the person of the Prophet or radical Islam.”165 This sort of prescience reveals that the issues were present before; the effects of the political art had been felt and only became evident after the devastating events of January 2015.

c. Images

The satirical magazine *Charlie Hebdo* first earned greater notoriety in 2006, receiving international attention for its cartoons featuring the Islamic Prophet Muhammad. The previous year, a Danish satirical newspaper, a similar style to *Charlie Hebdo* called *Jyllands Posten*, produced drawings of Muhammad, sparking outrage throughout the Islamic world. The protests that the edition inspired were severe, and it was at this time that the debate regarding freedom of expression took on a new meaning; the power of these political cartoons became increasingly evident. Riots broke out across the Middle East, resulting in over two hundred deaths and around eight hundred injuries. Across Europe, newspapers made decisions not to reprint the cartoons, choosing to avoid potential conflict rather than showing solidarity with the press. Further, after the firing of an editor who chose to reprint the cartoons at the Egyptian-owned French newspaper *France-Soir*, fear regarding the situation only increased. Only *Charlie Hebdo* proved to be bold enough to again test the limits of freedom of speech, to live up to its legacy of publishing the unpublishable. On February 8, 2006, an edition was released, featuring not only a reprint of the Danish cartoons, but also the magazine’s own, original cartoons to accompany them.

The cover featured a sobbing Muhammad, with the headline, “Muhammad overwhelmed by fundamentalists.” (Figure 11, Appendix A) Muhammad, dressed in black, crouches and covers most of his face with his hands. We can see his teeth and

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166 Ibid.
168 Ibid.
the very red color of his face. It is an image showing great emotion, anger from his complexion and the tension in his bared teeth. His hands look quite small compared to the rest of his body; overall he is not depicted proportionally. The black of his clothing stands in stark contrast to the pinkish red background, which is still lighter than the color of his face. This places emphasis on the figure, rather than any background objects. Muhammad is shown to be distraught, or greatly overwhelmed as said in the title. There is a thought bubble giving further indication to his state, which reads, “It is difficult to be loved by idiots.” This, of course, was aimed at those who had refused to publish cartoons featuring Muhammad in solidarity with the Danish publishers. However, it was also aimed at traditional Muslims.

The title explicitly mentioned fundamentalists, meaning those who adhered to the fundamental Islamic faith. Calling those who loved Muhammad to be “idiots” - which is a light, generous translation of the French term “con” - was a direct hit on Islam in general. This demonstrates the fine line that satirists toe when they address sensitive matters such as this. It was, according to the editors, another attempt to show how critiquing Islam and attacking the Muslim community were not the same. Yet again, Charlie Hebdo became entangled in a legal battle, this time with the Great Mosque of Paris and the Muslim World League.169 It was another victory for the satirical magazine, as the courts ruled that the satire of Islam was defended under French laws. It was then that the conflict between freedom of speech and protection of religion became more complex, and the cartoons of Charlie Hebdo illustrated,

169 Ibid.
quite literally, the ways in which people were divided over how the matters should be handled.

The 2011 firebombing of the Charlie Hebdo offices further revealed the extent of the struggle. The firebombing was in response to a cartoon featuring Muhammad, drawn in phallic symbolism, with the words, “100 lashes if you don’t die from laughter.”\textsuperscript{170} (Figure 12, Appendix A) The title featured the words “Charia Hebdo”, a mockery of the Islamic Sharia law. These words suggested that there was a lack of good humor from the Muslims who had been outraged by the previous images; here, laughing means either being beaten or dying. Like the other image, Muhammad is dressed in white, shown against a plain, green background, placing all the emphasis on the figure. White, typically symbolic of peace, purity, religiosity, and nobility, is used as a form of mockery. Though Muhammad is not typically represented in Islamic art, other traditional representations would portray him as wearing a black outfit.\textsuperscript{171} It contrasts dramatically with the words and the facial features. This time, we see his face fully, and he is drawn in complete exaggeration. The wild eyes, protruding teeth, overlarge nose, and open mouth all convey a sense of vulgarity. Less noticeable is the outline of his head and its garment, which form a phallic symbol, subtly adding another element of crudeness.


Meant to mock, the cartoon was taken as utter blasphemy by the assailants. Though there were no fatalities in this incident, it did increase the stakes for the competition between freedom of speech and religious protection. The cartoonists at Charlie Hebdo started to realize the seriousness, and danger, of their roles; their positions as artists became “evermore of a militant and exposed position than they espoused as individuals in the full complexity of their comic art”. As the national conversations became charged with topics regarding phobia, religious freedom, terrorism, free speech, globalism, and nationalism, the Hebdo satirists used their craft to interpret these difficult ideas, albeit contentiously.

Another image published in 2011 in response to the firebombing took the “blasphemy” further. Shown against a yellow background, Muhammad and a man who bears striking resemblance to the cartoonist, Stéphane Charbonnier, embrace in a bawdy kiss. (Figure 13, Appendix A) Titled “Love stronger than hate”, it clearly is a depiction of Muhammad as a homosexual. It was a play on the idea of acceptance of homosexuality, or the idea of all love being better than any hate; even the word amour is physically larger than the other words. This message is made even more powerful by the fact that Charbonnier was not known to be gay, and representing himself in this way obviously did not bother him. Both figures have their eyes shut, mocking a passionate kiss between lovers. Muhammad is again dressed in white, a contrast of purity and nobility with obvious debauchery for a religious figure. The large nose is also still present, illustrating the prophet in rudely large proportions. Charlie Hebdo is much more nondescript, though the pencil tucked behind his ear

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indicates intentions to continue drawing. Keeping with tradition, it showed that the
magazine would use the conflicts surrounding the satirical images of Muhammad as
material for future work. In the background, we see what appear to be remnants of a
protest; broken signs are distinguishable among the wreckage. This is likely
indicative of the persistence and determination of the art of satire despite the
setbacks from the opposition and the legal battles. After this image was published,
the website for Charlie Hebdo was hacked, a less serious ramification though it still
proved that the images were inciting outrage from certain parts of the public.

The images described above have been credited as the catalyst for the
January 2015 attacks on the offices of Charlie Hebdo and the murder of several of its
most prominent satirists.\textsuperscript{173} They are all characterized by their portrayal of the
Prophet Muhammad in uncouth styles and with absurd features. These elements
have meaning, though. For example, the large, protuberant nose that reoccurs in
almost every Muhammad cartoon shares a symbolism with the traditional portrayal
of Jewish people with large noses.\textsuperscript{174} It is a reference to race, religion, and all of the
issues that are connected to identity. The satirists had meant to evoke the
sentiments surrounding ongoing conflicts about Islam in France, particularly the
veiling issue and continued immigration.\textsuperscript{175} Above all, the target of the cartoons was
violent extremism and religious intolerance. These issues are part of larger forces;
freedom of religion and freedom of speech, rights granted at the time of the

Revolution continue to be questioned. Satire serves as a canvas on which struggle is painted. For now, Charlie Hebdo lives on in the spirit of its predecessors. The attacks did not quell the voice of the satirists, but again served only as a force for more work to be produced.

The resolve of the Charlie Hebdo staff was displayed through the publication of the magazine at its regular time the very next week following the attack. (Figure 14, Appendix A) Drawing on inspiration from the 2011 cartoon that had led to the crisis as well as the popular twitter image “Je suis Charlie”, the cover of the issue was titled “All is pardoned”. It was a message, sent to the whole world behind a mask of reconciliation, that the satirists would not bow down in the face of terrorism, but would continue to articulate the events in the society around them. Here, Muhammad is shown dressed in white as usual, holding the “Je suis Charlie” sign. The phallic shape of his head is more apparent, and his facial features are those of fear and distress. The wild eyes and oversize nose are still present, though now his mouth is set in a deep frown with a tear dripping off of his cheek. The fact that Muhammad, the symbol of Islam, is holding the sign that connoted solidarity with France as a nation all around the world, suggests that the magazine staff acknowledged that it was not Islam as a whole that had committed the violent acts, but rather radical individuals. The trademark Hebdo elements are present, with the exaggerated form of Muhammad, but this cartoon is more solemn, making a statement that things had to continue as usual despite the trauma of the attacks.

For the past two years since the attacks on its Paris headquarters, anniversary issues depicting caricatures of Islam have been released to
commemorate the event and to show that it will not back down from the challenge of satire. The most recent, the 2017 anniversary edition, had a cover that showed a man laughing in the face of an AK-47 rifle, captioned, “2017, at last, the end of the tunnel”.\(^{176}\) (Figure 15, Appendix A) The background of the cover is an eye-catching red; the color is often symbolic of anger and violence, giving the viewer an impression of the emotion that is still felt over the events of January 2015. A common feature of *Charlie Hebdo* covers is a paradox between the words and what is pictured. This applies here as well; at the “end” of the tunnel is Walter Foolz, the cartoonist of this drawing, represented like Charbonnier in the cartoon with Muhammad. This self-defacement is more serious; the end of this tunnel is certain death. The man, with disproportionate features and emphasis on the vulgar open mouth, is illustrated as being rather stupid, ignorant of the obvious danger. The eager face looks with anticipation towards a threat. It is a statement that the cartoonists at *Charlie Hebdo* laugh in the face of danger, even at the end.

This memorial to the 2015 attacks continues the tradition of the satirical journal choosing audacity over timidity. Despite the ongoing threat, the cartoonists persist in their work. The “tunnel” is another assault rifle, like the one used in the attacks on the headquarters, with an Islamic terrorist holding it. Dressed in white, an ironic symbolism of the terrorism masked as religious purity, he is shown without any sort of headwear, which is a sign of disrespect, as Islamic religious figures always wear an article of clothing on their heads. This figure is focused on

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the target, concentrating with a look of anger and determination. Another prominent feature is the long beard. This unkempt beard is in contrast with the white attire, showing juxtaposition between the nobility of the clothing and the unruliness of the facial hair. The figure personifies an Islamic terrorist well, representing the false holiness with his appearance. These elements illustrating the issues surrounding the 2015 attacks remain very relevant in French society today.

The satirists remain aware that they are pushing the limits and risking their safety to continue to criticize. January 2015 was not the end of terror in France, but only the beginning. Later that year in November, France experienced the worst attack to date at the Paris Bataclan venue and at several other locations throughout the eleventh arrondissement. In July 2016, Bastille Day festivities ended in disaster when a truck was driven through crowds of people in Nice. Just a week following that attack, a priest was killed by two terrorists in northern France. While these other terrorist attacks were not aimed at the satirical journal, the staff remains vigilant in their awareness of their vulnerability as they continually seek to get attention and reaction from their audiences through their provocative illustrations. This anniversary edition acknowledged this, and it also served as a warning for people to not be ignorant of the threats around them. This issue sold more than a million copies, demonstrating the ways in which satire uses art to connect with the emotions and the thoughts of the people.

d. Implications

As the chaos quieted and demonstrations ended, there was finally time to reflect and process what had happened and the implications of it. What began to emerge, and what came to the forefront of discussions about the Charlie Hebdo attacks, was the notion of freedom of speech and expression. In France, freedom of speech has always meant the right to “criticize other people’s beliefs or values”. After the attacks, however, this notion came into question. Was the right to criticize more important than upholding respect for all people; how far did the rights of the individual go? What had at first united so many began to divide them. After the initial shock and devastation of the incident subsided, reactions became much different.

More attention focused on why the Kouachi brothers and Coulibaly committed the massacre. The assailants made it very clear when they were killing the employees of Charlie Hebdo that their goal was to avenge Muhammad, because the magazine had published cartoons depicting the Islamic Prophet, in its typical satirical, and thus sacrilegious, manner. Moreover, the fact that the satirists depicted him at all was in itself considered improper and offensive. This mocking of Islamic fundamentalism, while taken as jest in France and Western Europe, was

179 Ibid.
taken quite seriously by those who adhere to the faith.\textsuperscript{181} Indeed, \textit{Charlie Hebdo} has always been known for its defense of the “right to blasphemy”, or as the French say, its \textit{gouaille}.\textsuperscript{182} In past years, the magazine had become infamous throughout the Middle East and North Africa because of its “anti-Islamic rhetoric” and perceived criticism of Muslim in general.\textsuperscript{183}

The backlash against the \textit{Hebdo} attacks had mainly been centered on protecting the freedom of the journalists and cartoonists; it had been very unsettling for many to realize that artists had become targets of radical Islamic terrorism.\textsuperscript{184}

There were, and still are, however, very different sides to this. The controversies the political cartoons aroused were reflective of more deeply seated issues in French society. France, home to the largest population of Muslim citizens in Europe and a historically diverse society, was also starting to see criticism regarding “indifference” to minorities, particularly French Muslims.\textsuperscript{185} A clear divide between French Muslims and non-Muslims became increasingly evident, and in many ways, \textit{Charlie Hebdo} was a symbol for this divisiveness, with its brash representations of the Islamic faith.\textsuperscript{186}

The fact that a political cartoon inspired a terrorist attack, and that it, in turn, opened a broad dialogue on a variety of issues, suggests the influence and power

\textsuperscript{183} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{184} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{186} Ibid.
that art holds in society. Even political cartoons, though they are often temporary and less valued as “real” art, speak to broader themes that are often left untouched. Political cartoons embody the Enlightenment values that uphold freedom of speech and rule by the individual. Moreover, because political cartoons are inspired by recent events, they provide insight into the thoughts and feelings surrounding those events, rather than just an informational account of what happened. The drawings of the eighteenth and nineteenth century reflect this; seeing the caricatures drawn by Daumier and his counterparts help us to understand today the reactions of people on a deeper level. This is a more potent account because it allows us to see not what happened, but what it meant for something to happen. The political cartoons provide social, political, and historical contexts as frames of reference. Moreover, it is not a filtered response; rather, it is seen through the eyes of someone who is trying to present the truth, or at least the truth as they see it.

In this way, “art speaks truth to power”, and satire especially provides a system of checks and balances to institutional forms of power. It serves as an important democratic process, demanding transparency, criticism, and a tool by which to see what changes need to be made. In the words of Bertolt Brecht, the German playwright who wrote against Fascism during the era of Nazi Germany, “Art is not a mirror held up to reality, but a hammer with which to shape it.” Certainly, Charlie Hebdo introduced a new reality for the French and for political artists all

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187 Ibid.
189 Ibid.
190 Ibid.
over the world. The aftershock of the attacks continue, with ongoing debates about the “responsibility” to publish cartoons that have all forms of contentious subject matter versus the need to provide security to all people regardless of their beliefs.\textsuperscript{191} Art in this form is a litmus test for how far freedom of speech should go in society, while at the same time serving a “watchdog” function.\textsuperscript{192} Traditionally, the spirit of \textit{Charlie Hebdo} has been to address people and issues “above” the average citizen, not “below”. In the nineteenth century, the oppressive governmental institutions of the July Monarchy were called out. Today, religious institutions and practices that are seen as oppressive- in many cases Islam but also Catholicism- are frequent subjects of the magazine. The purpose of cartoonists is not to direct blows at the common people, but at the authority figures that rule over them. For those that adhere to a religious faith, however, these attacks on their beliefs easily become personal. So, whether or not the magazine should continue to target specific religious or ethnic groups remains an important part of the discussion.\textsuperscript{193}

For many, the attacks were evidence that had gone too far in its expressions, that the magazine had almost “invited” repercussions for its Islamophobic messages.\textsuperscript{194} The ensuing national debates regarding immigration and the rise of the far-right National Front serve as just a couple of the related effects. For others, the satirical periodical, referred to in France as a \textit{journal irresponsable}, is about

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\item \textsuperscript{193} Ibid.
\end{itemize}
expressing freedom of speech and the right to criticize, no matter the subject matter. In their purest form, the satirical cartoons were not meant to spark outrage, but to encourage reflection, to challenge pillars of society, and to laugh in the face of tragedy and despair. In the tense and complex political environment that now defines France, Charlie Hebdo also faces an uncertain future. Still, it is too early to know what the actual ramifications will be. Little research has yet been done, and both the issues and the satire continue to exist. Despite this, the art that inspired the attacks, as well as the reactionary art, will live on as a very real and tangible memory of it all.
V. Conclusion

This thesis has demonstrated how satire has provided a unique way to describe and criticize people and events, and also how it has served as a catalyst for change in French society. Satire has long served as a testament to the power of the visual, and this is particularly evident in times of great political and social upheaval, such as nineteenth century France, post-Revolutionary France, and today's identity crisis-stricken France. While the idea of satire, criticism, and the pushing of the taboo have been prevalent in French society since the Enlightenment; it remains a force to this day. For a culturally and artistically rich country like France, the art of satire is just another way to continue the tradition of the limits of institutions and authorities. In this way, satire serves as a bridge from one era to the next, as described in this thesis through nineteenth-century, twentieth-century, and twenty-first-century satire.

The ambiguity of satire has allowed it to persist despite many attempts to put an end to it. Its nature has changed dramatically over time, and yet its presence has not wavered. The nineteenth century saw a great deal of political satire, due to the shifting administrations and conflicts over the Republic. Today, government stability in France does not warrant as much attention from satire. However, societal changes such as immigration, extremist violence, and issues over freedom of religion and laïcité attract much more satirical commentary as the French grapple with what it means to be French in an increasingly diverse society. So, the focus of satire has changed from the government to the people, but its commentary on important issues is as poignant as ever.
Through the turbulent political changes of the early nineteenth century, satirists wrestled with the challenge of freedom of expression and speech. The shifts from monarchy to republic and back again prompted constant censorship, and yet, attempts to quiet the voices of the government’s critics only gave satire more prominence among French citizens. The role of satire is especially evident in the reign of King Louis-Philippe, the Duke of Orleans, throughout the 1830s. The gradually increasing authoritarianism of his policies prompted outrage from the citizens who had been promised a constitutional monarchy that would uphold the principles set forth in the 1789 French Revolution.

The corruption of his ministers and the lack of transparency in his administration served as inspiration for the satirical magazine *La Caricature*, which was founded by artist Charles Philipon. His works, along with the work of fellow satirist Honoré Daumier, launched the journal into great success with its cutting-edge cartoons and outspoken criticism of the King. Works such as *Soap Bubbles*, *Gargantua*, and *Passé, Présent, l’Avenir* attracted attention not only from the people, but also from the administration of Louis-Philippe. While the satiric images were meant to inform citizens and provoke critical thought, satire in general touched on larger themes and issues in nineteenth-century society, namely freedom of speech and expression. Reactions from the July Monarchy were extreme; both Philipon and Daumier faced time in prison and were fined for their satirical work. These consequences threatened their careers, but they remained steadfast and continued to produce judgments in *La Caricature*. As a result, censorship laws changed and restricted the liberty of journalism for the rest of the century.
In the latter part of the twentieth century, the national identity of France began to be questioned. As immigration continually increased from North African countries, new cultures began to exist in cities across France. When economic troubles hit in the 1970s, many French people began to look at immigrants as the source of the issue, blaming them for taking jobs and for not assimilating to be “French.” The presence of Islam in France became more noticeable, and the headscarf debacle that ensued reintroduced discussion surrounding the 1905 law declaring the separation of church and state. As a secular society, France has struggled with how to adjust to a different, non-Western religion. Muslims in France have been cast aside as foreigners and the “Other”, and citizens have in turn felt like they have lost what it means to be distinctly French.

The satirical journal that is today called Charlie Hebdo was established around the same time that these issues began to emerge, and it has continually used satire to try to make sense of and pass judgment on continuing conflicts. The satirists at Charlie Hebdo had long targeted the Catholic Church, but started producing images of Muhammad in the early 2000s. The images of the Islamic Prophet, considered “blasphemous” by some, led to the January 2015 terror attacks on the offices of Charlie Hebdo. This attack resulted in the deaths of twelve prominent satirists, including the notorious editor Jean Charbonnier. This incident revealed the extent of the divisiveness within French society, and the power of the visual image in provoking emotional response. Millions of people all over the world stood in solidarity with the phrase “Je suis Charlie” to show support for the journal following the attacks. Certainly, the stakes are higher than ever for those satirists
who choose to continue standing up for the right to say what others consider to be unacceptable, and they risk much to say much.

The significance of satire is that it represents larger themes. For the French, satire is not just satire but it is associated with the freedoms granted at the time of the Revolution. The right to criticize is tied up with freedom of speech and expression, and it is “quintessentially French” in this way. In the nineteenth century, it was seen to be so threatening to the legitimacy of the July Monarchy that it was all but banned, and in the twenty-first century, it has been seen as offensive enough to inspire terror and murder. Through issues surrounding freedom of speech and freedom of religion, satire has remained a way to observe the changing identity of France. It has also influenced the identity of France, by inciting discussion and action towards sensitive subjects. It is this unabashed honesty and search for truth that distinguishes satire from other art and media forms, such as print journalism, literature, and even television. The images produced by satirists are lasting, and as we look back on the satire of the past and reflect on the satire of today, it is clear that there is something in the ribald commentary that speaks to reality. As a journalist put it in the days following the 2015 terrorist attacks, “France is home to the Louvre. But if you’re looking for art that’s closer to capturing the true spirit of the nation, you might be better off buying the latest edition of Charlie Hebdo.”

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196 Ibid.
VI. Bibliography


VII. Appendix A: Images

Figure 1: Guyot Marchant, *La Danse Macabre*, 1485, manuscript, Bibliothèques Municipales de Grenoble

![Figure 1](image1.png)

Figure 2: Jean-Jacques Boissard, *Masquerades*, 1597, Engraving, National Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C.
Figure 3: Jacques Callot, *Gobbi*, 1616, Etching, Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York City

![Figure 3](image)

Figure 4: Charles Philipon, *Soap Bubbles*, 1831, lithograph

![Figure 4](image)
Figure 5: Jean-Baptiste-Siméon Chardin, *Soap Bubbles*, 1733-34, oil on canvas, Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York City

Figure 6: Honoré Daumier, *Gargantua*, 1831, lithograph, Bibliothèque nationale de France (BnF), Paris, France
Figure 7: Charles Philipon, *Les Poires*, 1831, lithograph, Bibliothèque nationale de France (BnF), Paris, France

![Image of Les Poires](image)

Figure 8: Charles Philipon, *Le passé – Le présent – L’Avenir*, 1834, Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York City

![Image of Le passé – Le présent – L’Avenir](image)
Figure 9: Statue representing Roman god Janus, sculpture, Vatican Museum, Rome

Figure 10: Titian, *Allegory of Prudence*, 1565-1570, oil on canvas, National Gallery, London
Figure 11: Jean Cabut, *Charlie Hebdo* issue No. 712, February 2006, print

Figure 12: Rénald Luzier, *Charlie Hebdo* issue No. 1011, November 2011, print
Figure 13: Rénald Luzier, *Charlie Hebdo* issue No. 1012, November 2011, print

Figure 14: Rénald Luzier, *Charlie Hebdo* issue No. 1178, January 2015, print
Figure 15: Walter Foolz, *Charlie Hebdo* issue No. 1276, January 2017, print