

Models of Utopia: Representations of Nineteenth-Century Paris

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ABSTRACT

In the texts analyzed in this thesis, nineteenth-century Paris illustrates the utopian principles formulated by Karl Mannheim whose conceptualizations concern the social and moral order that makes up human existence. His utopia is characterized by human thoughts, behaviors, and actions. In our analysis of the works by Charles Fourier, Victor Hugo, and Emile Zola, common themes emerge as each writer undertakes the task of representing the past, present, and future Paris. They describe ideas of poverty, sickness, and revolution as well as the importance of education, progress, and moral order. The most telling conclusion of utopia unveiled in the thesis is that each writer also depicts his vision of Paris with a specific and unique designation. For Fourier, a utopian Paris is described as Harmony. A harmonious state of being represents a society built on agreement, cooperation, and order. Hugo's representation of Paris comes under the epithet of Humanity and Fraternity. Hugo believes that Paris held the key to unlocking a society built on benevolence, cooperation, and camaraderie. Zola designates Paris as Modernity. For Zola, modernity creates a paradox of utopia/dystopia and order/disorder. However, Paris offers the hope of a *ville beatitude* wherein the well-being of all the families would be of highest priority to create happiness, security, and order. Though each writer had a different idealization of Paris, the analysis of utopian mentalities foregrounds their outlook on not only the city-space but of humanity which held much promise for harmony, happiness, and order in a future – utopian – state.

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Introduction

The historian of urban theory Françoise Choay wrote, “Le XIX siècle fut l’âge d’or des utopies” (16n1). Utopian theories in the nineteenth century became a remarkable phenomenon as writers became fascinated with the conception and characterization of the city. More particularly for nineteenth-century French writers, Paris became the ideal location for utopian thinking. The history of Paris being a site of inspiration and an object of study began in the eighteenth century and flourished in the nineteenth century. Important thinkers such as Voltaire and Jean Jacques Rousseau expose the unsanitary and detrimental living conditions of the French capital city.¹ As I argued elsewhere, one important biographer of Paris was Louis-Sébastien Mercier who wrote many descriptions of Parisian life.² “Mercier spent the years 1781 to 1788 studying Paris so that he could write his *Tableau de Paris* for a description of ‘public and private behavior, dominant ideas, the public mood, and everything that has struck me in this odd assemblage of silly and sensible, but constantly changing’ city” (Stone 38). Mercier poignantly titled his work *Tableau de Paris* for he was interested in painting with the pen, rather than the brush, a dynamic portrait of his beloved city. Importantly, Mercier recognized the fatal flaws of Paris and believed that if his city was to become a world-wide role model a great transformation would be needed. While reading Mercier’s picture of Paris it becomes apparent that he had a great love for his city and his longing for change seemed to be a call to alleviate the burdens of the masses of poor in the city. These early descriptive essays of Paris would spark a revolution in writing the city in the nineteenth century.

The early writing of Paris was not limited to philosophers and literary writers alone. Utopian representations of Paris were formulated by other professions such as doctors, city administrators, and architects. The neo-classical French architect Claude-Nicholas Ledoux was

an important figure in the development of architectural utopian representations of the city.

Ledoux describes the architecture of the city in terms of cultural art and customs and characterizes their role in creating a new city-space:

Avant que la nuit ne couvre de son voile obscur le vaste champ où j'ai placé tous les genres d'édifices que réclame l'ordre social, on verra des usines importantes, filles et mères de l'industrie, donner naissance à des réunions populeuses. Une ville s'élèvera pour les enceindre et les couronner. Le luxe vivifiant, ami nourricier des arts, y montrera tous les monuments que l'opulence aura fait éclore. (1)

His fascinating description of the artistic endeavors of architects to create a city with monuments, edifices, and industrial innovations was an apparent response by him to a social outcry for more beauty, opulence and proportion.

These early writers of Paris listed here – Voltaire, Rousseau, Mercier, and Ledoux – were the torchbearers of representing Paris with her blemishes and odors as well as with a goal to transform her into a habitable, orderly, aesthetic modern city would be carried on well into the nineteenth century. The scope of this thesis is to analyze the utopian representations of nineteenth-century Paris in three selected works: Charles Fourier's *De l'anarchie industrielle et scientifique*, Victor Hugo's *Paris* and Emile Zola's *Le Ventre de Paris*. To accomplish this goal, theories of utopia and the city will be analyzed in chapter one of this work.

In chapter one, Karl Mannheim will be the primary theoretician of utopia and the first two-thirds of the chapter will deal with his concepts of what he terms utopian mentalities. This extensive focus on Mannheim's ideas will lay the ground work for chapters two through four as I will integrate the Mannheimian form of utopia in the works of the aforementioned nineteenth-century writers. Mannheim was chosen because of his focus on the temporal nature of utopia.

His classification of utopia in three dimensions – the past, the present, and the future – created a unique way to analyze the cultural and literary texts that make up this thesis. The theories of city comprise the remaining third of chapter one and will be analyzed through the works of the urbanist Françoise Choay, the geographer Marcel Roncayolo as well as the sociologist Maité Clavel. The city, when described through a utopian perspective, provides the living space for understanding and molding individual and collective thoughts, conducts, and behaviors. It is the thoughts and actions of the social order that allows for utopian thought to originate.

Through the lens of Mannheim, four important nineteenth-century thinkers will be analyzed in the remaining chapters to highlight the models of utopia as it relates to the ever-changing, century-long Parisian transformation. In chapter two, Charles Fourier and his disciple Victor Considerant will be examined to develop a social theorist interpretation of utopia and Paris. The analysis will focus primarily on the inventor of the Fourierist school of thought while Considerant will be used as a secondary source for understanding parts of Fourier's theories. Chapters three and four will analyze two important literary perceptions of nineteenth-century Paris through the eyes of Victor Hugo and Emile Zola, respectively. Hugo wrote *Paris* during the Second Empire while Zola represented Paris in a fictional Second Empire that presents anachronistic characterizations, revealing as much about Second Empire politics as those under the Third Republic. In each work, we will see that utopia, as a construct of the human mind, will effect dynamic transformations for nineteenth-century Paris and the citizens who inhabit the immured French capital city.

In chapter three, we will see that Hugo, in particular, was fascinated by the grandiose qualities affixed to Paris. Paris, as seen through Hugo's eyes, becomes the utopic model to which he believes all other countries will aspire. Hugo is persuaded of the magnificence of Paris

because of the Enlightenment ideals: reason, rationality, humanity, fraternity, equality, etc. Moreover, Paris's grandeur emerged out of a harrowing, painful past that led to the Revolution of 1789. For Hugo, Paris is the envy and example of not only Europe, but the world as a whole. When writing about his beloved city, Hugo exhibits simultaneously a nostalgic reverence for Paris's past with a forward-looking vision of Paris's future, a future that includes a revolutionary model for the world. The simple, yet beautiful metaphors Hugo utilizes point to his nostalgic representation of Paris as he lovingly writes, *Paris est...* "Paris est un flambeau allumé – un flambeau allumé a une volonté" (*Paris* 61); "Paris est la cité prédestinée où le progrès est reconnaissable" (62); and most notably, "Paris est plus près de la civilisation" (36).

Similarly, in chapter four, Zola shows his fascination with Paris through his representations of a city in decay. In his novel *Le Ventre de Paris*, Zola chose *Les Halles* as a microcosm of the larger city wherein he displays simultaneously a fascination with the wonder and grandeur of this massive, modern creation whilst the familiar Parisian concerns – i.e. cleanliness, sickness, sanitation, etc – continue to wreak havoc on the Parisian inhabitants. There is a mysteriousness in the manner in which he portrays a paradoxical city – "une cité tumultueuse" (71) juxtaposed with "une ville de béatitude" (87). The city itself is important only insofar as it provides moral and social order for the people. The city that does not provide order, or more specifically, the city that allows disorder and dystopia to reign, will never accommodate the perfection of humankind, views represented by the character Florent, and perhaps Zola himself. Thus, we will see that *Le Ventre de Paris* presents a utopian vision of Paris based on a humanitarian law whereby all the inhabitants will have sufficient opportunities for moral and social perfection.

The study of these four chapters together will present utopian visions that showcase the importance of moral and social order; such order ameliorates human existence and creates a worldview where harmony, humanity or modernity reign, in actual or fictional societies.

End Notes

¹ In one particular criticism of Paris, Voltaire blasted the insalubrious smells from the 73 cemeteries throughout the city and wrote, “In vain does the example of so many European towns put Paris to blush; and it will never reform” (qtd. in Castelot 8). Jean Jacques Rousseau wrote in *La Nouvelle Héloïse* that Paris was “dominated simultaneously by the most sumptuous opulence and the most deplorable misery” (qtd. in Garrioch 3).

² See my thesis titled “Paris: How the Revolutionary Years Shaped a Modern Day Capital, 1782-1889,” *Amalgam* 6 (2011): 36-57.

Chapter One: Utopia and the City

The word “utopia” traces its roots back to Sir Thomas More who coined the term in 1516 for the title of his book *Utopia*. Etymologically, “utopia” is constructed from the Greek words *eu* meaning “good”, *ou* meaning “not”, and *topos* meaning “place”. With this construction, utopia literally has a double meaning which consists of “a good place” while at the same time suggesting there is “no good place.”¹ Over time, the definition of utopia has evolved to mean “nowhere” and ultimately reflects More’s fictional creation of a perfect society built on absolute tolerance, equality, and order. Soon, intellectual, philosophical and political thinkers began envisioning societies built on the utopian system described by More with an ideal social, political, or legal system. As a result of the expanded use of the term, utopia has developed a seemingly limitless amount of implications, but most notably: a place or city most pleasing and enjoyable which stands in contrast with the fictional imagery that utopia can only exist as an imagined construct of the mind, or more possibly still, there is no place pleasing and enjoyable which exists.

Even though the word utopia represents an unattainable or imaginary place, intellectual thought since the sixteenth century has sought to create utopian principles for the perceived betterment of the social and political order. In his book *Ideology and Utopia*, the twentieth-century sociologist, philosopher and historian, Karl Mannheim (1893-1947), attempts to trace the development of utopian thought that has developed since the sixteenth century and describes how utopian principles have impacted the past, present, and future of any given society. For Mannheim, human existence is constructed according to “a functioning social order” where “people really act” (194). Understanding human existence, or more distinctly the “functioning social order,” plays a key role in understanding Mannheim’s definition of utopia, for the given

social order “embraces also all those forms of human ‘living together’ [...] which the structure makes possible or requires; and also all those modes and forms of experience and thought which are characteristic of this social system and are consequently *congruous* with it” (emphasis added 194). The key word Mannheim uses here to differentiate a regular social order from a utopian society is its congruity. A congruous environment symbolizes there is agreement and harmony among its inhabitants. According to Thomas More’s original usage, “congruity,” “agreement,” and “harmony” are relative terms which define utopia. Differing from Thomas More, however, Mannheim suggests that the congruous or harmonious nature of human existence ultimately prevents utopia from developing because, as he writes, “Every period in history has contained ideas transcending the existing order, but these did not function as utopias [...] as long as they were ‘organically’ and harmoniously integrated into the world-view characteristic of the period” (193).

With this in mind, Mannheim states unequivocally his definition of utopia in this manner, “A state of mind is utopian when it is *incongruous* with the state of reality within which it occurs” (emphasis added 192).² The idea of incongruity implies a state of being incompatible, disagreeing, or inconsistent with the dominant norms of the time. Furthermore, this incongruity with the dominant existing order orients the thoughts and actions of a marginalized group in direct opposition with the existing social structure and lays the foundation for utopia. Mannheim emphasizes this point by suggesting the whole of human nature – thoughts, actions, beliefs, behavior, conduct, etc – must become incongruous with the existing practices of one’s social epoch. In his early developments of a working definition of utopia, Mannheim employs a lexicon that connotes images of destruction. Utopian thought “shatter[s]” (192), “burst[s] the bonds of” (193), “burst[s] the limits of” (199), or “disintegrat[es] the previously existing social order” in

order to effect “the realization of a new social order” (203). His deliberate use of destructive terminology underscores the need for the marginalized or, as Mannheim describes them, “the ascendant group” (203) to revolutionize part of or the whole existing structure as a means of realizing a new order which would transcend every aspect of social life including individual and collective thoughts, conducts, and behaviors.³ For example, Mannheim writes about Old Regime France, “The utopia of the ascendant bourgeoisie was the idea of ‘freedom.’ [...] It contained elements oriented towards the realization of a new social order, which were instrumental in disintegrating the previously existing order and which, after their realization, did in part become translated into reality” (203). Therefore, for freedom to become a new social order, the previous monarchical society underwent a complete transformation through the revolutionary nature of “the living principle which links the development of utopia with the development of an existing order” (Mannheim 199). Thus, one might say, action transforms social reality and brings a new social order and a new set of principles for human conduct.

In the development of his theory on utopia, Mannheim acknowledges the weakness of his “arbitrary construction” of the term which stems from his break with the traditional locution of the word coined by Thomas More (200). However, his concise development of utopia is a preparatory stage, for Mannheim conceptualizes four different kinds of social modalities of utopia which he calls “mentalities”: “The Orgiastic Chiliasm of the Anabaptists”, “The Liberal-Humanitarian Idea”, “The Conservative Idea”, and “The Socialist-Communist Utopia”. Importantly, Mannheim describes the particularities and necessary conditions for the various mentalities to take root:

One may rightly speak of a utopian mentality only when the configuration of the utopia at any one time forms not only a vital part of the ‘content’ of the mentality involved, but

when, at least, in its general tendency, it permeates the whole range of that mentality. Only when the utopian element in this sense tends to be completely infused into every aspect of the dominating mentality of the time [...] are we truthfully and realistically entitled to speak not merely of different forms of utopia but, at the same time, of different configurations and stages of utopian mentality. (209)

The first utopian mentality, according to Mannheim, began “the moment in which ‘Chiliasm’ joined forces with the active demands of the oppressed strata of society” (211). This significant event brought together an intellectual ideology – the Chiliastic belief of an ideal millennial society – with the ascending strata of society – the Anabaptist movement of the sixteenth century and more specifically the oppressed peasants who revolted during the Peasants’ War of 1524-26. Mannheim notes that Chiliasm coupled with the Anabaptist movement under the leadership of Thomas Münzer laid the foundation for the “modern revolutionary movements...because in it Chiliasm and the social revolution were structurally integrated” (211 n9). During the Peasants’ War of 1524-26, the marginalized social group – the peasants – did not secure any relief from the oppressive persecution of the feudal system at that time. However, following Mannheim’s requirement that the marginalized utopian mentality become “infused into every aspect of the dominating mentality,” the Chiliastic utopian mentality penetrated the dominant social existence in two ways. First, the process of a collective conscious took shape as the oppressed peasantry realized the need for a social transformation. Second, the Chiliastic spirit of revolution became enrooted in the mentality of humanity. Of this second point Mannheim writes, “Since the earliest appearance of this form of political change [i.e. revolution], Chiliasm has always accompanied revolutionary outbursts and given them their spirit” (217). Though Mannheim links the development of a collective consciousness and a revolutionary spirit to the

Chiliastic mentality (and hence Chiliasm can be called a utopian mentality), clearly the peasant movement did little to either break apart the oppressive control of the dominant class or to create a new social order. However, Mannheim justifies his point by his notion that only a single “utopian element” needs to transcend “the dominating mentality of the time” to distinguish a “utopian mentality” (209).

Mannheim’s second conceptualization, the liberal-humanitarian mentality, finds its utopian principle in the creation of the “idea.” In its simplest form, the idea represents “a formal goal projected into the infinite future” (219). It is this “idea” which separates the liberal and Chiliastic mentalities. When comparing the liberal idea with the socialist utopia (the fourth mentality), Mannheim explains, “Socialism is at one with the liberal utopia in the sense that both believe that the realm of freedom and equality will come into existence only in the remote future” (240). This important comparison clarifies Mannheim’s representation of the idea as “freedom” and “equality.” Remembering that a utopian mentality is created by an ascending social stratum, the liberal mentality challenged the existing monarchial society by attaching itself to Enlightenment ideals such as reason and progress. Interestingly, Mannheim notes that two competing ascending groups were vying for control in order to shatter the existing feudal structure – “the absolute monarchy and the bourgeoisie” (221). As discussed earlier,⁴ the bourgeoisie originally attached itself to the liberal ideas of freedom and equality and was successful in overthrowing the existing Old Regime. Once firmly established, the liberal mentality became concerned with an “indeterminate progression”, which in Mannheim’s schema means, a progress that was not predetermined and which allows human action and choice to construct the social order (229).

For the utopian principles of freedom and equality to be realized in the distant future, the liberal mentality increasingly focused the idea of social change onto “the concrete ‘here and now’” (224). Mannheim asserts that while individual and collective action begins in the present, the realization of social reform is attainable only in the future. Because of this forward-looking mentality, Mannheim succinctly states that the liberal idea is “increasingly bound up with the process of becoming” (224). In essence, this liberal idea “could be completely realized only in some distant time in the course of the continuous development of the present” which means that it necessarily “effects *gradual* improvement” (emphasis added 224). One crowning achievement of the liberal mentality highlighted by Mannheim was the French Revolution. This Revolution “gave itself over to the reconstruction of the world,” but more importantly, Mannheim claims that from it the “modern humanitarian idea radiated from the political realm into all spheres of cultural life” (220-21). It is in this way that the liberal idea fulfills Mannheim’s requirements of utopia and utopian mentality: the ideas of freedom and equality, as seen through the example of the French Revolution, shattered the existing social structure and ushered in a new mentality which extended to all spheres of human existence, including political and cultural life.

The third mentality, the conservative idea, had no utopian principles to lay claim to in the beginning of its model. After the reconstruction of society under the liberal idea, the former ascending bourgeoisie became heirs to the conservative mentality which “has no predisposition towards theorizing” (229). Accordingly, the new social order provided a sense of comfort and security for the dominant class which, as Mannheim describes, kept them from “theoriz[ing] about the actual situations in which they live” because “they are well adjusted to them” (229). For Mannheim, when human beings become adjusted, as such, they determine that the natural world is in order and harmony; they “regard the environment as part of [the] natural world-order

which [...] presents no problems” (229); and they cling “to the notion of the determinateness of [their] outlook and [their] behaviour” (229). This doctrine of determinism – the belief that all events or social changes are the outcome of preceding events – becomes the guiding principle in the conservative mentality: “But for conservatism everything that exists has a positive and nominal value merely because it has come into existence slowly and gradually” (235). More importantly, it is this doctrine of determinism which distinguishes the conservative idea from the liberal idea.

Conforming to Mannheim’s previous definitions of utopia and utopian mentality, it appears that the conservative idea does not fulfill the requirements to be called “utopia.” The conservatives, happy and “completely congruous with [the] concretely existing reality,” (233) have no need to break or shatter their own dominant social order and hence do not appear to offer utopian thought. However, Mannheim explains that conservatism was challenged by “opposing theories” and “discovers its *idea* only *ex post facto*” (230). Thus, the conservative mentality originates as a counter-utopia to contend with the liberal idea which calls for continued change to and evolution of the social order.⁵ Because of the tension which existed between the differing theories, Mannheim justifies conservatism as a utopian mentality because “the present [existence] continually confronts us with new tasks and problems which have not yet been mastered” (233). In this way, action, behavior, and meaning will continue to face the possibility of change. However conservatives focus the idea of utopia on “the living reality of the here and now” (232) instead of on a future period and, as a result, Mannheim claims, “the utopia in this case is, from the very beginning, embedded in existing reality” (233). Accordingly, the conservative idea becomes utopian in so far as: first, the dominant social class counters opposing ideas by creating its own intellectual view of the world; second, attitudes, behaviors and actions

are grounded in the development of the here and now; and finally, when a recognition that “every event” has “an imminent, intrinsic value” (237) begins to permeate society such that the present finds its meaning and justification in the past.

The fourth and final mentality, the socialist-communist utopia, is created from the “various forms of utopia which have arisen hitherto and which have struggled against one another in society” (240). This statement seems to contain a twofold function in the development of the utopian mentalities. First, Mannheim justifies the preceding mentalities by emphasizing that the socialist utopia has integrated specific ideas and theories belonging to each mentality. Second, it begins a distinctive change in Mannheim’s writing process, for, as he declares, socialism “is best understood in its utopian structure by observing it as it is attacked from three sides” (239). Here, Mannheim must show that despite accepting utopian thought from each preceding mentality, socialism remains incongruous with the existing structure and seeks to shatter the social order. Therefore, Mannheim uses once again a destructive terminology to describe the main goal of the marginalized social stratum who sought “to annihilate the antagonists’ utopia” (241).

As a utopian mentality, socialism is concerned primarily with “the economic and social structure of society” (241). Moreover Mannheim elucidates that, “for the socialists [...] it is the social structure which becomes the most influential force in the historical moment” (242). Like liberal-humanitarianism, the socialist’s orientation is also towards “a goal located in the future” (240). However, socialism, which also integrates the doctrine of determinism from the conservative idea, maintains that the determinate nature of the socio-historical process and the ideas of freedom and equality are established only at a “specifically determined point in time, namely the period of the breakdown of capitalist culture” (240). While the conservative idea

seeks to uphold the status quo, and as such finds its utopia in the present, the socialist utopia is engaged in a continual process of change which Mannheim describes as a “progressive utopia which strives to remake the world” (242). By creating a new, determinable nature of the idea, socialism disconnects from the “process of becoming” which defines liberalism and instead affirms that the present social structure can only be “understood in the light of its concrete fulfillment in the future” (246). Accordingly, the socialist utopia remains in a constant struggle against the existing social world in order to shatter the dominant viewpoints, to reorder the social and economic structure, and to prepare for the assimilation of the utopian ideas of freedom and equality in conjunction with the fall of capitalism.

One essential feature of Mannheim’s utopian mentalities is they are theorized with differing values of temporality. The essence of time plays an important role in determining a utopian mentality because, by the simplicity of its definition, utopia is necessarily forward-looking in nature as intellectual thought permeates first the ascending strata and then prepares the present social existence to transform the future into a new social order. Moreover, the accumulation of past experience creates the conflict necessary to create utopian thought. Mannheim stresses the concept of temporality in his formations in this way, “We see that the manner in which a group conceived of time displays most clearly the type of utopia in consonance with which its consciousness is organized” (244). In light of this important point, a brief explanation of the temporal nature of utopia as it relates to the utopian mentalities will be discussed.

First, Mannheim’s description of temporality for the Chiliastic utopian mentality is suspect since he confines the Chiliast movement to a preoccupation of only present concerns and cares: “The Chiliast expects a union with the immediate present [...] there is no inner articulation

of time for him” (216). Limiting Chiliasm to an “immediate present” takes away from the significant features of the peasant revolt which called, not necessarily for the immediate millennial reign of Christ, but for relief from the oppressive rule of the nobility including ideas to improve the social and political structure of the medieval feudal system. The peasantry longed for mutual and brotherly respect with regards to the physical surroundings, including land and hunting rights, as well as the spiritual life, including the choosing of community pastors and relief from the unfair burden of extra tithes.⁶ Though Mannheim recognizes the social and spiritual ties of Chiliasm, he unfortunately neglects the transcendent and forward-looking nature of their ideas as a means of creating a new social order.⁷

Concerning the liberal and conservative ideas, Mannheim asserts that each are primarily concerned with the concrete here and now. Nevertheless, the two competing mentalities diverge with respect to the importance of the past and the future. The liberal mentality, while embracing an indeterminate idea of the future, experiences time in a “typically linear conception of evolution” by which ideas and goals become assimilated into the “whole structure of consciousness” (226). On the other hand, the determinate idea of the conservatives creates a venerable relationship between the past and the present such that “the past is experienced as virtually present” (236) meaning that every preceding event gives life, value, and meaning to the present and its socio-historical structure. Thus, while the conservatives are content with maintaining the status quo of social order, the liberals on the other hand envision an evolutionary society built on reason and progress.

The most informative portrayal of time relates to Mannheim’s development of the socialist-communist utopia. As has been shown, the socialist mentality incorporated aspects of each preceding mentality. This is true as well with the temporal nature of utopia. From the

liberals, socialism integrates a progressive, forward-looking view of the social structure. From the conservatives, socialism accepts the validity of the past and its significance in understanding the socio-historical structure of existence. With this three dimensional temporality, Mannheim observes, “It is not alone through the virtual presentness of every past event that every present experience embodies a third dimension which points back to the past, but it is also because the future is being prepared in it. It is not only the past but the future as well which has virtual existence in the present” (246). Therefore with this three dimensional view of time, socialism more fully resembles the socio-historical process which helps define and understand the forces involved in social order, existence, and change – in other words, how “a state of mind [becomes] utopian when it is incongruous with the state of reality within which it occurs” (292) .

Mannheim’s development of utopia and the utopian mentalities offers a unique perspective of not only the construction of the social order but also of the thoughts, behaviors, and actions of the human beings who make up those existing structures. Even though Mannheim articulates a theory of utopia that transcends its traditional usage, his representations still show that a veritable transformation must take place in order for utopia, or utopian mentalities, to be realized. One important “existing social order” (to use Mannheim’s terminology) which became a focal point of utopian nineteenth-century ideology is the city of Paris. Generally speaking, the city embodies the whole living experience of human existence. The city, the environment of this human experience, enables human action, interaction, and reaction during the development of human behavior, ideology, and, most importantly for this discussion, utopian mentalities which orient the individual’s conduct within the existing social order. The sociologist Maïté Clavel adds that the city is where “des hommes ont décidé, et décident de fait et de façon continue, de s’associer (pour un certain nombre de tâches), de mettre en commun (des ressources diverses), et

de demeurer côte à côte” (Clavel, 3-4). The city, then, provides one location for utopian ideals and principles to be discussed and practiced.⁸

To write about the city is a difficult undertaking insofar as the term “city” lacks a consensus definition in theoretical terminology. Clavel describes city life as “divers[e] et en constant changement” (1) which creates difficulties in theorizing and defining what the “city” is in that it represents multiple facets that are always evolving. In his poignantly titled introduction “Comprendre la ville aujourd’hui,” the French geographer Marcel Roncayolo writes that “[la ville] organise [...] un système de relations” (19) which includes, in its simplest form, a mutually acceptable social, political, and economic cooperation among its inhabitants. However, drastic growth during the age of industrialization has transformed and redefined the city into large conglomerations in which it becomes difficult to mark where one city ends and another begins. The immense growth of the twentieth century has brought about new ways of understanding the city, such that Maïté Clavel asks whether or not the word “city” is still a suitable appellation.⁹ New terms including metropolitan, municipal, urban, and suburban help to redefine the city. However, it was the creation of a new discipline, urbanism, at the beginning of the twentieth century which has led scholars to theorize about the meaning and function of the city.¹⁰ This new discipline allows an interrogation “sur les modalités, les formes, et les conséquences de l’urbanisation contemporaine” according to Clavel (1). The development of theories and meanings of the figurative city are important precursors for a continued discussion on utopian ideals as they relate to the city.

The nineteenth century marked a turning point as the literal and figurative representations of the city would take on a new life, a new meaning, and a new interpretation as it submitted to the growth and expansion demands of the era, in particular with industrialization. The century

was highlighted by transformations of nations and capitals in such dramatic fashion that political, social, and theoretical ideologies focused on the creation of the perfect city. Because this “perfect city” ideology permeated nineteenth-century thinking, the city became the workspace of the professional urban reformer who was charged with the task of creating and molding a utopian center. The historian Nicholas Papayanis describes the rise of the nineteenth-century urban reformer and the utopian view of the city in this way:

The understanding of the modern city that emerged at this time was that the city must function as an organic unit, a unified whole, and that any planning for such a city had to begin from the comprehensive vision of all its parts. This new vision of the city combined a classic Enlightenment ideal, namely, the belief that human perfection... could be achieved through rational comprehensive planning of city space. (247)

This description by Papayanis specifically refers to the birth of the urban reformer in Paris during the first half of the nineteenth century and, tellingly, this idea of “rational comprehensive planning” of nineteenth-century Paris was a revolutionary idea related to the liberal-humanitarian mentality. However, the dramatically changing notion of city during the nineteenth century, coupled with the birth of the urban reformer, laid the foundation for the urbanism of the twentieth century. Nevertheless, during the nineteenth century the city itself took on a new importance in the lives of its citizens and brought about a new form of examination for the intellectuals who studied it. Françoise Choay describes this new form of examination as “une démarche nouvelle” which is reflected in ideological form as “observation et réflexion” (Choay 12). To understand how the transforming city would unfold, nineteenth-century scholars, historians, philosophers, and even urban planners sought to, as Choay writes, “comprendre le phénomène de l’urbanification” (12), and attempted to address the many problems that plagued

the city. In the twentieth century, trying to understand the phenomena of urbanization has been the role of the urbanist since the creation of urbanism as a discipline. Writing about the creation of urbanism, Choay submits that this “néologisme correspond à l’émergence d’une réalité nouvelle,” which appeared “vers la fin du XIX siècle” and offered a critical, scientific and philosophical approach to the new realities of city life (8).

An important question thus becomes, “How is *city* defined by theoreticians of urbanism?” To be sure, the Industrial Revolution created economic and social problems for the city as both industry and people flocked to the urban city center for work opportunities. Expansion, growth, and development become common words for the urbanist. More importantly, what can be ascertained regarding the concept of the city is that it is in constant flux as economical, physical, and social changes redefine the very characteristics used to describe it. As such, Clavel draws our attention to the etymology of the word, demonstrating that the city became a common term in the eleventh century because, “C’est le début de la période pendant laquelle les ‘villes franches’ obtiennent des ‘libertés’ ou plus exactement des droits, des limites à l’arbitraire féodal, première étape vers des formes d’autonomie économique et politique relatives, caractéristiques des villes d’Europe” (3). This observation points to the establishment of liberty as well as political and economic autonomy in the creation of the physical city boundaries.

However, the term *city* has yet another factor that makes it so unique. Because of dramatic growth and constant change, the physical attributes of the city create a mystery that intellectuals seem almost compelled to try to understand. According to Choay, even though the discipline of urbanism is a recent phenomenon, the idea of the city has preoccupied other thinkers in other ages. The nineteenth century is full of examples of attempts to understand the

mysteriousness of the city. Clavel also writes about the mysteriousness and the trance that the city has over intellectual thinkers by stating:

Des auteurs curieux et fascinés nous font partager leur lecture des richesses et leur interprétation des inconnues que recèlent les villes et ce qu'elles disent de leur époque. [...] D'autres, séduits par la pérennité de la ville dans ses formes mouvantes [...] ajoutent à la connaissance de la ville par la finesse et les ouvertures de leurs analyses et de leurs descriptions. (4-5)

This statement is especially true of Paris. Paris became a city of fascination and mystery. The mysteriousness of Paris is highlighted by Honoré de Balzac in his novel *Père Goriot* when he writes, “Mais Paris est un véritable océan. Jetez-y la sonde, vous n'en connaîtrez jamais la profondeur. [...] Il s'y rencontrera toujours un lieu vierge, un antre inconnu, des fleurs, des perles, des monstres, quelque chose d'inouï, oublié par les plongeurs littéraires ” (15). Balzac, like so many other artists, recognized the grandeur of a city that has become the captivation of countless artistic endeavors, such that the historian Colin Jones asserts that “the history of Parisian nostalgia is as long as the history of Paris itself” (xxi).

Other intellectuals who fantasized, theorized and philosophized about the city before the creation of urbanism are designated by Choay as “des penseurs pré-urbanistes” who created “un nouvel ordre” as a way to characterize, define, and understand the relationship between the city and “la société qui l'habite” (Choay 11). Specifically, these *pré-urbanistes* were nineteenth-century intellectuals who, as Choay describes, “se sont penchés sur le problème de la ville, sans d'ailleurs jamais le dissocier d'une interrogation sur la structure et la signification du rapport social” (9). Here, Choay connects the problems of the city, problems that are usually referred to as “social ills,” with the social structure of the day. More specifically, by connecting the

problems of the city with the existing social structure, Choay links the *pré-urbanistes* with ideas of utopian change which have already been discussed here in Mannheim's developments of the utopian mentalities. In her own work, Choay cites the descriptive terminology of the *pré-urbanistes* who portrayed the social ills of the city with metaphors of human images. For example, the congestion in the streets brought on by tight living quarters was described as congested arteries that needed to be cleared.¹¹ Further tropes relating to Paris's problems that were touched upon by these *pré-urbanistes* and described by Choay include, "les métaphores du cancer et de la verrue" (13), "[son] délabrement physique et moral" (13), "l'hygiène physique déplorable" (13), and "l'hygiène morale" (14). These anthropomorphic metaphors became tools for the *pré-urbanistes* who attempted to, as Choay writes, "résoudre les problèmes posés par la relation des hommes avec le monde et entre eux" (16).

Hence we see that the city was more than a simple living space. The city was life; it was organic; it became a living, breathing entity that required attention much like the sick/diseased human body in order to become healthy, vibrant, and functional. With this in mind, Choay clarifies two forms of study which the *pré-urbanistes* employed in their observations and reflections of the city; these forms are "descriptive" and "polémique" (12). Those from the descriptive school chose to take a detached historical view of the city, focusing on facts and statistics while defining urbanization in terms of cause and effect. The polemic school, subdivided into two groups – les humanitaires et les penseurs politiques – used humanistic metaphors to critique the city according to the social decay which plagued it. This *polémique* view focused more specifically on the social, economic, and political forces which scrutinized the working class and claimed a connection between social decay and the poverty of the working-class regions of the city. Furthermore, the city in its state of social decay was labeled as

disorder while on the other hand the city held a potential to become a new order (“un nouvel ordre” according to Choay 11), a utopia, by creating a city which would fit the society and the social structure which inhabits it.

Drawing from Mannheim’s utopian mentalities, Choay develops a model to categorize the *pré-urbanistes*: *progressiste*, *culturaliste*, *sans modèle* (Marx and Engels), and *anti-urbaniste américain*. Her model is based on a vision of the city in terms of temporality in which the city is torn from its concrete linear timeframe, with a single-minded focus on the present, and encompasses a non-linear temporality with a focus on the past and the future. To be sure, Choay is not the only urban scholar who articulates the city with temporal terminology. Roncayolo writes, “La ville est bien celle de demain” (25) but he also cautions that by neglecting the past, the vision of the city becomes “tout simplement linéaires” (25) and thus loses its utopian dream. For Choay, the backward and forward natures of utopia are respectively defined as “les figures de la nostalgie ou du progressisme” (15). These two figures of time become the basis for two of Choay’s models which need to be discussed further here: the *progressiste* and the *culturaliste*.

First, the *progressiste* model, which Choay admits incorporates Mannheim’s liberal-humanitarian idea and part of the socialist-communist utopia (Choay 15 n3), envisions the city built on ideals of reason and progress. Importantly, the city is built to allow the social existence of the human experience to function and thrive in harmony and order. Choay writes that “l’espace urbain est découpé conformément à une analyse des fonctions humaines” with distinct regions for “l’habitat, le travail, la culture, et les loisirs” (17). Furthermore, Choay details progression as an alleviation of the hygienic problems through providing open space to allow sufficient air, light and water to be distributed to all equally (17). The *pré-urbanistes* of the *progressiste* model use a distinct terminology such as, “rationnelles” (18), “précision de détails”

(18), “rigidité”(18), “austérité”(18), and “même valeur universelle” (19). This terminology, similar to Mannheim’s liberal idea and Enlightenment concepts, focuses on developing a city in which equality is achieved by a rigid geometrical construction which provides a living experience that is similar for all. Finally, and most importantly, the *progressiste* model orients the progress of the city toward the future.

The second model to be discussed here is the *culturaliste*.¹² This model follows Choay’s temporal form of nostalgia and incorporates aspects of Mannheim’s conservative idea.¹³ The nostalgic nature of the *culturaliste* model orients the city toward the past. As the name of the model suggests, the *pré-urbanistes* seek to create a city based on a shared cultural identity. Their terminology, in contrast with the *progressiste*, describes the city with phrases such as “nulle trace de géométrisme” (23), “l’irrégularité et l’asymétrie” (23), and “pas de prototype” (24), all of which are “inspirées des cités médiévales” (23). In essence, this model seeks to integrate the past into the present by creating the future city based on the pre-industrial, medieval one.

Regarding the *pré-urbanistes* model described by Choay, one important phrase from Mannheim will further highlight the work of these theoreticians. Mannheim writes, “All knowledge is oriented toward some object and is influenced in its approach by the nature of the object with which it is preoccupied” (86). In nineteenth-century Paris, competing ideologies added to an already chaotic political and social sphere. Mannheim would describe this as, “Only in a world in upheaval (nineteenth-century Paris was in constant upheaval), in which fundamental new values are being created (equality, democracy, socialism, republicanism, utopianism, etc) and old ones destroyed (monarchical power, nobility, Christianity, etc), can intellectual conflict go so far that antagonists will seek to annihilate (through revolution) not merely the specific beliefs and attitudes of one another, but also the intellectual foundations upon

which these beliefs and attitudes rest” (commentary added 64). Because of this “upheaval” and chaos, knowledge was “oriented toward some object”, namely the city itself. The nature of the city, or more specifically Paris, preoccupied many nineteenth-century Parisian thinkers. Schools of thought soon developed as a means to create a new, utopian Paris which would accommodate the creation of the “fundamental new values” already listed.

In his examination of the pre-Haussmann planning of Paris, Papayanis particularly focuses on the schools of thought that emerged in Paris during the first half of the nineteenth century. Specifically, one of the schools he accentuates was the Fourierists, actualized by Charles Fourier and perpetuated by his two most recognized disciples – Victor Considerant and Perreymond. Regarding the Fourierists, Considerant verifies the formation of a school under Fourier’s leadership. The attachment to a school of thought was an important endeavor for nineteenth-century artists. By creating a new movement in the form of an *école*, the theoreticians affiliated therein were able to define the integral set of values and precepts belonging to their mode of thought as opposed to having their ideology defined by rival savants. Considerant labels the Fourierist school as “l’école sociétaire” and he writes, “Voilà bientôt quinze ans que l’Ecole sociétaire s’est formée; déjà elle étend partout ses ramifications, son influence, ses principes” (59). The *école sociétaire* focused on changing the living conditions of the Parisians who were suffering in poverty and misery intensified by their pitiful city-space. Poverty, specifically, would become an important subject for many nineteenth-century thinkers; including two visionaries discussed in this work – the social theorist Charles Fourier and the writer/politician Victor Hugo.

Further elucidation from Karl Mannheim states, “As long as we see the objects in our experience from a particular standpoint only and as long as our conceptual devices suffice for

dealing with a highly restricted sphere of life, we might never become aware of the need for inquiring into the total interrelationship of phenomena” (100). Nineteenth-century Parisian life is a phenomenon that has fascinated intellectuals and thinkers from that time-period onward. The types of phenomena that existed, and which are interrelated, provide the backdrop to understanding how Paris became an ideal location for an attempted creation of utopia. Regardless of the different modes of thought that erupted during that time period, nineteenth-century Paris is a perfect example of the constant flux relating to utopia that allows for a continuous transformation of meaning. As Mannheim writes, “The problem is to show how [...] certain intellectual standpoints are connected with certain forms of experience, and to trace the intimate interaction between the two in the course of social and intellectual change” (81). One overarching question that explores this theory postulated by Mannheim might ask, “How did nineteenth-century thinkers create social and intellectual change as it relates to Paris?”

Answering the question requires understanding that “every event and every element of meaning in history is bound to a temporal, spatial, and situational position” and “that history is mute and meaningless only to him who expects to learn nothing from it” (Mannheim 93). Thus, Mannheim’s definition of utopia and the search for meaning provides us with hope that, as we recognize the dynamic nature of history and that meaning evolves with temporal, spatial, and situational position, we are more adept in developing meaning and recreating understanding of the mental processes that effectuated social and intellectual change in nineteenth-century Paris.

End Notes

¹ This etymological construction of utopia is my translation from the French found in Françoise Choay, p. 25.

² An important distinction must be made regarding Mannheim’s use of “the state of reality” because, as Mannheim states, “The nature of ‘reality’ or ‘existence as such’ is a problem which belongs to philosophy and is of no concern here” (193). Since Mannheim sees the nature of reality as a philosophical problem, we must clearly understand how

he develops the idea of reality throughout the chapter. Simply put, reality is the dominant social order or the dominant viewpoint which exists at any given moment of history. Thus, Mannheim's definition of utopia could be adjusted to read "A state of mind is utopian when it is incongruous with the dominant or existing social order or the prevailing viewpoint within which it occurs."

³ For Mannheim, utopia and revolution symbolically work together as a means to create social change. The anarchist vision of revolution and utopia are an "extreme" viewpoint according to Mannheim because the anarchist only sees value in the continual destruction of the perceived "authoritarian" state (197). However, aside from brief moments of violent revolution, Mannheim's very definition of utopia reflects the desired need for an ascendant group to revolutionize or fundamentally change the existing social structure in order to realize the utopian elements of intellectual thought valued by the competing social strata. Mannheim notes further that "modern revolution" is defined as "no ordinary uprising against a certain oppressor but a striving for an upheaval against the whole existing social order in a thoroughgoing and systematic way" (217 n20).

⁴ See page 8 of this work.

⁵ For further explanation of the liberal idea and evolution see Mannheim, p. 226.

⁶ These two general ideas come from two online sources: The Encyclopedia Britannica online gives a brief description of the Peasants' War and Marxists.org includes the Peasants' requests in "The Twelve Articles of the Peasants."

⁷ While defining the word "politics," Mannheim interjects an important remark regarding his work when he states, "The definition is always related to its purpose and to the point of view of the observer, [...] and consequently our definition, which selects certain facts, must be related to this formulation of the problem" (212 n11). It becomes apparent that Mannheim chooses certain facts for his specific interpretation of Chiliasm and the Peasants' War as he limits the potentiality of the peasants' demands to a concern with their present and not for a future transformation of society.

⁸ Although the city provides one location for utopian representation, many utopian depictions are set in rural or primitive contexts.

⁹ Maité Clavel describes the twentieth-century transformation of the 100 most populated cities of the world as "grandes agglomérations" and "la mégalopolis" and then asks a pointed question, "Le terme 'ville', en effet, convient-il toujours pour ces immenses rassemblements d'hommes et de femmes vivant rassemblés sur un espace restreint?" (2).

¹⁰ Clavel and Françoise Choay describe the importance of the growth of urbanism as a discipline. Choay, specifically, states that the French usage of "urbanisme" was first used in 1910 by G. Bardet and is defined as "science et théorie de l'établissement humain" (Choay 8).

¹¹ This idea comes from the French description of Choay, "la percée de grandes artères" (11).

¹² An important note for this paper must be made regarding Choay's classifications of the two models: *progressiste* and *culturaliste*. Choay ascribes Victor Hugo to the model *culturaliste* because of his relationship with the *école romantique*. Choay writes, "C'est en grande partie le développement des études historiques et de l'archéologie, née avec le romantisme, qui fournissent l'image nostalgique [...]. En France, on trouve ce type d'évocation dans les œuvres de Victor Hugo et de Michelet" (21). Throughout most of Hugo's long literary career, he treasures medieval Paris through his picturesque descriptions of the city. However, preparing for the *Exposition universelle de 1867*, Hugo produces an atypical work, which is the focus of chapter three of this work, which aggrandizes Paris's revolutionary past and proclaims the cities heraldic future. In this regard, Hugo's outlook is more fittingly described as *progressiste*.

¹³ Choay points out that "notre modèle culturaliste n'est pas entièrement assimilable à 'l'idée conservatrice'" (15 n3).

Chapter Two: Charles Fourier's *Attraction Passionnée* and Utopia

The French Revolution of 1789, as noted by Karl Mannheim, is regarded as the triumph of the liberal–humanitarian utopian mentality. This Revolution promised transformation and progress in order to build society on Enlightenment ideals such as reason, rationality, and humanity. As such, the Revolution took as its motto a tripartite promise of *Liberté, Egalité, Fraternité*. These promises offered hope to a poverty-ridden, autocratic society. The events of 1789 created a new dynamic in which the monarchial and ecclesiastical traditions of the past were replaced by a forward-looking mechanism of progress intent on societal reform and, in particular, allowing individuals to simply provide for the well-being of their families. On a larger scale, the political changes ushered in by the Revolution instigated a century's worth of discord, chaos, and revolution in which France passed through three Republics, two empires, two monarchies, and a brief period of extreme bloodshed known as the Terror. More particularly, this political dissonance prevented the much needed social reform which many newly entitled *citoyens* were anticipating. One historian of the French Revolution, William Doyle, intimates “that the Revolution was a force for progress” and further adds, “[As] the fruit and vindication of the Enlightenment, [the Revolution] set out to emancipate not just the French, but humanity as a whole, from the grip of superstition, prejudice, routine, and unjustifiable social inequities by resolute and democratic political action” (99). It is this needed and anticipatory social reform as it relates to Paris and utopia that will be the focus of this chapter through the lens of the Fourierist school of thought.

The dawning of the nineteenth century could be viewed as an inconsequential event for many Parisians. The arrival of the new century coincided with the coronation of the new emperor – Napoléon Bonaparte (December 2, 1804) – in what could be viewed as a traditional

Romanesque ceremony held at the cathedral of Notre Dame. As it turns out, Napoléon would follow other royal traditions and recognize Paris as his capital city. Importantly, however, Napoléon was not alone in recognizing the distinct importance and value of Paris. Nicholas Papayanis points out that “the idea of comprehensive planning and the perception of Paris as a unified entity was becoming a common element [...] by the end of the eighteenth century” (33). As has already been discussed in chapter one, the nineteenth-century city became a working model, a virtual drawing board, where ideas of progress, perfection, and harmony were encouraged by urban planners and reformers. Conditions in Paris, especially, engendered the need for urban reform. As the French historian Jeanne Gaillard bluntly states, “The Paris of the nineteenth century is still a Medieval Paris,” the root cause of which stems from the concentration of people, work, and all other urban functions in the center of the city and “preventing a harmonious spread throughout Paris” (10).¹ Gaillard’s stringent declaration that nineteenth-century Paris resembled Medieval Paris is notable because Parisian reform became effectively static in the decades preceding and following the Revolution.

By the time of the July Monarchy (1830-48), Paris continued to wallow in the filth and chaos that had plagued it for generations. Parisian planning led to the formation of schools of thought which, in their turn, conceptualized the city as an organic, human-like body capable of being physically organized in a manner to produce a healthy, viable, functioning entity. Papayanis confirms that “these intellectuals had come to regard the ability of people and commerce, as well as of air and sunlight, to circulate easily through cities as a condition of their health” (173). One particular school of thought, the Fourierists, developed under the leadership of Charles Fourier (1772-1837) and subsequently, after his death, under his most loyal disciple Victor Considerant (1808-93). A social theorist and *pré-urbaniste* according to Choay, Fourier

denounced the constant appeals of progress which enlightened so many contemporary intellectuals. In his work *De l'Anarchie industrielle et scientifique* (1829), Fourier upbraids his contemporary *savants* and *belles-esprits* who blindly lead society by their vague promises of progress and prosperity. In his criticism of contemporary thought, Fourier claims that intellectuals “ont flatté l’orgueil en persuadant à l’esprit humain qu’il est arrivé au foyer des lumières” (14). More tellingly still, Fourier contends that by blindly giving over social guidance and destiny to the *sophistes* and *belles-esprits*, the existing social world deprives itself of crucial, needful discoveries and then he adds, “telle est la duperie où tombe notre siècle” (16).² Not only does Fourier criticize the existing social structure, he also intends to propose a new ideology which, if integrated, will shatter the social order and will create a new utopian element according to Mannheim’s definition.

In his discussion on the early nineteenth-century urban reformers, Papayanis gives clarification on Fourier’s work as regards utopia and Paris, or more specifically on Fourier’s “outline of the ideal city” (172). Papayanis notes that Fourier’s work was “unrelated to Paris” but that “[his] model provides an insight into the features and principles that he regarded as central to a rational city” (172). Like many other urban reformers of his time, Fourier still embodied principles of the Enlightenment such as reason and rationality even though he often denounced those intellectuals who propagated the Enlightenment ideal of progress. Finally, Papayanis clarifies that Fourier’s ideology does relate to Paris for “[his expositions] are reflected in the plans of his disciples for a new Paris” (172). To clarify Papayanis’s statement, in *De l'Anarchie industrielle et scientifique*, Fourier specifically addresses two European capitals, London and Paris, both in need of reform to create a healthy city-space which would establish social harmony and order out of the existing disharmony and disorder.

Residing in Paris throughout his life, Fourier had first-hand knowledge of the commonly recognized urban problems which exacerbated the misery of the vast majority of Parisian residents. Fourier attests that he spent thirty years studying, analyzing, and developing theories on social order to find ways to alleviate the miserable conditions of the masses of sick and poor in Paris.³ As with most of his contemporary social and urban thinkers,⁴ Fourier recognized many of the common troubles which beset the city. Some of the most commonly cited menaces that vexed the city are noted as the width and safety of the streets; health, cleanliness, and overall safety of the city; and the extensive crowding of people in the city center. Fourier adds in his exposé three other urgent social needs as being a way to obtain work, to attain sufficient sustenance, and finally to provide resources for women who were so poorly compensated that they could not find enough subsistence except by turning to prostitution.⁵ Recognition of these many social disorders which plagued Paris persisted well into the nineteenth century. The historian David Garrioch sums up the miserable Parisian living conditions in this way:

Paris amplified problems because it concentrated people. A larger population in one place meant more dramatic consequences when an epidemic struck. It meant a greater likelihood of adulterated food [...] and higher levels of water pollution, because the drains discharged into the same water courses that provided drinking waters [...]. The tuberculosis that ravaged the population was directly linked to the poor nutrition and cramped and damp living conditions. (46-47)

As for the schools of thought that developed in the first half of the nineteenth century, each sought to transform Paris into a modern-day capital city that would be the envy of the world and would highlight the Enlightenment ideas of uniformity and rationality as they revolutionized medieval Paris. Fourier notes that his ideas of city-space, if correctly established, would spread

“subitement partout le globe” (7). To analyze Fourier’s ideas of harmonious city-space as utopian, we find useful a question posed by Mannheim, “Under what conditions may we say that the realm of experience of a group has changed so fundamentally that a discrepancy becomes apparent between the traditional mode of thought and the novel objects of experience?” (100-101). This pertinent question relates to the incongruous nature of thought of a thinker or group and the existing social structure. Fourier boldly proclaims his break with traditional intellectual thought on the social order and on city-space: “J’ai analysé double duperie chez les classes naturellement surveillantes du monde savant, ou rivales en doctrines” (7). Then he notes three groups of thinkers – *les gouvernements* (political thinkers), *le sacerdoce* (theological thinkers), and *les philosophes* – each of whom have failed in their respective sphere to conceive of social harmony. Fourier writes, “Si donc les philosophes ont établi l’anarchie scientifique, il faut convenir que leurs adversaires les y ont bien débonnairement aidés” (7). This tripartite failure by the existing intellectual thinkers means that “tout le monde est victime de cet égarement” (Fourier 7).

By announcing his own fundamental discrepancy with the traditional modes of thought, Fourier intends to prove that his ideology is incongruous with the existing social structure. The incongruous nature of his thought provides a necessary opposition to other modes of thought, thus preventing “the existing order from becoming absolute” according to Mannheim (198). In Fourier’s own way of reasoning, he is breaking from thirty centuries of philosophical and intellectual dupery by which the *savants* and *belles-esprits* have guided society into its current state of misery. Fourier creates separation from other modes of thought by stating that the existing society is “un travestissement de la destinée sociale, un *monde à rebours*” (emphasis by Fourier 4). Fourier stresses that society has become a *monde à rebours* to criticize the appeals by

other theorists who claim that, since the era of Enlightenment and the subsequent French Revolution, humanity has entered a new Civilized stage of existence. For Fourier, the calls for civilization and progress continue the downward trend toward persistent poverty and misery of the people. Fourier writes, “Nous n’avons pas encore su faire le premier pas dans les routes du bonheur social. Les peuples civilisés voient leur misère s’accroître en raison du progrès de l’industrie” (4). In essence, Fourier seeks to break from the false promises of hope, civilization, and progress propagated by those who are in a state of *anarchie industrielle et scientifique* – according to Fourier’s terminology.

A central concept of Fourier’s work is his use of the word *anarchie*. *Anarchie* has several meanings and usually indicates a form of total insubordination against laws and governments. The sixth edition of the *Dictionnaire de l’Académie française*, published in 1835 defines *anarchie* in terms of lawlessness due to a lack of leaders and authority. However, one definition in *Le Trésor de la Langue Française* is key for this discussion of Fourier’s concept: “Désordre, confusion due à un défaut d’organisation, à l’absence de lois, de règles, de principes directeurs.”⁶ Throughout his work, Fourier continues a systematic discussion to show the essence of this *anarchie*. He contends that the world is in a fallen state, blinded by the duperies of science, philosophy, and politics. Then he describes the social consequences of this anarchic dupery: “On a vu que les sciences fixes [...] ont fortement contribué à la longue durée de cette anarchie et des ténèbres sociales” (16). This reference to social darkness suggests a world in a state of confusion and emphatically opposes the mental images of enlightenment, knowledge, and progress that were commonly circulated among his peers. However, Fourier’s most compelling criticism of society’s darkness is found in his metaphor of a labyrinth. He writes, “Quand on est dans un labyrinthe, il s’agit d’en sortir et non pas de le perfectionner ni d’en parcourir les détours; il faut

en chercher et trouver l'issue" (22). The twists and turns of this labyrinth confuse society as a whole because, in Fourier's opinion, the sophists don't know how to proceed to find a way out of the darkness. Instead, because these sophists are afraid to admit their folly, Fourier contends that three thousand years have allowed them to ingrain their cunning doctrine by perfecting the endless mazes of the labyrinth so as to perpetuate their own career.⁷ Additionally, Fourier acknowledges that there is a way to escape from the darkness and he insinuates several times that he will take the lead in creating a new mode of thought, a new social theory, to allow society to pass from its Civilized state into a state of Harmony.⁸

Naturally, an analysis of incongruous thought is found through the breakdown of the new ideology that appears in a specific historical time and place. Mannheim writes, "The problem is to show how, in the whole history of thought, certain intellectual standpoints are connected with certain forms of experience, and to trace the intimate interaction between the two in the course of social and intellectual change" (81). Analyzing the Fourierist model of social theory provides insight into Fourier's incongruous mode of thought. In particular, Fourier is commonly known for his development of an ideological communal society known as the Phalange. However, Fourier has deeper political, theological, and philosophical ideas that provide insight into his utopianism. Fourier delineates both *l'anarchie industrielle* and *l'anarchie scientifique* as two separate mechanisms for prolonging confusion in society. Considering both forms of *anarchie* allows us to deduce Fourier's ideology.

Fourier opens the discussion of *l'anarchie scientifique* with evidence of the perfidious conditions of his nineteenth-century society resulting from a spirit of atheism on account of "nos lumières modernes" (5). Fourier gives his definition of the atheism that plagues his society when he writes, "Ils renient Dieu pour excuser leur impéritie à découvrir un plan sur la destinée sociale

qu'on eût déterminé fort aisément, si l'on eût eu la plénitude de foi et d'espérance en l'universalité de la Providence" (5). Fourier believes that philosophers have neglected to seek after God's plan for the social harmony of humankind because they place their own ability to reason above God's omnipotence.⁹ To strengthen his reasoning, he uses a metaphor to describe these men who place their own reason above God's knowledge. The philosopher is compared to a traveler who trusts in his own abilities and is unwilling to listen to his guide. The confident traveler separates himself and subsequently finds himself lost in the thickness of the forest. The lost traveler does not blame himself but accuses the guide for allowing him to become lost.¹⁰ Thus, not only have philosophers instigated a world in which *l'anarchie scientifique* has become widespread, Fourier adds that "la philosophie et la demi-piété" have resulted in "l'anarchie intellectuelle" (6).

This state of anarchy breeds the ongoing mechanism of disorder which, in its turn, does not broach the existing social problems. However, within Fourier's definition of atheism is the indication of God's plan for the social destiny of humanity. According to Fourier, the universe is the mirror of man. Thus, if the universe has natural laws to create and keep order, then man, God's greatest creation, would also be created and guided along natural and social laws which would in turn create a social order built on Harmony. Fourier illustrates this Providential Social Order, including the process he refers to as the *mécanisme sociétaire*, by referring his readers to the law of universal gravitation demonstrated by Isaac Newton. Just as Newton unveiled the physical properties of gravity as a universal law, Fourier intends to unveil God's law of social harmony, aptly entitled *la théorie de l'attraction passionnée*. According to Fourier's theory, just like the properties of the physical gravitational pull, there is a corresponding social gravitational pull which brings together individuals in a functioning, orderly society in which harmony may be

reached. For Fourier, had God not provided a law to govern social order and harmony, he in turn would not be worthy of mankind's adulations. Nevertheless, God desires society to escape "cet abîme de fausseté et de misère", an escape which will only occur after an analysis and synthesis of the *mécanisme sociétaire* ordained by God (36). By turning to atheism and neglecting to understand God's will toward humanity, society has entered a state of scientific confusion or, as Fourier has called it, *l'anarchie scientifique*.

To determine the foundation of this new social order, Fourier uses an image of a *carrière* (quarry), or "la carrière sociale" (3). When erecting a physical structure, the architect must consider a base that will provide structural integrity for the edifice that sits thereon. Fourier and his subsequent disciples Considerant and Perreymond understood the role of architects and engineers in the construction of city space for, as Papayanis writes, "Considerant and Perreymond were engineers [which] undoubtedly goes a long way toward explaining their perspectives and methodologies" (199). As a social theorist, Fourier focused his attention on developing a foundation that would provide a sound integrity for the creation of a new social structure. Fourier believed that mankind would never reach a higher stage of harmony until a "nouvelle création" took shape under the *attraction passionnée* (47). Society will remain in a state of "harmonie divergente et contrariée" so long as the disillusionment of Enlightenment ideals such as Civilization, Progress, and Revolution continue to be the foundation of modern society (47). This weak foundation as described by Fourier means that society will retrograde and he uses a metaphor to show this backward movement: "Telle est l'exacte analyse de notre vol sublime, qui est visiblement le vol de l'écrevisse" (47). This image of the *écrevisse* represents a slow, backward movement that retards the true essence of progress found under the *attraction passionnée*. To carry this image even further, Fourier adds that if progress has been

made, it is more by chance than by enlightenment from the *savants* and that society is only moving forward at “un pas de tortue” (42).

Describing this new theory of an *attraction passionnée*, the theorist explains that there is a corresponding *progrès réel* which opposes the *progrès faux* actuated by his counterparts. By creating incongruous thought from his contemporaries, Fourier fits into Mannheim’s conception of utopia because he developed theories on social progress and its vital relation to city-space that ultimately transcended the existing order. That the Fourierist mentality transformed urban planning and urban thought is noted by Papayanis who writes, “The Fourierists are particularly important in the debate on the modern city, however, in being consistently interested, as a group, in urban problems, and in their insistence [...] that the modern city is a field of communication flows” (199). This Fourierist thought – the communication flows of the city – became an influential aspect of nineteenth-century Parisian planning which endeavored to improve the circulatory system through the development of efficient communication, transportation, city waste expulsion, and commerce activities throughout the constantly growing city. The incorporation of wide, expansive streets and long running thoroughfares would connect the heart of the city with its outlying parts as well as improve many safety and health concerns and, in theory, improve many of the miserable conditions of the destitute. The Fourierist school of thought, designated *pré-urbanistes* in chapter one, laid the foundation for urbanism to become a modern-day discipline.

Before discussing Fourier’s ideas of *progrès réel*, there is a second important break Fourier makes from a contemporary mode of thought that should be addressed. As has already been stated, Fourier is known particularly for his philosophical development of the communal society known as the Phalange. Fourier believed that part of the ideal, divine operation of society

would be found by developing “les réunions sociétaires dites Phalanges d’Harmonie” (29). This harmonious society would consist of between 1600 and 1800 men, women, and children united under a communal order all working to use their respective talents, abilities, and resources for the upkeep and wellbeing of their compatriots. This social order was called *l’Association* by Fourier. However, Fourier was not the only intellectual thinker at the time who endorsed this idea of an Association. One rival, Robert Owen, also preached the creation of the Association. Owen developed communes, particularly in the United States, built under the same auspice as Fourier of providing a new harmonious society. Notwithstanding, Fourier was extremely critical of schools of thought that taught the same principles of the Association as him.¹¹

In his work Fourier refers to Owen’s Association as simply *la secte Owen* and he labels it “[la secte] la plus dangereuse” (38). He is critical of Owen who creates Associations that are too small to survive and on which the goal is simply to exploit the industrious by providing them only “du pain noir et des haillons” and to enrich “quelques chefs” (27). Fourier further adds that one of the challenges of the Association is the “répartition satisfaisante pour les trois facultés, *capital, travail, et talent* de chaque individu” and then adds that this is something that the Owen sect neglects to address in its “monachisme industriel” (emphasis by Fourier 38). Finally, Fourier impugns those who give money, honor, and recognition to groups like *la secte Owen* who boast about the foundation of the Association but have not figured out how to resolve the many problems of the *mécanisme sociétaire*.¹² With this critique, Fourier also laments that on the other hand, little recognition is offered to the one who offers the solution for humanity to escape its moral and philosophical decay through “la découverte du mécanisme sociétaire” (38). These morsels of criticism for the false Associations, sprinkled throughout his work, allude to Fourier’s mindset regarding contemporary thought: Fourier intends to develop a utopian mentality distinct

from other intellectual thinkers which he believes will create a new harmonious society under guidance of God's naturally ordained and divine laws.

Within Fourier's ideology, real progress is found only in understanding and developing the social operations ordained by God. According to Fourier, God created both passion and industry and assigned the necessary codes and mechanisms for analyzing and synthesizing the *attraction passionnée*.¹³ Fourier undauntedly articulated his belief in Divine laws in an era where dechristianization was an ongoing process. Notwithstanding the state of confusion that the world remained in, disorder was a needed component of the social world. Fourier writes, "Ce désordre doit exister sur tous les globes, dans leurs premiers siècles, dans leur âge d'enfance et d'obscurité, où ils ne savent pas encore s'élever au calcul du mécanisme sociétaire" (28). This reference to disorder underscores Fourier's constant entreaty that the world remains in a state of anarchy or confusion. Disorder is an essential part of the process of emerging out of darkness and into a social order built on the theory of the *régime sociétaire*. Fourier thus claims that he alone has elaborated a new social order out of the existing social disorder. His deliberate usage of biblical terminology coupled with his perceived calling as the mouthpiece of God's social attraction suggests Fourier envisions his role as a prophet who will found society according to the plan of "le Mécanicien suprême, l'Econome suprême" (35).¹⁴ In effect, Fourier has formulated a treatise that combines a political, social, and spiritual theory into the development of a harmonious society.

Throughout his work, Fourier appears to fancy himself not just a theoretician but also a mathematician as well by employing a numerical lexicon such as *calcul*, *multiplier*, *doubler*, *quadrupler*, *décupler*, *mathématique*, or *géométrique* to advance his system of reasoning in which the economy will grow exponentially and proportionately by organizing society under the

Phalange. With every proposal, whether mathematical, theological, political or social, Fourier attacks the philosophers who he claims are always unwilling to adhere to his propositions. Pertaining to his mathematical suppositions he writes, “Mais cette idée révolte les philosophes, qui [...] frémissent à l’idée d’une théorie mathématique de l’harmonie des passions” (63). However, in an unusual turn, Fourier does credit certain economists, such as “MM. [Thomas Robert] Malthus et [Jean Charles Léonard de] Sismondi” (54), who were influential in his critiques of “[le] cercle vicieux de l’industrie” (53). Seemingly, it appears that Fourier utilizes numbers as a way to enhance his theories. However, for the most part his numerical suppositions appear more or less randomly chosen and do not necessarily correlate to his philosophical agenda. A common phrase used by Fourier is shown in the example of his critique of the vicious circle of industry when he writes “j’en vais citer *seulement une douzaine, entre cent et plus*” (emphasis added 54). Fourier is prone to embellish his numbers by suggesting that there are a magnitude of ways from which he could choose to critique each aspect of society, but his suggestion is that he is willing to limit himself in his approach.

Once the reader moves past all of Fourier’s numerous enumerations, the most important aspect of Fourier’s work becomes apparent. Much like Mannheim did in the twentieth century, Fourier organized a model of society according to specific periods referred to as *Périodes Sociales du Premier Age du Monde*. This model is also described as the *échelle du mouvement social* (Chapter 4 begins Fourier’s discussion on l’*échelle du mouvement social*, 39). Gleaning from the same rationale Mannheim would use, the construction of specific historical periods reinforces “the comprehension, in all their ‘purity,’ of the structures which are historically unfolding and operating in them” (211). Because an understanding of theories is subjected to the situational time and place, there is a dynamic nature to history. Thus, by providing a model of

society, Fourier magnifies his theories of the social destiny of mankind and his belief on how to alleviate the poverty and misery of the Parisians.

Fourier's model is comprised of nine specific periods: 0. *Bâtarde, sans l'homme*; 1. *Primitive, dite Eden*; 2. *Sauvage ou inerte*; 3. *Patriarchat*; 4. *Barbarie*; 5. *Civilisation*; 6. *Garantisme*; 7. *Sociantisme*; and 8. *Harmonisme* (5). Though he again returns to his propensity for calculations and identifies four subdivisions making a total of thirty-six distinct periods, the most significant computation that expounds on Fourier's doctrine is the tripartite categorization of each period into either *Préludes à l'industrie* (periods 0-2), *Industrie mensongère* (periods 3-5), or *Industrie véridique* (periods 6-8). These last two categories of industry are of specific importance to understanding Fourier's ideology of city-space, for within them Fourier analyzes the immediate past and present of society (periods 3-5) and the potential harmonious future that awaits (periods 6-8) if founded on his model of *la carrière sociale*. The appellation of industry as either *mensongère* or *véridique* inherently suggests his incongruity with the philosophical debate on how to create a better future. For Fourier, the false industry corrupts society and destroys the potential harmonious society that awaits in the authentic industry. Returning to Mannheim's theory of utopia we find: "Here, too, we have the sense of historical time as a meaningful totality which orders events 'prior' to the parts, and through this totality we first truly understand the total course of events and our place in it" (210). By applying Mannheim's theories to understand Fourier's conception of historical time, it becomes evident that Fourier conforms to the temporal nature of the utopian mentalities. It appears that Fourier more closely aligns with the liberal-humanitarian mentality which "holds in contempt as an evil reality everything that has become part of the past or is part of the present" (Mannheim 226).

Tellingly, Fourier himself admits his disenchantment with the past when he quotes “Condillac et Bacon” in his critique of the “honorable philosophers”: “Quand les erreurs se sont ainsi accumulées, il n’y a qu’un moyen de remettre l’ordre dans la faculté de penser, c’est d’oublier tout ce que nous avons appris, de reprendre nos idées à leur origine, et refaire l’entendement humain” (63). By adhering to this doctrine, Fourier believes that the old ways of reasoning must be eradicated from the present way of thinking in order to create social change. Fourier berates the likes of Voltaire, Montesquieu, and Rousseau who have led society into the “mécanisme subversif” (63). His disillusionment with the past and present creates within his doctrine a forward-looking mentality in which society is in a constant process of *devenir* using Fourier’s terminology. With this idea that society is in a constant state of becoming, Fourier is able to outline his model for the *progrès réel* which, in essence, is his utopian identity.

The model of society proposed by Fourier indicates that mankind’s progress has stalled at Period 5, *Civilisation*. Fourier offers his definition of Civilization and its subsequent failures which he elucidates in this manner:

La Civilisation [...] est un mécanisme de licence individuelle, qui ne fournit des garanties ni à la masse contre l’individu, ni à l’individu contre la masse. Fondée sur ces deux caractères antisociaux, la Civilisation n’est pas même un germe de raison sociale, encore moins un perfectionnement de la raison, titre qu’elle s’arroge effrontément. (40)

This stinging rebuke of civilization reveals Fourier’s antagonistic approach to the so-called progress of society. Civilization has created an individualistic mentality that does not draw individuals together into a society under the laws of the *attraction passionnée* but acts instead as a repellent. Furthermore he challenges a Civilization that has wrongly assumed the right to the title of “perfector” because of the prevailing belief that the Enlightenment ideal of reason will

result in the perfection of society. A common satirical phrase pertaining to civilization postulated by Fourier is “les perfectibilités perfectibilisantes” (See for example pages 26 and 42). With this declaration, Fourier has created a new word – the adjective *perfectibilisantes* – to scoff at the philosophers and metaphysicians who believe society and civilization can be perfected whilst they claim that the modern world of progress has already instituted said perfection. In essence, they continue to perfect what they already assert has been perfected.

Even though society remains stagnant in the period of *Civilisation*, there remains a hope for progress because of the inevitable social destiny of mankind. The theorist contends that the goal of mankind is to achieve period thirty-three (stage one of *Harmonisme*) which will be the highest level immediately attainable.¹⁵ To achieve this goal mankind will have to pass through “14 phases ou approximations graduées” before arriving at *Harmonisme*, a process that does allow for direct advancement to this elevated state of existence if guided by the right oracle (47). To aid in the fluidity of the stages, Fourier lays out specific rules that governments can follow to effect change. Some of these rules include: “morigéner le peuple”, “prévenir les famines”, “[prévenir les] menées d’accaparement”, “établir l’assurance universelle”, and “prévenir en grande partie l’indigence” (48). With these guidelines, Fourier also returns to the physical environment by proposing to “effectuer sans décrets, la restauration des forêts, sources, et climatures” (48). By combining rules for societal and environmental change, Fourier anticipates the necessary movement to a more harmonious society.

Returning to the concerns of the city-space, Fourier is particular in pointing out the destruction that the *industrie mensongère* inflicts on the welfare of the people. Poor compensation, long working hours, and too much competition driving down wages all augment the persistent poverty and misery of the people. He highlights the unsanitary living conditions,

including the “constructions insalubres, qui détruisent les enfants ... [et] les contagions, telles que virus psorique, syphilitique et autres” (45). He condemns the congestion of the city which elevates the mortality rate of both children and adults because of the lack of air circulation.¹⁶ He lambastes the pollution with its consequential destruction of forests, waterways, and agriculture. He even vilifies the destructive wastes within Paris with the accompanying pests and vermin that thrive in the filth.¹⁷ Finally, he bemoans the fate of society under the control of the *industrie mensongère* as he writes, “Refuser au peuple le droit au travail et au minimum, c’est l’assassiner, le ravalier au-dessous de l’esclave qu’un maître est obligé de nourrir” (41). It is because of this filth, poverty, and misery that Fourier addresses the city-space and theorizes on how to transform society for the well-being of all.

To broach the importance of a new theory on city-space, Fourier poses a question to his contemporary intellectuals, using repetition to underscore his quandary: “Or, comment l’organiser, quel ressort employer, quel oracle, quelle théorie consulter?” (36). For Fourier the response is simple, “Dieu n’aime pas la petite culture, le petit producteur: il veut les grandes réunions sociétaires amplement pourvues de moyens” (36). The path must start with his theory of the *attraction passionnée*. The development of these large assemblies of people is at its peak efficiency when 300-400 families are united in the Phalange. According to Fourier, men, women, and children would be equally yoked to the success and upkeep of their respective commune. A further distinction that Fourier makes is that the Association will create unity by bringing together the three societal classes: “riche, moyenne et pauvre” (38). In Victor Considerant’s book, *Exposition abrégée du Système Phalanstérien de Fourier*, the disciple expounds on his teacher’s theory of unity within the Association. Considerant considers the two main conditions

needed for unity and survival of the Association (*le bien-être matériel* and *la solidarité des intérêts*) and clarifies:

Aujourd'hui, les intérêts sont divisés, hostiles: nul n'est porté à souhaiter la prospérité de son voisin; on désire plutôt sa ruine, dont on pourra profiter. [...] Dans la phalange, au contraire, tous les individus étant associés, le malheur du voisin vous touche personnellement, et vous profitez de ses succès. On n'augmente son bien-être qu'en augmentant le bien-être général, et l'on ne peut nuire aux autres sans se nuire à soi-même. (28)

Unity is not achieved by dividing society along class lines and only associating with those individuals who are the same. Unity comes by associating with those who are different; by wishing for their success; and by mutual engagement in providing for the well-being of each other.

To pass from the *période Civilisation* to the *période Garantisme*, and eventually to *Harmonisme*, the system of social order must guarantee not only adequate and appropriate city-space, but also must guarantee to the people sufficient work and subsistence. Fourier insists that there must be developed within the guarantee a response to the problem of proportional distribution according to the three main faculties of man – *capital*, *travail*, and *talent*.¹⁸

Considerant furthers Fourier's doctrine by suggesting that the entire maintenance of the Association depends on a genuine solution to the dilemma of proportional distribution. The solution, of course, is supplied by the theoreticians who originally proposed the crisis. Fourier declares that the three faculties are resolved "par la théorie *des séries passionnelles*" (27). Additionally, Considerant expounds on the solutions and gives an explanation of what the theory of the series is.

First, Considerant explains that in regards to *capital*, the Phalange acts as “une caisse d’épargne” where the increases and riches garnered by the individuals will make everyone a capitalist in a short amount of time.¹⁹ The distribution of capital will be accorded to each Phalange according to their social worth and contribution, thus making the value of work more appealing. Next, Considerant addresses *travail*. Work is divided into three categories – *de nécessité, d’utilité, and d’agrément* – with the first two categories receiving the greater compensation (Considerant 45). Of note for Fourier’s ideology, work in each Phalange is divided according to nature and type and then assigned to men, women, or children according to their talents, abilities, and desires. Each type of work is called a series and each series further subdivides into groups. Every individual becomes part of a group and a series which then become their commune.²⁰ Finally, Considerant affirms that each member of the Phalange will be recompensed according to the talent they demonstrate during the variety of work performed. Importantly, Considerant concludes that “les hommes les plus capables s’élevaient infailliblement, par l’élection compétente, au rang qui leur était dû” (46). Interestingly, Considerant uses a past tense, the imperfect, as he is seemingly describing an Association that has been, or is functioning, at the time of his analysis.

As a social theorist interested in the betterment of humanity, Fourier also addressed the morality of the people. Morality, in this sense, represents the attitudes, behavior, and conduct of the inhabitants of society. As discussed in chapter one, the conduct and behavior of individuals create the social existence in which humanity interacts and wherein utopian mentalities are formed. For his part, Fourier was disillusioned by the greed and corruption resulting from the industrial, scientific, and philosophical ideologies of the day. Regarding the failure of “les moralistes” Fourier writes, “[Ils] ont abusé le genre humain en lui persuadant qu’il pouvait

devenir vertueux et heureux en Civilisation” (11). Moreover, social discord in the form of revolution disheartened Fourier who claimed that misery and poverty led men to seek the overthrow of government because of a failure in realizing the promised equality through democratic representation (Fourier 40). The fundamental failure of philosophers, metaphysicians, and moralists resulted in an amoral society in which crime and suffering simultaneously created the confusion and disorder of the world in anarchy.

Considerant describes the Fourierist ideology of morality which he claims is reinforced by the arrangement of the Phalange. Within the Phalange, individual interaction must be amicable to enhance the cooperative relationship that is paramount to the Association’s success. Considerant asserts that crime will be nonexistent since everyone will find happiness through the satisfactory distribution of the faculties of man. Regarding theft, he claims that stealing is impossible because there are too many obstacles preventing it from being profitable (48). He then adds that the morality of mankind will continue to grow because of the influence of work and education (48). Education and work will eliminate laziness from society and consequently will extirpate poverty and begging from the conduct and behavior of mankind.²¹ In essence, the Fourierist school of thought intends to transform every aspect of society which is avowed by Considerant who concludes by writing the goal of his teacher:

En effet, [la théorie de Fourier] a pour but de transformer complètement les relations actuelles des hommes, de substituer la richesse à la misère, la liberté à l’oppression, l’ordre aux révolutions, le bonheur au malheur: en un mot, de constituer la société, pour ainsi dire, au rebours de ce qu’elle est aujourd’hui. (54-55)

Writing and theorizing in early nineteenth-century Paris, Fourier missed the fruition of many aspects of *pré-urbaniste* thought which resulted in the transformation of Paris under

Napoléon III and his Prefect Georges-Eugène Haussmann during the Second French Empire. Fourierist thought touched many aspects of society including: agriculture, industry, commerce, education, science and arts, or, as Considerant writes, “tout ce qui compose la vie réelle, positive et journalière des individus et des peuples” (54). Fourier’s ideology was enthusiastically propagated by his disciples under the designation “Ecole sociétaire” (Considerant 53). Remarkably, Fourier dissociated from early nineteenth-century urban ideology as he outlined principles for the transformation of Paris that would be inherited by future urbanists and city planners. His ideas represent utopia as discussed by Mannheim because of their incongruity with the existing social structure and their subsequent integration in the social existence. More importantly, however, the theories described by Fourier construct a utopian mentality intended to transform a society simultaneously bewildered by poverty and misery on one side and the despicable conditions of Parisian city-space on the other to create a society founded on principles of happiness and equality originally ordained by God. By establishing the divine theory of the *attraction passionnée*, Fourier proposes what he deems to be the social destiny of mankind ending in an eventual harmonious state.

End Notes

¹ Quotations translated from French, “Le Paris du XIXe siècle est encore un Paris médiéval” and “empêche de se répartir harmonieusement sur l’ensemble du territoire parisien.”

² Fourier writes, “En se livrant aveuglément aux sophistes [...] le monde social se prive de toutes les découvertes dont il sent le besoin” (16).

³ According to Fourier, “Aucun d’eux [les philosophes] n’aura voulu hasarder de sacrifier, comme moi, *trente années*, à l’étude de cette Attraction (sa théorie sur la société)” (38).

⁴ Thinkers such as Auguste Comte and the Functionalist theoreticians; Saint-Simon, a rival whose ideas Fourier criticized; and an important Parisian position, Prefect of the Seine, filled by figures such as Comte de Rambuteau (during part of Fourier’s writing career) and eventually by Georges-Eugène Haussmann.

⁵ Fourier contends, “Le moyen de procurer au peuple du travail et du pain [...] et surtout celui des femmes, si mal rétribuées qu’elles n’ont de ressources que dans la prostitution” (8).

⁶ To conceptualize this specific definition, the online dictionary uses Fourier’s use of *anarchie* in this respect to describe confusion and disorder.

⁷ Fourier states, “Trois mille ans ont enraciné ce préjugé [...] parce que les écrivains et spéculateurs en sophisme craignent la chute des 4 sciences fausses, et pensent que ce serait une perte pour eux” (27-28).

⁸ Fourier writes the most pointed declaration of his role as inventor as: “Celui qui ne sait pas expliquer par méthode régulière et géométrique ces analogies, ne connaît rien au système de l’univers matériel [...] sans savoir le prouver par le calcul de l’Analogie dont je suis inventeur” (14).

⁹ Fourier proclaims, “Et quelle est la démente de ces hommes soi disant pieux, qui placent Dieu au second rang et la raison humaine au premier, en consentant qu’elle usurpe sur Dieu la fonction législative ou direction du mouvement social” (6).

¹⁰ Fourier writes, “On peut comparer leur folie d’athéisme à celle d’un voyageur qui ne voulant suivre aucun des avis de son guide et s’isolant de lui, s’égarerait au plus épais des forêts et en accuserait le guide” (6).

¹¹ In 1831, Fourier published his critique of other Associations in his book *Pièges et charlatanisme des deux sectes Saint-Simon et Owen qui promettent l’Association et le progrès*.

¹² Fourier declares, “On accueille des illusions dépourvues de théorie, comme celles de la secte Owen, qui se vante de fonder l’association et qui n’a su résoudre aucun des nombreux problèmes de mécanisme sociétaire” (38).

¹³ Fourier states, “Il résulte que Dieu n’a pas pu créer les passions et l’industrie sans leur assigner un mécanisme digne de sa sagesse, un code sociétaire, dont il fallait faire la recherche par analyse et synthèse de l’Attraction passionnelle” (27).

¹⁴ Indeed, Fourier and his disciples envisioned his role as more than a social thinker. Considerant states, “La réputation d’un homme de grand talent, animé de convictions sincères et habile propagateur du système social dont il est l’apôtre zélé, mais tolérant” (52).

¹⁵ According to Fourier, “Le but du genre humain en carrière sociale, est la phase 33, la plus élevée où l’on puisse parvenir immédiatement” (45).

¹⁶ Fourier comments, “Dans les villes, ils sont tellement assassinés par l’insalubrité, qu’il en meurt sept fois plus que dans les campagnes insalubres. Il est prouvé que, dans les quartiers de Paris où l’air circule peu, la mortalité parmi les enfants jusqu’à l’âge d’un an est de 9 sur 10, tandis qu’elle n’est que de 1 sur 8 dans les campagnes de Normandie” (33).

¹⁷ Fourier avers, “Les immondices dont les créations subversives [...] ont meublé notre globe, les 130 espèces de serpents, les 42 espèces de punaises, et autres ordures qui sont vraiment une œuvre infernale” (43).

¹⁸ Fourier writes, “Outre ce problème primordial, il en est vingt autres, et d’abord celui de répartition satisfaisante pour les trois facultés, *capital, travail, et talent* de chaque individu” (38).

¹⁹ Considerant claims, “Car, grâce à l’accroissement de la richesse sociale et à l’équité de la répartition, tout le monde sera plus ou moins capitaliste en peu de temps. La phalange fera fonction de caisse d’épargne pour les petits capitaux, qui n’y trouveront pas seulement un intérêt, mais en outre un fort dividende” (45).

²⁰ This discussion of the series and groups of the Phalange are found in Considerant pp 33-35.

²¹ Considerant writes, “Il n’y a donc plus de *paresseux* [...]. Ainsi, l’établissement du régime sociétaire extirpera la misère et la mendicité” (49).

Chapter Three: Victor Hugo's Paris, Revolution and Utopia

The first day of June, 1885 saw more than one million mourners gather in Paris to pay their respects to Victor Hugo, who died 22 May, 1885. Known by the time of his death as “Père de la République” (*Hugo Politique* 62), Victor Hugo is one of the most celebrated French figures of the nineteenth century. Primarily recognized for his literary accomplishments, including works such as his poetry, theater, *Notre Dame de Paris* and *Les Misérables*, Hugo possessed a natural skill that emerged as an adolescent when he became preoccupied with “[une] carrière des lettres” (*Hugo Politique* 8). With his fame as a writer spreading, Hugo would soon be acknowledged as “le chef de la nouvelle école [...] ‘romantique’” (*Hugo Politique* 10) because of his literary as well as theatrical works during the 1820s. It is notable that Hugo’s passion in writing is found in describing the misery and poverty that reigned over many of his compatriots he encountered on the streets of Paris. The museum catalog *Hugo Politique*, produced for the 2013 exhibition held at the Victor Hugo Museum in Paris, assembles a rich array of archival documents that chronicle Victor Hugo’s contributions to politics and social reform throughout his life with commentaries written by the museum curators. One commentary describes Hugo’s life-long desires to alleviate poverty and suffering: “Il ne va cesser [...] d’agir et de réclamer pour les plus démunis [...] assistance, éducation et secours. Il ne va cesser également [...] de pratiquer la charité et d’aider matériellement tous ceux qui viennent le solliciter” (21). The theme of poverty would remain a cornerstone of Hugo’s thoughts and accomplishments as an author, a poet, and a politician for, as Hugo declared in an important discourse in 1849, “Je ne suis pas, messieurs, de ceux qui croient qu’on peut supprimer la souffrance en ce monde, la souffrance est une loi divine, mais je suis de ceux qui pensent et qui affirment qu’on peut détruire la misère” (qtd. in *Hugo Politique* 20).

One important feature of Hugo's career that remains less heralded is his role in the political venues of nineteenth-century Paris. With a life spanning more than three-quarters of the century (1802-1885), Hugo experienced the ebb and flow of nineteenth-century political, social, and economic transformations of France, but more particularly of Paris. Notably, Hugo encountered personally the revolutionary spirit that pervaded nineteenth-century Paris. Hugo's father, Léopold Hugo, was a soldier in the French Revolution and later became a general in the Empire under Napoléon Bonaparte. During early childhood visits to his father in places such as Naples or Madrid, Hugo experienced the tragedy of war which left an indelible impression on him of the accompanying misery and pain which follows such violence (*Hugo Politique* 7). He further encountered revolutions in 1830, 1848, and 1871, as insurrections in Paris coincided with social and political discord. Regarding the chaotic events which he experienced firsthand in June 1848, Hugo wrote in a letter to Juliette Drouet, "Jamais je n'oublierai tout ce que j'ai vu de terrible depuis quarante heures" (qtd. in *Hugo Politique* 25). Hugo's disgust of the violence and the senseless deaths, of the suffering and certainly the misery, resulted in his acceptance of the principles of revolution, but, on the other hand, in his disparagement of the acts that followed. Similarly in a letter to the Editor of *L'Indépendance belge* written in 1871, Hugo expressed his feelings of the Commune, "J'accepte le principe de la Commune, je n'accepte pas les hommes. J'ai protesté contre leurs actes" (qtd. in *Hugo Politique* 49). These experiences shaped Hugo's thoughts and ideas of society and were reflected in both his literary and political careers. One further example of this is Hugo's response to the common political debate which questions the rights and liberties of the people versus the laws of the State (le droit contre la loi, *Hugo Politique* 52-53). Hugo believed that it was the responsibility of those who had a platform for sharing ideas to try to resolve the debate. For his part, Hugo believed that the people's claim to

rights and liberties was superior to the law and, in 1875, while recounting his thoughts on the matter, “[il] réaffirme sa fidélité en la révolution, c’est-à-dire sa confiance dans le peuple – et donc sa foi en l’avenir” (52). That Hugo believed in revolution is an important part of his utopian ideas to be discussed in this chapter.

It is important to note that, not only was Hugo’s literature influenced by the world around him, but his ideas of the world inspired an evolution of his political affiliation as he became more and more “un homme politique” as described in *Hugo Politique*: “On a beaucoup raillé son parcours qui mène, pour simplifier, le jeune royaliste ultra de la première Restauration à devenir, après avoir soutenu le régime de Louis-Philippe, républicain conservateur au début de la IIe République, puis républicain démocrate, puis, proscrit, républicain socialiste” (3). Although Hugo’s political affiliations evolved throughout his life, his agenda remained constant, such that he wrote, “Quant à moi, j’ai essayé, selon la mesure de mes forces, d’introduire dans ce qu’on appelle ‘la politique’, la question morale et la question humaine” (*Hugo Politique* 3). Hugo’s transformation from Royalist to Republican followed his desire to use politics as a means of transforming society, resolving social ills, eliminating poverty, and establishing peace.¹ In addition, as described in *Hugo Politique*, Hugo fought to abolish capital punishment (12-13) and even defended the Communards by arguing for their amnesty after committing what he considered terribly horrific acts (48-49). He also defended the rights of women and children (21); argued unceasingly for a secular, state-run school system (54); and finally, throughout his life, he encapsulated a philosophical ability to foresee a future where progress and civilization equated the establishment of liberty, equality, and fraternity (61).

Victor Hugo’s career as both a litterateur and a politician gave him a platform to express his thoughts and ideas which can be labeled utopian, according to Karl Mannheim’s definitions.

However, Mannheim affirms that, “In the sense of our definition, an effective utopia cannot in the long run be the work of an individual, since the individual cannot by himself tear asunder the historical-social situation” (207). Even though Hugo’s voice spoke out of either Paris or exile to loudly proclaim his utopian ideals, it is important to note that he was not alone as an intellectual thinker in the political arena. In 1848, the *Associations des belles lettres, du théâtre et des arts libéraux* announced the candidature of five of its members for the National Assembly. This association merged together “[des] hommes qui se sont voués à la culture des lettres et des arts” and “[qui] se confondent dans un sentiment de fraternité” (*Hugo Politique* 25). Moreover, this association believed that a united political agenda supported by men of intellect would create social change. In the letter announcing its candidates, the association wrote:

Nous avons réuni nos votes sur ces candidats. Isolés, ces votes seraient impuissants. Citoyens, nous vous demandons de les rendre forts par votre sympathie. Ouvriers, nos frères, quand il s’agit d’accomplir l’œuvre sociale, faites une place aux ouvriers de l’intelligence. (*Hugo Politique* 25)

Even though the sociologist Priscilla Ferguson notes that “Hugo’s political career [...] could not be called a success” (160), he clearly played a leading role in nineteenth-century Parisian politics. Hugo’s association with like-minded individuals implies recognition of unity for lasting change. Like Mannheim, Hugo asserts that utopia will establish a lasting hold in society only when the nation works for it instead of an individual. He writes, “Quand c’est une nation, le travail, au lieu de durer des heures, dure des siècles” (*Paris* 45). Thus, there was a constant call for strength through unified action and the call, for Hugo, meant political action.

As has been shown, Victor Hugo had many passions which emerged in his literary life as well as his political ambitions. His vision was always to the future, to progress, and to the development of civilization. Intent on creating a social existence built on his utopian principles, Hugo lauded Paris as the city of progress. Hugo adored, contemplated, and postulated many luminous accomplishments of Paris, his beloved city of revolution, which led to his being described as “curieux de tout, observateur, et infatigable arpenteur de Paris” (*Hugo Politique* 14). His passion for the city was noted by Ferguson who wrote, “No writer, before or after 1871, was more forcefully identified with Paris than Victor Hugo, and few celebrated the city as passionately or as constantly as he” (154-55). In a fascinating, yet highly understudied text, *Paris* (1867), Hugo depicts the city of Paris as the envy and example of not only Europe, but of the world as a whole. Hugo is persuaded of the grandeur of Paris because of Enlightenment ideals: reason, rationality, humanity, fraternity, equality, etc. *Paris* is divided into five chapters: “L’Avenir”, “Le Passé”, “Suprématie de Paris”, “Fonction de Paris”, and “Déclaration de paix”. Significantly, in part two of *Paris*, “Le Passé”, Hugo spends 17 pages depicting what for him was Paris’s harrowing, painful past to then herald Paris’s highest achievement and grandeur: out of centuries of injustice, corruption, and abuse from monarchical control emerged a people prepared to fight for freedom. Paris’s ignoble past led to the noblest of political actions, the Revolution of 1789. In *Paris*, the forward-looking Hugo claims that Paris will become the utopian model to which all other countries will aspire. When reading *Paris*, it is refreshing to note that Hugo enthusiastically writes drawing simultaneously on his passion for progress and his utopian vision for humanity.

Intended to be used as the Introduction for the guidebook *Paris-Guide*, Hugo wrote *Paris* for the impending Universal Exposition of 1867. Curiously, Hugo’s Introduction appears to have

been met with a strong antipathy; his work, though published in some editions of the *Paris-Guide*, was also published separately.² Nevertheless, Hugo expresses his delight that the rest of the world will come to Paris to be enlightened by the city where “toutes les hautes impulsions de l’esprit du dix-neuvième siècle” originated (60). Hugo leaves little doubt of his opinion of Parisian politics as he adds that Paris is the place where the important questions of the century were formulated, debated and resolved, such questions as: “droit de l’individu, base et point de départ du droit social, droit du travail, droit de la femme, droit de l’enfant, abolition de l’ignorance, abolition de la misère, abolition du glaive sous toutes ses formes, inviolabilité de la vie humaine” (60). Then, as he is wont to do, Hugo metaphorically calls out to the world, “Une exposition universelle, à Paris [...]. Allons, allons, incendiez-vous dans le progrès” (65). Indeed, Hugo associates Paris with the highest of all utopian qualities including progress, civilization, revolution, and, humanity, all of which Hugo painstakingly weaves into his poetic book, *Paris*. Following the definitions of the liberal-humanitarian and the socialist mentalities of utopia by Karl Mannheim discussed in chapter one, *Paris* will be analyzed through these lenses as they relate to revolution and Hugo’s futuristic, twentieth-century vision of France’s capital city.

As mentioned earlier, *Paris* is comprised of five chapters which expand on Hugo’s passion and admiration for the French capital city. Chapters two through five focus directly on Paris as a city of wonder, of progress, and of admiration. Contrasting these four chapters, Hugo opens *Paris* with a vision of the future and ostensibly he designates this chapter “L’Avenir”. The setting of this future time period is twentieth-century Europe. With clarity Hugo describes the qualities that are befitting of this utopian vision: “Au vingtième siècle, il y aura une nation extraordinaire. Cette nation sera grande, ce qui ne l’empêchera pas d’être libre. Elle sera lustre, riche, pensante, pacifique, cordiale au reste de l’humanité” (13). One important quality that Hugo

highlights intensively throughout his vision of the future is that this nation “considérera le gaspillage du sang humain comme inutile” (13). To reinforce his disparagement of bloodshed, he adds that this future nation will see the ignorance of a past that applauded the fabrication of a cannon named *Bigwill* which weighed twenty-three tons (15). Emphatically, with regards to the ignorance of the past, Hugo definitively sees its end, “l’ignorance, qui est la suprême indigence, abolie” (17). In light of these admirable, enviable qualities of the future nation, Hugo depicts a vision of a human existence which values justice, equality, and the protection of natural rights. Then Hugo writes, “[cette nation] sera plus que nation, elle sera civilisation; elle sera mieux que civilisation, elle sera famille” (16). Clearly, Hugo has a grand idea that surpasses nineteenth-century thinking. He has a far-reaching vision of the future which, if established, would shatter the existing social structure by creating a new world-order that, in his words, includes “la paix”, “aucune exploitation” and finally, “la dignité de l’utilité de chacun senti par tous” (16).

An early remark must be made here concerning Hugo’s verb tenses in “L’Avenir”. First, this opening chapter, comprising pages 13-18, is primarily composed as one would expect with future verb tenses. In the opening three pages (13-15), Hugo compares and contrasts the future mindset with the mindset of his contemporary society. By employing the future verb tense, Hugo shows that the future state of mind is far more elevated, advanced, and dignified because one will be living in a state of fraternity and equality. His examples largely show that Hugo’s contemporaries value the tools of war and death, whereas he predicts the future nation will no longer praise such accomplishments. Three examples, one from each page, will be used to justify this statement: first, “Le haussement d’épaules que nous avons devant l’inquisition, elle l’aura devant la guerre” (13); second, “cette nation estimera un tunnel sous les Alpes plus que la gargousse Armstrong” (14); and finally, “on ne verra plus de ces budgets, tels que celui de la

France actuelle” which created a budget for “la fantaisie d’un pendu dont le gibet coute deux mille huit cents francs” (15). The manner in which Hugo juxtaposes the future tenses with the present-day mindset shows that his society is still in a process of becoming. This process of becoming, which characterizes the liberal-humanitarian idea according to Mannheim, signifies that the utopian ideals in which society is constructed as a civilization, a family, will be attained only in some distant future as the existing nineteenth-century social mindset is shattered and replaced by a higher law of equality and civility. Thus, by using the future tense, Hugo continues to build his forward-looking vision of society.

However, a second significant verb construction appears in chapter one that is equally as informative as the future tenses. For one brief page, Hugo constructs a series of short, declarative statements characterized by the usage of the past participle as an adjective. These short statements seem to represent for Hugo an unmistakable change from the tragic, miserable aspects of society which he clearly recognizes must end for utopia to be established. Again, the use of several examples will be accumulated to quantify Hugo’s structural change: first, “l’idée de domesticité purgée de l’idée de servitude” (16); “le châtement remplacé par l’enseignement” (17); “la liberté du cœur humain respectée au même titre que la liberté de l’esprit humain, aimer étant aussi sacré que penser” (17); and finally, “toute autre colère disparue” (17). Differing from the future tenses which signify the process of becoming, these definitive statements signify an abrupt end to the repugnant qualities that Hugo detests. These negative qualities of human conduct – hatred, misery, and anger – must be rooted out of society for, as Mannheim contends, “Utopias [...] transcend the social situation, for they too orient conduct towards elements which the situation, in so far as it is realized at the time, does not contain” (195). The usage of the past

participle in this case signals that at some point during the creation of this new twentieth-century social order, Hugo has already foreseen a change in human conduct.

Examining Victor Hugo's *Paris* through Mannheim's utopian mentalities heightens our understanding of merely one political and literary intellectual of nineteenth-century Paris. However, an understanding of the socio-historical structure of Hugo's contemporary city (an analysis of nineteenth-century Paris was discussed more so in chapter two) allows us to orient his ideology into clearly defined utopian mentalities which is an integral factor in determining utopia: "In other words, the key to the intelligibility of utopias is the structural situation of that social stratum which at any given time espouses them" (Mannheim 208). By 1867, undoubtedly Hugo still sorrows because of the poverty and misery of his compatriots. His first mention of *misère* in *Paris* comes three pages in when he states that within this new nation "la longue traînée des misérables envahira magnifiquement les grasses et riches solitudes inconnues" (15). As has already been discussed, Hugo had a vision of progress that manifested itself in an idea of a continual evolution of humanity. To what is humanity evolving? Hugo answers, "Attester Paris, c'est affirmer, en dépit de toutes les apparences évidentes acceptées du vulgaire, la continuation de la vaste évolution humaine vers la libération universelle" (58). This idea of universal freedom and of evolution is a utopian principle found in the liberal-humanitarian idea of Mannheim's utopian mentalities. As will be seen in our further discussions of *Paris*, Hugo habitually articulates utopia under the umbrella of the liberal-humanitarians.

Conversely, Hugo also has a propensity to develop utopian ideals that relate to Mannheim's socialist mentality. Specifically, Mannheim makes a distinction between the forward-looking liberal and socialist mentalities by stating, "But socialism characteristically places this future at a much more specifically determined point in time, namely the period of the

breakdown of capitalist culture” (240). Though Mannheim attributes a “determined point in time” as being the fall of capitalism, in reality this is an unknown and vague temporality, especially considering capitalism has persisted into the twenty-first century while at least one socialist country failed by the end of the twentieth century. Consequently, this determined outlook of the socialist idea is not a definitive point in time but a broad supposition. Similarly, Hugo follows the socialist mentality by depicting his vision of twentieth-century Europe. Hugo astonishingly anticipates a United Europe over a century before the European Union would become reality. His ideas are utopian in principle, because when established they will follow Mannheim’s definition and shatter the existing social structure of not only a single country or people, but the entirety of a continent. Hugo predicts that the twentieth century will assimilate:

Unité de langue, unité de monnaie, unité de mètre, unité de méridien, unité de code ; la circulation fiduciaire à son haut degré ; le papier-monnaie à coupon faisant un rentier de quiconque a vingt francs dans son gousset ; une incalculable plus-value résultant de l’abolition des parasitismes ; plus d’oisiveté l’arme au bras [...]. (16)

With the creation and expansion of the European Union in the 1990s, Europe began to resemble Hugo’s anticipatory foresight. In the history book, *Europe Reborn*, the historian Harold James describes the political, social, and economic impact of the European Union, some of which was already envisioned by Hugo. James explains that the Treaty of Maastricht “severely limited national monetary and fiscal policies”, created “a common European citizenship, so that EU citizens could vote in local and EU elections in other member countries”, elaborated “a common foreign and security policy”, and finally, ordered the creation of a “new currency (which was eventually named the ‘euro’)” (398). Hence, Hugo ornately frames his determinist outlook of a

united Europe according to a socialist, “progressive utopia which strives to remake the world” (Mannheim 242).

Focusing primarily on the creation of a new nation, Hugo’s opening chapter is a “vision majestueuse” (18) of a utopian society which values, among other things, equality, fraternity, and humanity as the code of conduct for its citizens. This new nation and new society will neither cease its evolution nor its process of becoming because, as Hugo adds at the end of the chapter, “Elle s’appellera l’Europe au vingtième siècle, et, aux siècles suivants, plus transfigurée encore, elle s’appellera l’Humanité” (18). This conclusion to the chapter, with a significant emphasis on the liberal idea of continual progression, shows only what society could become with guidance from an enlightened, forward-looking idea. It is here at the end of the chapter where Hugo finally introduces his foresight as to the source of the enlightened ideals: “Cette nation aura pour capital Paris” (18). This is the introduction to Hugo’s conviction of Paris’s majesty and includes another important verb structure which relates to Mannheim’s utopian mentalities. Hugo unequivocally affirms in the present tense, “Avant d’avoir son peuple, l’Europe a sa ville”, and then he continues showing that Paris has already reached this higher plane of humanity by stating, “De ce peuple qui n’existe pas encore, la capitale existe déjà. Cela semble un prodige, c’est une loi” (18). This brief introduction to nineteenth-century Paris highlights Hugo’s belief that by 1867, the city had advanced far beyond its inhabitants in terms of utopian ideals.³ This new usage of the present tense does not take away from the liberal-humanitarian idea espoused by Hugo. On the contrary, Hugo conforms to the anticipatory liberal outlook described by Mannheim in which utopia will ultimately be realized in “the remote future” because it is “arising out of the process of becoming in the here and now, out of the events of our everyday life” (226). For Hugo, the future will blossom into Humanity because of the everyday events within his cherished city.

Chapter two, “Le Passé”, begins with a tedious revision of Paris’s long and storied history. Hugo appears to be interested in the creation of a city and captures the essence of this growth through vivid imagery; for example, “La chrysalide d’une ville est dans ces broussailles. Cette cité en germe, le climat la couve. La plaine est viable, cela pousse, cela grandit. A une certaine heure, c’est Paris” (19). This praiseworthy introduction of the germination of a city leads Hugo to reflect on the foundational question for this chapter “Comment s’est formé ce chef-lieu suprême?” (19). Clearly this city fills Hugo with a sense of pride and wonder. Nevertheless, however grand Paris’s accomplishments and beauty, its history contains what Hugo describes in this chapter as “un inconvénient” (20) which hangs over the city as a heavy, dark cloud. One entry in *Le Petit Larousse Illustré 2011* defines “inconvénient” as, “Côté désavantageux, aspect négatif de quelque chose; défaut.” Paris’s unfavorable side is found in a history full of corruption, destruction, privation, and death attributed by Hugo primarily to the centuries of despotic monarchies ruling the capital city with a tight grip. These centuries of monarchical control resulted in a series of cause and effect events such as “[les] persécutions sans nombre dans Paris” which led to revolts by the people. These revolts which resulted in the first barricade in 1588 led to an increased tyranny from the monarchy, “Avec les révoltes se multiplient les supplices” (24). Further evidences of the dark and troublesome history of Paris’s past include the death and destruction from war, famine, pestilence, and rampant disease such that “Paris a grandi entre la guerre et la disette” (23). Hugo intensifies the image of Paris’s history by describing it as a labyrinth of horror, “L’histoire n’a pas de sape plus noire. Aucun dédale n’égale en horreur [...]” (34). This long history of Paris added devastation upon devastation for nearly 1200 years according to Hugo until “[le] compteur” took a final reckoning in 1789 when revolution changes everything (35).

Importantly, Hugo gives us his reasoning for the detailed explication of these past events, namely that “cette histoire est, pas à pas, l’accentuation du progrès” (20) and that “tout dans cette ville [...] a un sens” (25). Creating meaning out of past events is an important characteristic of Mannheim’s utopian mentalities. Mannheim explains the importance of creating meaning:

On the basis of these purposes and expectations, a given mentality orders not merely future events, but also the past. [...] It is in nothing but this meaningful ordering of events, extending far beyond mere chronological orderings, that the structural principle of historical time is to be discovered. But it is necessary to go even farther: this ordering of meaning is, in fact, the most primary element in the comprehension and interpretation of events. (209)

Hugo’s step-by-step depiction of the tragedy and chaos found within Parisian history creates meaning for the climactic event of the liberal-humanitarian mentality – the French Revolution of 1789. By describing Paris’s past, Hugo does not intend to ruminate over a linear, chronological history but instead to reflect on the significance of these events in light of their final outcome. Hugo describes the past with a dramatic and meaningful image for his contemporaries by comparing it to “the plague” (57). The plague represents sickness, uncleanness, contamination, and death. By the nineteenth century, urban reformers believed cleaning up the city (and in some instances removing poorer social classes) would remove future threats of diseases such as the plague or cholera.⁴ Similarly, Hugo confirms that the figurative historical plague was purged by the Revolution which he depicts as “un vaste assainissement” (57). The purifying, transforming, and revolutionizing powers of Paris become three important themes of the final three chapters of *Paris*, entitled “Suprématie de Paris”, “Fonction de Paris”, and “Déclaration de Paix” respectively.

Before discussing these three themes which are interwoven throughout the final three chapters of *Paris*, a brief synopsis should be made regarding Hugo and revolution. As a scholar of French culture, Priscilla Ferguson describes Victor Hugo as having a resolute role in writing the introduction to the 1867 *Paris-Guide* which was purposefully written for the Universal Exposition hosted by the French government that year. Hugo's role was somewhat of a paradox given he was in exile; he was invited to submit an article, particularly because of his popularity, to prepare the world for the exposition sanctioned by the government that exiled him. In her book *Paris As Revolution*, Ferguson writes, "The fusion of writer and Paris, Paris and modernity, modernity and revolution, is nowhere more arresting than in the work and persona of Victor Hugo. And nowhere is Hugo more insistent on making these affinities explicit than in his outsize introduction to *Paris-Guide (1867)*" (70). In many ways, Paris and revolution have an analogous relationship since the French Revolution of 1789; and Hugo played a vibrant role in creating the everlasting bond that has linked Paris and Revolution ever since. Ferguson adds, "This is Hugo's vital contribution [...]. His assimilation of Paris with the Revolution, and with revolution, alters the very conception of the city. Writing the Revolution entails a revolution in writing" (73). This important comparison of Hugo and revolution draws its significance from Hugo's astonishment and admiration for the revolutionary spirit which he insists permeated Paris from that momentous day in 1789, a day in which Paris became "la ville pivot sur laquelle [...] l'histoire a tourné" (Hugo 36).

Presumptuous as Hugo may have sounded, the French Revolution is considered by many scholars as a watershed moment in the dawning of modern society.⁵ The revolutionary power of Paris, or more specifically Paris and revolution, saturates Hugo's mentality and fascination with his beloved city, such that he marks the evolution of Paris with what he deems a progressive

ascension out of darkness which ends with revolution: “Paris druidique, Paris romain, Paris carlovingien, Paris féodal, Paris monarchique, Paris philosophe, Paris révolutionnaire” (37). Much like the guide book he is writing for, Hugo portrays revolutionary Paris as a guide for the rest of mankind. Revolutionary Paris is the foundation upon which humanity and civilization rest. By shattering the Old Regime, Hugo boldly claims that revolutionary Paris is not only lighting the way toward humanity but dragging the rest of France behind by force until the glorious day when “[la France] s’apaise et applaudit” (38). Moreover, the Revolution rang in the “age of maturity” (l’heure de l’âge viril a sonné) and the enlightenment for the creation of civilization (Hugo 41). This interconnecting of descriptive words highlights Hugo’s belief that Paris and revolution act as a springboard for progress and change. He adds further that the French Revolution “hangs over” everything that is – nineteenth-century France – and everything that will be – a civilization called Humanity (43). Indeed, the French Revolution modifies every aspect of human existence (43);⁶ it is infused into life itself. The great results of this revolution, Humanity and Fraternity, become the foundation upon which the rest of mankind will build.

This grand Revolution shattered an old way of thinking, acting, and becoming by offering what Hugo sees as the triumphant results of Liberté, Egalité, Fraternité. Hugo scoffs at the many archaic attempts to build walls around Paris as a way to control the city because “un rayonnement est plus fort qu’une muraille” (41) and for Hugo it is upon these walls that Paris gladly “publishes its Revolution” (53).⁷ In effect, Hugo’s usage of a ray of light symbolically portrays his attempts to transfuse to the world his philosophical idea of revolution. In his opinion, the revolution stands as the preeminent Idea that Paris will offer to the world in 1867. The scholar of nineteenth-century French literature Skyler Artes notably claims that these same walls surrounding Paris, which Hugo mocks, acts in fact as proof to all visitors in 1867 that Paris

cannot be reigned over or controlled (6). Artes analyzes *Paris* through the lens of Palingenesis which signifies “a process of renewal” or a rebirth (3). According to Artes, the philosophy of Palingenesis, which by the nineteenth century focused on a social reformation or evolution of mankind into a more perfect form of humanity, influenced many in the French Romantic movement and is important because of Hugo’s fundamental ties therein (4). Furthermore, Artes correlates Hugo’s terminology of the enclosed Paris as a form of Palingenesis in which Paris is reformed from a feminine identity into a masculine one (7). For example, she highlights Hugo’s specific verb choices of *murer* meaning to wall off and *mûrer* meaning to ripen or make mature, as well as his usage of *ceinture* meaning belt and *enceinte* which has two important meanings of enclosing an area as well as being pregnant (8). With these words, Hugo asserts that the monarchs intended to impose a discipline on Paris comparable to the monks (Hugo 41). Artes describes this linkage to a monastery as a “rigorous repression of Paris’s sexual maturity” (8). The *ceinture* indicates a chastity belt while *enceinte* represents Paris’s pregnancy which indeed gave birth on July 14, 1789 (Artes 8). Artes concludes this Palingenesis discussion of the rebirth of Paris by stating, “A once female Paris would reproduce alone. Her creation was a new masculine self. No longer figured as a repressed feminine entity [...], the male Paris is an explosive source of revolutionary light” (9). Artes maintains her intuitive and valid discussion on Hugo’s descriptive rebirth of Paris into a masculine entity throughout her article. Her description of revolutionary light, in essence, represents Paris’s virility which Hugo invites the world to experience when they feel Paris’s “magnificent fire of progress” (Hugo 48)⁸ on display during the *Exposition universelle* in 1867.

Hugo’s manner of unfurling the connection between Paris and revolution is spiritual in nature. To strengthen his visionary discourse, Hugo guides his readers through Paris’s grandeur

with poignant selections of metaphorical Christian epistemology. Both Ferguson and Artes comment on the spiritual nature of Hugo's writing, with Artes stating that "Hugo borrows from the Christ narrative and [Pierre-Simon] Ballanche's theosophical evolutionary model of Palingenesis to legitimize Paris's ascension" (Ferguson 74; Artes 13). Much like Christ's parable of the sower, Hugo posits "Paris est un semeur. Où sème-t-il? Dans les ténèbres. Que sème-t-il? Des étincelles" (48). Paris plants seeds of progress, visions of humanity, and ideas of civilization in the darkest corners of the world. The enlightened ideals of Paris flow forth like the *urbi et orbi*, the dictums sent forth from the city (*urbi*) to the world (*orbi*). However, Hugo's intent is that no longer will these dictums come from Rome, but from Paris, which has resulted in "[un] déplacement du pouvoir spirituel" (50) Hugo triumphantly acknowledges. Hugo shows this shifting of spiritual power to Paris by characterizing it as "[la] cité prédestinée" to bring forth the transforming power of progress (62). To further develop his ideas of Paris's superior spiritual power, Hugo compares Paris multiple times to his perceived ancient rival cities. In one of these comparisons (46), Hugo identifies three rays of light, *le Vrai*, *le Beau*, and *le Grand*, which emanated from the ancient cities of Jerusalem, Athens, and Rome respectively, with each emitting their one ray of light. These three rays, finally, are restored, reaffirmed, and brought together in unity in Paris, where the supreme words of the martyr at Jerusalem (Jesus Christ) are now declared: Liberté, Egalité, Fraternité. Hugo ends this comparison by emphasizing Paris's great attachment to the ideas of humanity, "Paris, lieu de la révélation révolutionnaire, est la Jérusalem humaine" (47). Hugo's idiosyncratic view of Paris and revolution engender his peculiar spiritual discussion of the city, for as Hugo testifies to his readers, "Ce que Révolution veut, Dieu le veut" (43) and for Hugo it is a spiritual connection which indeterminably links Revolution and Paris.

Anticipating many visitors from the far corners of the world, Hugo endeavors to superimpose on Paris's affinity for revolution an emphasis on its transformative power of progress. Progress naturally implies advancement and betterment. Hugo used his platforms in the political and literary fields to seek after the advancement and betterment of humankind, but more particularly for alleviating the poverty and misery of his compatriots. Conspicuously, Hugo identified the source for the advancement and betterment of mankind to be found in his progressive city Paris. Progress then, in its Hugolian form, is infused with the dynamic nature of an Idea. In his text, Hugo differentiates between a majuscule *I* and minuscule *i* of the word idea (idée) which, in the latter case, appears as a proper adjective: "Une vaste marche en avant de la foule Idée conduite par l'esprit Légion" (17). The usage of the majuscules by Hugo seems to emphasize a legion of thinkers who formulate and spread forth the limitless ideas that will create the future nation (Humanité) with Paris as its capital city. Ferguson as well unveils the role of post-Revolutionary thinkers in describing and redefining the parameters of Parisian influence. She writes, "Writers joined architects, urban planners, and government officials in molding the distinctive cultural practices of the new city. [...] In the very act of bearing witness to the transformations of the city, writers and their texts pushed those transformations further" (13). The nineteenth-century thinker's propensity to mold the role of the city and transform its bounds is paramount to the development of utopian principles and agrees with Mannheim's philosophy that "the utopian element in our consciousness is subject to changes in content and form" (206). Hugo certainly adheres to this doctrine in both artistic form and content as he zealously describes his ideas of Paris's transformative powers of progress.

For Hugo, the idea, or more particularly the idea of progress, was created in Paris because of revolution. Moreover, Hugo contends that the function of Paris is "la dispersion de l'idée"

(48). To advance his ideas of progress, Hugo utilizes a germane vocabulary to portray Paris as not just the literal city of lights, but the figurative also. Paris sparkles, enlightens, illuminates, radiates, and shimmers; these verbs highlight Paris's ultimate achievement of hopeful progress which ends with civilization. More importantly to Hugo, Paris intends to share its vision of humanity with all: "[Paris] envoie de la civilisation aux quatre vents, et qu'il prodigue la libre pensée aux hommes" (48). This statement by Hugo is not just symbolic because, as he notes, Paris literally disperses enlightenment and progress such that in 1864, France's exportation of books totaled "dix-huit millions deux cent trente mille francs" of which "les sept huitièmes de ces livres" were printed in Paris (50). Appropriately, Hugo's vision of progress and enlightenment literally includes education and the accompanying dispersion and accumulation of knowledge.

Since education corresponds with progress and civilization, the education system appears to be a staple of Hugo's ideas for many decades. In a discourse entitled "La Liberté de l'enseignement" given on January 15, 1850, Hugo spoke before the National Assembly concerning France's education system which at the time was a religious-run institution. Nevertheless, Hugo argued for a state-run, laic system in which education would be obligatory but also free to all. In this discourse, republished June 8, 1875, in the newspaper *Le Rappel* during the education debate in France, Hugo justified his backing of a laic system by commending education as the only source for combating and destroying poverty. "Instruire, c'est construire" Hugo affirms and then associates the importance of education and France's future generations by condemning the lack of progress by these politicians, "Je ne veux pas vous confier l'enseignement de la jeunesse, l'âme des enfants, [...] l'avenir de la France. Je ne veux pas vous confier l'avenir de la France, parce que vous le confier, ce serait vous le livrer" (*Hugo*

Politique 31). Hugo's harsh criticism for what he saw as a lack of progress toward an obligatory and free education under a laic school system in 1850 represents his continuous inculcation of the need for progress and the diffusion of ideas through enlightenment which comes through the education system.

Undoubtedly Hugo makes a connection between education, light, and Paris as he demonstrates Paris's power to transform from barbarianism to civilization:

Comment t'appelles-tu, Lutèce ? Je m'appelle Paris. Et toi, comment t'appelles tu, Thèbes ? Je m'appelle Derh-el-Bahari. Constatation poignante, les deux villes de même race, ont, chacune de leur côté, perdu figure, l'une dans la civilisation, l'autre dans la barbarie. Différence entre ce qui a avancé et ce qui a reculé. (68)

To highlight Paris's grandeur and enlightenment, Hugo allegorizes once again to compare his city, which grew out of the barbarous *Lutèce*, with a school: "Paris tient école" (62). This school is a "school of civilization, a school of development, a school of reason and of justice."⁹ Hugo then affirms that Paris is like the *Institut* which *Le Petit Larousse Illustré 2011* refers to as "édifice parisien [...]. Affecté à l'Institut de France depuis 1806."¹⁰ By the time Hugo writes *Paris* in 1867, the *Institut de France* comprised the five academies of education again described by *Larousse 2011* as "française, des inscriptions et belles-lettres, des sciences, des beaux-arts, des sciences morales et politiques." As has been discussed, Hugo was a leading proponent of state-run education and this reference to the *Institut* reflects his desires for, as he states once again in *Paris*, "cet Institut" to be the place where "l'enseignement gratuit et obligatoire" will diffuse from. Hugo concludes this discussion of the Parisian schools by stating that "Paris est une forge d'idées" (62). Symbolically, Hugo attempts through his idiosyncratic adoration of Paris to

show that progress and transformation evolves through education and diffusion of the utopian ideals which are forged together in progressive Paris.

Notwithstanding this grand Parisian progress, Hugo adds in *Paris* that there is a growing reaction against Paris's forward march (58). This reaction is ascribed by Hugo to the traditions and reverence of the past. Following Mannheim's construction of the utopian mentalities, conservatism (which values the determinant nature of past events) contends primarily against the liberal idea of progress and remains beholden to the past. Hugo insists that progress, and specifically "ce puissant dix-neuvième siècle", is denounced on all sides "par la tradition [...] de tout le passé, passé fanatique, passé scolastique, passé autoritaire" (58). For Hugo, this criticism is full of prejudices and errors and needs to be addressed. Metaphorically speaking, these prejudices and errors are like "des torsions qui exigent un redressement" (62). Using an image of a sprain to the body, Hugo applies the same logic for fixing this ailment: "l'appareil orthopédique" (62). This appliance symbolizes a brace utilized to support, protect, and immobilize a sprained joint. To provide this brace for his compatriots, and the world, Hugo proposes a need to affirm that Paris is neither broken nor stalling in its progression. He writes:

Attester Paris, c'est affirmer, en dépit de toutes les apparences évidentes acceptées du vulgaire, la continuation de la vaste évolution humaine vers la libération universelle. Au moment où nous sommes, la coalition nocturne des vieux préjugés et des vieux régimes triomphe, et croit Paris en détresse, à peu près comme les sauvages croient le soleil en danger pendant l'éclipse. (58)

Hugo confirms that this glorious affirmation of Paris is found in *Paris-Guide 1867* which is written by the foremost writers and artists of France and who all will testify to progress, to democracy, to peace, and to the greatness of the nineteenth-century city.¹¹ In essence, Hugo is

anticipating an affirmation of the development and establishment of utopian principles, principles that he believes will be established in a future time period when the world recognizes that Paris is the holder of the greatest ideas of his era – progress, equality, humanity, fraternity, and civilization – all established because of the synergetic rapport between Paris and Revolution.

End Notes

¹ As his allegiances shifted more and more towards the Republicans, Victor Hugo described in his book *Choses vues* (1848) his ideas of socialism and how it could transform society: “Il n’y a pas cent socialismes comme on le dit volontiers. Il y en a deux. Le mauvais et le bon. Il y a le socialisme qui veut substituer l’Etat aux activités spontanées, et qui sous prétexte de distribuer à tous le bien-être, ôte à chacun sa liberté. [...] Ce socialisme-là détruit la société. Il y a le socialisme qui abolit la misère, l’ignorance, la prostitution, les fiscalités, les vengeances par les lois, les inégalités démenties par le droit ou par la nature, toutes les ligatures, depuis le mariage indissoluble jusqu’à la peine irrévocable. Ce socialisme-là ne détruit pas la société ; il la transfigure” (*Hugo Politique* 26).

² To be sure, Hugo was asked to write the Introduction to the *Paris-Guide* (1867). The full title of the guidebook – *Paris Guide par les principaux écrivains et artistes de la France* – underscores the need to include Hugo, one of the greatest nineteenth-century writers, in this work. However, Priscilla Ferguson denotes in her discussion on Hugo’s *Paris*, “The introduction [by Hugo] was also published separately (1867)” (70n20), which allows one to question whether his work was omitted in some editions because of his exile. While searching online archival databases, most editions of the guidebook I discovered omit Hugo’s Introduction. However, the complete guidebook with his writing does exist. For this chapter, I use Hugo’s version published separately in 1867.

³ This idea that the city, and not its inhabitants, act as the bearer of utopian principles is a significant part of Hugo’s discussion on Paris’s influence and role in the development of the new nation and will be discussed further.

⁴ Françoise Choay refers to the political and humanitarian thinkers of the polemic school who particularly looked for links between the social ills, including moral and physical hygiene, and the lower classes of society (13-14). Citing facts and statistics, many nineteenth-century cities targeted the working classes by branding them as the carriers of social ills and social decay – a literal and figurative carrier of disease one might say. Choay writes in one instance about the moral hygiene being “également mise en cause: contraste entre les quartiers d’habitations des différentes classes sociales aboutissant à la ségrégation” (14).

⁵ Priscilla Ferguson states that the overthrow of the Bastille on July 14, 1789 “announced the first modern revolution” (11).

⁶ Hugo writes, “La révolution française est en surplomb. Pas un fait humain que ce surplomb ne modifie” (43).

⁷ “Paris y affiche son spectacle jusqu’à ce qu’il y affiche sa révolution” (53).

⁸ “Le magnifique incendie du progrès, c’est Paris qui l’attise” (48).

⁹ “Ecole de civilisation, école de croissance, école de la raison et de justice” (Hugo, 62).

¹⁰ Though Hugo references the *Institut*, he does not offer more information to identify a specific location. I am inferring that he is referring to the *Institut de France* organized in 1806. I am providing the reader with this information but leave the interpretation open.

¹¹ “Cette affirmation de Paris, ce livre la fait. Cette affirmation, elle est dans les pages qu’on lit en ce moment. Affirmation de la démocratie, affirmation de la paix, affirmation du siècle” (58).

Chapter Four: Emile Zola's Dystopian Utopia as Representation of Paris

According to Henri Mitterand, the funeral of Emile Zola (1840-1902) witnessed a gathering in the streets of Paris unknown since the funeral of Victor Hugo nearly twenty years prior (Dossier 442). This heralded event, which included a delegation of miners from Denain, authenticated the renown of a man whose path to such celebrity was tumultuous at best. Unlike Hugo's rise to fame, Zola encountered significant setbacks that could have derailed any potential dreams of notoriety that he may have had. Mitterand explicitly describes the constant disappointments that Zola experienced throughout his life. For example, after the death of his father at the age of seven, Mitterand declares that it was "le malheur et la ruine pour la famille" (Dossier 427). Zola's failure of his baccalaureate and the abandonment of his studies are described as "un nouvel échec" (Dossier 429). During what may have been the most difficult time of his life where not much is known of Zola's experiences, he sank into "le spleen" (Dossier 430). During the year 1867, Zola found fewer opportunities for income which was described as "une année noire" (Dossier 433). Finally, even after success began to ease some of the burdens, in 1888 he took a mistress who gave birth to Zola's two children; this controversy in his life is described as a "bouleverse[ment de] sa vie privée" (Dossier 438). These formidable experiences shaped Zola and could have hampered his path to success. Hence, after the tragic death of his father left him and his mother in poverty and debt, Zola spent a lifetime trying to create security and order in the midst of the chaos that flourished around him.

To simply state that Zola was a success as one of the leading figures of the nineteenth-century naturalist movement detracts from the experiences that shaped his view of the world. Most of his life was spent in a transitional state such that Mitterand remarks that Zola lived "[une] vie de bohème" because he had to constantly change residency (Dossier 429-30).

Mitterand further observes that before Zola's rise to fame, and subsequently during his celebrated literary career, the litterateur never could establish himself in one location because ultimately he experienced many hardships from the loss of several vocations during his life. His early career as a writer was spent composing for newspapers and journals in Paris (Mitterand, Dossier 431). These early experiences working with the press began the process of both a positive and negative public image in the Second Empire. As a "conteur, chroniqueur, [et] critique" (Mitterand, Dossier 431), Zola faced censorship from time to time due to his criticism of the Empire that deterred some editors from publishing his exposés. In 1870, he was saved from legal proceedings for his pamphlets that were "plus antibonapartiste que jamais" only because of the start of the war with the Prussians (Mitterand, Dossier 434). On the other hand, his political opinions linked him to many notable Republicans before the establishment of the Third Republic. These associations grew as he published his "causeries polémiques" in Republican newspapers such as *La Tribune* or *Le Rappel*, the newspaper founded by Victor Hugo and two of his sons, Charles and François (Mitterand, Dossier 433). His engagement in contemporary social and political affairs marked a common theme in his writing.

Nonetheless, Zola's ultimate dream was to secure a long term contract with an editor in order to "assur[er] sa sécurité matérielle et lui permettr[e] de construire à loisir une grande œuvre, conforme à ses intuitions 'naturalistes' [...] [ce qui] est pour lui la forme moderne du roman" (Mitterand, Dossier 433). What resulted from his procurement of this long term contract would be the chef-d'oeuvre of Zola's career as he completed the series of novels entitled *Les Rougon-Macquart*. As a naturalist writer, Zola was fascinated with sciences and "l'analyse psychologique, physiologique et sociale" (Mitterand, Dossier 433). In an essay specific to *Le Ventre de Paris*, Mitterand emphasizes that Zola was "fasciné par le développement des sciences

de la nature et de la vie” (“Tiens, voilà du Boudin” 316). For Zola, science provided the medium to define the social and moral order of society and because of this, the naturalist movement prospered under the leadership of Zola. This movement combined the empirical nature of the sciences with the belief that the behaviors, the characteristics, and ultimately the destinies of human existence are determined by heredity and the social environment of the individual. Thus, being interested in life from a naturalist viewpoint, Zola sought to exemplify society based on the social, moral, and political concerns of human existence under the specifically chosen period of the Second Empire (1852-1870).

Before moving into an analysis of the novel, however, discussion should be given to the political climate in which Zola developed his thematic literature. As has already been discussed in this thesis, the nineteenth century was a turbulent time, full of bloodshed, disharmony, and political change in France. Revolution and insurrection, primarily in Paris, increased fears of a return to the loathsome acts of the Terror. The supposed democratic republic, established during the French Revolution of 1789, passed from government to government wherein only two oppressive regimes prior to the Third Republic were able to hold power for up to eighteen years. The century of instability added to the social disorder and social inequality of French citizens. Though Zola never sought a political life the way Hugo did, he played an important and active role in nineteenth-century French politics. From his much publicized and damning letter to the French President entitled *J'accuse* to his much celebrated novel *Germinal* which contributed to the gathering of a delegation of miners at his funeral procession, Zola envisioned and advocated for what he perceived to be a necessary social change. Social change would be the result of united action; and Zola, like many other artists and writers, believed the role of these virtuosos was to guide the public toward progress and reform.

Zola was a lifelong Republican as well as supporter of Socialist ideologies that promoted worker's rights and social equality. During the Second Empire, his role as a journalist brought him to liberal political conferences where opponents of the Emperor gathered to express their disapproval (Mitterand, Dossier 431). Furthermore, during the momentous transitional period from the Second Empire to the Third Republic following the bloodshed of the Commune, Zola emerged as a sympathetic advocate for social reform. It was in this tenuous transitional period that Zola penned *Le Ventre de Paris* (1873), his first major novel written during the Third Republic. To a certain extent, this novel represents an atypical work for Zola. According to the French scholar Richard Shryock, with *Le Ventre de Paris* Zola deviated from his penchant for progressive social reformation and undertook a novel with a conservative outlook. Shryock writes:

Zola's *Le Ventre de Paris* lies at the heart of this discursive and political shift taking place within republicanism at the time. This novel was written during the first years of the Third Republic when the republicans were the minority "caretakers" for the government [...]. During these years the republicans campaigned hard to change how they were viewed by the conservative majority of the country. Zola's novel [...] participates in the struggle by addressing a readership that lies at the political center of the country, the part of the population that the republicans were seeking to win over. (54)

Zola's convergence with a conservative mentality indicates his political savvy and republican self-awareness. With the emergence of a Republican Party slowly gaining seats in the National Assembly during the early years of the Third Republic, the French citizenry were wary of the past professed revolutionary tendencies of republicans and Zola recognized the need to shed this revolutionary image. To oppose revolution, the republicans adhered to a conservative tenet of

“social order” and historically “the republicans’ bloody repression of the Commune in 1871 crystallized their association with this notion” (Shryock 54). It was this alignment with the conservative ideology that allowed republicanism to fully embrace the authority to mandate social and moral order.

The powers that govern the social and moral order of society are the basis of Mannheim’s explication of utopia. Utopia, in essence, signifies the shaping of the behaviors and conducts of the citizens within a given society. Mannheim writes, “Utopias too transcend the social situation, for they too orient *conduct* towards elements which the situation, in so far as it is realized at the time, *does not contain*” (emphasis added 195). The nineteenth-century political pendulum in France epitomized this idea of utopia, for each succeeding regime attempted to procure power in order to dictate the social and moral conducts that society “[did] not contain” at the time. As political dogmas shift amidst the rising and falling of political powers and ideologies, the integration of specific doctrines transforms the behavior and the morals of the society. Thus we see that the theoreticians and litterateurs discussed in this work all addressed specific concerns regarding the social, economic, and in some respects political injustices of their compatriots. Poverty, social inequalities, unsanitary living conditions, and disorder, to name a few, were a common theme for nineteenth-century thinkers. Zola was no different as an author. Following in the footsteps of some of the greatest nineteenth-century French writers, he used his pen to address the social and moral issues of his day. For his Rougon-Macquart series, Zola historically situated those novels in Second Empire France. However, Zola deviated from the Second Empire historical context. Shryock comments on Zola’s use of anachronisms and writes, “*Le Ventre de Paris* speaks as much to the problems of the Third Republic when Emile Zola was writing as it

does about the Second Empire in which the story is set” (48). Thus it seems that Zola, albeit subtly, aggrandizes the persistent nineteenth-century social issues in the eyes of his readers.

As has been mentioned, one particular social issue commented on by each of the theoreticians in this thesis is the misery and poverty of the people. Misery and poverty represent the dystopian nature of human existence for, in theory, the continuous suffering of a people is a setback to progress and delays the development of social and moral order. In *Le Ventre de Paris*, Zola also addresses poverty but it is not an issue that is central to the novel as it is for Fourier and Hugo. Zola’s depiction of misery and poverty is symbolized with Florent’s character, the antagonist of the *Gras* who run *Les Halles*. Interestingly, he is also the only noted Republican in the story. Florent appears educated, caring, thoughtful, and soft-spoken. Moreover, he is described as having a “weak character” (182): he is made fun of by *la mère Méhudin* who calls him “le grand maigre” (197) and is described by the neighborhood as “le micmac des Quenu” (213). In an early depiction of Florent’s return from exile to a newly renovated *Halles* in central Paris, Zola pointedly describes the state of mind of this character, “Il était gris de misère, de lassitude, de faim” (70).

Florent, with his weak demeanor and frail body, becomes the gossip of *Les Halles*. In fact, his mellow temperament provoked the jeers of more than one of Zola’s characters, including his friend Claude who, after seeing Florent nearly faint at the sight of Marjolin slaughtering the pigeons, derides, “Eh bien, quoi donc ! [...]. Voilà que vous vous évanouissez comme une femme” (Zola 394). Claude’s taunt effeminates Florent and his gentle, non-threatening character. In fact, as the scene continues, Claude further mocks the revolutionary Florent (“vous ne feriez pas un bon soldat”) by defaming the authorities who feared Florent and exiled him to Cayenne (“ceux qui vous ont envoyé à Cayenne sont encore de jolis messieurs,

d'avoir eu peur de vous"). Claude also discredits Florent's leadership of the impending insurrection ("vous n'oserez pas tirer un coup de pistolet; vous aurez trop peur de tuer quelqu'un") (394-95). Claude's critique of Florent adds to the feminization of the Republican and the Revolutionary Commander who leaves the scene discouraged and in a somber mood, envisioning the upcoming battle with him, "au milieu, très pâle, ne pouvait regarder, se cachait la figure entre les mains" (395). This disgrace leaves Florent in a solemn and depressed state through the end of the novel. Furthermore, Florent's constant nervous and depressive character is depicted in many instances as one form of disorder. Nevertheless, Zola has created with Florent a complex character wherein both order and disorder can exist. Through the order and disorder portrayal of Florent, Zola also formulates the paradox of utopia and dystopia in the novel which will be discussed later in this chapter.

The questions of order and disorder are meticulously described by Zola, but this description is exemplified most through the role of the women. With *Le Ventre de Paris*, Zola attempted to create the hustle and bustle of the marketplace that provides the nourishment for Paris and, by extension, for the Empire. Within this dichotomy of subsistence, the majority of Zola's characters are by far women who play a constant and conspicuous role in not only *Les Halles*, but in society as well. The French scholar Sharon Johnson examines the role of order and disorder in *Le Ventre de Paris* as it relates to gender. According to Johnson, Zola constructs women "as either immoral and disorderly or moral and orderly" (39). In this way it appears that the role played by women in the novel seems almost paradoxical. On one hand, the honest, virtuous, and cleanly Lisa represents order. As a bourgeois woman, she wields power in *la charcuterie* where she conducts business, but her power and influence extend beyond the walls of her business and into the community as well. Many look up to her with either jealousy or

respect for the riches she possesses. Lisa's orderly domain however is contrasted with the other women of *Les Halles* who struggle amid the turmoil of the street-vending, the confusion accompanied by the masses of people who flood *Les Halles* every day, and the image of women who sell their flesh for money (prostitution). This second group of women represents the immoral side of society that, as has already been stated, would need to be controlled and behaviors modified in order to construct a moral and orderly society.

The theme of disorder functions as a reaction to the orderliness of Lisa and as such prostitution is used as a way to underscore the life of many women who live within *Les Halles*. Even though prostitution was regulated, many criminal and disorderly acts were involved with the practice which brought with it “risks of violence and abuse, [and] of venereal disease” (Garrioch 62). Johnson maintains that “prostitution is presented both implicitly and explicitly” in *Le Ventre de Paris* (39). One particular example of this explicit representation of prostitution comes after the arrest of Gavard. The three women watching the action – Mlle. Saget, Mme. Lecœur, and La Sarriette – hastily pursue the money that Gavard had hidden away in his armoire. After narrowly collecting the money before the police arrive, the three women are contentedly returning to *la charcuterie* to witness the apprehension of Florent. The money, tucked away in their dresses, makes La Sarriette smile as she giddily confesses, “Ça me bat contre les cuisses.” Then Zola as narrator adds, “Elles goûtaient une jouissance à sentir ce poids qui leur tirait les jupes, qui se pendait à elles comme des mains chaudes de caresses” (412). This juxtaposition of money beating against the thighs with the warm caresses of hands touching their bodies subtly connects the greed and dishonesty of these women with the disorder and uncleanness associated with prostitution.

Not only does Zola effeminize Florent, but he also affixes to women the major role of social order and disorder. Johnson elaborates by stating, “Zola codes revolt (Florent) and the *Halles* (the *marchandes*) as feminine and disorderly, yet neither Florent nor the female merchants pose a real threat to the country’s political stability” (50). If neither category were a threat to the nation’s political stability, what would be Zola’s purpose for linking femininity and disorder? At the time of the publishing of *Le Ventre de Paris*, political stability was a consequential consideration for the Third Republic. The fleeting nature of nineteenth-century political power foreshadowed republican conservatism. Thus, the feminization of order and disorder seems to have coincided with an increase in male political activity. Zola, through the personage of Gavard, distances women from political activity. While discussing the Empire, Gavard shows his displeasure with Lisa and her passive support of the Emperor. Zola writes, “Il pardonnait à Lisa ses tendresses pour l’empereur, parce que, disait-il, il ne faut jamais causer politique avec les femmes, et que la belle charcutière était, après tout, une femme très honnête qui faisait aller joliment son commerce” (168). Though Lisa was considered an honest woman, a term that links her with the bourgeoisie, Gavard insinuates that she is better at business than at politics. A further example of the depoliticization of women appears at the Café Lebigre during the political discussions of the potential insurrection. Attending there is Charvet and Clémence, a couple whose “mariage libre” contains “une théorie de l’égalité des sexes” (226). Clémence, despite her purported equality, very rarely discusses politics with the men for, as Zola writes, “elle croyait certainement garder sa place de femme, en réservant son avis, en ne s’emportant pas comme les hommes” (225). The duplicitous nature of equality usually acquiesces to certain menial and domestic rights while withholding the right of political opinion, and with it, political power. Johnson further argues, “The manner in which Zola subverts mid-nineteenth-century

gender distinctions also obscures his text's ideological positions on questions of gender, politics, and gendered politics." (50). By eschewing a firm republican stance in his novel through an effeminate male protagonist, and by creating a paradox wherein women symbolize both order and disorder, Zola has successfully conservatized his novel thereby creating "a non-threatening portrait for conservatives and republicans" under which they can unite politically (Johnson 52).

The delineation of political powers and ideologies by Zola in *Le Ventre de Paris* fits the Mannheimian utopian principle. The dynamic state of nineteenth-century governments creates specific historical stages in which a utopian function can develop. Mannheim affirms these historical stages:

This change [...] of the utopia does not take place in a realm which is independent of social life. It could be shown rather, especially in modern historical developments, that successive forms of utopia, in their beginnings are intimately bound up with given historical stages of development, and in each of these with particular social strata. (206)

The essential aspect of Mannheim's description that relates to our discussion is the fact that utopian change is not independent of social life. Political activism, regime changes, and government policies do not establish utopian principles until a unique and revolutionizing thought is integrated for the transformation of social and moral order.

In his novel, Zola is interested in this idea of transforming social and moral order. *Le Ventre de Paris* depicts more than just the conservative ideology already mentioned herein. Specific political ideologies found within the pages of the novel include conservatism, republicanism, socialism, and even a brief mention of hébertism. Each of these "isms" contains utopian elements that relate to the utopian mentalities discussed in chapter one of this thesis. However, Zola seems to mask any clear-cut connection with a particular utopian mentality other

than the previously discussed conservative agenda. Therefore, to fully analyze Zola's mentality, a look at the other specific ideologies mentioned will allow us to understand the utopian elements Zola integrates.

First, hébertism is briefly mentioned in the novel and refers to the political ideology of Charvet, a rival of Florent's at the Café Lebigre and the former leader of the *société* which meets there. Zola writes, "En politique, il était hébertiste" (173). Mitterand provides further details of the *hébertiste* origins in a footnote (Dossier 465). Hébertism is named after Jacques-René Hébert who was the founder and editor of the revolutionary journal *Père Duchesne*. This journal frequently tried to expose enemies of the Revolution. Hébert, with his followers known as the *enragés*, believed in tyrannical efforts including guillotining all their enemies. From time to time Charvet is portrayed in his *hébertiste* persona. He is known as "le despote du groupe, étant le plus autoritaire et le plus instruit" (Zola 174). In his final showdown with Florent, one further ideology that relates to society is explained. Referring to the members who agreed with Florent, the narrator writes, "ils le confirmaient dans son idée que le peuple est trop bête, qu'il a besoin d'une dictature révolutionnaire de dix ans pour apprendre à se conduire" (Zola 360). Charvet believed that the people were not smart enough to conduct themselves in "l'exercice de la liberté" and would need a dictator for at least 10 years to guide their social and moral conduct (225). Through Charvet, Zola recalls to mind the horrors of the Terror and the brutal repression of dissidents. This image of despotism represents dystopia and is used by Zola who dissociates himself and the republicans from any form of tyrannical rule which many feared would happen under republican leadership. Zola, anticipating the dystopian fear of the people, indicates that the guillotine no longer belongs in the political discussion as he describes Charvet and Clémence leaving the Café, never to return.

In the early part of the novel, Zola describes Florent becoming a republican before his exile to Cayenne (87). After Florent experienced many years of suffering – the death of his mother, quitting his education to take care of Quenu, sadness and poverty day in and day out – Zola writes, “Voulant échapper aux tentations de méchanceté, il se jeta en pleine bonté idéale, il se créa un refuge de justice et de vérité absolues” (87). Unfortunately for Florent, there was no refuge to be found, for a Republic that promised happiness, fulfillment, and ultimately a better life did not exist at the time. After the bloody Revolution of February 1848, Florent became an activist in calling for payback for the republican blood that was spilt. Revolution became “une religion nouvelle” for him (87). His revolutionary tendencies eventually cost him as he was found on a barricade in the Parisian streets during an insurrection and he was shipped from Paris, without even a trial, to spend the rest of his life in exile.

With Florent, Zola endeavored to create a sympathetic figure whose suffering would arouse sympathy from the majority of the French population. Suffering and poverty were two fundamental social concerns for Fourier, Hugo, and Zola whom the latter of the three, as we have already seen at the beginning of this chapter, experienced immeasurable suffering throughout his life. The character Florent, whose suffering impelled him to act, never accomplished his transcendental purpose of affecting change. However, with Florent Zola creates two important Republican agendas intended for the social order and happiness of the people: first, Florent envisions a Republican city where society would become perfectly happy; and second, Florent creates humanitarian laws that would provide for the well-being of all the families of Paris. The humanitarian law and the Republican city are interrelated as Zola writes, “il arrangeait des mesures morales, des projets de loi humanitaires, qui auraient changé cette ville souffrante en

une ville de béatitude” (87). Analyzing the humanitarian laws presented by Zola will further characterize his utopian elements in *Le Ventre de Paris*.

One aspect of Florent’s idea of the Republican city has a spiritual connotation. According to Gural-Migdal, Florent’s ideal city is based on a utopia that is ineffable and mystical (148). Florent denotes this mystical utopia by imagining Paris as “une ville de béatitude” (87). The most famous beatitudes are the declarations of Jesus Christ whereby mankind may progress toward the perfection of character. The beatitudes, in many instances, are a call to men and women who suffer, who are poor in spirit, or who are meek and lowly of heart; Florent, in many instances, is the ideal representation of this type of suffering. Furthermore, Florent’s statement is reminiscent of Hugo’s “metaphorical Christian epistemology”¹ in which Paris is the enlightenment power for guiding humanity towards progress and perfection. In the same way, Florent foresees a city capable of perfecting humanity through the perfecting of the behavior and conduct of society. Throughout the novel, Florent remained drawn to Paris, captured by its mysterious and redemptive power. In this way, Florent’s “ville de béatitude” is utopian in nature.

The Republican city contains less spiritual relevance as it does political ideologies however. Florent never wavers from his political ambitions. He is constantly concerned with happiness, with misery, and with equality. French scholar Anna Gural-Migdal submits that Florent’s Republican persona is in fact one form of utopia for, as she writes, “Florent fait prévaloir un utopisme régénérateur [...] prônant un idéal républicain d’égalité, de justice, et de fraternité universelle” (148). Florent’s ties with Republicanism characterize his ideas of the perfect city. In *Le Ventre de Paris* the narrator adds clarification of Florent’s fascination with politics, “Fatalement, Florent revint à la politique. Il avait trop souffert par elle, pour ne pas en faire l’occupation chère de sa vie” (Zola 205). One further description of his activism describes

him as “toujours perdu dans son rêve humanitaire” (Zola 224). Throughout the early half of the nineteenth century, humanitarian needs were described in their interrelationship with the needs of the city. Safety, cleanliness, circulation, sickness, and crime were immediate crises that social theorists addressed. Even though *Le Ventre de Paris* takes place during Haussmannization, Zola continually highlights the dirtiness and unpleasantness of the city. Descriptions such as these abound: “la boue [...] noire et poissante [des Halles]” (274), “l’air [qui] s’endort” (270), “une odeur chaude, pénétrante, une exhalaison de bêtes vivantes, dont les alcalis la piquaient au nez et à la gorge” (282), and “les ruisseaux coulent rouge [dans les rues]” (261). The city, just like its inhabitants, needed air, sunlight, cleanliness, and healthy living conditions for order and happiness to prevail. Indeed, when describing Lisa’s move to *La Rue Pirouette*, Zola references these same needs as Lisa’s ideas for happiness. Zola writes, “La rue Pirouette blessait ses idées de propreté, son besoin d’air, de lumière, de santé robuste”

Unlike many early social theorists, Zola did not recommend what changes were needed to clean up Paris. His primary focus was on *Les Halles*, a microcosm of the city as a whole. Haussmannization certainly addressed issues with circulation and safety by creating geometric unity that brought about order. Nevertheless, Zola shows in *Le Ventre de Paris* that disorder persists. The life of Gavard, in the middle of the chaos of *Les Halles*, gives one example of the disorder that reigns on a daily basis. For his part, Gavard seems to love the chaos of *Les Halles*. Zola describes Gavard as being seduced by the female merchants’ “vacarme” and “leurs commérages énormes” (111). With the constant noise, the chitter-chatter, the gossip, the petty bickering amongst the *marchandes*, the hustle and bustle of people, Zola writes that “[Gavard] y goûtait mille joies chatouillantes, béat, ayant trouvé son élément” (111). Zola further describes the disorder of the marketplace with the word *tohu-bohu*. *Le Trésor de la Langue Française*

defines *tohu-bohu* as “Grand désordre, agitation confuse. Ensemble confus de choses mêlées.”

An example of this great disorder is illustrated in a passage describing Florent’s daily examination of the market, “Ce tohu-bohu de paniers, de sacs de cuir, de corbeilles, toutes ces jupes filant dans le ruissellement des allées [...]” (199). The constant juxtaposition between order and disorder in *Le Ventre de Paris* highlights the need for continued reform. Though Zola adored the order of Haussmann’s overwhelming, fascinating, and geometric infrastructure of *Les Halles*, the abominable confusion and disorder of the day-to-day operations maintained the unkempt and unsanitary living conditions of Paris.

Notwithstanding this disorder, the Republican city proposed by Florent would provide relief from suffering. During his free time in the evenings, Florent theorized and drafted “des plans de travaux gigantesques” (204). In this way Zola narrates Florent’s work:

Successivement, il ébaucha une réforme absolue du système administratif des Halles, une répartition nouvelle de l’approvisionnement dans les quartiers pauvres, enfin une loi humanitaire, encore très confuse, qui emmagasinait en commun les arrivages et assurait chaque jour un minimum de provisions à tous les ménages de Paris. (204)

The initial sketches of the law are characterized as still being disorganized in the form of an outline. However, this is the best depiction of Florent’s plan to alleviate the suffering of the people. Using the same vernacular as Fourier,² Zola here indicates the need for the city and the government to provide the minimum necessities of life so that suffering and poverty would be alleviated. To accomplish this humanitarian law, a new administrative system of *Les Halles* had to be instituted to distribute proportionately the commodities and provisions into the poorer areas of Paris so that all families would have sufficient for their needs. With the development of this plan to transform Paris, Zola transforms Florent as he redefines his political association as

“socialiste” (224). No longer is Florent’s revolution a republican movement, but it also has transformed into a socialist revolution: “il faut aujourd’hui songer au travailleur, à l’ouvrier; notre mouvement devra être tout social. Et je vous défie bien d’arrêter cette revendication du peuple. Le peuple est las, il veut sa part” (224).

This allusion to a socialist revolution perhaps prefigures Zola’s later political ideologies, specifically when he writes *Germinal* (1885), a novel depicting a strike and failed insurrection of coal miners in Northern France. More importantly however, this transformation of Florent and his revolution into a socialist movement further distances Zola and the Republican image of 1873, from the 1871 Commune and the bloodshed organized by a socialist movement in Paris. Mitterand explains the need for this separation, “Pendant la Commune [...] : sa collaboration à *La Cloche*, journal républicain modéré [...] l’a rendu suspect à la Commune. [...] Après avoir été éloigné par la Commune, Zola est désormais surveillé par la république conservatrice” (Dossier 435). Again, Zola has proactively mediated an evolving Republican agenda within the confines of a conservative system of belief. This time, however, it is in his own life and not a novelistic fictional universe, such as we see in *Le Ventre de Paris*.

Of further significance, we see that political ideologies have once again returned to the city-space and, for our discussion, to Paris. Writing about nineteenth-century utopian thinkers, Gural-Migdal states, “En résumé, chacun de ces utopistes croit à sa manière au pouvoir de la révolution pour faire triompher le progrès et la raison, pour régénérer une société intolérable et intolérante” (147). Utopian progress espouses political ideologies with urban theories to advocate the simultaneous transformation of the moral character of the society and the city-space calculated to accommodate it. The Paris in *Le Ventre de Paris*, according to Gural-Migdal, is synchronously described as “utopique et dystopique” (151). This paradox of utopia/dystopia

relates just as much to Zola's fascination with Paris as it does to the bourgeois representations of the changing city.

The first utopian/dystopian paradigm concerned Zola's fascination with the work of Georges-Eugène Haussmann and the transformation of *Les Halles*. Mitterand explains that Zola "a été frappé par la rationalisation et la fonctionnalisation que le préfet et l'architecte avaient imposées au grand marché de Paris" ("Tiens, voilà du boudin" 317). Haussmann's transformation of Paris inflicted a plenitude of positive and negative consequences upon the city and its citizens. From a scientific perspective, Zola seemed intrigued by the rational, functional ordering of this city-space. Mitterand describes the "espace moderniste" incorporated by Haussmann as "fonctionnel, rationaliste, planificateur, formalisé, normalisateur, hygiénique, transparent, et universel" ("Tiens voilà du boudin" 316). This terminology by Mitterand recalls also the explications of Choay who highlighted the rational, rigid, and geometric concerns of the *pré-urbanistes*. In two similar descriptions of Florent's (and hence Zola's) enchantment with Paris, the rationality and grandeur of the city takes shape. In this first example, Zola foregrounds the imposing regularity of the pavilions and their blinds:

Mais ce qui le surprenait, c'était aux deux bords de la rue, de *gigantesques* pavillons, dont les toits superposés lui semblaient grandir, s'étendre, se perdre, au fond d'un poudrolement de lueurs. Il rêvait, l'esprit affaibli, à une suite de palais, *énormes et réguliers*, d'une légèreté, de cristal, allumant sur leurs façades les mille raies de flammes de persiennes continues et sans fin. (emphasis added 39)

The second description analyzes the light cast on the geometric iron roofs, designed by the architect Baltard, as well as the general functioning of the market place which transfix Florent:

La lumière [...] entrant par toutes les baies, par toutes les raies des persiennes; c'était comme un transparent lumineux et dépoli, où se dessinaient les arêtes minces des piliers, les *courbes élégantes des charpentes, les figures géométriques des toitures*. Il s'emplissait les yeux de cette immense épure [...] reprenant son rêve de quelque machine colossale, avec ses roues, ses leviers, ses balanciers [...]. (emphasis added 202)

The Haussmannization of Paris's central marketplace, as highlighted by these depictions, brought a new uniformity and rationality to the city of Paris that accentuated a new scientific modernity as opposed to the former nostalgic irregularities of Paris's past.

Furthermore, Haussmannization created within *Les Halles*, and subsequently within Paris as a whole, a seeming monster whose gigantic superstructure imposed a new modern and orderly infrastructure upon the city. Mitterand avers:

La distribution interne calculée, la spécialisation de chacun des éléments de la structure, la classification, la désignation par fonctions et par numéros, la technicité et la précision des nomenclatures, et aussi le découpage rigoureux des durées professionnelles, construisent une gigantesque organisation, devant laquelle Zola est tombé en arrêt dès sa première nuit d'investigations, apparemment avec plus d'admiration que de gêne.
(“Tiens voilà du boudin”³¹⁷)

This enormous superstructure outlining the city is characterized as a dream for Florent. Zola's fascination with *Les Halles* as described by Mitterand details a modern machine whose purpose is to digest the people. Zola writes:

[Les Halles] entassaient leurs masses géométriques; et, quand toutes les clartés intérieures furent éteintes, qu'elles baignèrent dans le jour levant, carrées, uniformes, elles apparurent comme une machine moderne, hors de toute mesure, quelque machine à

vapeur, quelque chaudière, destinée à la digestion d'un peuple, gigantesque ventre de métal, boulonné, rivé, fait de bois, de verre et de fonte, d'une élégance et d'une puissance de moteur mécanique, fonctionnant là, avec la chaleur du chauffage, l'étourdissement, le branle furieux des roues. (62)

This re-creation of city-space was intended to produce utopia and order through modernity. Conversely, Zola's characterization of this modern machine asserts that the goal of this massive creation is the digestion of its inhabitants. Accordingly this gigantic metal stomach symbolizes the commercial function of the city which is fattened with the riches and elegance of industrialization. This rational utopia has become inseparably connected with materialism and greed, a veritable "graveyard of stench and decomposition" (Zola 299),³ or in other words, a dystopia.

Even though this modern city frightens Florent, modernity, on the other hand, infatuates Claude who represents naturalism in the novel. Claude's reaction to modernity is the antithesis of Florent's fear. Energetically Claude expresses his sentiments of the transformation of *Les Halles*. Claude affirms, "C'est une curieuse rencontre, disait-il, ce bout d'église encadré sous cette avenue de fonte... Ceci tuera cela, le fer tuera la pierre, et les temps sont proches" (Zola 293). Claude sees in *Les Halles* the final confrontation of Paris-past and Paris-future. On the one side is the Medieval legacy represented by l'Eglise de Saint-Eustache (cela, according to Claude). This grand edifice, constructed of stone and built by faith, is a testament to a mystical past. The inside of the church, which coincidentally is immediately described after this scene during Lisa's visit to Abbé Roustan, is dark and empty; its usefulness has run its course. On the other hand, a new manifesto has been written: "c'est l'art moderne, le réalisme, le naturalisme" (Zola 294). Claude attests that the greatest original monument built in his era is *Les Halles centrales*.⁴

Comparatively, while the Church has emptied and lost its usefulness, “les Halles s’élargissent à côté, toutes bourdonnantes de vie” (Zola 294). Zola’s explicitness in choosing this phrase has a significant meaning here. This phrase – “ceci tuera cela” – hearkens back to Hugo’s *Notre Dame de Paris*. Hugo, known as the Father of the Republic, is an important Republican figure in the early years of the Third Republic. As has been described in chapter three of this thesis, Paris and Revolution are interwoven and inseparable in the history of the nineteenth-century city. By once again bringing to mind the past republican ideology of revolution, Zola professes that his modern art – *le réalisme, le naturalisme* – will kill the past ideologies that no longer fit within this new, modern paradigm of utopia, in which Paris is no longer linked with the revolutions of the past.

Le Ventre de Paris is comprised of a plethora of complexities due to the hidden meanings, contradictory agendas, and metaphors. Zola’s picturesque representations of the modernization of *Les Halles* certainly point to his enchantment of this immense creation of Haussmannization. On the other hand, the vivid depictions of a massive machine, grinding, bellowing, digesting, and fattening-up as it devours the people of Paris suggest a loathing for this marketplace that epitomizes Haussmannization. His metaphorical language – “[Les Halles] lui semblaient la *bête satisfaite et digérant, Paris entripaillé, cuvant sa graisse, appuyant sourdement l’Empire*” (emphasis added 205) – suggests the failings of a government that is worried more about fattening the pocketbook rather than providing for the people. However, as has been shown in this chapter, *Le Ventre de Paris* contains an unconventional paradigm wherein Paris can be framed in Zola’s paradoxical vision of utopia/dystopia and order/disorder. In the latter end of the nineteenth century, Zola foresaw the continued need to create a city wherein suffering and poverty would be eliminated, happiness would be universal, and perfection could

be achieved. Such a city, utopian in nature, was the “ville béatitude” described by Florent in his humanitarian view of Paris.

End Notes

¹ This statement is my own found in Chapter three of this work.

² See Fourier’s reference on the fate of society if minimum provisions are not provided to the people, chapter two of this thesis.

³ In Zola’s words, “Un vaste ossuaire, un lieu de mort où ne traînait que le cadavre des êtres, un charnier de puanteur et de décomposition” (299).

⁴ Zola writes, “Depuis le commencement du siècle, on n’a bâti qu’un seul monument original, un monument qui ne soit copié nulle part, qui ait poussé naturellement dans le sol de l’époque; et ce sont les Halles centrales” (294).

Conclusion

In the texts analyzed in this thesis, nineteenth-century Paris illustrates the utopian principles formulated by Karl Mannheim whose conceptualizations concern the social and moral order that makes up human existence. His utopia is characterized by human thoughts, behaviors, and actions. The city, as discussed in chapter one of this thesis, is the primary space whereby humankind interacts and provides the necessary human experience in which action, interaction, and reaction engender ideas for utopian representations. Nineteenth-century Paris was in constant flux: the physical makeup of the city was described by many reformers as the cause of both physical and moral sickness and decay; the citizens were restless; revolution was always on the horizon; urban reform was inevitable. In this regard, Paris provided the perfect opportunity for the French nineteenth-century writer to envision a utopia that created a healthy physical and moral environment for humanity to thrive.

In our analysis of the works by Charles Fourier, Victor Hugo, and Emile Zola, common themes emerged as each respective writer undertook the task of representing the past, present, and future Paris. Using Mannheim's theory of utopia, it appeared that each writer was interested in the conduct and actions of the Parisians. They described ideas of poverty, sickness, and revolution as well as the importance of education, of progress, and of moral order. With these common themes, each writer expressed views that were not always in agreement. For example, Hugo reflected on Paris and Revolution as two necessarily interconnected entities for humanity to be established. Contrarily, Fourier believed revolution was despicable and further corrupted the social order with a damnable lie of progress. Instead of revolution, Fourier believed that real progress was found in his *attraction passionnée* in which society passes from *Civilisation* to *Harmonisme*. Finally, Zola saw revolution as a thing of the past and that Paris, or specifically the

republican city he envisioned, needed to be distanced from revolution. Whereas Hugo saw revolution as the rights of the people usurping a corruptible state, Zola showed that Republicans could change society through the democratic system.

The most telling conclusion of utopia discovered in the thesis is that each writer also characterized his vision of Paris with a specific and unique designation. For Fourier, a utopian Paris is described as Harmony. A harmonious state of being represents a society built on agreement, cooperation, and order. Hugo's representation of Paris comes under the epithet of Humanity and Fraternity. Hugo believes that Paris held the key to unlocking a society built on benevolence, cooperation, and camaraderie. Zola designates Paris as Modernity. For Zola modernity creates a paradox of utopia/dystopia and order/disorder. However, Paris offers the hope of a *ville béatitude* wherein the well-being of all the families would be of highest priority to create happiness, security, and order. Moreover, through the characterization of Florent and his utopian views of society Zola underscores how to achieve the principles of the *ville béatitude* through the establishment of a republican city governed by what Florent saw as a humanitarian law. Though each writer had a different idealization of Paris, principles of utopia highlighted their outlook on not only the city-space but of humanity which held much promise for harmony, happiness, and order in a future – utopian – state

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