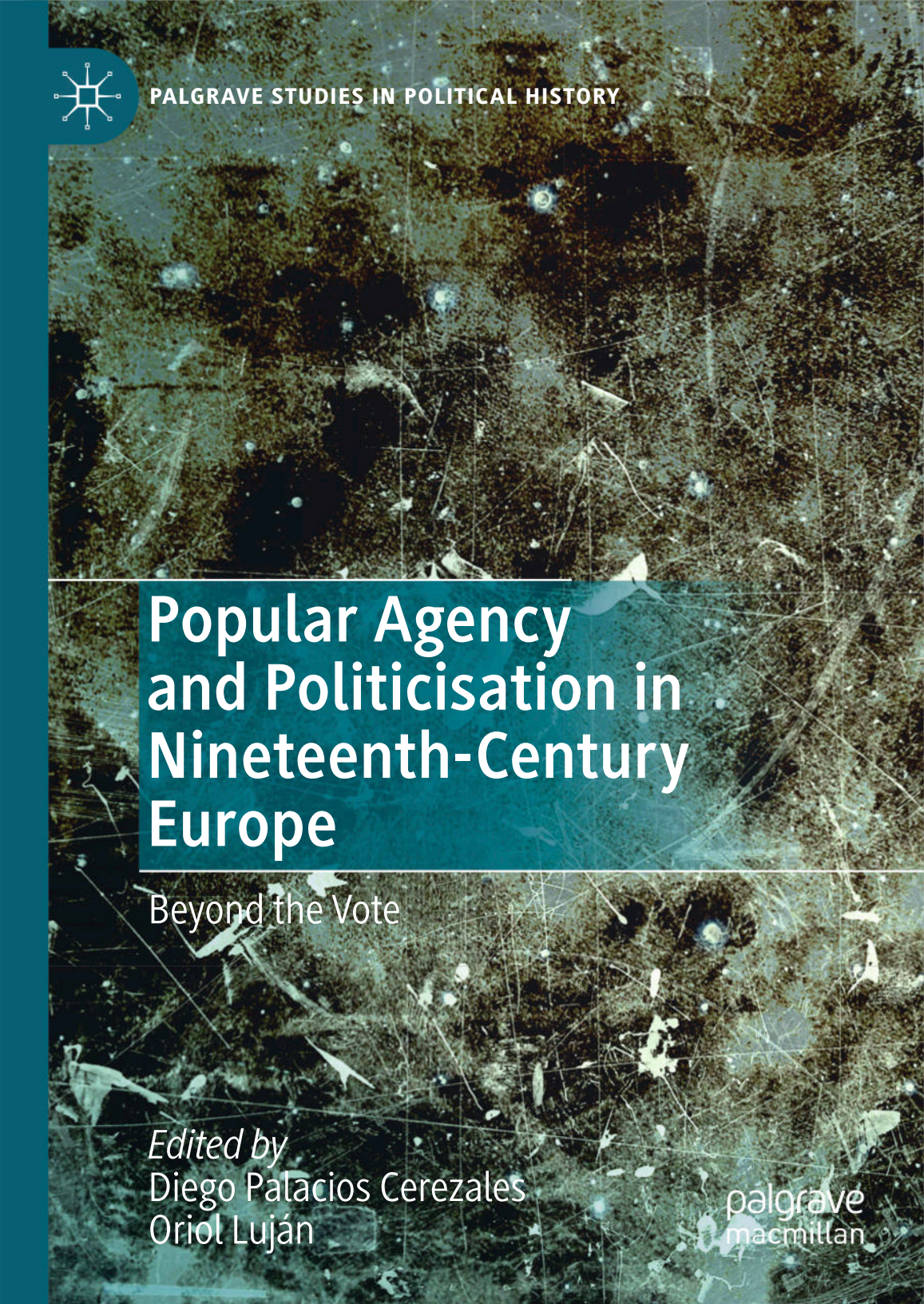
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Beyond the Vote
Edited by
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CHAPTER 4

Royalist Women in the Marketplace: Work, Gender and Popular Counter-Revolution in Southern Europe (1814–1830)

Álvaro París

> The female merchants of fish, vegetables, poultry, fruit, flowers and other goods […] have played a part in recent times. There are few among them who did not show themselves to be royalists in 1814, with a truly touching enthusiasm.
>
> *Police report on the market women of Marseille* (1818)[1]

Citizenship was far from being the only framework for popular political participation in early nineteenth-century Europe. Royalists, legitimists and counter-revolutionaries played a major role in the making of new models of political agency. They presented themselves as loyal subjects, yet they felt entitled to confront the royal authorities and criticise the

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king himself. Far from being attached to the past, royalist movements deployed 'modern' political practices and discourses to conquer the public sphere. They used every tool at their disposal to oppose revolution and to win mass support: from the press and public opinion, to electoral rallies, collective petitions, public demonstrations and popular militias. Royalism was not merely a defence of the *Ancien Regime* led by nostalgia and cultural inertia, but rather the adoption of new ways of organising a broad spectrum of social forces against republican and constitutional regimes. In response to the challenge of the French Revolution, royalists called for mass mobilisation—both on the battlefield and in the public arena—thus widening the space for popular political participation.[2]

Recent literature on popular royalism has shown how peasants, urban artisans, domestic servants, day labourers and working women embraced royalism as a way to express their own demands and grievances.[3] Politicisation was not a top-down process (spread from the elite to the masses, from the national to the local level, from the urban centres to the rural areas) or the discovery of the 'true' interests of the working classes. Common people appropriated new discourses and practices according to their everyday experiences and worldviews, in order to pursue their goals. To this end, they deployed both formal and informal strategies, traditional and novel repertoires, horizontal and hierarchical networks.

Historians and political scientists have recently called into question the dichotomies between 'conventional' and 'unconventional', 'formal' and 'informal' and 'elite' and 'popular' politics.[4] Throughout the first half of the nineteenth century, the rules of politics were under construction. Political actors experimented with different repertoires and codes to articulate their grievances, since the foundations of political legitimacy were in dispute. Therefore, politics should be addressed as a set of practices open to experimentation, rather than a closed field set by formal, specialised and institutionalised rules.

Moreover, as the editors of this book stress in the introduction, popular politics should not be conceived as a closed, self-contained and autonomous field, separate from elites and institutions. 'Popular' and 'elite' should not be pitted against one another as two isolated and autonomous spheres.[5] Instead of approaching popular politics as a singular universe, we should instead include these actors in the narrative of political history. Not because working people 'deserve' to be vindicated, but because we simply cannot understand politics without taking them into account.

In this chapter, I will discuss how working women engaged in royalist politics to address their everyday concerns and defend what they perceived as their own interests. I approach this subject through two case studies: Marseille and Madrid. Despite their differences, both cities witnessed the rise of royalist mobilisation involving working-class participants during the Bourbon Restoration period (1814–1830). In both cases, moreover, market women seem to have played an important role. Therefore, as long as we avoid making hasty generalisations, these examples would provide a good starting point for further comparative research.

'Royalist Furies': Work, Gender and Counter-Revolutionary Politics

In the aftermath of the French Revolution, working men and women from southern European cities—such as Marseille, Toulouse, Montpellier, Naples and Madrid—took an active role in royalist and counter-revolutionary movements. Traditionally, historians have explained this support as a conservative reaction against economic modernisation. According to this interpretation, artisans and workers whose traditional trades depended on 'the economic system of the past'—as well as those who had personal bonds with the elites—were keener to support royalist positions.[6] Royalism would thus have been an elite-driven movement, fuelled by manipulation, patronage and bribery; an expression of the enduring influence of local notables upon pre-industrial workers. In big capital cities such as Naples and Madrid, economic backwardness, popular conservativism and the influence of the Catholic Church would explain the appeal of reactionary discourses among the masses. It was not by chance that Marx and Engels took inspiration from the Neapolitan *lazzaroni*—the urban lower classes who resisted revolution both in 1799 and 1848—to shape their vision of the lumpenproletariat.[7] In sum, popular royalism has been portrayed either as a form of 'false consciousness' or as a persistence of the *Ancien Regime*.

The sociology of popular royalism, however, contradicts these assumptions. In fact, one particular feature of royalist and counter-revolutionary movements was their ability to gather heterogeneous social groups with apparently conflicting interests against the specific impact of revolutionary policies. Popular royalism was rooted not only among well-established artisans and dependent servants but also among precarious proletarians, unsettled migrants, port workers, day labourers, market women,

bricklayers, textile workers and street vendors. In short, as stressed by Bernard Rulof, 'historians' portrayal of royalism as a force characterised by powerful patrons and dependent clients needs to be reconsidered'.[8]

Market women played a singular role within the constellation of working-class royalists. Both official sources and contemporary witnesses tended to depict working women as particularly radical in their royalist views. Spanish and French archives are filled with descriptions of 'amazons', 'harpies', 'furies', *poissardes* [fishwives] and *mujerzuelas* [whores][9] leading royalist crowds and inciting men to violence. Moreover, food hawkers, fishwives, fruit vendors and street sellers appeared consistently in the descriptions of royalist crowds and supporters. They seemed to be at the forefront of the action, both in peaceful demonstrations and in violent street clashes. Police agents constantly reported subversive discourses and malicious rumours spread by market women in public spaces. This is not surprising, since food sellers played a central role in the urban community.[10] Firstly, they nourished the population, in a context in which famine was one of the main causes of social unrest. Secondly, they were genuine points of reference on the streets and in the squares. They knew who was who and where people lived, which made them the perfect candidates for asking directions. Furthermore, they were at the centre of rumours, conversations and oral communication networks, so they acted as a thermometer of public opinion.[11] Police agents exploited this collective knowledge by consulting market women and by using them as a source of information. Market women fuelled the stomach of the city and were the mouthpiece of the urban working classes.[12] Thus, they played a crucial role in the imaginary of the body politic of the *Ancien Regime*, an imaginary that was preserved—yet transformed—through the revolutionary and post-revolutionary periods.[13]

The very idea of a 'female' popular royalism, however, was closely tied to the stereotype of women as irrational and emotional beings. During the French Revolution, lower-class women emerged as the archetypical model of fanaticism, through the image of the *tricoteuses* and the guillotine furies.[14] The same dynamic happened on the opposite side, where royalist furies embodied the most fearsome part of the counter-revolutionary crowds.[15] Royalist women were portrayed as ignorant, easy to manipulate, subject to the influence of the clergy, emotional, volatile and fervently Catholic. The attributes assigned to their gender were paired with those ascribed to their class position, to shape the image of the *mujerzuelas realistas* [royalist whores] and the *furies royalistes* as

an incarnation of the rudest rabble. By presenting women as irresponsible, manipulated by priests and carried away by their emotions, police and judicial authorities dismissed the agency of the protesters. Therefore, the omnipresence of women might be explained as a rhetorical artefact to undermine the legitimacy of the royalist movement rather than an accurate description of its social background.

The recurrence of these stereotypes has led many historians to neglect the actual participation of working women in counter-revolutionary movements. The most frequent reason alleged for this omission lies in the difficulties posed by primary sources. Unravelling the political participation of working women in the first half of the nineteenth century is indeed a challenging task. Riotous women are elusive figures of disorder who briefly appear in the sources before 'returning back to the shadows'.[16] As a result, the history of popular politics in the first half of the nineteenth century is overwhelmingly male, since it remains focussed on club militants, secret society members, coffee house customers, National Guards and guerrilla fighters. Meanwhile, women are marginalised in the domestic sphere and in the so-called traditional repertoires of contention, such as food riots, religious-based protests and community-oriented goals. In contrast with 'modern' political discourses and practices (oriented towards the national public sphere), female protests would have been narrower in scope, aimed at specific concerns such as food prices, community values and 'parochial' issues. Working-class women would have been particularly inclined to counter-revolution because of their rejection of modernity, secularisation and the disruptive effects of economic changes on the traditional community.[17] The active role played by women in the political arena is portrayed paradoxically as a reactive defence of the old society and as a reaffirmation of their traditional role within the community as mothers and caretakers. Thus, the engagement of women in counter-revolution is often presented as an extension of their traditional gender role as domestic caregivers.[18]

The assumption that women were excluded from the public sphere, however, has been widely contested by historians.[19] The doctrine of separate spheres was an idea—imposed through policies and gender norms—and not an actual reflection of social relationships in urban spaces. Women worked, lived, chatted, socialised, sold, bought, borrowed, ate, fought, protested and enjoyed leisure in the streets.[20] They actually 'owned' the street (although in a different way to men), a space in which they held a greater agency than has traditionally been assumed.[21] At least

in urban contexts, the public/private dichotomy is not a useful framework to describe the social reality in eighteenth- and nineteenth-century Europe. Public space was a gendered space, but women (particularly working women) were not excluded from it. For the vast majority of women, working outside the home was not an option but essential for survival.

To sum up, most studies on counter-revolutionary working women have focussed on food riots, religious mobilisations and other repertoires linked to their role as caregivers. Indeed, royalist women looked after wounded fighters, hid refractory priests, carried sensitive information, acted as spies, sewed flags, organised clandestine support networks, supplied soldiers and performed logistical tasks.[22] This being the case, they also occupied the public space to challenge the authorities, confronted soldiers and the police, chased and harassed revolutionaries, engaged in a 'war on symbols' in the streets and openly discussed political matters. Women-led public demonstrations in support of the refractory priests, organised fundraising, subscriptions and petitions for royalist and Catholic causes and, in some cases, they even took up arms.[23] In short, working-class women played a fundamental role in shaping popular royalism as a 'mass' movement.

Femmes des halles and *poissardes*: Royalist Market Women in Marseille (1814–1815)

From the first abdication of Napoleon (April 1814) to the Second Restoration of Louis XVIII (July 1815), France went through four political regimes in fifteen months.[24] During this turbulent period, royalists gathered wide support through southern France, a region known as the *Midi blanc*.[25] In Toulouse, Marseille, Bordeaux and Montpellier, royalist movements took to the streets raising white flags, destroying Napoleonic symbols in public spaces (such as statues, plaques, tricolour cockades, flags and imperial eagles) and chasing after supporters of the Empire and the Revolution.[26] Conscription, taxation and the social cost of permanent war had eroded Napoleon's legitimacy. Thus, a section of the urban working classes pinned their hopes on the restoration of the monarchy. The return of Napoleon during the Hundred Days unleashed a cycle of violence and reprisals between Bonapartists—who controlled the army and the militia of the *fédérés*—and royalists, who recruited their own militias and armed

gangs.[27] Throughout this period, police reports from Marseille highlighted the royalist fervour of market women and food sellers. Those women—known as *femmes des halles, poissardes* and *régratières*—were singled out as some of the core supporters of popular royalism, along with port workers, stevedores, ship carpenters and street-porters (*portefaix*).

A police report from 1818 summarises this perception. According to the account, the *femmes des halles* from Marseille 'have played a role in recent times and there are few among them who have not shown themselves to be royalists in 1814, with a truly touching enthusiasm':

> The return of Bonaparte made them furious and, during the Hundred Days, far from hiding their way of thinking, they sold their jewellery and clothes to lead soldiers to desertion, and they made tremble—by means of their audacity—those soldiers who would have wanted to suppress them.[28]

The category of *femmes des halles* referred to 'the sellers of fish, vegetables, poultry, fruits, flowers and other goods',[29] from those who rented a stall in the market to the myriad of food hawkers and resellers who sold on the streets with or without a licence.[30] The latter were known as *régratières* (resellers) or *repetieros* in the Provençal dialect. The term *poissardes* originally referred to sellers of fish (*poisson*) but it was later extended to all kinds of female food vendors. Moreover, *poissarde* came to mean 'vulgar woman', showing 'rude and insolent manners and language'.[31] Like the Spanish term *verdulera* (woman vegetable seller), the term *poissarde* became associated with the manners of the 'lower people'.[32]

Along with police reports, the memoirs of Julie Pellizzone provide an original perspective on the political engagement of market women. Pellizzone was a well-to-do royalist woman from Marseille who kept a diary during those years.[33] On 6 May 1814, for example, she described how the *poissardes* organised a royalist parade following the example of the local bourgeoisie. They carried a portrait of Louis XVIII in procession with tambourines and white flags through the main streets, while shouting 'long live the king'.[34] Later, they danced around an *arc de triomphe* erected for the occasion in the marketplace. The *poissardes* decorated the king's bust with a silver crown, while the flower sellers [*bouquetières*] covered it with bouquets and the fruit sellers distributed oranges to the crowd.[35] Through this repertoire, market women stressed their central role in the urban economy and the public space. They ostensibly showed

their loyalty to the king and established a bond between their trade and the well-being of the restored monarchy.

Women from different markets competed with each other to publicly show their devotion to the royal cause. The *poissardes* from the Rue de Rome market gave a dance for the (English and Sicilian) soldiers of the allied army stationed in Marseille after Napoleon's defeat.[36] They spent large sums of money for the occasion, installing decorated columns with white curtains, flags and busts of the king and the Duchess of Angoulême. Some days later, women from the Saint-Jean market took part in a procession in which they carried a royal bust to the basilica of Notre-Dame de la Garde. Afterwards, they set up a tent in their market square, where they held a dinner and danced with the allied troops.[37]

Political parades were inspired by religious rituals. Royal portraits, white flags and *fleur de lys* mingled with images of the Virgin and religious offerings.[38] Some of these rituals were perceived as a form of idolatry by Catholic priests, as was the case when one of them refused to bless a portrait of the Duchess of Angoulême.[39] Foreign observers were shocked by these religious expressions. Boucher de Perthes, a customs officer sent from Paris, portrayed local royalism as the result of female religious fanaticism:

> I do not know what they find in common between politics and religion, but they see heretics in everyone that is not ultra or white [royalist] like them.[40]

According to his account, women sang popular songs calling for the burning of the Bonapartists at the stake as if they were Huguenots or 'sons of Beelzebub'.[41] Charles de Rémusat—another Parisian official sent to Toulouse—explained lower-class royalism as a result of 'Spanish devotion',[42] while others described the royalists as 'fanatical like thorough-going Spaniards'.[43]

Market women also used their presence in the public space to raise funds for the royalist cause. They organised donations for the companies of royalist volunteers who fought Napoleon. Allegedly, this money helped to instigate desertion among soldiers, who would later join the royalist ranks.[44] As has been shown, far from being part of a faceless mob, market women had economic and social resources, moral authority and a position to defend. In a context of uncertainty, when the merchants of

Marseille were demanding the re-enactment of the port franchise abolished in 1794,[45] the *femmes des halles* asserted their importance in the local economy and positioned themselves as the most faithful royalists to better defend their interests.

Finally, market women also took part in violent incidents against Bonapartists and soldiers, hated because of their loyalty to the emperor. During the Hundred Days (when Napoleon briefly returned to power until his final defeat at Waterloo), the population of Marseille openly confronted the troops and even tore off the cockades and Napoleonic badges from their uniforms. A state of siege was declared in April 1814 to supress the 'popular riots', and some people started to perceive the troops as occupiers. Even the authorities considered the city lost for the imperial cause and acknowledged that 'the people of Marseille are for the king' and 'it will take some time before Marseille becomes French'.[46] The *poissardes* publicly provoked and mocked the soldiers. On one occasion, a military officer asked some market women 'what happened with the king they loved so much'. One of them answered that 'we have put him in quarantine since the plague [Napoleon] came to France'.[47] On another occasion, a reseller [*régratière*] asked a soldier to rock her baby. Then she uncovered the cradle, in which a bust of Louis XVIII was lying, and exclaimed 'come all to see the devil cradling the good Lord'.[48] In the eyes of the police, these jokes showed how market women 'believed themselves to be of some social importance' and 'abused' their position.[49]

The situation escalated after the second abdication of Napoleon (June 1815). When most of the troops had left the city, a violent persecution broke out against the Bonapartists and their accomplices. Women took part in what would become one of the bloodiest episodes of the so-called White Terror of 1815. According to the police 'the women from the public squares' rushed to kill Bonapartists, joining the porters [*porte-faix*] and port workers who ran around the city armed with their bars.[50] Isolated soldiers were chased and beaten to tear off their cockades, while the rioters plundered the shops and homes of the *castagniers* (as they nicknamed the Bonapartists[51]), murdered them and throw them into the sea. Events degenerated into a massacre which left 250 victims (between dead and wounded) and more than 80 shops and houses plundered.[52]

Violence struck the 'Egyptian' community of Marseille, many of whom had come to the city after the campaign of Napoleon (1798). Among them were the soldiers of the Imperial Guard and the famous Mamelukes,

but also a wide range of people from the Ottoman provinces (Syria, Palestine, Greece, etc.), known generically as 'Egyptian refugees'. Some of the women who arrived with the 'Egyptians' were known as *négresses*.[53] Although some of them were former slaves of African origin, it is very likely that the term *négresses* was applied to women of diverse phenotypes in order to label them as 'others'. Pellizzone describes how two of these women—that were trying to escape from the murderous crowd—made an attempt to save themselves by embracing a bust of Louis XVIII installed by the *poissardes* in the *Cours*. The market women pulled them off, considering them unworthy of touching the king's statue. As a result, the *négresses* were beaten to death; one of them was shot and the other thrown into the sea.[54]

Verduleras and *mujerzuelas*: Royalist Market Women in Madrid (1814–1833)

During the reign of Ferdinand VII (1808–1833), liberal and absolutist regimes alternated in the midst of a civil war that polarised Spanish society and gave birth to new models of political participation. Absolutism was restored twice, first from 1814 to 1820 and then from 1823 to 1833. During the constitutional interlude known as the *Trienio Liberal* (1820–1823), royalist guerrilla bands rose up against the government, plunging entire regions into civil war. Therefore, the situation of rapid regime changes and widespread political violence bears some similarities to the two restorations of Louis XVIII and Napoleon's Hundred Days in France.

In Madrid, fruit and vegetable sellers (*naranjeras, verduleras* and *rabaneras*[55]) frequently appeared in police reports because of their fervent royalist and anti-liberal positions. According to the police interpretation, the lower people of Madrid 'belong to the ultra-royalist party' because they are 'led by the clergy who control them at their will'.[56]

Throughout the first absolutist restoration, market women of Madrid expressed their support for the regime through a public display of their loyalty to Ferdinand VII. During the Royal Entry of May 1814, the women of the *Plaza Mayor* (the central market square) opened up a path between their stalls and decorated it with vegetable arches covered with oranges, lemons and 'all kinds of groceries'. By this gesture, they linked the prosperity of Ferdinand VII's reign to the abundance of foodstuff and the well-being of their trade.[57] Since market women were the suppliers

of essential goods, the display of groceries during the royal ceremony symbolised 'the abundance promised by the happy reign'.[58]

Aside from their role in public ceremonies, market women also took an active part in the violence against the liberals. Once again, 'women crowds from the lowest rabble' were depicted as 'furies' who tried to lynch liberal prisoners with their own hands.[59] Much like in Marseille, liberals were labelled as heretics, Jews and Freemasons excluded from the community, who deserved to be slaughtered 'as the Christians did with the Saracens'.[60]

However, it was not until the second absolutist restoration of 1823 when widespread violence against the liberals erupted. In May 1823, French troops commanded by the Duke of Angoulême, alongside royalist guerrilla bands, entered Madrid, thus putting an end to the liberal regime for the second time. Food vendors and other working women received the royalist troops wearing white ribbons, playing tambourines, chanting royalist songs, harassing the liberals and destroying the symbols of the Constitution.[61] 'Ragged women' looted and burned the houses and shops of those identified as liberals, while throwing mud at the constitutional soldiers that were retreating from the city.[62] Once again, the portrayal of working-class women as agents of political violence must be interpreted carefully. On this occasion, however, we can rely on a unique source that provides abundant information about the political leanings of market women. Secret police agents of the *Superintentendencia General de Policía*—established in 1824—frequented market squares to explore the discourses of the 'lower classes', providing a comprehensive account of public opinion in working-class neighbourhoods.

In the Plaza de San Ildefonso, the main marketplace of the Maravillas neighbourhood, fruit and vegetable vendors debated political issues, circulated rumours and denounced the police. The police force itself became the target of popular criticism, both for social and political reasons. On the one hand, the female sellers protested against street vending licences and security cards, the latter a personal identification document recently introduced by the police.[63] On the other, the police were accused of persecuting the 'true royalists' while protecting the liberals. In this way, everyday resistance against police practices merged with the ultra-royalist discourse, portraying the police as a treacherous and 'liberal' institution despised by the majority of the people.

In this context, everyday concerns could be 'politicised' in an ultra-royalist sense. When the price of bread rose in 1825, the women vendors

from the Plaza de San Ildefonso blamed the usual suspects: the bakers, the merchants and the local authorities. But in contrast to the bread riots of the eighteenth century, a new scapegoat emerged: the liberals. Some consumers claimed that the rise in the price 'was the liberals' fault, because most of them are rich and they have a lot of stored wheat, and they want to sell it at a high price to vex the royalists'.[64] According to a woman from the Maravillas neighbourhood, 'miserable people' claimed that 'everything bad that happened to them' was because of the liberals and the government that protected them.[65] Thus, ordinary people expressed their everyday concerns in political terms, adopting an ultra-royalist discourse to attack the liberals, the government and the police as responsible for the suffering of the people.

Fruit and vegetable sellers were not the only ones who linked their everyday concerns to the political situation. In 1826, the selling of cotton fabrics in streets and squares was forbidden in Madrid. Henceforth, only merchants with shops were allowed to trade in these cotton textiles. Women street sellers protested that the government was taking away the livelihood of the poor, warning the king that 'had it not been for them, the Constitution would still be in place'.[66] Working women felt responsible for the restoration of absolutism in 1814 and 1823. Thus, they considered that the monarch was duty bound to address their everyday concerns and protect their trade in exchange for their loyalty.

Conflicts between female street vendors and well-established merchants were sometimes experienced through political lenses. In June 1825, an anti-liberal riot started in Madrid. Dozens of suspected liberals were killed and wounded, while shops and coffee houses were attacked in the city centre. Many merchants interpreted these incidents as a 'raid against the city's commerce', because 'the commerce was generally identified as liberal'.[67] Several people noticed 'some agitation among the female vegetable vendors and the lower classes' who threatened the shops on Calle de las Huertas, a central commercial hub.[68] Panic spread among business owners and the middle classes who felt persecuted by poor women and 'men from the scum of the Earth'.[69] Therefore, ultra-royalist violence was perceived as revenge carried out by poor street sellers and lower-class women against rich merchants in the city centre. In the days that followed, some merchants, traders and men of finance claimed that they were closing their businesses and running away to France, where they could find protection from this 'crowd of armed men and *mujerzuelas*'.[70]

Police agents explained the proliferation of anti-liberal and ultra-royalist discourses among working women as the result of elite manipulation. Their reports, however, provide a rich description of the social interactions through which political opinions were formed in public spaces. Women came into contact with ultra-royalist discourses by talking about politics with priests, soldiers and royalist militiamen. For example, the police reported that 'a Franciscan lay brother frequented the Plaza de San Ildefonso, where he talked a lot with the female vegetable vendors, offering tobacco powder to the shopkeepers and *politicando* [talking politics] with them'.[71] The Franciscan tried to convince them that the Inquisition would be restored to supress liberalism, while the 'infamous police', 'made up of crooks and thieves', would soon disappear. On the banks of the Manzanares River, friars and royalist militiamen 'socialised with the washerwomen and engaged with them in political discussion'.[72] From the police perspective, it seemed 'incoherent' that such poor women, being incapable of 'reasoning', could participate in political conversations on their own initiative. Therefore, they assumed that 'these *mujerzuelas* are nothing more than an echo of the ideas that were darkly infused into them'.[73] While trying to describe how royalist elites manipulated an ignorant and passive population, police reports were in fact revealing the politicisation process that was taking place in everyday spaces of work and sociability. From the market squares to the banks of the river, working women shared information orally and discussed the political news, thus forming their own opinions.

The Politicisation of Everyday Concerns and the Feeling of an Incomplete Restoration

Madrid and Marseille were two very different cities geographically, socially and politically, so that a comparison between them might seem unfeasible at first sight. However, they both held large open food markets overwhelmingly run by women, which gave rise to distinctive patterns of outdoor sociability.[74] Moreover, they experienced the spread of royalist and counter-revolutionary discourses which permeated working-class milieux during the Restoration period. For this reason, they provide a unique vantage point from which to study market women's engagement with royalist politics. The distinctive role of female food vendors in urban society was well established in both cities during the *Ancien Régime*. But the uncertainty caused by the revolution and the subsequent

regime changes forced them to adapt and reassess their role in the new political and institutional landscape.

Market women were not necessarily more likely than other workers to embrace royalist politics. In fact, Parisian market women had become one of the early symbols of the French Revolution, after they led the march to Versailles in October 1789. Haim Burstin has shown how the *Dames des Halles* of Paris tried to 'preserve' and 'reconvert' their traditional distinctive role to bring it into line with the new political regime.[75] They managed to re-establish a direct relationship with the king and adapted their old merits to the new revolutionary values. As Katie Jarvis points out, market women engaged in revolutionary politics through their role as merchants, women and mothers. Therefore, in 1793, they confronted the militant women of the *Société des citoyennes républicaines révolutionnaires* because they supported price controls (the General Maximum) which squeezed their profit margins as food retailers. For this reason, the *femmes des halles* have traditionally been portrayed as 'conservative' and opposed to women's citizenship, while in fact they were asserting their own understanding of economic citizenship.[76]

The example of revolutionary Paris teaches us that market women's relationship with politics was embedded in particular contexts and attached to the conditions of their trade. From this perspective, the royalist positions of market women from Madrid and Marseille during the Restoration period may be analysed in a new light. At a critical juncture in the development of their trade, market women presented themselves as the most faithful subjects of the restored monarchy to reassess their traditional role in new circumstances. As happened in Paris during the French Revolution, they 'reconverted' the traditional monarchical imaginary to adapt it to a new situation, marked by the civil war between liberals and absolutists (in Spain) and Bonapartists and royalists (in France).

Popular royalism was rooted in the everyday concerns and demands of the market women, like the price of bread, taxes, vending licences, police restrictions on the use of public spaces and resentment against rich merchants.[77] Politicisation arose from specific and material grievances, embedded in particular contexts, such as the working-class neighbourhoods and marketplaces of Marseille and Madrid, where royalist discourses circulated widely among the people during the Restoration period. In both cities, a sector of the working population—including market women—appropriated royalist, anti-liberal and anti-Bonapartist discourses to address their grievances, in order to pursue what they

perceived as their own interests. Their support for the royalist cause was neither unconditional nor uncritical. Once they realised that the restoration was not fulfilling their social and economic aspirations, they started to accuse the authorities of being too moderate and of protecting the revolutionaries. Following ultra-royalist narratives, they claimed that the restoration was incomplete. The victory against the revolution had been mutilated as a result of the betrayal of the authorities and the police, labelled as too moderate or crypto-liberal. Since the restoration was incomplete, they felt entitled to criticise the authorities, the government and the king himself, and even to unleash popular violence to obtain retribution and restore justice.

In Madrid, some popular royalists claimed that 'they were doing no better than during the time of the Constitution', while protesting against the rising bread prices.[78] According to them, the authorities and the king himself were responsible for deceiving the people who had supported the restoration. There were political reasons for the growing disaffection towards Ferdinand VII, since the ultra-royalist elites had been removed from key positions of power. However, these resentful elites appealed to the masses and managed to make a connection with their concerns. Ferdinand VII was insulted and accused of being 'the most liberal [person] in the nation' and a 'Freemason'.[79] This rhetoric permeated the working-class neighbourhoods, where the police reported that working women claimed that Ferdinand was incapable of ruling and would be replaced by his brother (the Infante Don Carlos).[80]

In Marseille, working-class royalists also felt let down by the outcome of the restoration. Royalist elites had promised to abolish the *droits réunis* (indirect taxes) to stir up popular support. Once in power, however, they did not keep their promise. In May 1814, the people of Marseille protested against the *droits réunis* while shouting 'long live the king', because 'they had got it into their heads that they would not pay any more taxes' following the restoration.[81] Expectations were soon dashed and Julie Pellizzone's diary describes the gradual disappointment of the formerly enthusiastic royalist masses. Economic stagnation, excessive taxes and the negative impact of the long-desired port franchise made people distrust the king.[82] The hopes placed in the ability of the restoration to improve the living conditions of the common people were frustrated and royalist fervour declined.[83] In 1818, the authorities of Marseille were pleased that 'everything is back to the order of our civilised societies'. The political radicalism of market women seemed to have somehow vanished

and 'nobody talks about these women [*dames des halles*] other than to ask for the price and quality of their goods'.[84]

The frustration, however, led to the emergence of an ultra-royalist opposition with rank-and-file supporters. As in Spain, the French ultras (known as *exaltés* or *épurés*[85]) challenged the authorities and called for the 'looting and killing' of the former Bonapartists. The ultras took advantage of the social unrest and gathered popular support by 'stirring up the masses' and 'flattering the passions of the crowd'.[86] The authorities in Marseille emphasised that what was presented as the 'popular opinion' was nothing but 'a misguided faction of the people' that was 'excited and attracted' by the ultras. The disaffection fuelled by the feeling of an incomplete restoration brought popular royalism into a new phase in both countries. Ultra-royalism embodied the opposition to the alleged 'moderation' of the restored regimes, paving the way for the emergence of French legitimism and Spanish Carlism in the 1830s.[87]

Conclusion

Politicisation could be defined as the universalisation of singular experiences, a process through which social demands transcended the local and particular horizon of everyday experience to be transferred to an emerging political arena.[88] Thus, tensions, expectations and desires originated outside the political field, yet were transferred there in order to gain legitimacy.[89]

Politics were merged into everyday life and arose from concrete and material concerns. They took shape on the streets, and in squares and marketplaces, through the experiences of ordinary people living under extraordinary circumstances such as revolution, counter-revolution and restoration. However, the focus on the agency of ordinary people should not lead to an understanding of 'popular politics' as a closed and autonomous field. As we have seen, market women interacted with members of the elites, such as ecclesiastics or ultra-royalist agitators, who tried to win them over to the cause. Therefore, their political horizon was neither self-sufficient nor isolated from elites and institutions. In fact, arguing for the autonomy of 'the politics of the people' can lead, paradoxically, to an underestimation of the ability of these people to understand, influence and transform the political system as a whole.

Through the lens of their everyday concerns—regarding food prices, vending licences and police practices—market women took a stand on

issues of 'high' politics, such as the impact of the revolution and the role of the restored monarchy. Politics did not 'descend' to the masses, nor were they 'discovered' by them. Ordinary people learnt how to express their grievances in political terms, appropriating and reshaping political ideas and practices, thus making them their own. Far from being a remnant of the past or a result of the manipulation of the clergy, popular royalism emerged as an alternative path of politicisation during the Age of Revolution.[90]

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Notes

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29. Ibid.
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31. *Poissarde*: 'Femme vulgaire dans ses manières, particulièrement grossière et insolente dans son langage'. 'Qui imite ou adopte un langage et des mœurs attribués au bas peuple'. *Trésor de la Langue Française informatisé* https://www.cnrtl.fr/.
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36. Ibid., vol. 2, 96 (31 July 1815).

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49. Ibid.
50. ANF, F^7, 9002, 'Les femmes des places publiques s'embrassaient s'excitaient à tuer les napoléonistes, les portefaix, les ouvriers du port courraient çà et là armés de leurs barres poussant de cris de rage; tout militaire isolé était poursuivi et battu pour lui faire quitter la cocarde; on parlait de piller les magasins et les maisons des Chataigniers [sic] et de les jeter tous dans le port'.
51. 'Qu'est-ce qu'un castagnier? C'est un complice de l'ogre de Corse, un monstre, un scélérat, enfin un bonapartiste, qu'on appelle castagnier parce que tous les bonapartistes sont Corses, et que tous les Corses se nourrissent de châtaignes'. Boucher de Perthes, *Sous dix rois*, vol. 3, 274.
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66. Archivo Histórico de Protocolos Notariales [AHPN], 35.194, police report, 9 January 1826, celador 6.
67. AHN, Consejos, leg. 12.312, police report, 20 June 1825, celador 2 and AHN, Consejos, leg. 12.292, police report, 8 July 1825, celador 4.
68. AHN, Consejos, leg. 12.312, police report, 18 June 1825, [the agent who signed with a cross]. 'Se ha advertido cierta agitación en las rabaneras y gente baja y amenazas por éstas a las tiendas de la calle de Huertas'.
69. AHN, Consejos, leg. 12.293, police report, 9 August 1825, informant.
70. AHN, Consejos, leg. 12.312, police report, 23 June 1825, celador 2.
71. AHPN, 35.194, police report, 14 January 1825, celador 3.
72. AHN, Consejos, leg. 12.330, police report, 1 September 1825, celador 3. 'Alternando con las mismas lavanderas y metiéndose con ellas en discursos políticos'.
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79. AHN, Consejos, leg. 12.312, police report, 11 June 1825, celador 3.
80. AHN, Consejos, leg. 12.293, police report, 23 August 1825, the agent who signed as 'N°'.

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82. Pellizzone, vol. 2, 99; ANF, F^7, 9002, report of the police lieutenant of Marseille, 13 November 1815.
83. Pellizzone, vol. 2, 119.
84. 'On ne parle guère de ces dames que pour s'enquérir de la cherté ou de la bonne qualité de leurs marchandises'. ANF, F^7, 9636, 31 January 1818, prefect of the Bouches-du-Rhône.
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