

ROMANTICISM IN PRINT: PERIODICALS AND THE POLITICS OF AESTHETICS IN

RESTORATION PARIS, 1814-1830

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Elizabeth Frances Della Zazzera

*For Jack*

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## ABSTRACT

### ROMANTICISM IN PRINT: PERIODICALS AND THE POLITICS OF AESTHETICS IN RESTORATION PARIS, 1814-1830

Elizabeth Della Zazzera

Warren Breckman

In 1814 allied forces defeated Napoleon's armies and restored the Bourbon monarchy to the throne of France. In the wake of over two decades of revolution, empire, and upheaval, France built itself anew by calling on a past seemingly untainted by its recent sins and missteps, and by building toward a (hopefully) prosperous future. The debate over how to rebuild France took place not only in the world of high politics but also at the level of culture, and particularly through the literary debate between romantics and classicists – the *bataille romantique*. The literary debates between classicists and romantics, with their conceptions of what was 'French' and what was not, became entangled with political debates between liberals and royalists, and both classicism and romanticism could be mobilized for various political aims. Such disputes were publicized and crystalized in literary journals, which were both intellectual and commercial products. Through their robust debates about literature, these periodicals put forward competing proposals about how best to rebuild France. This dissertation examines the role of literary journals and other cultural and commercial institutions in the growth of romanticism in Paris between 1814 and 1830. It argues that the creation of romanticism as a genre, especially through its conflict with classicism, was a collaborative process that involved writers, printers, booksellers, readers, and institutions. The literary conflict between romanticism and classicism, which took place not only in the press, but also on stage, and in meeting halls, salons, and living rooms, played an important role in the development of a nascent civil society in early nineteenth-century Paris, and that the debate, along with those institutions of civil society, offered a seemingly non-political avenue through which to debate French society in the face of government restrictions on press freedom and freedom of assembly for political papers and organizations. The *bataille romantique* took on a

particular salience in the Restoration because it paralleled and became entwined with the conflict between revolution and counter-revolution that undergirded all political conflict in the Restoration.

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## INTRODUCTION

On 8 June 1795, following the death of the young son of Louis XVI and Marie-Antoinette in his Parisian prison, the Comte de Provence, brother of Louis XVI, assumed the title Louis XVIII. Sixteen days later he released the “Declaration of Verona,” a letter addressed to his subjects, the people of France. In it, Louis called on France to turn back the clock on Revolution, arguing that impiety and revolt caused all the ills currently afflicting the people of France. “To that ancient and wise constitution, whose fall has proved your ruin, we wish to restore all its purity which time has corrupted, all its purity which time has impaired,” he wrote.<sup>1</sup> Throughout his exile, however, Louis’ vision of a restored Bourbon monarchy shifted. In the December 1804 “Declaration of Calmar” he repudiated his former position, demonstrated his support for a constitutional monarchy in France, agreed to retain many of Napoleon’s administrative changes, and promised to grant amnesty to anyone who supported his restoration as King.<sup>2</sup> In March 1814, from his exile at Hartwell House, Louis reaffirmed his newfound moderate position,<sup>3</sup> and in May 1814 Louis enshrined this moderate vision of Restoration – caught somewhere between revolution and counter-revolution – in his restored government’s founding document, the *charte constitutionnelle*. The charter declared all people of France equal before the law, established representative government, and protected freedom of the press,<sup>4</sup> religion, and other rights. But it also declared that the charter and all its attendant rights were a gift bestowed on the French by their King, who retained significant executive and legislative power. In an attempt to ease these tensions and to move forward unhindered by France’s past, the charter declared that “all inquiries into opinions and votes voiced prior to the Restoration are forbidden. This same *oubli* is mandated for both tribunals and citizens.”<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> *The Annual Register, Or, A View of the History, Politics and Literature for the Year 1795* (London: T. Burton, 1800), 255, //catalog.hathitrust.org/Record/008965699.

<sup>2</sup> Philip Mansel, *Louis XVIII*, Rev. ed (Stroud: Sutton, 1999), 119.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, 162.

<sup>4</sup> Although the Restoration government curtailed press freedom through a series of press laws. See chapter 1.

<sup>5</sup> “Assemblée Nationale - Charte Constitutionnelle Du 4 Juin 1814,” accessed September 19, 2013, <http://www.assemblee-nationale.fr/histoire/constitutions/charte-constitutionnelle-1814.asp>. “Toutes recherches des opinions et votes émis jusqu’à la restauration sont interdites. Le même oubli est commandé aux tribunaux et aux citoyens.”

This tension between revolution and counter-revolution,<sup>6</sup> this compromise between old and new, would characterize Restoration politics for the next sixteen years. In the aftermath of a bloody Revolution and a military dictatorship and empire, France built itself anew by calling on a past seemingly untainted by its recent sins and missteps, and by building toward a (hopefully) prosperous future. This rebuilding 'restored' France insofar as it tried to reclaim it, and return it to its former glory, but no one could truly revive the old regime; too much had transpired in the interim. The events of the Terror and of Napoleon's reign loomed large in the minds of the French, as well in the minds of all Europeans affected by Napoleonic expansion. Moreover, those events continued to shape French and European society. Neither Louis XVIII's return to French soil on 24 April 1814, nor the Congress of Vienna's new European order, established 9 June 1815, meant the elimination of Napoleon's bureaucracy, laws, administration, and even personnel, much of which persisted throughout the Restoration, often with few changes. The Restoration government recognized all imperial titles and honors,<sup>7</sup> and, despite protests, the *biens nationaux*, the land confiscated from émigrés and from the church, remained in the hands of the citizens who had purchased them from the revolutionary government of France. Visions of

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<sup>6</sup> In *Marianne into Battle*, Agulhon argues that the symbolic struggle between revolution and counter-revolution propelled nineteenth-century French politics. Elsewhere he has suggested, that this tension always favors the revolutionary impulse. For example, he that literary circles, even when made up of reactionary aristocrats, are still fundamentally democratic in principle. Stéphane Rials too has suggested, in a publication of a variety of articles on different aspects of nineteenth-century French political life, that the impulse toward both revolution and counter-revolution flows through French politics. Pierre Ronsavallon argues that it is equally possible to write two different political histories of France: one that emphasizes France's tendency toward Jacobinism, centralisation, and the tension between illiberalism and the sovereignty of the people, and another that focuses on the extension of liberties and the progress of representative government. While Ronsavallon made this distinction in order to advocate for more histories that explores the latter, he exposes a truth not just about historical scholarship, but also about modern France. Post-revolutionary France saw both an extension of liberties and a tendency toward centralisation – the tension between revolution and counter-revolution drove early nineteenth-century French politics and culture. Maurice Agulhon, *Marianne into Battle : Republican Imagery and Symbolism in France, 1789-1880* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1981); Maurice Agulhon, *Le cercle dans la France bourgeoise: 1810-1848, étude d'une mutation de sociabilité* (Paris: A. Colin : École des hautes études en sciences sociales, 1977), 29; Stéphane Rials, *Révolution et contre-révolution au XIXe siècle* (Paris: Diffusion Université Culture/Albatros, 1987); Pierre Rosanvallon, *La monarchie impossible: les Chartes de 1814 et de 1830* (Paris: Fayard, 1994), 7.

<sup>7</sup> Napoleon granted titles to 3200 individuals, only 22.5% of whom had been nobles before 1789. David Higgs, *Nobles in Nineteenth-Century France: The Practice of Inegalitarianism* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1987), 8.



what this restored nation would look like, cultured by the history of the previous decades (and by interpretations of that history), and shaped by the complicated realities of the present, multiplied and conflicted.

This debate over the rebuilding of France was a conflict between the two major political currents: the liberals, some of whom had supported revolution or Napoleon, and the royalists, conservative supporters of the Bourbon monarchy. But this debate also transcended political partisanship, and moved into the realm of national identity. These debates concerned not only how France should be organized, and what its constitution should look like, but also how it would present itself to the world, what legacy it would leave, what mark it would have on Europe. These debates were therefore also cultural, and so spread to the world of literature and art.

These debates took place not only in the world of high politics but also at a popular level, among the people of France themselves. One enduring legacy of the revolution was the persistence of institutions – the press, or political clubs – that enabled the people to maintain a voice in public affairs. In *Democracy in America*, Alexis de Tocqueville identified these institutions – those voluntary non-political associations that existed apart from the state – as civil society, and presented them as checks on the political order. These groups, he contended, strengthen democracy by providing forums for debate and protection from the tyranny of the majority. But civil society also protects democratic politics from its potentially destabilizing tendencies. The American people are free to do anything, Tocqueville noted, but they do not because their culture and especially their religion stop them from even imagining doing certain things.

Restoration France had representative institutions, but cannot rightly be called a democracy,<sup>8</sup> and while freedom of the press was enshrined in the constitutional charter of 1814,

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<sup>8</sup> The Restoration legislature was bicameral, with a Chamber of Deputies, and a Chamber of Peers. Because only those who paid 300 francs in direct taxation, most of which was levied on land, were enfranchised, a very limited electorate of mainly landed elites voted for the Chamber of Deputies. The King appointed members to Chamber of Peers, and could appoint any number he wanted. The King also appointed his ministers, who were responsible for most of the work of the French government. Because there was no convention that ministers be chosen from the ranks of the chambers, the ministry and the chambers were often at odds, and a significant portion of political conflict in the Restoration consisted of the ministry trying to control the chambers, or the outcomes of elections, so that the chambers would be pro-ministry. For example, In 1824 Louis XVIII's government changed the electoral laws so that instead of electing

the Restoration press was never free. Nonetheless, befitting a society caught between revolution and counter-revolution, the French people still claimed a political role in the Restoration, a role that they exercised through a set of institutions that resembled civil society. To some extent, the French voiced political opinion and developed political mores through the partisan press and through voluntary political associations, as Tocqueville claimed citizens of the United States did. Yet the overbearing power of the restored monarchy, especially following the succession of Charles X to the throne, gave French civil society a distinct character. Royal policies, especially censorship of the political press and the limits placed on freedom of association, but also the rewards and recognition the state gave to cultural pursuits, pushed some of the functions of political associations and the political press in Restoration France away from those overtly political institutions and into more covert cultural and civil spaces. When the Restoration government tightened its control of the political press, the literary press became an alternate venue through which to debate politics by other means. Robust political discussions and conflicts about how to rebuild France thus took place not only in the partisan political press, but also through cultural and literary institutions, including the literary press, literary societies, the literary marketplace, and the theatre.

When political debates entered these literary spaces, they inevitably merged with a parallel, ongoing aesthetic conflict between romantics and classicists known as the *bataille romantique*. Classicists sought to stop what they perceived to be the foreign influence of romanticism, which had originated in Britain and Germany, and promote classicist literature,

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one fifth of the chamber of deputies each year, they would elect one chamber every seven years. In the March 1824 elections this new policy returned a significantly pro-government chamber. Mansel, *Louis XVIII*, 399. Charles X's ministers also worked to limit the democratic nature of Restoration institutions. But, as Robert Alexander argues, despite limited representation and state attempts to shore up its authority or skirt the law, the legacy of the Restoration is one of push-back against the Napoleonic model of authoritarianism – of state power at the expense of representative bodies and a state exempted from the rule of law. He notes, for example, that “because [ultra-royalist first minister] Villèle’s answer to criticism was to tighten state control, the backlash against Villèle merged with attempts to limit state power. An early manifestation came in April 1827, when the Peers blocked the press law; but more critical were revisions by both Chambers of a government proposal to revise the process of compiling jury and voter lists.” R.S. Alexander, “‘No, Minister:’ French Restoration Rejection of Authoritarianism,” in *Napoleon’s Legacy: Problems of Government in Restoration Europe*, ed. David Laven and Lucy Riall (Bloomsbury Academic, 2000), 41, see also 43–44.

which they argued was the true French literature. Classicism was founded on the idea that good literature, literature of taste, followed a set of specific and universal rules, rooted in the work of Aristotle, and interpreted for the French by seventeenth-century writers like Racine, Corneille, and Boileau. At the same time, romantics sought to promote a vision of modern literature free from the constraints of classicist rules, which they argued made literature dull and imitative. Classicists and romantics alike believed that theirs was the literature that would unify France, and their quarrel helped to galvanize each into an increasingly circumscribed literary ideology.

However, neither romanticism nor classicism were monoliths, and each camp was mired in internal conflict. The political conflict between revolution and counter-revolution at the heart of the Restoration paralleled not only the conflict between romantics and classicists, but also their internal conflicts. Because classicism found its roots in the literature of the era of Louis XIV, the height of French Absolutism, many royalists believed classicism should be the true literature of Restoration France. In contrast, because classicists believed in universalist standards of beauty and taste, liberal classicists associated classicism with the universalizing ideals of the Enlightenment and its opponents could tie classicism to revolution and even Empire. (Napoleon had been a proponent of classicism, but then – so was Louis XVIII.) Classicists on both sides of the political spectrum saw in classicism the height of French glory – famous French classicists were France's most revered authors – and so sought in classicism a reminder of a time when France was not a defeated power. Romantics too divided along partisan lines. Liberal romantics embraced freedom from the strictures of tradition – both political and literary, and royalist romantics too saw romanticism as liberating, they simply also believed that the monarchy represented the true and stable path to liberty, rather than the false liberty of Jacobinism.

This dissertation traces the development of romanticism through Restoration institutions of civil society, with an emphasis on the literary press, in order to showcase not only how romanticism and classicism both solidified as genres in their conflict with one another, but also the key role that literary conflict and literary institutions played in Restoration society. Restoration Paris, the center of the *bataille romantique* as well as of French cultural, literary, and periodical production, saw the rise of literacy, of commercialization, and of new printing technologies. Its

character was shaped by just by its political realities, but by its cultural and economic realities. The literary press, the theatre, the literary marketplace, and literary societies and academies all created spaces for debate about the future of France, a debate both political and cultural in nature.

When we consider the range of French literary institutions as fulfilling the role, however covertly, of an incipient civil society in the Restoration, and thus examine the *bataille romantique* in light of the specific political conflicts about how to rebuild France, new dimensions to the *bataille romantique* become evident. French classicists, in their critiques of romanticism, were doing more than assessing the merits and demerits of a new literary school. Some were instead trying to protect what they perceived to be the greatest legacy of French culture – the literature of the era of Louis XIV – from the influence of British and German styles of writing. Others sought to uphold the rational, universalist worldview of the Enlightenment in the face of an ideology of particularism. Likewise, the romantics, in proclaiming their freedom from the rules of art and literature, were also offering up new and competing visions of France – one free from both the politics and the literature of the ancien regime, and another free from the universalist pretensions of the Revolution. The fundamental tensions in both romanticism and classicism meant they did not easily map on to rival political ideologies of royalism and liberalism, and meant that both literary schools could be mobilized in support of any political position and invoked for a number of rhetorical aims. Classicists could claim that romanticism, by virtue of its novelty, discarded French tradition and embraced revolution, and, by virtue of its roots in British and German literature, was un-French. The latter argument held particular salience while allied soldiers continued to occupy French soil, until 1818. Romantics could claim that classicism was obsolete, a simple mimicry of past forms no longer relevant to the modern world, and they could claim that classicism's universalism tied it to revolution. In these ways, classicists and romantics carried on an inherently political discussion by other means.

But they simultaneously carried on a robust literary debate that challenged received ideas about the nature of literary genre, of literary criticism, and did so through increasingly commercialized civic and cultural institutions – like the press, literary societies and academies,

and the theatre. Romanticism and classicism were contested categories and labels applied by both partisans and opponents in works of literary criticism, in the pages of newspapers and journals, in meeting halls, living rooms, and salons. Through the application of these categories and through debates over the nature of literature and criticism, critics, journalists, playwrights, publishers, booksellers, *salonnières*, and *sociétaires* crystallized and hardened definitions of both romanticism and classicism, as well as their differing ideas about literature itself. Through their conflict with one another, and through their own internal conflicts, romanticism and classicism developed into increasingly stable categories over the course of the Restoration.

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While it has been over thirty years since Pierre Rosanvallon insisted that we have much to learn from the political culture of the Restoration in his book *Le moment Guizot*, the period remains a perennially understudied era of French history.<sup>9</sup> Maya Jasanoff has suggested that historians dismiss the Restoration as a brief resurgence of the *ancien régime* – a backward move by a group of unsympathetic elite reactionaries. Scholars, she contends, have been much more interested in the social equalizing tendencies of the French Revolution than in the experiences of the émigrés or their victory in the Restoration.<sup>10</sup> Scholars of the nineteenth century prefer the contested liberalism of the Third Republic to any of the periods between 1814 and 1871, and tend to ignore the royalist, conservative Restoration most of all.<sup>11</sup> Even works that claim to touch on

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<sup>9</sup> Pierre Rosanvallon, *Le moment Guizot* (Paris: Gallimard, 1985).

<sup>10</sup> Maya Jasanoff, "Revolutionary Exiles: The American Loyalist and French Emigre Diasporas," in *The Age of Revolutions in Global Context, C. 1760-1840*, ed. David Armitage and Sanjay Subrahmanyam (Houndmills, Basingstoke, Hampshire ; New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010), 39–40.

<sup>11</sup> The scholarship that does exist on the Restoration tends to focus on the political landscape, or on broad historical overviews. The most famous of these are Bertier de Sauvigny's *The Bourbon Restoration* and Waresquiel and Yvert's *Histoire de la Restauration*. Robert Alexander's work is significant for its focus on local politics throughout France, and for its insights on the development of French liberalism. Sherilyn Kroen has presented the Restoration as a crisis of legitimacy, and focuses on both the theatre and religion. She uses the conflicts that erupted over productions of Molière's *Tartuffe* throughout the Restoration as a framework for understanding Restoration Politics. Jean-Yves Mollier et al's edited volume *Repenser la Restauration* has suggested new perspectives on this underexamined periods of French history – including studies on ideologies, the theatre, romanticism, and print culture. And recently, Denise Davidson has examined the Restoration from the perspective of urban life and gender Guillaume de Bertier de Sauvigny, *The Bourbon Restoration*, trans. Lynne M. Case (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1967); Emmanuel de Waresquiel and Benoît Yvert, *Histoire de la Restauration, 1814-1830*:

both the Restoration and the July Monarchy spend more pages on the latter and its slightly more liberal politics.

But the Restoration was not a return to the old regime. One gained access to the court of Louis XVIII, not through aristocracy or a complex system of social status and privilege, but through official position or military rank, and in 1814 almost everyone who had a military commission or government position in France did so because of their actions during the Revolution and Empire.<sup>12</sup> Nor was the Restoration's political or cultural landscape dominated only by reactionary elites. It was a limited monarchy with a charter that established representative chambers, albeit with a very limited franchise, and despite censorship and other government controls, new ideas and new practices flourished.<sup>13</sup> Louis XVIII disagreed with the ultra-royalists who "wanted to use Royalist enthusiasm, Royalist dominance in the chamber, the Government and the army, and the momentary eclipse of the Bonapartists and the *parti national*, to turn France into a party state."<sup>14</sup> Louis instead wanted to appeal to all his subjects, and balance between competing factions to create a new consensus and stability. He knew that the alliance of European powers who had defeated Napoleon and allowed Louis to return to the throne were extremely wary that France would once again descend into Revolution, so much so that they occupied French soil until 1818. Stability mattered above all else. And the regime was quite stable, especially under Louis XVIII,<sup>15</sup> even though it saw more conflict than consensus.<sup>16</sup> When

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*naissance de la France moderne* (Paris: Perrin, 1996); R. S Alexander, *Bonapartism and Revolutionary Tradition in France: The Fédérés of 1815* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991); R. S Alexander, *Re-Writing the French Revolutionary Tradition*, New Studies in European History (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003); Sheryl Kroen, *Politics and Theater: The Crisis of Legitimacy in Restoration France, 1815-1830* (University of California Press, 2000); Jean-Yves Mollier, Martine Reid, and Jean-Claude Yon, eds., *Repenser La Restauration* (Paris: Nouveau Monde éditions, 2005); Denise Z. Davidson, *France after Revolution : Urban Life, Gender, and the New Social Order* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2007).

<sup>12</sup> Mansel, *Louis XVIII*, 206.

<sup>13</sup> Stéphane Rials developed this idea of the Restoration as a limited monarchy, rather than a constitutional monarchy. He argues that royal authority was constrained by the legislature and by the charter, but only because the monarchy declared that to be the case. In that sense the monarchy limited itself. Rials, *Révolution et contre-révolution au XIXe siècle*, 125.

<sup>14</sup> Mansel, *Louis XVIII*, 341.

<sup>15</sup> Of the six French kings and emperors who served between 1774 and 1871, only Louis XVIII died, of natural causes, while still head of state.

his more reactionary brother, the Comte d'Artois, became King Charles X in September 1824, political conflict worsened. Charles, less interested in compromise than his brother, and more willing to support the ultra-royalist faction, passed laws and ordinances unpopular with a growing cadre of French liberals, including censorship laws, anti-sacrilege laws, and a law providing indemnity payments for the *biens nationaux*, properties confiscated and sold during the French Revolution. When in July 1830, he invoked article 14 of the Charter,<sup>17</sup> which he controversially interpreted to mean that he could rule by royal ordinance alone, and passed a series of restrictive ordinances designed to quell conflict, he sparked the Revolution that would remove him from power and end the Restoration.

Although we speak of the political divisions in the Restoration as being between royalists and liberals, neither were homogenous groups or 'parties' in the modern sense. But the bipolar division is still a meaningful one, because the two groups disagreed on the fundamental basis of the Restoration regime – whether the Charter was an expression of the sovereignty of the people or a gift bestowed by the King. Robert Alexander has argued convincingly that we cannot define the Restoration's political groups in terms of doctrine alone, because they functioned in a reality where often compromise or shrewd practicality mattered more than partisan platform.<sup>18</sup> Yet, he also recognizes that attempts to compromise between liberals and royalists meant attempts to compromise between ideas of national and royal sovereignty, which were fundamentally incompatible positions. So while liberals and ultra-royalists, as opposition parties, sometimes came together to defeat or uphold various measures (often liberties, like press freedom), their

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<sup>16</sup> A recent dissertation on the Restoration, entitled "United in Division" suggests that this culture of disagreement defined Restoration politics more than any other factor. The project explores the divisive nature of Restoration political rhetoric. Maximilian Paul Owre, "United in Division: The Polarized French Nation, 1814-1830" (PhD diss., University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, 2008).

<sup>17</sup> "The king is the supreme head of the state, commands the land and sea forces, declares war, makes treaties of peace, alliance and commerce, appoints to all places of public administration, and makes the necessary regulations and ordinances for the execution of the laws and the security of the state." Frank Maloy Anderson, *The Constitutions and Other Select Documents Illustrative of the History of France 1789-1901* (Minneapolis: H. W. Wilson company, 1904), 459.

<sup>18</sup> Alexander, *Re-Writing the French Revolutionary Tradition*, 10–14, 16–17.

positions were not compatible in the long term.<sup>19</sup> They put forward not only differing, but also incommensurable visions of France.

Like the political divisions, the literary conflict between romantics and classicists – the *bataille romantique* – expressed a division both practical and theoretical. Romantics and classicists also put forward competing vision for the future of France, and those visions became increasingly irreconcilable over the course of the Restoration. The actual differences between romantic and classicist literature were never as significant as the violence of the debates between them would suggest, and it was the force of those debates and the distinct visions of France that they implied that rent one from the other so completely. Critics sometimes denounced romanticism in name, while lauding many of the characteristics associated with it. Despite this, their conflict was founded on a fundamental disagreement: whether literature should follow the purportedly strict universalist rules of classicist literature as expressed in the works of seventeenth-century French writers like Racine, Corneille, and Boileau, or whether it should be unbound from literary rules and strive tirelessly toward an unattainable perfection. Should France follow tradition, or should it develop something new? If it should look to the past, which part of its past should it look to?

The interplay between political authority and political liberty, between counter-revolution and revolution, were complex throughout the Restoration, and this dissertation clarifies our understanding of the complexity of the period by more closely mapping the contours of popular political expression through literary institutions and print culture. This dissertation enriches our understanding of the Restoration by directing attention to the important role that print culture, and specifically literary print culture, played in politics and public discussion as well as literary debates. It argues that the history of print culture is not a monolith. Periodicals, because they are not books or broadsheets or pamphlets, had a logic that is all their own. Periodicals were collective. They were produced by groups of people – writers, editors, owners, and printers – and so were not homogenous. But periodicals were also branded – they focused on a topic or professed a particular political or literary affiliation. Groups and factions therefore turned to

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<sup>19</sup> Ibid., 23–25.



periodicals to promote their particular vision or interest.<sup>20</sup> Periodicals mediated. They shaped the information that reached the public, and so influenced trends in both thought and action.<sup>21</sup>

Because of the importance of literature to early-nineteenth century French society, and because of the nature of Restoration censorship, the literary press played a significant role in the development of not only French romanticism and classicism, but also in the production of a civil society in Restoration Paris. It built communities of readership, spread ideas and ideologies, and galvanized factions. It contributed significantly to the development of literary criticism as a genre of writing, as well as to the publicization of debates about criticism. Moreover, because the press grew increasingly commercialized throughout the nineteenth century it helped to inspire, as well as publicize, the growing conflicts over industrialization and commercialization, especially around literature.

### Historiography

Scholars interested in the intersection of print and politics have frequently turned to periodicals – newspapers or journals. Nineteenth-century sociologist Gabriel Tarde's theories about the periodical press provide a framework for thinking about the ways in which the periodicity of the press shaped readers' experiences of reading, and for how periodicals created communities of readers connected by their shared experience of reading. Tarde argues that newspapers differ from books both because they discuss contemporary matters and because they are read simultaneously, by people who know they are reading simultaneously. This knowledge of one's own participation in a virtual public of readers who are all being influenced en masse by the same ideas, is the very thing that creates that public.<sup>22</sup> The serial quality of the

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<sup>20</sup> Gabriel Tarde writes "There is not one sect that does not wish to have its own newspaper in order to surround itself with a public extending far beyond it, causing a sort of mobile atmosphere in which it will be bathed, a collective awareness that it is a simple *epiphenomenon*, in itself inefficacious and inactive. Nor is there any profession, be it small or large, that does not want its own newspaper or review as well, as each corporation in the Middle Ages has its chaplain or its habitual preacher, and each class in ancient Greece its regular orator. Is not the first concern of a new literary or artistic school to have its newspaper, and would it think itself complete without one?" Gabriel Tarde, *Gabriel Tarde On Communication and Social Influence: Selected Papers*, ed. Terry N. Clark (University of Chicago Press, 2010), 284–85.

<sup>21</sup> Dominique Kalifa and Philippe Régner, eds., *La civilisation du journal: histoire culturelle et littéraire de la presse française au XIXe siècle* (Paris: Nouveau Monde, 2011), 18.

<sup>22</sup> Tarde, *Gabriel Tarde On Communication and Social Influence*, 278.

press meant that the relationship between reader and journalist is more directly reciprocal than the relationship between reader and author. Journalists can observe readers' responses to their product by following subscription numbers and tweak their papers to entice a larger readership. But, Tarde notes, "after a few trial runs, the reader has chosen his paper, the paper has selected its readers, there has been mutual selection, hence mutual adaptation. The one has a paper which pleased him and flatters his prejudices and passions; the other has hold of a reader to his liking, docile and credulous, whom he can easily direct with a few concessions to his positions, analogous to the oratorical precautions of the ancient orators."<sup>23</sup> So over time the community created by specific periodicals grows more homogenous and circumscribed, but this does not preclude the production of rival communities by rival periodicals.

Similar arguments about the function of the periodical press have been made by scholars of the romantic-era literary press. In her work on the role of periodicals in the development of British romanticism, Marilyn Butler argues that "by appearing regularly and opening their columns to readers, journals implied a community of discourse that united its scattered members and over time distinguished their idiolects from those of the national community. On the other hand, this comforting social identity was by definition also divisive; as journals proliferated, what they registered was the play within the community of different idiolects."<sup>24</sup> The literary press, like the press more broadly, could therefore build communities by signaling both exclusion and inclusion.

There is a significant body of work on the history of print, readership and texts in nineteenth-century France, much of which focuses on the changing institutions and technologies of print, such as the rise of the publisher, the invention of the steam press and lithography, the spread of *cabinets de lecture* and other lending libraries, the role of booksellers and the commercialization of print.<sup>25</sup> Drawing on work on the early modern period by scholars like Roger

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<sup>23</sup> Ibid., 282–83.

<sup>24</sup> Marilyn Butler, "Culture's Medium: The Role of the Review," in *The Cambridge Companion to British Romanticism*, ed. Stuart Curran (Cambridge, UK; New York: Cambridge University Press, 1993), 127.

<sup>25</sup> Françoise Parent-Lardeur, *Les Cabinets de lecture: La lecture publique à Paris sous la Restauration* (Paris: Payot, 1982); Nicole Felkay, *Balzac et ses éditeurs, 1822-1837: essai sur la librairie romantique*, Histoire du livre (Paris: Promodos/Editions du Cercle de la librairie, 1987); Jean-Yves Mollier, *L'argent et les lettres: Histoire du capitalisme d'édition, 1880-1920* (Paris:

Chartier and Robert Darnton, these studies of print culture focus not only on the content of printed materials, but also their physical form and the people and processes involved in their production and consumption. Moreover, many of them, as Alain Vaillant has argued, take Pierre Bourdieu's concept of increasing autonomization of literature from politics with the development of the literary marketplace as their foundation, but also recognize the crisis that developed in response to increased commercialization.<sup>26</sup> Perhaps the most famous and influential of these is Paul Bénichou's *le Sacre de l'écrivain*, which explores the emancipation of the writer from religious and political strictures and so traces the move from "man of letters" to "author" – a transition that implies not only the writer's autonomy, but also his or her productive genius. The man of letters may be erudite, but the author creates.<sup>27</sup>

The press, and especially newspapers, have always served as important sources for scholars of the Restoration, although scholarship that focused on the press in particular have been rare,<sup>28</sup> and often focused on the history of specific periodicals.<sup>29</sup> In recent years scholars

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Fayard, 1988); Marie-Claire Boscq, "L'implantation des libraires à Paris (1815-1848)," in *Le commerce de la librairie en France au XIXe siècle: 1798-1914*, ed. Jean-Yves Mollier (Paris: IMEC Editions : Editions de la Maison des sciences de l'homme, 1997); John D. Lyons, "What Do We Mean When We Say 'Classique,'" in *Racine Et/ou Le Classicisme*, ed. Ronald W. Tobin (Tubingen: Gunter Narr Verlag, 2001), 497–510; Pascal Durand and Anthony Glinoe, *Naissance de l'éditeur: l'édition à l'âge romantique*, Réflexions (Bruxelles: Impressions nouvelles, 2005); Christine Haynes, *Lost Illusions: The Politics of Publishing in Nineteenth-Century France* (Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press, 2010).

<sup>26</sup> Alain Vaillant, "La genèse de la littérature moderne (1800-1836): autonomisation ou médiatisation?," *Orages*, no. 7 (March 2008): 119–37.

<sup>27</sup> Paul Bénichou, *Le sacre de l'écrivain, 1750-1830; essai sur l'avènement d'un pouvoir spirituel laïque dans la France moderne*. (Paris: J. Corti, 1973). This transition is somewhat analogous to the earlier transition from "belles-lettres" to "literature" explored by Philippe Caron in Philippe Caron, *Des "belles lettres" à la "littérature": une archéologie des signes du savoir profane en langue française (1680-1760)* (Paris: Société pour l'information grammaticale, 1992).

<sup>28</sup> Irene Collins, *The Government and the Newspaper Press in France, 1814-1881*, Oxford Historical Series; General Series (London: Oxford University Press, 1959); Daniel L. Rader, *The Journalists and the July Revolution in France: The Role of the Political Press in the Overthrow of the Bourbon Restoration 1827-1830*. (The Hague: Nijhoff, 1973).

<sup>29</sup> For studies of individual periodicals published under the Restoration, see Léon Séché, *Le Cénacle de la Muse française, 1823-1827, (Documents inédits) Portrait de Soumet, Guiraud, Emile Deschamps, Charles Nodier, Michel Pichat, Talma* (Paris: Mercure de France, 1908); Odette-Adina Rachman, *Un périodique libéral sous la Restauration: Le Mercure du XIXe siècle (avril 1823-mars 1826), suivi du répertoire daté et annoté* (Genève: Editions Slatkine, 1984); Thomas Davies, *French Romanticism and the Press: The Globe*. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1906); Daniel Petric, *Le groupe littéraire de la Minerve française (1818-1820)* (Paris: E. De Boccard, Éditeur, 1927); Jean-Jacques Goblot, *Le Globe, 1824-1830: Documents pour servir à l'histoire de la presse littéraire* (Paris: Honoré Champion, Éditeur, 1993).

have grown increasingly interested in the history of nineteenth-century French newspapers and periodicals as objects in themselves. This work suggests that periodicals have to be understood in their own right, as distinct from other forms of print, and the work of Yannick Portebois even suggests that periodicals must be understood as distinct not just from books, but also from the newspaper press.<sup>30</sup> There has also been some significant work on the history of French literary periodicals. Suzanne Dumouchel's study of the literary press in the eighteenth century argues that eighteenth-century literary journals, like *le Mercure de France*, *l'Année littéraire*, and *le Journal des dames*, differed from their seventeenth-century predecessors, because they placed human subjectivity, that of their *rédacteurs* and of their readers, at the forefront of their work. As a result, they encouraged the development of literary criticism, helped shape mores and tastes, and contributed to the development of a mediated, virtual, culture.<sup>31</sup> These journals helped lay the groundwork for the nineteenth-century literary press, by establishing stylistic and format conventions for the genre, by establishing an audience for their readership, and by contributing to the development of modern literary criticism. Patrick Berthier has produced an extensive study of the literary and theatre press in the early July Monarchy, exploring representations of the romantic-classicist debate in literary criticism, as well as the poetry and prose literature printed in the periodical press. Berthier argues that a study of literary journals allows the historian to draw up an inventory of criticism and create a general impression of the field of literary ideas in the July Monarchy.<sup>32</sup> Marie-Eve Thérénty's study of novelists who were also journalists and critics between 1829 and 1836 argues that their participation in the press had a significant impact on the development of nineteenth-century French literature.<sup>33</sup>

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<sup>30</sup> Kalifa and Régnier, *La civilisation du journal*; Guillaume Pinson, *L'imaginaire médiatique: histoire et fiction du journal au XIXe siècle* (Paris: Classiques Garnier, 2012); Marie-Ève Thérénty, "La réclame de librairie dans le journal quotidien au XIXe siècle: autopsie d'un objet textuel non indentifié," *Romantisme: revue du dix-neuvième siècle*, no. 155 (2012): 91–103; Yannick Portebois, *Entre le livre et le journal* (Paris: Institut d'histoire du livre, 2013).

<sup>31</sup> Suzanne Dumouchel, *Le journal littéraire en France au dix-huitième siècle: émergence d'une culture virtuelle*, Oxford University Studies in the Enlightenment (Oxford: Voltaire Foundation, 2016).

<sup>32</sup> Patrick Berthier, *La presse littéraire et dramatique au début de la monarchie de juillet (1830-1836)* (Villeneuve d'Ascq Cédex: Éditions universitaires du Septentrion, 1997).

<sup>33</sup> Marie-Eve Thérénty, *Mosaïques: être écrivain entre presse et roman, 1829-1836* (Paris: H. Champion, 2003).

While Berthier and Thérenty's work both discuss the end of the Restoration, the literary press in the Restoration has not been the focus of a comprehensive study like Dumouchel or Berthier's since Charles Marc Des Granges' *La Presse littéraire sous la restauration*, first published in 1907.<sup>34</sup> However, many studies make use of periodicals in their discussions of Restoration literature and literary criticism. Alain Vaillant's article on the genesis of modern literature, for example, examines literary criticism in a number of Restoration periodicals, and argues that the development of conceptions of modern literature, and the triumph of romanticism, occurred through a process of mediatization and public conflict through the press – a kind of popularization of literary criticism. The second 'romantic revolution' of this time period, he argued, was a change in the nature of the periodical press itself, which near the end of the Restoration moved away from solemn discussion to adopt a tone that was satirical, irreverent and fun. The press also focused increasingly on fiction and *fait divers* (miscellaneous news items). This newfound focus and format, Vaillant argues, opened the press up to the culture of sentiment and entertainment that had already permeated other parts of the culture.<sup>35</sup> John Boeing, in his discussion of periodicals in the romantic age in England and the continent argues that romantic-era literary periodicals differed from their eighteenth-century counterparts because their producers saw themselves as engaged in a project to shape literary agendas, and not just to review books. He also notes that romanticism found in the periodical the perfect medium to enact its own project – to recognize the particularity of the individual, while building and improving a larger community – which mirrors the production of a periodical.<sup>36</sup>

Other than Vaillant and Des Granges' there have been few comprehensive or synthetic examination of the development of romanticism through the Restoration literary press. Again, while scholars of French romanticism make extensive use of the press, and especially romantic

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<sup>34</sup> Charles Marc Des Granges, *La presse littéraire sous la Restauration, 1815-1830: Le Romantisme et la critique* (Genève: Slatkine Reprints, 1973).

<sup>35</sup> Vaillant, "La genèse de la littérature moderne (1800-1836): autonomisation ou médiatisation?," esp. 133-135.

<sup>36</sup> John Boeing, "The Unending Conversation: The Role of Periodicals in England and on the Continent during the Romantic Age," in *Nonfictional Romantic Prose: Expanding Borders*, ed. Steven P. Sondrup and Virgil Nemoianu, *A Comparative History of Literatures in European Languages* 18 (Amsterdam; Philadelphia, PA: John Benjamins, 2004), 286–87.

journals like *la Muse française* and *le Globe*, they tend not to focus on the impact or logic of the press itself,<sup>37</sup> and when, like Berthier, they do, they tend to focus on romanticism in the July monarchy.<sup>38</sup> Studies of French romanticism or the romantic era and print have tended to focus on books.<sup>39</sup> Scholars of British romanticism have more thoroughly examined the role of periodicals in the development of the romantic movement than have scholars of French Romanticism. These scholars note that the growth of the periodical press and the romantic era are coterminous. This scholarship sees periodical producers, readers, and romantics themselves engaged in a collective project of producing and reproducing romanticism, a project deeply rooted in the politics of the public sphere. It also sees print as central to the collaborative process of genre creation and canon formation.<sup>40</sup>

As Michael Gamer has demonstrated in his study of romanticism and the gothic, genre and generic classification is not just about authorial intent, but is a collaborative process that

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<sup>37</sup> Alan B Spitzer, *The French Generation of 1820* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1987); Corinne Pelta, *Le Romantisme libéral en France: 1815-1830: La représentation souveraine* (Paris: Harmattan, 2001); Jean-Claude Yon, "Théâtre, romantisme et presse à la fin de la Restauration: l'exemple du Globe en 1827," in *Paris 1820: l'affirmation de la génération romantique: actes de la journée d'étude organisée par le Centre André Chastel le 24 mai 2004*, ed. Sébastien Allard (New York: Peter Lang, 2005).

<sup>38</sup> Literary Historians tend to place the beginning of French romanticism in 1830, with the Bataille d'Hernani as their starting point, or in 1827 with Hugo's Preface to Cromwell. Marika Schmitz-Emans argues that this results from our tendency to want to begin eras with dramatic moments and with more or less fully-formed manifestos. Monika Schmitz-Emans, "Theories of Romanticism: The First Two Hundred Years," in *Nonfictional Romantic Prose: Expanding Borders*, ed. Steven P. Sondrup and Virgil Nemoianu, *A Comparative History of Literatures in European Languages* 18 (Amsterdam; Philadelphia, PA: John Benjamins, 2004), 18–19. I would add to this that 1827 was also the moment that romanticism 'went liberal,' at least according to our common understanding, and that a liberal romanticism is often interpreted as more authentic than a royalist romanticism. This dissertation is founded on the premise that to understand how romanticism developed, and to understand our contemporary account of it, we have to look to the period before the manifesto was written, when romanticism was in a state of becoming.

<sup>39</sup> For example James Smith Allen, *Popular French Romanticism: Authors, Readers, and Books in the 19th Century* (Syracuse, N.Y.: Syracuse University Press, 1981); Martyn Lyons, *Reading Culture and Writing Practices in Nineteenth-Century France*, *Studies in Book and Print Culture* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2008); Haynes, *Lost Illusions*.

<sup>40</sup> Kim Wheatley, *Romantic Periodicals and Print Culture* (London; Portland, OR: Frank Cass, 2003); Barton Swaim, *Scottish Men of Letters and the New Public Sphere, 1802-1834* (Lewisburg, PA: Bucknell University Press, 2009); Mark Schoenfield, *British Periodicals and Romantic Identity: The "Literary Lower Empire"* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009); Michael Gamer, *Romanticism and the Gothic: Genre, Reception, and Canon Formation*, *Cambridge Studies in Romanticism* 40 (Cambridge; New York: Cambridge University Press, 2000); Jeffrey N Cox, *Poetry and Politics in the Cockney School: Keats, Shelley, Hunt, and Their Circle*, *Cambridge Studies in Romanticism* 31 (Cambridge; New York: Cambridge University Press, 1998); Butler, "Culture's Medium: The Role of the Review."

“depends upon the readers, publishers and critics who ultimately determine a text’s identity and value.”<sup>41</sup> This process, he argues, can be smooth when there is consensus, but is often fraught with conflict when the author and readers disagree about genre classification, or there is disagreement among readers.<sup>42</sup> Mary Gluck, in *Popular Bohemia* (2005), makes a similar argument about the collective production of literature. Just as Gamer suggests that there is greater reciprocity between what we today call ‘romanticism’ and ‘the gothic’ than current literary criticism, or indeed the romantics, would have one believe, Gluck argues that the shift to modernism and the birth of an avant-garde came not only from the work of people like Théophile Gautier or Charles Baudelaire, but also from vaudeville, from melodrama, and from other popular genres, which also helped shape the work of avant-garde writers. She writes:

Modernism or avant-gardism, seen as a radically new cultural practice and artistic identity that emerged sometime around 1830, cannot be understood exclusively in terms of an interiorized realm of high culture, nor can it be seen as a direct reaction to an external world of social and political crisis. On the contrary, the origins of modernism will be presented here as an inseparable part of the humble and neglected regions of popular culture and everyday experience that found increasingly commercial articulation by the middle of the nineteenth century.<sup>43</sup>

Gluck notes that much of the literary discussion that took place in nineteenth century France happened not in elite journals, or prestigious academies or salons, but in the popular press, in prefaces to novels, and in humorous magazines.<sup>44</sup> Gluck, as well as Gamer and the other scholars of British romanticism, remind us to consider the ways in which, not just literary

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<sup>41</sup> A note on terminology: while “genre” can mean a school or type of literature – like the romantic, the gothic, comedy, or crime fiction – “genre” can also refer to the form that literature takes – a novel, a poem, a play, a literary journal, an almanach. The primary sources cited in this dissertation tend to use “genre” both ways; they refer to romanticism and classicism as “genres,” particularly in the construction “*genre romantique*,” they also sometimes say “school.” While I sometimes use “school,” “movement,” or “ideology,” to avoid the confusion of referring to both romanticism and literary journals (or literary criticism, etc.) as “genres,” I use “genre” whenever the sources do, and also whenever I want to highlight the ways in which romanticism was not just one coherent school or a movement, but a collectively constructed set of ideas and practices – a genre. Gamer, *Romanticism and the Gothic*, 1. Romantics and classicists also used the word “genre” differently, because they had different criteria for literature and literary evaluation. For a discussion of romantic genre theory see Tiltottama Rajan, “Theories of Genre,” in *The Cambridge History of Literary Criticism*, ed. George Alexander Kennedy, vol. 5: Romanticism (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1989), 226–49.

<sup>42</sup> Gamer, *Romanticism and the Gothic*, 2.

<sup>43</sup> Mary Gluck, *Popular Bohemia: Modernism and Urban Culture in Nineteenth-Century Paris* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2005), 2.

<sup>44</sup> *Ibid.*, 1.

ideologies, but Restoration political culture more broadly, was a collective project. How did the state, the press, commerce, the theatre, architecture, literature, and the various people involved in each, work together to contest and create the complex manifold of Restoration France?

### **Sources and Methodology**

The recent *Civilisation du Journal*, an extensive study of the periodical press in nineteenth century France, begins with the assertion that the production and consumption of periodicals in the nineteenth century fundamentally altered the social political and economic landscape. While periodicals had of course existed prior to the nineteenth-century, economic changes, technological advancements, and increased literacy meant that the nineteenth century saw a dramatic increase in the volume of periodicals. This study focuses on the literary culture and periodical production of Paris to the exclusion of the rest of France. This limits the breadth of the project, but can be justified both practically and intellectually. Paris, because it was so populous<sup>45</sup> and because it acted as the cultural and political center in France, was the site of most of France's periodical production and consumption. Provincial journalism was also significant, but could not match the variety or volume of Parisian publications. This can in part be explained by geography – distributing journals or newspapers in Paris was much easier than in more remote areas. Literacy was also likely a factor. In 1850 Parisian literacy rates were one hundred fifty percent of what they had been in 1800, and the price of books and newspapers had decreased by seventy-five percent (although they were still rather expensive).<sup>46</sup> This increase in literacy was disproportionately skewed toward Paris. By one account, in 1830 20% of Parisians were illiterate, while in the rest of France that number was 50%.<sup>47</sup> Of course, journals and newspapers could be and were shared orally, so literacy was not necessarily a barrier to access to printed material, but a more literate population certainly meant a larger market. This continual

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<sup>45</sup> In the Restoration the population of Paris was between 700 and 800,000, and the population of France was around 30 million. (The 1826 census put the population of France at 32 million, its pre-Revolutionary population was 24 million. Lewis Goldsmith, *Statistics of France* (London: J. Hatchard and Son, 1832), 2.)

<sup>46</sup> James Smith Allen, "The 'Cabinets de Lecture' in Paris, 1800-1850," *The Journal of Library History* (1974-1987) 16, no. 1 (Winter 1981): 200.

<sup>47</sup> H. Hazel Hahn, *Scenes of Parisian Modernity: Culture and Consumption in the Nineteenth Century* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009), 20.



growth of the market for print meant more periodicals, which fundamentally altered society with the rhythms of their periodicity.<sup>48</sup>

Advances in technology affected books differently than periodicals. For example, the invention of stereotype printing, where a mold was made of a moveable type page that could then be cast, even in multiples so that a book could be reprinted without resetting type (which was labor intensive and therefore expensive) and meant that the type was freed up for later pages, increased both the speed and decreased the cost of printing books. It was introduced to France by Firmin-Didot, and meant that while around one thousand volumes were published in France in 1800, more than 8000 were published in 1826.<sup>49</sup> However, this would have much less of an impact on the periodical press, where reprinting was less common. Moreover, while many of the technologies that would help encourage mass printing were invented in the early nineteenth century, it took some time for them to be implemented on a large scale. This was partially for practical reasons – buying a new press could be an impossible expense, even if it meant producing wares more cheaply and being able to sell more. For example, the Koenig-Bauer cylindrical steam press, invented in 1812 and used to print the London Times, at a rate of 1100 pages per hour, did not arrive in Paris until 1823.<sup>50</sup> This delay was in part because the legalities of printing could inhibit the introduction of new technologies, particularly for periodicals. Journals and newspapers could not be printed on a cylindrical press because they had to be printed on stamped paper.<sup>51</sup> It was only after 1830 that printers began to fully take advantage of these technologies to produce cheaper volumes. This would affect periodicals as well. In 1836, 80 000 issues of Parisian newspapers were produced each day. In 1847, this number more than doubled to 180 000.<sup>52</sup> The Restoration was a particular moment in the history of French print culture. It was a transitional period between the literary culture of the ancien regime and the mass print culture of the late nineteenth century.

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<sup>48</sup> Kalifa and Régner, *La civilisation du journal*, 7.

<sup>49</sup> Michael Marrinan, *Romantic Paris: Histories of a Cultural Landscape, 1800-1850* (Stanford, Calif: Stanford University Press, 2009), 340.

<sup>50</sup> Ibid.

<sup>51</sup> Catherine Cassan-Touil, "Introduction," in *Autour d'un cabinet de lecture*, ed. Graham Falconer (Toronto: Centre d'études du XIXe siècle Joseph Sablé, 2001), 12–13.

<sup>52</sup> Ibid., 24.

Printing in the Restoration was constrained not only by technology but also by law. While censorship laws changed a number of times throughout the Restoration, the government always controlled and oversaw the print industry and the press, through the licensing of printers and booksellers. Printing was the most strictly regulated part of the production and distribution of books, newspapers and journals, more than paper making, binding, publishing, bookselling or book-renting. Like bookselling, printers had to be licensed, but the total number of licenses was limited, which meant that printing was the bottleneck that limited the amount of material that could feasibly be printed in Paris. The printer was, by law, particularly responsible for that which he or she printed.<sup>53</sup> The printer had to make a declaration to the government in advance of printing anything – detailing the date, title, author, format (octavo, duodecimo, etc.), and number of copies printed. Printers had to supply these with such frequency that most printed forms that could be filled in with the relevant information, to save from having to repeat the generalities: “I the undersigned declare the intention to print a work entitled ... of which I propose to produce ... copies ... in ... volumes, in format ... of ... pages. Paris, the ... , 18...” The forms also included the printer’s name and address at the top.<sup>54</sup>

The literary journals this dissertation examines varied significantly in format, in length, in price, and in tone and intended audience. The shortest and least expensive (per issue) were the daily theatre papers. They were printed in folio on one sheet, and so were four page-sides long, printed in columns like a newspaper. The first (or, rarely, the fourth) page listed all current theatrical performances in Paris, while the rest contained editorial musings, reviews of plays and

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<sup>53</sup> While most printers in the Restoration were men, printing and bookselling formed an important enclave for women’s labor, and in particular widows’ (but also unmarried women’s) labor; widows could inherit their husband’s printing-house or bookshop without having to apply for a new license. Louis-Adolphe-Léonard de Grattier, *Commentaire sur les lois de la presse et des autres moyens de publication* (Paris: Videcoq, 1839), 32–33. For a brief discussion and an extensive catalogue of French female booksellers see Roméo Arbour, *Dictionnaire des femmes libraires en France, 1470-1870* (Genève: Droz, 2003).

<sup>54</sup> The printer declarations for Paris for 1817-1834 are located in Archives nationales de France, F18/43-119. The archival record suggests that there may have been some confusion over whether a printer had to make a declaration each time they printed a periodical, or only the first time. Some printers provide a new declaration each time a new issue of a journal is printed (be that weekly or monthly), while others do not. This confusion seemed not to exist for daily papers. This may be a result of repeated declarations being disposed of instead of archived. Printers always provided new declarations for journals when the print run changed, which offers a limited way to track the relative popularity of these journals.

books, discussions of art and literature in general, reports on the meetings of literary and scholarly societies, and occasionally timely literary or theatrical news – Byron’s death, theatre closures in the wake of the assassination of the Duke de Berry, or announcements of literary prizes and their winners. Many of these theatre papers were satirical or humorous, and were geared at a more general audience than the longer format literary journals, with their significantly shorter articles and less serious tone. These papers were also often without literary partisanship – while the more scholarly journals tended to be mainly romantic or mainly classicist, the theatre papers often showed no literary preference, or were openly hostile to both camps and to the debate between them. They cost around 50 to 75 fr per year, but customers could also subscribe for 6 months (27 - 38 fr), 3 months (15 - 20 fr), and sometimes 1 month (6 - 8 fr), although subscribing for the year was nearly always the most economical choice.<sup>55</sup> Most printed daily, but some printed only weekdays, every second day, or three times a week. Journals would also sometimes reduce or increase their frequency, presumably in response to the journal’s relative popularity.

The longer-format journals, almost always printed in octavo, tended to be weekly or monthly, although their length varied considerably from 8 pages to upwards of 50. They were printed, like books, in a single column. They were often numbered in volumes and issues, like modern academic journals, and would sometimes include a table of contents in the last issue of a given volume. These often contained very long book reviews that would continue from issue to issue. That meant they could be very thorough in their discussion of the books in question, although these reviews were often littered with very long quotes and spent a lot of words describing the texts under review in detail, or filled space with seemingly unrelated tangents. Content-wise they did not vary significantly from the theatre dailies, although they were more likely to review non-fiction books – often history or science – and some did contain sections for political news and current events. Because their periodicity and length varied considerably so did their pricing; periodicals cost anywhere from 28 fr a year for a 32 page journal published three

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<sup>55</sup> The annual subscription rate represented about 10% of an average worker’s salary. Robert Justin Goldstein, ed., *The Frightful Stage: Political Censorship of the Theater in Nineteenth-Century Europe* (New York: Berghahn Books, 2009), 72–73.

times a month (*Mémorial des libraires*) to 40 fr a year for a 16-page weekly (*L'Observateur*). These longer-format journals were also more likely to be associated with a particular group or society, and were therefore more likely to be expressly or obviously partisan, in literary or political terms or both. *Les Annales de la littérature et des arts*, for example, was for many years the organ of royalist classicist society *La Société des bonnes-lettres*, and *la Muse française* was famously the mouthpiece of a group of seven royalist romantics including a 21-year-old Victor Hugo.

This typology is not a perfect one. There were literary journals that fit neither of these grouping. *Le Globe*, for example, was a columned journal that was not focused on the theatre, nor was it satirical. It was much more similar in tone and content to journals printed in octavo. There were also single column journals aimed at a more popular audience, written in relatively simple language with short articles, including a variety of theatrical or literary almanacs, published annually. Many literary

almanacs contained only poems or prose excerpts, but others engaged literary criticism.

While this project focuses primarily on the literary press, and so most of the periodicals it considers were dedicated specifically to literature, arts, and theatre, it also makes frequent use of one newspaper: *le Journal des débats politiques et littéraires*. While not the most popular



Figure 1 - First appearance of the feuilleton in the Journal des débats (image credit: Gallica)

newspaper in the Restoration, *le Journal des débats* offered significant arts and culture coverage, particularly theatre reviews.<sup>56</sup> The feuilleton, the section of the newspaper devoted to arts and culture, usually the bottom quarter of each page, separated from the rest of the paper by a line, first appeared in *le Journal des débats* in 1800. Its editors Julien Louis Geoffroy and Louis-François Berti coined the term on 30 pluviôse in the year VIII (19 February 1800) when they indicated they would use the bottom of the page of their newly enlarged paper to announce the plays being performed in Paris each night. Quickly these announcements gave way to reviews of those plays, and Geoffroy, calling on his experience as a critic for *l'Année littéraire*, became the *Débats'* first theatre critic, a position he held until his death in February 1814.<sup>57</sup> Both drawing on and contributing to a tradition of theatre criticism and literary journalism, but with the resources and subscriber base of a newspaper, Geoffroy helped establish *le Journal des débats* as a primary source for literary criticism, a tradition that continued into the Restoration under the paper's new theatre critic Pierre Duviquet.

While it has not been the subject of frequent scholarly attention recently, the role of print and the literary press in the development of French romanticism has always been well known. In a 1927 article on the beginnings of romanticism, written on the occasion of its purported 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary, the author begins with two booksellers, Ambroise Tardieu and Ladvocat, and a journal, *la Muse française*. The story would have been familiar. Alexandre Soumet, Alexandre Guiraud, Victor Hugo, Alfred de Vigny, Émile Deschamps, Saint-Valry and G. Desjardins were all founders of *la Muse française*, published by Ambroise Tardieu. While they did not call themselves romantics, their cénacle and their journal clearly promoted this 'new literature.' But an article by Charles Nodier angered the Académie Française, which answered by denouncing romanticism (Auger's denunciation is now most famous for inspiring Stendhal's *Racine et Shakespeare*). The Académie's opposition to the journal threatened Soumet's potential election to a chair of the

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<sup>56</sup> The most-read paper of the Restoration was *Le Constitutionnel*, which, according to a police report on the press, had 18 000 subscribers in 1824. *Le Journal des débats* had the second largest subscriber base with 12 700. The government considered both to be 'opposition' papers. Rapport général sur la presse, 12 February 1825, Archives nationales de France, F18/261.

<sup>57</sup> Olivier Bara, "Julien-Louis Geoffroy et la naissance de feuilleton dramatique," *Orages*, no. 7 (March 2008): 163.

Académie, so the journal ceased production and the *cénacle* disbanded.<sup>58</sup> The story continued with Charles Nodier, whom the Comte d'Artois (and future Charles X) named librarian of the Arsenal, which contained a space that he and other romantics used as the meeting place of their new salon. While the salon continued to exist until 1830, in 1827 it began to be overshadowed by the *Cénacle de Notre-Dame-des-Champs*, located in Victor Hugo's home. This was also the year that Victor Hugo wrote his play *Cromwell*, published the following year, the preface of which signaled his break with both royalism and a more timid romanticism or 'semi-classicism.' This hardline liberal romanticism contrasted with the royalist romanticism of Charles Nodier and his ilk, and only solidified its dominance with the success of *Hernani* in 1830, and with the July Revolution.<sup>59</sup>

But this traditional story of how romanticism began as a royalist movement and became a liberal one ignores the romantics who were always liberals, like Stendhal and Germaine de Staël, and the romantics who remained royalists, like Nodier. It also creates a sort of hierarchy of romanticism – Victor Hugo is a 'true romantic,' while Soumet is a semi-classicist who abandoned the 'new literature' for a seat at the table. Moreover, it only tells us the story of romanticism from its own perspective, and leaves out the, in Gamer's terms, genre creation work done by classicist writings and non-partisan critics. Romantic journals like *la Muse française* and *le Globe* were aimed at and read by mainly dedicated romantics; their impact was likely in reality quite small. This is also the case for the various *cénacles*, which were crucial to the internal development of French romanticism, but did not function in a vacuum. Non-romantic periodicals, because they reported on and reviewed romantic works and activities, and because they often defined classicism in opposition to romanticism, were crucial to the overall development of romanticism. To understand what the greater reading public knew or understood about romanticism we must look to its detractors; we must examine literary journals as a collective unit.

The fundamental methodological problem of using periodicals to assess the roll of periodicals in the growth of literary movements, or in anything else, is that they will invariably

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<sup>58</sup> L.-J. Arrigon, "A l'aube du Romantisme," in *Lectures pour tous : revue universelle et populaire illustrée* (Paris: Edi-Monde, 1927), 17.

<sup>59</sup> *Ibid.*, 18–20.

inflate their own value. Journal editors consistently claim that journals are an important rallying point for their particular cause or that they alone provide a voice for the voiceless. Similarly, censorship records, a second important source-base for this study, also have a tendency to over-emphasize the power of periodicals to sway public opinion. Whether those whose livelihood did not depend on those same journals felt as strongly is unlikely. This should come as no surprise. The historical record loves to lie to us. It consistently overemphasizes the importance of things that have survived, which often means things that were not well used. It encourages us to believe that the anxieties of those in power were based in absolute actuality. It privileges the internal lives of the wealthy over the lived realities of everyone else. It is my hope that by including all kinds of literary journals, from satirical dailies to literary almanacs to the more erudite periodicals, and by placing those periodicals in a larger context that includes literary sociability, the legal and commercial framework of print, and the theatre, that this will mitigate the problem somewhat. If we know what periodicals were saying about literature to people across classes and genders, then we can at least have a better sense of what it was possible to say about literature in Restoration France. Moreover, by placing periodicals into a broader framework of civil society we emphasize that periodicals played a role in the development of romanticism and classicism in France, and they publicized the debate between the two in a particular way that would not have occurred in an imaginary alternate reality where periodicals did not exist, but that is not to say that periodicals are the reason romanticism existed in Restoration France. Instead, they were one of the important vehicles through which romanticism was contested and created, and understanding the role of that vehicle means we will understand both French romanticism and the Restoration better than we have before. An examination of literary journals adds to, rather than supplants, the important scholarship done on romantic-era novels, art, or music.

While we can probably safely assume that no one believed in the power of the press as much as the owners of periodicals or the government censor, that does not mean that they were without influence. As the work of print culture historians like Roger Chartier has demonstrated, print is not imposed on the masses from above, nor is it entirely created from below, but rather involves a negotiation between the two. Books, Chartier writes, try to impose an order and a

homogenous interpretation, but they can never successfully eliminate the freedom of readers to interpret.<sup>60</sup> Therefore, even if we cannot reconstruct individual readers' interpretations of literary journals (or of the books they are reviewing), we can reconstruct the parameters of the realm in which that interpretation took place. And of course, the lines between creators and consumers are not always clear-cut. The people who write for these literary journals are, of course, readers of the books they review and of other periodicals. Moreover, whether journals influenced public opinion to the extent they or the censors claimed matters less than the fact that journals producers, consumers, and the state all believed they did. The imagined generic power of periodicals encouraged the people of Restoration Paris to turn to them in order to promote or protect their partisan viewpoints, regardless of their success in doing so. Perhaps the clearest example of this is when the ultra-royalist Villèle ministry decided to buy up the opposition newspapers and turn them into pro-ministerial papers. Apparently never having considered the extent to which people who subscribed to liberal newspapers did so for the paper's political position, the ministry mainly succeeding in running the papers they bought into the ground.

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Restoration France saw an early modern power transition to a modern world. Through the Revolution and First Empire, huge portions of the map of Europe were redrawn, and a number of European nations, including France, underwent a series of often violent regime changes. When the Bourbons returned to power, they were confronted with new technologies, new industries, new bureaucracies and laws, a new nobility, new artistic forms, and new literary schools. And they were confronted with a population that could not agree on how (or if) France would adapt to this new order. When political conflict seemed intractable, some turned to literature as a potential avenue for social cohesion and a new consensus, but literature too became mired in conflict. In the midst of that conflict, however, the writers, journalists, critics, booksellers, printers and publishers of Restoration Paris created and promoted beautiful literature, helped change the criteria by which art was evaluated, and presided over the

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<sup>60</sup> Roger Chartier, *The Order of Books: Readers, Authors, and Libraries in Europe Between the Fourteenth and Eighteenth Centuries* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1994).



development of a newly commercialized printing industry. This dissertation traces the political and literary conflicts of Restoration Paris, and the remarkable changes that happened around and through those conflicts.

Chapter one explores the political and legal framework of the Parisian press in the Restoration. It argues that beliefs about the power of the press encouraged the government to censor opinions it believed were injurious to the harmony it was trying to create, and encouraged journalists to use the press to promote their alternate visions for Restoration society. It further argues that the censorship laws passed in 1819 and 1822 encouraged the production of literary journals, by tightening controls over the political press. In this new censorship regime, only newspapers and journals that had paid a caution payment could legally discuss politics. Literary journals, therefore, turned to literature as an alternate realm to solve the fundamental cleavages in Restoration society. The political world and the political press were so polarized and so polarizing that these journalists sought a separate sphere, untainted by the liberal-ultra-royalist conflict at the heart of Restoration politics. But the literary sphere was just as mired in conflict. Each side of that conflict mobilized the press, and the power of literary criticism to try to promote their particular vision for France. However, as in the political sphere, attempts to find a consensus in the *bataille romantique* only led to further polarization.

Chapters two and three extrapolate on the idea introduced in chapter one that literary criticism functioned as a kind of censorship, or that critics relied on criticism in order to cajole and convince the public to read and write particular things. They did this because they believed that “literature is the expression of society” and so a society’s literary output had to be true to that society, and had the power to shape that society. Chapter two also explores how romantic and classicist literary critics, in their denunciations of each other’s literature, helped to shape and define both literary schools and their conceptions of good and bad literature. It argues that understandings of romanticism have been fundamentally shaped by the classicist conception of literary genre as something that followed specific rules and criteria. This notion of genre made it possible for classicist critics to deny that romanticism, because it had no rules or specific definition, was a literary genre at all. Chapter three examines the business side of literary

criticism. It explores the growing print market in the Restoration and the anxieties that commercial practices such as advertising had on both the book trade and on literary criticism. Classicist anxieties about romanticism, and about its success with readers, became intermingled with anxieties about the decadence of literature in a commercial age, and critics of romanticism associated it closely with profitability and with the trappings of a modern print market, especially the figure of the *éditeur*. However, while critics of commercialization believed commerce had a corrupting influence, the move away from a system of patronage toward a literary marketplace also coincided with beliefs in the independence and freedom of writers with respect to their own work, which dovetailed nicely with romantic conceptions of artistic genius.

Chapters four, five, and six, while still focused on the press, examine other institutions of civil society that grew up around or were shaped by the press, and the literary press in particular. Chapter four explores the literary geography of Restoration Paris. It looks at both how the press spread ideas about Paris and its neighborhoods, and how the commerce of print helped to shape the Parisian landscape. It looks at arcades and *cabinets de lectures* as case studies for sites of commercial bookselling and reading. It explores the idea that commercial spaces and a quest for profit could override or flatten literary partisanship.

Chapter five investigates literary sociability, and looks in detail at the various salons, Academies, *cénacles*, and societies that made up Parisian literary culture. Many of those groups relied on the press to promote and extend their message of literary partisanship, but some groups, especially those with connections to the state or established pedigrees, had more cultural power than others. Royalist romantics were able to leverage their political and social connections to gain access to the resources of these more well-connected groups. This chapter also looks at the destabilizing impact of anti-romantic rhetoric from the royalist literary society le Société des bonnes lettres and from the Académie française, on romantic sociability, and particularly its influence in the breakup of the *cénacle of la Muse française*.

Chapter six studies the *bataille romantique* in Parisian theatre. Because of the importance classicism placed on the theatre as a literary form, the theater became a critical venue for the *bataille romantique*. Romantics recognized that any true triumph over classicism

would have to include romantic dominance of the theatre. As romantic plays premiered in increasingly prestigious theatres, the theatre press crafted a narrative about romantic ascendancy in the theatre that persists to this day. These steps culminated in the premier of Victor Hugo's play *Hernani* in 1830, which featured demonstrations by both romantic and classicist partisans. But theatre also contributed to the *bataille romantique* in more direct ways, by making it the subject of plays. These comedies fit into a larger genre of comedic plays that pitted old versus new, and ended with some reconciliation between the two. These comedies sought to reconcile the tension between revolution and counter-revolution, and because the French interpreted romanticism as historically new and classicism as founded at the apex of the ancien régime, the struggle between romantic and classicist theatre became part of and contributed to a larger struggle between the old and new elements of Restoration life.

When we recast the Restoration as the era of the *bataille romantique*, we relocate a traditionally political narrative into a cultural and civic framework. It allows us to see how Restoration culture was collaboratively constructed by not just the political and literary elites but also the printers, booksellers, playwrights, critics, sociétaires, salonnières, readers and theatregoers who made up Restoration civil society.

## CHAPTER 1: CENSORSHIP, LITERARY JOURNALS, AND THE RESTORATION STATE

*"If the party that calls itself royalist, and that we have given the name ultra, is in error, then the efforts it undertakes to propagate its doctrines will only serve to discredit them; if, on the other hand, they are correct and it is us who are in error, then it is good that they can make themselves heard. The liberty of the press will not exist truly until the day where all opinions can be expressed without danger."*

- Charles Comte and Charles Dunoyer, *Le Censeur européen* (1818)<sup>61</sup>

*"Literary hatreds are more ferocious than even political hatreds, because they irritate the most sensitive aspects of your pride, and your adversary's triumph declares you an imbecile."*

- Théophile Gautier, *Histoire du romantisme*<sup>62</sup>

*"It is of no doubt that we must attribute to its foreign origin the significant complaints that emerged in France against the first attempts of romantic literature. We have not forgotten the persecution it suffered; and what happened at that time proves that party spirit that at first seemed exclusive to politics, is no stranger to the peaceful world of literature."*

- Junius Castelnau, *Essai sur la littérature romantique*<sup>63</sup>

A free and independent press is a fundamental pillar of fully democratic society. The press carries significant power to shape public debate and is intended to hold democratic governments to account. But the press is never without its conflicts of interest – be they partisan, intellectual, or business-related. In less democratic societies, like the constitutional monarchy of Restoration France, where the press was not free, it nevertheless played a significant role in political and cultural life, and was still itself shaped by commercial, political, and intellectual interests. The press in the Restoration contributed to its polarizing political debates, even as the French government sought to silence dissenting opinions. Just as the political factions used the press to promote their partisan positions, critics and writers turned to the literary press as an avenue to debate the future of France, especially after 1819 when new press laws made literary periodicals less expensive and easier to produce than newspapers or political journals. A nation

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<sup>61</sup> "Ouvrages nouveaux," *Le Censeur européen* 10 (1818): 344.

<sup>62</sup> Théophile Gautier, *Histoire du romantisme ; suivie de notices romantiques ; et d'une étude sur la poésie française, 1830-1868* (Paris: Charpentier et Compagnie, 1874), 100, <http://gallica.bnf.fr/ark:/12148/bpt6k206100b>. "Les haines littéraires sont encore plus féroces que les haines politiques, car elles font vibrer les fibres les plus chatouilleuses de l'amour-propre, et le triomphe de l'adversaire vous proclame imbécile."

<sup>63</sup> Junius Castelnau, *Essai sur la littérature romantique* (Paris: Le Normant Père, 1825), 7. "C'est sans doute à cette origine étrangère qu'il faut attribuer les grandes réclamations qui s'élevèrent en France contre les premiers essais de la littérature romantique. On n'a point oublié de quelle sorte de persécution elle fut l'objet ; et ce qui se passa à cette époque, put prouver que l'esprit de parti qui semble d'abord exclusif à la politique, n'est point étranger au domaine paisible des lettres."

mired in political conflict, the French saw literature as a potential avenue for social cohesion. Literary debates between romantics and classicists reinforced political debates, even when they did not map on to them perfectly, because both classicism and romanticism could be co-opted and operationalized for political ends, while simultaneously claiming to exist in a space outside the political. And like the political press, the literary press, in its attempts to promote a harmonious vision for the future of France, presented two competing and mutually exclusive visions, and contributed to increased polarization and the solidification of romanticism and classicism as ideologies and canons.

Both journalists in Restoration Paris and the French government believed strongly in the power of the press to influence and shape society. The *rédacteurs* of *le Censeur européen* argued that printing technology contributed to the development and spread of ideas. “The intellectual world has grown along with the material world,” they wrote, and “print is the magic medium that works to preserve and increase this precious treasure: it shelters it from all attempts of despotism and barbarism.”<sup>64</sup> Moreover, they insisted that “this marvelous art puts people in permanent conversation; it is a new organ, unknown to the ancients, that unmasks errors and proclaims the truth; it will let no useful invention be forgotten, all that it collects becomes heritage for posterity.”<sup>65</sup> This new technology changes governments and societies, they argued. But both journalists and the government worried that print, and the press in particular, could be used to divide and polarize. The government used press censorship to try to eliminate that polarization through the suppression of opinions it believed to be injurious to the state. An 1825 report on the state of the periodical press in France insisted that newspapers increased the divisions in public opinion, and that freedom of the press would mean the end of the monarchy.<sup>66</sup> That same year, Pierre Baour-Lormian (1770-1854) published a dialogue between a romantic and a classicist, in

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<sup>64</sup> “Des factions,” *Le Censeur européen* 3 (1818): 3. “Le domaine intellectuel s’est accru comme le domaine matériel. L’imprimerie est le moyen magique qui sert à conserver et à accroître ce trésor précieux; il le place à l’abri de toutes les tentatives du despotisme et de la barbarie.”

<sup>65</sup> Ibid. “Cet art merveilleux met les peuples en conversation permanente; il est un organe nouveau, inconnu aux anciens, qui démasque l’erreur et proclame la vérité; il ne laisse perdre aucune invention utile, tout ce qu’il recueille devient un héritage pour la postérité.”

<sup>66</sup> Rapport général sur la presse, 12 February 1825, Archives nationales de France, F18/261. “Il n’y a donc que licence de la presse périodique en France et il n’y a que licence sans répression. Il faut ou que cet état de choses change ou que la monarchie périsse”

which the romantic boasted about the support his preferred literary school received in the press.<sup>67</sup> The classicist responded that these journals infected Paris, because they, like the romantics, ignored “the charter of good poetry”: the rules of Boileau.<sup>68</sup> Given the pernicious influence of romantic writing and its support in the press, the return of good taste, the classicist continued, would be slow indeed.<sup>69</sup> Just as government officials worried about the press’s undermining of the state, classicists worried that the free press could destabilize taste and undermine French national identity. Yet classicists lacked the coercive power that the state possessed through its censorship regime, and were required to look for other means to promote their agenda. The perceived power of the press to sway and convince encouraged many to turn to it as the vehicle for their political and literary beliefs, encouraged governments across Europe to try to control the printed word, and encouraged literary critics to attempt the same.

Censorship allowed the Restoration government to attempt to control the spread of ideas and information they considered injurious to their particular vision for Restoration France. Under the reign of Louis XVIII, that vision imagined a devoutly royalist populace, granted the rights and privileges of the constitutional Charter of 1814 by the grace of the King, divorced from the legacy of the French Revolution through a policy of willful forgetting and amnesty. Under the reign of Charles X, censorship laws increasingly focused on religious content, as the government aligned itself more clearly with the reactionary ultra-royalist faction. But, as Judith Butler argues in *Excitable Speech*, official government censorship and regulation does not exhaust the possible modes of censorship in a given society, and “implicit forms of censorship may be, in fact, more efficacious than explicit forms in enforcing a limit on speakability.”<sup>70</sup> While Butler refers to language conventions and also hate speech, and focuses on oral communication, literary criticism too functions as a kind of attempted censorship, and her ideas also apply to the

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<sup>67</sup> Pierre-Marie-François Baour-Lormian, *Le classique et le romantique , dialogue* (Paris: Canel, 1825), 23, <http://gallica.bnf.fr/ark:/12148/bpt6k1138916>.

<sup>68</sup> Ibid., 28. Baor-Lormian’s use of the phrase “la charte des bons vers” draws clear parallels between classicist artistic rules and the limited monarchy of Restoration France, with its *charte constitutionnelle*.

<sup>69</sup> Ibid.

<sup>70</sup> Judith P. Butler, *Excitable Speech : A Politics of the Performative* (New York: Routledge, 1997), 130.

censorship of print. Literary criticism, like censorship, tried to control what people read, in order to shape their opinions and ultimately their lives. Restoration literary critics, and the writers they discussed, produced their writing within the constraints created by the government's censorship regime, while simultaneously contributing to the constraints placed on both literature and criticism itself, by increasingly narrowly defining the parameters of good writing and good criticism.

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### ***Oubli* and its alternatives**

Louis XVIII and his government sought to construct a constitutional monarchy for France on a policy of forgive and forget, with respect to the French Revolution. They made a concerted effort to move forward as if the terrible events had not really happened. They enshrined this policy of forgetting (or *oubli*), of moving forward, in the charter. Article 11 stated, "All inquiries into opinions and votes voiced prior to the Restoration are forbidden. This same *oubli* is mandated for both tribunals and citizens."<sup>71</sup> The ease with which Napoleon returned to power at the start of the Hundred Days proved how dangerous this disregard for the past could be. Historians have primarily criticized Louis XVIII for failing to dismantle the army during the first Restoration, and given that he was chased from his own country by the threat of what was supposed to be his army, it seems likely Louis would have agreed with them. In response to this demonstration of his regime's vulnerability, when Louis XVIII returned to power in November 1815, he instated a more thorough purging of the ranks – especially those people who flocked back to Napoleon during the Hundred Days.<sup>72</sup> In spite of the purges, his government's policy continued to be one of more or less neglect with respect to the recent past. He did not seek out and punish all those who had tried the king nor did he confiscate and return sold-off émigré and church lands (the *biens nationaux*), no matter how much the ultra-royalist forces clamored for it. This was at least in part a practical decision – it would be impossible to try anyone as a regicide without drawing attention to the fact that Louis XVI was tried and executed, an act that denied the legitimacy of the French

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<sup>71</sup> "Assemblée Nationale - Charte Constitutionnelle Du 4 Juin 1814." "Toutes recherches des opinions et votes émis jusqu'à la restauration sont interdites. Le même oubli est commandé aux tribunaux et aux citoyens."

<sup>72</sup> Nicholas J Richardson, *The French Prefectural Corps, 1814-1830* (Cambridge: Cambridge U.P., 1966).

monarchy. Moreover, the sale of the *biens nationaux* had saved France from financial ruin, and had changed the lives of a huge number of French peasants who now owned their own land; to denounce those sales as fraudulent could potentially put the government in a precarious fiscal position, and might foment the very thing the Restoration monarchy most wanted to avoid - uprising.<sup>73</sup>

Furthermore, it would have been virtually impossible (or at least, highly impractical) to dismantle the bureaucratic apparatus that Napoleon created to govern France, just as it proved impossible to dismantle Napoleon's restructuring of the Holy Roman Empire. As a result, the Restoration inherited many of the processes and individuals that made their government work from the Empire. Nicholas Richardson's study of the French prefectoral corps shows clearly how significant retention of Napoleonic prefects shaped the day-to-day realities of Restoration government.<sup>74</sup> The legal structure built under the empire also carried over into the Restoration, including the laws related to printing, bookselling, and the press. The imperial decree of 5 February 1810 formed the basis of all print laws in the Restoration and set up the administrative structure that would regulate all printing, bookselling, and censorship. This legal retention also extended to personnel - some of the Restoration censors and other press administrators began their appointments under Napoleon's regime.<sup>75</sup> The legacy of Napoleonic appointments influenced cultural institutions as well. When the Bourbons rechartered the Académie on 21 March 1816 they stripped eleven members of their seats, including Lucien Bonaparte, for their Napoleonic sympathies and actions during the Hundred Days,<sup>76</sup> but one of them, Antoine-Vincent Arnault, was reelected to a seat in 1829, and many more of the members appointed during the

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<sup>73</sup> For a detailed discussion of this policy of *oubli* and how it conflicted with the position of the Catholic Church in France, see Sheryl T Kroen, "Revolutionizing Religious Politics during the Restoration," *French Historical Studies* 21, no. 1 (1998): 27–53.

<sup>74</sup> Richardson, *The French Prefectoral Corps, 1814-1830*.

<sup>75</sup> Four of the nineteen men who served as Imperial censors in 1813 continued until at least 1821: Charles de Lacretelle, Lemontey, D'Avrigny, and Vanderbourg. *Biographie des censeurs royaux* (Paris: chez les marchands de nouveautés, 1821), 29–30, <http://gallica.bnf.fr/ark:/12148/bpt6k61246840>; *Almanach impérial : présenté à Sa Majesté l'Empereur par Testu* (Paris: Testu, 1813), 209. Moreover, Pagès and His both served as chiefs of various divisions of the department of printing and bookselling under the empire and until 1821 and 1822, respectively. *Almanach impérial* (1813): 209; *Almanach Royal* (Paris: M.-P. Guyot, 1821): 158; *Almanach Royal* (Paris: M.-P. Guyot, 1822): 154.

<sup>76</sup> Daniel Oster, *Histoire de l'Académie française* (Paris: Vialletay, 1970), 98–99.



Empire retained their seats, including François-René de Chateaubriand, Louis Philippe, comte de Ségur, Charles de Lacretelle and his older brother Pierre Louis de Lacretelle.<sup>77</sup>

The effect of the *oubli* policy was twofold. On the one hand it ensured that Louis' government would be in almost continual conflict with those most keen to support a restored monarchy – the Church and the conservative ultra-royalist former aristocracy – which in turn meant that the Restoration was a time marked by debate, conflict and a lack of consensus. On the other hand, a policy of *oubli* ensured that virtually any person's actions during the Revolution and Empire could be construed as either patriotic or treasonous. The policy was designed to avoid the kind of instability that would result from purging government administrators, redistributing land, and constant accusations of treason or Bonapartism, but it was less successful in its prevention of the latter. Many took issue with a policy that meant people who had changed loyalties many times and worked in the governments of various regimes would be rewarded for their experience with jobs, while those who fled France and ostensibly remained loyal to the monarchy would not get their land back. And so there were those who publicly called out those they saw as turncoats, in direct opposition to article 11. For example, the *Dictionnaire des girouettes* published in Paris in 1815, listed various public figures, all the regimes to which they had been loyal and provided quotations to demonstrate those revolving loyalties.<sup>78</sup>

The imperfect implementation of the policy of *oubli* ensured that the Restoration had a complex relationship with France's past and especially with the legacy of the Revolution and Empire. Restoration politicians (and monarchs) and other public figures had to maintain a balance wherein they were not perceived as either proponents of the Revolution or the Empire on the one hand, or traitors to France on the other. In the Restoration there was at times a sense that France

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<sup>77</sup> Others elected under Napoleon who retained their seats in the Académie française include: François-Auguste Parseval-Grandmaison, François de Neufchâteau, Roch-Ambroise Cucurron Sicard, Alexandre-Vincent Pineux Duval, Pierre Daru, Louis-Benoît Picard, Népomucène Lemercier, Louis-Marcelin de Fontanes, Jean-Gérard Lacuée, count of Cessac, François Juste Marie Raynouard, François-Nicolas-Vincent Campenon, Constantin-François Chassebœuf, Jean-Baptiste-Antoine Suard, Antoine-François-Claude Ferrand, Joseph Michaud, Jean-Armand de Bessuéjols Roquelaure, Félix-Julien-Jean Bigot de Prémeneu, François Andrieux, Gabriel Villar, and Antoine Destutt de Tracy.

<sup>78</sup> *Dictionnaire des girouettes* (Paris: Alexis Eymery, 1815). For a detailed discussion of this and similar publications see Alan B. Spitzer, "Malicious Memories: Restoration Politics and a Prosopography of Turncoats," *French Historical Studies* 24, no. 1 (Winter 2001): 37–61.

was France regardless of its regime, and so anyone who had fought against either the Revolutionary or the Napoleonic armies could be criticized for having fought against the French people, but at the same time people who were members of or public supporters of any post-1789 government could be labeled traitors to the throne. A Restoration where citizens accused each other of either treason or Bonapartism with regularity and fervor could not be a strong or stable one. Restoration governments were therefore likely to perceive ultra-royalists as much as, if not even more, of a destabilizing force to the regime as liberals and the early Louis XVIII ministries designed policy to rein in both sides.

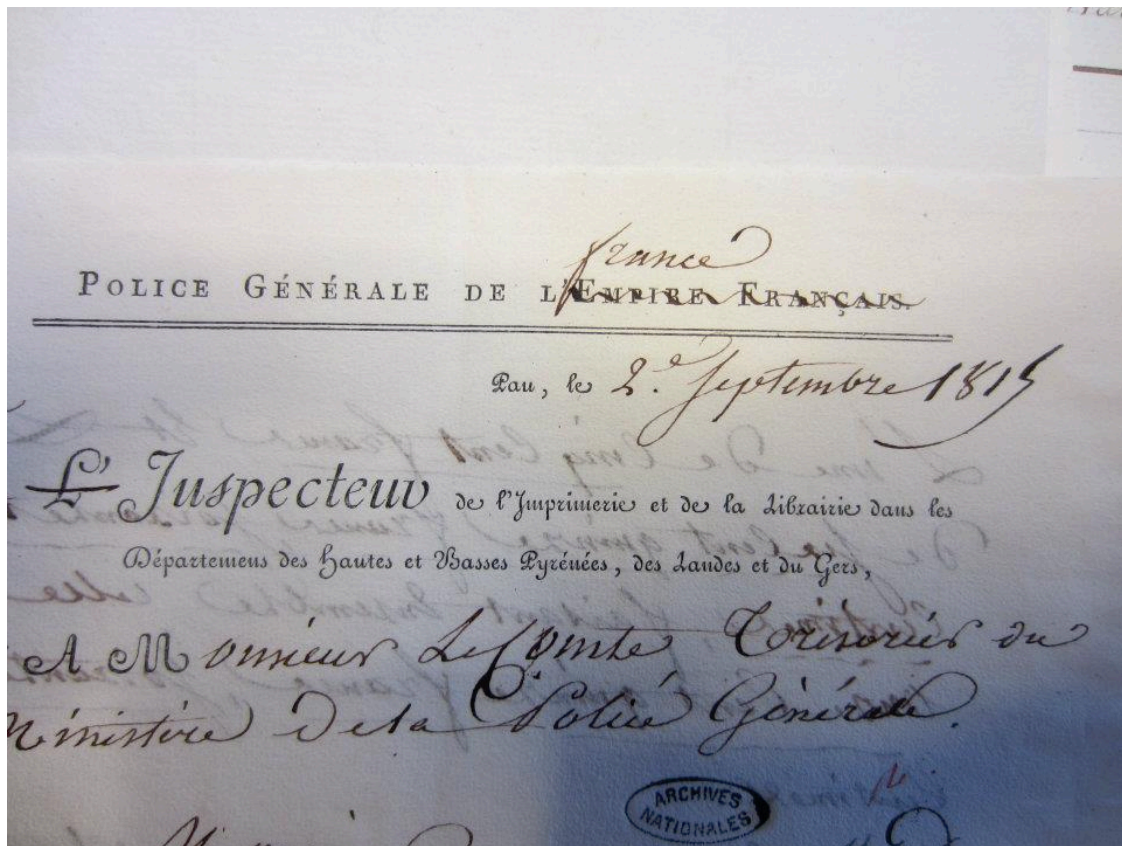


Figure 2 - Repurposed imperial letterhead, 1815 (AN F18/26)

Censorship proved an important tool for the enforcement of *oubli*. Censorship laws were aimed at both ultra-royalist and liberals, especially during the second Restoration when ultra-royalist demands that land be returned to émigrés or threats to those who supported Napoleon

during the 100 days made the government very wary.<sup>79</sup> In the early years of the Restoration Louis XVIII seemed determined to move forward from, rather than wallow in, the past, and to build a new consensus of the center. To that end Louis tended to appoint ministers from the center-left and center-right, in order to isolate the extremes on both ends of the political spectrum. But, while Louis could choose his cabinet and try to control the press, he could not dictate that everyone forget the preceding 25 years and pretend that his reign really had begun in 1796 when the young son of Louis XVI died. While Louis may have believed that the legitimacy of his reign lay entirely in his person, the realities of the constitutional monarchy were such that his power was far from absolute.<sup>80</sup> He alone could not dictate France's present, future, or its approach to its past.

The policy of *oubli*, while it had a tremendous impact on Restoration life and laws, is best understood as only the most powerful of a series of competing visions for the best way to restore France. Perhaps the greatest irony of the Restoration is that the violence of the debates surrounding these competing visions of French harmony destroyed the possibility of harmonious reconciliation. The Restoration was not characterized by consensus, but by a desire for reconciliation that only bred conflict. When the 1815 national election in France returned a royalist majority in the *Chambre des députés*, Louis XVIII reportedly declared it the '*chambre introuvable*,' (variously translated as the 'unobtainable chamber' or the 'unexpected chamber').<sup>81</sup> This term has come to highlight the difficult and polarized nature of French chamber politics at the time. The debates that would eventually lead to the chamber's dissolution by the King, at the behest of his minister, Élie Décazes, in 1816, illustrate the nature of this polarization. In these debates the royalist majority opposed not only the moderate minority led by Royer-Collard, but also the King's cabinet ministers, and therefore the person of the King himself. The royalist majority began to argue that their support for the monarchy need not translate into support for each of Louis XVIII's

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<sup>79</sup> Collins, *The Government and the Newspaper Press*, 11. This also meant that ultra-royalists and liberals tended to find themselves on the same side of the debate over freedom of the press.

<sup>80</sup> Stéphane Rials calls the Restoration monarchy a 'limited monarchy' (*monarchie limitée*), rather than a constitutional monarchy, and makes clear that the monarchy placed those limits on itself. The charter made clear that the power and authority of the King existed prior to the charter, and that the charter existed by grace of the King, but also established a legislative system that put limits on that monarchy. Rials, *Révolution et contre-révolution au XIXe siècle*, 103–4, 125.

<sup>81</sup> He apparently intended this to express that "it was such a freakish chamber that it could never be matched." Bertier de Sauvigny, *The Bourbon Restoration*, 124.

choices, and adopted the slogan “*Vive le Roi quand-même*,” (Long live the King, regardless). This led to a seemingly paradoxical situation whereby the royalists began arguing for a ministry that was responsible to the chamber (because they held a majority there), while the moderates and liberals were pushed into support for the King’s chosen ministry, because it was more liberal.<sup>82</sup> For similar reasons the liberals supported the King and Décazes’ decision to dissolve the *chambre introuvable*.<sup>83</sup> As Bertier de Sauvigny notes, “in France the constitutionalists and liberals were delighted. Royer-Collard said a statue should be erected in honor of Décazes, and there were even scenes where former Jacobins were insulting Ultra-Royalists by shouting *Long Live the King!*”<sup>84</sup> The dissolution of the chamber only helped to further polarize the liberal and the royalist positions.

In *De la monarchie selon la charte* (1816), which he wrote in response to the dissolution of the *chambre introuvable*, Chateaubriand argued that the King could be legitimate in one of three ways, through the ancien regime (which was impossible), through despotism (also impossible), or through the charter (which was not simply the only possible option – it was also already the reality).<sup>85</sup> Chateaubriand argued that dissolving the only royalist assembly to have been elected since 1789 seemed a terrible way to bolster the monarchy, and questioned how the monarchy could be maintained if the mechanism by which it gained its legitimacy (the charter) was undermined.<sup>86</sup> Much of Chateaubriand’s treatise was concerned with demonstrating that most of France was truly royalist and that its revolutionary minority should therefore not hold majority power. Chateaubriand, like the *Dictionnaire des girouettes* before him, believed that allowing those who had been in power during the Revolution to remain in power during the

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<sup>82</sup> Ironically, it was the ultra-royalists, conservative supporters of a powerful monarchy, who were calling for true parliamentary and responsible government, whereas the liberals, ostensibly reformers who supported the full implementation of the Charter to limit the powers of the king, were looking to limit the powers of the chamber. This ‘practical’ approach to politics is also visible in debates over freedom of the press, where liberals and ultra-royalists often found themselves arguing for the same freedom from censorship, since their partisans were the most likely to be censored because of their extreme views.

<sup>83</sup> Bertier de Sauvigny, *The Bourbon Restoration*, 122.

<sup>84</sup> *Ibid.*, 138.

<sup>85</sup> François René de Chateaubriand, *De la monarchie selon la charte* (Paris: Le Normant, 1816), 1-2.

<sup>86</sup> *Ibid.*, 280.

Restoration was damaging to France. (Although, the 'revolutionaries' Chateaubriand said were being given all the offices and were plotting against the monarchy, were less likely to be Jacobins, and more likely to have served under the Directory, Consulate or First Empire.)<sup>87</sup>

As Chateaubriand's treatise demonstrates, the conflict and polarization expanded outside of the somewhat insular world of high politics, in large part through the press. Periodicals and other printed matter spread political debates outside the chambers of deputies and peers, by reproducing and broadcasting their language or similar language. In doing so they put forward models for what they perceived to be the 'true France' and established their journal's pedigree or position. It was common to feature an epigraph on the title page, frontispiece, or masthead of journals, which could function as a sort of short hand to publicize the journal's partisanship to readers.<sup>88</sup> *Le Drapeau blanc*, as if its title was not enough of an indication of its ultra-royalist politics, used the ultra slogan "Vive le Roi quand même!" as its epigraph. In an article in the second issue of *le Drapeau*, Alphonse Martainville, its ultra-royalist founder, explained the phrase saying:

It is the call of all the royalists, who place no limit on their affection or devotion, who cherish and respect the representative of the legitimate monarchy, without making his person and his life the exclusive goal or the definitive limit of their affection or their loyalty. They extend these sentiments to the whole family of the monarch, to all the princes called by Providence to continue, to perpetuate the *immortal* royalty of France. Certain persons, whose affections for royalty are, no doubt, less fervent and less expansive, have seen, or have claimed to see in *Long live the King regardless!* something which implies irreverence or even factionalism. If one is taken in by the scruples of such people, one will find that even *Long live the King*, without further qualification, will appear seditious.<sup>89</sup>

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<sup>87</sup> Spitzer, "Malicious Memories," 39–40.

<sup>88</sup> Many literary journals did this as well. For example, *La Muse française*'s epigraph quoted Virgil, in what seems to be a dual reference to the Restored Bourbon monarchy and the new literary school - romanticism: "Jam redit et Virgo . . . / Jam nova progenies coelo demittitur alto"<sup>88</sup> ("Now the virgin returns, now a new progeny is sent down from high heaven"). Translation from Alexander Pope, *The Poetical Works of Alexander Pope*, ed. Alexander Dyce (London: W. Pickering, 1835), 41.

<sup>89</sup> Alphonse Martainville, "Vive le Roi quand-même!," *Le Drapeau blanc* 1 (1819): 49. "C'est le cri de tous les royalistes qui ne mettent point de bornes à leur amour et à leur dévouement; qui chérissent et respectent le représentant de la monarchie légitime, sans faire de sa personne et de sa vie l'objet exclusif et la dernière limite de leur affection et de leur fidélité. Ils étendent ces sentimens à toute la famille du Monarque, à tous les princes appelés par la Providence à continuer, à perpétuer *l'immortelle* royauté de France. Certaines personnes, dont le royalisme est sans doute moins ardent et moins vaste, ont vu, ou plutôt on feint de voir dans *vive le Roi quand même!* quelque chose qui sentait l'irrévérence et même la faction. Ecoutez les scrupules de ces gens-là et vous finirez par trouver *vive le Roi*, tout court, tant soit peu séditioneux."

The article went on to list those ‘royalistes quand mêmes’ whom Martainville painted as the true patriots of France – including those involved in the Vendée uprising, the guards killed during the October Days, the people who had helped disguise the King and his family for the flight to Varennes, and all those émigrés forced into exile.<sup>90</sup> He took all his examples from the French Revolution. By labeling these specific groups as ‘royalistes quand même’ Martainville insisted that the site of true French patriotism was counter-revolution. And not only those who one could say fought and died for what they believed, or risked being discovered in underground plots, but also those who had simply run away. The implication was clear – those who had supported the Revolution in any capacity were not true royalists, were not true French patriots. Far from subscribing to a policy of *oubli*, for Martainville one’s actions during the Revolution had a direct correlation to one’s political pedigree in the Restoration; a position shared by other ultra-royalists, and broadcast to all of his readers.<sup>91</sup>

The *rédacteurs* of these periodicals had a tendency to present their own position as the position of all the French (or at the very least, the ‘true French’), as though theirs was the only way forward for a happy and harmonious France. In *le Drapeau Blanc*’s prospectus, Martainville set up the journal as defender of religion and public morality, saying that such voices had been drowned out by those who preached revolution and atheism. He argued that when the King dissolved the *Chambre introuvable*, it left the majority of the nation without representatives or advocates.<sup>92</sup> *Le Drapeau*, he proposed, would give voice to the voiceless royalists, and would in the process solve France’s problems. He compared the royalist task in attempts to censor liberal voices to Hercules’ trial against the hydra – in which for every head of the beast he cut off, several more would grow.<sup>93</sup> In doing so he presented *le Drapeau* as the solution to this problem, as a way to right the wrongs of the past, when liberals went uncontested. He also insisted that the

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<sup>90</sup> Ibid., 52. The Vendée uprising was an anti-Revolutionary royalist movement, focused mainly in the Vendée area of France, between 1793 and 1796.

<sup>91</sup> *Le Drapeau blanc* began with a print run of 2000, which increased to 3000 and then 4000 in only a few months. Archives nationales de France, F18/62B.

<sup>92</sup> “Le Drapeau blanc,” *le Drapeau blanc* 1 (1819): 3-6.

<sup>93</sup> Ibid., 4.

“vast majority of the nation” were royalists, defenders of “the good cause,” which meant that their not having defenders or a mouthpiece was particularly unjust.<sup>94</sup>

An article by the Marquis D’Herbouville in Chateaubriand’s *le Conservateur* made similar claims, saying that “all the French are royalists. This seems to me a truth in fact and in sentiment that does not require demonstration.”<sup>95</sup> Of course, the royalism of *le Conservateur*, the royalism of Chateaubriand and his followers, looked very different from Martainville’s ultra-royalism, because it was conservative, but not reactionary. D’Herbouville made these pronouncements in an article condemning the minister’s announcement that his goal was to “royalize the nation, and nationalize royalism.” D’Herbouville took exception to that, arguing that the nation was already royalist and royalism did not need to be nationalized because it was the “religious dogma revered by our fathers, natural to the French who proclaimed it so loudly in 1814, in 1815, in 1816.”<sup>96</sup>

In their own journals, liberals presented the idea that France was ‘truly’ liberal (perhaps even if the French did not know that is what they were.) In an article by Antoine Jay in *la Minerve*, he argued that those things France wanted in 1789 are the same things France always wanted in troubled times, and continued to want in his day. He insisted that “love of liberty founded on laws has surpassed anarchy and despotism, and we [liberals/*rédacteurs* of *la Minerve*] have remained the final consolation of our setback, the last hope of the nation; it would be just as difficult today to resuscitate the old monarchy as to give ghosts solid form, to wake the dust from its tombs.”<sup>97</sup> In this sense, both liberals and royalists were engaged in projects that they framed in terms of

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<sup>94</sup> Ibid., 6. “Immense majorité de la nation”; “la bonne cause.”

<sup>95</sup> Marquis D’Herbouville, “Sur l’harmonie sociale considéré relativement à notre situation,” *Le Conservateur* 2, no. 22 (1818): 391.

<sup>96</sup> Ibid. “Le but du ministère est de *royaliser la nation, et de nationaliser le royalisme*. Ce seroit certainement une noble tâche, s’il y avoit quelque chose à faire à cet égard; mais, lorsque tout est fait, il n’y a rien à tenter. Une nation qui, depuis quatorze cents ans, vit sous le gouvernement monarchique de ses Rois, n’a pas besoin d’être *royalisée*; et le royalisme, espèce de dogme religieux révérend par nos pères, naturel aux Français qui l’ont proclamé si hautement en 1814, en 1815, en 1816, n’a pas besoin d’être *nationalisé*. Ainsi, le ministre qui présentait ce résultat comme un des buts vers lequel ses collègues et lui dirigeoient leurs travaux, a donc au moins commis une erreur.”

<sup>97</sup> Antoine Jay, “Nouvelles littéraires,” *La Minerve française* 3 (1818): 6. “L’amour de la liberté fondé sur les lois a traversé l’anarchie et le despotisme, et nous est resté comme la dernière consolation de nos revers, la dernière espérance de la patrie; il serait aussi difficile aujourd’hui de ressusciter l’ancienne monarchie que de donner une forme solide à des fantômes, ou de réveiller la poussière des tombeaux.”

'restoring' France to its imagined or purported 'true path' – but they disagreed as to the nature of that true path. As the Marquis D'Herbouville remarked in *le Conservateur*: "What have we always wanted? What do we still want? A government who with tranquility guaranties our persons and our property."<sup>98</sup> While he went on to say that legitimate monarchy would provide that guaranty, without that qualification, a liberal could have just as easily written his first statement.

This debate over the future of France did not take place in the realm of politics alone. Literature was an important area of debate also, and literary periodicals were a crucial venue for that conflict. The central literary quarrel of the Restoration was the debate between classicists and romantics, known as the *bataille romantique*. The conflict lent itself particularly well to discussions regarding France's past and its future. Classicism saw itself as based in the literary traditions of the classical world, and argued for strict universal rules by which all art could be judged. Because classicism was the dominant artistic and literary form in eighteenth-century France, and because of its putative universalism, it had strong associations with the Enlightenment, and even the Revolution and Empire (Napoleon had been a proponent). But classicism, although not called classicism at the time, really emerged in the seventeenth century with the so-called quarrel of the ancients and the moderns, and so was also associated with the court of Louis XIV and the height of French Absolutism. This meant that liberals and royalists alike could perceive classicism as the true literature of France. Moreover, since most of France's most famous and revered writers (Racine, Corneille, Boileau, sometimes Voltaire) were considered classicists, upholding classicism meant upholding French art at its most internationally dominant. Given that France had just lost a major European war, and was, until 1818, under allied occupation, it is not at all surprising that many in the Restoration turned to classicism as a way to recapture French glory. Nor is it surprising that those same people opposed a literary ideology, romanticism, inspired by the literature of their occupiers.

The *nouvelle littérature*, or romanticism, seemed perfectly poised to oppose classicism. It was a novel and 'imported' literary school, learned from English and German writers, and it

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<sup>98</sup> d'Herbouville, "Sur l'harmonie sociale considéré relativement à notre situation," *le Conservateur* 2: 391. "Qu'a-t-on voulu de tous les temps? que veut-on encore? Un gouvernement qui donne avec la tranquillité la garantie des personnes et des propriétés."



rejected classicism's strict adherence to literary rules. Moreover, in its foreign context, romanticism flourished in its opposition to French cultural hegemony, and French military encroachment. Romanticism, the classicists contended, was foreign-born, un-French, new and vulgar. But, like classicism, romanticism was compatible with both French liberalism and royalism. French liberal romantics, like Paul-François Dubois and Pierre Leroux, founders of *le Globe*, drew parallels between the liberalization of society and the liberalization of art. Duvergier de Hauranne argued that romanticism gave people the right to feel and judge as they wished, while following rules one had not set for oneself was tantamount to literary despotism.<sup>99</sup> In a letter that philosophe Théodore Jouffroy wrote to Paul-François Dubois to congratulate him on his founding of a new journal he said that Dubois preached "literary liberty."<sup>100</sup>

Royalist romantics too believed that romanticism was the literature of liberty; they also believed that the monarchy was the best path to true liberty. Charles Nodier, in a review of the works of Millevoeye, wrote that he did not understand why liberals held fast to classicism, which had been France's glory when it had no freedom. "But romantic royalists," he wrote, "I find entirely consistent, because I believe they love liberty, which reconciles well with a monarchical government founded on the national interest, and, perhaps, might not reconcile with any other [government]."<sup>101</sup> This position is entirely understandable if one considers that in French memory liberalism meant Jacobinism, which, the romantics insisted, was not liberty, but an excessive liberalism that led to chaos and despotism. This is not to say that royalist romantics acted entirely out of the fear of another Robespierre or Napoleon, nor is it to paint them as reactionary conservatives. Rather, it is to suggest that there was theoretical congruity between romanticism and royalism, especially under the reign of Louis XVIII. Romantics and royalists were engaged in similar projects: moving forward to build a new France, without losing the stability of the past. The

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<sup>99</sup> Pierre Trahard, ed., *Le romantisme défini par "Le Globe"* (Paris: Les Presse françaises, 1924), 14.

<sup>100</sup> Quoted in Jean-Jacques Goblot, *La jeune France libérale: le Globe et son groupe littéraire, 1824-1830* (Paris: Plon, 1995), 379. "liberté littéraire."

<sup>101</sup> Charles Nodier, "Critique littéraire: Oeuvres complètes et inédites de Millevoeye," *Annales de la littérature et des arts* 10 (1823): 322. "Quant aux royalistes romantiques, je les trouve fort conséquens, parce que je suppose qu'ils aiment la liberté, qui se concilie fort bien avec un gouvernement monarchique appuyé sur les intérêts nationaux, et qui ne se concilie peut-être avec lui."

revolutionaries had moved forward too quickly, and the results had been disastrous. Moreover, romanticism's interest in history, in tradition, and in emotion over excessive reason made it compatible with conservative impulses. But many royalist classicist critics disagreed that romanticism could be compatible with conservatism, because they saw romanticism as a new art form that discarded French tradition.

When we conceive of the romantic-classicist debate as a debate of novelty versus tradition, we can understand why the debate had such salience in the Restoration, and why romanticism could seem like such a threat to royalism, even in the first half of the 1820s when many prominent Romantics were themselves royalists. Restoration France was a modern society ruled by an early modern power. All its political and cultural machinations were marked by a tension between old and new, between remembering and forgetting. Romanticism, even when not politically liberal, was always, in France, about freedom from literary strictures, about emancipation from the literary rules of early modern classicism, best showcased by the classicist insistence that all theatre adhere to the so-called 'three unities' of place, time, and action. Romantics wanted to cast off the rules of French literary tradition, just as liberals wanted to cast off the rules of French political tradition.

Yet, the full complexity of the relationship between political position and literary school cannot be captured by relatively simple typology of royalist-classicist and liberal-classicist, royalist-romantic and liberal-romantic. It is impossible to categorize all individuals as romantics or classicists, liberals or royalists. Even when we expand the political categories to include the ultra-royalists on the far right and the doctrinaires in the middle, or offer classico-romantic as a middle of the road literary position, we still miss some of the nuance. Human reality defies typologies, and ideologies defy neat categorization. This problem only increases when we apply these categories to journals. Except in a few cases where a periodical is really the production of a single person with a singular focused vision (Martainville and *le Drapeau blanc* comes close, for example), groups of people produce journals, and they therefore rarely offered a uniform doctrine.

Despite the inconsistencies and complexities in the positions they presented, literary journals and newspapers cultivated and developed reputations.<sup>102</sup> Etienne Delécluze defended classicism in a series of articles in *le Globe* in 1825; the next year the famous Liège almanac *Mathieu Laensbergh* called *le Globe* the “principal organ of romanticism in France.”<sup>103</sup> Even though *les Annales de la littérature et des arts* published Charles Nodier’s justification of romantic royalism, everyone knew it was the official journal of the royalist classicist Société des bonnes-lettres. These reputations meant literary journals represented their particular schools of thought even when they published contrary views. They broadcast their purported affiliations through epigraphs and prospectuses, where they claimed they alone would give voice to the true literature of France (whatever they believed that was). Classicist and romantic journals alike claimed to offer voice to an aspect of French life that the political papers ignored – literature. Both romanticism and classicism were somewhat fluid categories, but their definitions sharpened through their conflict, and through their affiliations with particular individuals, groups and publications.

### **Censorship**

However, the writers and directors of these periodicals produced their products and promoted their visions for France within a framework of print regulation and censorship. Censorship shaped periodicals even when it did not redact portions of articles, or force journals to shut down production, because it created constraints and parameters on the possibilities for the periodical, which the *rédacteurs* either worked within or around. For example, journals that were censored would often simply begin publishing under a new name; or when press laws defined periodicals as appearing at regular intervals, people printed their periodicals at irregular intervals to circumvent those laws.<sup>104</sup> These kinds of evasions were not usually successful in the long

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<sup>102</sup> The ways these periodicals referred to each other suggests that they were highly associated with their given political and literary affiliations. For example, the first issue of *le Conservateur littéraire* began with a satirical poem entitled “L’Enroler Politique” that referenced *la Minerve*, *l’Homme gris*, and *les Lettres normandes* as though their essential characters would have been well known to the reader. “L’Enroler Politique,” *Le Conservateur littéraire* 1 (1819): 6.

<sup>103</sup> Quoted in Goblot, *La jeune France libérale*, 378.

<sup>104</sup> For example, in 1817 the prospectus for *le Censeur européen*, wrote that the journal should not be considered a periodical, because it will not appear at fixed intervals. It seems likely the

term, as laws changed to keep up with the techniques used to evade them, but they are suggestive of how censorship both shaped and was shaped by the practices of periodical producers. The relationship between censors and journalists went two ways: as censors adapted their practices when journalists pushed against the limits of censorship, so too did journalists alter their behavior in order to go unnoticed and unredacted.<sup>105</sup>

Censorship purportedly contributed to ministerial attempts to limit factionalism and build consensus in the Restoration; it served the policy of *oubli*. Throughout the Restoration, various French governments argued that the violence of the divisions in French society made censorship necessary, because left unchecked both the right and the left wing newspapers and journals would undermine the stability of French society.<sup>106</sup> For example, in 1825 the Joseph de Villèle government, in an attempt to pacify conflict over the *biens nationaux*, passed a highly controversial law that would pay an indemnity to affected émigrés. An 1825 report on the press argued that the indemnity should have been a conciliatory measure that led to broader consensus, but that press coverage of it made the public turn “against the indemnity,” because “newspapers have a way of making divisions deeper, in arming partisans one against the other.”<sup>107</sup> This also meant that the government deployed censorship laws strategically against

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journal's directors made this pronouncement for the sake of the censor, since their previous journal *le Censeur* had been proscribed. “Avant-Propos,” *Le Censeur européen, ou Examen de diverses questions de droit public, et de divers ouvrages littéraires et scientifiques, considérées dans leurs rapports avec les progrès de la civilisation* 1 (1817). “*Le Censeur Européen* ne doit pas être considéré comme un ouvrage périodique; les volumes ne paraîtront point à des époques fixes.”

<sup>105</sup> Some of this negotiation was practical – what time on Sundays was it reasonable for journalists to submit their papers for preliminary censorship examinations so that the censors have enough time to examine them, and the journalists have enough time to get their paper ready for publication. Archives nationales de France, BB30/268, Folder 1.

<sup>106</sup> For example, one censorship report by Jacques Honoré de Lourdoueix from 29 July 1820 wrote that liberal papers made “vague accusations that could do nothing but sour minds and excite passions.” An earlier report from 2 May 1820, Boyer remarked that, “the council is convinced that the pronounced intention of the government is that censorship be exercised with that religious impartiality, which alone can win it the support of public opinion.” “La conseil est convaincu que l’intention bien prononcée du gouvernement est que la censure soit exercée avec cette religieuse impartialité qui seule peut lui conquérir l’appui de l’opinion publique.” (document 33). Archives nationales de France, BB30/268, Folder 1.

<sup>107</sup> Rapport général sur la presse, 12 February 1825, Archives nationales de France, F18/261. “Certes, l’indemnité des émigrés devait être un grand moyen de réconciliation générale, mais les journaux en font un moyen de rendre les divisions plus profondes, en armant les intérêts les uns

those who opposed them, while they ignored infractions from pro-ministerial papers. One journal wrote, for example, that “writers whose positions allowed them to write under censorship” produced the royalist political paper *le Défenseur*.<sup>108</sup> People outside the government also blamed the polarization of French society on the press. *Le Drapeau blanc* lamented that while France’s mores were monarchic, its opinions were republican, and that it was the press that created the latter.<sup>109</sup>

Print was regulated slightly differently in Paris than elsewhere in France; in Paris the prefecture of police, and not the department’s prefect, administered print regulation. As noted above, Napoleon’s 1810 decree created the administrative structure that, with little change, would regulate all printing in the Restoration. It established a director general of the press, who acted under the minister of the interior, and a team of six auditors who acted below the director. It also limited the number of printing licenses available in Paris and in the departments.<sup>110</sup> In Paris the number of licenses was capped at sixty, which meant that many print shops were forced to shut down. The law stipulated that these remaining sixty printers were required to buy the presses and printing material from those forced to go out of business and pay an indemnity so that each ex-printer could be paid 4000 francs.<sup>111</sup> Printer licenses were granted by the Director-General of Print and approved by the Minister of the Interior.<sup>112</sup> The decree required all printers to declare each item they intended to print, including the author (if known) and the title of the piece. The Director-General could request a copy of any item to be printed and defer its printing, at which point it would be sent to a censor. The 1810 decree also made it illegal to print anything that would undermine subjects’ duties to the state or the sovereign. If the censor decided that printed material was in contravention of this article, it would either be suppressed or the director general would suggest changes before it could be reexamined by the censor, and then perhaps

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contre les autres, il est certain que le public, tel que l’ont fait les journaux, est aujourd’hui contre l’indemnité.”

<sup>108</sup> Sur quelques phrases du *Défenseur*,” *le Conservateur littéraire* 2 (1820): 246.

<sup>109</sup> Extraits des journaux de Paris sans date, Archives nationales de France, F7/7083.

<sup>110</sup> Grattier, *Commentaire sur les lois de la presse et des autres moyens de publication*, 19–20.

<sup>111</sup> Goldsmith, *Statistics of France*, 264.

<sup>112</sup> Grattier, *Commentaire sur les lois de la presse et des autres moyens de publication*, 22.

printed.<sup>113</sup> The ordinance decreed that printers must deposit five copies of any printed object to their department, or in Paris, to the prefecture of the police. The four additional copies went to the national library, the minister of the interior, the director general of the press, and the library of the *conseil d'état*.<sup>114</sup> The decree regulated not only the production, but also the sale of printed materials. It required all booksellers be licensed and registered, and made it illegal for them to sell any works contrary to the interest of the state. It also regulated books printed outside of France and required that the director-general give permission for their import and established the import duties to be paid.<sup>115</sup>

Although article 8 of the Charter officially granted press freedom, that freedom was quickly curtailed by a series of press laws. The restored monarchy and its government ministries

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<sup>113</sup> Ibid., 22–24.

<sup>114</sup> Ibid., 29–30.

<sup>115</sup> Ibid., 25–26. Articles 39 and 40 of the decree were particularly significant because they reinforced a legal understanding of intellectual property and copyright first advanced during the Revolution. On 19 July 1793, for the first time in France, revolutionary legislators recognized authors as unique originators of their own ideas, and thus the owners of their work. Unmarried adult women and widows gained the same intellectual property rights as men. Carla Alison Hesse, *The Other Enlightenment: How French Women Became Modern* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2001), 57, 64. Article 39 proclaimed that copyright belonged to the author and his widow during their lifetimes, and went to their children for 20 years (no mention was made of women authors). Article 40 allowed authors to sell their copyright to a printer or bookseller, and the transfer of copyright to widow and children functioned the same as when copyright remained with the author. Grattier, *Commentaire sur les lois de la presse et des autres moyens de publication*, 27. This relatively new understanding of intellectual property differed significantly from the early modern system of *privilege*, whereby royal authority granted a printer the exclusive rights to print a given text, which made the printer, rather than the author the de facto owner of the text. This change in understandings of intellectual property is tied to changes in conceptions of authorship and the genesis of ideas. Before copyright could exist, the idea that ideas were generated by an author, and not simply explicated or reflected, had to exist. But it grew out of earlier laws that vested copyright in authors, such as the British copyright act of 1709, also known as the Statute of Anne, and the 1777 law in France. As Roger Chartier argues, these copyright laws emerged as a result of the state's desire to limit the publisher's *privilege*, but were also founded on the notion that a book came out of an author's individual labour. Contemporaries believed intellectual labour could not be legally protected indefinitely, because it involved not the spontaneous creation of something, but the bringing together of received elements. Scholars like Condorcet believed it would be unjust to protect intellectual labour in perpetuity because idea belonged to everyone. Chartier, *The Order of Books*, 32–35. One significant difference between the tradition of copyright in England and France is that the Statute of Anne, unlike Napoleon's 1810 ordinance, did not include a provision for censorship. In the French system, who had rights to a book (or other printed material) had direct implications for who could be held responsible for that book – who could be blamed, fined, or arrested if a book broke a press law, was deemed libellous, or censored. Carla Hesse, *Publishing and Cultural Politics in Revolutionary Paris, 1789–1810*, Studies on the History of Society and Culture 12 (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1991), 231.

were particularly concerned with the regulation of newspapers and other periodicals, as well as political pamphlets. The first press law of the Restoration, the law of 21 October 1814 established preliminary censorship for all printed material of less than twenty pages.<sup>116</sup> Any printed material longer than twenty pages did not require preliminary censorship, nor did anything published in foreign languages (including dead languages), prayer books or catechisms, judicial proceedings, transactions of societies that were recognized by the King, or writing by members of either the Chamber of Deputies or the Chamber of Peers. Prefects, in departments, and the director-general of the press in Paris, had discretionary power over those items not usually subject to censorship. They could survey all printed material and require that it be submitted for preliminary censorship.<sup>117</sup> (However, this surveillance of longer printed material was eliminated by a King's ordinance on the execution of the law on 20 July 1815, which stated that this surveillance brought more inconveniences than advantages to the liberty of the press.)<sup>118</sup> Works subject to censorship had to be submitted to two or more censors, and if two of them decided it was libelous, or that it went against the Charter or was injurious to public morality or peace then the director-general of the press was allowed to stop its publication. A committee of three peers and three deputies was appointed at each session, to which the director-general would report. The committee could overrule the director-general and allow publication.

The law also stipulated that no periodical or journal could appear unless the King authorized it in advance. The director-general of police authorized newspapers in Paris, while the director of publishing authorized those in the provinces. These administrators were then in charge of surveying the press, and could withdraw their authorization at any time. As under the Empire, where the police regulated the press, this system of surveillance under the Restoration meant that "in practice ... provincial newspapers were watched by the prefects and Paris newspapers by the police."<sup>119</sup> Also in keeping with the Imperial decree on printing, the 1814 law stipulated that

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<sup>116</sup> Grattier, *Commentaire sur les lois de la presse et des autres moyens de publication*, 30.

<sup>117</sup> Archives nationales de France, BB30/192 *Bulletin des Lois* no. 47 (Paris: L'Imprimerie Royale, 23 Octobre 1814), 314.

<sup>118</sup> Archives nationales de France, BB30/192. *Bulletin des Lois* no. 5 (Paris: L'Imprimerie Royale, 22 July 1815), 35-36

<sup>119</sup> Collins, *The Government and the Newspaper Press*, 4.

printers and booksellers had to be licensed by the government. Unlicensed printing offices were destroyed and the owners subject to a fine of 10 000 francs and imprisonment. Printers still had to declare their intention to print each work before publishing it and deposit five copies at the office of the director-general.<sup>120</sup>

Under the 1814 law there was significantly less preliminary censorship than under the Napoleonic decree (particularly after the 1815 ordinance), since censorship was limited to short publications, but the administration of that censorship did not change significantly. Many of the Restoration administrators and censors of the *librairie*, for example, had served under the Empire as well. Where the Restoration's regulation of the press differed most significantly from the Empire's was in those things it deemed worthy of censorship. The Restored monarchy was, especially in the Second Restoration, particularly concerned with monitoring Bonapartist and liberal periodicals, as well as ultra-royalist periodicals.<sup>121</sup> Louis XVIII and his government needed France to move forward, not wallow in the debates of the past nor focus on who did what during the Revolution or the Hundred Days. Their attempts to control the press were born out of a desire to avoid political conflict, which made censorship one mechanism through which they enforced the policy of *oubli*, and so their censorship was most concerned with newspapers, and political pamphlets, although many Restoration novels were added to the infamous 'Index' of banned books.

Freedom of the press became a crucial and constantly debated issue in the Restoration. It was a popular topic for political pamphlets<sup>122</sup> and articles in the press, which the censor

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<sup>120</sup> Goldsmith, *Statistics of France*, 266–67.

<sup>121</sup> As noted above, the ultra-royalists, who supported the monarchy but not always the government, were seen as a potentially destabilizing influence because they called for land to be returned to emigrés, and threatened those who had supported Napoleon during the Hundred Days. Collins, *The Government and the Newspaper Press*, 11.

<sup>122</sup> Including, for example: Jean-Baptiste Say, *De la liberté de la presse: seconde lettre* (Paris: L.G. Michaud, 1814); François Guizot, *Quelques idées sur la liberté de la presse* (Paris: Le Normant, 1814); *De la Liberté de la presse et des lois répressives* (Paris: Le Normant, 1814); *De la Liberté de la presse et de la direction générale de l'imprimerie et de la librairie. Précédé d'une adresse au roi. Par Julien-Michel Dufour,...* (Paris: Blanchard, n.d.); Charles His, *De la liberté de la presse dans la monarchie représentative* (Paris: Libraires du Palais-Royal, 1826); Marthe-Camille Bachasson Montalivet, *Les amis de la liberté de la presse. Lettre d'un jeune pair de France aux Français de son âge* (Paris: Le Normant fils, 1827); François-René de Chateaubriand, *Les amis de la liberté de la presse: Marche et effets de la censure* (Paris: Le



monitored closely. After having existed for two years, la Société des amis de la liberté de la Presse came under government suspicion in December 1819 for violating article 291 of the Napoleonic Code, which limited freedom of association, although most of the accused were acquitted.<sup>123</sup> Because newspaper censorship was most likely to target ultra-royalist and liberal papers, those otherwise divergent parties sometimes came together in support of press freedom. For example, in December 1816 the ultra-royalists opposed Elie Decazes' new press bill, which would reaffirm the newspaper censorship already in place, since the 1814 law was due to expire in 1817.<sup>124</sup> They did this both because they hated Decazes, whom they blamed for the dissolution of the *Chambre introuvable*, and because they wanted free rein to attack him in their newspapers.<sup>125</sup> Liberals also opposed the extension of the 1814 law. Charles Dunoyer and Charles Comte in their journal *Le Censeur européen* argued that an unfree newspaper press and a lack of national representation were one and the same. Control of the press, they insisted, substituted the voice of the nation for the voice of the select few.<sup>126</sup> Despite opposition, the

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Normant fils, 1827); François-René de Chateaubriand, *Les amis de la liberté de la presse : Derniers avis aux électeurs* (Paris: Le Normant fils, 1827); Jean-Guillaume Hyde de Neuville, *Les amis de la liberté de la presse . Des conséquences ministérielles, ou Lettre d'un député à MM. les propriétaires de la Gazette Universel de Lyon* (Paris: Le Normant fils, 1827); Jean-Pierre Pagès, *De la censure, lettre à M. Lourdoux* (Paris: Bureau de la France Chrétienne, 1827), <http://gallica.bnf.fr/ark:/12148/bpt6k425155k>.

<sup>123</sup> *Procès de la société dite les Amis de la liberté de la presse* (Paris: Brissot-Thivars, 1820), i, 113, <http://gallica.bnf.fr/ark:/12148/bpt6k5796730k>. This Society of Friends for the Freedom of the Press is not the same as the society of the same name that formed in opposition to the Villèle government's proposed press law in 1827 and published a number of pamphlets calling for press freedom. Chateaubriand led the latter group.

<sup>124</sup> Decazes was Minister of the Interior at the time, but in 1818 would become First Minister, only to resign in the aftermath of the assassination of the Duc de Berry in February 1820.

<sup>125</sup> Collins, *The Government and the Newspaper Press*, 14–15.

<sup>126</sup> "De l'asservissement provisoire des feuilles périodiques," *Le Censeur européen* 1 (1817): 330. While one could argue that the ultra-royalists supported liberty of the press pragmatically rather than ideologically, the same cannot be said for the liberals. In a later issue of their journal Comte and Dunoyer announced the publication of Chateaubriand's *le Conservateur*, which they said would fill a gap in the periodical press, which currently had liberal and ministerial journals, but not a far-right journal. They contended that while there are those who opposed the production of this journal, they disagreed. They wrote: "If the party that calls itself royalist, and that we have given the name *ultra*, is in error, then the efforts it undertakes to propagate its doctrines will only serve to discredit them; if, on the other hand, they are correct and it is us who are in error, then it is good that they can make themselves heard. The liberty of the press will not exist truly until the day where all opinions can be expressed without danger." "Ouvrages nouveaux," *Le Censeur européen* 10 (1818): 344. "Si le parti qui s'appelle royaliste et auquel on a donné le nom d'*ultra*, est dans l'erreur, les efforts même qu'il fera pour propager ses doctrines ne serviront qu'à les discréditer si au contraire il a raison et si c'est nous qui nous trompons, il est heureux qu'il puisse

majority of the chamber agreed with Decazes that newspaper censorship was necessary in a country so divided by factions, and the law passed with a significant majority. For example, Jean-Joseph Augustin Desselles argued in the Chamber of Peers that liberty of the press, while generally good for both a country and its government, only aggravated the evils of a nation mired in discord.<sup>127</sup> He went on to say that if the political parties limited their conflicts to the realm of politics, the newspaper press could have more freedom, but that, in the fractious climate of the Restoration, partisans used the periodical press as weapon.<sup>128</sup> In the absence of a law that could rein in abuses of the press without preliminary censorship, Desselles voted for the bill.<sup>129</sup> This new press law meant that newspaper censorship remained virtually unchanged between 1814 and 1819,<sup>130</sup> when preliminary censorship was eliminated in favor of a system of libel laws that effectively brought literary journals under the regime of the censor.

Thomas Cragin has argued that censorship was always less effective than historians tend to make it out to be. He contends that for every story of a paper getting shut down there is one of a printer or a peddler avoiding censorship.<sup>131</sup> It is not surprising that the archival record makes government censorship seem more effective than it was. Censorship and police archives will not contain documentary evidence of people who successfully evaded censorship.<sup>132</sup> What censorship archives can suggest are the factors that went into decisions about censorship, and what the government was most interested in censoring. Censorship reports of Paris newspapers, other periodicals and pamphlets suggest that representations of politics were the censor's

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se faire entendre. La liberté de la presse n'existera réellement que le jour où toutes les opinions pourront être divulguées sans danger."

<sup>127</sup> "De la loi qui suspend provisoirement la liberté des écrits périodiques," *Le Censeur européen* 2 (1817): 260.

<sup>128</sup> "De la loi qui suspend provisoirement la liberté des écrits périodiques," *Le Censeur européen* 2 (1817): 261.

<sup>129</sup> "De la loi qui suspend provisoirement la liberté des écrits périodiques," *Le Censeur européen* 2 (1817): 264.

<sup>130</sup> Collins, *The Government and the Newspaper Press*, 14–15.

<sup>131</sup> Thomas J. Cragin, "The Failings of Popular News Censorship in Nineteenth-Century France," *Book History* 4, no. 1 (2001): 64.

<sup>132</sup> Although the censorship records explored here do sometimes include complaints about newspapers and journals flouting the commission – publishing parts of articles they had not submitted for preliminary examination – and while these journalists and their publishers/printers might be tried and fined for doing so, they had still managed to get their uncensored sentences to the public.

primary concern. The censor also closely monitored all references to censorship and censors in the press, and the police monitored groups who promoted press freedom.<sup>133</sup> On a number of occasions, the censor would note that there was ‘nothing political’ in a particular newspaper for a given day, and then provide no other commentary.<sup>134</sup> Moreover, the daily reports on the press written by the censors mainly included daily newspapers – like *le Constitutionnel*, *le Renommée*, or *le Journal des Débats* – and political journals – like the *le Drapeau blanc* or *le Censeur européen* – and only rarely literary journals or theatre dailies.<sup>135</sup> This suggests a rather specific application of the word ‘political’ – one that meant more than mere reporting of events in the realm of politics. The archival record’s silence on literary periodicals carries over to the historiography on censorship in Restoration France, which tends to focus on newspapers or the theatre.

How the censors interpreted the word ‘political’ had significant legal ramifications. The law on journals and periodicals of 9 June 1819, while it followed two bills that eliminated preliminary censorship of newspapers, specified that owners and publishers of journals and newspapers that were either partially or entirely political were subject to special regulations, regardless of whether or not they appeared at fixed intervals.<sup>136</sup> The 1819 law, written by Guizot, stipulated that owners and publishers of political journals had to declare their intention to print

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<sup>133</sup> Archives nationales de France, BB30/192. This dossier includes records from 1814-1820 on the Société des amis de la liberté de la presse, including lists of members (166 of them), brief meeting minutes, the times and locations of meetings. It also includes censorship reports on pieces written about censorship, and works on censorship submitted to the censorship commission.

<sup>134</sup> In one (undated) example, a report indicated that ultra-royalist paper *Le Messager des chambres* “contained no political articles,” Archives nationales de France, F7/7086-7089, but examples can also be found in Archives nationales de France, F7/7085, Archives nationales de France, F7/7084, Archives nationales de France, F7/7083, and Archives nationales de France, F7/7082. Censors used political to mean “of interest to the censor” outside the censorship of periodicals as well. On 25 April 1820 in censorship reports on pamphlets the censor wrote: “Nul ouvrage politique n’a été déposé aujourd’hui. C’est la première fois que cela arrive, depuis le 8 avril, que je suis chargé de l’examen des brochures, en comparant mon travail de ce cinq derniers jours, à celui des jours précédents, je m’aperçois que les pamphlets ont diminué en de nombre et de violence. Faut il attribuer déjà ce bon effet aux saisies qui ont été faites, ou bien n’est-ce qu’un sommeil passager de la part des pamphletaires?” Archives nationales de France, F18/41, 25 April 1820.

<sup>135</sup> Extraits des journaux de Paris, May-December 1820, Archives nationales de France, F7/3464; Censure des écrits périodiques 1827, Archives nationales de France, BB30/269. Some reports on *le Pandore*, *le Figaro*, *le Courier des Théâtres* and *le Corsaire* and other papers referred to as ‘petits journaux’ in the latter, which is a file of censorship reports from 1827.

<sup>136</sup> As noted above, publishing at irregular intervals had previously been a way to get around censorship laws that defined periodicals as works that published at a set schedule.

their journal, had to pay a deposit of 10 000 francs for a daily and 5000 for a less frequent publication to offset any fines they might be charged for breaking press laws, and had to submit copies of each published issue. Owners or publishers who did not meet these requirements could be charged and imprisoned for one to six months, and fined between 200 and 1200 hundred francs.<sup>137</sup> This meant that journals that were supposed to be non-political could be prosecuted if they published political material. Including political material meant the government could accuse them of being political journals that had not declared themselves to be so, and had not paid their deposit. The results of this were two-fold. On the one hand, it became much less expensive to produce an avowedly non-political journal, because one did not have to pay an expensive deposit. So literary journals could be, and were, mobilized as ‘politics by other means.’ On the other hand, the government could prosecute any avowedly non-political periodical for discussing politics, which put very specific strictures on literary journals. The June 1819 bill followed two somewhat more liberal press law bills, written by the Duc de Broglie, which said that instead of preliminary censorship to control the press, any legal offences committed by the press would be tried by jury. These offences included attacks on the crown or the succession, or the charter, or public morals, since those were already part of the penal code. These earlier bills also defined the neologism “defamation” (*diffamation*) – that an utterance could be considered libelous regardless of whether or not it was true.<sup>138</sup>

The number of literary journals produced in Paris increased after 1819. Prior to the 1819 law it was much easier to produce non-newspaper political periodicals, like the liberal *Mercure de France*, *la Minerve française*, *le Censeur européen*, and on the royalist side *le Conservateur*,

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<sup>137</sup> The law also prohibited journals from printing information from secret meetings of the chambers without authorization, stipulated that journals could be required to include material provided by the government, and required that journals that were prosecuted under the law publish the legal decision or judgment. Those who did not follow these regulations could be fined between 100 and 1000 francs. “Loi du 9 juin 1819 relative à la publication des journaux et écrits périodiques,” *Moniteur Universel* n° 165 (Monday, 14 June 1819): 782.

<sup>138</sup> Collins, *The Government and the Newspaper Press*, 23.; Archives nationales de France, BB30/268, Folder 2, Censure des journaux et écrits périodiques, documents généraux 1820-c.1830, *Bulletin des lois* no. 399 (1819): 5.

because legally there was little the government could do to censor them.<sup>139</sup> The government could bring these journals to court under the laws for seditious writing, but Decazes, then Minister of the Interior, did so only rarely.<sup>140</sup> Censuring a journal for seditious writing could only happen after the fact, which meant the purportedly seditious piece would already have circulated. Moreover, the journalists who produced these periodicals were skilled at subtlety and could skirt the seditious writing laws, which meant that when Decazes went against the journals he opened himself up to accusations of overreach.<sup>141</sup> In his 1817 pamphlet *Questions sur la législation actuelle de la presse en France*, famed liberal Benjamin Constant questioned whether the jurisprudence practiced by the King's lawyers subverted all possible liberty of the press.<sup>142</sup> He argued that the application of sedition laws to printed materials rested on five assumptions: 1) That it is possible to condemn a person for your own interpretation of their words, even if they protest that interpretation. 2) That attacking the King's ministers is to attack the King. 3) That old laws can be applied even in situations where the writing was produced under new legislation, 4) That the accused can be punished for the manner in which he defends himself. 5) That the printer, even having followed all the requisite formalities, can be prosecuted.<sup>143</sup> The Duc de Broglie wrote the 1819 press laws specifically to address these difficulties in applying existing sedition legislation to printed material.

The 1819 laws, and especially the June law that required caution payments, sparked immediate controversy in the press. *Le Censeur européen* insisted that the June 1819 law clearly intended to make it difficult for people to produce periodicals more than it intended to protect

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<sup>139</sup> Although even before the 1819 law it could be less expensive to produce a non-political journal, just not to the same extent. For example, the 25 March 1817 law on finances exempt periodicals dealing with art or science that published monthly or less often from the requirement of being printed on stamped paper – which other periodicals had to do. Archives nationales de France BB30/192, “No. 1879 Loi sur les Finances, a Paris, le 25 Mars 1827,” *Bulletin des lois* no. 145, 236–237.

<sup>140</sup> One of these instances was to suppress Volume 3 of *le Censeur européen*, the details of which are published in volume 4 of the journal (1817).

<sup>141</sup> Collins, *The Government and the Newspaper Press*, 19.

<sup>142</sup> Benjamin Constant, *Questions sur la législation actuelle de la presse en France et sur la doctrine du ministère public* (Paris: Delaunay, 1817), 12, <http://gallica.bnf.fr/ark:/12148/bpt6k2141294>.

<sup>143</sup> *Ibid.*, 14–15.

society from ills.<sup>144</sup> The same journal compared the new libel laws to a law that prevented stealing by forcing everyone to keep their hands in their pockets at all times while in public or face punishment for robbery.<sup>145</sup> The laws' controversy only grew when Bonapartist Louis Pierre Louvel stabbed the Duc de Berry, third in line to the crown of France, on 13 February 1820 outside the Paris Opera house.<sup>146</sup> Berry died the next day, and soon after *Le Drapeau blanc* accused Decazes of fostering the conditions that made his assassination possible by allowing regicidal opinions to spread freely.<sup>147</sup> In the aftermath of the assassination, the theatres closed, the Opera building was torn down,<sup>148</sup> and Decazes passed a new preliminary censorship law to try to counter arguments that he was weak on censorship.<sup>149</sup> This only served to further polarize political opinion. While ultra-royalists blamed Decazes for the assassination, the liberal *Minerve* argued that "the assassination of the unfortunate duc de Berry was nothing but a pretext to ravage the liberty of the press," and insisted that Decazes had his harsh press law already drafted and was just waiting for an opportunity to introduce it.<sup>150</sup> These new censorship laws were

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<sup>144</sup> "Du project de loi sur les journaux et écrits périodiques," *Le Censeur européen* 12 (1819): 232.

<sup>145</sup> "Du project de loi sur les crimes et délits de la presse," *Le Censeur européen* 12 (1819): 129.

<sup>146</sup> Berry's assassin opposed the Monarchy, and Berry's death would have meant the Bourbon line dying with his father, then future Charles X, and Berry's childless brother. Berry's widow, however, the Duchess de Berry gave birth to a son seven months after her husband's death, and after the July Revolution the Legitimists considered her child the true heir to the throne. For a thorough examination of the impacts of the assassination on French culture, politics, and judiciary see Gilles Malandain, *L'introuvable complot: attentat, enquête et rumeur dans la France de la restauration* (Paris: Editions de l'école des hautes études en sciences sociales, 2011).

<sup>147</sup> Collins, *The Government and the Newspaper Press*, 27–28. Although one of the harshest versions of preliminary censorship of the Press during the Restoration, these laws should not be seen as a dramatic turn from no censorship to harsh censorship following the assassination. The 1819 laws, while they did not involve preliminary censorship, were by no means a liberal approach to press control, particularly not the third law written by Guizot which required that political papers pay deposits against future fines.

<sup>148</sup> The new opera building would not open until the following August. Goldstein, *The Frightful Stage*, 81; Edward Planta, *A New Picture of Paris, Or, The Stranger's Guide to the French Metropolis; Accurately Describing the Public Establishments, Remarkable Edifices, Places of Amusement and Every Other Object Worthy of Attention. Also, a Description of the Environs of Paris; with Correct Maps, an Accurate Plan of the City, a Guide to the Principal Objects of Curiosity, Numerous Views of the Public Edifices, &c.*, 15th ed. (London: Samuel Leigh; Baldwin, Cradock, and Co., 1827), 423.

<sup>149</sup> Collins, *The Government and the Newspaper Press*, 31.

<sup>150</sup> "M. Le Duc de Richelieu, Lettre à S.E. en réponse à la sienne du 4 avril," *La Minerve française* 9 (1820), 21. "L'assassinat de l'infortuné duc de Berri n'a été qu'un prétexte pour nous ravir la liberté de la presse; un voyageur très bien informé nous assurait l'autre jour, qu'un mois avant ce cruel événement, M. Decazes lui avait montré le projet de loi qui a paru improvisé le lendemain."

quite strict and quite strictly enforced.<sup>151</sup> For six of the seven days in the first week of May 1820, liberal newspaper *le Renommé* published blank columns filled with dashes in place of the articles the censorship commission made them pull,<sup>152</sup> and still managed to get cited by the president of the censorship commission, Louis Simon Auger, for publishing the phrase, “But at least the magistrate will have the consolation of opening it but rarely,” which had not been included in the version submitted for examination. Auger judged this addition to be innocent on its own merits, but said the council would judge whether it should form part of judicial proceedings, in conjunction with *le Renommé*’s other infractions.<sup>153</sup> In the same report, Auger noted that they had removed the word ‘good’ from the phrase “our good Chamber of Deputies,” from an article in *le Drapeau blanc*, for being overly familiar.<sup>154</sup> In June 1820, the crown charged the publisher of *le Renommé* for infractions against the censorship law and sentenced him to two months in prison and a fine of 600 francs.<sup>155</sup> But despite their strict application, these laws did not save Decazes’ ministry.<sup>156</sup>

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<sup>151</sup> These laws did not do away with the 1819 laws, however. Article 9 of the 31 March 1820 law stipulated that all aspects of the three 1819 laws, excepting those parts contradicted by the current law, would continue to be enforced. “Loi sur la publication des Journaux et écrits périodiques,” *Loi et ordonnance du Roi relatives à la publication des journaux et écrits périodiques* no. 436 (1820): 2. Archives nationales de France, BB30/268, folder 2. By 1822 the press laws were so complicated that they filled a nearly 200-page volume. J. Anatole Garnier Dubourgneuf, *Code de la presse, ou Recueil complet des lois, décrets, ordonnances et règlements actuellement en vigueur sur cette matière. Avec des notes et explications* (Paris: Nève, 1822), <http://gallica.bnf.fr/ark:/12148/bpt6k5722176b>.

<sup>152</sup> Printing blank columns, or sections of dashes or dots, signaled to the public very clearly that the censors had redacted the article. Censorship reports often made note when journals would do this, and in one instance on 20 October 1820, the censor remarked that *le Constitutionnel* had put in a section of dots, even though no articles had been suppressed. The censor concluded that the newspaper did this “only to provide some pretext for public malice” (“fournir quelque prétexte à la malignité publique”). Archives nationales de France, BB30/268, Folder 1, document 424. In an attempt to stop journals and newspapers from replacing censored passages with dots or dashes, the censorship commission threatened to start redacting entire articles anytime they wanted to remove even a word. Placet, the publisher of the much-censored liberal newspaper *le Renommée* asked in a petition to the censorship commission, written in April 1820, why they did not want the public to see the traces left by their scissors. Archives nationales de France, BB30/268, Folder 1.

<sup>153</sup> Archives nationales de France, BB30/268, Folder 1, document 328.

<sup>154</sup> Archives nationales de France, BB30/268, Folder 1, document 328. Auger ended his report by noting that the operations of the censorship commission were getting easier, because most journalists did not want to lose time or money and now that they understood what they were, had adapted to the censorship commissions expectations. Only *le Drapeau blanc* and *Le Renommée* continued to act in bad faith, he wrote. One week later he claimed he had spoken to soon and that both violence and bad faith abounded in the press. The censorship reports from 1820-21 suggest that journalists consistently pushed back against the control of the commission.

<sup>155</sup> Archives nationales de France, BB30/268, Folder 2, document 76.

Richelieu, who took over from Decazes, tried to extend these purported temporary preliminary censorship laws, but was defeated by a coalition of ultra-royalists and liberals, and resigned.<sup>157</sup>

In 1822 the ultra-royalist Jean-Baptiste de Villèle government, which had denounced the preliminary censorship laws of 1820, passed a series of libel laws to regulate discussions of the government in the press. Those periodicals deemed to be “injurious to public peace or the respect due to religion, to the king and to the constitution”<sup>158</sup> could be brought to trial and suspended. There were an unprecedented number of newspapers and periodicals brought to trial between 1822-1823, although beginning in 1824 it became much harder to get convictions, in part because journal producers grew much more subtle in their criticism. A report on the press written in 1825, noted that while the 1822 law was supposed to bring all periodicals under the control of the censorship regime, including non-political ones, it was failing to do so, because everyday periodicals claiming to be non-political wrote about politics, and did so without authorization and without having paid the caution payment.<sup>159</sup> Under the management of the director of arts, royal theatres, and manufactures, Sosthène de la Rochefoucauld, the Villèle government dealt with the decreasing effectiveness of their laws by buying up opposition papers and making them loyal to the ministry. This system of *amortissement des journaux* failed for the most part, since people stopped subscribing to papers once the government took them over and changed their politics, but it did successfully convince Martainville to make *le Drapeau blanc* pro-

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<sup>156</sup> These new censorship laws were not popular. In 1820, Pierre-Louis de Lacretelle, the theatre censor Charles de Lacretelle’s older brother, published the first act of a satirical play called *Les Censeurs*, in the first volume of a brochure called *Panorama* that was intended to replace the censored *Minerve française*. None of the characters in the play have names, but are identified by their jobs or titles – l’Académicien, le Journaliste, le Diplomate, le Medecin, le Grec, l’Abbé, le Lecteur: all censors. (This is suggestive of how well-connected censors were in Restoration French society.) The stage directions indicate that, “the curtain falls the moment the play starts.” The scenes depict censors who are not particularly diligent, but are nonetheless biased against liberal newspapers. The newspaper producers try to hurry the censors who then decide to approve all the royalist and censor all the liberal articles they have not yet read. Pierre-Louis de Lacretelle, *Panorama*, vol. 1 (Paris: Lacretelle aîné et compagnie, et chez les marchands de nouveautés, 1820), 1–12.

<sup>157</sup> The Richelieu ministry applied this censorship law strictly against both liberal and ultra-royalist papers, and many published under this censorship regime appeared with blank columns where the censors had redacted articles or sections of articles. Collins, *The Government and the Newspaper Press*, 34–35.

<sup>158</sup> Quoted in *ibid.*, 37.

<sup>159</sup> Rapport général sur la presse, 12 February 1825, Archives nationales de France, F18/261.



ministry: a significant achievement. When Villèle tried to pass a press bill that would strengthen the 1822 statutes by threatening to take away printers licenses if they printed periodicals that ran afoul of the law, the opposition parties defeated it, and Villèle instead reinstated preliminary censorship for the press in 1827.<sup>160</sup> This system of libel laws beginning in 1819, but especially after 1822, effectively brought non-political journals under a 'censorship' regime that had previously largely ignored them. Even when Villèle reintroduced preliminary censorship in 1827, and when the Martignac ministry returned to a system similar to that of 1819, the censors continued to monitor literary journals.

Although the 1822 law built on the earlier libel law of 1819, it was even more controversial because of the potential breadth. The law stipulated that a journal or newspaper need not print one article that in itself could be considered libelous; instead, the government would only need to demonstrate a general tendency toward writing that was opposed to the monarchy, Catholicism, or the constitution, or was considered opposed to peace. This meant that an article that on its own would not be considered libelous could be considered to be so in the context of a series of articles. The royal courts could suspend journals for a first or second offence, and could suppress them for a third offence. Initially, the elimination of preliminary censorship was praised as a liberalization of the press, but it quickly became clear that this was simply a new kind of censorship. Liberals who opposed the law argued that indicting for a 'general tendency' toward libel, rather than a specific example of libel was potentially the most grievous assault on press freedom since the Restoration.<sup>161</sup>

For literary journals, the press control agenda of the Villèle government meant a crackdown on political content in avowedly non-political journals. For example, when *le Miroir des spectacles*, a daily theatre paper, came before the royal court on 28 May 1823, the reports stated that it was because it contained material of a political nature, which meant it broke the law of 19

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<sup>160</sup> Collins, *The Government and the Newspaper Press*, 41–52. Villèle reinstated censorship by ordonnance rather than by law. He was able to do this because art. 4 of the 17 March 1822 law allowed the implementation of preliminary censorship (ie the 1820 and 1821 laws) when the chambers were not in session, in the event that grave circumstances rendered the current press laws ineffective. "Loi relative à la police des journaux et écrits périodiques," *Bulletin des lois* no. 510 (1822): 210.

<sup>161</sup> Ibid., 37.

June 1819,<sup>162</sup> as well as the March 1822 laws.<sup>163</sup> The reports mentioned specific issues of the journal, but not precisely which articles they considered 'political material.' The issue from 2 January 1823 (issue 707) contained a review of a political dictionary, the issue from 21 January 1823 (issue 726) contained a reflection on the word 'no' that disparaged the Jesuits, the *Société des bonnes-lettres*, the ultra-royalist papers *le Drapeau blanc* and *l'Étoile*, as well as a quote saying that a people would only accept a king who respected its laws and privileges. The article ended with the assertion that if the word 'no' was spoken by a whole people it would sound throughout the world.<sup>164</sup> These are clear examples of political content in this purportedly non-political journal, and the potentially revolutionary implications of the article on 'no' are clear, but in other issues listed in the report the 'political material' they contain is not as obvious. The journal's publisher, Michelot, was sentenced to two months in prison and a six hundred franc fine, and the printer, Constant Chantpie, to one month in prison and two hundred franc fine,<sup>165</sup> and on the 24<sup>th</sup> of June of the same year, the ministry of the interior suppressed the journal.<sup>166</sup> After missing only a day of publication its owners simply published the journal under a new name – *le Sphinx* – although this did not fool the ministry of the interior, whose file on *le Miroir* contains a note that a day after *le Miroir* was shut down the printer submitted a declaration for a journal called the *Sphinx* authored by the same people, also claiming to be non-political.<sup>167</sup> Moreover, the censor procured the list of subscribers to *le Miroir* from the publisher in order to prove, through comparison with *le Sphinx* subscribers, that they were in reality the same journal,<sup>168</sup> and interrogated the printer, Constant Chantpie, asking whether *le Sphinx* employed the same personnel as *le Miroir*, and why, if they were different journals, they used the same paper, type,

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<sup>162</sup> Presse – Paris – Dossiers de journaux par ordre alphabétique, 1820-1894: *Micos ignorantes à Modiste universelle*, "Miroir (le), le Spinxe 1822-1823," Archives nationales de France, F18/383, document 48.

<sup>163</sup> Archives nationales de France, F18/383, document 55.

<sup>164</sup> *Miroir des spectacles*, no. 707 (2 January 1823): 2; *Miroir des spectacles*, no. 726 (21 January 1823): 3. "Nous qui valons autant que vous, nous vous prenons pour notre roi et seigneur, tant que vous respectez nos lois et privilèges; sinon, non".

<sup>165</sup> Archives nationales de France, F18/383, document 48.

<sup>166</sup> Archives nationales de France, F18/383, document 57.

<sup>167</sup> Archives nationales de France, F18/383, document 58.

<sup>168</sup> Archives nationales de France, F18/383, document 67, 69.

and format.<sup>169</sup> These methods led to the 28 June suppression of *le Sphinx*, and the seizure of 880 copies of its second issue.<sup>170</sup> Furthermore, Chantpie was censured for printing more copies of *le Sphinx* than he said he would in his printer's declaration, although he claimed he had filed a new declaration correcting the first.<sup>171</sup> However, while *le Sphinx* existed for only three issues, it was replaced within two weeks by *la Pandore*.

The case of *le Miroir* tells us a number of things about the suppression of literary journals in the wake of the 1819 and 1822 press laws. Firstly, it was a slow process, especially in comparison to preliminary censorship. The first extant letter to the Procureur du Roi accusing *le Miroir* was from 29 August 1822, and Michelot and Chantpie were not sentenced until May of 1823, and the journal was only shut down a month later. Moreover, this case suggests that the government was less concerned with political content in literary journals in the abstract, and more with what that content was. This first letter did not explicitly accuse *le Miroir* of printing political material, but rather suggested that *le Miroir* had published an article that was injurious to the state religion – Catholicism.<sup>172</sup> In October 1822 another letter accused *le Miroir* of writing against censorship in the theatre. The letter went on to say that such condemnation of theatre censorship had to be stopped, or the theatre might become as licentious as other genres of literature already had.<sup>173</sup> This argument is particularly interesting; because although censorship was of course a political issue, the argument being made was that *le Miroir's* position would be injurious to culture. Initially the ministry seems to have considered going after *le Miroir* for attacking public officials, but as we have seen, this course of action was either unsuccessful or was abandoned in favor of arresting Michelot and Chantpie for including political material in a non-political journal. What these earlier letters in the journal's file tell us, however, is that this was simply an expeditious application of the law of 1819 in order to shut down a journal that had a history of causing trouble for the government, and not necessarily for strictly political reasons, but for cultural and literary

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<sup>169</sup> Archives nationales de France, F18/383, document 71.

<sup>170</sup> Archives nationales de France, F18/383, document 74.

<sup>171</sup> Archives nationales de France, F18/383, document 77-82.

<sup>172</sup> Archives nationales de France, F18/383, document 41.

<sup>173</sup> Archives nationales de France, F18/383, document 43.

reasons as well.<sup>174</sup> This regime of censorship by other means following the 1822 press law actually put liberal literary journals at a disadvantage, compared to political journals or newspapers, because they could be sentenced just for including political discussion, with no need for the government to prove that the political material was libelous or even that it tended toward libel. Moreover, the inclusion of political material could be used as an excuse to censor a literary journal that the government believed injurious to public mores, or the public's image of the government.

"What counts as politics?" and "who is allowed to be political?" are especially loaded questions in a country experimenting with representative government. This is particularly true of Restoration France, with its recent history of revolution and regicide, and where the divisions in public opinion and the distance between official and popular ideology only increased over time.<sup>175</sup> Moreover, the lines the censorship commission drew between 'politics' and 'not politics,' and therefore 'allowed' and 'prohibited' were somewhat arbitrary. For example, while the commission closely monitored all references to government ministers,<sup>176</sup> it allowed attacks on bureaucrats, even though the censors knew these were used to imply attacks on the government. Villèle even allowed anti-bureaucrat sentiments in the opposition journals he purchased, in a (failed) attempt to maintain their subscriber base.<sup>177</sup> When the government reintroduced preliminary censorship in 1827, the censors excised references to "personnalités" in literary journals more than they censored anything else. They also cut references to disputes between the actors and theatre

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<sup>174</sup> The censorship reports from 1827, after preliminary censorship was reintroduced, suggest a similar story – the government tracked specific journals that it believed would cause problems. One of those journals – *la Pandore* – is a later version of *le Miroir/Sphynx*. Archives nationales de France, BB30/269.

<sup>175</sup> In 1825, the six most popular opposition newspapers had a combined subscriber base of 43 605, and the six most popular ministerial journals boasted 15 250 subscribers. Rapport général sur la presse, 12 February 1825, Archives nationales de France, F18/261.

<sup>176</sup> This shows up in the censorship record as "personnalités" ("persons of note"), and these were cut from literary journals constantly under the 1827 law. For example in one censorship report from 4 July 1827: "*Le Figaro* contained some persons of note; they were refused, and the same for *la Pandore* and *le Courier des Théâtres*." "Rapport du bureau de Censure de Paris, 2e semaine," Archives nationales de France, BB30/269, document 54. "*Le Figaro* renfermait quelques personnalités; elles ont été refusées, il en a été de même pour *la Pandore* et *le Courier des Théâtres*."

<sup>177</sup> Ralph Kingston, *Bureaucrats and Bourgeois Society: Office Politics and Individual Credit in France 1789-1848* (Palgrave Macmillan, 2012), 118–20.

directors, especially in royal theatres, and, of course, all commentary on censorship.<sup>178</sup> Following the 1828 elimination of preliminary censorship, censors flagged and recorded extracts from literary papers, in order to build cases against them. The censors' concerns remained more or less the same. In one report, the censors noted that *le Corsaire* printed an open letter from artists saying the director of theatres in Marseille and other cities had mismanaged the theatres and maltreated the actors.<sup>179</sup> Other citations were more obviously political, particularly references to press laws or censorship practices. *La Pandore* opposed the fact that under the 1828 laws caution payments were the same for all daily papers, so it had to pay the same deposit as a newspaper like *le Constitutionnel*, which had so many more subscribers.<sup>180</sup> Or, *le Courier des Tribunaux* wrote that the new press law "will kill all of France's newspapers."<sup>181</sup>

Censorship concerns also shifted over time. While political matters seem to have been the censor's primary concern over the course of the Restoration, under Villèle and the later ministries, the censorship regime became increasingly concerned with references to religion. In the mid-1820s the Villèle government became convinced that newspapers criticized the Jesuits as a proxy for attacks against Catholicism and the crown, so censors began to take note of references to the Jesuits.<sup>182</sup> With the return of preliminary censorship, the government continued to monitor religious references in the press, but because the Martignac ministry had passed a

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<sup>178</sup> Archives nationales de France, BB30/269, document 54, 56, 57.

<sup>179</sup> Rapport sur les journaux de Paris 1826-1828, "Extraits des Petits Journaux, 12 May 1828," Archives nationales de France, F7/7081.

<sup>180</sup> "Extraits des Petits Journaux, 21 May 1828," Archives nationales de France, F7/7081. In the latter half of the 1820s *Le Constitutionnel* had 20 000 subscribers. Collins, *The Government and the Newspaper Press*, 48.

<sup>181</sup> "Extraits des Petits Journaux, 21 May 1828," Archives nationales de France, F7/7081.

<sup>182</sup> In August 1825, the Villèle government brought charges against both *le Constitutionnel* and *le Courier français*, claiming their references to Jesuits intimated criticisms against the Church as a whole, but both papers were acquitted that December, in part because the judges were anti-Jesuit. Collins, *The Government and the Newspaper Press*, 41. This religious censorship could affect literary journals as well. In July 1827, for example, the censor cut a sermon by seventeenth-century Brazilian preacher Antonio Vieira from *Le Globe* for including the phrase "veille toi seigneur pourquoi t'es tu endormi?" ("awake Lord, why have you slept?") which they considered borderline blasphemous and therefore scandalous to pious readers. Censure des écrits périodiques 1827, "Rapport du bureau de Censure de Paris, 4e semaine," Archives nationales de France, BB30/269, document 56.

law to limit the Jesuit's influence, his censorship commission tracked both positive references to the Jesuits and opposition to Martignac's policy towards them.<sup>183</sup>

The Restoration government also censored books and the theatre, and therefore the censors monitored the book and theatre reviews and announcements in literary journals to ensure literary journals did not undermine their control of the non-periodical press or the theatre. Censors eliminated references to books or plays considered injurious to the public, or that had been censored. For example, on 3 July 1827 they cut an announcement of the publication of the works of Voltaire in one volume from *le Corsaire*, because it "could be of no importance for booksellers, and would produce in public mores an undesirable influence by putting this author in the reach of the smallest fortunes."<sup>184</sup> In another, they cut an excerpt from Walter Scott's history of Napoleon from *le Pandore* because it presented Talleyrand unfavorably.<sup>185</sup> A February 1825 report on the press argued that press freedom was dangerous because journals influenced people's reading habits.<sup>186</sup> Literary journals, therefore, posed a threat to social mores precisely because they encouraged people to read books, and books were themselves dangerous: a belief held by conservative governments across Europe. In January 1825, the English essayist William Hazlitt (1778-1830) found that border guards seized all of his books upon his entry into the Kingdom of Piedmont-Sardinia. As he recalled:

We proceeded to the Custom-House. I had two trunks. One contained books. When it was unlocked, it was as if the lid of Pandora's box flew open. There could not have been a more sudden start or expression of surprise, had it been filled with cartridge-paper or

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<sup>183</sup> In the records on literary journals from the 1828 press regime most of the notations that are not about references to censorship or press laws are about religion. For example, on 17 May 1828 *La Réunion* published a chapter of Martial Marcet de la Roche Arnaud's *Mémoires d'un jeune Jésuite*, in which the Jesuits insisted on Louis XVIII illegitimacy as monarch. Or, on 21 May 1828, *Le Figaro* critiqued the same book for having plagiarised *Histoire des ordres monastiques* (1751). "Extraits des Petits Journaux, 21 May 1828," Archives nationales de France, F7/7081.

<sup>184</sup> It is notable that the censors were particularly concerned that this inexpensive volume of Voltaire's writings would reach the lower classes. Censure des Ecrits périodiques 1827, "Rapport sur les opérations du bureau de censure de Paris, Séance 3 Juillet," Archives nationales de France, BB30/269, document 54. "Une pareille édition des œuvres de Voltaire ne pouvant être d'aucun importance pour la librairie, et devait produire sur les mœurs publiques une influence fâcheuse, en mettant cet auteur à la portée des plus petites fortunes."

<sup>185</sup> Censure des Ecrits périodiques 1827, "Rapport sur les opérations du bureau de censure de Paris, Séance 14 Juillet," Archives nationales de France, BB30/269, document 55.

<sup>186</sup> Rapport général sur la presse, 12 February 1825, Archives nationales de France, F18/261. "La liberté des journaux est funeste à la société sous la rapport de l'influence qu'ils ont sur la presse non périodique."

gun-powder. Books were the corrosive sublimate that eat out despotism and priestcraft. . . a box full of them was contempt of the constituted authorities; and the names of mine were taken down with great care and secrecy. . . it was not till I arrived at Turin that I found it [the box] was a prisoner of state, and would be forwarded to me anywhere I chose to mention, out of his Sardinian Majesty's dominions.<sup>187</sup>

Literary journals might even be considered more dangerous than books, because they cost less, and because they could expose one reader to the ideas of multiple books in a single document.

Even as press laws changed over the course of the 1820s, because the censorship commission continually enforced the provision that political periodicals had to seek pre-authorization and deposit a caution payment, the press control regime consistently encouraged the separation of literature and politics. But that separation was impossible. The inhabitants of the Restoration's political world also inhabited its literary world. The people who wrote poetry, plays, novels, and literary criticism in the Restoration often also worked as politicians, bureaucrats, received government pensions, or served government-run institutions. In *The Rules of Art*, Pierre Bourdieu argues that "the liberal fight against the Restoration and the overture made to men of letters in the Orléanist period had favored, if not a politicization of intellectual life, at least a sort of lack of differentiation between literature and politics, as the flowering of literary politicians and political *littérateurs* such as Guizot, Thiers, Michelet, Thierry, Villemain, Cousin, Jouffroy and Nisard bears witness."<sup>188</sup> This overlap of political and literary personalities extended to the censorship commission itself. Under the Restoration, the men who served as censors also lived as writers, journalists and academicians. Louis-Simon Auger, a member of the Académie Française and the Société des bonnes-lettres and best remembered for his 1824 denunciation of romanticism, which inspired Stendhal's *Racine et Shakespeare*, wrote for *le Journal des débats*. L'Abbé Andrezel translated works from English, and published collections of Greek writing.<sup>189</sup> Veillard was a poet, Vanderbourg and Landrieux journalists, and Briffaut was both.<sup>190</sup> D'Erbigny was a (not very successful) playwright, and Pain a slightly more successful one. Mazure wrote

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<sup>187</sup> William Clowes Hazlitt, *Notes of a Journey Through France and Italy* (London: Hunt and Clarke, 1826), 190–91, <http://archive.org/details/notesajourneyth00clargoog>.

<sup>188</sup> Pierre Bourdieu, *The Rules of Art: Genesis and Structure of the Literary Field* (Stanford Calif.: Stanford University Press, 1996), 130.

<sup>189</sup> *Biographie des censeurs royaux*, 12.

<sup>190</sup> *Ibid.*, 14, 20, 26.

political pieces for the official government paper *Le Moniteur*, and Lourdoueix penned a *roman philosophique*.<sup>191</sup> Abel-François Villemain, whose essay on literary criticism won the Académie Française's essay contest in 1814, and whose literary lectures influenced many Restoration-era critics, also served as director of the division of *imprimerie et librairie*, which oversaw all press regulation and censorship, from 1816 to 1820. Villemain and the men of the censorship commission embodied the blurring of criticism and censorship, literature and politics that characterized Restoration letters.

Literary journals, despite attestations of political neutrality, also could not separate politics from literature. They expressed political opinions that went beyond the censorship commission's operational definition of 'potentially injurious to the ministry or the crown.' As expressed in an 1825 report on the state of the press, "beyond the twelve newspapers authorized to treat political matters, there are, more and more everyday, a mass of other newspapers and periodicals that claim to be literary, and that, at heart, are all political."<sup>192</sup> The report went on to say that these purportedly literary journals were seditiously political "because they do not stop – whether in very easy-to-understand allegories or allusions, or whether more directly – insulting religion, ministers, the government and all those attached to it."<sup>193</sup> The examples it cited – *la Lorgnette*, *la Pandore*, *le Corsaire*, *le Diable-boiteux*, *le Mercure du XIXe siècle* – unsurprisingly, were all opposition journals. The censor, because it used 'political' to mean 'opposed to the government' dismissed not only the political expressions of royalist literary journals, but also the importance that aesthetic debates played in the conflict of Restoration society. Moreover, the censorship regime's desire to dissociate politics and literature encouraged literary journals to couch their aesthetic interventions as non-political and helped encourage journal producers to turn to literature as an avowedly non-political arena for social debate.

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<sup>191</sup> Ibid., 18–21.

<sup>192</sup> Rapport général sur la presse, 12 February 1825, Archives nationales de France, F18/261. "Outre les douze journaux autorisés à traiter les matières politiques, il s'est établi et il s'établit tous les jours une foule d'autres journaux et écrits périodiques qui s'affichent pour être littéraire, et qui, dans le fond, sont tout politiques."

<sup>193</sup> Rapport général sur la presse, 12 February 1825, Archives nationales de France, F18/261. "Puisqu'ils ne cessent, soit dans les allégories et des allusions très aisées à saisir, soit plus directement, d'insulter la religion, et les ministres, le gouvernement et ceux qui lui sont attachés."



## Critics

The French government used censorship to try to control the debate for Restoration France, but the people who espoused competing viewpoints had no such recourse. They had to use persuasive language in order to convince the public of the superiority of their opinion. To do so, they used the closest tool they had to censorship: literary criticism. Literary criticism and censorship both worked toward the goal of controlling what people read, and found their inspiration in the notion that what people read shaped their ideas, their viewpoints, their whole lives. In October 1814, Louis Dubroca wrote a pamphlet on government censorship, in which he included “by analogy” a discussion of literary criticism. Dubroca argued that government censorship and literary criticism were “two types of censorship,”<sup>194</sup> and that many of the vices that led to bad censorship also led to bad critique. Bad criticism, Dubroca argued, could come from many places. The spirit of rivalry – the jealousy a critic felt when reviewing the work of someone in his own field – could encourage bad and unfair criticism.<sup>195</sup> A desire to aggrandize one’s own erudition and accomplishments could also distort proper literary criticism. Literary censors, Dubroca argued, often displayed this particular vice.<sup>196</sup> Contempt for nascent talent, Dubroca contended, also resulted in poor literary criticism.<sup>197</sup> He called on literary censors to be friends of French letters, by supporting rather than crushing young talent.<sup>198</sup> However, Dubroca argued, partisanship was the most dangerous obstacle in the way of fair and impartial criticism, just as it was a significant obstacle to the fair practice of censorship. When either a censor or a critic evaluated a piece of literature from a position of partisanship, Dubroca contended, they judged the work before even reading it.<sup>199</sup> Both censorship and literary criticism could therefore contribute to (and arise from) the very factionalism they were trying to eliminate.

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<sup>194</sup> Louis Dubroca, *De la Censure ministérielle considérée dans les dispositions morales, politiques et intellectuelles qui conviennent à son exercice, et, par analogie, de la critique littéraire des ouvrages, de ses abus et des moyens de la rendre à son utilité* (Paris: P.N. Rougeron, 1814), 10, <http://gallica.bnf.fr/ark:/12148/bpt6k6133587v>. “Deux espèces de censure.”

<sup>195</sup> Ibid., 89.

<sup>196</sup> Ibid., 93.

<sup>197</sup> Ibid., 96.

<sup>198</sup> Ibid., 98.

<sup>199</sup> Ibid., 98–100.

While the format and content of literary journals varied, the medium built itself around the review – book reviews, theatre reviews, reviews of cultural trends and mores. The *rédacteurs* of literary journals wrote as cultural and literary critics, and in that guise they offered proposals for French literature, culture, and society more broadly. Because different journals offered competing viewpoints and because they grew into totems for those viewpoints, they contributed to the polarization of romanticism and classicism, and therefore to polarized culture more broadly, even as they tried to promote a singular vision of French society. These journals operated within a number of constraints – including censorship practices, journalistic expectations, political climate, and French literary and critical traditions – but they pushed back against those constraints, as they circumvented censorship, influenced political discourse, and shaped literary ideologies and critical practices.

These constraints encouraged *rédacteurs* to present their journals as politically neutral, and literary journals often claimed their only goal was to bring literature to the people of France. For example, *Le Conservateur littéraire*, run by Victor and Abel Hugo, in a volume from late 1820 declared that its *rédacteurs* were detached from “all personal interest.”<sup>200</sup> Moreover, the editors argued that theirs was not a political journal, and because of this they could review literature that might alarm the censor, even when all other journals ignored those works. But, of course, they continued, the *rédacteurs* themselves were royalists and Catholics, even if their journal was ‘apolitical.’<sup>201</sup> Their detachment from politics, they claimed, gave them the freedom to explore literature that might not otherwise be explored, but they were then careful to point out that if their journal was not politically neutral it would be on the ‘right’ side of politics in the eyes of the crown.<sup>202</sup> Similarly, the prospectus to J.G. Dentu’s royalist classicist *l’Oriflamme* (1824) insisted

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<sup>200</sup> “Préface,” *Le Conservateur littéraire* 3 (1820): 6. “Détachés que nous sommes de tout intérêt personnel, nous recevrons avec plaisir les plaintes de ceux de messieurs les gens de lettres qui pourraient avoir à souffrir de l’insolence des hommes puissants et importants, parmi lesquels nous spécifions particulièrement les acteurs, les journalistes et les libraires.”

<sup>201</sup> Ibid.

<sup>202</sup> In the same issue as this editorial preface – as if to provide concrete evidence for its claims – *le Conservateur littéraire* published a poem on mutual education with a note that the *rédacteurs* opposed the poet’s position on mutual education, but that it had been included in the journal for its literary merits. (Mutual education was form of instruction that became popular in Europe in the

that the periodical “while having nothing to share with politics will usefully serve well-read France, erudite France, religious and monarchical France.”<sup>203</sup> Dentu swore that no partisan spirit would influence the journal’s literary criticism, and that they would treat all works with impartiality and justice. “But,” he wrote, “we will make strong and principled war against that bad taste that young barbarians are endeavoring to introduce among us, under the name *romantic*.”<sup>204</sup> While this seems contradictory, the *rédacteurs* of *l’Oriflamme* demonstrate throughout their periodical that they believed literary conflict threatened France, and they present their opposition to romanticism as an act of patriotism. “Disorder, confusion, the abandonment of all beautiful and good principles,” one reviewer wrote, “seems, for the last ten years, to have become the nineteenth [century’s] share.”<sup>205</sup> Moreover, it seemed to him that the toppling of literary giants like Corneille paralleled the toppling of political giants in the Revolution.<sup>206</sup> *L’Oriflamme* did not need to discuss politics to be political. They had literature.

Because literary journals were not authorized for political content, these claims of political neutrality, the *rédacteurs* hoped, protected the journals from possible litigation by the government. As noted, opposition literary papers had to worry about this significantly more than their royalist counterparts. Yet, these claims to political neutrality had other advantages. First, they were part of a broader trend in journalistic practice, especially among opposition papers, to emphasize the objectivity and impartiality of one’s journalists. For example, *La Minerve* announced in 1819 that J.-P. Pagès would replace Benjamin Constant as their reporter for Chamber proceedings, because Constant had won a seat and so was no longer impartial, whereas Pagès “a former magistrate, who does not now occupy any political position, and is not

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nineteenth century, wherein more advanced students would help those less advanced.) “Discours sur les Avantages de l’Enseignement mutuel,” *Le Conservateur littéraire* 3 (1820): 7.

<sup>203</sup> J.G. Dentu, “Prospectus,” *L’Oriflamme. Journal de littérature, de sciences et arts, d’histoire et de doctrines religieuses et monarchiques* 1 (1824): 2. “Je me propose donc de publier sous ce titre un Journal qui, sans avoir rien de commun avec la politique servira encore utilement la France lettrée, la France savante, la France religieuse et monarchique.”

<sup>204</sup> Ibid. “mais nous ferons une guerre vive et raisonnée à ce mauvais goût que de jeunes barbares s’efforcent d’introduire parmi nous, sous le nom *romantique*.”

<sup>205</sup> “Messénienne sur Lord Byron, par M. Casimir Delavigne,” *l’Oriflamme* 1 (1824): 193. “Le désordre, la confusion, l’abandon de tous les principes du beau et du bon, semblent, depuis dix-ans, devenus le partage du dix-neuvième [siècle].”

<sup>206</sup> Ibid.

subject to any minister, assures his impartiality.”<sup>207</sup> Second, there were a number of reasons why certain literary partisans, in particular royalist romantics, who supported the crown, but not the literary position of the Académie française, would want to present literature as politically neutral.<sup>208</sup>

The political climate of the Restoration was highly volatile, and the political press reflected and fuelled that volatility. When they claimed to be above those consequences literary journals tried to build a literary sphere that could influence the social world while remaining protected from its political disputes. Stendhal wrote that those who despaired at the last elections turned away from the disappointing world of politics toward the world of literature, and, much to the chagrin of France’s men of letters, brought reason with them.<sup>209</sup> Some critics argued that literature ought to be separate from politics, or that politics had a pernicious influence on literature. In *Racine et Shakespeare*, Stendhal wrote that poetry should not be political, because that limited its intelligibility. He gave the example of Jonathan Swift, whom Stendhal contended could not be properly understood without reading the commentary on him, which no one does.<sup>210</sup> The *rédacteurs* of *le Conservateur littéraire* argued that political debate was a distraction, that political unrest, “by endangering society, makes all minds forget the decadence, no less imminent, of French letters,”<sup>211</sup> and that good literary critique required political neutrality, stating that, “we will always distinguish, in our critiques, the man of letters from the man of the party, because bias kills true literary critique.”<sup>212</sup>

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<sup>207</sup> “Session des chambres: Note des auteurs,” *La Minerve française* 5 (1819): 497. “ancien magistrat, et qui aujourd’hui n’occupe aucune place dans aucune administration, sous aucun ministre, garantit son indépendance.”

<sup>208</sup> Chapter 5, which examines Restoration literary sociability, more fully addresses the impact of political connection and institutional support on literary debates.

<sup>209</sup> Stendhal, *Racine et Shakespeare, n° II, ou Réponse au manifeste contre le romantisme prononcé par M. Auger dans une séance solennelle de l’Institut* (Paris: Dupont et Roret, 1825), 73.

<sup>210</sup> *Ibid.*, 54–55.

<sup>211</sup> “Préface,” *Le Conservateur littéraire* 3 (1820): 5. “des agitations politiques qui, mettant la société en péril, font oublier à tous les esprits la decadence non moins imminente des lettres françaises.”

<sup>212</sup> *Ibid.*, 1. “nous distinguerons toujours, dans nos critiques, l’homme de lettres de l’homme de parti, parce que la partialité tue la vraie critique littéraire.”

Other romantic journalists shared the concern of the *rédacteurs* of *le Conservateur littéraire* that politics in general, and the polemical and polarized nature of Restoration politics in particular, detracted from and hampered French letters. The *rédacteurs* of royalist romantic *la Muse française* (1823-1824), lamented that because politics was noisily discussed in the *salons*, it drowned out discussions of literature and forced those who loved poetry to fall silent.<sup>213</sup> They worried not only that the disruptive world of the political would distract from literature, but also that the politics of the literary world stymied literary advancement. They argued that dull minds had failed to notice important and brilliant literature, which received no exposure in periodicals because they were either purposely silent with respect to this new literature, or ignorant of it.<sup>214</sup> Given *la Muse*'s romanticism, it seems clear that this was a (not-so) veiled way of saying that classicist writers were too caught up in their artistic rules to recognize the value of the 'new literature' - *le genre romantique*. However, the *rédacteurs* of *la Muse* were by no means apolitical, not with respect to governmental politics and not with respect to literary politics, being clear supporters of both royalism and Romantic literature. *Le Globe*, as well, presented itself as a bastion of literary criticism untainted by politics. In the 'profession of faith' in the first issue, Paul Dubois, one of its founders, argued that although literature had thrived despite the political turmoil of the Restoration, the same could not be said for literary critique. Most journals, he contended, had abandoned it, and when they did mention it, it was always for political party purposes.<sup>215</sup> *Le Globe*, like most literary journals, presented itself as the only periodical untainted by political violence. That the journal exaggerated in order to appeal to subscribers and avoid the censor does not detract from the true sentiment at its core. *Le Globe* was not without its political affiliations – it was initially a liberal and later a saint-simonien journal – but it, along with *le Conservateur littéraire* and *la Muse française*, mobilized the rhetoric of political neutrality to promote romantic literature, and to protect the literary world from politics.

Ironically, the purported political neutrality of literary periodicals also allowed them to become an important avenue through which people on both sides of the political spectrum

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<sup>213</sup> "Avant-propos," *La Muse française* 1 (1823): 1.

<sup>214</sup> Ibid.

<sup>215</sup> Trahard, *Le romantisme défini par "Le Globe,"* 2.

publicized their visions of and for France, because literature, these journalists believed, if it remained safe from the volatility of the political sphere, could change society. Pierre-François Tissot in the Prospectus of *le Mercure du dix-neuvième siècle* opposed the idea that politics had killed literature, and instead suggested that literature could save politics from the polemical and polarized state in which it found itself in 1823.<sup>216</sup> He argued that “literature is the instrument put in the hands of the scholar, the administrator, the poet, the publicist, to introduce useful ideas in factories just as in cottages, in the house of a citizen just as in the palace of princes.”<sup>217</sup> He suggested that literature be used to mediate the polarization of politics, by forcing people of opposing viewpoints to think about the same things and utilize the same language, so that they might converse with one another.<sup>218</sup> He therefore said explicitly something that is often implicit in other literary periodicals: that although politics should not influence literature, literature (or at least the right literature) could help provide a way forward for France.

As Charles Darnin argued in *la Minerve littéraire* in 1820, no one could divide literature from politics, and many even conflated the two. Danin invoked Louis XIV’s suppression of François Fénelon’s *Les Aventures de Télémaque* (1699) and André Chénier’s execution during the Reign of Terror to demonstrate the indivisibility of literature and politics. Chénier, he wrote, “wrote a literary masterpiece: it was a political offence.”<sup>219</sup> Danin’s examples suggest that censorship – political consequences for literary choices – inextricably entangled the literary and the political. But this also meant that the political consequences of literary works shifted with the winds of political change. Louis XIV exiled Fénelon from Versailles, but *Télémaque* went on to become one of the most popular and influential books of the eighteenth century,<sup>220</sup> because,

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<sup>216</sup> Pierre-François Tissot, “Introduction,” *Mercur du dix-neuvième siècle* 1 (1823), 6-7.

<sup>217</sup> Ibid., 13. “les Lettres sont l’instrument remis entre les mains du savant, de l’administrateur, du poète, du publiciste, pour introduire les notions utiles dans les ateliers comme dans les chaumières, dans la maison du citoyen comme dans le palais des princes.”

<sup>218</sup> Ibid., 6.

<sup>219</sup> Charles Danin, “De la littérature distincte de la politique,” *La Minerve littéraire* 1 (1820): 22. “Il compose un chef-d’œuvre littéraire : ce fut un délit politique.”

<sup>220</sup> David Bell argues that *Télémaque* played a significant role in the development of pacifist thought and shifting conceptions of war. David Avrom Bell, *The First Total War: Napoleon’s Europe and the Birth of Warfare as We Know It* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co, 2007), 61–62.

Danin insisted, “if it is literary today, it was once political.”<sup>221</sup> For example, he wrote, the theatre journal *le Journal des théâtres* is considered to be literary, but under another regime it would have been political. “What therefore is politics?” he asked. “What therefore is literature?”<sup>222</sup> Theoretically, he argued, the two were distinct; literature dealt with the rules of writings, and politics with the science of itself. In practice, through censorship and government oversight, the two became intermingled. But, in an ironic twist, Danin argued, governments focused not on what we might think of political writing – the works of people like Aristotle, Machiavelli, Montesquieu or Rousseau – but instead worried only about that which was only political accidentally or by inference. And so the news, a moral treatise, a religious discussion, “an astronomical discovery in the time of Galileo,” all became political, and “an academy saw politics in literature applied to philosophy . . . an administrator saw it in numbers . . . and the court of Richelieu saw it in the beauty of *Cid*.”<sup>223</sup> But the conflation of literature and politics went both ways, Danin argued. Just as literature is “sometimes more political than politics” so too is politics, at its foundation, literary.<sup>224</sup> Literature, he argued, creates style and all utterances are made up of their substance and their form, and while that substance might be history, or politics, or morality, the form is always in the domain of literature.<sup>225</sup>

Danin defined literary criticism as utterances or writing for which literature made up both its substance and its form. Literature, for Danin, was the combination of all literary productions, all knowledge about those productions, and the rules we use to both appreciate and produce literary

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<sup>221</sup> Danin, “De la littérature distincte de la politique,” 22. “S’il est littéraire aujourd’hui il fut politique autrefois.”

<sup>222</sup> Ibid. “Qu’est-ce donc que la politique ? Qu’est-ce donc que la littérature ?”

<sup>223</sup> Ibid., 23. “c’est une nouvelle, c’est une leçon de morale, c’est un trait d’humanité, c’est un acte de religion, c’est une preuve de courage ; c’était une découverte d’astronomie au temps de Galilée, de physique sous la Sorbonne, de médecine sous telle université ; aux yeux de ce parlement, c’était un système ancien, une invention récente aux yeux de cet autre : une académie voit de la politique dans les lettres appliquées à la philosophie ; un ministre grammarien dans le *Dictionnaire des Synonymes*, un administrateur dans les chiffres, un mandarin dans l’alphabet, et la cour de Richelieu dans les beautés du *Cid*.” *Le Cid* is generally regarded as Pierre Corneille’s best work, although the Académie française criticized it for not following the three unities, in a controversy known as the *Querelle du Cid*. See Jean-Marc Civiardi, *La querelle du Cid : (1637-1638) : édition critique intégrale* (Paris: Champion, 2004).

<sup>224</sup> Danin, “De la littérature distincte de la politique,” 24. “la littérature est quelquefois plus politique que la politique même.”

<sup>225</sup> Ibid., 25.

works.<sup>226</sup> And he believed literature progressed overtime, as society improved in its politics, science, and philosophy, so too did it perfect its literature. This meant that any judgment of a piece of literature required knowledge of the place and time in which it was written. Because, Danin continued, literature is the expression of society and because his society, Restoration France, teemed with political interests “politics called literature to its aid, made an alliance with it,” but this politicization of literature, as always, did not stop literature from being literature.<sup>227</sup> Danin believed that the literature of the Restoration would have its own particular character, just as the literatures of previous eras had their own characters. This concept, that literature is the expression of its society, discussed in detail in the next chapter, abounded in the Restoration, and helped raise the stakes of literary debate and literary criticism.

To ensure that politics allied with the correct literature, and that people read the right kind of literature – the literature that expressed its society most truthfully – one needed to either persuade the public, or control the supply of literature. While the government relied on the latter, an increasing coterie of literary critics used literary criticism to do the former. These critics turned to print, and the press in particular, to cajole and convince the public of the merits of their preferred literary school. This criticism shaped literary debates and helped solidify definitions of both classicism and romanticism, even as it made proposals for French political, cultural and economic life. The press, because it was subject to regulation, because it was perceived as an organ for political and literary polarization, and because it was a commodity, operated within and pushed back against a number of constraints, all of which helped to shape literary criticism in the Restoration.

While the 1819 press laws brought literary journals under the scrutiny of the censor, they also incentivized the production of literary and other non-political periodicals, by demanding caution payment for political papers.<sup>228</sup> Furthermore, by forbidding political content in non-political

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<sup>226</sup> Ibid.

<sup>227</sup> Ibid., 27. “la politique appelle à son secours la littérature, qui fait alliance avec elle.”

<sup>228</sup> In a random sample of 43 literary-only or non-political periodicals only seven began publishing before 1819. This is attributable to both the 1819 press law and the increase in periodical production over this time period. The literary periodicals published before 1819 like *le Mercure de France* or *la Minerve française* included sections on politics as well as sections on literature.



journals, these new laws encouraged literary journals to present the literary world as a sphere separate from the political world, and one that could solve the problems created by politics. This change in press regulation coincided with the outbreak of the *bataille romantique*. The conflict between romanticism and classicism did not suddenly appear in 1819, and its roots traced back to the late eighteenth century, and certainly at least to the publication of Germaine de Stael's *De l'Allemagne* in 1810. However, the conflict began to solidify in the late 1810s and early 1820s, as romantic groups and periodicals rose up and romantic partisans became increasingly vocal, even if no one yet understood precisely what romanticism was. The process of debating romanticism and classicism – so much of which took place in the new literary periodicals that journalists founded in the wake of the 1819 laws – would work to alleviate that confusion.

## CHAPTER 2: THE POLITICS OF LITERARY CRITICISM

*The mood of an age may be nonetheless real for being illogical . . . Historical phenomena take on many accretions as they pass through society; they become involved with other phenomena and eventually lose themselves in the common stream. Any major movement of the mind inevitably accumulates a crowd of different associations and meanings as it spreads. But we do not for this reason infer its nonexistence or meaninglessness. It is, in fact, possible to argue the reverse: that whenever we find doctrine that everyone knows about but no one can quite define we are in the presence of a major intellectual movement.*

– Roland Stromberg, *European Intellectual History Since 1789*<sup>229</sup>

In 1823, the publisher Persan produced the first volume of an annual called *Tablettes romantiques*.<sup>230</sup> Over 400 pages long, it contained a variety of previously unpublished poems and prose fragments, but it began with four pieces of literary criticism: François-Benoît Hoffmann on classicism, J.P. Brès' satirical poem on the rules of romantic literature, Charles Nodier on *le genre romantique*, and Germaine de Staël on romantic and classicist poetry. In the preface, Persan explained that he wanted to make these differing viewpoints available so that readers could decide for themselves whether those things he had heard about romanticism – that it was not a real genre, that it was detestable – were true.<sup>231</sup> Literary criticism, he seemed to suggest, would offer the tools for readers to evaluate literature, and would help them understand what the different literary genres stood for – if they in fact stood for anything. The inclusion of pieces of literary criticism in a selection of short prose and poetry intended for a wide audience suggests just how widespread literary criticism, and the *bataille romantique*, were in Restoration Paris, as well as the role played by the press in its development and dissemination.

But literary criticism was its own particular genre of writing – one that emerged in the eighteenth century and became more popular and common in the nineteenth – and as with all literary forms, romantics and classicists disagreed on what it should look like. Perhaps the most concrete difference between classicism and romanticism was their approach to literary criticism. A classicist critique examined a work of literature in order to determine the extent to which it

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<sup>229</sup> Roland Stromberg, *European Intellectual History Since 1789* (New York: Appleton-Century-Crofts, 1968), 36.

<sup>230</sup> Subsequent volumes were titled *Annales romantiques*, and the 1826 volume printed at least 1500 copies. Archives nationales F18/109, document 640.

<sup>231</sup> *Tablettes romantiques; recueil orné de quatre portraits inédits* 1 (1823), v.

successfully created art while following the rules laid out by the classicist tradition. A romantic critique, because romanticism rejected the very ideal that literature be bound by rules, was necessarily different, and the development of a specifically romantic style of literary criticism helped shape romanticism as a movement. What exactly romantic critique should look like was not always clear, particularly to classicist critics who judged romanticism by classicist standards. How does one critique a work of art if one has no template against which to compare it? Critics refined conventions of literary criticism – both classicist and romantic – as well as notions of their own literary movements themselves, through their debates.

But, as we have seen, romantics and classicists also sought to shape Restoration society with their literature, and criticism and the press became the tools with which they could do that. Critics in the Restoration believed both in the power of the press to reach and influence people, and in the power of literary criticism to do the same. Even those on neither side of the *bataille romantique* believed that criticism and the press shaped opinions and that criticism must therefore be used judiciously and morally. In 1829, the journal *le Démocrate littéraire* asked, at a time when the country is divided and the quarrel between the past and the present reaches new heights, “do not writers have a more important mission than to dogmatize over vain subtleties in literary criticism?”<sup>232</sup> But those subtleties in literary criticism stood for much and influenced much larger issues. In the Restoration, the royalist theorist and statesman Louis de Bonald’s axiom that “literature is the expression of society,” was repeated constantly in the literary periodical press. Romantics and classicists alike shared his belief that literature and society were inextricably linked, even as they disagreed about what that connection meant for the state of literature, and even for the state of society. Both sides of the debate, however, took the phrase to mean that literature was both a barometer of society and that it had profound influence on society. When literature is the expression of society, the quality of literature, its morality, its taste all matter to a significant degree. As a result, concerns that people had access to the wrong kind of literature

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<sup>232</sup> É.M., “De la direction politique des lettres françaises pendant les trois derniers siècles, du but qu’elles doivent se proposer aujourd’hui,” *Le Démocrate littéraire: tribune des jeunes gens* 1 (1829): 14. “les écrivains n’ont-ils pas de mission plus importante à remplir que de dogmatiser sur des vaines subtilités de critique littéraire?”

abounded in the Restoration, and literary criticism, and debates about literary criticism, proliferated in the periodical press, as well as in monograph printing, in an attempt to control what literature people read, or how they evaluated the literature they did read.

Literary criticism was therefore rooted in the idea that there was a correct kind of reading, and that incorrect reading was not only undesirable but also harmful – both to the individual and to society. This latter belief is, of course, also at the foundation of literary censorship. For people to have access to the wrong kind of books, someone had to produce the wrong kind of books, and where censorship tries to limit their production (or distribution), literary criticism denounces them after the fact (although often in the hopes that in the future writers would produce fewer wrong books, or better books). In that sense censorship is a set of practices, while criticism is more of a set of principles or a discursive framework. Censorship focuses on what bad reading is, where literary criticism is also concerned with what makes good literature. As we saw in the previous chapter, it is impossible to completely separate literary criticism from censorship in a regime that practices censorship, both because official literary principles will influence censorship and because the censorship regime will shape criticism. When the censorship regime encouraged the production of literary periodicals, journalists turned to literature to discuss and debate the future of French society. The literary conflict between classicists and romantics entangled with political debates in imprecise ways, because both literary ideologies could be mobilized in support of different political positions. Literary criticism, whether erudite and reasoned, or populist and polemical, became a tool with which journalists attacked their opponents.

Through this conflict, literary criticism helped define and distinguish between romantic and classicist literature. The classicist critique of romanticism fundamentally shaped understandings of romanticism, and continues to do so into the present. Histories of romanticism, like Restoration-era classicist critiques of romanticism, tend to develop from the assertion that romanticism is somehow indefinable. Historians of romanticism often begin their historiographies with Arthur Lovejoy's famous insistence that we must speak of romanticisms and not romanticism, because it never formed a coherent whole, and is therefore impossible to

conceptualize as such. Marika Schmitz-Emans has argued that the problems we have with defining romanticism can be traced back to romanticism itself. How, she asks, can we find a fixed conceptual framework for “poetry that should always be in the process of becoming.”<sup>233</sup> (This is reminiscent of Nietzsche’s oft-quoted aphorism that only things without history can be defined.) Both Lovejoy and Schmitz-Emans make important points – romanticism did vary across time and space, and it is difficult to pin down something that defines itself as in a perpetual state of development, and that is rooted in the rejection of received artistic principles. But Schmitz-Emans, Lovejoy, and all scholars who begin from the premise that romanticism is indefinable, perpetuate classicist conceptions of romanticism. They bring a fundamentally classicist understanding of genre and of literary criticism, and particularly the critique of romanticism. Classicist criticism gave us the idea that a genre, like theatre, or a work of art, like a play, must be comparable to some sort of established ideal of the genre in order to criticize/appreciate it, a premise romanticism wholly rejected. The romantic theory of genre rejected a rules-based list of features in favor of an idea of genre as process or as the interplay between competing tendencies.<sup>234</sup> Despite these differences, both romantics and classicists referred to romanticism and classicism as “genres” – *le genre romantique*, *le genre classique*. While they both used the word in that context to mean literary school or movement, the classicist understanding of a genre as something that follows rules meant they often denied romanticism the status of genre. In *Tablettes romantiques*, Persan wrote that he preferred classicism because he believed in universal truth and universal beauty,<sup>235</sup> suggesting a relatively good understanding of classicist ideology. In contrast, the volume of the annual published two years later began with the assertion that “the romantic genre has not yet been satisfactorily defined”<sup>236</sup> – and by classicist standards it never would be.

Although the earliest French classicist writers lived in the seventeenth century, the traditions of classicist critique, and of modern French literary criticism, really emerged in the

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<sup>233</sup> Schmitz-Emans, “Theories of Romanticism: The First Two Hundred Years,” 17.

<sup>234</sup> Rajan, “Theories of Genre,” 226.

<sup>235</sup> *Tablettes romantiques; recueil orné de quatre portraits inédits* 1 (1823), vi.

<sup>236</sup> *Annales romantiques; recueil de morceaux choisis de littérature contemporaine* 2 (1825): v.

eighteenth century. Literary journals played a significant role in the invention and development of modern criticism practices.<sup>237</sup> So to understand critique in the nineteenth century we must first go back to its origins in the eighteenth, with the understanding that classicist critique in the nineteenth century was forged as much by its conflict with romanticism as by its traditions and models. The conflict with romanticism helped to distil and crystalize classicist criticism into a more coherent, but less nuanced, version of its eighteenth-century self. In that sense, classicism, the ideology, was forged in the Restoration as much as romanticism was.

At the center of classicist criticism is the idea of taste (*goût*). The philosophes believed that criticism was a skill that needed to be learned and honed, and that it could not be founded on sentiment alone.<sup>238</sup> However, they also believed that a person needed to have the innate capacity for criticism in order for their training to be successful. They called that innate capacity “taste.”<sup>239</sup> So taste was something a person could have. But it was also something a work of art had. It was both a capacity and a quality. Only a person who had the capacity for good taste (and the training to develop it) could recognize an object that had the quality of being in good taste. These contentions helped make the professionalization of criticism possible. Because criticism was seen as a special skill as well as an aptitude, rather than something any literate person could do by explaining their sentiments about their reading, only a particular subset of people could be critics.

### **The Expression of Society**

In the prospectus for *Le Mercure du dix-neuvième siècle*, Pierre-François Tissot argued that literature, because it could bring people together, could solve the polarized and intractable political conflict facing Restoration France. Tissot and his contemporaries believed that literature influenced the social and political world, because they believed the two to be closely intertwined. The phrase “literature is the expression of society” was everywhere in the periodical press and critical literature of early nineteenth century Paris. Generally attributed to ultra-royalist theorist

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<sup>237</sup> Vaillant, “La genèse de la littérature moderne (1800-1836): autonomisation ou médiatisation?,” 120.

<sup>238</sup> Jennifer Tsien, *The Bad Taste of Others: Judging Literary Value in Eighteenth-Century France* (University of Pennsylvania Press, 2012), 9.

<sup>239</sup> *Ibid.*, 42.

and statesman Louis de Bonald,<sup>240</sup> the concept formed the common ground around which literary partisans debated the relative merits of romanticism and classicism, even though they did not always agree on what it meant for literature to be the expression of society. The principle applied not just to fiction, but to journalism as well. A review of German literary journals signed Jules de P., argued that it was impossible to judge German literary periodicals by French standards because their journals differed as much from the French as their national character. But this also meant that “it is enough to read journals to fully know the spirit of other nations.”<sup>241</sup> De P. characterized French literary journals as highly critical: their reviews offered an opportunity for the reviewer to share his opinion, rather than an opportunity to showcase the author being reviewed. While German reviews, he contended, did the opposite, this French style of reviewing reflected that at its core the French character was vain.<sup>242</sup> If society shaped and was shaped by both its fiction and its literary journalism, then policing those things, both through censorship and through criticism and debate became crucial. It also ensured that literary debates were political debates. If literature is the expression of society, then debates about literature could also be debates about society – what it should look like, what its goals should be – and because the Restoration was a time of flux and of change, debates about how France should be remade had a concreteness and a salience that went beyond the hypothetical.

While he expressed the idea that literature reflected its social milieu as early as 1796 in his *Théorie du pouvoir politique et religieux*,<sup>243</sup> Bonald seems to have first used the precise phrase “*littérature est l’expression de la société*” in a series of articles in the *Mercure de France*, including one on the debate between ‘ancients and moderns’ in Ventôse Year X (February/March

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<sup>240</sup> For a thorough discussion of Bonald’s particular brand of counter-revolutionary thought, see David Klinck, *The French Counterrevolutionary Theorist, Louis de Bonald (1754-1840)* (New York: P. Lang, 1996). Chapters 7 and 8 focus on the Restoration, and Klinck discusses Bonald’s theory of literature on pages 124–127.

<sup>241</sup> Jules de P., “Revue des journaux littéraire d’Allemagne,” *Les Annales de la littérature et des arts* 1 no 16 (1821): 84.

<sup>242</sup> Ibid.

<sup>243</sup> In *Théorie du pouvoir* Bonald wrote that someone should study “the rapprochement of the state of the arts in different peoples with the nature of their institutions.” Quoted in Klinck, *The French Counterrevolutionary Theorist, Louis de Bonald (1754-1840)*, 124.

1802),<sup>244</sup> and one on style and literature in the August 1806 issue.<sup>245</sup> Bonald recognized the political implications of his axiom; when he said “society” he meant something like “political culture.” He argued that monarchic societies produce the best epic poetry because they are the most unified and epic poetry requires unity of action,<sup>246</sup> and that the taste for sound literary doctrine in Ancient Rome was born with monarchy and ended with it. He continued, that after Augustus writers did not display genius and as tyrants corrupted the empire, so too did writers corrupt taste.<sup>247</sup> Moreover, in keeping with his religious perspective, Bonald also believed that true literature began with Christianity.<sup>248</sup> Bonald believed that the caliber of the government affected the caliber of the literature produced by that society. And because he was an anti-revolutionary who believed monarchy is the natural order of society, for Bonald that meant that monarchies would always produce the best literature, and strong and orderly monarchies would produce the best literature of all. Because, he argued, order was “the primary source of all beauties, even literary ones.”<sup>249</sup> For this reason, Bonald believed that French literature reached its apex under the reign of Louis XIV, and began its decline in the 18<sup>th</sup> century. Even popular literature (*le genre familier*), he insisted was exalted in the time of Louis XIV, but in the 18<sup>th</sup> century (read: with the *philosophes* and the Revolution) both high and low literature suffered. “At the same time,” he wrote, “that societal principles were challenged in impious and seditious literature, the principles of taste were ignored in poems, and the authority of models was challenged in poetics.”<sup>250</sup>

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<sup>244</sup> In this article he specifically wrote “Because literature is the expression of society, just as the spoken word is the expression of a man.” [Louis de Bonald], “Des anciens et des modernes,” *Le Mercure de France* 7 (February-March 1802): 354. “Car, la littérature et l’expression de la société, comme la parole est l’expression de l’homme.”

<sup>245</sup> Louis de Bonald, “Du style et la littérature,” *Le Mercure de France* 25, no. 267 (August 1806): 393. This article was reprinted in his 1819 *Mélanges littéraires, politiques et philosophiques*, Louis-Gabriel-Ambroise de Bonald, *Mélanges littéraires, politiques et philosophiques* (Paris: A. Le Clere, 1819), 354.

<sup>246</sup> Bonald, *Mélanges littéraires, politiques et philosophiques*.

<sup>247</sup> *Ibid.*, 398.

<sup>248</sup> *Ibid.*, 399.

<sup>249</sup> *Ibid.*, 410. “...première source de toute les beautés, même littéraires »

<sup>250</sup> *Ibid.*, 410–11. “En même temps que les principes de la société étoient mis en problème dans des écrits impies et séditions, les principes du goût étoient méconnus dans des poésies, et l’autorité des modèles attaquée dans des poétiques.”



However, Bonald was not the only person to make the connection between literature and society at the turn of the nineteenth century. Germaine de Staël, in her lesser-known work of literary critique, *De la littérature considérée dans ses rapports avec des institutions sociales* (1799), wrote that she proposed to “examine the influence of religion, mores, and laws on literature, and the influence of literature on religion, mores and law.”<sup>251</sup> She argued that while authors such as Marmontel, La Harpe, and Voltaire had already written treatises on the art of writing and on the principles of taste that left nothing to be desired, not enough attention had been paid to the moral and political factors that shaped literature.<sup>252</sup> But while Bonald and de Staël made similar pronouncements about the relationship between literature and society, they did so for quite different reasons, and with different political and literary end goals.<sup>253</sup> Bonald campaigned for the monarchy and epic poetry, but de Staël sought a literature founded in political liberalism. She hoped to trace the impact of the Revolution on literature in order to explore what literature might be like if “liberty, morality and republican independence were sagely and judiciously combined.”<sup>254</sup> Moreover, where Bonald’s “literature is the expression of society” expressed a universalist claim about one correct politics and one correct literature,<sup>255</sup> in de Staël and other romantic hands the phrase became a justification for literary relativism. And while Bonald believed that social and political institutions influenced literature, and that as societies

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<sup>251</sup> Germaine de Staël-Holstein, *De la Littérature, considérée dans ses rapports avec les institutions sociales*, vol. 1 (Paris: Imprimerie Crapelet, 1799), i, gallica.bnf.fr/ark:/12148/bpt6k10400965. “Je me suis proposé d’examiner quelle est l’influence de la religion, des moeurs et des loix sur la littérature, et qu’elle est l’influence de la littérature sur la religions, et moeurs et les loix.”

<sup>252</sup> Ibid.

<sup>253</sup> For a brief but thorough account of the origins of the phrase and the idea, and how Bonald and de Staël mobilized it quite differently see Arsène Soreil, “La littérature expression de la Société: A propos d’une formule célèbre,” *Revue belge de philologie et d’histoire* 10, no. 1 (1931): 162–68.

<sup>254</sup> Staël-Holstein, *De la littérature*, 1:ii–iii.

<sup>255</sup> He wrote: “If one opposed me, saying that the ideals of moral beauty (that is to say literary) are not the same for every people, I would observe that they are not different, but simply unequally developed.” Quoted in Soreil, “La littérature expression de la société,” 167–68. “Si l’on m’objectait que les idées du beau moral (c’est-à-dire littéraire) ne sont pas les mêmes chez tous les peuples, je ferais observer qu’elles ne sont pas différentes, mais seulement inégalement développés.”

developed from primitive to advanced so too did their literature, de Stael, and most of the critics who adopted Bonald's axiom, presented culture and literature as reciprocally constitutive.<sup>256</sup>

That this same concept – “literature is the expression of society” – could fit these divergent theories of both society and literature may help explain its ubiquity in Restoration literary circle. This idea emerged at the turn of the nineteenth century, and then profoundly influenced both romantic and classicist criticism and literature. Charles Nodier argued in 1821 that if literature is the expression of society then romanticism “is nothing but the classicism of the moderns, that is to say the expression of a new society, that is neither that of the Greeks nor that of the Romans.”<sup>257</sup> Similarly, in his essay, *Sur la poésie romantique* (1825), Auguste le Prévost argued that classicist literature, because it grew out of ancient literature reflected ancient society, whereas romantic literature reflected modern society, and as a result expressed sentiments of religions, nation, love and melancholy – the sentiments of modernity.<sup>258</sup> Junius Castelnau (1795-1855) took this idea of romanticism as modern further. He wrote in 1825 that romanticism's fundamental modernity meant that it was necessarily unfinished, and in development. “Born entirely from the genius of modern times,” Castelnau wrote, romanticism “must follow it in all its phases, survive small changes in institutions and mores,” and “march in step with new sentiments and ideas.”<sup>259</sup>

Classicist critics did not always agree. Romanticism might be new, but it could also be a passing fad, rather than a real expression of early-nineteenth-century France. For example, A. Malitourne wrote in *les Annales de la littérature et des arts*, at the end of 1820, that when

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<sup>256</sup> Bonald's theory of literature was in profoundly non-romantic. He believed that societies were the true authors of literary works, and in that sense dismissed the idea that an individual particular genius generated art. Bonald's social theory had much closer ties to Enlightenment stadialism than to romantic particularism, despite the fact that his axiom “literature is the expression of society” proved equally suited to both. Klinck, *The French Counterrevolutionary Theorist, Louis de Bonald (1754-1840)*, 124–27.

<sup>257</sup> Charles Nodier, “Critique littéraire, Le Petit Pierre, traduit de l'allemand, de Speiss,” *Les Annales de la littérature et des arts* 2, no. 16 (1821): 77.

<sup>258</sup> Auguste Le Prévost, *Sur la poésie romantique* (P. Periaux Père, 1825), 3, 18. While most contemporaries who quoted the axiom cited Bonald, Auguste Le Prévost credited both Bonald and de Stael with the concept.

<sup>259</sup> Castelnau, *Essai sur la littérature romantique*, 222–23. “Née dans toutes ses parties du génie des temps modernes, elle doit le suivre dans toutes ses phases, survivre aux modifications partielles des institutions et des mœurs, marcher parallèlement avec les sentimens et les idées acquises.”

common sense made its return to France it would prove that romanticism's success was only ephemeral.<sup>260</sup> Yet, if romanticism was, as its proponents claimed, the literature of the modern world, then, its opponents could insist that it was tainted by the decadence and impiety of modernity. In 1821, Ducanel, director of the Société des bonnes-lettres asked that if literature is the expression of society could French letters from the past 30 years of revolution be "anything other than the expression of revolt, of discord, of impiety, of all the furious passions that troubled France?"<sup>261</sup> Moreover, by maligning romanticism for its association with contemporary society, and therefore revolution, these critics effectively accused romanticism of failing to be politically neutral, and of contributing to the instability of French society. In a review of Casimir Delavigne's *Messénienne sur lord Byron*, in a late 1824 issue of *l'Oriflamme* a reviewer who signed his name 'S.' argued that romanticism was anti-French, and insisted its positions were "more revolutionary in literature than were those of 89 in politics; because at least they did not come to us from abroad."<sup>262</sup> "Who," he asked, "will despise, as they deserve, these ridiculous standards bearing only the monograms of Byrons, of Schillers, of Walter Scotts?"<sup>263</sup> But if these royalist classicists saw romanticism as a literary revolution, some liberal anti-romantics presented romanticism in the opposite light. In 1829, the new literary journal *le Démocrate littéraire* made the dubious claims that democracy abounded in French politics, and the people found representation everywhere, except in literature. French literature, the journal continued, failed to represent the people of France, because romanticism, which preached the emancipation of letters from classicist rules, actually represented literary tyranny.<sup>264</sup> *Le Démocrate* insisted that romanticism not only fettered French literature, it had also artificially derailed the progression of French culture, a set back from which France would only slowly recover. This counter-revolutionary reaction in literature, *le*

<sup>260</sup> A. Malitourne, "Adieux à l'année 1820," *Les Annales de la littérature et des arts* 1 (1821): 511.

<sup>261</sup> Ducanel, "Société des bonnes-lettres, Prospectus," *Les Annales de la littérature et des arts* 2, no 19 (1821): 236. "Pouvait-elle être autre chose que l'expression de la révolte, de la discorde, de l'impiété, de toutes les passions furieuses qui troublaient la France?"

<sup>262</sup> S., "Littérature: Messénienne sur lord Byron par M. Casimir Delavigne," *L'Oriflamme* 1 (1824): 194. "plus révolutionnaires en littérature que celles de 89 en politique ; car au moins celles-ci ne nous venaient pas des étranger."

<sup>263</sup> Ibid. "qui honnira, comme elles le méritent, ces enseignes ridicules qui ne portent que les chiffres des Byron, des Schiller, des Walter Scot ?"

<sup>264</sup> "Prospectus," *Le Démocrate littéraire: tribune des jeunes gens* 1 (1829): 1.

*Démocrate* argued, had to be opposed. *Le Démocrate*, like *l'Oriflamme* blamed foreign influence for this disruption to French culture. Salons, theatres, newspapers, societies, and literature, it went on, have been taken over by “literary émigrés” and exploited for the sake of the foreign and the aristocracy “who can only live by it [the foreign] and for it.”<sup>265</sup> This position suggests a belief that romanticism, because it came from outside France, implicated its proponents in a treasonous preference for the foreign over the domestic, just as the *émigrés*, by escaping the Revolution, had abandoned France.

The foreignness of romanticism, the idea that it was not truly French, that it came from countries that had defeated France at war, animated much of the hostility against it. In a speech to the *Société des bonnes-lettres*, Jean-Charles Dominique de Lacretelle (called Lacretelle jeune to distinguish him from his older brother) declaimed that he was “afraid that we will no longer recognize the French under the borrowed lugubrious clothing of our neighbors.”<sup>266</sup> He went on to inveigh against “the authority of Schlegel, that Quintilian of romanticism, the deplorable denigrator of Racine, of Molière, of Boileau, of La Fontaine!”<sup>267</sup> And further, he suggested that romanticism and royalism were incompatible, and insisted that “all blasphemy against Racine or Fénélon irritates you [the listeners], no doubt, as much as any diatribe against Henry IV or Louis XIV, because all is connected in royalist sentiments.”<sup>268</sup> For Lacretelle romanticism was not only un-French, but anti-French, precisely because it was foreign inspired and because it condemned famous French classicist authors, whom Lacretelle equated with France’s most revered kings. The royalist classicist *Nouvelle année littéraire* insisted that romanticism was so un-French it corrupted the very language. And it was not the only culprit, the author insisted – political debates

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<sup>265</sup> Ibid., 2. “Qui ne peuvent vivre que par lui et pour lui.”

<sup>266</sup> “Société royale des bonnes-lettres: Séance d’ouverture du 4 décembre,” *Les Annales de la littérature et des arts* 13, no. 166 (1823): 420. “J’ai peur, en vérité qu’on ne reconnaisse plus les Français sous ces habillements lugubres empruntés de nos voisins. On ne se contente pas d’en reverter l’époque actuel, où les esprits, j’en conviens, sont assez sérieux, on veut en couvrir la légèreté si connue de nos pères.”

<sup>267</sup> Ibid., 421. “L’autorité de Schlegel, ce Quintilien du romantisme, ce déplorable contempteur de Racine, de Molière, de Boileau, de La Fontaine!”

<sup>268</sup> Lacretelle’s inclusion of his audience’s opinion – his assumption that they share his own – speaks the ways in which, in this case literary societies, but also journals, produced homogenized communities, or at the very least advanced visions of their particular communities as homogenous. Ibid., 422. “Tout blasphème contre Racine ou Fénélon vous irrite sans doute autant qu’une diatribe contre Henri IV ou Louis XIV, car tout se lie dans les sentiments royalistes.”

tended toward neologism, pamphlets rejected both politeness and correct grammar, literary journals failed to uphold sound doctrines, critics judged seventeenth-century literature by nineteenth-century standards, publishers produced unfaithful reprints, and these all contributed to the alterations of the French language. The author feared that, despite their eternity, one day Racine and Boileau's works would need to be translated for French audiences.<sup>269</sup>

Occasionally, critics who opposed French romanticism accepted romanticism produced in other countries. Walter Scott or Schiller, in their romanticism, simply reflected their own societies. But classicist France required classicist literature. In 1824 the journal *l'Oriflamme* wrote neither Germany or England should be considered barbarian because their literature differs from France's. Moreover, while no one could deny the genius of Shakespeare, Schiller or Goethe, the article continued, when people proposed to use them as "models of true taste" that could not be borne.<sup>270</sup>

The association of romanticism with both revolution and with foreign powers meant that much of the romantic project in these periodicals revolved around undoing conceptions of romanticism as un-patriotic or anti-French. Charles Nodier, in his 1818 review of Germaine de Staël's *De l'Allemagne* in *le Journal des Débats*, advanced a tempered version of this. He suggested that it might be important to be familiar with foreign literature, even if it did not conform perfectly to understood notions of beauty. French literature, he argued, had advanced as far as it could on its own, and he proposed that great things could emerge from the melding of the clean and regulated French-style with the free and passionate style of the German romantics.<sup>271</sup> Three years later, he made the argument that France could learn from the literature of its neighbors more forcefully. Where other nations, he argued, learned from and built upon their artistic heritages, France had for some reason become trapped in servile imitation of its literary past. At some point, he wrote, "the critics who regulate our literary destiny proclaimed that imitation was

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<sup>269</sup> "De l'état actuel de la langue française," *La Nouvelle année littéraire* 3 (April, May, June 1828): 10.

<sup>270</sup> "Epître à M. Viennet, sur le genre romantique, par M. le baron d'Ordre," *L'Oriflamme* 1 (1824): 305.

<sup>271</sup> Charles Nodier, "Variétés: *De l'Allemagne*, par Mme de Staël, cinquième édition," *Le Journal des débats politiques et littéraires* (8 November 1818): 2.

taste, and taste was genius.”<sup>272</sup> But, he argued, Racine was not a French poet, but rather a Greek poet and a Hebrew poet. Nodier insisted that Schiller, had he been born in France, would still be inferior to Racine, but would have at least offered French literature the example of independence and originality, where Racine offered only the second-hand accolades that came from connection with ancient works.<sup>273</sup> In Nodier’s view, allowing German, British and Italian works to influence French letters would mean being inspired to cast off rules in favor of innovation, and not simply an imitation of foreign styles instead of old styles. Moreover, Nodier’s proposals for French literature reveal his own particular characterization of French literature and literary practice. Classicism as practiced in nineteenth-century France, he suggested, was a dead model based in imitation and repetition, while, by contract, romanticism was both creative and original.

The *bataille romantique* existed not just between romantics and classicists, but also internally to each literary school. Those internal conflicts often fell along political lines. For example, in the Restoration, liberals and royalists could not agree on Voltaire’s place in French classicist canon. Jean-François de La Harpe, the founder of modern classicist literary criticism, had published *Elegy to Voltaire* in 1780, and his famous *Lycée* had dedicated two of its fourteen volumes to Voltaire and called him a tragedian on par with Racine and Corneille.<sup>274</sup> In the aftermath of Revolution, royalist classicists had a hard time overlooking Voltaire’s politics. In a lecture on La Harpe given to the Société des bonnes-lettres the critic and literary scholar Pierre Duviquet rescued La Harpe from the supposed political taint of his association with Voltaire. Duviquet insisted that La Harpe “joined the party of Voltaire, less out of conviction than out of calculation and pride,” and that La Harpe’s talent as a literary scholar should therefore still be recognized.<sup>275</sup> Royalist classicists could co-opt La Harpe by denying his revolutionary roots, or selectively remembering the past. Similarly, in *le Conservateur littéraire*, a young, royalist, but not

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<sup>272</sup> Nodier, “Critique littéraire, Le Petit Pierre,” *les Annales de la littérature et des arts* 2: 79. “les critiques en titre qui règlent chez nous les destinées de la littérature, prononcèrent que l’imitation était le goût, et que le goût était le génie.”

<sup>273</sup> *Ibid.*, 81.

<sup>274</sup> Jean François de La Harpe, *Lycée, ou Cours de littérature ancienne et moderne.*, vol. 9 (Paris: Depelafol, 1825), 1, <http://gallica.bnf.fr/ark:/12148/bpt6k202736d>.

<sup>275</sup> “Société des bonnes-lettres, Cours de littérature, M. Duviquet, Séance du 21 décembre,” *Les Annales de la littérature et des arts* 6 (1821): 23.

yet ardently romantic Victor Hugo found it necessary to justify his respect and admiration for Voltaire by arguing he was not a true revolutionary. "It is of no doubt," he wrote, "that if Voltaire were alive today he would loath the men and the doctrines of the revolution. Voltaire was essentially *monarchical*; most of his writings prove this, but for the rest one must today judge him more by his character than by his life."<sup>276</sup> Later in the article Hugo suggested that some of Voltaire's unedited writings might do more harm than good, and that only those that serve literature without harming morality should be published.<sup>277</sup> Hugo's issue with Voltaire was thus tied to the latter's revolutionary implications, and by explaining away such associations Hugo was able to save Voltaire's literary accomplishments from censure. On the other hand, liberal classicists were much happier to include Voltaire in the classicist canon. The comte de Ségur, who was deprived of his offices, but not his seat in the Académie française, for supporting Napoleon during the 100 days, told the Académie in a speech on the glories of French history that Voltaire "stunned with the universality of his genius."<sup>278</sup>

Romanticism was perhaps even more ambiguous and fractured than classicism. Jean-Claude Yon argues in his study of *le Globe*'s reviews of the theater in 1827, that in order to show the full complexity of romanticism's aesthetic positions, he had to limit his research to one year, one literary form, and one periodical, because otherwise it would have been impossible to cover the necessary material.<sup>279</sup> Moreover, anti-romantic sentiment in the Restoration sometimes seemed more tied to the idea of romanticism and the word "romantic" than to any specific set of literary criticisms or doctrines. Charles Nodier argued that a significant portion of anti-romantic sentiment in France arose from the erroneous conflation of 'romantic' with 'not-classicist.' Labeling all non-classicist modern literature as romantic, Nodier noted, would mean including a

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<sup>276</sup> V[ictor Hugo], "Vie privée de Voltaire et de Madame du Chatelet, pendant un séjour de six mois à Cirey; par l'auteur des lettres péruviennes; suivant de cinquante épîtres inédites en vers et en prose de Voltaire," *Le Conservateur littéraire* 1, no. 9 (1819): 331. "Il n'est pas douteux que, si Voltaire était né de nos jours, il n'eût exécré les hommes et les doctrines de la révolution. Voltaire était essentiellement *monarchique*; la plupart de ses écrits le prouvent, mais au reste il faut aujourd'hui le juger plutôt d'après son caractère que d'après sa vie."

<sup>277</sup> Ibid., 336–37.

<sup>278</sup> "Sociétés savantes, Académie française, Séance du 6 novembre 1820," *Minerve littéraire* 1 (1820): 8. "Voltaire si étonnant par l'universalité de son génie"

<sup>279</sup> Yon, "Paris 1820," 153.

lot of terrible literature under the category.<sup>280</sup> In a review of some plays, *le Globe* noted that while people continued to reject romanticism in name, they supported it in fact. In the feuilletons of newspapers and in literary journals, the article continued, critics promoted romantic doctrines, despite not calling them romantic.<sup>281</sup> Duvergier de Hauranne pointed out, in another issue of *le Globe*, that ‘romantic,’ like ‘liberal,’ was a word that only had a relative definition, even going so far as to say that people called things they liked ‘classicist’ and things they disliked ‘romantic.’<sup>282</sup> But romanticism, Hauranne argued, because it was founded on literary self-governance, “had to triumph, either under that name, or another, because only there is there life, activity, forward movement.”<sup>283</sup> To Hauranne the idea of romanticism mattered more than its name, but to others the name was a significant stumbling block. Romanticism’s many negative associations encouraged the romantics of *le Conservateur littéraire* and *la Muse française* to avoid the word, and they referred instead to the “new school” of literature. The virulence of the opposition to romanticism contributed to misunderstandings and misinformation about the school. Junius Castelnau wrote in 1825 that early attacks against romanticism reflected anxieties about national pride and not literature, and that the near-infinite number of opinions about romanticism made it impossible to reach a consensus about it, since that would require impartial discussion.<sup>284</sup> Moreover, he argued, the romantic-classicist debates “proved that the spirit of partisanship that had seemed exclusive to politics, was no stranger to the peaceful domain of literature.”<sup>285</sup>

Some journals, therefore, sought to protect the literary world from not just political machinations, but literary conflict as well. *Le Diable boiteux*, a liberal theatre daily, that rejected the romantic–classicist debate, argued in an 1823 article that the press itself, as a form of writing, contributed to the literary domain, both because it was (or could be) free from the literary partisanship that hampered French letters, and because it was a popular medium, written to be

<sup>280</sup> Nodier, “Critique littéraire, Le Petit Pierre,” *Annales de la littérature et des arts* 2: 82.

<sup>281</sup> “Variétés, Vaudeville: *La Vénus de Neuilly*, parodie. – *Les fileis de Vulcain*, vaudeville,” *Le Globe* 3 (1 July 1826): 455.

<sup>282</sup> Trahard, *Le romantisme défini par “Le Globe,”* 10.

<sup>283</sup> Ibid., 18. “Ce qu’on appelle le *romantique* doit triompher, soit sous ce nom, soit sous un autre, parce que là seulement il y a vie, activité, mouvement en avant.”

<sup>284</sup> Castelnau, *Essai sur la littérature romantique*, 7–9.

<sup>285</sup> Ibid., 7. “put prouver que l’esprit de parti qui semble d’abord exclusif à la politique, n’est point étranger au domaine paisible des lettres.”



intelligible to the public. The article insisted that a free press would save French literature. The partisan spirit of French letters, *le Diable boiteux* contended, meant that French writers worried more about representing their particular coterie than, as they ought to be, expressing contemporary French society or speaking in language intelligible to the French public. Smart eighteenth-century authors, they argued, knew they had to adapt received ideas about literature to their new era: that they had to speak to the people of France. The press, *le Diable* went on, had to use the language of the people in order to be heard and understood by them, and so banished from their pages the “bad taste that reigns in big books of metaphysics, in poetry collections, at the Société des bonnes-lettres, and even the theatre.”<sup>286</sup> Their evidence: Chateaubriand showcased better style in his newspaper and journal articles and pamphlets than in his major works.<sup>287</sup> *Le Démocrate littéraire*, similarly, wrote that its literary criticism instead of relying on polemics would identify literature that could contribute to the progress of public reason, and seek out literature for the sake of public utility. It would not, the author continued, concern itself with the distinction between romanticism and classicism: “a distinction that only limits and confuses literary criticism, rather than illuminating or extending it.”<sup>288</sup>

### Theories of Criticism

In May 1828, the journal *l'Observateur* called literary criticism “the sentinel of literature” and argued that never had that definition been more apt than at a time when literary division was so violent.<sup>289</sup> The author, M.X.V. argued that literary criticism had to be a reasoned voice in this era of passions and conflict, and that a premium must be placed on justice and truth to combat the violence of literary conflict. M.X.V. argued for a revival of ancient models of literary criticism,

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<sup>286</sup> “De l’esprit littéraire des journaux,” *Le Diable boiteux* 1, no. 148 (8 December 1823): 2. “Le mauvais goût qui règne dans les gros livres de métaphysique, dans les recueils de poésie, à la Société des bonnes lettres, et jusqu’au théâtre, est banni des journaux.”

<sup>287</sup> Ibid.

<sup>288</sup> É.M., “De la direction politique des lettres françaises pendant les trois derniers siècles, du but qu’elles doivent se proposer aujourd’hui” *Le Démocrate littéraire: tribune des jeunes gens* 1 (1829): 15. “distinction qui n’a fait qu’égarer et rétrécir la critique, au lieu de l’éclairer et de l’étendre.”

<sup>289</sup> M.X.V., “La critique,” *L’Observateur, journal hebdomadaire de la littérature, des théâtres, des arts, de la librairie, du commerce & des modes* no. 64 (19 May 1828): 2 “la sentinelle de la littérature.”

which he argued saved ancient cultures from barbarism, in order to combat the corruption of modern criticism.<sup>290</sup>

Literary criticism in the Restoration proliferated, building on earlier traditions of criticism, and debating what the future of literary criticism should look like. Scholars and critics published the contents of their lectures from literature courses in multi-volume sets. The most famous of these was the course by Jean-François de la Harpe (1739-1803), an eighteenth-century writer and critic, who began his *Lycée, ou Cours de littérature ancienne et moderne* in 1786. H. Agasse first published la Harpe's *Lycée* in 16 volumes between 1798 and 1804. Of those volumes, four dealt with the classics, three with seventeenth-century French writing, seven with eighteenth-century French writers, and two with eighteenth-century philosophers, which means the vast majority of La Harpe's work focuses on French literature that could be considered classicist. In 1813, A. Costes published another complete version, while in 1814 F. Séguin ainé published an abridged version. Under the Restoration, reprints and new editions of La Harpe's lectures abounded. In 1815, a new 16-volume edition was published by E. Ledoux and Tenré. In 1816 Lefèvre published a "new and augmented" version in 15 volumes, as did Verdière in 1817-1818, but in 4 volumes. Déterville published a 16-volume version with a new preface in 1818. Séguin reprinted his abridged version in 1819, and Rolland published a new abridged version that same year. In 1820 new versions were published by E. Ledoux and V. Lagier, the latter advertising an introduction about the life and works of La Harpe by Peignot. Between 1821 and 1830 there were at least 16 new editions, 2 abridged, published in France. Copyright law at the time, established in 1793, allowed a work to enter public domain ten years after the author's death, which made it possible for editions of La Harpe's essays to proliferate after 1813. The large number of new editions and reprints, 23 in 15 years, suggests that these books were, or were at least perceived as, popular and therefore a good investment for publishers. The abridged versions, although they were often three volumes, also suggest an attempt to reach a wider audience, for people without the money and/or the inclination to read sixteen volumes of literary criticism. One review of a less-expensive complete edition, sold in a compact five volumes, remarked that the *Lycée*

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<sup>290</sup> Ibid., 3.

appealed to many young men who wanted to improve their education and that “we know that most of them have more zeal than fortune.”<sup>291</sup> In 1821 *les Annales de la littérature et des arts* called La Harpe “the premiere, or at least the most agreeable of, our modern critics,”<sup>292</sup> and his *Lycée* was used as a textbook until around 1850,<sup>293</sup> which likely accounts for many of these editions, and also suggests that his ideas would have circulated widely among the educated in France. While La Harpe was wrong when he claimed that his was the first in France to offer a complete history of literature, as Andrew Hunwick argues, he “was the first to teach literature systematically and with a chronological approach,” and “he was the first to attempt a *critical* history of literature.”<sup>294</sup> Moreover, his work disseminated to an extent that those earlier works simply did not, which meant that his particularly classicist vision of literature and style of literary criticism circulated widely in the first half of the nineteenth-century, and seem to have had a significant influence on the literary criticism of the Restoration. In 1821 when Pierre Duviquet<sup>295</sup> gave a course on literature at the royalist *Société des bonnes-lettres*, he specifically designed his course to take up where La Harpe left off, as a kind of continuation of his work.<sup>296</sup> La Harpe himself was a subject of one of Duviquet’s lectures, and Duviquet performed some impressive logical maneuvers in order to demonstrate that La Harpe was not the fan of Voltaire he seemed to

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<sup>291</sup> Casimir B., “Lycée, ou Cours de littérature ancienne et moderne, par J.F. La Harpe,” *Les Annales de la littérature et des arts* 3, no 33 (1821): 259. “et l’on sait que la plupart d’entre eux ont plus de zèle que de fortune.” Even this less expensive compact version cost 30 francs in Paris and 37 f. 50c to have shipped to the departments.

<sup>292</sup> Ibid., “il est le premier, ou, tout au moins, le plus agréable des critiques modernes.”

<sup>293</sup> Andrew Hunwick, “La Harpe: The Forgotten Critic,” *The Modern Language Review* 67, no. 2 (April 1, 1972): 282, doi:10.2307/3722311.

<sup>294</sup> Ibid., 283, 289. Some examples of printed literary histories of France that precede La Harpe include: Jean-Pierre Nicéron’s *Mémoires pour servir à l’histoire des hommes illustres dans la république des lettres* (1727-45), Félix de Juvenal de Carle’s *Essais sur des belles lettres, des sciences et des arts* (1740-44), Claude and François Parfaict’s *Histoire générale du Théâtre français depuis son origine jusqu’à présent* (1745-1749), Guillaume Alexandre de Méhégan’s *Considérations sur les révolutions des arts* (1755), Jean-Baptiste de Boyer, Marquis D’Argens’ *Histoire de l’esprit humaine* (1765-68), Antoine Sabatier de Castres’ *Dictionnaire de Littérature* (1770) and *Les Trois siècles de la littérature française* (1772), and Charles Palissot de Montenoy’s *Mémoires pour servir à l’histoire de la littérature depuis François 1er jusqu’à nos jours* (1771). Of these only Sabatier de Castre’s *Trois siècles* and Palissot’s *Mémoires*, the ones focused on French classicist literature, were reprinted during the Restoration.

<sup>295</sup> *Les Annales de la littérature et des arts* always spells his name Duvicquet, but it is always spelled Duviquet elsewhere.

<sup>296</sup> “Société des bonnes-lettres,” *Journal des débats politiques et littéraires* (11 November 1821): 2.

be, nor was he ever really a philosophe.<sup>297</sup> Duviquet was an important critic in the Restoration. He replaced Julien Geoffroy as theatre critic for the *Journal des débats* after Geoffroy's death in 1814,<sup>298</sup> and remained in the position until Jules Janin took over in 1830. La Harpe helped to promote what would become a standard interpretation of French literature – one that saw seventeenth and eighteenth century literature as the pinnacle, and precisely because it was most in keeping with classicist rules of art. La Harpe believed those rules were universal and he judged all literature based on how well it adhered to them (with the exception of ancient literature, which he said should not be judged by modern standards).<sup>299</sup> Moreover, regardless of what La Harpe's criticism was like, the fact of its existence and its prevalence suggests that interest in literary criticism was on the rise and that La Harpe helped shaped what that literary criticism looked like.

In 1814 the subject of the Académie française *prix d'éloquence*<sup>300</sup> was "Discourse on the advantages and disadvantages of literary criticism."<sup>301</sup> The choice of subject suggests a contemporary interest in literary criticism, and a belief that criticism was a potential topic for debate. The winner was Abel François Villemain (1790-1870), who shortly after winning became a professor of history at the University of Paris, and two years later a professor of French eloquence. His lectures on literature, which he gave for many years, were highly influential and published in a variety of formats and lengths beginning in 1828. In December 1819, he was named director of the press in the ministry of the interior. In his essay, Villemain wrote that in the time of Voltaire there were two critics who rose above the rest and became arbiters of good taste:

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<sup>297</sup> "Société des bonnes-lettres: Séance du vendredi 21," *Les Annales de la littérature des arts* 5, no. 64 (1821): 406; "Société des bonnes-lettres: Cours de littérature M Duviquet, Séance du 21 décembre," *Les Annales de la littérature et des arts* 6, no. 66 (1821): 24. For more on the Society's selective appropriation of La Harpe, see chapter 5.

<sup>298</sup> Initially Duviquet shared this position with Charles Nodier, but only until October of 1814. Duviquet signed his articles "C." or sometimes "Duv...t." *Le livre du centenaire du journal des débats: 1789-1889* (Paris: Plon - Nourrit, 1889), 607–8.

<sup>299</sup> Hunwick, "La Harpe," 289.

<sup>300</sup> For the history and significance of these annual *concours*, see Spitzer, *The French Generation of 1820*, 206–24.

<sup>301</sup> "Institut Impérial de France, Classe de la langue et de la littérature françaises, Prix proposés au concours pour l'année 1814," *Le Mercure de France* 55, no. 613 (17 April 1813): 175. Because the topic was announced a year in advance, the *prix d'éloquence*'s topic was chosen under Napoleon's regime, but the Institut announced the prize-winner on 21 April 1814, approximately two weeks after the start of the First Restoration, and only 3 days before Louis XVIII returned to France.

Jean-François Marmontel and La Harpe. Villemain wrote that both recognized true talent and both published in periodicals. La Harpe, Villemain insisted, was made for criticism.<sup>302</sup> His idealization of La Harpe's critical style is unsurprising, given that Villemain's views on criticism, discussed below, seem to have been significantly influenced by La Harpe.

While many professional critics were also writers in their own right – like Villemain, or la Harpe, whose plays and poetry both found some success,<sup>303</sup> and like Jules Janin, who became the theatre critic for the *Journal des débats* in 1830, replacing Duviquet – that does not mean that their role as critics was any less important. And while critics like Villemain and la Harpe were associated with academic institutions, literary criticism also existed outside of schools. Academic lectures on literature were often published, which meant a potentially wider audience for literary criticism – la Harpe and Villemain are two examples of this, but there were also others. For example, August Wilhelm Schlegel's *Cours de littérature dramatique*, translated into French by the Swiss writer Albertine-Adrienne Necker de Saussure (who was married to Germaine de Staël's cousin Jacques Necker, named for his famous finance minister uncle) in 1814. There were also other kinds of long-form literary criticism, of which Germaine de Staël's writings (notably *De l'Allemagne* and *De la littérature considérée dans ses rapports avec les institutions sociales*) are the most obvious example. Julien Geoffroy's *Cours de la littérature dramatique*, a collection of his columns from his role as theatre critic for the *Journal des débats*, was first published in 1819-1820.

Histories of the professionalization of journalism tend to focus on the rise of journalistic ethics and the ideal of objectivity that developed in twentieth-century journalism. But while journalism in the early nineteenth century did not look exactly like journalism does in the twentieth century, it defined and followed specific writing and format conventions in an increasingly professionalized and commercialized world. And in the Restoration, literary criticism was particularly associated with the periodical press. For example, in 1815 Pierre Laurent Maillet-Lacoste wrote "De la critique littéraire, exercée surtout par les journalistes," ("On Literary

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<sup>302</sup> Abel François Villemain, *Discours sur les avantages et les inconvénients de la critique* (Paris: Firmin Didot, 1814), 17–18.

<sup>303</sup> Hunwick, "La Harpe," 282.

Criticism, practiced primarily by journalists”) inspired by the Académie Française’s essay contest on the advantages and hazards of literary criticism.<sup>304</sup>

Of course, the periodical press had also been an important medium for criticism in the eighteenth century. In the June of 1772 edition of the *Mercure*, in an open letter to Voltaire, La Harpe wrote an overview of the literary periodicals in publication in France at the time. He wrote positively of all the journals he named (*Journal des Savans*, *Gazette littéraire*, *Mercure de France*), but negatively of periodicals in general, which he argued had proliferated excessively.<sup>305</sup> La Harpe lamented that the writers of most periodicals were not true men of letters (*gens de lettres*), and argued that this was the fault that led to all others. Because these critics were not peers of the people they were criticizing, La Harpe contended, they could not fully understand French literary culture, and therefore could instruct no one. La Harpe believed that the best literary criticism came from an honest desire to educate. Criticism designed to offend, humiliate, flatter or confuse was odious, insipid and vile. Only pure intentions, La Harpe believed, could produce good style.<sup>306</sup> La Harpe saw literary criticism as a moral enterprise, one that most periodicals failed to uphold, because they were not concerned with truth, with education, or with taste.

In “Discours sur les avantages et les inconvénients de la critique,” the essay that won the Académie Française’s prize in 1814, Villemain expressed opinions very close La Harpe’s. The epigraph on the printed version of Villemain’s essay was a quote from Voltaire: “An artist who had much knowledge and taste, without prejudice and without envy, would be an excellent critic.”<sup>307</sup> Villemain argued that impartiality, a love of literature, a desire for others to succeed were all attributes that elevated criticism.<sup>308</sup> And he insisted that bad literary criticism, steeped in jealousy

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<sup>304</sup> Pierre Laurent Maillet-Lacoste, “De la critique littéraire, exercée surtout par les journalistes,” in *Oeuvres* (Paris: Belin, 1822). In 1815 this essay was published on its own in Marseille.

<sup>305</sup> Jean-François de la Harpe, “Réponse de M. de la Harpe à la Lettre de M. de V...., insérée dans le dernier *Mercure*,” *Le Mercure de France, dédié au Roi. Par une société de gens de lettres* (June 1772): 133.

<sup>306</sup> *Ibid.*, 135-138.

<sup>307</sup> Villemain, *Discours sur les avantages et les inconvénients de la critique*. “Un excellent critique serait un artiste qui aurait beaucoup de science et de goût, sans préjugé et sans envie.”

<sup>308</sup> *Ibid.*, 7.

and lacking in taste, should be condemned.<sup>309</sup> Like La Harpe, he believed that the practice of criticism came with a moral imperative.

The line between criticism and literature was not always distinct, Villemain insisted. Good criticism should be indistinguishable from the art it examined – it was to be both sincere and impartial, to show both taste and talent.<sup>310</sup> However, Villemain's essay did not focus on good critique. Instead he explored the kind of critique that lent itself to abuse, the kind made possible by printing. "The printing press," Villemain wrote, "that happy invention of the modern age, that makes thinking popular, and multiplies education and stupidity, also makes criticism more indispensable and more common."<sup>311</sup> The printing press therefore made it easy for the envious to write unfair and jealous critiques of their betters. Precisely at the moment that literary criticism became a genre in its own right, Villemain wrote, it also became flooded with critiques by writers who forgot that justice and truth were the moral imperatives of all authors and who did not realize that literary critics were not the enemies of writers, but simply more modest writers themselves.<sup>312</sup> This elevation of critique as an art form, as a genre in its own right, and Villemain's perception of that elevation as a recent phenomenon, are both significant for the professionalization and popularization of criticism.

Periodicals, Villemain argued, had a significant influence on society, because they were sites of criticism, which helped shape public opinion. However, criticism did not always reach the artistic levels to which Villemain believed it was capable. To do so it had to be devoid of partisanship or vested interest.<sup>313</sup> He noted that historically, criticism became more prominent in eras when talent was on the decline and concluded that "criticism is one of those professions that prospers in difficult times,"<sup>314</sup> but that if literature fell completely so too would criticism.<sup>315</sup> This might be explained in part by the lag Villemain believed could exist between literature and

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<sup>309</sup> Ibid., 14.

<sup>310</sup> Ibid., 9.

<sup>311</sup> Ibid., 3–4. "L'imprimerie, cette heureuse découverte des siècles modernes, qui rendit la pensée populaire, et multiplia l'instruction et la sottise, rendit aussi la critique plus indispensable et plus fréquente."

<sup>312</sup> Ibid., 6.

<sup>313</sup> Ibid., 19.

<sup>314</sup> Ibid., 16.

<sup>315</sup> Ibid., 20.

critique. Sometimes, he wrote, the genius of an author was so advanced that contemporary critics could not recognize it, and only when the passage of time demonstrated the genius of that author would his or her work shape and instruct the practice of literary criticism. Only then would criticism reach the level of enlightenment of the author. So even though contemporary criticism was impartial and sincere, it was still wrong.<sup>316</sup> Criticism, he recognized, had a tendency to be conservative, to protest “dangerous innovations,” which at times meant criticism acted as a protective or corrective measure, but at other times meant it failed to recognize good innovation.

Villemain did not believe that bad criticism was particularly harmful. He argued that even when criticism was wrong it encouraged thought.<sup>317</sup> Furthermore, the very things that made it bad mitigated the harm of bad criticism. It has less of an impact because it was partisan and exaggerated, and because it did not conform to the reality of the literature.<sup>318</sup> The influence of bad criticism would be fleeting, Villemain insisted, because the passage of time will always reveal both the power and longevity of good books, and the weakness and ephemerality of bad books.<sup>319</sup> Good criticism, impartial criticism, can only advance and enlighten opinion, while bad criticism can only discredit itself.<sup>320</sup>

### **Romantic and Classicist Criticism**

Romanticism was a self-reflexive and self-conscious literary movement, and while romantic writers (often) called themselves romantic, as noted above, both historical and contemporary conceptions of French romanticism were in large part the creation of classicist polemics against it, and classicist critiques of romanticism helped to promote conceptions of romanticism that persist to this day. But, as we have seen, those critiques, and the *bataille romantique* more broadly, also helped shape classicism. As John Lyons reminds us, Racine, Corneille, and their contemporaries did not call themselves classicists. Nor did eighteenth-century literary critics like Jean-François de la Harpe or Voltaire, who did so much to define classicist literature, ever use the word “classique.” Instead, even though the body of literature already

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<sup>316</sup> Ibid., 5.

<sup>317</sup> Ibid., 21.

<sup>318</sup> Ibid., 23.

<sup>319</sup> Ibid., 2.

<sup>320</sup> Ibid., 24.



existed, and even though nineteenth-century conceptions of classicism grew out of eighteenth-century conceptions of literature and literary criticism, what we refer to today when we say 'classicism' "is the creation of the nineteenth-century polemics surrounding 'romanticism.'"<sup>321</sup> Nineteenth-century classicist literary criticism perpetuated a fiction, which originated in the eighteenth century,<sup>322</sup> that all seventeenth-century literature had been classicist literature, and nineteenth-century classicists perpetuated the fiction that everyone had always recognized the literary school they called classicism as the true French literature. Yet, the seventeenth century also saw literary conflict. The writers most associated with French classicism simply won that conflict, known as the *querelle des anciens et des modernes* (quarrel of the ancients and the moderns).<sup>323</sup> This quarrel, which would see the ascendancy of Boileau, Corneille, and their interpretation of ancient Greek and Roman literary forms, paralleled the *bataille romantique*.<sup>324</sup> In 1820, *la Minerve littéraire* noted that while the ancients and the moderns quarreled over literature's era, romantics and classicists quarreled over literature's location.<sup>325</sup> But since critics perceived romanticism as both foreign and new, and since they presented classicism as the victor of the quarrel of the ancients and the moderns, the parallels ran deeper than *la Minerve* suggested.<sup>326</sup>

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<sup>321</sup> Lyons, "What Do We Mean When We Say 'Classique,'" 498.

<sup>322</sup> Jennifer Tsien argues that the eighteenth century debates about what French letters should be were so successful that they have masked what French letters were actually like, which was incredibly diverse. She further argues that the fact that the philosophes idea of French canon is the same as ours today should not be taken as evidence that they were right, but rather evidence that their campaign was so successful. I would add that the continuation of that campaign into the nineteenth century has contributed to the persistence of classicist conceptions of literary canon and literary criticism (although they often exist alongside romantic ideas of the same, despite their mutual-exclusion). Tsien, *The Bad Taste of Others*, 186.

<sup>323</sup> English languages scholars sometimes refer to the quarrel as the Battle of the Books.

<sup>324</sup> While Restoration critics saw the quarrel in light of the *bataille romantique*, Joan DeJean examines the quarrel as a fin-de-siècle event, and compares it to the culture wars of the 1990s (the time of her writing). Joan DeJean, *Ancients against Moderns: Culture Wars and the Making of a Fin de Siecle* (Chicago: University Of Chicago Press, 1997).

<sup>325</sup> L., "Bibliographie française et étrangère: La Vierge d'Arduène, *Traditions gauloises*, par Mad. Elise Voïart," *La Minerve littéraire* 1 (1820): 444.

<sup>326</sup> A recent edited volume has suggested the literary quarrel might be considered a genre in its own right. The book also explores the influence these quarrels had on the production of different literary genres and literary ideologies. Pierre Servet and Marie-Hélène Servet-Prat, eds., *Genres et querelles littéraires*, Cahiers du GADGES 9 (Génève: Droz, 2011).

Because the classicist critics of romanticism, not surprisingly, judged romanticism by classicist standards, they defined romanticism by that which they believed it lacked – rules, taste, definition, nature, Frenchness. In doing so, it not only helped shape conceptions of romanticism, it helped refine the idea of classicism as its opposite. In Jean-Pons-Guillaume Viennet's review of a translation of a selection of poetry by Lord Byron, Walter Scott and Thomas Moore, published in the classicist (and moderate) *Minerve littéraire* in 1820, he wrote that because "the rules [of romanticism] are not yet well defined nor well known, I am forced to make do with the examples presented before me; and I find, after having read them, that I am as far along as I was before."<sup>327</sup> It is not surprising that Viennet's search for rules in romanticism yielded no results, since, by classicist standards, romanticism has no rules. L.'s review of *La Vierge d'Arduène* by Madame Éloïse Voïart made a similar observation. L. noted that Voïart had adopted the genre people were calling 'romantic,' but insisted that this was "a frivolous distinction, about which it was impossible to determine the rule, and should have already been banned from literature."<sup>328</sup>

This classicist search for rules helped to create and promote the stereotype of romanticism as nebulous and impossible to define. Viennet, who was a playwright and poet, as well as a politician, began his discussion of romanticism in his review with the question of definition. "But what is this genre?" he asked:

What is the true definition of this word? Does it come from 'novel' (*roman*)? But novels are not considered good unless they portray historical verisimilitude, unless they are a fabulous representation of scenes of ordinary human life, unless they submit to that eternal rule, that all must be found in nature. How is it then, that that which entices the most enthusiasm from romantic poets is precisely that which is not natural and not rational? Proponents of this genre constantly declare that this is true reality, that our tragedies and our epics contain only a conventional truth, an artificial nature, and that the triumph of the romantic will be that of reason and of taste.<sup>329</sup>

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<sup>327</sup> Viennet, "Bibliographie française et étrangère: Choix de poésies de Byron, Walter Scott, et Moore, *traduction libre, par l'un des rédacteurs de la Bibliothèque Universelle*," *La Minerve littéraire* 1 (1820): 296. "Les règles n'étant pas encore bien définies ni bien connues, je suis forcé de m'en rapporter aux modèles qu'on me présente ; et je me trouve, après les avoir lus, tout aussi avancé que je l'étais avant."

<sup>328</sup> L., "La Vierge d'Arduène," *La Minerve littéraire* 1: 444. "distinction frivole, dont il est impossible d'établir la règle, et qui devrait être déjà bannie de la littérature."

<sup>329</sup> Viennet, "Choix de poésie de Byron, Walter Scott, et Moore," *La Minerve littéraire* 1: 295-296. "Mais quel est ce genre ? Quelle est la définition vraie de ce mot ? Dérive-t-il de celui de roman ? Mais le roman n'étant réputé bon qu'autant qu'il a une vraisemblance historique, qu'il est une représentation fabuleuse des scènes ordinaires de la vie humaine, il est soumis à cette règle éternelle, que tout doit en être pris dans la nature. Comment se fait-il que ce qui excite le plus

Viennet demonstrates in this passage a thorough understanding of romantics' own claims about their literary ideology – that the classicist conception of nature was limited and artificial – but they are still incomprehensible to him. He still does not even know what “romantic” means. Literary critics and scholars have been asking “but what even is romanticism?” since its advent, and that confusion was only amplified by critics who approached romanticism from a classicist vantage point.

When they did exist, classicist definitions of romanticism tended to focus on what romanticism was not. In 1823 at the *Athénée de Paris*, Saint-Albin Berville gave a lesson on the “*genre romantique*” in which he argued that the three principle characteristics of romanticism were that it 1) it did not follow the three unities in theatrical compositions, 2) it was diverse in its tone, even within one subject, and 3) it preferred nature over the classicist ideal.<sup>330</sup> Berville was particularly generous in his estimation of romanticism. An editor (N. d. R.) who commented on the report of Berville’s lesson at the *Athénée* argued that if all agreed with Berville’s definition of romanticism it would be difficult to consider writers like Virgil, Tacitus, Racine, Rousseau or Buffon as classicists, and we would instead have to call them romantics. N. d. R. argued that instead we should call *classique* all those pieces of writing that merit reading and rereading by successive generations, and all other writing need not have a designation at all.<sup>331</sup> N. d. R., by defining classicism as ‘all good literature’ therefore, not only denied that romanticism had a positive definition, but rather denied it was a literary movement or school at all. And N. d. R. was not the first to do so. Pierre Duviquet, in a talk at the *Société des bonnes-lettres* on 19 December 1821, argued that classicism’s imitation of nature had achieved the apex of literary merit, and so romanticism’s self-pretensions were delusions, because any good qualities in romantic literature

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d’enthousiasme dans les poètes romantiques, soit précisément ce qui n’est ni naturel ni raisonnable ? Les propagateurs du genre ne cessent pourtant de crier que c’est la vérité même, que nos tragédies et nos épopées n’on eu jusqu’à présent qu’une vérité de convention, une nature artificielle, et que le triomphe du romantique sera celui de la raison et du goût.”

<sup>330</sup> X., “Athenée de Paris,” *Revue encyclopédique, ou analyse raisonné des productions de membres de l’Institut et d’autres hommes de lettres* 17 (January-March 1823): 198–99.

<sup>331</sup> N. d. R., “Athenée de Paris [editorial note],” *Revue encyclopédique, ou analyse raisonné des productions de membres de l’Institut et d’autres hommes de lettres* 17 (January-March 1823): 199.

were necessarily classicist qualities. Romanticism, therefore, was not a genre.<sup>332</sup> Etienne Jouy, in an article in the theatre daily *La Pandore* took this a step further and denied both romantic literature and classicist literature the status of genre. Jouy said this not because he was not a classicist, but because when romanticism did not exist, classicism did not need to be a genre – it was simply good literature. The only good in literature is truth, he argued, and that following the one literary school, founded by its three masters, and following the principles of taste, nature, and reason. Romantics, he argued, devised this division of the genres in order to promote their mediocre literature.<sup>333</sup> In practice, however, romantics often denied any association with romanticism, or denied the division between romanticism and classicism, because of the stigma attached to the word.<sup>334</sup>

It was because classicists believed that literature should fulfill certain specific criteria that their critics could claim that any good things they saw in romantic writing (i.e. perceived examples of classicist rule-following) were not romantic. Viennet, in his review of British poetry, said both that in the future Chateaubriand (who had only recently been vindicated politically) would be remembered, not for his romanticism, but for those parts of his writing that were “natural, and in keeping with the taste of writers of the old school”<sup>335</sup> (classicism). Later in his critique he claimed that he could quote many admirable parts of Byron’s poems, but that those parts were not romantic. His best poems, Viennet argued, were *le Corsaire* and *Lara*, in which Byron “painted a somber and terrible nature; but a nature that existed; and, in painting it, he did not deviate from ancient poetry.”<sup>336</sup> Viennet admitted that this was a new quality or feature, but that it because it was one found in nature, despite its novelty, “did not therefore belong to a new genre of

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<sup>332</sup> “Société des bonnes-lettres, Séances des 19, 21 et 23 février,” *Les Annales de la littérature et des arts* 2, no. 22 (1821): 331.

<sup>333</sup> Etienne Jouy, “Classiques et romantiques,” *La Pandore*, no. 258 (29 March 1824): 2.

<sup>334</sup> See discussion above and in Chapter 5. Also see John Isbell, “Romantic Disavowals of Romanticism, 1800-1830,” in *Nonfictional Romantic Prose: Expanding Borders*, ed. Steven P. Sondrup and Virgil Nemoianu, A Comparative History of Literatures in European Languages 18 (Amsterdam; Philadelphia, PA: John Benjamins, 2004).

<sup>335</sup> Viennet, “Choix de poésie de Byron, Walter Scott, et Moore,” *La Minerve littéraire* 1: 295. “naturelles, et dans le goût des écrivains de l’ancienne école.”

<sup>336</sup> *Ibid.*, 303. “il peint une nature sombre et terrible ; mais cette nature existe ; et il ne sort pas, en la peignant, du domaine de l’ancienne poésie.”

poetry.”<sup>337</sup> By claiming ‘nature’ as a distinctly classicist characteristic, these critics could co-opt portions of romantic writing as classicist, anytime they seemed to reflect nature, and could go as far as denying the existence of romanticism as a distinct literary genre.<sup>338</sup>

But “nature” and “natural” were not precise categories. Defining classicism as natural only opens up the question of how to define natural. Restoration classicists inherited this definitional passing-the-buck, along with the foundation for their theories of literary criticism, from the *philosophes*. “Nature,” whatever that was, was at the foundation of all eighteenth century conceptions of good literature, of good taste, whereas bad taste always resulted from some sort of artifice.<sup>339</sup>

Philosophers in France became particularly concerned with taste as an aesthetic category of judgment in the eighteenth century. Classicists in the nineteenth century therefore inherited taste as central to any discussion of literary merit, and it is therefore impossible to separate a discussion of the rise of literary criticism in Restoration Paris from the issue of literary taste. But how to define taste? *L’Observateur* defined it as “an *instinct of convention* presiding over our judgments, supported by more or less certain rules that have become doctrines.”<sup>340</sup> In Abel-François Villemain’s prize-winning essay on criticism, he presented taste and critique as both founded in morality. He wrote, quoting eighteenth-century moralist and writer Luc de Clapier de Vauvenargues, that “one must have soul (*âme*) to have taste.”<sup>341</sup> And those moral qualities that Villemain believed led to a good critique would “make one’s taste more enlightened (*plus lumineux*) and more pure.”<sup>342</sup> The opposite, saying something untrue for profit or to discredit

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<sup>337</sup> Ibid. “n’appartient point pour cela à un nouveau genre de poésie.”

<sup>338</sup> These debates extended outside Paris as well. For example, in Nantes, the journal *Lycée Américain* published an article asking whether, despite the work of critics like Germaine de Stael to define two genres (romanticism and classicism), the divisions between them are as stark as the debates suggest. F.-Ch. De la Roussière, “Y’a t-il plusieurs genres dans l’art d’écrire,” *Lycée Américain* (1824): 510–5244.

<sup>339</sup> Tsien, *The Bad Taste of Others*, 63.

<sup>340</sup> M.X.V., “De la critique (2e article),” *L’Observateur, journal hebdomadaire de la littérature, des théâtres, des Arts, de la Librairie, Du Commerce & des Modes* no. 65 (26 May 1828): 18. “un *instinct de convention* qui préside à nos jugemens, appuyé sur des règles plus ou moins sûres qui sont passées en doctrines”

<sup>341</sup> Villemain, *Discours sur les avantages et les inconvénients de la critique*, 7. “Il faut avoir de l’âme pour avoir du goût.”

<sup>342</sup> Ibid. “rendra son goût plus lumineux et plus pur.”

someone out of malice, Villemain insisted, would eventually corrupt the person so they believed their own lies and their critique would further lose all good sense. This lack of sense and indifference to truth would only spread and corrupt the person further. So just as good morality and good taste reinforced one another, bad morality and bad critique made each other worse.<sup>343</sup> Social mores, therefore, could act as a barometer for taste. As *L'Observateur* suggested, a society with good mores would also have pure taste.<sup>344</sup>

The philosophes believed that taste was an innate sensibility. Some people had taste, and other did not: that is to say some people had the ability to discern a piece of art that expressed good taste, and others did not. But that innate ability needed refinement, through training in the rules of classicist literature. Because those rules could be taught and learned, so too could taste (if only to that subset of the population blessed with innate taste).<sup>345</sup> Yet, while taste required both innate ability and learning, it was also universal. As L. wrote in *la Minerve littéraire* “a work adopted by taste will always be good, whether it dates back to the time of Virgil, or comes from the home of Frederick II.”<sup>346</sup> This also meant that at times classicist critics could recognize the talent of a romantic writer, but claim that their lack of taste misled them. One review of Lemercier’s plays *Agammemnon* noted that where his first play had followed classicist rules, this one dispensed with them “as a sacrifice to the idol of the day, romanticism and the foreign,” but that “true genius made itself felt even in the most bizarre and monstrous productions.”<sup>347</sup> One review of Victor Hugo, similarly, suggested that he be encouraged to leave behind his “bad literary genre” since he “had enough talent to succeed *in the good one*,” implying that Hugo had promise, but not taste.<sup>348</sup> In another example, *le Diable boiteux* wrote that Byron’s genius could

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<sup>343</sup> Ibid.

<sup>344</sup> M.X.V., “De la critique (2e article),” *L'Observateur* no. 65: 18.

<sup>345</sup> Tsien, *The Bad Taste of Others*, 46.

<sup>346</sup> L., “La Vierge d’Arduène,” *La Minerve littéraire* 1: 445. “Un ouvrage adopté par le goût sera toujours bon, soit qu’il remonte au siècle de Virgile, soit qu’il arrive de la patrie de Frédéric II.”

<sup>347</sup> “Lettre XIII,” *Nouvelle année littéraire* 1 (1826): 163.

<sup>348</sup> X. “Nouvelles Odes, par M. Victor M. Hugo,” *L’Oriflamme* 1 (1824): 254. “A quoi bon s’égarer en cultivant un mauvais genre de littérature, lorsqu’on possède assez de talent pour réussir *dans la bonne* ?”

offer French poets a rich source of new inspiration, so long as those poets studied his work with the precautions of taste.<sup>349</sup>

Romantics were much less concerned with notions of taste, because their concept of literary criticism was one based not on rules, but on how well a piece of writing succeeded in its aesthetic aims. In the January 1824 edition of *la Muse française*, Alexandre Guiraud wrote a manifesto for the journal entitled “Nos Doctrines.” Although he paid lip service to the importance of taste, “that exquisite sentiment of the French,” Guiraud insisted that taste was timid, meticulous, and given too prominent a place in the arts.<sup>350</sup> While taste could act as a guide and should not be ignored entirely, Guiraud suggested it be treated as an accessory, so that it be applied as needed and not get in the way of truth or art.<sup>351</sup> Classicist literary journals therefore often decried romantic writing for its lack of taste, but the reverse was almost never true. Romantic critics, rather, often emphasized their love for true French classicist literature – the literature of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries – and for the literature of the ancients that was its purported inspiration. The romantics claimed to only oppose those writers who insisted on mimicking those stale forms, and with nowhere near the genius or success of the originals. In “Nos Doctrines,” Guiraud argued that Voltaire and Corneille were not to blame for the state of French literature. Rather, society was to blame for not diversifying the objects of its admiration, and therefore creating a myopic France that would not look to other nations or other forms of literature.<sup>352</sup> He contended that French literature could learn from foreign literature, because it was imbued with a verisimilitude and a relevance that French literature, which tried to imitate the writings of geniuses like Racine and Corneille who had in turn been imitating the ancients, could not achieve. This imitation of an imitation became copying, Guiraud averred, where the original was increasingly distorted and faded, like the image on a coin that had been in circulation too long, and that this resulted in the downfall of French literature.<sup>353</sup> What France needed, he insisted, was not a dead literature of copyists, but a living literature that united the real and the

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<sup>349</sup> “Lord Byron, Oeuvres inédites,” *Le Diable boiteux* no. 27 (27 January 1825): 3.

<sup>350</sup> Alexandre Guiraud, “Nos Doctrines,” *La Muse française* 2 (1824): 21.

<sup>351</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>352</sup> *Ibid.*, 5–6.

<sup>353</sup> *Ibid.*, 13.

ideal, like the kind promoted by Schiller, “because a copy, no matter how exact, cannot convey nature unless it is imbued with imagination.”<sup>354</sup>

Similarly, Junius Castelnau wrote that all the cultural and political factors of Louis XIV’s time fit perfectly with a literature that sought to imitate or revive ancient literary practices and rules, and so that is what people who wrote in that time did. But, he argued, while critics today wanted to jealously strip classicist writers of their glory, one should not conflate their talents as individual writers and the system their compositions followed, since one came from their own genius and the other was the result of the time in which they lived.<sup>355</sup> The romantic critique of classicism was at its base, therefore, a rejection of classicist universalism, and not a rejection of classicism itself. Castelnau also argued that while reason was universal, imagination and sensibility varied with society, which meant that while there was only one way “to judge well,” because there was only one truth, “to sense well” was relative because there were no rules to guide feelings. He went on to suggest the historical contingency of artistic criticism: that culture and circumstance will shape the way that a work is judged or received or perceived.<sup>356</sup> Romantic particularism therefore meant that romantic literary criticism could not look like classicist criticism. It could not hold up a universal standard of taste in order to see how closely a work adhered to it, or determine how well a play executed the three unities. It had to find new criteria with which to judge works of art and literature.

Victor Hugo’s 1827 preface to *Cromwell*, often considered his romantic manifesto, outlined one possible vision for romantic criticism. This new criticism, he argued, would judge authors not by their adherence to rules or genres, which, he contended were outside the purview of both art and nature, but rather by the immutable principles of literature and the particular laws of their own approach.<sup>357</sup> Critics were, in a feat of literary empathy reminiscent of Friedrich

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<sup>354</sup> Ibid., 15. “Car une copie, quelque exacte qu’elle soit, ne rend pas la nature, si l’imagination n’a point pénétré l’esprit.”

<sup>355</sup> Castelnau, *Essai sur la littérature romantique*, 225–26, 243.

<sup>356</sup> Ibid., 20.

<sup>357</sup> Victor Hugo, *Cromwell, drame par Victor Hugo* (Paris: Ambroise Dupont et Cie, 1828), lxi, <http://gallica.bnf.fr/ark:/12148/btv1b8626458j>.



Schlegel,<sup>358</sup> to place themselves in the author's mind and see the work through his or her eyes. In this way the criticism would be intelligent and would focus on, as Chateaubriand said, the works' beauties, instead of its defects. For, Hugo argued, those things that were called defects were so often the intrinsic results of good qualities, and so it was a critic's duty to seek out the connection between defect and beauty.<sup>359</sup> Instead of seeing the work as a whole, or as an end, this interpretation allowed the critic to view it as a process – as an attempt to perfect those defects, even if it never succeeded in doing so. This new criticism, Hugo insisted, was as erudite as classicist criticism was ignorant, and was as serious as the other was frivolous. And it was gaining traction. Hugo noted that this new critique already had its own literary journals, and that it had inspired good criticism in some of the less serious papers.<sup>360</sup> Hugo insisted that romantic criticism would protect romantic literature, and therefore French culture, from the pernicious influence of classicism. But romantic criticism would also protect romanticism from false romanticism – those popular genres commonly associated with romanticism, but that Hugo argued were concerned only with profit, and not with art.

Romantic criticism was therefore as much about policing romanticism, defining its parameters, as about debating with classicism. When Charles Nodier wrote that classicists wrongly conflated romanticism with all modern literature, he did so because he wanted to distance romanticism from modern literature that was popular and, he believed, bad. Nodier called this false romanticism "*l'école frénétique*." Where romanticism simply did away with some conventions or rules, but still showed imagination and did not offend tastes, *l'école frénétique* threw away all rules, all conventions, and produced "monstrous extravagances" and "delirium."<sup>361</sup> While changing times and the difficulties France had gone through, understandably made people want to turn to new cultural forms, Nodier argued that was no excuse for the atheism, the despair,

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<sup>358</sup> For more details on Schlegel's theories of criticism, see, for example Victor Lange, "Friedrich Schlegel's Literary Criticism," *Comparative Literature* 7, no. 4 (October 1, 1955): 294. Lange writes: "The critic illuminates the original exercise of the poet in a re-creative process on a level where, as Schlegel says, he has brought himself to an understanding of understanding."

<sup>359</sup> Hugo, *Cromwell*, lxii.

<sup>360</sup> *Ibid.*, lxi.

<sup>361</sup> Nodier, "Critique littéraire, Le Petit Pierre," *Les Annales de la littérature et des arts* 2: 82.

and the ridiculous, fantastical, and horrible scenes that this school produced.<sup>362</sup> The novel under review, *Le Petit Pierre* by Speiss, Nodier classified as *frénétique*, but we might call it gothic.

Ladvoat, known for publishing romantic literature in the restoration, produced this novel, a ghost story set in the thirteenth century and aimed at a popular audience, as well. While Nodier objected to the novel on literary and moral grounds – he considered it sacrilegious and “deplorable” – but was willing to admit that of all the “false romantics” Speiss was one of the more poetic and talented.<sup>363</sup> The anxiety that these works of popular fantastic fiction might be mistaken for romanticism seems as much a concern about their actual content as about their popularity, their commerciality, and their association with the lower classes, and their perception as popular fiction, rather than literature.

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Romantic periodicals cannot be understood in a vacuum. They were not the only, or even the most popular, journals and the ways in which the journals were received and debated contributed significantly to the meaning they created. Romanticism was shaped fundamentally by its perceived opponent classicism, just as classicism in the early-nineteenth century was defined as much by its opposition to romanticism as by its adherence to the rules of classicist literature. Literary critics debated the relative merits of both romantic and classicist literature, and in doing so helped to define each one. As these debates unfolded in the press, that medium, as well as the constraints placed on it by politics, culture, and censorship, influenced the content of those debates. But, the press, like literary movements, was a collaborative medium. Journals were owned and operated by *rédacteurs*, attached to literary societies, published by publishers, printed by printers, sold by booksellers, censored by the government, read by subscribers. Each of these faces of the literary press in the Restoration helped to define and produce romanticism. Moreover, the variety of individuals and institutions involved in the production and distribution of literary journals reminds us that they were commodities as well as ideological products. This is all the more significant, because even though romanticism would not dominate French literature until

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<sup>362</sup> Ibid., 82–83.

<sup>363</sup> Ibid., 83.

the 1830s,<sup>364</sup> an impression emerged in the 1820s, particularly among the classicist critics threatened by it, that romanticism was becoming dangerously profitable.<sup>365</sup> The next chapter explores the relationship between literary criticism and commerce, and examines the relationship between profitability and literary merit.

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<sup>364</sup> Allen, *Popular French Romanticism*, 65. James Smith Allen calculated that in 1827 16.7% of the books he sampled reflected romantic influence, while by 1834 that number reached 36.7%.

<sup>365</sup> *Ibid.*, 7.

### CHAPTER 3: THE BUSINESS OF LITERARY CRITICISM

*The advertisement is the ruse by which the dream forces itself on industry.*  
- Walter Benjamin, *Arcades Project*, p. 171.

*A ream of white paper is worth fifteen francs; blackened, it can sell for one hundred sous or one hundred francs; one hundred francs if the work succeeds, one hundred sous if it fails.*  
- Honoré de Balzac, “*Sur l’état actuel de la librairie*” (1830)

Criticism in the nineteenth century built upon the models of literary criticism from the eighteenth century, including the all-important concept of taste, but was also shaped by the professional and economic realities of periodical production. The commercialization of publishing disrupted a patronage system of literary production in favor of a marketplace, which helped lead to the rise of the publisher (*éditeur*), which in turn increased the commercialization of publishing. As Roger Chartier argues, the commercialization of literature and professionalization of writing came hand in hand with a sense of art as autonomous and disinterested. “When authors shifted from the patronage system . . . to operate in the market,” he writes, “. . . this shift was accompanied by an apparently contradictory change in the ideology of writing, henceforth defined by the urgency and absolute freedom of creative power.”<sup>366</sup> But this ideology existed simultaneously with the belief that commercialization corrupted literature. The perceived commercialization of publishing, both of journals and of books, had just as much of an impact on criticism as the reality of it. Critics worried that booksellers produced books only for profit, with no concern for their literary merit or taste, and they lamented that literary criticism could be bought and sold, especially as periodicals moved toward a fiscal model based on advertising revenue. Advertising in the press in the Restoration was limited, but it was also highly criticized as a sign of decadence. These new economics of periodical production made journals susceptible to criticism of partiality. Restoration journals relied on both subscribers and advertisements, both of which could be cast as motive for disingenuous partisan critique. These processes of commercialization did not begin in the nineteenth century, but they shaped and were shaped by the *bataille*

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<sup>366</sup> Chartier, *The Order of Books*, 37.

*romantique*. Concerns and anxieties about the commercialization of literature, and the concomitant commercialization and corruption of literary critique, entangled with concerns about the growth of romanticism – its foreign influence and bad taste – as well as with complaints about the stagnation of French letters – its tired regurgitation of tropes, its refusal to write for the new era. For literary critics in the Restoration bad literature was often literature corrupted by commerce.

### **The right kind of reading**

The idea that commercial literature was also bad literature, and that placing profit at a higher premium than literary merit led to the production and distribution of bad literature, was not new in the Restoration. Because books are commercial products, anyone concerned with what books are good and what books are bad will also be concerned with the business of publishing and the production and distribution of those books. In the eighteenth century critics complained of *bibliomanie*, where people bought books in expensive editions and to function as status symbols, instead of for their content. They believed this came about as a result of the sheer volume of books being published – there were too many books and people did not know the right books to read. Moreover, even if they did know the correct books to read, they did not have the education, and therefore the taste, to appreciate or critique them.<sup>367</sup> This kind of hand wringing over people being exposed to the wrong kinds of literature is familiar to us today. Critics often malign readers for preferring short-form articles on the Internet to books, or argue that adults should read so-called literary fiction, instead of YA or genre fiction or “chick-lit.”<sup>368</sup> Much of the popular discourse surrounding these kinds of criticisms has noted that the genres most denigrated by these critics tend to be perceived as female-dominated, both in terms of authorship and readership.<sup>369</sup> This gender dynamic is of course not new. Male anxiety over women reading has been traced back

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<sup>367</sup> Tsien, *The Bad Taste of Others*, 14–24.

<sup>368</sup> Ruth Graham’s article “Against YA,” while not the first of these, helped to spawn a series of articles on the topic. Ruth Graham, “Against YA,” *Slate*, June 5, 2014, [http://www.slate.com/articles/arts/books/2014/06/against\\_ya\\_adults\\_should\\_be\\_embarrassed\\_to\\_read\\_children\\_s\\_books.html](http://www.slate.com/articles/arts/books/2014/06/against_ya_adults_should_be_embarrassed_to_read_children_s_books.html).

<sup>369</sup> Mary Ann Badavi, “No, *The Fault in Our Stars* Is Not Young-Adult Fiction’s Savior,” *The Atlantic*, June 10, 2014, <http://www.theatlantic.com/entertainment/archive/2014/06/why-fault-in-our-stars-is-not-ya-fictions-savior/372441/>.

through the classical period, as a kind of particular subset of broader censorship concerns.<sup>370</sup> For example, in *Reading Popular Romance in Early Modern England*, Lori Humphrey Newcomb traces elite male anxiety over the proliferation of reading for pleasure among the non-elite, and how that anxiety focused on a particular disdain for popular romance, which they argued was more commercial and material than the literature of the elite.<sup>371</sup> In the early modern period women were often taught to read but not write, both because they tended to leave school earlier than boys and reading was taught first, and because writing was seen as unnecessary for women and potentially dangerous.<sup>372</sup> Historians have well documented eighteenth- and nineteenth-century complaints that reading novels would make everyone feminine and overly sentimental.<sup>373</sup> Other genres, including poetry, were considered masculine.<sup>374</sup> Opponents of romanticism too believed it could corrupt women and girls. The 1824 vaudeville *les Femmes romantiques* told the story of a Baron who worked to save his nieces from the influence of romanticism by finding them good husbands.<sup>375</sup> But these denigrated genres have also often come under fire for their popularity and perceived commerciality – both criticisms frequently leveled at so-called ‘women’s literature.’ Critics have often perceived profitability as incompatible with good literature. In 1818,

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<sup>370</sup> One recent example that gives an overview of approaches to female reading throughout history is Belinda Jack, *The Woman Reader* (Yale University Press, 2012).

<sup>371</sup> Lori Humphrey Newcomb, *Reading Popular Romance in Early Modern England* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2002), 1.

<sup>372</sup> Roger Chartier, ed., *A History of Private Life: Passions of the Renaissance* (Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1993), 112–19.

<sup>373</sup> One example: In a review of several new novels in *les Annales de la littérature et des arts*, the reviewer noted that it was strange that none of the novels discussed so far were written by women because “this genre of writing in effect belongs to the more observant sex, both by interest and by curiosity.” C. de V. “Revue de quelques romans nouveaux,” *Les Annales de la littérature et des arts* 2 (1821): 58. “...ce genre d’ouvrage appartient en effet au sexe le plus observateur par intérêt et par curiosité.”

<sup>374</sup> Jacqueline Pearson, *Women’s Reading in Britain, 1750-1835: A Dangerous Recreation* (Cambridge University Press, 1999), 196.; The journal, *la Jeune France*, criticized Madame Tastu’s *Chroniques de France*, saying that the chronical was a manly genre that requires virility, and that if she returned to her earlier kinds of work she would find better success. “Poésie,” *La Jeune France* no. 6 (5 July 1829): 44.

<sup>375</sup> Emmanuel Théaulon and Ramon de la Croisette, *Les Femmes romantiques, comédie-vaudeville en un acte*. (Paris: Pollet, 1825). This play includes an amusing typographic joke. The Baron tells his nieces and their widowed mother that he has a romantic visitor whom he only refers to as Lord Trois Étoiles, a reference to the practice of obscuring people’s identities in print with three asterixes, or stars; in this case “Lord \*\*\*.” The Baron never outright lies about the identity of the romantic, he simply lets everyone believe that he is the famous Lord they expect him to be.

the journal *l'Observateur des modes* despaired that, “now that literature has become entirely commercial, we print more than ever, and booksellers call a book good, not because it is well written but because it sells well.”<sup>376</sup> Books published because they would sell well took on the stigma associated with other ‘industrial’ products. Voltaire, for example, compared the Dutch book trade to the textile trade, something he intended as a criticism.<sup>377</sup>

Moreover, many believed that industry, and the preoccupation with industrial development and advancement had a profoundly corrupting influence on society and culture that went beyond the mere industrialization of literature. In a letter from September 1825, Stendhal, in an inversion of the sexist notion that women polluted art, attributed France’s comedic acumen to the fact that women were admitted to society, and had been for three hundred years. Men, he contended, spent at least half of their socializing hours with women, which saved them from spending their nights engaged in serious discussion of ‘interest.’ Stendhal argued that the French move toward industrialization and mechanization, and their growing English-like focus on steam, canals and railroads, threatened this comedic superiority.<sup>378</sup> At this same time, Parisian society became embroiled in a controversy over gas lamps and gas lighting.<sup>379</sup> This was in part a political controversy – le Compagnie Française de l’éclairage par le gaz, who built an enormous gas reservoir in a rich Parisian neighborhood had initially been granted permission by the liberal Décazes government, and had that permission revoked by the ultra-royalist Villèle government – but it was also a controversy about new technology and its impact on day to day life. As Jean-

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<sup>376</sup> “Les consciences d’à-présent, par un Jury de vrai libéraux,” *L’Observateur des modes* 2 (1818): 41. “Aujourd’hui que la littérature est devenue tout-à-fait commerciale, on imprime plus que jamais, et les libraires appellent un bon ouvrage, non pas celui qui est bien écrit, mais celui qui s’est bien vendu.”

<sup>377</sup> Tsien, *The Bad Taste of Others*, 32.

<sup>378</sup> Stendhal, *Courrier anglais: London magazine, Athenaeum*, ed. Henri Martineau, vol. 5 (Paris: le Divan, 1936), 191, <http://gallica.bnf.fr/ark:/12148/bpt6k6885w>.

<sup>379</sup> The gas lamp controversy extended beyond Paris, and beyond France. For example, Pope Gregory XVI, who became pope in 1831, opposed introducing gas lighting on the streets of Rome. He purportedly believed that they would encourage people to congregate at night and spread sedition. Other accounts suggest he thought gas lamps, along with the railroad, which he cleverly called “chemins d’enfer,” would promote commercialism, increase the power of the bourgeoisie, and, therefore, liberal politics. Pope Gregory XVI also argued against freedom of the press in his August 1832 encyclical *Mirari Vos*, writing that “the Church has always taken action to destroy the plague of bad books.” <http://www.papalencyclicals.net/Greg16/g16mirar.htm> (accessed 15 April 2016).

Baptiste Fressoz argues, because gas lamps were highly visible in prosperous and sociable parts of Paris in a way that other new technologies were not, because they were in arcades, theatres, on the streets, in *cabinets de lectures* and cafés, fears about the relatively safety, and concerns about bad smells or harsh light extended and grew.<sup>380</sup> And concerns about gas lighting technology, and about technological progress writ large became entangled with debates about literary and cultural progress, about the progress of *lumières*. In a pamphlet on the gas lamp controversy Charles Nodier and Amédée Pichot wrote that “the people who accuse us of hatred for *les lumières* . . . are completely convinced that the progress of human intelligence is directly proportional to the intensity of the luminous source by which we are lit (*éclairé*), such that Isocrates is to Buffon as the lamp is to the candle.”<sup>381</sup> Nodier and Pichot suggest that in the minds of the pro-gas light contingent any opposition to this technological advancement was an opposition to the advancement of the mind, a connection only made stronger by the dual meaning of the word *lumière*.

These worries about the corrupting influence of commerce and industry extended to criticism itself. Because literary criticism disseminated through print, both in books and the periodical press, it was subject to the same denunciations of commercialization as other print, and tied up with broader concerns about a growing emphasis on commerce and industry. However, because literary criticism was meant to act as a safeguard against bad literature, and as a way to direct people to the right books, its potential corruption by a desire for profits was of particular concern. Journal *rédacteurs* would therefore claim that their journal was untouched by the corrupting influence of money, just as they would claim that for the authors and literature they were trying to promote.

Concerns about commercialism and its corruption of literature suggest that literature, and therefore printing, were bound by a moral imperative to do good for society. As we have seen, literary critique, like censorship, in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries was founded on the

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<sup>380</sup> Jean-Baptiste Fressoz, “The Gas Lighting Controversy Technological Risk, Expertise, and Regulation in Nineteenth-Century Paris and London,” *Journal of Urban History* 33, no. 5 (July 1, 2007): 732, doi:10.1177/0096144207301418.

<sup>381</sup> Charles Nodier and Amédée Pichot, *Essai critique sur le gaz hydrogène et les divers modes d'éclairage artificiel* (Paris: C. Gosselin, 1823), xii, <http://gallica.bnf.fr/ark:/12148/bpt6k1082000>.



idea that there was a correct kind of reading, and an incorrect kind. And while critics and censors believed that correct literature and good reading would improve society, they also believed that reading the wrong literature would inevitably corrupt it.

## Advertising

In their theories of literary criticism, explored in the previous chapter, both Villemain and La Harpe maintained that the advance of printing, and the periodical press, contributed to the proliferation of bad critique. It is easy to believe that criticism could fail its imagined moral imperative. Criticism could certainly come from a place of partisanship, or envy, rather than a place of generous love of literature and a desire to educate. Moreover, in Restoration France literary criticism could also be financially motivated. Newspapers and journals likely contained some advertising by the late 1790s.<sup>382</sup> However, because of the way that newspaper advertising functioned in early nineteenth-century France, it was often, by design, difficult to tell whether or not a review or article had been commissioned and paid for. Historians have traditionally seen advertising as having developed 'late' in France,<sup>383</sup> and the historiography often notes that there was significantly less advertising in the French press than in the Anglo-American press.<sup>384</sup> While the latter is true, it is also not the whole story. Beginning in the 1820s and continuing throughout the nineteenth century the French press used a covert form of advertising called *réclame*.<sup>385</sup>

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<sup>382</sup> Felix Verneuil, *La quatrième page des journaux, histoire impartiale de l'annonce et de la réclame, depuis leur naissance jusqu'à ce jour* (Paris: P. Martinon, 1838), 17. Verneuil claims that *l'annonce* first appeared on the fourth page of the *Journal des débats* in 1798. Editions of the *Journal des débats et décrets* (which ran from 1798-1805 and then became the *Journal de l'empire*) do sometimes contain a short list of books for sale, where they can be purchased and their price, sometimes with a brief description and/or critique. They were usually printed at the end of the fourth page, in or just above the *feuilleton*, under the heading ANNOUNCE or ANNONCES. The first example I could find is from 4 March 1801. Whether these were paid for is unclear – in the random sample examined all the books advertised were available for sale at Le Normant, who printed the *Journal des débats*, so this may have been more of a case of cross-promotion than selling advertising space. This practice continued after 1805, and after 1814 when the paper was again renamed the *Journal des débats*.

<sup>383</sup> Marc Martin, *Trois siècles de publicité en France* (Paris: Editions Odile Jacob, 1992), 11–15.

<sup>384</sup> See for example, Paul Starr, *The Creation of the Media: Political Origins of Modern Communications* (Basic Books, 2005), 147; Jean K. Chalaby, "Journalism as an Anglo-American Invention A Comparison of the Development of French and Anglo-American Journalism, 1830s-1920s," *European Journal of Communication* 11, no. 3 (September 1, 1996): 303–26.

<sup>385</sup> Marc Martin argues that advertising in newspapers for financial gain began in France around 1825, and significantly developed beginning in 1827. Advertising was used to keep subscription costs from rising. Martin, *Trois siècles de publicité en France*, 55–60.

Individuals would pay for a positive mention in an article or editorial, as this was thought to be more interesting to read than a straightforward ad.<sup>386</sup> This practice was much more like modern product placement or sponsored content than like the kind of advertising historians typically associate with the Anglo-American periodical press in the nineteenth century. While later in the nineteenth century periodicals would run ads that could be easily distinguished from other newspaper content, Restoration newspapers and journals contained nothing that looked like the advertisements in contemporaneous American or British papers.<sup>387</sup> Even when French newspapers began including ‘English style’ ads, they did not initially employ typographical effects, except shorter lines and smaller text than the other newspaper text. These “annonces anglaises” were relegated to the fourth page; *réclame* generally appeared on page 2 or 3. *Réclame* cost twice as much as a standard advertisement, but advertisers believed in the efficacy of *réclame* and so paid that premium; *réclame* capitalized on the faith readers placed in their newspapers by disguising their publicity as news.<sup>388</sup> However, *réclame* never managed to be perfectly invisible. Particularly later in the nineteenth century, several papers would simultaneously print the same *réclame*, which allowed savvy readers to distinguish it from actual literary critique, and *réclame* did follow a number of genre conventions – it tended to be hyperbolic, repetitive, and anonymous, for example.<sup>389</sup> An 1838 article in *Le Figaro*, pointed to three distinct types of *réclame*: intolerant, multiple, and by *erratum*. Intolerant *réclame* declared that all recent books were terrible and so they were happy to announce the appearance of the only book that defied this trend of decadence. Multiple *réclame* praised everyone – the publisher, the author, and all the books they had ever produced. *Réclame* by *erratum* inserted praise into the correction of an error purposefully inserted into a previous edition. For example, “It was in error that we wrote yesterday

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<sup>386</sup> Hahn, *Scenes of Parisian Modernity*, 5–7.

<sup>387</sup> Beginning in the second half of the eighteenth century, British papers also had covert advertising, like *réclame*, called ‘puff,’ as in the character Puff in Sheridan’s 1779 play *The Critic*, who writes positive theatre reviews for pay. In Act 1 Scene ii of the play Puff describes in detail the practice of producing puff, including the various kinds of puffs that could be written – reviews, letters to the editor, anecdote, etc. Richard Brinsley Sheridan, *The Critic: Or, A Tragedy Rehearsed: A Farce* (London: J. M. Dent, 1897).

<sup>388</sup> Martin, *Trois siècles de publicité en France*, 62–63.

<sup>389</sup> Thérénty, “La réclame de librairie dans le journal quotidien au XIXe siècle: autopsie d’un objet textuel non indentifié,” 92.

that *History of Hindus* could be purchased at no. 1 rue de la Chine; it is at no. 2 of the same street that one can find this magnificent work, that the public and fashion will soon discover. There are rumors of a 37<sup>th</sup> edition.”<sup>390</sup> Felix Verneuil, in his 1838 history of French advertising, argued that *réclame* worked by convincing people they already wanted something they did not even know about, by using language like “the public has long desired a new edition of...” or “there have been complaints about the lack of a quarto edition of...”<sup>391</sup>

Single sheet *affiche* advertising had existed since the late eighteenth century, and was originally text-only, although the rise of lithography in the Restoration meant increased use of images in *affiche* advertising.<sup>392</sup> Despite this, lithography had little impact on the periodical press until the 1830s. Lithography was a new technology, and between 1817 and 1819 there were only 13 lithograph printers registered in Paris,<sup>393</sup> and few periodicals included illustrations much beyond an image in the masthead. Beginning in 1829, newspapers inserted half-page *affiche* style advertisements between their pages, initially to announce books for sale. By 1830 these inserted flyers were illustrated and advertised all manner of things – fashion, periodicals, even medicines.<sup>394</sup> The July Monarchy saw the rise of more easily recognizable advertising and the invention of the modern French word for advertising: “*publicité*,” although people continued to use

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<sup>390</sup> “Les Réclames,” *Le Figaro* 104 (26 January 1838): 4. Earlier in the article the author notes that *réclame* would sometimes be undermined by the *Feuilleton*, because the *réclame* would praise a book criticized in the *Feuilleton*. “C’est par erreur que nous avons annoncé que l’Histoire des Indous se vendait au rue de la Chine no. 1; c’est au no. 2 de la même rue que se débite cette magnifique ouvrage, que la vogue et le public ont bien su trouver. On parle d’un 37<sup>e</sup> édition.”

<sup>391</sup> Verneuil, *La quatrième page des journaux*, 35–36.

<sup>392</sup> Hahn, *Scenes of Parisian Modernity*, 17.

<sup>393</sup> Enregistrements des brevets des imprimeurs de Paris et des libraires de Paris et départements, 1816–1838, “Enregistrement des Imprimeurs lithographes,” Archives Nationales de France, F18(I)/16, documents 295–97. Lithography became increasingly common, especially under the July Monarchy. Much of the famous political caricature produced under the July Monarchy, including the works of satirist and artist Honoré Daumier, were produced as lithographs. For an examination of the culture of July Monarchy political cartoons and the illustrated press see Robert Justin Goldstein, *Censorship of Political Caricature in Nineteenth-Century France* (Kent State University Press, 1989), esp. chp. 4; David S. Kerr, *Caricature and French Political Culture, 1830–1848: Charles Philipon and the Illustrated Press* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000); Sandy Petrey, *In the Court of the Pear King: French Culture and the Rise of Realism* (Cornell University Press, 2005); Amy Wiese Forbes, *The Satiric Decade: Satire and the Rise of Republicanism in France, 1830–1840* (Rowman & Littlefield, 2010), esp. chp. 1.

<sup>394</sup> Martin, *Trois siècles de publicité en France*, 62.

“*réclame*” more frequently,<sup>395</sup> as well as “*annonce*.”<sup>396</sup> With it came a virulent debate about the morality of advertising.<sup>397</sup> Critics of advertising were more concerned with *réclame* in the press than with posters or *affiche* advertising, which had existed in France since at least the 17<sup>th</sup> century. The invisibility of the *réclame*, the fact that the high press and the popular press were potentially full of them, unnerved people. Historian H. Hazel Hahn argues that critics of advertising were upset that “the press, purporting to be an organ of transparency, was selling its opinions.”<sup>398</sup> Verneuil expressed such a concern when he called *réclame* the bastard daughter of *l’annonce* and wrote that it did more bad than other advertising because it “hid all its vice under a coat of virtue.”<sup>399</sup> He continued, “its pretty language, its saintly aspect, its protestations of loyalty, its air of decency, will seduce those who would be made wary by the coarse tone and puffed up style of *l’annonce*.”<sup>400</sup>

Advertising highlighted the commercialization of the press not only because advertisements were printed in newspapers, but also because so often the ads were for other journals or books.<sup>401</sup> *Réclame* could be used to sell anything, but was often used in the sale of books, in part because authors would at times pen their own covert advertisements.<sup>402</sup> The proliferation of print increased the commercialism of not just journals, but also books. Journalists slipped *réclame* into book reviews in both the feuilletons of newspapers, like *le Journal des débats*, and in the periodical press.

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<sup>395</sup> Hahn, *Scenes of Parisian Modernity*, 82.

<sup>396</sup> See for example, Verneuil, *La quatrième page des journaux*, 18. Verneuil argued that the July Monarchy increased both the power and frequency of advertising in newspapers and journals.

<sup>397</sup> Hahn, *Scenes of Parisian Modernity*, 82–83.

<sup>398</sup> Ibid., 84.

<sup>399</sup> Verneuil, *La quatrième page des journaux*, 18. “Cachant tous ses vices sous le manteau de la vertu.”

<sup>400</sup> Ibid. “Son beau langage, sa figure de sainte, ses protestations de loyauté, son air décent séduiront ceux que la voix rude et le style bouffi de *l’annonce* avait mise en garde.”

<sup>401</sup> Hahn, *Scenes of Parisian Modernity*, 85.

<sup>402</sup> Thérenty, “La réclame de librairie dans le journal quotidien au XIXe siècle: autopsie d’un objet textuel non identifié,” 100. Thérenty offers an overview of bookselling *réclame* in the nineteenth century, although her focus is mainly on the latter half of the century. She explores *réclame* as a literary genre. She writes that they tended to be hyperbolic and exaggerated, and argues that in the twentieth century *réclame* evolved into the press information that would be sent with a book to literary critics. This issue of *Romantisme* (no. 155, 2012/1) explores the topic of *réclame* more generally, including its applications in other industries.

The more of a business both book selling and periodical production became, the less it seemed that literary criticism could be trusted. Moreover, critics of the commercialization of print insisted that it corrupted not just criticism, but literature itself. In February 1828, the journal *l'Incorruptible*, whose stated aim was to root out both romanticism and corruption in publishing, published an article on advertising. Its author “Le chev. Robert” argued that advertising meant that journalists gave up their honor in exchange for a fortune; they supported anything that would increase their popularity, and abandoned or ignored anything that would not. It created a system whereby journalists would only discuss literature when they were paid by the authors to do so, like writers were being charged a tariff to entry.<sup>403</sup> In a follow-up article Robert insisted that “gold or the interests of a group dictate literary judgments, and immortality is bestowed upon vaudevillists and novelists, following the laws of this new taxation.”<sup>404</sup> Ignoring this reality ought to be a crime, Robert insisted, on par with treason. It seems no coincidence that Robert singled out vaudeville and novels, both genres more popular than prestigious, as the particular beneficiaries of the “treasonous” actions of journalists. Journalists, Robert wrote, were more like industrialists than men of letters. Their love for advertising was founded on a love of their own success and that of their friends. They cared nothing for truth, Robert insisted, only for money and personal profit, but their influence was such that those works they trumpeted were then successful.<sup>405</sup> Following similar logic, in 1839 Charles Sainte-Beuve wrote in *Revue des deux mondes* that advertising in general, and the *réclame* in particular, turned literature into “industrial literature,” an outcome he deplored as a “disaster.”<sup>406</sup> Sainte-Beuve was by no means the first to decry the lamentable effect of industry on literature. Literary critics in the eighteenth century often presented literature tainted by commerce as the wrong kind of literature. Rousseau, like Voltaire, compared the book trade with the textile trade, saying that the plenitude of bad books degraded

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<sup>403</sup> Le chev. Robert, “De la publicité,” *L'Incorruptible, Journal littéraire et des théâtres* 7 (3 February 1828).

<sup>404</sup> Le chev. Robert, “De la publicité,” *L'Incorruptible, Journal littéraire et des théâtres* 15 (11 February 1828): 2. “C’est l’or, ou l’intérêt d’une cotterie, qui dictent les arrêts littéraires, et l’immortalité est distribuée aux vaudevillistes et aux romanciers, suivant les lois de cette nouvelle fiscalité.”

<sup>405</sup> Ibid.

<sup>406</sup> Charles Augustin Saint-Beuve, “La littérature industrielle,” *Revue des deux mondes* 19 (1839), 675–76; Hahn, *Scenes of Parisian Modernity*, 85.

the whole trade, just as cheap cloth degraded the price of all cloth.<sup>407</sup> When books became nothing more than a commodity to be produced and sold for profit, instead of purchased for the information or literature they contained, the argument went, readers lost sight of books' true value in favor of their exchange value.

These concerns about industrial literature grew out of worries about the commercialization of literary production as well as anxieties about the expansion of readership. The less educated, the lower classes, not only could not be trusted to choose the correct literature, their purchasing power only encouraged the production of more bad literature – those vaudevilles and novels that Robert insisted journalists only promoted for their own gain. The industrialization of literature, its critics believed, democratized both the production and the consumption of literature. Eighteenth century anxieties about bibliomania, metromania, and about the overproduction of books only intensified in the face of increased industrialization, growing literacy, and growing literary markets.<sup>408</sup> In 1823, the publisher Alexandre Nicholas Pigoreau noted that while in the age of Diderot a small group of people wrote for the amusement of the idle and wealthy, in the present everyone wants to write, everyone wants to read, and writers must adapt and produce books accessible to these new audiences.<sup>409</sup> “We need popular novels,” he wrote, “... “because the people (*le peuple*) want to read novels,” as well; there should be novels for artisans, for dressmakers, for “small minds,” just as there should be editions of philosophes’ writings for others.<sup>410</sup> He wrote that those who worried that these “bad works” threatened good taste and morality should be reminded and reassured that there are also still works that “break the stamp of good taste, of true joy, or decency and delicacy.”<sup>411</sup> The growth on both the supply

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<sup>407</sup> Tsien, *The Bad Taste of Others*, 35.

<sup>408</sup> For more on those eighteenth-century anxieties see Ibid., 14–37.

<sup>409</sup> Alexandre Nicholas Pigoreau, *Cinquième supplément à la Petite bibliographie biographico-romancière, ou, Dictionnaire des romanciers: contenant le catalogue des romans qui ont paru depuis sa publication* (Paris: Pigoreau, 1823), iii–iv.

<sup>410</sup> Ibid., iv. “Il faut des romans populaires, si j’ose m’exprimer ainsi, puisque le peuple veut lire des romans: il en faut pour l’artisan dans sa boutique, pour la petite couturière dans son humble mansarde, pour la ravaudeuse dans son tonneau; il en faut pour les petits esprits, comme il faut des éditions de nos philosophes pour la petite propriété.”

<sup>411</sup> Ibid., v. “Si l’on est effrayé avec raison du débordement de ces mauvaises ouvrages qui menacent d’engloutir le bon sens et la moralité, on doit se rassurer, en considérant que l’on en

and demand side for books allowed for a greater diversity of reading material. Or as Stendhal put it, while all women read novels, they did not all have the same level of education, so booksellers distinguished between novels for “bedroom women” (*femmes de chambre*) and salon novels (*roman de salon*). Stendhal noted that these novels varied not just by their content, but also by their authors, format, price, and publisher, suggesting, as Anthony Glinoe has argued, that “it is the literary field as a whole that must adapt to the new reality.”<sup>412</sup>

Literary journals contributed to the commercialization, popularization, and perceived decadence of literature, not only because they were themselves commercial products, but also through their advertisements for books. All book reviews in Restoration periodicals were fundamentally promotional; they publicized the books they reviewed to their readers, even if no one paid for them to do so. Reviews always included information about where the books being reviewed were sold and usually also their price. Periodicals would also sometimes include brief notices announcing the publication of books without any critique of their content, which functioned as advertising regardless of whether or not they were paid for. In daily papers these tended to appear on the fourth page amidst other random announcements and brief editorial commentary.

Advertising and the push toward profitability through increased subscriptions were both potentially in tension with literary journals’ moral imperative regarding criticism. The amount of literary criticism in the newspaper press decreased somewhat in the July Monarchy, as the serialized novel began to take up increasing space in the *feuilleton* section of newspapers.<sup>413</sup> In French these were called *romans-feuilleton*. This move to serialized novels was closely tied to the phenomenon of increased reliance on advertising revenue for periodicals. As Alfred Nettement explained it in his 1854 *Histoire de la littérature française sous le Gouvernement de Juillet*, in 1836 Emile de Girardin and Armand Dutacq, founders of *la Presse* and *le Siècle*, respectively,

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voit encore un certain nombre de marqués au coin du bon goût, de la véritable gaîté, de la décence et de la délicatesse.”

<sup>412</sup> Anthony Glinoe, “Classes de textes et littérature industrielle dans la première moitié du xix<sup>e</sup> siècle,” *COnTEXTES. Revue de sociologie de la littérature*, Varia, May 26, 2009, <https://contextes.revues.org/4325> (accessed 16 June 2016). “C’est le champ littéraire dans son ensemble qui doit s’adapter à la nouvelle donne.”

<sup>413</sup> Walter Benjamin, *The Arcades Project* (Cambridge, Mass.: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2002), 762–63.

decided to drastically reduce the subscription price of their papers and to make up the difference with paid advertisements.<sup>414</sup> But, *Nettement* continued, to get enough advertisements to pay for the paper they had to have sufficient subscribers so the advertisers would be willing to pay for space on the fourth page of their papers. To encourage enough subscribers they needed to attract readers of all stripes, regardless of political partisanship, and so, *Nettement* concludes, the *roman-feuilleton* was born.<sup>415</sup> *Nettement* argues then that the rise of advertising reduced both the amount of literary criticism and the amount of political partisanship in newspapers. This move toward an advertising rather than subscription funded system further commercialized the literary press. And the development and proliferation of the serialized novel further tied periodicals to the increased commercialization of books.<sup>416</sup>

### ***The Éditeur***

Along with advertising, the early nineteenth century saw an increase in the commercialization of print more broadly. One important development of commercial literature in the nineteenth was the rise of the *éditeur* (publisher). An *éditeur*, in the nineteenth century, was a bookseller who published books at his or her own expense.<sup>417</sup> The *éditeur* was not exactly like a modern publisher, because he or she operated as both publisher and printer-bookseller, and focused on the acquisition and sale of books. These *éditeurs* opposed the regulation of printing and argued that print should be treated like any other industry, and so called for freedom of the press. Their protectionist opponents, who were often traditional printer-booksellers, believed print was a special commodity and so required regulation.<sup>418</sup> As Pascal Durand and Anthony Glinoe argue, it is not as though printer-booksellers in the eighteenth century did not also acquire and sell books. They did, but they were not called *éditeurs*. They suggest that the rise of “*éditeur*” as a term indicates a growing differentiation between printers, booksellers and publishers, and a

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<sup>414</sup> Alfred Nettement, *Histoire de la littérature française sous le gouvernement de juillet*, vol. 1 (Paris: J. Lecoffre, 1854), 301, <http://gallica.bnf.fr/ark:/12148/bpt6k4978c>.

<sup>415</sup> *Ibid.*, 1:302.

<sup>416</sup> For more on serialized literature in the July Monarchy and throughout the nineteenth century, see Lise Queffelec, *Le roman-feuilleton français au XIXe siècle* (Paris: Presses universitaires de France, 1989).

<sup>417</sup> Haynes, *Lost Illusions*, 16–17.

<sup>418</sup> *Ibid.*, 1–3.



decrease in their overlap. *Éditeur* was not just a new word for printer-bookseller, but instead marked a real change in the book trade. They compare it to the rise of the term *auteur* over *homme de lettres*, which occurred concurrently with the rise of *éditeur*. There is clear overlap between an author and a man of letters, but they are also decidedly not the same.<sup>419</sup>

Historians have often attributed the rise of the *éditeur* to changes in printing technologies and commercial practices. Historians have especially connected the *éditeur* with the increased production of illustrated books – a phenomenon that not only required the technological advances of the nineteenth century that made illustrated volumes more economical, particularly lithography, but also an entrepreneur interested in bringing together writers, illustrators, and different kinds of printers to produce a single product.<sup>420</sup> And of course, the *éditeur* did emerge at a time when new technologies and new practices all contributed to an increased commercialization of print and the book trade, including increased literacy, lithography, stereotypography, systems of credit, advances in papermaking and mechanical printing. But, as Christine Haynes argues, it would be a mistake to see the *éditeur* as the result of commercial practices that he was actively pursuing and developing. The *éditeur* was therefore a cause of commercialization in print, rather than the result of it. She notes that *éditeurs*' importance in the 1810s and 1820s, before printing was fully industrialized and before France could be fully called a 'consumer' society, suggests their role in promoting both those processes.<sup>421</sup>

As with advertising, and other evidence of the commercialization of literature, the rise of the publisher met significant protest. In March 1830 Honoré de Balzac wrote "Sur l'état actuel de la librairie" in his new journal *Le Feuilleton des journaux politiques*, a weekly he founded with Emile de Girardin to promote a new company that sold discounted books.<sup>422</sup> In it he said that bookselling was one of the most decried professions, whereas at the invention of printing it had

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<sup>419</sup> Durand and Glinoer, *Naissance de l'éditeur*, 22.

<sup>420</sup> Haynes, *Lost Illusions*, 24–25.

<sup>421</sup> *Ibid.*, 25.

<sup>422</sup> Bruce Tolley, "Balzac and the 'Feuilleton Des Journaux Politiques,'" *The Modern Language Review* 57, no. 4 (October 1962): 504.

been highly respected.<sup>423</sup> In Balzac's version of events, the rise of the *éditeur* played a significant role in the decline of the prestige of bookselling. Balzac contended that the increased consumption of books, which he attributed to both educational and technological developments, multiplied the importance of commerce for bookselling by ten. Where in the past, Balzac lamented, authors would live by patronage, they now lived by sales.<sup>424</sup> It used to be that printers and booksellers were one and the same, but now, Balzac wrote, booksellers paid printers the way a baker pays the mill.<sup>425</sup> This new distinction between bookseller and printer, Balzac contended, was made even worse by the divisions among booksellers. The first kind of booksellers – the *libraire-éditeur* produced books and sold them to the second kind the *libraire-commissionnaire*, and the third kind of bookseller sold books to the public. Balzac argued that this divided-labor system where the printer, publisher, distributor and seller were four different people only meant that the public had to pay four times the mark-up.<sup>426</sup> This proliferation of intermediaries, Balzac insisted, had to be reversed in order to fix the book trade (*librairie*). But, in Balzac's estimation the printing and book trade suffered from moral failures and not just structural ones. He summed up the printing trade: "a ream of white paper is worth fifteen francs; blackened, it can sell for one hundred sous or one hundred francs; one hundred francs if the work succeeds, one hundred sous if it fails."<sup>427</sup> This drive toward profits and success over all else, Balzac insisted, was the cause of publishing's downfall. Booksellers, he contended, now believed they need not read the manuscripts they buy, that books only need a good title in order to sell, that they should conceive of and commission books, and that they know the public's needs.<sup>428</sup> Balzac clearly believed that its connection with commerce, marked by the proliferation of personages involved in print, including the *éditeur*, was corrupting the book trade. (Balzac's own involvement in both bookselling and journal production might then be read as an attempt to take control of his own

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<sup>423</sup> Honoré de Balzac, *Critique Littéraire* (Paris: Albert Messein, 1912), 27, <http://hdl.handle.net/2027/uc1.b4648791>.

<sup>424</sup> *Ibid.*, 28–29.

<sup>425</sup> *Ibid.*, 31.

<sup>426</sup> *Ibid.*, 34.

<sup>427</sup> *Ibid.*, 31–32. "Une rame de papier blanc vaut 15 francs, noircie, elle se vend 100 sous ou 100 francs ; 100 francs si l'ouvrage réussit, 100 sous s'il tombe."

<sup>428</sup> *Ibid.*, 30.

writing and protect it from the influence of the print industry.) Moreover, while Balzac presents this commercialization of print as a moral failing of the industry, it was actually the direct result of legislation: the 1810 press law limited the number of printing licenses given in Paris, but not the number of bookselling licenses, so the majority of booksellers were going to have to rely on outside printers.

“Les éditeurs,” an article in the July 1835 edition of *Revue de Paris*, written by Frédéric Soulié, signed S., like Balzac, distinguished between a *libraire-commissionnaire* and a *libraire-éditeur*. According to Soulié, a *libraire-commissionnaire* purchased books on speculation and sold them on credit, and sold good books in high-quality printings. The *libraire-commissionnaires*, Soulié argued, were much more common in years past, before the book trade had reached its current state of torpor. Soulié criticized *éditeurs* for their emphasis on their own profits and their lack of taste, but specified that this was an issue with what he called *l’éditeur littéraire* and not with *l’éditeur classique*. *L’éditeur-classique*, Soulié wrote, published dead writers, lived in the Faubourg Saint-Germain, and married well. Soulié further subdivided *classique* into *classique noble*, and below this *classique vulgaire*, and even further below *classique bourgeois*, and noted that there were very few *éditeurs classiques* in Paris.<sup>429</sup> *L’éditeur littéraire*, itself a subdivision of *éditeurs* of new books and living authors, which would also include publishers of scientific, medical, legal or historical texts, was the real subject of the article. *L’éditeur littéraire*, Soulié wrote, would buy a 150 000 franc castle and then tell one of his *hommes de lettres* that he cannot afford to give him the 500 francs he needs to live. The most remarkable fact about the *éditeur littéraire*, S. claimed, was that he does not read, not even part of any of the books he publishes.<sup>430</sup> Moreover, S. wrote, the *éditeur littéraire* pays his authors in favors and gifts instead of money, uses all tricks available to him to sell books, and squeeze everything he possible can from the author: “advertising, *la réclame*, prospectuses, fly, run, resound,” and a publisher turns one work into many “published in collections, in series, in large and small format, with or without engravings, deluxe editions, standard editions, paperback editions, abridged editions,” and turns

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<sup>429</sup> S., “Les éditeurs,” *Revue de Paris* 19 (July 1835), 131.

<sup>430</sup> *Ibid.*, 132.

his author into the genius of the era, but all for the publisher's own profit.<sup>431</sup> The publisher takes the property of the *homme de lettre* and renders it "used, sucked dry, depleted, and so he thrives (*engraisser* – grows fat) in mild idleness, while the writer still diminishes (*maigrir* – grows thinner) at work."<sup>432</sup> Soulié argued that the publisher's role serves to cheapen the value of literature, and then the actual price, such that: "You can find all the spry and picturesque literature of the era you could want for 5 sous, and with more left over. The high and strong literature of the school [classicism] you will not see; those works have been put on the scrap heap: we could not even sell them for paper."<sup>433</sup>

Soulié associated the rise of the editor with romantic literature. As romanticism grew in prominence and popularity, France also saw the rise of the *éditeur*, increased newspaper advertising, and other indicators of increasing commercialization of print. Even though we know romanticism would not be the dominant literary form until the 1830s,<sup>434</sup> there was an impression – particularly among classicist critics – that it was taking over. In 1825, the journal *L'Oriflamme* in a two-part series on romanticism lamented that only a few souls, still possessing sense and reason, continued to recognize the perfection of French letters. The articles complained that romantic literature was invading and taking over French classicism.<sup>435</sup> They, like other classicists, argued that romanticism's lack of classicist-style literary rules – its very vagueness – made it particularly dangerous. Because romanticism "wanders . . . in the depths of chaos" it was indefinable and

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<sup>431</sup> Ibid., 135. "L'annonce, la réclame, le prospectus, volent, courent, retentissent..."; "...publié en collections, en livraisons, grand et petit format, avec ou sans gravures, édition de luxe, édition populaire, édition de poche, édition compacte..."

<sup>432</sup> Ibid. "...rend à l'homme de lettres sa propriété usée, sucée, épuisée, puis il va s'engraisser dans une douce oisiveté, tandis que l'écrivain maigrir encore au travail."

<sup>433</sup> Ibid. "Vous y avez passé tous, littérature fringante et pittoresque de l'époque, à 5 sous tant qu'on en veut, et il en rest encore. Littérature haute et forte de l'école, vous n'y êtes point passés; vos oeuvres ont été mises au pilon: on ne pouvait pas même vendre le papier."

<sup>434</sup> Allen, *Popular French Romanticism*, 65. James Smith Allen calculated that in 1827 16.7% of the books he sampled reflected romantic influence, while by 1834 that number reached 36.7%. Smith Allen takes a different methodological approach to defining works as 'romantic' than I do – he looks for a defined set of romantic characteristics in literature – but the numbers he offers suggest a trend

<sup>435</sup> "Le Romantisme (premier article)," *L'Oriflamme, Journal de littérature, De sciences et arts, d'histoire, et de doctrines Religieuses et Monarchiques. Par J. B. Salgues et plusieurs hommes de lettres* 3 (1825): 353.

therefore were it to enter all of literature, all literature would be embroiled and lost.<sup>436</sup>

Romanticism, *l'Oriflamme* insisted, appealed to the base and the vulgar – the common worker. It flattered their pride, and so made its way all the way to the boutiques and the shops and therefore presumably to financial success and into the hands of more readers.<sup>437</sup> The imagined commercial success of romanticism, the fear that a foreign style of literature was taking over French letters only strengthened, and was strengthened by, classicist anxieties about the commercialization of literature in general.

Romanticism, as James Smith Allen has thoroughly demonstrated, was becoming increasingly profitable by the mid-1820s.<sup>438</sup> Moreover, romantic literature was highly associated with the rise of the *éditeur* in the person of Pierre-François (Charles) Ladvocat, and later Eugène Renduel. Ladvocat, a *libraire-éditeur* in the galerie des bois at the Palais Royal was the romantic publisher of the Restoration. He began his career publishing small pamphlets of poetry, to great success, and his first major book was *Messéniennes* by Casimir Delavigne, the most successful playwright of the Restoration. Ladvocat later published Hugo's poems, translations of Byron, Shakespeare and Schiller, and works of all the young romantics, including Alfred de Vigny and Sainte-Beuve. He was known for his excellent skills at publicity and *réclame*, his good relationships with journals and the success he brought his authors. Many of the authors he published went on to become members of the Academies, government ministers, and other high profile members of society. Edouard Thierry, *rédacteur* of the *Moniteur universel*, once noted that at a time when the fourth page of a newspaper was not yet relegated entirely to advertisements, Ladvocat successfully used *réclame* because he had "at his disposition all the best writers of the press."<sup>439</sup> Ladvocat was immortalized in at least two Restoration plays, as inspiration for the character of Satiné in *l'Imprimeur sans caractère*, and that of Fortuné in *Roman à vendre*, who is

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<sup>436</sup> "Le Romantisme (deuxième article)," *L'Oriflamme, Journal de littérature, De sciences et arts, d'histoire, et de doctrines Religieuses et Monarchiques*. Par J. B. Salgues et plusieurs hommes de lettres 3 (1825): 402. "erre . . . dans la nuit du chaos"

<sup>437</sup> Ibid., 401.

<sup>438</sup> Allen, *Popular French Romanticism*, 7.

<sup>439</sup> Ferdinand Hoefer, ed., *Nouvelle biographie générale : depuis les temps les plus reculés jusqu'à nos jours*, vol. 28 (Paris: Firmin-Didot frères, 1854), 650, <http://gallica.bnf.fr/ark:/12148/bpt6k63110438>.

presented as both highly successful and well-connected.<sup>440</sup> Balzac used Ladvocat as the basis for the character Dauriat in Balzac *Illusions Perdues*.<sup>441</sup> In the obituary he wrote for the *Journal des débats*, Jules Janin argued that the young writers of his generation owed their success to Ladvocat, who gave voice to a group of people who were not otherwise being heard.<sup>442</sup> Another Restoration-era *éditeur*, Edmond Werdet, who was an early publisher of Honoré de Balzac, wrote in 1859 that Ladvocat was a modern bookseller who worked tirelessly to promote new literature, while others, like Jean-Jacques Lefèvre, found success by printing books that were already popular.<sup>443</sup> Ladvocat worked tirelessly to produce a new literary culture, while Lefèvre worked tirelessly to produce excellent printed editions of writers like Rousseau and Voltaire. Werdet contended that Ladvocat imbued bookselling, and indeed literature, with a new life and verve. Ladvocat, Werdet remembered, was the most daring publisher of the 'new literature,' and "as intelligent as he was bold."<sup>444</sup> Ladvocat demonstrated boldness not only in his support for the new literature, but also in his business practices. He and Lefèvre worked with different corpuses of literature, and they also approached their professions very differently. If we take the success of romanticism in general and the authors Ladvocat published specifically as evidence, then it would seem that the new tactics of the *éditeur* were successful, although Ladvocat himself ended his career in bankruptcy. Thus, while by the 1820s romanticism had not pervaded to the extent that *l'Oriflamme* and others worried it had, classicists' fears of its success, and of its association with new forms of literary publicity and production were not completely unfounded.

Romanticism's success would only continue, and would continue to be encouraged and promoted by the new *éditeurs*. Ladvocat was at his most influential under the Restoration. He

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<sup>440</sup> Ibid.

<sup>441</sup> Allen, *Popular French Romanticism*, 102. *Illusions Perdues* is generally considered to be the first representation of modern French publishing in literature

<sup>442</sup> Jules Janin, "Nécrologie – le libraire Ladvocat," *Journal des débats politiques et littéraires* (11 September 1854): 2.

<sup>443</sup> Edmond Werdet, *De la librairie française: son passé, son présent, son avenir, avec des notices biographiques sur les libraires-éditeurs les plus distingués depuis 1789* (Paris: Dentu, 1860), 97–98, 239–40. Jean-Jacques Lefèvre (1779-1858) was a printer-bookseller who apprenticed under his father, who was a typographer for Henri Didot. His first print operation failed after the fall of Napoleon, as he had just finished a large run of the *Code de l'empire français* with commentary. He began again in 1815 with a business that printed French classics, with notes and commentary.

<sup>444</sup> Ibid., 96.

apparently joked to Jules Janin that King Louis-Philippe had ruined him, because all his authors became government officials. Guizot was secretary of state, Abel Rémusat became minister of the interior, Sainte-Allaire was ambassador to Austria, and Villemain and Victor Cousin were members of the House of Peers. Janin noted that although the works of Chateaubriand alone should have constituted a fortune for the bookseller, he was never particularly wealthy, and that the *Livre du Cent-et-Un*, which began publication in 1831, was a sort of last gasp for Ladvocat.<sup>445</sup> When Ladvocat's business began to decline, Eugène Renduel, who opened his business on Rue des Grands-Augustins in 1828, took up much of the romantic publishing in Paris. After 1830 romantic writers flocked to Renduel's bookstore, which served, as Ladvocat's had before his, as an important social meeting space for authors as well as a commercial center for romantic literature.<sup>446</sup> Renduel had the advantage of working with writers whose careers had already been established by the work of Restoration *éditeurs* like Ladvocat, and he apparently had a talent for convincing writers to leave their current publishers for him.<sup>447</sup> It is said that Renduel encourage Heinrich Heine to write *De la France* in 1833.<sup>448</sup> Renduel, like Ladvocat, was known for his skills as a businessman as much as he was known for his support of romanticism. In 1835, for example, Renduel published Lammenais' *Paroles d'un croyant*, which at 35 000 copies was the best-selling book of the first half of the nineteenth century.<sup>449</sup> Renduel and other editors negotiated prices with their authors, each bargaining for his own self-interest, which was a departure from the "traditional paternalism of the bookseller."<sup>450</sup> Works by well-known romantic authors became increasingly expensive around 1830 as competition between *éditeurs* to buy manuscripts that would sell well increased. In 1831 Renduel paid Victor Hugo 2000 francs for the rights to print 1100 copies of *Marion Delorme*, and paid more and more for each subsequent book, until he declined to pay Hugo's asking price of 10 000 francs for *Ruy Blas* in 1837. Historian James Smith Allen attributes much of Renduel's own short-lived success (he retired in 1840) to

<sup>445</sup> Jules Janin, "Nécrologie – le libraire Ladvocat," *Journal des débats*, 3.

<sup>446</sup> Adolphe Jullien, *Le romantisme et l'éditeur Renduel: souvenirs et documents sur les écrivains de l'école romantique* (E. Fasquelle, 1897), 19.

<sup>447</sup> *Ibid.*, 16.

<sup>448</sup> *Ibid.*, 24.

<sup>449</sup> Allen, *Popular French Romanticism*, 121.

<sup>450</sup> *Ibid.*, 111.

his focused devotion to the promotion of romanticism,<sup>451</sup> and, as noted above, he did have the advantage of getting into romantic publishing when French romanticism was already popular. But one should not discount the impact that this new commercially-driven type of publishing had on the increasing popularity of romantic literature. Certainly those who published with him owed some of their success to his efforts as *éditeur*, as well as to the efforts of the romantic *éditeurs* who came before him. Certainly, in *Illusions Perdues*, Dauriat professes to be the source of his authors' success, in part because of his connections in the periodical press and ability to secure friendly reviews. And, when Werdet wrote in praise of Ladvocat in his history of the French book trade, he did so because he said romantic writers owed Ladvocat a debt of gratitude for taking commercial risks in order to ensure their literary success. He added that, like many talented people, Ladvocat was not as appreciated in his lifetime as he should have been.<sup>452</sup>

### Romanticism

One of the Restoration plays that immortalized Ladvocat, *Roman à vendre, ou les deux libraires* (*Novel for sale, or the two booksellers*), first played at the Théâtre de l'Odéon on 10 February 1825. Written by M. Bayard, the play promoted the conceit that romanticism was more 'commercial' than classicism, and it consistently emphasized that romanticism, in particular, was profitable. While the play does not mention *éditeurs* specifically, many of their novel commercial tactics, like *réclame*, feature heavily in the play. Referred to in *Année théâtrale* for 1825 as a "*demi-succès*,"<sup>453</sup> and as a success in the *Almanach des spectacles* for 1826,<sup>454</sup> the play ran for several performances over the next months. The *Almanach des spectacles* suggested that the prettiness of its verses made up for the problems with the play's subject, which they described as "nothing but literature and the sale of a novel."<sup>455</sup> The review in *le Globe*, meanwhile, noted that the play, in its desire to exist and find success, forgot to have a plot.<sup>456</sup>

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<sup>451</sup> Ibid., 121.

<sup>452</sup> Werdet, *De la librairie française*, 97.

<sup>453</sup> *Année théâtrale de 1825* (Paris: G. Brunet, 1825), n.p.

<sup>454</sup> *Almanach des spectacles* (Paris: Barba, 1826): 124.

<sup>455</sup> *Almanach des spectacles* (Paris: Barba, 1826): 124.

<sup>456</sup> C.M. "Théâtre de l'Odéon: Roman à vendre, ou les deux libraires," *Le Globe, journal philosophique et littéraire* 1 (15 September 1824 – 1 May 1825): 350.



The play consistently pits popularity or style, and therefore commercial success, against taste, which entailed pitting romanticism against classicism. Derville tells Durand that popularity, what is in style (i.e. romanticism), matters more than good taste when one wants to publish something.<sup>457</sup> The classicist Bertrand refuses to sell romantic or foreign literature; instead, he says, he will “return to the French, above all the good French”<sup>458</sup> to encourage the vogue of good taste. Gélon, on the other hand, insists that Bertrand will have to wait a long time for taste and popularity to align, commenting that “taste is nothing in these affairs, /And it is not by that that our bookshops shine.”<sup>459</sup> Bertrand is only convinced after his encounter with an actress friend of Derville’s who pretends to be a noble woman interested in romantic and foreign literature. Even then, he remarks that it is strange to buy a book for ten thousand francs, when the *Le Cid* sold for only five hundred. The romantic bookseller Fortuné replies that people now write for profit, and that one could no longer find writers like Corneille for cheap, as you could then.<sup>460</sup>

*Roman à vendre* presents a segmented but integrated print culture – where authors, booksellers and journalists each do their own work in order to produce literature that is not only available, but also desired by the public. The play also suggests that the public’s desires could significantly influence the literature being sold, even if those desires were themselves influenced by the literature available and its coverage in the press. Derville often remarks how authors, booksellers, and journalists work together to ensure the success of a novel. At one point Fortuné declares he is going to say that he purchased Durand’s novel for 10 000 francs, when he actually offered him half that. Derville explains that the journalists will find out, they will publish it as fact and people will think the novel is good because it was so expensive. “To double the price, is to double the merit,” he explains.<sup>461</sup>

Near the end of the play, Fortuné and Gélon debate whether it is booksellers or journalists who are worse for the state of literature. Gélon says that in Paris there are many

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<sup>457</sup> Jean-François-Alfred Bayard, *Roman à vendre, ou, Les deux libraires comédie en trois actes et en vers* (Paris: Barba; Brière, 1825), 16.

<sup>458</sup> Ibid., 85.

<sup>459</sup> Ibid., 60.

<sup>460</sup> Ibid., 95.

<sup>461</sup> Ibid., 79.

booksellers who profit from the sale of literature that is in bad taste. Gélon says he pities the authors who are unknowingly complicit in this peddling of bad taste, as well as the victims of it. The bookseller advertises the authors' work as being of higher quality than it is, and then these young authors, enticed by their brief success sell works that are drafts or not polished, and their names become known for their bad work. Fortuné counters that there are journalists who make a living out of slander, who produce scorn because they can produce nothing of value, who insult both good taste and morality, and who champion bad writing for four francs a page.<sup>462</sup> While they each admit that there are booksellers and journalists who are above reproach, they both clearly harbor disdain for the other's profession (although within the context of the play they are romantic rivals, which is the subtext of their dispute). Neither the bookseller nor the journalist is innocent in the proliferation of bad books.

The commercialization of publishing in the early nineteenth century produced significant anxiety about the state of literature and literary criticism. Even the portrayal of *réclame* in this play met with harsh criticism. When Derville pays Gélon for a good review of Durand's book in the play, he depicts it as a common practice, which it certainly was, even if some critics in the periodical press took exception to Gélon's characterization. Derville, when explaining to his friend Durand how he will help sell his novel, notes that "Every day newspapers are trained ... or paid / from modest authors to make new acclaim."<sup>463</sup> Journalists decried the portrayal of the booksellers and complained that the censors had been overly lenient with respect to the play. In the review of the first performance, *le Diable Boiteux* quipped that the journal that advertised the book probably had no subscribers,<sup>464</sup> suggesting that an unscrupulous critic like Gélon could not have written for a well-received or popular journal, and that the sale of *réclame* was not just shameful, but bad business. The play garnered enough negative press that Bayard, in the preface to the printed version of the play, claimed that journalists disliked the play because their *amour-propre* was

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<sup>462</sup> Ibid., 61.

<sup>463</sup> Ibid., 16–17. "Chaque jour entraînés... ou payés, les journaux/Font du modeste auteur des éloges nouveaux."

<sup>464</sup> "Première représentation de *Roman à vendre*," *Le Diable boiteux* 42 (11 February 1825): 2.

bruised by his depiction of the journalist Gélon. Their outrage served as a pretext to hide their true interested stake, Bayard insisted.<sup>465</sup>

Despite its critical take on both romantic and commercial literature, the play actually ends with a justification of romanticism. Rosine, the actress pretending to be a noble woman, presents a number of arguments in favor of both romantic writing in general and historical fiction in particular, and while Bertrand listens to her because she is noble and so represents a class of people he is eager to have as his subscribers, her actual arguments are significant. She argues that anyone with a soul would prefer the romantics over the writers of old, that romantics scorn taste for being pedantic, and that although in the past writers preferred pleasant things, writers now prefer the more melancholic. And historical fiction, she argues, introduces us to unknown lands. She speaks of a poet named Belrose,<sup>466</sup> whom she calls the god of the romantics, and says that his poems are full of taste and clarity.<sup>467</sup> Rosine's pronouncements on the romantic present a romanticism that is new and fresh, that is young and popular, and that teaches the reader something he or she would not know otherwise. Many of her descriptions are exaggerated or silly for the sake of comedy, but are suggestive of contemporary popular understandings of romanticism. She says, for example, that romantics speak lovingly of tombs and, as they are always dying, are so much the better for it, and when she asks Derville if he is a romantic, he replies, "Yes, when I am ill." But while she jokes, Rosine presents a highly expansive definition of romanticism. By her definition anyone writing about the sad or the macabre could be a romantic. Rosine emphasizes the commercial benefits of romanticism's popularity, and contends that "there is no salvation outside the popular genre."<sup>468</sup> She says that early eighteenth-century playwright Alain-René Lesage is "too pleasant for us" and only wrote of "ordinary people" and so is hardly read, but that with the novel for sale and her contacts, Bertrand will now have the opportunity to publish all these young popular romantics.

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<sup>465</sup> Bayard, *Roman à vendre*, ii–iii.

<sup>466</sup> This might be a reference to the character Belrose in Casimir Delavigne's 1820 play *Les Comédiens*.

<sup>467</sup> Bayard, *Roman à vendre*, 90.

<sup>468</sup> Ibid. "Hors du genre à la mode il n'est point de salut."

That it takes a noble woman, albeit a pretend one, to convince Bertrand of the merits of the novel, and therefore the merits of romanticism, is telling. Bertrand, because he is both older and a classicist, represents an *ancien régime* approach to literature. Rosine commands authority in Bertrand's estimation because of her social position, and so shows how he holds to old hierarchies. But she also represents wealth, and connections to other wealthy people, so Bertrand's acquiescence in the face of her arguments was as much about profits as it was about the authority of nobility. Bertrand says that Rosine's pronouncements seem reasonable because her rich noble friends will buy from him, and that he can capitalize on the success of young (i.e. romantic) authors.<sup>469</sup>

Anxieties about the commercialization of literature intermixed with classicist anxieties about romanticism. If commercial literature ignored taste and merit in favor of profit, then, these classicists reasoned, romanticism, which would never succeed on its own merits, might become, or perhaps was already becoming, the dominant literary form. Louis-Simon Auger in a speech at the Société des bonnes-lettres on 30 May 1822 asked the young writers of France if they wanted to achieve glory and make money by the same means as the romantics. If they did, he suggested they pen unnatural histories, false characters, badly-written invectives against respected men, and raise the passions of the vain and ignorant masses. Doing so, he insisted, might mean their elevation among romantics, but would mean their downfall in the estimation of "honest and rational men."<sup>470</sup> He continued: "You will make noise, but that noise will be a scandal. You will win gold; but you will lose honor. Your works will have back-to-back editions with high print runs; but, made for the moment, they will have short lifespans, and soon nothing will be left of their existence but a depressing or ridiculous memory."<sup>471</sup> Auger argued that true and lasting literary glory, and not just temporary financial success, required adherence to the sound doctrines of classicism. Two years later, when he denounced romanticism at the annual meeting of the Institut

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<sup>469</sup> Ibid., 91.

<sup>470</sup> Louis-Simon Auger, *Discours prononcé par M. Auger, de l'Académie française, le 30 mai, pour la clôture des séances de la Société des bonnes-lettres* (N.p.: n.p., n.d.), 18.

<sup>471</sup> Ibid. "Vous ferez du bruit ; mais ce bruit sera du scandale. Vous gagnerez de l'or ; mais vous perdrez l'honneur. Vos ouvrages auront coup sur coup nombre d'éditions, nombre de représentations ; mais, faits pour un moment, ils ne vivront que le temps de sa durée, et bientôt il ne restera de leur existence, qu'un souvenir affligeant ou ridicule."

de France, Auger continued his accusations that romanticism pandered to the masses and was therefore commercial and without longevity. He insisted that it was designed for amusement and not instruction, and that it seduced young writers with flattery, and preyed on their desire for celebrity with false promises of triumph and success.<sup>472</sup> Auger saw romanticism as a temporary fad whose purported success distracted young writers from applying their talents where they should - in the sound principles of classicism.

But classicists were not the only ones wary of the consequences of romanticism's newfound popularity. In the infamous preface to his 1827 play *Cromwell*, Victor Hugo insisted that only new and good criticism could deliver France from not only dead-letter classicism but also false romanticism. This false romanticism pretended toward romanticism and took up its trappings without knowing how to properly execute them. He called it romanticism's shadow, its copy, its parasite, which "picks up its crumbs" and by trying and failing to do those things that even true romantics find difficult, made 'real' romanticism look bad.<sup>473</sup> Here Hugo sounded much like Rousseau saying that just as bad cloth lowers the price of all cloth, bad books tarnish the names of all books. In this preface, which has long been considered Hugo's romantic manifesto, Hugo advanced a particular vision of romanticism, which excluded those less erudite works that, he claimed, people wrote to jump on the romanticism bandwagon, presumably for profit. Hugo insisted that only good literary criticism, by which he meant romantic criticism free from classicist rules, could protect true romanticism from both classicism and false romanticism.<sup>474</sup>

The anxiety that less worthy books could become a commercial success and therefore have undo influence points to the complicated relationship that literature had with commerce. Books and periodicals were commodities, but they were also intellectual or artistic artifacts, and they were also, at least potentially, national culture. Many of the philosophes and Restoration-era critics would certainly have argued that on an imaginary scale of commodity to art, some books weigh more heavily on one side than the other. Regardless, books were not treated the same

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<sup>472</sup> Louis Simon Auger, "Discours sur le romantisme, prononcé dans la séance annuelle des Quatre Académies Du 24 avril 1824," in *Recueil factice de manifestes pro et antiromantiques* (Genève: Slatkine Reprints, 1974), 16, 26.

<sup>473</sup> Hugo, *Cromwell*, lxi.

<sup>474</sup> Ibid.

way as other commodities in society – they occupied a particular place both legally and culturally. Authors did not necessarily see their own works as primarily commodities, even if selling their writing made up the bulk of their income. Victor Hugo, like Villemain before him, expressed the belief that good literature would win out overtime. He wrote:

[The author] here decides not to defend his own work, neither in whole nor in part. If his play is bad, what good will it do to support it? If it is good, why defend it? Time will do the book justice, or it will render justice upon it. Immediate success is only of consequence for the bookseller. So if this essay arouses the ire of the critics, he will leave them be.<sup>475</sup>

The success of the book in the long term, he argued, matters artistically, whereas its success in the short term was only a commercial concern. By setting up this dichotomy Hugo suggested that the commercial success of a book had no correlation with its literary merit. Despite this, and despite the fact that Hugo denounced so-called false romantics who turned to romanticism for the profits, Hugo's own relationship to profit and his writing suggest ambivalence on his part. Geoffrey Turnovsky's study of France's literary marketplace in the long eighteenth century begins with an 1829 anecdote about Hugo's refusal to sell a piece of writing to the newly founded *Revue de Paris* for less than 500 fr. Hugo told the journal's director Louis-Désiré Véron that he never sold any writing for less than 500 fr, but did on occasion give it away for free. Véron took this as an opportunity to negotiate Hugo's rate, but Hugo rebuffed those attempts and instead gave him the piece to publish for free. As Turnovsky notes, this misunderstanding suggests that Hugo believed that his literary merit was beyond any business negotiations – he could be paid what he was worth, or he could bestow his writing as a gift – while Véron viewed Hugo's work as he would any other commodity.<sup>476</sup> We also know that Hugo demanded larger and larger sums from his *éditeur* Renduel as his books became more popular, which suggests that he saw some connection between monetary value and popularity, or at the very least that he was willing to capitalize from that popularity monetarily. Those in literary circles in the Restoration looked down on writing for

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<sup>475</sup> Ibid., lxiii–lxiv. "... il prend ici l'engagement de ne le défendre ni en tout, ni en partie. Si son drame est mauvais, que sert de le soutenir ? S'il est bon, pourquoi le défendre ? le temps fera justice du livre, ou la lui rendra. Le succès du moment n'est que l'affaire du libraire. Si donc la colère de la critique s'éveille à la publication de cet essai, il la laissera faire."

<sup>476</sup> Geoffrey Turnovsky, *The Literary Market: Authorship and Modernity in the Old Regime* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2010), 1–3.

the sake of profit. The salonnière Virginie Ancelot wrote in her account of Charles Nodier's romantic salon that only two of three of the playwrights who attended seemed preoccupied with turning everything, including glory, into money, which eventually alienated them from the other attendees, whom they perceived as competition. Everyone else, she remembered, wrote literature for its own sake and supported each other. "As long as art and letters are a noble passion with beauty as their aim," she wrote, "the artist and the writer are generous and full of sympathy for those who also chase the ideal; but when art is only a job, one wants to make it as lucrative as possible. And for this one eliminates, at any cost, the rival who can compete in the frantic desire to make money."<sup>477</sup>

These conflicted attitudes towards literary profit reveal a society grappling with changes in both the literary marketplace and its legal framework. In his *Cours complet*, published in 1828-1829, political economist Jean Baptiste Say advanced a position on literary copyright that combined romantic and pre-romantic conceptions of literary property and authorship. He argued that copyright of printed materials should lie with their authors, because although printers and paper makers are required to disseminate printed writing, they would not exist at all without the ideas of the authors. But, he maintained, this consideration of the author must be balanced with the needs of society. It is in the interest of society if ideas and enlightenment are diffused widely, and so copyright should not be held in perpetuity. Moreover, he continued, the ideas of one author may have at some point in the future be thought by someone else.<sup>478</sup> The latter is similar to pre-nineteenth-century arguments for why copyright should not rest with the author, but with the printer: that people do not create fundamentally new ideas, but merely put together received ideas in new ways, and so cannot possibly be said to own 'their' ideas. Books therefore differ from other commodities because they are public goods. Say disagreed with those in France who

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<sup>477</sup> Marguerite Louise Virginie (Chardon) Ancelot, *Les salons de Paris, foyers éteints*, 2. éd. (Paris: Jules Tardieu, 1858), 132–33, <http://hdl.handle.net/2027/nyp.33433069346983>. "Lorsque les arts et les lettres sont un noble passion qui porte vers le beau, l'artiste et l'écrivain sont généreux et pleins de sympathies pour ceux dont les efforts tendent vers l'idéal; mais, quand l'art est seulement un métier, on veut le rendre le plus lucratif possible. Et pour cela on écarte à tout prix le rival qui peut faire concurrence au désir effréné de gagner l'argent."

<sup>478</sup> Jean Baptiste Say, *Cours complet d'économie politique pratique* (Paris: Guillaumin, 1852), 535.

wanted copyright to be inheritable by an author's descendants. He argued that an author does not write only for his family, but also for all people in all times. Authors contribute to a heritage, Say argued, of which the public should have a part.<sup>479</sup> An author's descendants may not be the best people to ensure the public has access their writings. What if, Say asked, Racine's widow or his son, who were not interested in publishing his writing, had control of all his copyrights? Then, he insisted, "they would have deprived us [France] of one of the most precious jewels in our literary treasure."<sup>480</sup>

But Say also had more faith than Rousseau or Voltaire that taste would win out in the marketplace of ideas. Say argued that "of all the monuments of humanity, good books are both the most durable and the most honorable. The pyramids of Egypt will perish before the writings of Homer will."<sup>481</sup> He went on to say that printing and engraving meant that works from his time would be passed on to descendants in much more complete form than those previously, and useless books would eventually stop being printed, while good books would continue to be reproduced.

We cannot separate romanticism or periodicals from their commercial context. John Isbell argues that in the romantic era technological, political, and artistic change all came together to create a new audience for art. "Stereotype printing, romantic art, and a vast consumer market are born in symbiosis," Isbell writes.<sup>482</sup> For "stereotype printing" we can read any number of new printing or selling technologies – steam presses, less expensive paper, lithography, the growth of cabinets de lecture, advertising. And that vast consumer market included all the institutions that made that market possible – arcades, *cabinets de lecture*, publishers, copyright legislation and literary societies. Romanticism, in both what Hugo would call its true and false forms, was shaped by commercial concerns at every level of its production, distribution and consumption. Isbell

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<sup>479</sup> Ibid., 537. The change in copyright law from one that rested with the printer to one that rested with the author is an important part of the shift in conceptions about literature that was also marked by the shift from classicist to romantic conceptions of literary criticism.

<sup>480</sup> Ibid., 538. "Nous aurions pu être privés par eux d'un des plus précieux joyaux de notre trésor littéraire."

<sup>481</sup> Ibid. "De tous les monuments des hommes, les bons livres sont à la fois les plus durables et les plus honorables. Les pyramides d'Égypte périront avant les écrits d'Homère."

<sup>482</sup> Isbell, "Romantic Disavowals of Romanticism, 1800-1830," 50.



suggests that because romantics wanted to speak “to and for the people in unmediated speech,” they perpetuated “the fiction that artist and consumer are one being.”<sup>483</sup> But romantics, as we saw with Hugo, felt ambivalent about the realities of popular fiction; their desire to create truly open art for all competed with their desire to protect their art from the corruption of commercialization.<sup>484</sup> Both romantics and classicists looked to literary criticism as the bulwark that could save French literature from all damaging influences, including that of commerce. But literary criticism was itself tied up in the commerce of printing and publishing, and therefore subject to its presumed corrupting influence. Both romantics and classicists benefitted from the exposure afforded to them by an increasingly commercial press, which could produce more books and more journals, and yet they were united in their condemnation of commercial publishing insofar as it made it possible for the other to succeed.

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<sup>483</sup> Ibid.

<sup>484</sup> Ibid., 48–49.

## CHAPTER 4: THE COMMERCIAL GEOGRAPHY OF PRINT IN RESTORATION PARIS

In 1941 Lucien Febvre argued that to write a history of literature in a given time period, in relation to social life, one would have to “reconstruct the environment, ask who wrote and for whom; who read and why; one would have to know what education, at college or elsewhere, the writers had received – and the same with their readers; also one would have to know what success they achieved, the extent and depth of that success; one would have to relate changes in practice, in taste, in writing and concerns of the writers to political shifts, to transformations in religious mentality, to evolutions of social life, to changes in artistic fashion and taste, etc.”<sup>485</sup> While this order might be so tall as to be impossible, his list suggests a number of considerations we must take into account about a place and time in order to understand its literary production. More than that, his insistence on the importance of this context suggests that these factors are not only background information, but also important driving forces in the production and consumption of that literature. Restoration Paris itself, therefore, is an actor in this history of the development of romanticism in literary journals, rather than mere setting. The conditions of Paris in the Restoration fostered a particular kind of creativity, characterized by both the development of a new school of literature, new technologies, new commercial practices, as well as by intense political and cultural debate.

Scholars have come to talk about the concept of a city as an agent of its own economic and cultural development as ‘the creative city.’ The urban planner Charles Landry developed his concept of the creative city in his book *The Creative City: A Toolkit for Urban Innovators* (1995). He argues that the number one resource of a city is its people: “human cleverness, desires, motivations, imagination and creativity are replacing location, natural resources and market

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<sup>485</sup> Lucien Febvre, “Littérature et vie sociale: un renoncement?,” *Annales d'histoire sociale* (1939-1941) 3, no. 3/4 (December 1941): 113–14. “Il faudrait, pour l’écrire, reconstituer le milieu, se demander qui écrivait, et pour qui ; qui lisait, et pour quoi ; il faudrait savoir quelle formation avaient reçu, au collège ou ailleurs, les écrivains — et quelle formation, pareillement leurs lecteurs ; car enfin... ; il faudrait savoir quel succès obtenaient et ceux-ci et ceux-là, quelle était l’étendue de ce succès et sa profondeur ; il faudrait mettre en liaison les changements d’habitude, de goût, d’écriture et de préoccupation des écrivains avec les vicissitudes de la politique, avec les transformations de la mentalité religieuse, avec les évolutions de la vie sociale, avec les changements de la mode artistique et du goût, etc.”

access as urban resources.”<sup>486</sup> To solve cities’ problems, Landry argues, we must therefore promote the conditions for human creativity. While the concept of ‘creative cities’ has had a significant impact on urban studies, policy and planning, there has been less direct historical application of the concept.<sup>487</sup> Peter Hall, in his *Cities in Civilization*, notes that there is little historical theory to explain or examine the culturally creative city – so that we might understand why cities have what he calls ‘golden ages.’<sup>488</sup> He comes at the notion of the creative city not by way of urban planning theory, but by way of Hippolyte Taine’s notion of the *Creative Milieu*. Taine argued that in each era different sentiments, needs and skills coalesced around a particular ruling ethos or character.<sup>489</sup> Hall’s model notes that affluence often accompanied creative growth. Since artists often relied on patrons, either private or public, that correlation certainly makes sense. But, wealth alone did not create a city’s golden age, he insists. Nor is even the confluence of wealth and education enough. Instead, “there is something even beyond the economy and inherited cultural dispositions; there is an element of serendipity that will refuse to be explained in any systematic way. People meet, people talk, people listen to each other’s music and each other’s words, dance each other’s dances, take in each other’s thoughts. And so by accidents of geography, sparks may be struck and something new come out of the encounter.”<sup>490</sup> Cities are defined as cities, rather than towns or villages, because of the density and size of their populations, and so the probability of these serendipitous encounters is higher than in less populous areas. But population and proximity is not enough of an explanation either – certainly there are physical and structural factors at play also. Hall proposes that the precise factors at play

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<sup>486</sup> Charles Landry, *The Creative City: A Toolkit for Urban Innovators* (Earthscan, 2012), xii.

<sup>487</sup> An important exception to this is Martina Hessler and Clemens Zimmermann, *Creative Urban Milieus: Historical Perspectives on Culture, Economy, and the City* (New York: Campus Verlag, 2008). And also of note is the conference *Unscrewing the Creative City: The Historical Fabrication of Cities as Agents of Economic Innovation and Creativity*, the Centre of Urban Studies at the University of Antwerp, 12-13 December 2013, for which an edited collection of selected proceedings is forthcoming.

<sup>488</sup> Peter Geoffrey Hall, *Cities in Civilization* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1998), 10–11.

<sup>489</sup> *Ibid.*, 15–17.

<sup>490</sup> *Ibid.*, 21.

in any time or place will necessarily differ but that through comparing them it might be possible to determine the underlying structural factors that lead to creative cities.<sup>491</sup>

Although not many historians have engaged directly with the notion of creative cities, many are talking about very similar ideas. Following in the footsteps of Carl Schorske's *Fin de Siècle Vienna*, some intellectual historians have written on the role of the city in the development of ideas.<sup>492</sup> Scott Spector has recently noted that the number of book length monographs on the intellectual history of European cities suggests a resurgence of the Schorskesque 'urban model' of intellectual history.<sup>493</sup> That model, he writes, is not so much a single methodology, or even a governing principle about the role cities themselves have in the development of ideas and intellectual life, as it is an emphasis on or interest in the urban contexts of ideas.<sup>494</sup> Moreover, these newer histories differ from those written in Schorske's era. In the current scholarship "cities appear as co-agents of ideas in complex ways," Spector contends. "Institutional uniqueness, historical tradition, demographic composition, social tension, patronage, and the symbolic of the city itself are of course factors historians have not ceased to consider. Yet there is no calculus whereby these influences can be accounted for. Today's historian of the ideas of a city has to enter its texts; she needs the tools of the poet as much as those of the ethnographer."<sup>495</sup> Urban intellectual history has become its own sub-sub-genre. It allows intellectual historians to explore the roles of community, geography, communication networks, and local government in the history of ideas, even if, as Spector suggests, the specifics of the role the city plays in the formulation and development of ideas cannot, as Hall argues, be extrapolated to other cities in other times.

Urban intellectual histories of nineteenth-century Europe tend to focus on the latter half or third of the century: the time when governments became increasingly interested in urban

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<sup>491</sup> Ibid.

<sup>492</sup> Some examples include: Carl E Schorske, *Fin-De-Siècle Vienna: Politics and Culture*, Vintage books ed (New York: Vintage Books, 1981); Jerrold E Seigel, *Bohemian Paris: Culture, Politics, and the Boundaries of Bourgeois Life, 1830-1930* (New York: Viking, 1986); Peter Jelavich, *Munich and Theatrical Modernism: Politics, Playwriting, and Performance, 1890-1914* (Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press, 1985).

<sup>493</sup> Scott Spector, "Forum: Ideas and the City, Introduction," *Journal of the History of Ideas* 74, no. 2 (April 2013): 259.

<sup>494</sup> Ibid., 262–63.

<sup>495</sup> Ibid., 265–66.

planning. The end of the nineteenth century saw increased commercial and consumer activity in European cities, as well as increased political agitation, and so teems with examples of those things we associate with modern urban phenomena – shopping, counter-cultural clubs, interest groups, artist collectives. Historians tend to place the emergence of large-scale consumer culture at the end of the nineteenth century. H. Hazel Hahn puts the history of consumption much earlier – in the 1830s. While Hahn argues that modern consumer culture emerged in the July Monarchy, many of the processes she points to (expansion of commercial print media, the creation of urban sites organized around consumption) existed under the Restoration as well, even if in nascent form, and indeed her evidence often includes examples from the 1820s.<sup>496</sup>

It is just as important that we investigate the intersections of urban and intellectual history for the early, as for the late, 19<sup>th</sup> century. The early 19<sup>th</sup> century saw the development of many of the urban trappings that would flourish later in the century – including infrastructure like gas lighting, new commercial centers in the guise of shopping arcades, a vibrant culture of sociability surrounding arts and theatre, and the roots of a mass press. While Peter Hall sought to examine cities in their golden ages, at the height of their creative output, in the era they are most famous for, there is value in examining the creativity of a city not necessarily at its alleged apex (however one might determine that). Restoration Paris may not represent Paris at its ultimate creativity, but it does showcase a city in transition, at a significant shift in its country's political history. Moreover, it is an important project of historical recovery to attempt to reconstruct major European cities as they were before they were redrawn and rebuilt by Haussmann and his urban-planning contemporaries. But we must not limit this reconstruction to geography. We must also consider all those factors that influence Paris' creativity: the high number of public gathering spaces, the cultural importance placed on social life, the vibrancy of its print culture, and the instability of its political system. A culture in transition, Restoration Paris was trying to heal from the scars of its past, with a population willing to debate how that healing should happen.

Print, and the literary press in particular, offers a window into the creativity of Restoration Paris. The cultural and political debates that characterized the Restoration took place in the

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<sup>496</sup> Hahn, *Scenes of Parisian Modernity*, 3.

press. The press helped to build and maintain a narrative both about political and cultural conflicts, as well as about the city itself – its neighborhoods, its commercial and cultural centers, and its infrastructure and general character. Travel guides and travel narratives, but also newspapers and literary journals, discussed Parisian sites and sights, and interpreted the city for its reading audience. Literary journals themselves contributed to the shaping and coloring of the city in which they were produced and consumed. By helping to shape commercial spaces and reading practices; by publicizing the activities and ideas of literary academies, societies, and groups; and by crafting a narrative surrounding the *bataille romantique* in the French theatre; Parisian literary journals contributed to the creativity of their city.

### **Literary Geography**

The Bourbon Restoration saw a proliferation of locations of literary production and consumption in Paris. Printers, booksellers, *cabinets de lecture*, *cénacles*, and societies all provided geographic centers around which literary debate and collaboration could focus. Restoration Paris was a city divided by politics and by wealth: certain neighborhoods were known to be liberal, while others were royalist; some housed students, others the rich. But it was also a city divided by art and literature, and by economics. Areas of the city, *cafés*, bookshops, journals, clubs and societies could be associated with romanticism or with classicism. Teams of contributors came together to produce these journals, sometimes as the organ of a society or group, and they helped to create and promote the ideas and the identities they were designed to express. Moreover, they were produced and consumed by groups of people in various locations across Paris. These journals therefore relied on and produced both physical geographies and imagined ones. When a group of romantics met at Victor Hugo's home in 1828 to form the famous *cénacle* of Notre-Dame-Des-Champs, they gave romanticism a geographic center. When they debated and defined romanticism against classicist attacks in a variety of literary journals, they helped to produce an imagined locus for understanding their new literary school.

Bookselling, or periodical-subscription selling, was concentrated in commercial centers, and specifically in and around the Palais-Royal and south of the Quai des Augustins. This means that even when print shops or bookstores were partisan, which was by no means always the

case, they occupied the same commercial spaces as their opponents, and when bookstores and print shops were not partisan, they printed and sold liberal and royalist, romantic and classicist texts side by side. The social world of literary periodical production in Restoration Paris was also a commercial world. The clear divisions we imagine between romantics and classicists, royalists and liberals, were never as distinct as the traditional narrative might suggest, both in practice and in print. While these divisions became more distinct over time, and while literary journals played an important role in that growing distinction, the geography of the production and distribution of literary journals worked both to bolster and undermine that increasing division, by creating both physical and imagined sites of convergence on the one hand and by juxtaposing romantic and classicist writings in commercial centers on the other.



Figure 3 – Victor Hugo's Home, n. 11 Notre-Dame-des-Champs<sup>497</sup>

Scholars have become increasingly interested in the question of geography with respect to literature. In *Atlas of the European Novel*, Franco Moretti suggests that we must look at both internal and external geographies of novels (that is the geographies of their plot elements, and the geography of their production and distribution). As a historian, my interest lies primarily in the latter, which means not only the physical places where journals were produced and consumed,

<sup>497</sup> A.-P. Martial, "Habitations des personnages les plus célèbres de France" n.d., DC 211b, fol 72 and 76, Bibliothèque Nationale de France.

but also the legal and commercial environment in which they were produced and consumed, as well as the imaginary geographies that literature created – the communities of belonging and the factions of dispute. As Ogborn and Withers contend in *Geographies of the Book*, the geography of the book has been a part of the history of the book from the very outset of the subfield.<sup>498</sup> They argue that the construction of knowledge and its dissemination cannot be radically separated one from the other. Consequently, the history of the book, with its emphasis on the material reality of texts, must see geography as integral to the nature of books themselves. Geography of the book, they contend, is not simply the locations of printers, but something that affects the production, distribution and consumption of texts.<sup>499</sup> Where its paper is pulped, how it is sold, and where a book is read might all have an impact on its nature, meaning and influences. The use of Geographic Information Systems (GIS) to produce visualizations of book geographies is a much more recent phenomenon in scholarship. Only a decade and a half have elapsed since Fiona Black, Bertrum MacDonald and J. Malcolm Black suggested that GIS could provide a new tool for book historians.<sup>500</sup> More recently, Ian Gregory has argued that GIS is best used as a way to investigate the geographical aspects of research questions – as a tool for research, rather than simply as an end in itself.<sup>501</sup>

Many of the geographic markers of Restoration romanticism no longer exist, having been torn down when Baron Haussmann rebuilt Paris in the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, or by subsequent building and development. For example, the aforementioned no. 11 Notre-Dame-des-Champs was located between what is now 23 and 35 rue Notre-Dame-des-Champs, and was torn down in 1904 to make way for Boulevard Raspail.<sup>502</sup> The house's original location is now a large intersection filled with islands with benches and trees. Moreover, even though the street still

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<sup>498</sup> Miles Ogborn and Charles W. J. Withers, eds., *Geographies of the Book* (Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2010), 1.

<sup>499</sup> *Ibid.*, 10.

<sup>500</sup> J. Malcolm W. Black, Bertrum H. MacDonald, and Fiona A. Black, "Geographic Information Systems: A New Research Method for Book History," *Book History* 1, no. 1 (1998): 11–31, doi:10.1353/bh.1998.0001.

<sup>501</sup> Ian Gregory, *Historical GIS: Technologies, Methodologies and Scholarship* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 1.

<sup>502</sup> "Les lieux Hugoliens: le Paris de Victor Hugo," *Victor Hugo: Conscience et combats*, accessed November 21, 2014, <http://www.enluminures.culture.fr/culture/celebrations/hugo/fr/paris10.htm>.



exists, it is lined with the stone buildings with wrought-iron balconies that one finds all over Paris. It is impossible to visit the rooms in which the *cénacle* would have met, or see what they saw when they looked out the window. Reconstructing the physical world of a Paris we can no longer inhabit is an important component to understanding the development of romanticism and the press, and to understanding the Restoration as a whole. While the transformation of Paris makes reconstruction of its Restoration geography that much more imperative, it also makes it more challenging. And of course, while the Haussmanization of Paris was its most dramatic transformation, pre-Haussmann Paris was not a static place – there was growth, new development, streets were given revolutionary names and then changed back. In his 1816 travel guide, *A New Picture of Paris, or the Stranger's Guide to the French Metropolis*, Edward Planta makes much of the fact that his guide, along with its included map, unlike many others, takes into account the changes Paris has undergone – buildings that had been destroyed during the Revolution or built since, streets and squares that have been renamed – and so offers a true picture of Restoration Paris, and all the changes the new regime has brought to the city. “But,” he notes, “when rapid improvements are carrying on in every part of the city, and some street is almost every day changing its appellations, inaccuracies in a few trifling particulars are absolutely unavoidable.”<sup>503</sup> A city is never static. No one snapshot of its geography can boast accuracy over time, particularly in a time of flux and transition like the early Restoration.

One of the major challenges in reconstructing the literary geography of Restoration Paris is trying to reconstruct the meanings associated with various spaces and geographies. Inhabitants of Restoration Paris would have understood the meaning of geographies in a way that we can only hope to recreate. In some instances the meanings associated with certain geographies can be difficult or even impossible to interpret. In 1821 the *Miroir des spectacles* made a reference to the most distinguished man of letters living on the Rue Plâtrière. We know that the most famous man of letters to ever live on the Rue Plâtrière was Jean-Jacques Rousseau – rue Plâtrière is today rue Jean-Jacques Rousseau – but he was not living there in

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<sup>503</sup> Edward Planta, *A New Picture of Paris; Or, The Stranger's Guide to the French Metropolis*, New edition (London: Samuel Leigh, 1816), v.

1821, because he died in 1778.<sup>504</sup> In the *Great Cat Massacre*, Robert Darnton argues that, “when you realize that you are not getting something – a joke, a proverb, a ceremony – that is particularly meaningful to the natives, you can see where to grasp a foreign system of meaning in order to unravel it.”<sup>505</sup> By parsing out the meanings attributed to space in Restoration Paris, by finding the joke in these geographic references, we get closer to understanding the world in which these periodicals were produced and consumed.

Literary journals are themselves a good source of qualitative information about parts of Paris. Neighborhoods could be sources of pride that were fiercely defended for their perceived special attributes and attractions. And the politics and literary affiliations of a given neighborhood were often an important part of its identification by both its inhabitants and those who lived in other *quartiers*. On 4 June 1823, *Le Miroir des spectacles* published a letter to the editor signed “an inhabitant of the Marais, who would be angry to live elsewhere.” The letter, which took up almost a full page in the 4-page daily, enumerated the various attributes of the Marais, a portion of the city the letter-writer said everyone understood to also include the faubourgs of St. Antoine and Temple.<sup>506</sup> (The faubourgs were areas then outside the city limits, and the two specified in the letter were to the north and east of the *Marais*). The *Marais*, a name still attributed to the neighborhood today, even though it is not associated with any administrative division of the city, was located in the 8<sup>th</sup> arrondissement (it is now in parts of the 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup>).

The letter compared other neighborhoods unfavorably to the Marais, saying that the Chaussée d’Antin had an unimpressive population, the faubourg St-Germain had comparatively unremarkable activity or industry, and that the Palais-Royal would not be celebrated for its tranquility.<sup>507</sup> The Marais, he insisted, was the best of all the arrondissements, and yet was rarely mentioned by the *Miroir*. He accused the authors of the *Miroir* of still believing the Marais was old-

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<sup>504</sup> Rue Plâtrière was also rue Jean-Jacques Rousseau in 1821 – it was renamed in 1791. “Rue Jean-Jacques Rousseau,” accessed September 26, 2013, [http://www.v2asp.paris.fr/commun/v2asp/v2/nomenclature\\_voies/Voieactu/4808.nom.htm](http://www.v2asp.paris.fr/commun/v2asp/v2/nomenclature_voies/Voieactu/4808.nom.htm).

<sup>505</sup> Robert Darnton, *The Great Cat Massacre: And Other Episodes in French Cultural History* (Basic Books, 2009), 78.

<sup>506</sup> “Le Marais, à MM. les Rédacteurs du Miroir,” *Miroir des spectacles, des lettres, des mœurs et des arts* no 860 (4 June 1823): 3.

<sup>507</sup> This characterisation of the Palais-Royal as rowdy or even unsafe was common and is discussed below.

fashioned and conservative. To demonstrate otherwise the Marais-enthusiast wrote that there was a cabinet de lecture where one could read the *Drapeau blanc* or the *Quotidienne* whenever one wanted, but where there was an hour-long wait for the *Constitutionnel* and the *Miroir*. This is a fantastic example of how newspaper readership could function as short hand for political affiliation. ‘See how liberal the inhabitants of the Marais are,’ the writer was saying, ‘they line up to read liberal papers.’ The writer did not only frame this as a matter of politics, however. He also said that the inhabitants of the Marais had “good taste” and that their theatres were always full, unlike the Odeon (in the old 12<sup>th</sup>), the Théâtre-Français (in the Palais-Royal) or the Opera (which in 1821 had moved to Salle le Peletier, located in the old 2<sup>nd</sup> not far from where the Opera is today).<sup>508</sup>

Two days later the *Miroir* printed an article describing various (most likely) imagined responses from people who wanted to argue that the Marais was not the best neighborhood in Paris. The rue Neuve-Saint-Augustin was apparently offended that the Marais claimed to be the height of Parisian civilization, and wished to claim that title for itself, because it was the location of the Société des bonnes-lettres.<sup>509</sup> (Incidentally, this royalist literary society was sometimes referred to in journals by its location, as in “the literary society of rue Neuve Saint-Augustin.”<sup>510</sup>) The author of the article humorously wondered if the whole of the Marais, including the two faubourgs, could boast as many “wig-headed”<sup>511</sup> individuals as the Society.<sup>512</sup> The faubourg Saint-Germain wrote to complain that the letter-writer claimed they lacked activity and industry,

<sup>508</sup> “Le Marais, à MM. les Rédacteurs du Miroir,” *Le Miroir des spectacles* no. 860: 3.

<sup>509</sup> “Protestations des divers quartiers de Paris contre les prétentions du Marais,” *Le Miroir des spectacles, des lettres, des mœurs et des arts* no. 862 (6 June 1823): 3.

<sup>510</sup> *Le Diable boiteux. Journal des spectacles, des mœurs et de la littérature* 1, no 146 (6 December 1823)

<sup>511</sup> ‘Têtes à perruques’ – literally wig-headed – implied people who were old-fashioned and behind the times in their ideas and their values, as with the wearing of wigs. This could reference the society’s strident royalism, or their obsessive classicism, and likely both. Larousse’s *Grand dictionnaire universel du XIXe siècle* defines it as “Personne de peu d’esprit, qui tient opiniâtrement à d’anciens préjugés,” (Person of little intelligence, who holds outdated notions) and gives the example, from Balzac’s *Illusions Perdues* “Perruque était le dernier mot trouvé par le journalisme romantique, qui en avait affublé les classiques.” (Wig was the last word discovered by romantic journalists, and they used it to nickname the classicists.) *Grand dictionnaire universel du XIXe siècle*, t.12, s.v. “perruque.”

<sup>512</sup> The Société des bonnes-lettres, discussed in detail in the next chapter, was a favoured punching bag of the liberal *Miroir*.

and the author joked that it was true that in no other quarter did you see so much activity and industry geared toward finding a pension and flattering the wealthy and powerful to gain a position.<sup>513</sup> Although a satirical article, it demonstrates clearly that neighborhoods had identities and attributes associated with them that would have been understandable to the average reader. Everyone reading would have known that the Faubourg Saint-Germain was the home to the wealthy and ambitious, and without that knowledge the joke would not work.

Other neighborhoods also had clear identities: the Latin Quarter was where students lived, where one could find small shops, the financial district surrounded the Louvre.<sup>514</sup> But these neighborhoods were not static, nor were they isolated. New neighborhoods emerged, their characters shifted over time, and people could move fairly freely between them. One example of a 'new neighborhood' was the 'New Athens' neighborhood in what is today the 9<sup>th</sup> arrondissement. (It is also known as the Clos Saint-Georges.) *Journal des débats* contributor Dureau de la Malle publicized the name "the new Athens" on 18 October 1823, claiming that the public had been referring to the neighborhood as such for two years. The epithet seems to be in reference to the perceived Greco-mania of the many artists, writers, and actors who began to congregate there during the Restoration, and who represented the elite of the romantic movement. (The neighborhood is the current home of the *Musée de la Vie Romantique*, located in what was once romantic artist Ary Scheffer's house). Dureau de la Malle defined the boundaries of this new neighborhood as rue des Martyrs to the north, Rue Blanche on the west, Saint-Lazare to the South, and rue de la Rochefoucault on the east.<sup>515</sup> And he described the neighborhood as a solitary but vibrant retreat from the city – where the air was clean, and smelled of the flowers in the various gardens, where one did not hear the sounds of carriages, but rather those of birds. As a result, he argued, it had attracted poets, artists and others who were

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<sup>513</sup> "Protestations des divers quartiers de Paris contre les prétentions du Marais," *Le Miroir des spectacles* no. 862: 3. Pensions and connections were particularly significant in the Restoration – the Revolution and empire had thrown off a system of privileges in favour of one purportedly based on merit, but that meant that in the Restoration ambition required one to seek out official recognition. Mansel, *Louis XVIII*, 206.

<sup>514</sup> John Tresch, *The Romantic Machine: Utopian Science and Technology after Napoleon* (Chicago ; London: The University of Chicago Press, 2012), 8.

<sup>515</sup> "Deuxième lettre sur les nouveaux quartiers de Paris," *Le Journal des débats politiques et littéraires* (18 October 1823): 1.

searching for a place to meditate, “or a refuge against the false illusions of ambition and glory.”<sup>516</sup> Dureau de la Malle listed “Francklin,” the philosopher Volney, and Germain Garnier (best known for translating Adam Smith) as inhabitants of the neighborhood, specifically of rue Rochefoucauld. It was a neighborhood of vibrant reading culture – with over 50 000 volumes in two libraries. It also boasted, according to Malle, elegant paintings that would satisfy the taste of any critic.<sup>517</sup>

Print and publishing themselves also helped to shape the geography of Restoration Paris. Printing and bookselling were concentrated in specific areas of the city, which gave those neighborhoods distinctive character (not unlike the concentration of bookstores in the Latin Quarter today). In 1997 Marie-Claire Boscq, using the *Almanachs du commerce et de l'industrie* published each year by Sébastien Botin as her source, compiled a geographic distribution of booksellers in Paris between 1815 and 1848.<sup>518</sup> She found that the total number of booksellers in Paris increased over the course of the Restoration and July Monarchy, from 330 in 1816 to 550 in 1846 (decreasing slightly to 499 in 1850). This upward trend holds true for the Restoration on its own, whereas growth under the July Monarchy is not consistent – the number of booksellers increases and decreases.<sup>519</sup> The eleventh arrondissement consistently housed the most booksellers from 154 in 1816 to 195 in 1831, most concentrated on and around the Quai des Augustins. The tenth arrondissement had the second highest number of bookstores, followed by the second arrondissement, where the Palais Royal was located.<sup>520</sup> She also remarked that bookshops tended to move – on average between 50 and 60% of bookshops were at new addresses after five years – although much of this came from new booksellers moving into the previously established locations.<sup>521</sup> This concentration of booksellers in the tenth and eleventh arrondissements is paralleled by a concentration of printers and printing in the same. Archival records outlining the weekly output of printers consistently show a plurality of printing in the tenth and eleventh arrondissements. This seems to be both the result of individual printers in those

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<sup>516</sup> Ibid.

<sup>517</sup> Ibid.

<sup>518</sup> Boscq, “L’implantation des libraires à Paris (1815-1848),” 27.

<sup>519</sup> Ibid., 32.

<sup>520</sup> Ibid., 33.

<sup>521</sup> Ibid., 39.

areas printing more, and the existence of a greater concentration of printers in those neighborhoods. Many of the most prominent printers of the Restoration (for example, Lenormand and Fain) worked in these areas.<sup>522</sup>

Printers and booksellers professed political and literary affiliations that shaped public impressions of their shops and their wares. In his history of the French book trade in the first half of the nineteenth century, the *éditeur* Edmond Werdet (1793-1870) wrote that there were two kinds of publishers in Restoration Paris. There were the kind like Charles Ladvocat who worked with not-yet known living writers to promote the new literature, and there were those like Jean-Jacques Lefèvre who printed the works of well-known dead authors like Rousseau and Voltaire.<sup>523</sup> Essentially, there were romantic and there were classicist publishers. But, Werdet also divided Parisian publishers another way – by politics. He placed the bookstores in the Palais-Royal, the center of Parisian literary life in the Restoration, into three groups. The first group, including Delaunay and Pelissier, were neutral. They stocked books based on whether or not they would sell, not their political affiliation. The second, Dentu and Petit, were the royalists. And the third, Ladvocat, Chaumerot, and Corréard, were the liberals.<sup>524</sup> The Restoration, he wrote, was an era of conflict. “It is difficult for us today to conceive of the energy, the furor, that, in that time, enlivened (*animé*) us for the opinion for which we were the defender,” he wrote.<sup>525</sup> The initial tensions lasted for five or six years, Werdet contended, and were just dying down when they were revived by the assassination of the Duc de Berry in April 1820, after which the political conflict continued unabated until the July Revolution.

These trends in printing and bookselling in general also apply to the printing and selling of literary journals in particular. Literary journals contain a wealth of specific locational information from which we can try to recreate the literary geography of Restoration Paris – specifically

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<sup>522</sup> Archives nationales de France, F18/28, Weekly reports of printers and their products in X and XI arrondissements. In comparison with same reports in Archives nationales de France, F18/29 from the arrondissements of Rive Droite, Tuileries, L'École de Médecin – suggest that the X and XI were where the bulk of the printing was. Those reports were always multiple pages (usually 4 sides), while the ones from F18/19 are usually only one sheet, with one and a half sides filled in.

<sup>523</sup> Werdet, *De la librairie française*, 96–101.

<sup>524</sup> Ibid., 102.

<sup>525</sup> Ibid., 103. “On se ferait difficilement une idée aujourd'hui de l'énergie, de la fureur dont on était animé à cette époque pour l'opinion dont on était le défenseur.”

addresses. Every journal listed the address of its office where readers could subscribe. Occasionally this was the office of a publisher – but because the publisher was a relatively new invention, more often the address listed was an office specifically dedicated to the journal. Each journal also listed the address of its printer, the booksellers and reading rooms where the journal was available, and, when applicable, the address of any literary society affiliated with the journal. And these are the addresses associated with the journal itself. The authors also provided addresses for the printers or publishers of the books they reviewed. By compiling and examining the locations of these offices, stores, and print shops we are afforded a comprehensive view of the locations of literary periodical production, dissemination and consumption in Restoration Paris. In doing so we gain an understanding of the physical realities of the social world of Restoration literary journals, and the factions they represented and reinforced.<sup>526</sup>

Literary journals and their offices and places of sale were concentrated in central Paris, and more specifically in the commercial areas most associated with bookselling – the Palais Royal and south of the Quai des Augustins, which by one account housed thirteen and sixteen booksellers, respectively, to say nothing of printers or cabinets de lecture, or bookstores located very nearby.<sup>527</sup> The same source, an 1828 travel guide to Paris, noted that other than the convent for which it was named, the Quai des Augustins, the south bank of the Seine between Pont St-Michel and Pont-Neuf, was almost entirely occupied by bookstores.<sup>528</sup> The Palais Royal, discussed in more detail below, was the palace of the Orléans branch of the Bourbon family. It also housed gardens, arcades and the Théâtre Français. It is not particularly surprising that literary journals were produced, printed and distributed in the same places that other printed

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<sup>526</sup> The most complicated and imprecise part of determining the locations of these journal offices is determining their modern address equivalents. Even when the streets have not changed names (or disappeared entirely), there is no way to know whether the street numbers have or have not changed, and more often than not they likely have. When the streets are short, as so many Paris streets are, unless I had additional information that told me the building was on a corner or elsewhere, I chose a modern address in the middle of the street. Because the goal is to be able to see overall trends, this lack of precision, although not ideal, is not particularly harmful. Longer streets are more complicated. For them, I researched historical addresses for at least two landmarks that still exists, so I could at least know if the journal office was located between these landmarks, or to one side of them.

<sup>527</sup> *Le Véritable conducteur parisien de Richard* (édition de 1828) (Paris: Éditions Les Yeux ouverts, 1970), 299.

<sup>528</sup> *Ibid.*, 290.

materials were, but their locations serve to reinforce the fact that although these journals were literary products and cultural products, they were also fundamentally commercial products. To fully understand the role of periodicals in Restoration Paris we must explore the tension that existed between their status as consumer goods and their role as ideological agents.

### **Literary Commerce**

In *The Rules of Art*, Bourdieu argues that in late nineteenth-century France there was a pure 'literary' field that existed outside the context of politics, out of governmental control. He contends that the advance of a capitalist market completely distinct from traditional patronage networks and official literary academies made this independent literary field possible. While the Restoration did not see a literary field that operated completely independently of the political world, it is still true that increasing commercialization, along with censorship laws, had a de-politicizing influence on literature and on the development of literary movements. Bourdieu's discussion of literature in the late nineteenth century therefore helps us to think through what impact the growth of a commercial literary market had on the politics of literary aesthetics. There is a tension between literary journals as ideological and political products and as commercial products. Their commercial status pulls away from politics, while their ideological agenda pushes them toward the political. The more literary journals were partisan or political, the more likely they were to be targeted by the censor. The same was true of the physical geographies these literary journals inhabited – printers and booksellers required licenses to operate, reading rooms required royal permission to open, and the political leanings or moral behavior of the petitioners was always taken into account. The commercial spaces of literary journals, the places they were printed, the reading rooms where one could read them, the bookstores where one could buy a subscription, were apolitical or non-ideological insofar as their primary motive was profit and sales, but those same spaces as well as other spaces that these journals were produced, the rooms of the literary society, the meeting place of a *cénacle*, could also be focal points of literary and political partisanship, insofar as they privileged ideas over money. Depending on what those ideas were and how politically connected the people involved were, that kind of partisanship could lead to public scrutiny. In practice, these divisions between commerce and ideology/politics



were not always clear-cut. Many bookstores and print shops focused on commerce in some measure and on ideology in some other, and journals that were not economically viable would fail and fold. Where precisely that balance lay is often impossible to pinpoint. Moreover, there was a sort of irony at play – that classicists and romantics had to come together in order to define and solidify their camps – both because they had to sell their printed material in close proximity to each other, and because they required the other as a rhetorical agent against which to define themselves.

As Bourdieu explains, when there are competing genres within the literary field – romanticism and classicism in this story, and symbolism and naturalism in his – variation necessarily exists within those genres. A group at the heart of each sect generally emerges as the ‘avant-garde,’ (supposedly) less concerned with commerce and more with the advance of the literary genre itself. In the early nineteenth century, Bourdieu argued, poetry acted as the avant-garde of romanticism, while in the 1880s theatre did. He writes:

Each of the genres tends to cleave into a research sector and a commercial sector, two markets between which one must be wary of establishing a clear boundary, since they are merely two poles, defined in and by their antagonistic relationship, of the same space. This process of differentiation of each genre is accompanied by a process of unification of the whole set of genres, that is, of the literary field, which tends more and more to organize itself around common opposites . . . in effect, each of the two opposed sectors of each subfield . . . tends to become closer to the similar sector of other genres . . . than the opposite pole of the same subfield. In other words, the opposition between genres loses its structuring efficacy in favor of the opposition between the two poles present in each subfield: the pole of pure production, where the producers tend to have as clients only other producers (who are also rivals), and where poets, novelists and theatrical people endowed with similar position characteristics find each other, though they may be engaged in relations that may be antagonistic; and the pole of large-scale production, subordinated to the expectations of a wide audience.<sup>529</sup>

The market, therefore, acts as a kind of homogenizer, while simultaneously creating parameters for the possibility of greater variety. In the Restoration, increasing commerce and commercialization meant that patronage networks alone did not control art, although traditional avenues for success and recognition continued to be important.<sup>530</sup> The censorship regime, which varied considerably under the restored Bourbons, was, even at its most severe, not as severe as in the previous decade, and particularly focused on works it deemed ‘political’ rather than in

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<sup>529</sup> Bourdieu, *The Rules of Art*, 120–21.

<sup>530</sup> See chapter 5.

policing literary taste as such. This made it possible for romanticism, as a new kind of literature, to find traction it might not have found otherwise, and certainly did not find under Napoleon.<sup>531</sup>

The increased (albeit limited) liberalization of print therefore helped the generic production of romanticism even without official institutional support, but also meant that romantic texts and classicist texts could be cast as equals, at least insofar as they were both commodities.

The potential effects of commodification on literature, and on literary spaces, did not go unnoticed by contemporaries. On the 8<sup>th</sup> of August 1824 a one-act comedy-vaudeville play premiered at the théâtre des Variétés in Paris.<sup>532</sup> It was called *l'Imprimeur sans caractère, ou, Le classique et le romantique* (The Printer Without Integrity, or the Classicist and the Romantic).<sup>533</sup> Set in the shop of the titular printer, Petit-Romain, the plot centers around the betrothal of Petit-Romain's daughter, Zoe, who wants to marry the son of a grocer.<sup>534</sup> Her father initially agrees, but later accepts two other offers, because they promise him more money: one from a classicist bookseller named In-Douze, who wants her to marry his friend a classicist writer, and one from a romantic bookseller named Satiné, who wants her to marry his romantic protégé. The two booksellers discover Petit-Romain's duplicity, and Satiné and In-Douze quarrel about literature. Petit-Romain pretends to agree with each of them, and they storm off, declaring that Petit-Romain is without courage or fortitude, and vowing to return with their choice to marry Zoe.<sup>535</sup> Much to

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<sup>531</sup> Napoleon's systematic anti-romanticism was well known: he, for example, tried to have the entire 1810 print run of Germain de Staël's *De l'Allemagne* destroyed. For a detailed discussion, which gives a good sense of the things that most concerned the censors, as well as of the censorship process under Napoleon in general, see John Isbell, "Censors, Police, and *De l'Allemagne*'s Lost 1810 Edition: Napoleon Pulps His Enemy," *Zeitschrift Für Französische Sprache Und Literatur* 105, no. 2 (January 1, 1995): 156–70.

<sup>532</sup> The *Journal des théâtres* announced the play's submission to the Théâtre des Variétés on 9 November 1820, suggesting it was written years before it was eventually staged and published. *Le Journal des théâtres, de la littérature et des arts* no. 202 (9 November 1820): 4.

<sup>533</sup> Unfortunately the title's pun – *caractère* means character as in both one's integrity and one's personality or type, but also means type for printing – is lost in translation.

<sup>534</sup> A love triangle or conflict resolved through marriage served as a staple plot device in comedies of this era. For more about these plays see Chapter 6.

<sup>535</sup> In one of the play's funnier moments, Petit-Romain declares, "Classicists! I am completely in agreement with you; classicists are nothing but so-called experts who, under the pretext that they know Latin and Greek, have the audacity to call ignorant all those who know nothing." Armand d'Artois, Gabriel de Lurieu, and Francis d'Allarde, *L'imprimeur sans caractère, ou, Le classique et le romantique comédie-vaudeville en un acte*, Seconde édition (Paris: J.-N. Barba, 1824), 25. "Les classiques! car je suis tout à fait de votre avis; les classiques ne sont que des prétendus savans qui, sous le prétexte qu'ils savent le Grec et le Latin, ont l'audace d'appeler ignorans ceux

everyone's surprise, Zoe's fiancé Julien, the grocer's son, turns out to be both In-Douze's writer and Satiné's protégé, suggesting that romanticism and classicism need not be as opposed as In-Douze and Satiné believed. In-Douze and Satiné are both angry that they were fooled, and Petit-Romain, in an attempt to calm everyone down, says that a man who enchants the bookseller, the grocer and the printer must be good enough for everyone, and jokes that he gave his word to all of them that their chosen suitor would marry his daughter, and that he will not change his mind. The classicist In-Douze comments that young authors (like Julien) might be misled, but they can be saved by good taste, by which he means an appreciation for classicism. In response, Petit-Romain quotes Voltaire: "All genres are good except the boring ones," i.e., the ones that do not sell, taking the "bourgeois" position that a book may be of any 'ic' as long as they are purchased.<sup>536</sup>

The play ends with everyone singing the verse of a song about the differences between a classicist and a romantic. According to the song a classicist smokes and drinks cognac, works hard, is a grenadier, wears a tri-corner hat and a powdered wig, fattens, garnishes and eats roast chicken, and relies on the intelligence of his poetry for success, while a romantic wears perfume, steals, brags of his valor, wears a toupee, fights capons and makes fools (*les dindons*) pay, and counts on his friends for accolades. These distinctions, while slightly bizarre, imply that the classicist is old-fashioned, but also honorable, while the romantic is modern, and perhaps even wealthy, but also artful.<sup>537</sup>

The whole play is designed to mock Satiné and In-Douze's dogmatic attachment to literary genre. Satiné and In-Douze's attitudes convey the sincerity of their convictions, declaring that their stores would be partisan spaces, where literary ideology mattered more than sales. But Petit-Romain reduces their conflict to contempt bred by competition. Literature, he notes, must

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qui ne savent rien."

<sup>536</sup> Ibid., 31.

<sup>537</sup> The stage directions bolster this interpretation. They note that In-Douze should be dressed in outmoded, sedate clothing – a tricorner hat, brown shirt, black culottes and socks, a cane with the head in the form of a raven's bill. On the other hand it says Satiné should be dressed in the latest fashion, and much more ostentatiously – in silk and pony hair, with an English-style cravat and riding coat with gigot (or leg of mutton) sleeves (sleeves that balloon around the upper arm and taper on the forearms), pleated pants and healed boots and a pince-nez. Ibid., 2.

entice these kinds of debates between men who are not compelled to like each other, but who are forced to hate each other cordially because their business continuously draws them together.<sup>538</sup> Tampon, the journeyman—representing the common man—frames the public ambivalence toward the *bataille romantique* early in the play. He observes that In-Douze and Satiné fight whenever they happen to be in the print shop at the same time, because one is a classicist and the other a romantic, but the master printer Petit-Romain is for both. Tampon, meanwhile, stands for neither: the classicist bores him and the romantic annoys him.<sup>539</sup> Petit-Romain's print shop exemplifies the ideal of neutral commercial space, where romantic and classicist literature and partisans are only judged on their profitability. Though the play skews somewhat in favor of classicists (and the play itself follows the *règle des trois unités* of classicist theatre), overall, it implies that literary partisanship matters less than sales, and that these differences are more a matter of pride and outward appearance than meaningful substance.<sup>540</sup>

The play was successful: it was included in lists of plays put on by the Variétés until at least February 1826.<sup>541</sup> Moreover, the *Année théâtrale* for 1824 called it a “constant success,”<sup>542</sup> and an article about the actor Lepeintre, who played Petit-Romain, mentioned *l'imprimeur sans caractère* as one of his successes.<sup>543</sup> It was also printed fairly quickly after its initial production, and went through at least two editions in 1824 alone.<sup>544</sup> And it seems to have inspired two similar plays: *Roman à vendre, ou les deux libraires* by M. Bayard, which went into production at Théâtre de l'Odéon on 10 February 1825, discussed in the previous chapter, and *Les deux écoles, ou le*

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<sup>538</sup> Ibid., 28.

<sup>539</sup> Ibid., 4.

<sup>540</sup> The play also highlights the importance of printing. The plot suggests how important printing was for the promotion of either literary genre – both booksellers needed a printer (and the number of printers in Paris was legally restricted). Moreover, the play's title is a pun – the word *caractère* means character, as in personality, as well as integrity, but it also means type, as in the type one prints with. An amusing bit of wordplay for a play about a printer who is neither a classicist nor a romantic, but raises the question, what is a printer without type? The naming of certain characters – In-Douze (duodecimo) and Tampon (stamp) – too reference aspects of printing and bookbinding. The play survives to this day, in part, because it was printed, but also because of the other print traces it left behind, particularly reviews in newspapers and journals.

<sup>541</sup> *La Lorgnette. Journal des théâtres, de la littérature, des arts, des mœurs, des modes et de la librairie, pour Paris, les départemens et l'étranger* 3, no. 726 (13 February 1826): 1.

<sup>542</sup> *Année théâtrale de 1824, ou Répertoire général des pièces jouées à Paris, depuis le 1er janvier jusqu'au 31 décembre 1824* (Paris: Firmin Didot, 1824), np.

<sup>543</sup> L.S. “Théâtre des Variétés,” *Journal des débats politiques et littéraires* (11 December 1824): 4.

<sup>544</sup> The copy used here is a second edition. The price listed is 1 fr 50 c.

*classique et le romantique*, which played at the same theatre that August, and is examined in Chapter 6.<sup>545</sup> These plays reveal the prominent place the romantic-classicist debate held in Parisian society in the mid-1820s. However, where *Roman à vendre* emphasized the profitability of romantic printing over classicist printing, *l'Imprimeur sans caractère* suggested to its audience that all literature could be profitable, and that commerce ignored or flattened literary distinctions. The play received special attention because the romantic publisher Pierre-François "Camille" Ladvocat inspired Satiné.<sup>546</sup> In Ladvocat's obituary Jules Janin claimed that "everyone in the city" went to see the play, recounting a story of Ladvocat giving costume advice to the actor playing 'him,' purportedly insisting that the actor must dress historically if he was to portray a historical figure.<sup>547</sup> This connection between the play and Ladvocat may account for people's continued interest in a play that might otherwise have been a forgotten moment from Parisian 1820s vaudeville theatre.<sup>548</sup> As we saw in the previous chapter, Ladvocat exemplified partisan publishing in Restoration Paris: he was *the* romantic publisher. He printed Hugo's *Odes*, and the works of Byron, Guizot, Victor Cousin, Gillemain, Lamartine, Casimir Delavigne, among others. His shop in the galleries de bois in the Palais Royal supplied an essential hub for romanticism in the Restoration, and he acted as a broker between romantics; Janin first met Chateaubriand in Ladvocat's home, after Ladvocat had moved from the Palais Royal.<sup>549</sup> While Petit-Romain suggests the ways in which commercial spaces could blur the lines of literary partisanship, Ladvocat (and his fictional counterpart Satiné), clearly shows that other commercial locations in Paris, like his store, and even his home, reinforced ideological divisions.

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<sup>545</sup> Jean-François-Alfred Bayard, *Roman à vendre, ou, Les deux libraires comédie en trois actes et en vers* (Paris: Barba : Brière, 1825); Joseph Léonard and Jean Joseph Ader, *Les deux écoles ou, Le classique et le romantique. Comédie en trois actes et en vers*. (Paris: A. Dupont et Roret; Barba, 1825). Chapter 3 explores *Roman à vendre* and the insights it offers into the commerciality of romantic printing, and Chapter 6 looks at *Les deux écoles* and places all three plays in the context of Restoration theatre.

<sup>546</sup> Artois, Lurieu, and Allarde, *L'imprimeur sans caractère*, 4.

<sup>547</sup> Janin, "Nécrologie – le libraire Ladvocat," *Journal des débats politiques et littéraires* (11 September 1854): 3.

<sup>548</sup> A 1927 article written on the supposed hundredth anniversary of romanticism discussed Ladvocat's portrayal in *l'Imprimeur sans caractère*, and used Janin's anecdote about Ladvocat's satorial advice to illustrate the origins of romanticism. Arrigon, "A l'aube du Romantisme," 17.

<sup>549</sup> Janin, "Nécrologie – le libraire Ladvocat," *Journal des débats politiques et littéraires* (11 September 1854): 3.

This growing commercialization of print and publishing should be seen as part of a greater commercialization in general. Although most histories of consumption tend to focus on the latter half of the nineteenth century, the Restoration was a significant time in the development of commercial culture, and therefore in the development of urban commercial spaces.

### **The Palais Royal and the rise of the Arcade**

The particular locations in which these periodicals were produced and sold came with their own sets of meanings. Although we know that the production and distribution of literary journals was concentrated in the areas surrounding the Palais Royal and the Quai des Augustins, sources suggest that the Palais Royal was seen as less respectable than the Quai des Augustins. As Reverend Thomas Frognall Dibdin tells us in his 1829 *Bibliographical, Antiquarian and Picturesque Tour in France and Germany*, in ancient times the area around the Sorbonne was the most common location for bookselling in Paris, but that now it is closer to the Seine, and especially the Quai des Augustins. Dibdin distinguishes these serious, proper, and respected booksellers from the peddlers of “trivial or mischievous productions” in the Palais Royal,<sup>550</sup> and he is not the only contemporary source to so characterize the Palais Royal. John Scott in his, *A Visit to Paris in 1814*, wrote that the books for sale in the galleries of the Palais Royal “run through all the degrees necessary to adapt them to every class of purchasers. Some are as elegant as art can make them, - others mere villainous deformities. There are editions of the works of all the established authors, graduated for every description of taste: - in one the prints are chaste and good, in another licentiousness begins to appear, - in a third it is more apparent, - in a fourth it amounts to obscenity.”<sup>551</sup> Scott took this as evidence of the depravity of French art in general, that it had to reach for nudity and obscenity, which belied their pretensions to refinement.<sup>552</sup> Whether or not it was true that a shopper could more easily find salacious literature at the Palais Royal than elsewhere in the city, that certainly seems to have been the general impression.

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<sup>550</sup> Thomas Frognall Dibdin, *A Bibliographical, Antiquarian and Picturesque Tour in France and Germany*, 2d ed., vol. 2 (London: R. Jennings, and J. Major, 1829), 219.

<sup>551</sup> John Scott, *A Visit to Paris in 1814: Being a Review of the Moral, Political, Intellectual, and Social Condition of the French Capital* (Philadelphia: Edward Parker, 1815), 110.

<sup>552</sup> *Ibid.*, 111.

Scott's concern with the transparency with which these stores sold 'obscene' literature was matched only by his confusion at it being sold side by side with fine literature. He wrote that the "French reconcile fineness with filth, politeness with coarseness, honor with falsehood. In like manner, the shops that present the grossness above alluded to, are crowded with elegant literature, placed out evidently for numerous purchasers. The best French classics, histories, poets, &c. are heaped on every stall, and lie among the trash of political pamphlets, which prove nothing but that there is not a particle of political understanding or principle in all France. The good books must be purchased as well as the bad ones, - and in point of fact, they are purchased."<sup>553</sup> Like with *l'Imprimeur sans caractère*, we see here how commerce could flatten distinctions within literature – obscene, popular, fine, all for sale side by side. Even if shops specialized or shunned literature that did or did not meet certain criteria, the concentration of bookstores in specific areas meant that these books were sold in proximity to each other. Moreover, the plethora of locations of bookselling meant that these commercial spaces became entangled with non-commercial spaces. Scott notes that, "you cannot walk three steps without encountering a stall rich in literature: the bridges and quays are full of them; the entrances of the palaces are hung round with the wares of these itinerant venders, – for in Paris their notions of what may be termed the decorum of elegance are not very troublesome; – the passages to the courts of justice are markets for these commodities."<sup>554</sup> The Palais Royal was an excellent example of this kind of mixed space – shopping arcades, public green space, the theatre, and palace.

The *Palais-Royal* was known not only for its salacious literature, but for its salaciousness in general, which may be the origin of this idea that the literature sold there was more lewd than the literature sold on the Quai des Augustins. Scott remarked that the Palais Royal was known for its prostitutes,<sup>555</sup> a fact echoed by Balzac in *Illusions Perdues*, where he noted that the prostitutes in the galleries de bois commanded so large a crowd that the crush of bodies was like being at a

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<sup>553</sup> Ibid., 112.

<sup>554</sup> Ibid.

<sup>555</sup> Ibid., 122.

ball.<sup>556</sup> Much of the contemporary literature about the Palais Royal focused on it as a site of sensuous pleasure – gambling, prostitutes, colorful displays of commodities, abundant food, and cafés. Short books with titles like *les Nymphes du Palais-Royal*, or *le Palais Royal ou les filles en bonne fortune*, or *les Confessions délicates des véritables nymphes du Palais Royal* abound in the Restoration.<sup>557</sup> The famous print by Opiz of a group of soldiers outside n. 113, a famous gambling house (seen below), depicts a number of well-coifed women, who are more than likely prostitutes. The preface to an 1819 guide to the Palais-Royal, written by an Englishman, began with the assertion that the Palais Royal was a place of astonishment for the English traveler. He wrote, “containing all art that can delight, of nature that can be desired, and of pleasure that can allure, the eye wanders unsated, without knowing where to rest.”<sup>558</sup> He contended that the Palais Royal was a place that could corrupt unsuspecting youths.<sup>559</sup>

The Palais Royal served as an important social space in early nineteenth-century Paris. An 1813 history of the Palais Royal noted that the nature of the building, its location in central Paris, and the large number of shops located there all worked to constantly attract a large crowd.<sup>560</sup> The author contended that the Palais Royal was the center of Parisian life – that it was the only place in the city a person could live in without ever having to leave.<sup>561</sup> He wrote that the Palais Royal could see to all one’s pleasures, including those of the mind – with several reading

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<sup>556</sup> Honoré de Balzac, *Illusions perdues* (Paris: Garnier-Flammarion, 1966), 265, 267.

<sup>557</sup> Déterville, *Le Palais-Royal ou les filles en bonne fortune: coup-d’œil rapide sur le Palais-royal en général, sur les maisons de jeu* (Paris: l’Écrivain, 1815); J.-P.-R. Cuisin, *Les nymphes du Palais-Royal; leurs mœurs, leurs expressions d’argot, leur élévation, retraite et décadence. Par P. Cuisin. 3e édition* (Paris: Roux, 1815), <http://gallica.bnf.fr/ark:/12148/bpt6k6457237f>; Émile Marco de Saint-Hilaire, *Biographie des nymphes du Palais-Royal, et autres quartiers de Paris; par Modeste Agnèse, l’une d’elles* (Paris: Librairie française et étrangère, 1823), <http://gallica.bnf.fr/ark:/12148/bpt6k6447844c>; *Les confessions délicates des véritables nymphes du Palais-Royal, écrites par elles-mêmes* (Paris: Terry, 1820), <http://gallica.bnf.fr/ark:/12148/bpt6k5492185h>; *Grande, véritable et lamentable complainte romantique de ces demoiselles, écrite sous la dictée d’une ci-devant nymphe du N° 113, accompagnée de notes et commentaires, par un moraliste du Palais Royal* (impr. de Gaultier-Laguionie (Paris), 1830), <http://gallica.bnf.fr/ark:/12148/bpt6k5734201v>.

<sup>558</sup> *The Picture of the Palais Royal, describing its spectacles, gaming rooms, coffee houses and other remarkable objects in that high change of the fashionable dissipation and vice of Paris* (London: W. Hone, 1819), iii, <http://gallica.bnf.fr/ark:/12148/bpt6k8536287>.

<sup>559</sup> *Ibid.*, iv.

<sup>560</sup> *Du Palais-Royal, ce qu’il a été, ce qu’il est, ce qu’il peut devenir* (Paris: Chez les marchands de nouveautés, 1813), 13.

<sup>561</sup> *Ibid.*, 13–14.



rooms and over 25 bookstores.<sup>562</sup> The Palais Royal also provided theatrical entertainment of various kinds, artists, food, and brothels.<sup>563</sup> This concept of the Palais Royal as the center of Paris was repeated fairly often.<sup>564</sup> In 1816 there was even a volume printed of over one hundred pages of songs about the Palais-Royal.<sup>565</sup>

The significance of the Palais Royal points to an important trend in Restoration Parisian commerce in general and Parisian commercial print culture in particular: the rise of the arcade. Arcades were covered pedestrian walkways, often with vaulted glass roofs. Many of Paris' shopping arcades housed booksellers, printers and journal offices. While Paris' first and undoubtedly most famous shopping arcade, the galleries de bois at the Palais Royal were built in the eighteenth century, at least 5 more were built under the revolutionary and Napoleonic regimes, and at least 15 new arcades were built during the Restoration, and the galleries de bois were torn down and replaced with "the first expansive vaulted arcade in the world." An 1828 travel guide, *le Véritable conducteur Parisien de Richard*, claimed there were 137 arcades in Paris.<sup>566</sup> Richard defined an arcade (*passage*) broadly to mean any covered pedestrian street, of which presumably not all would be shopping arcades (*galeries*),<sup>567</sup> which might explain this high figure. Despite the relative accuracy of the number given, Richard clearly saw arcades as a draw for tourists, and an important feature of the Parisian landscape. He specifically mentioned "les passages Vivienne, Colbert, de l'Opéra, Choiseul, Vero-Dodat" and commented on both the fineness, the expensiveness of their stores, and their usefulness in inclement weather.<sup>568</sup> Arcades provided a more pleasant urban shopping experience – their covered walkways protected

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<sup>562</sup> Ibid., 15.

<sup>563</sup> Ibid., 15–20.

<sup>564</sup> Détéville, *Le Palais-Royal ou les filles en bonne fortune*, xii.

<sup>565</sup> *Le chansonnier joyeux du Palais Royal, ou Recueil de divers chansons, pot-pourri, couplets tant bachiques que gaillards, burlesques, comiques, satiriques etc. Publié par des habitués des palais* (impr. de Me Ve Jeunehomme (Paris), 1816), <http://gallica.bnf.fr/ark:/12148/bpt6k54554809>.

<sup>566</sup> *Le Véritable conducteur parisien de Richard* (édition de 1828), 24.

<sup>567</sup> Although I make this distinction here for clarity, the word *passage* was often used for shopping arcades – the Passage des Panoramas, for example, was a shopping arcade, as was the Galerie de Bois at the Palais Royal.

<sup>568</sup> *Le Véritable conducteur parisien de Richard* (édition de 1828), 24.

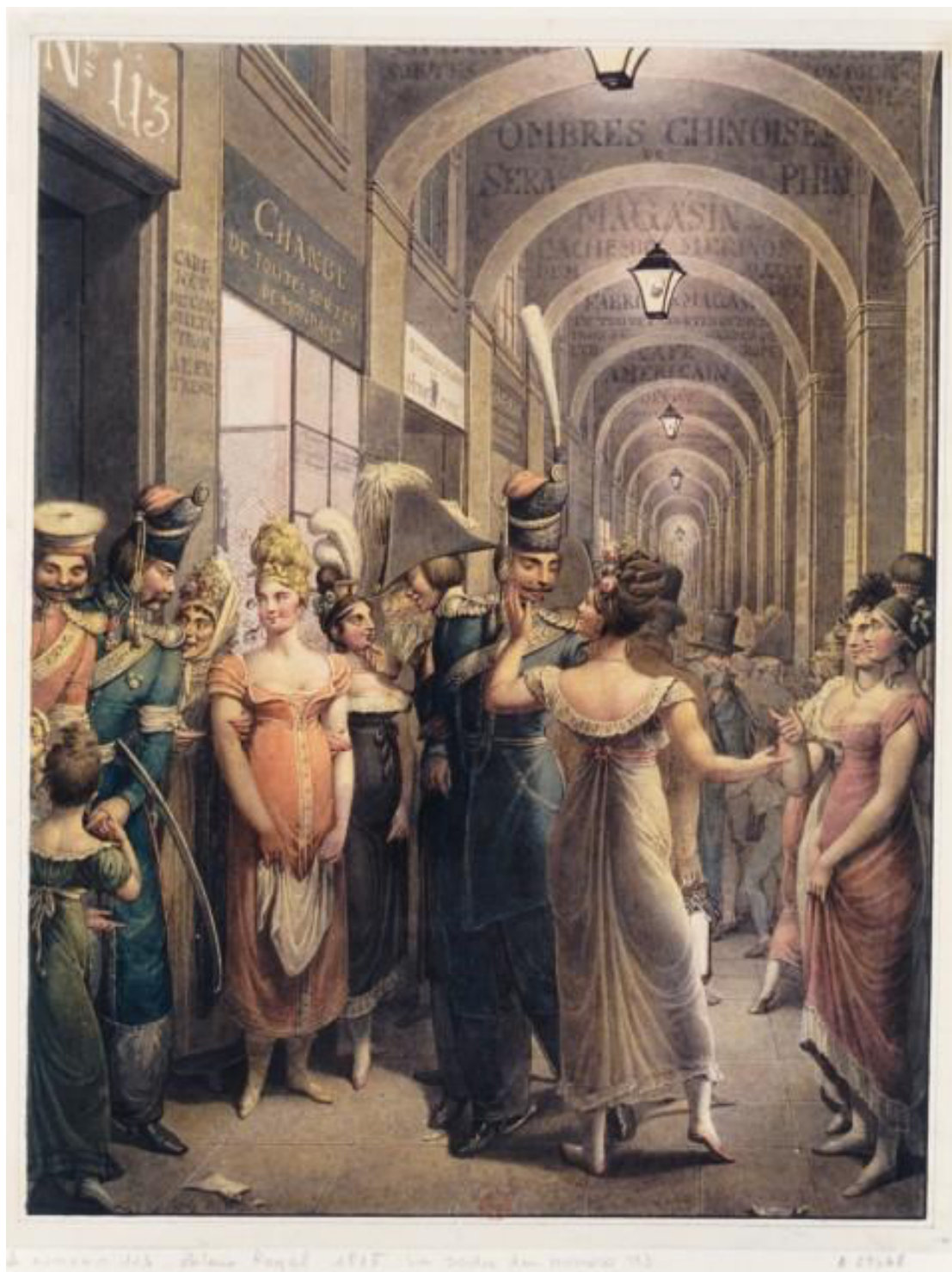


Figure 4 - Le n. 113 Palais Royal, 1815<sup>569</sup>

<sup>569</sup> Georg-Emmanuel Opiz, *[Le n° 113. Palais-Royal. 1815. La sortie du n° 113]: [dessin], 1815*, <http://gallica.bnf.fr/ark:/12148/btv1b10303273h>.

shoppers from the elements and the muddy, watery streets – a significant issue with the narrow roads and walkways of pre-Haussmann Paris. The author of another travel guide, *Nouveaux tableaux de Paris, ou Observations sur les mœurs et usages des Parisiens au commencement du XIXe siècle*, wrote that few other big cities had streets as dirty as Paris.<sup>570</sup> He wrote that Paris' shopping arcades were "sumptuous temples where the god of commerce possesses altars upon which the purses of curious strollers are offered in sacrifice daily."<sup>571</sup> They were also public places of sociability, where people could meet and walk. These arcades varied in terms of size and magnificence, but gas lamps lighted most,<sup>572</sup> which was significant given both the newness of gas lamp technology – the city began lighting its streets with gas lamps only in 1820 – and the controversy surrounding it.<sup>573</sup> Shopping arcades, and in particular the *galeries* at the Palais Royal were important locales for bookstores and print shops. In 1828 the arcades at the Palais Royal housed 120 boutiques, including at least 13 bookstores and 3 cabinets de lectures.<sup>574</sup> This proliferation of arcades is indicative of both commercial growth and increased commercialization in early-nineteenth-century Paris.

An 1827 play, *les Passages et les rues, ou la guerre déclaré*, situated in the galerie Colbert, centered around a sort of mock trial over the relative merits of the arcade versus the street, and explored the tension between profitable business and successful human relationships. It premiered at the Théâtre des Variétés on 7 March 1827. Its main character, M. Dulingot, a businessman and shareholder in various arcades, considers the marriage prospects of his daughter Alexandrine, who wishes to marry an umbrella salesman named Duperron. Dulingot refuses to grant Duperron Alexandrine's hand, because Dulingot wishes to invest the money he would use for her dowry, and because he believes Duperron's business, located on the street, will

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<sup>570</sup> Joseph Pain and C. de Beauregard, *Nouveaux tableaux de Paris, ou Observations sur les mœurs et usages des Parisiens au commencement du XIXe siècle*, vol. 1 (Paris: Pillet-Ainé, 1828), 27, <http://gallica.bnf.fr/ark:/12148/bpt6k63908821>.

<sup>571</sup> Ibid., 1:29. "Ces temples somptueux où le dieu du commerce possède des autels sur lesquels la bourse des badauds est chaque jour offerte en sacrifice."

<sup>572</sup> *Le Vritable conducteur parisien de Richard* (édition de 1828), 24.

<sup>573</sup> See for example, Nodier and Pichot, *Essai critique sur le gaz hydrogène et les divers modes d'éclairage artificiel*.

<sup>574</sup> *Le Vritable conducteur parisien de Richard* (édition de 1828), 113, 139.

fail as arcades eliminate the need for umbrellas.<sup>575</sup> Later, when Dulingot finds out Duperron owns some land through which he wants to build an arcade, but has joined the forces of the anti-arcade contingent, Alexandrine admonishes him saying that if he had not refused Duperron's request to marry her Duperron would still be on Dulingot's side. Dulingot simply notes that "one is a capitalist before one is a father."<sup>576</sup>

In the mock trial, M. Pour (M. For) argues in favor of arcades, while his half-brother, M. Contre (Mr. Against), argues for the street. Business interest and ideology have left the half brothers estranged; they cannot agree on the topic of arcades. All of the partisans in the arcades versus streets debate, like Dulingot and the misters Pour and Contre, place profitability ahead of all other interests. Madame Duhelder, who owns a carriage rental business and is part of a coalition against arcades, convinces Duperron that arcades will destroy his business and introduces him to M. Contre.<sup>577</sup> They, along with a clog maker and a hat maker, claim that arcades are destroying their businesses. For example, the hat maker says that arcades limit hats' exposure to the elements, and so they last four times as long.<sup>578</sup> In the final debate between M. Pour and M. Contre, M. Contre claims that "one hundred forty four arcades have opened their mouths wide and devoured our regulars [customers]" and that the arcades infringe on the ancient rights of Parisian streets.<sup>579</sup> He demands as recompense the prohibition of the 144 arcades and 14.5 million francs in damages.<sup>580</sup>

M. Pour's speech in favor of arcades, which he delivers in song, extols their virtues for the Parisian shopper. One can always walk in arcades, he argues, regardless of rain, wind and sleet. Arcades make for excellent meeting places in the winter, and women in arcades are "as in their boudoir."<sup>581</sup> He continues, praising the architecture of the arcade, noting that its columns

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<sup>575</sup> Nicolas Brazier, Gabriel de Lurieu, and Théophile Marion Dumersan, *Les passages et les rues, ou La guerre déclarée: vaudeville en 1 acte* (Paris: Duvernois, 1827), 11, <http://gallica.bnf.fr/ark:/12148/bpt6k726685>.

<sup>576</sup> Ibid., 24. "On est capitaliste avant d'être père."

<sup>577</sup> Ibid., 12–13.

<sup>578</sup> Ibid., 15–19.

<sup>579</sup> Ibid., 29. "Cent quarante-quatre passages ouvrent leurs bouches béantes pour dévorer nos habitués."

<sup>580</sup> Ibid.

<sup>581</sup> Ibid., 30. "comme dans leur boudoir."

make one think they are in Athens and that the arcade is “a temple to commerce, erected by good taste.”<sup>582</sup> This is the second allusion Pour makes to the foreignness of the arcade. Earlier in his speech he says that arcades have encouraged all of Paris (presumably with the exception of the anti-arcade faction) to adopt the fashion of the bazaars of the “Orient.”<sup>583</sup> He presents both these examples of foreign importation as positives, while simultaneously emphasizing how Parisian the arcades are, how important they are for the development of the city. He refers to “beautiful Paris, encircled with greenery” as well as “old Paris, disdainful of dust.”<sup>584</sup> He argues that these established markets lead to plenty, that they are healthful, and that all those who admire all that arcades do for history – building anew on the ruins of the past and raising them to glory – support the new Paris.<sup>585</sup> Arcades, Pour suggests, are the future of Paris.

A woman named Lutèce arbitrates this dispute between arcades and streets, and concludes that arcades and streets must work hand in hand, and allow building to continue so that Paris may grow, because “the further it extends its empire, the more commerce will earn.”<sup>586</sup> To cement the peace between the streets and the arcades Lutèce says she will arrange the marriage between Alexandrine and Duperron. Dulingot declares that he is pleased he gets to keep his money. The play ends with Lutèce announcing a ball to celebrate the wedding and a chorus singing a song about how singing and dancing is better than war.

The stage directions in the play suggest an attempt to evoke a feeling of the streets of Paris. The initial directions say “the theatre represents the middle of the rotunda of the galerie Colbert, rue Vivienne, the rear is open and allows one to see in perspective the arcade that follow the rue Neuve-des-Petits-Champs.”<sup>587</sup> When M. Contre enters the stage for the first time people carrying banners representing the streets of Paris follow after him – a bear, for rue Ours, a shepherd for rue Bergère, a croissant for rue Croissant. In parallel, when Alexandrine enters people carrying banners representing various arcades follow her – a salmon for Passage

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<sup>582</sup> Ibid. “ce temple / Est au commerce élevé par le goût.”

<sup>583</sup> Ibid.

<sup>584</sup> Ibid. “Ce beau Paris, couronné de verdure.”; “Du vieux Paris dédaignant la poussière.”

<sup>585</sup> Ibid.

<sup>586</sup> Ibid., 31. “Plus il étendra son empire, / Plus le commerce y gagnera.”

<sup>587</sup> Ibid., 3.

Saumon, a bridge for Passage Pont-Neuf, a dancer for Passage de l'Opéra, etc.<sup>588</sup> This visual emphasis on a particularly Parisian space, the fact that the shop owners hailed from various parts of Paris, showed the audience that this story was about Paris specifically, and not simply a generic story about arcades and commerce.

Walter Benjamin briefly mentions this play in his *Arcades Project*, twice, in the first section: "Convolutes." [A10,3] [A10a, 1]<sup>589</sup> Benjamin's unfinished project is the most famous and extensive study of Parisian arcades to date. He researched Parisian arcades for thirteen years, and believed they were the most important architectural development of the nineteenth century, and that, as a result, their study would tell us fundamental things about the nineteenth century that we would be unable to access through traditional historical methods. As a result the passages and references Benjamin collected range from the literary, the not-so literary (like *les Passages et les rues*), the philosophical, the economic, the technological, to the political. The work Benjamin did to organize his research suggests that arcades touched on all these aspects of life – his headings range from things like 'Prostitution, Gambling' to 'Marx' to 'The Stock Exchange, Economic History' to 'Fashion' to 'Modes of lighting.'

Rolf Tiedemann, in his discussion of how the *Arcades Project* should be read given that it is unfinished, argues that "the arcades themselves are only one theme among many. They belong to those urban phenomena that appeared in the early nineteenth century, with the emphatic claim of the new, but they have meanwhile lost their functionality. Benjamin discovered the signature of the early modern in the ever more rapid obsolescence of the inventions and innovations generated by a developing capitalism's productive forces."<sup>590</sup> Benjamin's arcades project, while a work of philosophy, is therefore compatible with a historical project of reconstructing a Paris that no longer exists. But his project also points to the important ways that nineteenth-century Paris was striving beyond itself. Tiedemann writes, "Benjamin wanted to draw attention to the fact that architectonic constructions such as the arcades owed their existence to and served the industrial order of production, while at the same time containing in themselves

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<sup>588</sup> Ibid., 24–25.

<sup>589</sup> Benjamin, *The Arcades Project*, 55–56.

<sup>590</sup> Ibid., 932.

something unfulfilled, never to be fulfilled within the confines of capitalism – in this case, the glass architecture of the future Benjamin often alludes to.”<sup>591</sup> Influenced by both psychoanalysis and Surrealism, Benjamin wanted to explore the material as connected to dreaming, because “under capitalist relationships of production, history could be likened to the unconscious actions of the dreaming individual, at least insofar as history is man-made, yet without consciousness or design, as if in a dream,” or as if the product of the collective unconscious.<sup>592</sup> His focus on the material as embedded in the world of dreams serves as an important reminder that we cannot separate the literary, aesthetic and political debates at the heart of this dissertation from the physical world in which they were produced, because that world developed in tandem with the collective dream of it, of which the literary and political debates are an important part, even if that dream went unfulfilled. The world of Restoration Paris was an early capitalist one, but more specifically it was a world whose capitalism encouraged the proliferation of arcades, and if we could somehow grasp what made Restoration Paris a place of growth for arcades, then we would know something fundamental about it that we might not understand otherwise.

Benjamin attributes the rise of arcades to the success of the textile industry, and the subsequent desire for stores to have extra merchandise on the one hand, and developments in iron production on the other.<sup>593</sup> Scott on the other hand attributes the rise of arcades, and particularly the Palais Royal, to the temperament of the French – whom he says desire their amusements outside the home – as well as to the climate of France.<sup>594</sup>

But what then is the particular relationship between arcades and literature, other than being places of sale? The section of the “Convulutes” entitled “Literary History, Victor Hugo” actually contains few explicit references to arcades, and instead focuses on the commercialization of literature. Whether or not that commercialization benefited the author often depended on his or her aspirations. There are several references to Balzac’s plan, expressed in his *Feuilleton des journaux politiques* (1830), to sell books directly to the consumer, and therefore

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<sup>591</sup> Ibid., 933.

<sup>592</sup> Ibid.

<sup>593</sup> Ibid., 3–4.

<sup>594</sup> Scott, *A Visit to Paris in 1814*, 105.

cut out the bookseller. This saved money for the buyer and made more money for the writer and publisher.<sup>595</sup> He also notes that Victor Hugo always got paid less than Alphonse de Lamartine.<sup>596</sup> Besides that, much of the section focuses on what literature does, how it interacts with society. He therefore often mentions journals and newspapers, how they were used to sell books in various ways, including the serialization of novels, and how journals were then competition for books, as well as how George Sand's novels purportedly encouraged women to leave their husbands.<sup>597</sup> Balzac's writing is presented as having either been prophetic, or having dramatically shaped French society after his death.<sup>598</sup> The incompleteness of literature's commercialization seems of particular importance for Benjamin. Elsewhere in the project he writes that, "these products are on the point of entering the market as commodities. But they linger on the threshold. From this epoch derive the arcades and *intérieurs*, the exhibition halls and panoramas. They are residues of a dream world. The realization of dream elements, in the course of waking up, is the paradigm of dialectical thinking. Thus, dialectical thinking is the organ of historical awakening. Every epoch, in fact, not only dreams the one to follow but, in dreaming, precipitates its awakening. It bears its end within itself and unfolds it – as Hegel already noticed – by cunning. With the destabilizing of the market economy, we begin to recognize the monuments of the bourgeoisie as ruins even before they have crumbled."<sup>599</sup> The arcades, therefore, help to bring literature into a commercial world, while simultaneously anticipating a more advanced commerciality in the future and striving toward it.

The ways in which commerce blurs the lines between types of literature, between fine and obscene literature, and the anxiety this caused for contemporaries seems tied to this anticipatory commerciality. They imagine a world overrun by rampant commerce, and no consideration for the literary. In *Nouveaux tableaux de Paris* (1828) in the section on arcades the narrator shares with the reader a conversation he overheard in the Passage des Panoramas. Two men are discussing whether a new theatre will open. The first says it will and will be

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<sup>595</sup> Benjamin, *The Arcades Project*, 756.

<sup>596</sup> Ibid., 757.

<sup>597</sup> Ibid., 758.

<sup>598</sup> Ibid., 760.

<sup>599</sup> Ibid., 13.



successful, the second says it will not and if it does no one will attend; there are already so many theatres. The first replies, “There are never too many . . . Everywhere where lovely plays are performed, there will be a public to applaud them. We should close gambling houses and multiply the theatres . . . We do not ruin ourselves for a seat in the orchestra, and to this day no one has killed themselves in despair after seeing a bad play.”<sup>600</sup> The narrator speaks up and adds that a proliferation of theatres will mean more men of letters finding outlets for their work, and therefore success, and specifically success based on merit and talent, not on established authority or belonging to the canon.<sup>601</sup> In this example, the arcade, as a site of both gambling and theatre crystalized for the interlocutors their grievances with society – that it was more concerned with money than art, with power than with talent. By selling literature in locations associated with money and with sensuous pleasure, arcades helped to highlight the commerciality of that literature.

### **Cabinets de lecture**

The *cabinet de lecture*, another important site for the consumption of literature in the first half of the nineteenth-century, presents a somewhat different model of commercial literature, one that is more or less isolated from other kinds of commerce.<sup>602</sup> (Although, they were also similar in many ways, and many cabinets de lecture were located inside or near arcades. One account claims that the Palais-Royal alone had upwards of 20 reading rooms.)<sup>603</sup> Occupying the space between bookshops and libraries, the cabinets de lecture, or reading rooms, were an important part of the print culture landscape of Restoration Paris. A cabinet de lecture was a commercial enterprise where customers could rent books, newspapers, journals, brochures or other reading

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<sup>600</sup> Pain and Beauregard, *Nouveaux tableaux de Paris, ou Observations sur les mœurs et usages des Parisiens au commencement du XIXe siècle*, 1:30–31. “Il n’y en a jamais trop, disait l’autre. Partout où se joueront de jolies pièces, il se trouvera un public pour les applaudir. Fermez les maisons de jeu et multipliez les spectacles; la morale et les désœuvrés y gagneront. On ne se ruine pas pour avoir une place au parterre, ou même à l’orchestre, et jusqu’à présent personne ne s’est tué de désespoir après la représentation d’un mauvais ouvrage. »

<sup>601</sup> Ibid., 1:31.

<sup>602</sup> This discussion of *cabinets de lecture* focuses on the commercial variety – subscription libraries – but the term *cabinet de lecture* was also used for the reading rooms available at academic and literary societies, which one could access by virtue of membership in the society. I mention this second type briefly in the discussion of the Société des bonnes-lettres in Chapter 5.

<sup>603</sup> *Picture of the Palais Royal*, 144.

material for a small fee per volume or per issue. People could also subscribe to a reading room, and so, by paying a monthly fee, could get unlimited access to the books and journals provided. Cabinets de lecture could offer books only, journals and newspapers only, or both. The average cabinet contained between two and five thousand titles, and some of the larger had as many as thirty thousand volumes and seventy-five journal titles.<sup>604</sup> They tended to be made up of a large room, or rooms, lined with bookshelves, filled with large tables laid with green cloths.<sup>605</sup> Although libraries existed in Paris, they tended to stock scholarly books, and so would not have had the latest novels or even recent newspapers and journals. Moreover, they tended to have limited hours. In contrast, cabinets de lecture opened early in the morning and closed late at night, which meant many were open thirteen to fifteen hours a day.<sup>606</sup> In part because of this, like Arcades, *cabinets de lecture* were hybrid spaces – both commercial and social. Their long hours meant they were spaces to which people could go in the evening, to socialize or simply be out in society.

Roger Chartier has argued that reading rooms had two different origins – they emerged from the aristocratic intellectual sociability of the Enlightenment on the one hand, and from a growing commerce around the book trade on the other.<sup>607</sup> Those that were formed by societies or salons to encourage shared reading and intellectual community were very different from those designed as commercial ventures, the former intended to create a closed society, and the latter an open one, but both appealed to a similar clientele. While a market implies a universal public, an association is by its very nature closed, and this meant that as they expanded, market-based reading rooms reached out to broader and broader portions of the reading community. Although historians disagree on precisely how far these reading rooms could reach in the first half of the nineteenth century, it seems likely that they were not frequented by the working classes until after

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<sup>604</sup> Cassan-Touil, "Introduction," 21.

<sup>605</sup> Harry Earl Whitmore, "The 'Cabinet de Lecture' in France, 1800-1850," *The Library Quarterly: Information, Community, Policy* 48, no. 1 (January 1978): 23.

<sup>606</sup> Cassan-Touil, "Introduction," 22.

<sup>607</sup> Roger Chartier, "Sociétés de lecture et cabinets de lecture en Europe au XVIIIe siècle," in *Sociétés et cabinets de lecture entre lumières et romantisme: actes du colloque organisé à Genève par la Société de lecture le 20 novembre 1993*. (Genève: Société de lecture, 1995), 43.

1848.<sup>608</sup> Françoise Parent-Lardeur emphasizes both the commerciality of *cabinets de lectures*, and their role as sites of culture – as places of encounter between the reader and the author.<sup>609</sup> They were open long hours, they tended toward contemporary novels, and so, she contends, were not substitutes for research libraries, with their limited hours and scholarly texts.<sup>610</sup> Jean-Yves Mollier disagrees and says that reading rooms were designed specifically to fill the space left by the libraries of the ancien régime, and that it was precisely because libraries continued to be scholarly and difficult to access and refused to house contemporary novels that cabinets de lecture found so much success. So they ‘replaced libraries’ insofar as they provided resources the libraries did not, and filled a gap that libraries refused to fill, and in a sense anticipated modern public libraries.<sup>611</sup> In both arguments it is clear that the rise of these reading rooms should be seen as part of a commercialization of print in general, and as an important moment in the economic history of printing. And it really was a moment – readings rooms became increasingly less common in the latter half of the nineteenth century. Extant records suggests that during the Restoration there were 463 cabinets de lecture in Paris, in 1875 their numbers declined to 129, and in 1910 there were only 36.<sup>612</sup> This decline can likely be attributed to both a reduction in the price of books and periodicals and the rise of public libraries,<sup>613</sup> as well as the growth of the retail bookshop. Martin Lyons places the proliferation of bookshops into the provinces in the 1850s, and while he argues these bookshops mostly led to the decline of colportage as a means of bookselling, they would have cut into the cabinets’ market as well, especially as prices declined.<sup>614</sup> Moreover, while there had been establishments that rented

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<sup>608</sup> Jean-Yves Mollier, “La Cabinet de lecture en France au XIXe siècle: Entre la bibliothèque et la librairie, une institution culturelle de longue durée,” in *Autour d’un cabinet de lecture*, ed. Graham Falconer (Toronto: Centre d’études du XIXe siècle Joseph Sablé, 2001), 46.

<sup>609</sup> Françoise Parent-Lardeur, “Les cabinets de lecture: France, premier tiers du XIXe siècle,” in *Sociétés et cabinets de lecture entre lumières et romantisme: actes du colloque organisé à Genève par la Société de lecture le 20 novembre 1993*. (Genève: Société de lecture, 1995), 57; Françoise Parent-Lardeur, *Lire à Paris au temps de Balzac: les cabinets de lecture à Paris, 1815-1830* (Paris: École des hautes études en sciences sociales, 1981), 9.

<sup>610</sup> Parent-Lardeur, *Les Cabinets De Lecture*.

<sup>611</sup> Mollier, “La Cabinet de lecture en France au XIXe siècle: Entre la bibliothèque et la librairie, une institution culturelle de longue durée,” 46–47.

<sup>612</sup> Cassan-Touil, “Introduction,” 23.

<sup>613</sup> Ibid., 24–25.

<sup>614</sup> Lyons, *Reading Culture and Writing Practices in Nineteenth-Century France*, 48.

books in the latter half of the eighteenth century, these establishments tended to carry books rather than newspapers or journals, and were not the frequently attended, comfortable social spaces that cabinets de lecture were.<sup>615</sup> Therefore, these reading rooms were primarily an early nineteenth-century phenomenon, for a number of economic and social reasons.

Although printing technology advanced fairly rapidly, the cost of producing periodicals decreased only slowly over the course of the Restoration. Reading rooms made it possible for these pricey artifacts to reach a wider audience. When new printing technology is invented there is often a gap before it can be widely used – both because it is expensive for printers to replace their current materials, and because the new technologies may not be compatible with current practices or laws. In the Restoration, for example, because journals had to be printed on stamped paper, they could not make use of the cylindrical steam printing press.<sup>616</sup> Moreover, it was unusual for journals or newspapers to be sold by issue, and subscriptions (be they quarterly, biannual or annual) were rather expensive. The two most common newspapers – *le Moniteur* and *le Constitutionnel*, cost 112 and 72 francs a year respectively, or one and a half month's salary for the average worker. This meant it was much less expensive for a group of people to subscribe to a newspaper together, a practice institutionalized and commercialized by cabinets de lecture.<sup>617</sup> Similarly with books. The cost of books meant the average worker or middling sort could not own a personal library, despite growing literacy rates. An average volume in octavo with a print run of 1000 cost around 7.50 francs, in duodecimo about 3 fr. Because books in octavo often came in two volumes, and those in duodecimo in three to five, this meant that a novel or monograph could cost as much as 15 francs, or one third of a worker's monthly salary.<sup>618</sup> In contrast, reading a single journal in a cabinet de lecture could cost as little as 5 centimes, or as many as 15. Access to all newspapers for a day cost around 20 centimes, and access to all journals and all books

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<sup>615</sup> Pain and Beauregard, *Nouveaux tableaux de Paris, ou Observations sur les mœurs et usages des Parisiens au commencement du XIXe siècle*, 1:65–66.

<sup>616</sup> Cassan-Touil, "Introduction," 12–13.

<sup>617</sup> Ibid.

<sup>618</sup> Ibid., 13. Belgian book piracy, which took Parisian bestsellers and printed them cheaply for lower prices, only made legally printed books that much more expensive.

between 30 and 50 centimes.<sup>619</sup> You could also buy access to the cabinet's journals for a certain amount of time – commonly a month would cost 3 fr. (Three francs would also get you a month of novels, or all books for a month might cost five).<sup>620</sup> While all of these costs could be higher if the establishment was particularly fancy, in general reading rooms and lending libraries made significant financial sense, for both their subscribers and their purveyors.

Although a growing sector of the economy, jobs in print were not necessarily lucrative. In 1826 at least 70 printers went bankrupt in France.<sup>621</sup> This did not mean that no printers, booksellers or reading room proprietors ever found success, or even that people perceived these jobs as risky. Petitioners often framed their requests for authorization to open cabinets de lecture in terms of financial need. This was particularly true of requests from women and widows. Printing and bookselling in general and reading rooms in particular formed an important enclave for women's labor, and in particular widows' and unmarried women's labor. A pre-revolutionary law of 28 February 1723 allowed an unmarried widow to inherit her husband's printing house or bookshop without having to apply for a new license. In June of 1827 the Restoration government declared this law to still be in effect.<sup>622</sup> According to extant archival records of requests for permission to open reading rooms in Paris, a little over half the time these requests were made by women, and usually widows or single women.<sup>623</sup> While the archives for cabinets de lecture in the Restoration are very incomplete, the trend toward women requesters is notable. Moreover, even if in reality only fifty percent of reading rooms were female-owned, there was certainly a sense at the time that the rental of newspapers in particular was dominated by women. A travel guide to Paris, published in 1828, remarked that "In nearly every street, in nearly every public garden we see a stall or a large parasol in which a woman has a voluminous collection of daily

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<sup>619</sup> Ibid., 22.

<sup>620</sup> Ibid., 23.

<sup>621</sup> Ibid., 13.

<sup>622</sup> Grattier, *Commentaire sur les lois de la presse et des autres moyens de publication*, 32–33.

<sup>623</sup> Cabinets de lecture, demandes d'autorisation, 1816-1830, Archives nationales de France, F18/2162B. Of the forty-three separate requests for cabinets de lecture mentioned in this folder, twenty are from men, one of whom explicitly mentions that his wife will work with him.

papers, which she rents to passers-by to read for 5 to 10 centimes per newspaper.<sup>624</sup> In Joseph Brisset's 1843 novel, *Le Cabinet de lecture*, the elderly Madame Bien-Aimé runs the eponymous cabinet.<sup>625</sup> This cultural perception of cabinets de lecture as female-dominated was likely helped by the fact that women ran many of the most popular or prominent cabinets: Madame Cardinal and Malvina Vermot.

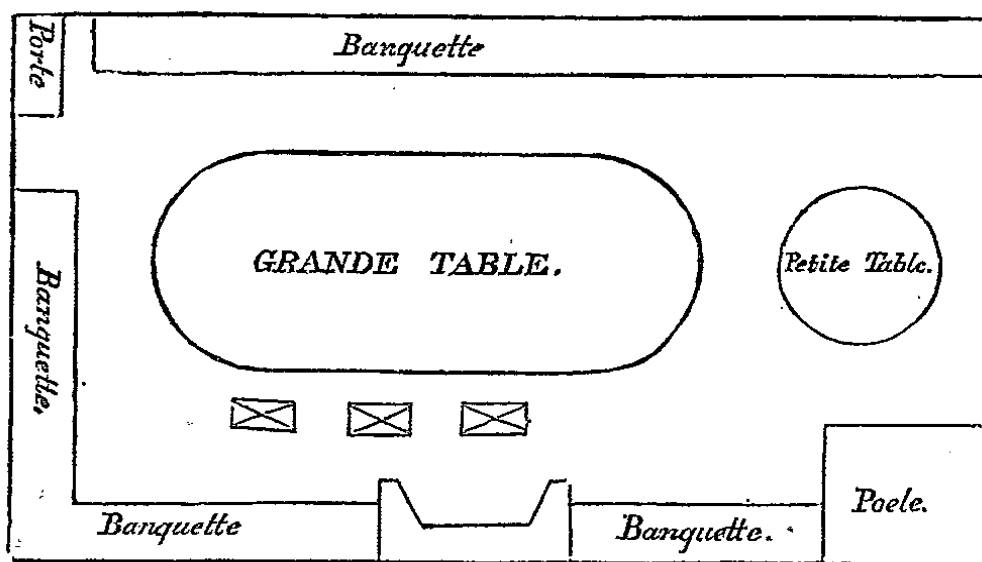


Figure 5 - Floor plan of a cabinet de lecture<sup>626</sup>

Opening a cabinet de lecture was relatively easy under the Restoration. One had to request permission from the Minister of the Interior, and provide a certificate of morality and an affidavit of support from four booksellers.<sup>627</sup> The petitioner had to specify whether she wanted to open a cabinet for journals only, books only, or both. Journal-only cabinets de lecture were quite common. After the request for authorization, the ministry of the interior would request a report on the petitioner from the prefecture of the police – presumably to independently verify the facts in the person's request. The prefect of police would then suggest whether or not the request should be granted. For a long time cabinets de lecture existed in a legal grey area – it was unclear

<sup>624</sup> *Le Véritable conducteur parisien de Richard* (édition de 1828), 54. "Dans presque toutes les promenades, dans presque tous les jardins publics on aperçoit une échoppe ou un large parapluie à l'ombre desquels une femme tient une volumineuse collection de feuilles du jour, qu'elle loue aux promeneurs pour en prendre lecture à raison de 5 ou 10 centimes par journal."

<sup>625</sup> M.J. Brisset, *Le cabinet de lecture*, 2 vols. (Paris: Victor Magen, 1843).

<sup>626</sup> A.M. Fonteney, "Dans un cabinet de lecture," *Paris ou le livre de cent-et-un*, 9 (Paris: Ladvocat, 1832), 271.

<sup>627</sup> Cassan-Touil, "Introduction," 19.; Archives nationales de France, F18/2162B

whether they should be considered bookstores and therefore subject to licensing. In 1816 a request for a license was filed with the note that bookseller licenses (*brevets*) were not required for people who provided book subscriptions.<sup>628</sup> In 1822, however, under the new censorship regime of the Villèle government, technically new cabinets de lecture did require a license, although this was not consistently enforced until 1836. In 1829, the Police specified that licenses would only be required for establishments that were solely reading rooms – so cafés that rented newspapers, or literary societies which also had libraries were not considered ‘cabinets de lecture.’<sup>629</sup> Because cabinets did not require a license but only authorization, and because they required less start-up capital than a bookstore or a print shop, people of more modest means could own and run them. Cabinets de lecture therefore not only increased access to reading materials, but also helped democratize the supply-side of print commerce.

The requests for authorization to open (or on occasion, to continue to run) a cabinet de lecture follow a number of conventions.<sup>630</sup> In their requests, petitioners gave their reasons for wanting to open a cabinet de lecture. Financial motivation, especially as a result of hardship – illness, the loss of employment, often accompanied by having to take care of children (either ones own or those of a relative or young siblings) – was the most common reason given for seeking authorization to open a reading room. Anne Maricot, in September of 1819, wrote that she lost money working in the lace industry and now had nothing to support her husband and three children, the eldest of which was still young. In 1823 Josephine Louis Coadalan wrote that as an orphan who could not walk without crutches, a cabinet de lecture was how she hoped to support herself, given that her infirmity made many kinds of employment impossible. In July 1825 Demoiselle Hortense Benoiste wrote that not only did she support her elderly mother, but that she hoped to be able to help her sister whose husband left her with three small children. Petitioners presented their cabinets de lecture as the only thing standing between them and ruin, or between their children and destitution. Couching their requests in these terms suggests that these

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<sup>628</sup> Ibid.

<sup>629</sup> Ibid. [cites Archives nationales de France, F18/567, piece 206.]

<sup>630</sup> Cabinets de lecture, demandes d'autorisation, 1816-1830, Archives nationales de France, F18/2162B.

petitioners believed the state would be sympathetic to their plight, and that the government had a certain responsibility, at the very least, not to stand in its citizens' way. Moreover, these petitioners clearly believed cabinets de lecture could be acceptably profitable, and also that commerce was a legitimate means of supporting oneself. In the most striking example of this, in October of 1823 Marie Anne Tellier (called Dorsan) wrote that she would like to open a cabinet de lecture of journals because she had been a 'dramatic artist' for many years, and having come into some money, would like to leave the world of drama behind. Her request therefore presented owning a cabinet de lecture as a way to raise her station in society, and not as a last resort. This suggests that cabinet de lecture owners were perceived as respectable, and that opening one could offer more than financial stability to the petitioners.

The petitioner's morality and politics were often mentioned in their requests as well, not surprisingly, given that morality was a requirement for authorization. Because the police would also investigate the petitioner, the prefect's report sometimes brought to light information about the petitioner's morality not provided by the petitioner themselves. In April of 1828 the prefecture of police suggested to the Director of the Librairie that a request for authorization for a cabinet de lecture of journals be rejected on the grounds that the petitioner, a M. Borel-Gaillard, had abandoned his wife in Switzerland and had, for the last two years, been living in Paris with a woman and their two children. Cabinet de lecture owners were expected to not only demonstrate morality, but also the 'correct' politics. The police report on M. Chaise, ainé, who requested authorization on 24 June 1824, mentioned both his military service as an artillery officer and his enduring loyalty to the Bourbons. In the same letter, dated 17 October 1824 the Prefect of the Police commented on the request of a M. Argoud, whose politics and morality, as well as those of his family, the Prefect asserted, were currently good, even though he had served in the military under Napoleon. The prefect suggested his request be granted – the government was willing to forgive his past association with Bonaparte's army in light of his current behavior. This was in keeping with government policy under Louis XVIII, which followed a sort of 'don't ask, don't tell' model for dealing with the two and half decades before his return to Paris.



Occasionally, a petitioner would mention connections they had, either to prominent people in the world of print (like Madame Boucher who noted she was printer Anselme Boucher's sister-in-law in her request of 27 December 1827) or in French society more generally (like Dlle Madeleine Sophie Rey, whom the prefect of the police noted was recommended by the Comtesse de Pierreclau and that she knew Mr. Brumat, chief of personnel at the prefecture of the police). Commonly, requests for authorization included evidence of the petitioner's familiarity with the world of print. In May of 1823, Jean-Marie Toussaint said he would use the stock from the library he used to own to fill his cabinet de lecture. Georges Bifnoir, in October of 1829, mentioned his previous employment as a typesetter for M. Huzard. Another consideration for authorization was whether the neighborhood would benefit from a reading room. Demoiselle Bernard, in May of 1830 requested authorization for a cabinet de lecture of journals and newspapers, and argued that her neighborhood had only a small number of cabinets de lecture. However, when Amédée Latour requested permission for a cabinet de lecture of medical and scientific literature in spring of 1820, he was refused authorization on the grounds that there were too many cabinets in Paris, and to have more would be dangerous. This concern over the concentration of reading rooms came up again in 1825 in a general report on the Press by the Paris police. The report noted that cabinets de lecture proliferated unchecked over the whole of the country, and that not one was without a volume of Voltaire, which meant that people of all classes could gain access to his impious ideas.<sup>631</sup> While the police report's concerns about Voltaire, sacrilegious literature, and the exposure of lower classes to 'improper' ideas and literature were consistent with the censorship practices of the newly crowned Charles X, the worry over the number of reading rooms is somewhat curious. Unlike printers, no law limited the

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<sup>631</sup> Rapport générale sur la presse, 12 February 1825, Archives nationales de France, F18/261. Image 19. "On ne fait pas attention que les cabinets de lecture sont aujourd'hui répandus sur toute la surface du royaume, et multipliés à l'infini, qu'il n'y a pas un de ces cabinets qui n'ait un Voltaire et par conséquent, pas un individu qui ne soit apportée de s'en procurer la lecture à 2 [?] le volume ; s'il n'est pas en état de l'acheter ; que le goût de cette lecture, continuellement excité par les journaux, non seulement dans la jeunesse studieuse, mais dans toutes les classes du peuple, est devenu le goût universel ; Enfin que ce que les lecteurs de toutes les classes généralement recherchent le plus dans cet écrivain si ingénieux, si clair et si populaire, c'est son impéité moqueuse, ce sont les attaques contre les prêtres et les sarcasmes contre le christianisme"

potential number of cabinets in Paris, and the government's approach toward cabinets de lecture was quite lax in general, particularly in comparison to the regulation and policing of printing and bookselling.

Cabinets de lecture distinguished themselves from each other by what reading materials they offered for rent. As noted above, some offered only newspapers and periodicals, others only books and others both. Those that focused specifically on literature were sometimes called *cabinets littéraires*. These cabinets could also focus on specific types of books, such as Amédée Latour's proposed medical and scientific cabinet. Similarly, Madame Boucher's 1827 request was for a cabinet de lecture specifically directed toward medical and law students, since most of them, she claimed, lived far away from the only cabinet in the quarter. Joseph Pain and C. de Beauregard described the variety of reading rooms as follows:

This cabinet offers all the newspapers of the capital; that other one does not offer recent issues; this one here provides, above the market, all that is interesting from the provincial papers, which an office worker brings the day after their arrival, cut up by the scissors of a Parisian journalist; that one brings among its treasures four or five English gazettes, always late, worn and wrinkled by the hands of the translator; this one has all the daily newspapers of Europe and America; this other one brings together all the weekly journals, the monthly reviews, the large volumes, thrown at the heads of frightened readers by London and Edinburgh each trimester. All the cabinets together (and there are one hundred twenty in Paris) conspire to ruin booksellers, who already can no longer view this total as their maximum output.<sup>632</sup>

Cabinets could be stand-alone businesses, or part of other businesses, such as cafés, *tabaqueries*, or hair salons, which often carried daily newspapers.<sup>633</sup>

Historians believe that cabinets de lecture were important for the growth of romanticism.

One of the most prominent cabinets de lecture in the Restoration, founded by Madame Cardinal

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<sup>632</sup> Pain and Beauregard, *Nouveaux tableaux de Paris, ou Observations sur les mœurs et usages des Parisiens au commencement du XIXe siècle*, 1:69. "Tel cabinet réunit tous les journaux de la capitale; tel autre n'admet pas ceux dont la création est récente; celui-ci nous offre, par dessus le marché, tout ce qu'il y a de piquant parmi les feuilles de province, qu'un garçon du bureau fournit le surlendemain de leur arrivée, mutilées par les ciseaux compilateurs d'un rédacteur parisien; celui-là réunit à ces trésors quatre ou cinq gazettes anglaises, en retard permanent, fatiguées et froissées entre les doigts d'un traducteur; l'un possède tous les journaux quotidiens de l'Europe et de l'Amérique; l'autre y joint les cahiers hebdomadaires, les recueils mensuels et les gros volumes que, chaque trimestre, Londres et Edimbourg jettent à la tête du lecteur effrayé. Tous les cabinets ensemble (et ils sont au nombre de cinq cent vingt dans Paris) conspirent la ruine des libraires, qui déjà ne peuvent plus même regarder ce total comme le maximum de leur débit."

<sup>633</sup> Ibid., 1:70–71.

in 1817 on Rue des Canettes, was known for having first editions of all the ‘romantics.’<sup>634</sup> In his memoirs, Armand de Pontmartin remembered Mlle Malvina Vermot’s cabinet, on rue l’Odéon beside the café Voltaire, as an important place for the reading of journals, specifically mentioning *le Globe*, *les Débats*, *le Corsaire*, *le Figaro*, among others.<sup>635</sup> “Around that green table [of Malvina Vermot’s cabinet],” he recalled, “one could meet all the personalities of young romanticism, so spirited, so passionate, during that terrible winter of 1829-1830.”<sup>636</sup> The presence of these writers, along with the cabinet’s other charms (its location near the Café Voltaire, the newspapers it carried, the attractive owner, the warmth offered by its fire), attracted artists, artisans and writers of the “new school,” wearing velvet and affecting doublets or leotards. Young men, called at the time “jeune France” – Ernest Fouinet, Fontaney, Ulric Guttiguer, a member of Charles Nodier’s *Cénacle*, Paul Foucher, Emile Deschamps and his brother Anthony, the painter Poterlet, among others.<sup>637</sup> If one of the prominent romantics happened to acknowledge one of these young men, having seen him at Victor Hugo’s *cénacle*, “the so privileged would puff himself up superbly, as if the king had just named him first secretary to the ambassador in London.”<sup>638</sup>

Pontmartin wrote that at that time the frequenters of Vermot’s cabinet imagined themselves to be poets. One week, he remarked, he had sent in some of his poetry to the *Revue de Paris*, although they had not printed it. That next Sunday when Vermot brought the *Revue de Paris* to the table, still wrapped in its band, Pontmartin produced a knife he had purchased specifically for the purpose and found that seven or eight others had brought out their knives, intending, like him, to remove the band from the paper. All of them, Pontmartin deduced, had sent in verses to the paper that week.<sup>639</sup> Pontmartin’s stories of writers and aspiring writers coming

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<sup>634</sup> Cassan-Touil, “Introduction,” 18.

<sup>635</sup> Ibid.

<sup>636</sup> Armand de Pontmartin, *Mes mémoires: Enfance et jeunesse* (Paris: E. Dentu, 1882), 115, <http://gallica.bnf.fr/ark:/12148/bpt6k62808n>. “On rencontre autour de cette table verte tout le personnel du jeune romantisme, si remuant, si passionné, pendant ce terrible hiver de 1829 à 1830.” The 1829-1830 winter was one of the coldest on record for Western Europe. In Paris the wealthy ice-skated on the Seine, while the poor relied on soup kitchens and charity for survival. Rader, *Journalists and the July Revolution in France*, 139.

<sup>637</sup> Pontmartin, *Mes mémoires: Enfance et jeunesse*, 114–16.

<sup>638</sup> Ibid., 117. “le privilégié se rengorgeait superbement, comme si le roi venait de le nommer premier secrétaire d’ambassade à Londres.”

<sup>639</sup> Ibid., 17–18.

together to read in a single location make it clear that the cabinet offered not only a practical way to cheaply gain access to print, but also an important social space organized around the consumption of print, both books and periodicals. A.M Fonteney's 1832 (fictionalized) account of an evening in a cabinet de lecture, focused primarily on the people he observed or interacted with. The plot centered around a *reviewer* (a writer of *revues*, or journals) who would not stop talking to him about his journal of statistics and industry, while all Fonteney wanted to do was talk to the young woman reading newspapers. It ended with the woman's husband coming to pick her up and Fonteney stuck walking home with the *reviewer*, whose manuscript he accidentally dropped in water rushing down the street. The *reviewer* went after his precious statistics and Fonteney considered his foe vanquished. Throughout the account Fonteney showed clear disdain for the *reviewer* whom he considered boring, annoying and worthless. His interest in facts and figures and money contrasted with Fonteney's desire to warm himself by the fire and amuse himself by observing the habits of patrons of the cabinet. Even the *reviewer* himself was an object of Fonteney's observation, before he decided to bore Fonteney and revealed himself as a *reviewer*, something that horrified Fonteney, who tried, to no avail, to insist he had no interest in hearing about an industrial and statistical journal.

In his account, published in the journal *Paris, ou livre de cent et un*, Fonteney said that he imagined the green table of the cabinet de lecture as a table d'hôte, with offerings for people of every political or literary appetite.<sup>640</sup> He compared the different kinds of journals available (daily or nightly newspapers, monthly reviews, magazines) to different courses of a meal (appetizer, entre, meat course, dessert). He argued that readers in the cabinet comported themselves analogously to people at a banquet – each consuming “according to their hunger, their thirst, their taste.”<sup>641</sup> Some read with discernment and moderation, while others read voraciously and widely.

Cabinets de lecture made commercial sense, but they also created social spaces for readership and are reflective of a public culture. In Scott's *Guide to Paris* he remarked that Parisians cared more for their public space than their homes because they spent much of their

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<sup>640</sup> A.M. Fonteney, “Dans un cabinet de lecture,” *Paris ou le livre de cent-et-un*, 9 (Paris: Ladvocat, 1832), 256.

<sup>641</sup> A.M. Fonteney, “Dans un cabinet de lecture,” *Paris ou le livre de cent-et-un* 9 (1832): 257.

time in public. He wrote, "The climate of France, and the character of the French, conspire to cause them to seek their pleasures out of doors. Home is the only place they neglect; it is a place only for their necessities; they must sleep there, - and the tradesmen must transact their business there: a bed, a table, and a few chairs are therefore wanted, and a small room or two, uncarpeted and bare, must be hired. I speak, of course, of the middle and inferior classes. But all that is inspiring and comfortable, they seek out of doors, - and all that they pride themselves in being able to procure, is in the shape of decoration and amusement."<sup>642</sup> He later noted that being in Paris gave one the impression that a large number of people seem to be without regular employment, and so spent much of their time in public, although not necessarily because they were wealthy. Scott traveled to Paris in a period of transition, the beginning of the First Restoration, when the army had been disbanded and prisoners of war had been returned, which probably amplified the impression of a city filled with people without purpose. But, Scott insisted that people told him that Paris always seemed full of aimless souls, and that this was not simply the consequence of temporary circumstance.<sup>643</sup> (Indeed, Paris often gives this same impression today.) Anecdotes about cabinets generally present them as locations of leisure, a place to go in the evening, much like one might attend the theatre. In Fonteney's account he said he walked to the cabinet without even noticing, so accustomed to the routine of going there to read the evening papers. He had been thinking that at the early hour of 7 o'clock on a cold November night, he had nothing to do, and did not wish to socialize or go to the theatre.<sup>644</sup> While cabinets were public spaces, they were also places of silence, of reading, of reflection, and therefore complicate a divide between public and private. Arcades too were gathering spaces that blurred the line between inside and outside, public and home. Their glass roofs protected shoppers from the elements, but allowed them to view the sky. Benjamin wrote that arcades "are house no less than

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<sup>642</sup> Scott, *A Visit to Paris in 1814*, 105.

<sup>643</sup> Ibid., 108. The first edition of this travelogue was published during the Hundred Days, although his travel took place during the first Restoration. As a result, Scott made some changes to his text between writing it and publication to reflect the political shift in France. He explains this in the book's preface.

<sup>644</sup> Fonteney, "Dans un cabinet de lecture," *Paris ou le livre de cent-et-un*, 9: 253.

street.”<sup>645</sup> Both cabinets and arcades were privately owned, but open to the public, which complicated their ‘public’ character. Cabinets de lecture and arcades both point toward the conjunction of sociability and commerce in seemingly public space, in ways that are particular to the early nineteenth-century.

Both arcades and cabinets de lecture provided locations for the distribution of printed material in the early nineteenth century, including literary journals. This embedded these journals in spaces that were both commercial and social, both collective and individual. But the commercial spaces in which these journals could be accessed were only one set of circumstances that helped shape and frame their meanings. Journals were produced by a whole cast of individuals – the rédacteur, the publisher, the critic, the censor – who together created the product that consumers accessed in these commercial spaces. And these journals expressed and promoted ideas and shared information. They built meaning by narrating specific aspects of reality for their audiences, and in doing so they contributed to the production of the political and cultural climate of Restoration Paris.

Yet as we have seen, commercial interests did not influence literary culture alone. In his essay on censorship and literary criticism, Louis Dubroca argued that when painting a picture of the current state of literary criticism “it was difficult to ignore that it had fallen into complete disrepute.”<sup>646</sup> This disreputable criticism, he argued, allowed talented individuals and works to fall victim to speculation, partisanship and factionalism.<sup>647</sup> Dubroca presented the corruption of literary criticism, censorship, and the periodical press as interrelated processes, all caused by the same tendencies toward self-interestedness and partisan spirit. But he had a solution to the downfall of criticism. Dubroca suggested that the Institut de France take control of all literary criticism and produce its own journal. This, he insisted, would put literary criticism in the hands of the luminaries of the nation’s premier literary body, who would imbue it with fairness and

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<sup>645</sup> Benjamin, *The Arcades Project*, 10.

<sup>646</sup> Dubroca, *De la censure ministérielle*, 112. “Ainsi, de quelque manière qu’on envisage l’état actuel de la critique littéraire, il est difficile de ne pas s’avouer qu’elle est tombée dans une déconsidération absolue.”

<sup>647</sup> Ibid., 113.

legitimacy.<sup>648</sup> Yet, Dubroca assumed that the members of the Institut and its constituent academies remained unfettered by partisanship or interest, that they did not advance their own agendas. But, as the next chapter explores, no literary group, society, or academy in the Restoration was free from political agenda or factionalism.

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<sup>648</sup> Ibid., 117.

## CHAPTER 5: ACADEMIES, SOCIETIES, CÉNACLES, SALONS: THE POLITICS OF LITERARY SOCIABILITY

*"Romanticism, when it appeared in 1820, was not defined. It was defined neither by its most authorized representatives, nor by its adversaries."*  
-Paul Albert, *Les origines du romantisme*<sup>649</sup>

*"On the one hand, it is the work of youth; on the other, it is liberty in art."*  
- Paul Albert, *Les origines du romantisme*<sup>650</sup>

*"But such is the blindness of partisan spirit, it gives its support only to those who have adopted its prejudices and who share in its delirium."*  
- Pierre Duviquet at the Société des bonnes-lettres (1821)<sup>651</sup>

In December 1823, a royalist literary society, the Société des bonnes-lettres (SBL)<sup>652</sup> began its fourth season of public lectures, and its first as the Société royale des bonnes-lettres. In their coverage of the opening session, the literary daily *le Diable Boiteux*, who were on record as being very critical of the society, wrote, "I am very embarrassed to relate this meeting [of the society]. I write for a literary journal, in which political discussion is forbidden, but everything was politics yesterday at the bonnes lettres."<sup>653</sup> The author continued, "It would be extraordinary if a journalist was turned into the police for having given his readers too faithful a portrait of the literary society of New-Saint-Augustine street."<sup>654</sup> But any faithful portrait of the Society, *le Diable boiteux* insisted, would involve politics because at the Bonnes-lettres "they do not speak the language of the muses, and we hear nothing but declarations of partisan spirit. And finally, to be a member of this brotherhood, one needs only certification of one's opinions; talent is not a

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<sup>649</sup> Paul Albert, *La littérature française au dix-huitième siècle: les origines du romantisme* (Paris: Hachette, 1883), 19, <http://archive.org/details/lalitttratur00albe>. "Le romantisme, tel qu'il apparut en 1820, n'a pas été défini. Il ne l'a été ni par ses représentants les plus autorisés, ni par ses adversaires."

<sup>650</sup> Ibid., 23. "D'une part, il est l'oeuvre de la jeunesse; de l'autre, il est la liberté dans l'art."

<sup>651</sup> "Société des bonnes-lettres: Cours de littérature M Duviquet, Séance du 21 décembre," *Les Annales de la littérature et des arts* 6, n 66 (1821), 24. "... mais tel est l'aveuglement de l'esprit de parti, qu'il n'accorde son suffrage qu'à ceux qui ont adopté ses préjugés et qui partagent son délire."

<sup>652</sup> I refer to the Société des bonnes-lettres alternatively as the Society or the SBL.

<sup>653</sup> "Société des bonnes-lettres: Séance d'ouverture," *Le Diable boiteux. Journal des spectacles, des moeurs et de la littérature* 1, no.146 (6 December 1823): 2. "Je suis vraiment fort embarrassé pour rendre compte de cette séance. J'écris dans un journal littéraire où il est défendu de parler politique, et cependant tout a été politique hier aux bonnes-lettres."

<sup>654</sup> Ibid. "Il serait singulier qu'un journaliste fût traduit à la police correctionnelle pour avoir donné à ses lecteurs une idée trop fidèle de la société littéraire de la rue Neuve-Saint-Augustin."



requirement.”<sup>655</sup> This journalist’s concerns about the politics of the SBL raise a number of important issues related to print culture and literary debates in Restoration France. The author hints at censorship: after 1819 literary journals were not allowed to discuss politics, because political periodicals were subject to more strict censorship laws, and the language the author uses suggests an attempt to protect the daily from potential litigation.<sup>656</sup> More than that, the author’s complaints suggest a belief that literature should be divorced from politics; that literary talent mattered more than partisanship, and that the Society should be criticized for being political when they were supposed to be a literary society.<sup>657</sup> The Société des bonnes-lettres presented a very different opinion. Its members believed that literature and politics were inextricable and co-constitutive, because both were governed by questions of morality. There was right literature, and wrong literature, good politics and bad politics, and they believed that only the promotion of both would lead to the improvement of society. They founded their royalist society on that basis, and it informed everything they did. Because their membership boasted government ministers, censors and members of the Académie française, and because their politics and their literary ideals were more or less in line with the establishment, the SBL did not have to fear censorship or government control, which granted their members a certain amount of freedom. The Society did not need to insist that literature be separate from politics, because both their political and literary

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<sup>655</sup> Ibid. “On n’y parle point le langage des Muses, on n’y entend que les déclamations de l’esprit de parti. Enfin, pour être reçu dans cette confrérie, il suffit d’un certificat d’opinion ; le talent n’y est pas de rigueur.”

<sup>656</sup> By 1823 preliminary censorship of newspapers and political periodicals had been abolished, but they did have to be authorized prior to publication, and there were very strict libel laws. Those periodicals deemed to be ‘injurious to public peace or the respect due to religion, to the king and to the constitution’ could be brought to trial and suspended. There were an unprecedented number of newspapers brought to trial between 1822-1823, although beginning in 1824 it became much harder to get convictions. Collins, *The Government and the Newspaper Press*, 37–39. For more details on censorship of the periodical press, see Chapter 1.

<sup>657</sup> The *Diable boiteux* seemed to reject not only political partisanship, but also literary partisanship, as they sided with neither classicism nor romanticism, and argued literature should be evaluated on its own merits, rather than by who wrote it or by public opinion. *Le Diable boiteux. Journal des spectacles, des mœurs, et de la littérature, Prospectus* (Paris: J. Tastu, 1823), 1. “Nous honorerons les beaux talents, sans plaintes trop amères s’ils sont persécutés; nous admirerons une statue, sans parler avec irrévérence du personnage qu’elle représente; nous flétrirons l’hypocrisie sans indiquer trop clairement sous quel habit elle se cache; nous rendrons hommage à la vertu personnelle, sans faire connaître à quelle opinion elle appartient; nous livrerons à la risée publique les mauvais poètes, qu’ils aient ou non des pensions: enfin, la politique exceptée, nous raisonnerons sur tout, nous parlerons de tout.”

affiliations were government sanctioned, and because they were well-connected enough to protect themselves.

Romantics, even royalist romantics, had a more complicated relationship with France's literary establishment, and operated both within it and on its fringes. Romantic sociability throughout the Restoration centered on groups called *cénacles*: a romantic invention. Pierre Larousse defined a *cénacle* as a group of people with the same ideas and goals coming together, while competing lexicographer Emile Littré defined it as a group of men of letters and artists who met often and admired each other. Anthony Glinoeer tells us that these two definitions highlight the *cénacle*'s dual-nature; it was both an ideological and a social or fraternal organization.<sup>658</sup> Glinoeer also suggests that the *cénacle*, in keeping with romantic philosophic notions, was simultaneously an individualist and a collectivist project. While the members of *cénacles* met and exchanged ideas and supported one another (especially through dedications and epigraphs), they did not, he argues, usually collaborate on writing projects. "Faced with a capitalist republic of letters," Glinoeer writes, "lost in the triviality of petty journalism and easy criticism, the writer always feels more alone even when he/she is more engaged with peers."<sup>659</sup> He continues:

In the great atomization of the literary field, the *cenacle* forms a niche in which the solitary genius and the damned poet can meet. Each of these little serfs displays sociability within the cozy surroundings of the bourgeois hearth, but this sociability – practicing what Starobinski calls a 'narcissisme de groupe' – does not break with poetic activity because the *cenacle* is itself a poetic object. It talks about itself, it evokes itself, and it merges with the community of inspirations and sources from which the poet draws. By incorporating it – entirely or in part – into the heart of his/her work, the poet confers a second life upon the *cenacle* and justifies his/her own sociable existence.<sup>660</sup>

This tension between the individual and the collective was not only a facet of romantic sociability, but also a facet of romantic ideology. Romantics tried to correct what they perceived to be the alienating influence of modernity. Because romantics believed that the Enlightenment ideals of universality helped forge a modern world that alienated individuals by ignoring their uniqueness, they tried to reconcile individuality and community by focusing on the particularity of each. They

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<sup>658</sup> Anthony Glinoeer, *La querelle de la camaraderie littéraire : les romantiques face à leurs contemporains* (Geneve: Droz, 2008), 16.

<sup>659</sup> Anthony Glinoeer, "Collaboration and Solidarity: The Collective Strategies of the Romantic *Cenacle*," in *Models of Collaboration in Nineteenth-Century French Literature: Several Authors, One Pen*, ed. Seth Adam Whidden (Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2009), 52.

<sup>660</sup> *Ibid.*, 52–53.

lauded uniqueness and genius on the one hand, and communal service and even the nation on the other. When they came together to produce journals, to support the cause of the new literature, romantics enacted one of their own ideals, and they helped to define and solidify romanticism itself. While Glinoe's article looks only at the *cénacle* of 1827-1831, his argument applies both to the group that produced *le Conservateur littéraire* in 1819, and perhaps even more strongly, to the *cénacle* of *la Muse française* founded in 1823. By working to promote the *cénacle* itself and the other members of it, these romantics worked to promote romanticism, even when, in the era of *le Conservateur littéraire*, in particular, they avoided the word 'romantic.' Moreover, while Glinoe emphasizes the individualist impulse in romantic sociability and focuses on the fact that the romantics did not produce work collectively, in these two cases the group of romantics did have a collective project: they worked together to produce a literary journal and, through a variety of means, to justify romanticism to a culture and a literary establishment resistant to it.

When Emile Deschamps later recalled the *cénacle* in a letter to the writer and poet Antoine de Latour, he remembered it in precisely those terms. The *cénacle*, he wrote, did not have the rules, statutes, and planned meetings of an academy or an association. Instead, the *cénacle* had a set of shared intimacies, camaraderie, and sympathies enjoyed in evenings at each other houses with the men and women of society. He went on, "the magic link between the members of the *cénacle* (who hardly knew there was a *cénacle*) was poetry, pure poetry (outside the theatre), epic, heroic, elegiac poetry." But the members were "emulators without rivalry, rivals without envy" who "gathered to advance the oeuvre and the collective idea." "We were," Deschamps insisted, "comrades in arms rather than competitors."<sup>661</sup> *Cénacles* differed from

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<sup>661</sup>Letter from Deschamps to Monsieur Antoine de Latour, Versailles, 21 June 1867. In Émile Deschamps, *Oeuvres complètes de Émile Deschamps: Prose*, vol. IV (A. Lemerre, 1873), 301. "Le *cénacle* n'a jamais été un semblant d'académie, ni même une association ; pas les moindres statuts, ni réglemens, ni séances, mais des intimités, *des camaraderies* dans le bon sens du mot, des sympathies instinctives, des réunions chez les uns et chez les autres, la plupart du temps le soir, avec des dames et des gens du monde... le lien magique entre les membres *du* *cénacle* (qui savaient à peine eux-mêmes qu'il y avait *cénacle*) était la poésie, la poésie pure (hors des théâtres), la poésie épique, héroïque ou élégiaque. Et on était émule sans être rival, rival sans être envieux. – On se rassemblait pour faire avancer l'oeuvre et l'idée collective ; on était des compagnons d'armes plutôt que des confrères."

academies and societies, not only in their level of formality, but because their meetings took place, not in public spaces, but in the homes of members.<sup>662</sup> In this respect, *cénacles* resembled salons, although salons rarely had the kind of literary agenda or homogeneity that characterized a *cénacle*, nor did they usually produce periodicals to promote that agenda. *Cénacles*, salons, academies and societies all offered hybrid public/private space in which to debate and promote literature, and to advertise and advance authors' work and careers. Individual writers and specific coteries of writers belonged to many of these organizations simultaneously, and the groups variously competed with and supported one another.

The Société des bonnes-lettres was a highly visible, and quite controversial, literary society, but it operated within an established structure of official and less official literary academies, societies, salons, and *cénacles* across Paris.<sup>663</sup> These groups provided opportunities for literary sociability, and offered organization and cohesion to literary movements, both through in person meetings and publications. Societies and groups often produced their own journals, which extended the reach of their public and promotional functions. *Les Annales de la littérature et des arts* became the official organ of the Société des bonnes-lettres in the fall of 1822, but reported on their practices from the beginning. Small groups of royalist romantics produced both *le Conservateur littéraire* and *la Muse française*. Even when a group or society did not produce its own journal, or affiliate officially with a particular journal, as with the liberal romantic *cénacle* de Notre-Dame-des-Champs, or the scholarly society l'Athénée de Paris, the members often contributed to a variety of journals, so that the ideas developed within the society still circulated in

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<sup>662</sup> Vincent Laisney argues that despite the common notion that *cafés* served as primary centers of literary sociability, in the early nineteenth century literary sociability centered on *cénacles* held in people's homes. Literary sociability in an era of at home meetings or meetings held by societies where membership was a requirement was less public than literary sociability held in *cafés*, although by no means private. Vincent Laisney, "Cénacles et *cafés* littéraires : deux sociabilités antagonistes," *Revue d'histoire littéraire de la France* 110, no. 3 (2010): 567.

<sup>663</sup> The laws concerning formal associations were fairly strict. The penal code of 1810 – article 291: "Nulle association de plus de vingt personnes dont le but sera de se réunir tous les jours ou à certains jours marqués pour s'occuper d'objets religieux, littéraires, politiques ou autres, ne pourra se former qu'avec l'agrément du gouvernement, et sous les conditions qu'il plaira à l'autorité publique d'imposer à la société. Dans le nombre de personnes indiquées [...] ne sont pas comprises celles qui ont leur domicile dans la maison où l'association se réunit." Quoted in Agulhon, *Le cercle dans la France bourgeoise*, 21. For a discussion of post-Revolutionary literary sociability in the provinces see Davidson, *France after Revolution*, chp. 5.

print. Moreover, many journals contributed to institutional or formalized sociability by publishing records of meetings of different societies. For example, *l'Observateur* (1827-28) regularly published accounts of the meetings of the Académie des Sciences, the Société de fructification générale,<sup>664</sup> and l'Athénée des Arts.<sup>665</sup> Many literary journals and newspapers reported regularly on the activities of the Académie française and other academies, as well as the Société des bonnes-lettres. Through this practice of reporting, smaller and less established groups and their journals put themselves in conversation with the French literary establishment, and included themselves in a broader literary dialogue, a position from which they could variously critique or align themselves with that establishment. Much in the same way that literary journals referred to each other and therefore produced a virtual community of literary journals, these sites of literary sociability referred to and reacted to one another, which, along with membership overlaps, helped to produce interconnected spheres of literary sociability.

These groups and the periodicals that reported on them, and on literature more broadly, helped to produce imagined literary geographies, and built real and virtual connections between individuals, groups, and ideas just as the physical meeting places of these groups and locations of sale and consumption of literary journals shaped the literary geography of Paris. Connections between individuals and arguments put forward in print and in person helped to produce and entrench camps – both romantic and classicist. While there was a lot of debate and even confusion about what these camps were, what they meant, and who belonged to them, their meanings and identities became increasingly clear over the course of the Restoration, at least in part through these journals and the sociability that surrounded and fuelled them.

For example, the Société des bonnes-lettres was trying to create a France that was royalist and classicist – a specific and circumscribed vision for the future of France and one that was free of conflict and founded on a harmony that was homogenous. However, its actions contributed to the polarization of romanticism and classicism – by putting forward increasingly

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<sup>664</sup> *L'Observateur, journal hebdomadaire de la littérature, des théâtres, des arts, de la librairie, du Commerce et des Modes* no 87 (27 October 1827): 374.

<sup>665</sup> *L'Observateur, journal hebdomadaire de la littérature, des théâtres, des arts, de la librairie, du Commerce et des Modes* no. 103 (16 February 1828): 87.

strict definitions for both genres. Romantic literary groups and societies also fed this generic polarization. Like their classicist opponents, the romantics sought a harmonious France – but one that perhaps left open the possibility for a certain amount of difference. Although both groups wanted social harmony, they had very different ideas about how to achieve it, because they had very different visions of social harmony. Both reacted to the upheaval of revolution and to the attempts to establish an early modern regime in a modern world with cultural critiques and literary agendas designed to resolve the tensions caused by the establishment of a counter-revolutionary regime in a post-revolutionary France.

But, as the *Diable boiteux*'s complaints about the Société des bonnes-lettres's political machinations suggest, literary societies varied in their political power and influence. This was so for a number of reasons, including the age and prestige of the group, its official or state connections, its membership, and its public popularity. So, while admittance to the state-run Académie française marked the height of literary prestige for a French writer, the short-lived Athenée des dames remarked in the first issue of its journal that most Parisians had never even heard of the women's literary society. Members of smaller or less powerful literary groups often looked to the more well-connected groups to justify and legitimize their members' literary endeavors. Royalist romantics in particular used their political and literary connections to seek out external validation from the literary establishment, especially in the period between 1819 and 1824, before the entrenchment of both sides of the *bataille romantique*.

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### **Academies: Française and Jeux Floraux**

Academic societies and literary academies are central to the history of French culture and literature. The first academic society founded in Europe was the Académie des Jeux Floraux, which awarded prizes named for flowers to French poets and writers, founded in Toulouse in 1323. By the Restoration, a wide variety of academic and literary societies and academies would shape and control French culture. Although literary societies and cénacles engaged in some of the same scholarly practices as academies, including monitoring, fostering, critiquing and protecting French culture, and although their memberships overlapped somewhat, they tended to

have a stronger social or fraternal element than did Academies. Moreover, academies distinguished themselves from other kinds of literary societies by their institutional structure, their formality, and, often, their longevity. The most obvious and important of these formal academic institutions was the Institut de France, which for most of the Restoration was comprised of four academies, including the Académie française.<sup>666</sup> The Académie française was originally founded in 1635, and while its administration has shifted over the years its central mission remains constant. Besides being charged with regularizing the French language, the Académie française also helps to produce and maintain a canon of French literature. Appointment to one of the forty chairs of the Académie to this day means official recognition of an author's literary merit. In the Restoration, the Académie's power was both political and literary, and so those granted membership as *immortels* (named for the Académie's motto "*A l'immortalité*") had to meet both its political and literary standards. As a result, the Académie's appointment of members, along with its other activities, mirrored and reinforced the era's political and aesthetic conflicts. When the Bourbons rechartered the Académie on 21 March 1816 they expelled eleven members, including Lucien Bonaparte, for their Napoleonic sympathies and actions during the Hundred Days.<sup>667</sup> Jean-Baptiste-Antoine Suard, perpetual-secretary of the Académie at the time, wrote to minister of the Interior the Comte de Vaublanc that it was important to rout out the remaining revolutionary spirit in the Académie.<sup>668</sup> That the Académie had a tendency toward conservatism is not at all surprising given its role as a national institution of regulation and tradition.<sup>669</sup> This conservatism extended to literary matters as well as the political. Under the Restoration, the members of the

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<sup>666</sup> At the outset of the Restoration the Institut (called the Institut Royal de France at the time) was made up of six academies – the Académie française, the Académie des inscriptions et belles-lettres, the Académie des sciences, the Académie de peinture et de sculpture, the Académie de musique, and the Académie d'architecture. In 1816 these last three academies were merged to form the Académie des beaux-arts. The fifth academy, the Académie des sciences morales et politiques, founded in 1795, had been suppressed under Napoleon in 1803, and would not be reestablished until after the July Revolution.

<sup>667</sup> Oster, *Histoire de l'Académie française*, 98–99.

<sup>668</sup> Arguably, Suard might have considered some of the *immortels* appointed under Napoleon who retained their positions revolutionary – Louis Philippe de Ségur, for example, was deprived of his offices for supporting Napoleon in the Hundred Days, but retained his seat in the Académie Française.

<sup>669</sup> That conservatism continues into the present. In the history of the Académie française, only eight *immortels* have been women.

Académie tended toward classicism, and in increasingly strident language, denounced romanticism in speeches at the Académie's meetings. In April 1820, *le Conservateur littéraire* reported that Jean-Louis Laya (1761-1833), director of the Académie française had opened a public session of the Institut Royal with a speech on the dangers of literary innovation, and that later on perpetual secretary of the Académie des beaux-arts, Quatremère de Quincy, gave an apparently overlong talk on the theory of imitation in visual art.<sup>670</sup> Louis-Simon Auger's speech in April 1824 denounced romanticism in much stronger terms – referring to the movement by name, rather than veiled references to 'new literature' or 'innovation'.<sup>671</sup> Moreover, because current members voted for new members, they could easily perpetuate their own literary sensibilities, which made change in the Académie's literary affiliations very gradual. The Académie could pressure or encourage individuals to turn away from new literary forms, and they did when, in the wake of Auger's speech, Alexandre Soumet left the cénacle of *la Muse française* to take up a seat in the Académie, and the journal folded. The Académie's institutional resilience meant that in the late 1810s and early 1820s, French romantics turned to other academies for support and validation, even though appointment to the Académie Française still represented the highest ambition for all French writers. As Lady Morgan noted in her 1817 travelogue "while the Academy was the subject of contempt and ridicule to men of genius; it still remained in general the objet of their ambition, - and it thus presents one of the many solecisms, which arise out of the incongruity of political institutions with the state of national illumination."<sup>672</sup>

Many academies, including the Académie française, gave out prizes for essay and poetry competitions. The periodical press advertised the contests, and winning essays and other entries were often published as pamphlets and reported on in the press. These contests helped to shape public conversations about literary matters. They also suggest to us the kinds of debates and

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<sup>670</sup> "Institut Royal de France, séance publique des quatre académies (24 avril 1820)," *le Conservateur littéraire* 2 (1820): 72-73.

<sup>671</sup> Auger's is the Académie's most famous denunciation of romanticism, and the most important for its immediately consequences for the *bataille romantique*: it helped inspire Stendhal's second volume of *Racine et Shakespeare*, and break up the cénacle of *la Muse française*, is discussed below, but there were other instances as well. For example, Phillipe de Ségur's July 1830 induction to the Académie française included two speeches against romanticism. *La Mode, revue des modes, galerie des mœurs, album des salons* (9 July 1830): 21.

<sup>672</sup> Lady Sydney Morgan, *France* (London: H. Colbourn, 1817), 105.



questions that concerned French writers and critics at the time. For example, the Académie française's 1814 essay contest, on the subject of literary criticism, won by Abel-François Villemain, suggests the growing importance of literary criticism in the early nineteenth century. In 1819, the Académie des Jeux Floraux's announced that their essay contest for the next year would ask essayists to explain what was meant by 'romantic literature' and what this new literary genre had to offer French classicism. They chose this question over three other options: one about the reconciliation of epic poetry and Christianity, one about the role of pathos in comedy, and one about whether or not there is an 'academic' writing style.<sup>673</sup> Eighteen nineteen, as we have seen, marked an important shift in censorship policies, one that favored the production of literary periodicals and helped lead to their proliferation. But 1819 was also a crucial turning point for French romanticism, with the founding of its first journal, *le Conservateur littéraire*, so it is not surprising that the Jeux-Floraux chose that same year to examine the question that increasingly plagued critics over the course of the Restoration – how does one define romanticism?

Also in 1819, the Académie des Jeux Floraux gave 17-year-old Victor Hugo's poem, *Ode sur le rétablissement de la statue d'Henri IV*, a special honor, the *lis d'or* prize, which they had only bestowed once previously in the academy's long history, and never since. The academy chose Hugo's poem over ones by the then-unknown Alphonse de Lamartine (whose break-out *Méditations poétiques* would not be published until 1820), and by future bishop Olympe-Philippe Gerbet.<sup>674</sup> This recognition by the oldest literary society in Europe helped to launch Hugo's incredibly successful and influential literary career, which they continued to support, and also might be considered the beginning of the Jeux-Floraux's (somewhat tentative) support for French romanticism. Several of the romantics associated with *le Conservateur littéraire* and later *la Muse française* contributed entries to the Jeux-Floraux's contests between 1818 and 1824, in part at the encouragement of their royalist-romantic compatriot Alexandre Soumet, who was born near Toulouse and had a connection to the academy – he had been elected *mainteneur*, the Jeux-

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<sup>673</sup> Frédéric Ségu, *L'Académie des jeux floraux et le romantisme de 1818 à 1824 d'après des documents inédits*, vol. 1 (Paris: Société d'Édition "Les Belles Lettres," 1935), 24.

<sup>674</sup> Ibid., 1:30.

Floraux equivalent of an *immortel*, in 1818.<sup>675</sup> Hugo also encouraged many of his literary friends to submit poetry to the Jeux-Floraux's contests, and often wrote to the academy in support of their entries, including one for the essay contest on romantic and classicist literature.<sup>676</sup> In 1822, Hugo's friend François Durand de Vrandaulmon received a prize, and Hugo wrote to the academy to express his delight at the success of his friend whom he had brought to the attention of the academy. He also wrote to say he was happy his childhood friend and *Conservateur littéraire* contributor Adolphe de Saint-Valry had received a prize.<sup>677</sup> The Jeux-Floraux became an important source of prestige and endorsement for the members of the royalist romantic *cénacle* surrounding Hugo and his brothers. In 1819 alone, the academy awarded Hugo with two awards – the *lis d'or* and the *amaranthe réservée* – and he had submitted a third poem that did not win; they granted one of Alexandre Guiraud's poems an elegy prize, the *souci d'argent*, and the other a *violette réservée*; and received another poem from Guiraud, as well as one from Eugène Hugo.<sup>678</sup> The academy's recognition could help validate a poet's talent and career, which in turn helped to validate the whole literary circle, as well as provide important connections to other members of the *cénacle*. Soumet's election as a *mainteneur* is the clearest example of this, but also once a writer received three of the academy's "flowers" the academy named them a *maître ès jeux*, a distinction awarded to Victor Hugo in 1820, and to Chateaubriand in 1821.<sup>679</sup>

The relationship between the *cénacle* and the Jeux-Floraux was reciprocal. *Le Conservateur littéraire* often printed or reviewed poems that had won prizes from the Jeux-Floraux, which helped the journal establish a pedigree for its contributors, and helped advertise the activities of the academy to a Parisian audience. For example, they reprinted Hugo's "le Rétablissement de la Statue de Henri IV" in their eleventh issue, with a note that it had been

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<sup>675</sup> Ibid., 1:22, 33. Members of the Jeux-Floraux were called 'maintainers' because they maintained and defended the rules of poetry.

<sup>676</sup> Frédéric Ségur, *L'Académie des jeux floraux et le romantisme de 1818 à 1824 d'après des documents inédits*, vol. 2 (Paris: Société d'Édition "Les Belles Lettres," 1936), 140–41.

<sup>677</sup> Ibid., 2:166–68.

<sup>678</sup> Ségur, *L'Académie des jeux floraux et le romantisme*, 1935, 1:21–78.

<sup>679</sup> Ibid., 1:34.

granted the *lis d'or* by the Académie des Jeux-Floraux.<sup>680</sup> Later in 1820, Abel Hugo, in *le Conservateur littéraire*'s write up on the Jeux-Floraux's competition for that year, wrote that the academy deserved its title as second "Académie de France" and as the oldest literary society in Europe, because of "the glory of its contests and the wisdom of its judgments" and because it gave young writers "useful encouragements and sound council."<sup>681</sup> Both its (well-deserved) prestige and its encouragement of young writers made the academy a particularly useful resource for the *cénacle*, and they advertised their connections to it through their journal, while simultaneously promoting the academy: Abel Hugo's write up also included a general description of the academy's contests, announced the winners and the topic for the essay contest for the next year.<sup>682</sup> In his article on the academy, Hugo briefly reviewed Amable Tastu's winning poem, the only poem that received a prize that year without reservations. He wrote that it expressed that grace characteristic of the work of "modern muses."<sup>683</sup> Amable Tastu would go on to win prizes for poems in 1822 and 1823, and later contributed to *la Muse française* as well. And this was not her only connection to the *cénacle*. Her husband, Joseph, opened a print shop in Paris in September 1822,<sup>684</sup> and in the following years he printed a number of works by the romantics in this circle, including Hugo, his brother Abel, Lamartine and Guiraud.<sup>685</sup>

The academy could also serve as a public forum for Hugo and his friend's works outside the context of the contests. Hugo wrote to the Jeux-Floraux about his poem "Quiberon," asking if someone would read it at one of their public meetings: which they did on 3 May 1821 to a

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<sup>680</sup> Victor Hugo, "le Rétablissement de la Statue de Henri IV," *Le Conservateur littéraire* 2, no. 11 (1820): 3.

<sup>681</sup> J. [Abel Hugo], "Académie des Jeux Floraux (3 mai 1820)," *Le Conservateur littéraire* 2 (1820): 112. "Par la pompe de ses concours et la sagesse de ses jugements, l'Académie des Jeux Floraux, qui donne, à-la-fois, aux jeunes talents, d'utiles encouragements et des conseils salutaires, se montre digne du titre de seconde Académie de France et de plus ancien corps littéraire de l'Europe."

<sup>682</sup> *Ibid.*, 107-109.

<sup>683</sup> *Ibid.*, 112. "muses modernes"

<sup>684</sup> Ségu, *L'Académie des jeux floraux et le romantisme*, 1936, 2:178.

<sup>685</sup> *Ibid.* Tastu often printed for Ladvocat, including works by Casimir Delavigne, such as *Messienne sur Lord Byron*, and Hugo's poem for the coronation of Charles X. He also printed other romantic works for Baudouin Frères, including Walter Scott's historical novels. Although, Tastu was by no means a romantic-only printer: he printed Viennet's anti-romantic poem, *Épître aux Muses*, and the complete works of Voltaire and Jean-Jacques Rousseau. He also printed the journals *le Diable boiteux* and *Mercure du dix-neuvième siècle*. Archives nationales de France, F18/116.

receptive audience. Hugo had read the poem himself on 28 February at a meeting of Société des bonnes-lettres, where it was also well received.<sup>686</sup> This suggests that Hugo saw both the Jeux-Floraux and the Society as forums to promote, publicize, and receive feedback on his work. Although neither were romantic organizations (the Society des bonnes-lettres was in fact anti-romantic, and increasingly so over time), Hugo and his circle could still benefit from the sociability and the platform they provided.

The Académie des Jeux-Floraux also contributed to the *bataille romantique* outside of its connections to the cénacles of *le Conservateur littéraire* and *la Muse française*. Although not a Parisian institution the Académie des Jeux-Floraux, because of its age and prestige, and in the late 1810s and early 1820s, its connection to the romantic literary circle surrounding both *le Conservateur littéraire* and *la Muse française*, had influence beyond its home in Toulouse. The academy tended to receive a significant number of entries for their contests,<sup>687</sup> and it had a sterling reputation, so much so that the journalist, critic, and poet Edmond Géraud called Toulouse “the literary metropole of the Midi.”<sup>688</sup> When the Academy announced that its topic for the 1820 essay contest would be “What are the distinctive characteristics of that literature we call romantic, and what resources can it offer classicist literature?” it spoke to a national audience, and contributed to the debate on an increasingly important topic in French letters. However the Academy chose no winner in 1820 and instead proposed the same topic for 1821, but, presumably to attract more or better entries, offered the substantial prize of nine hundred francs: double the usual amount. That no one could answer the prompt successfully seemed to contemporaries less a matter of insufficient prize money and more a testament to the question’s difficulty.<sup>689</sup> In 1820 French romanticism was still nebulous: *le Conservateur littéraire* avoided the term as much as possible, and even classicist opposition to romanticism was not yet cohesive or coherent. The second year of entries proved somewhat more successful. While the Académie did

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<sup>686</sup> Ségu, *L’Académie des jeux floraux et le romantisme*, 1936, 2:159.

<sup>687</sup> For example, they received 62 entries for 4 awards in 1820, and 153 for 8 awards in 1824. Ibid., 2:85, 249.

<sup>688</sup> Quoted in Ségu, *L’Académie des jeux floraux et le romantisme*, 1935, 1:132.

<sup>689</sup> “Recueil de l’Académie des Jeux Floraux 1820,” *Revue Encyclopédique ou analyse raisonné des productions les plus remarquables de la littérature, les sciences et les arts* 6 (1820): 589.

not deem any of the entries worthy of the full prize, it awarded a *prix réservé* (award with reservations), the *églantine d'or* prize to Gustave-Christophe de Gallery de la Servière (1794-1863).

In 1821 the Académie des Jeux Floraux received seven essays on the distinction between romanticism and classicism.<sup>690</sup> In his report on the contest, the perpetual secretary of the Académie des Jeux Floraux, Jean-Joseph Thérèse Pinaud, argued that the first and most fundamental principle of romanticism was the evocation of strong emotion in its audience. Therefore, romantic art was at its best when it evoked the strongest emotion, he insisted. The second principle of romanticism, he wrote, was to imitate nature as faithfully as possible, without recourse to the classicist unities of action, location and time. Pinaud also saw romanticism as marked by an interest in the supernatural, which he believed came from the romantics' preoccupation with the Middle Ages. "To be perfectly romantic," Pinaud wrote, "thoughts and expression must be melancholic, descriptive, vague, oneiric, ecstatic."<sup>691</sup> Even those who wrote the essay to condemn romanticism, he argued, should have been able to answer the second part of the question: 'what resources can romantic literature offer to classicist literature?' The romantic independence of spirit and desire to evoke strong emotion invigorates and liberates romantic thought and words. He asked: are these not qualities that a poet of taste might benefit from? Romantics, he contended, by creating veracious portraits, provide models for all who want to do the same, and by choosing subjects that are closer to home they contribute to understandings of local color. Their mystical disposition, Pinaud wrote, might be indicative of a true spirituality, something one would be happy to see in classicist writing. The Academy, he continued, did not simply want the contest entrants to explain why all other countries should follow the same literary rules French classicists follow, but rather to consider how English or German literature, both in

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<sup>690</sup> Académie des Jeux Floraux, *Recueil de l'Académie des jeux floraux pour 1821* (Toulouse: M.J. Dalles, 1821), lxiii, <http://gallica.bnf.fr/ark:/12148/bpt6k4150585>.

<sup>691</sup> Ibid., lxix. "pour être parfaitement romantiques, la pensée et l'expression doivent être mélancoliques, descriptives, vagues, rêveuses, extatiques."

spite of and because of their differences from French classicism, might prove useful for French writers.<sup>692</sup>

While Pinaud's take on the question was more or less favorable to romanticism, or at least saw potential value in it, the winning entry was somewhat less forgiving of the new literary school. In Servièrè's prize-winning essay, he argued that the debate between romantics and classicists made it seem as though romantic and classicist literature differed in irreconcilable ways. We talk about these two genres in extremes, he wrote, which makes it so that we imagine them divided by an impenetrable wall that does not really exist. Some reflection, he insisted, will demonstrate that the conflict is merely a conflict of words: a semantic, rather than a real, debate.<sup>693</sup> Servièrè looked back to the late-seventeenth- and early-eighteenth-century quarrel of the ancients and moderns as a lens through which to understand the romantic-classicist debate. In the ancients and moderns quarrel, the moderns rejected ancient literature on the basis of its foundation in a non-Christian society. But, Servièrè argued, the ancients paid close attention to what made literature great and learned the secrets of good taste, and it was for this reason that proponents of the ancients became classicists. The moderns pushed away the rules of the ancients, only to replace them with bad dogmas. The mistake of the moderns, Servièrè wrote, like that of the romantics, was believing that the rules upheld by the classicists were somehow invented or arbitrary, rather than discovered methods for ensuring good taste, which Servièrè defined as the precise discernment of that which is beautiful and true.<sup>694</sup> Servièrè also chided romantics for their dismissal of classicist literature as imitation. He noted that they only imitated the rules of good taste, which, because he believed those rules were discovered, really meant the imitation of nature, and that, fundamentally, art without imitation was impossible. The best

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<sup>692</sup> Ibid., lxx–lxxiii.

<sup>693</sup> Ibid., l.

<sup>694</sup> Servièrè was right that the *bataille romantique* paralleled the battle of the ancients and the moderns. Both pitted a new literary form against an older tradition, and in doing so shaped understandings of both, and a number of critics in the Restoration made the connection between the two conflicts. However, the debate between classicists and romantics was so tied up in the politics of Restoration France, which only contributed to its volatility. Despite any similarities with the quarrel of the ancients and moderns, or ways in which the conflict built on and emerged from previous artistic conflicts, the romantic-classicist conflict was fundamentally of its time, and so engrained in attempts to recapture and reassert France in this new era. Ibid., lv.

painting or sculpture, even at their most imaginative, achieved perfection by their imitation of their subject matter, Servièrè contended. In literature also, he wrote, the possible expression and subjects were not unlimited, so parallels always existed between different works.<sup>695</sup> Romantics, Servièrè argued, in their disavowal of any imitation of the ancients, simply imitated the Germans instead. Moreover, he wrote, in their hatred of all rules, they forgot even the basic rules of taste, when imaginative genres like romanticism, he argued, most need both taste and rules.<sup>696</sup>

Many classicist critics in the Restoration echoed Servièrè's arguments about the relationship between classicism and romanticism, and dismissed romantic criticisms of classicism in similar ways. When Servièrè's entry received a reserved prize, but not the annual prize, the Academy considered proposing the question again for a third time. However, they decided against doing so because critic Pierre Duviquet (1766-1835) had given a talk on the distinction between romanticism and classicism at the Société des bonnes-lettres, and the Jeux-Floraux felt that with his pronouncements, the essay they were trying to encourage now existed somewhere in the world.<sup>697</sup> In his speech, discussed in more detail below, Duviquet made very similar arguments to Servièrè. Romanticism, in Duviquet's opinion did not really exist. In his estimation, it was a false genre that failed to recognize the fundamental, natural truth of classicist rules, and anything of value that one could find in romantic literature actually came from classicist principles.<sup>698</sup> Pinaud's clear support for both Servièrè and Duviquet's interpretations of romanticism suggests that the academy endorsed romantic literature less ardently than their friendly relationship with Hugo's circle, or his willingness to mine romanticism for its potential contributions to classicism, would suggest.

One of the seven entries to the essay contest was written by then unknown future President of France, Adolphe Thiers. In his report on the contest for 1821, Pinaud said that if the

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<sup>695</sup> Ibid. This concept that literature and creativity come from external structures and stimulus and not from the internal genius of the author – that, as M.H.. Abrams explains it, literature is a mirror not a lamp is at the foundation of early modern conceptions of authorship and copyright.

<sup>696</sup> Ibid., lviii–lix.

<sup>697</sup> Ibid., lxxvi. Duviquet's speech at the SBL was never published in full, but *les Annales de la littérature et des arts* and *Lettres champenoises* reported on it.

<sup>698</sup> "Société des bonnes-lettres, séances des 19, 21 et 23 février," *Les Annales de la littérature et des arts* 2 (1821): 331.

contest had been to choose the work that contained the most reason and truths then Thiers would have won. Thiers wrote to the judges after his loss in June of 1821.<sup>699</sup> In the letter, Thiers expressed gratitude and noted that he had not spent long on the piece, which would account for its imperfect style. He also said that he found that the winning entry married bad romantic taste and dry biography, and that he did not consider Servièrre a rival. “I have noticed,” he concluded, “that we condemn romanticism in principle, but that all minds let themselves be taken in by it regardless.”<sup>700</sup> While Thiers referred to Servièrre, his words applied to the Académie des Jeux-Floraux more broadly, which rewarded the work of poets with romantic tendencies, but also denied the validity of the new school, excepting in the ways it might inspire classicism. Thiers’ words also applied, albeit to a lesser extent, to the *cénacle* of romantic writers who looked to the academy for validation for their art. While they produced journals to promote ‘the new literature,’ the Hugo brothers, Soumet, and their compatriots often hid behind the language of neutrality. Moreover, they, at least initially, avoided the word ‘romantic,’ and they associated freely with the royalist classicist Société des bonnes-lettres, suggesting that in the early 1820s politics mattered more than literary partisanship to the members of the *cénacles* of the *Conservateur littéraire* and *la Muse française*, and that political connections could be operationalized to promote literary aims.

### **Cénacles: *Le Conservateur littéraire* and early royalist romantic sociability**

In December 1819, in the wake of the new censorship laws that, by further restricting political publications, encouraged the creation of literary journals, Abel, Eugene, and Victor Hugo founded *le Conservateur littéraire* as a literary corollary to Chateaubriand’s political journal *le Conservateur*. Initially Victor and Abel Hugo served as the journal’s primary contributors, but they were joined in 1820 by the group of writers who would go on to found *la Muse française*, including Alexandre Soumet, Alexandre Guiraud, Alfred de Vigny, Émile Deschamps, and Adolphe de Saint-Valry. Although Victor and Abel Hugo continued to write a large plurality of the articles for

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<sup>699</sup> This letter was published in *Le Temps* after Thiers’ death in September 1877.

<sup>700</sup> *Le Temps* no. 5995 (16 September 1877). “Je me suis aperçu que l’on condame le romantisme en principe, mais que tous les esprits s’y laisse prendre cependant.”



the journal – Victor alone wrote at least 111 articles across the journal's 30 issues<sup>701</sup> – the journal became much more of a group effort. Moreover, most of the contributors signed their articles with pseudonyms or initials, and some contributors used several different pseudonyms (Hugo deployed at least seven), which made it seem as though the journal had even more contributors than it did.<sup>702</sup> The connections these writers made while producing *le Conservateur littéraire*, both with each other and through other organizations, proved crucial for the development of royalist romanticism in the 1820s, despite the fact that the journal itself never found significant success,<sup>703</sup> and despite the *rédacteurs* reticence.

*Le Conservateur littéraire* while always clearly royalist, began with only tentative overtures toward romanticism, and, like most literary journals at the time, insisted on its neutrality in both political and literary matters. As we have seen, not only did claims to political neutrality try to protect literary journals from prosecution under the press law of 1819, which forbid political discussion in non-political papers, but they also tried to protect the realm of letters from the pernicious influence of political conflict. Early in the journal's run, Victor Hugo wrote, in a piece about two plays by Casimir Delavigne and Ancelot, that because of the decadence of French letters one no longer asks whether a poet belongs to the right literary faction, but instead one asks for his political party.<sup>704</sup> A small shop owner and voter, Hugo argued, would whistle (boo) a performance of Ancelot's Louis IX, not because of any defect in the performances or the play, but because *le Constitutionnel* told the shop owner that Louis IX is also named Saint-Louis, "and the merchant voter is a philosophe."<sup>705</sup> Liberal newspapers, he continued, praised Delavigne's

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<sup>701</sup> Jules Marsan, ed., *Le Conservateur littéraire, 1819-1821*, vol. 1–1 (Paris: Librairie Hachette, 1922), xliii.

<sup>702</sup> The multiple pseudonyms, also deployed in *la Muse française*, made it possible for the contributors to, in a sense, brand their articles. Hugo, for example, tended to sign his literary critique for *le Conservateur littéraire* "V." and his art critique "M." Similarly, in *la Muse française*, Emile Deschamps tended to sign his criticism "E." but signed his articles on mores "le Jeune moraliste."

<sup>703</sup> The journal lasted only until 1821 and printed 30 issues. Its early issues had print runs of 500, which later decreased to 300 and then 250, and then rose again to 300. Archives nationales de France, F18/50A.

<sup>704</sup> V[ictor Hugo], "Les Vêpres Siciliennes, tragédie par M.C. Delavigne, Louis IX, tragédie par M. Ancelot (premier article)," *Le Conservateur littéraire* 1 (1819): 65.

<sup>705</sup> Hugo, "Vêpres Siciliennes," *Le Conservateur littéraire* 1: 63. "le marchand électeur est philosophe."

*Vêpres Siciliennes*, not for its beauty, but for the eloquent phrases they could quote from it. Hugo wrote that this elevation of literary conflict, and particularly conflict in the theatre, to the same fevered pitch, and almost the same importance, as political conflict was a new phenomenon and characteristic of the current century.<sup>706</sup>

These calls for political neutrality in matters of literature attempted to preserve literary critique from corruption by politics, not to eliminate political partisanship or position altogether.<sup>707</sup> The *rédacteurs* of *le Conservateur littéraire* could be avowedly royalist, and could produce an avowedly royalist journal, and still argue that literary evaluations should be made on literary rather than political merits, and therefore claim political neutrality in literary matters. In the preface to the May 1820 edition the *rédacteurs* wrote that they served both literature and the throne and that they would be happy to revive interest in literature but they would be “happier still if we could promote monarchism and persuade some generous souls to accept sound doctrines.”<sup>708</sup> However, they insisted that their politics would not affect their treatment of literature, stating that, “we will always distinguish, in our critiques, the man of letters from the man of the party, because bias kills true literary critique.”<sup>709</sup> They echoed this sentiment in the preface to the third volume where they promised, as always, to write from their conscience, and present their “religious beliefs with toleration,” their “political position with moderation” and their “literary opinions with measure.”<sup>710</sup>

*Le Conservateur littéraire*’s writers found themselves in a precarious position: according to the French establishment, they supported the right politics, but the wrong literature. And while their royalism granted them certain privileges – such as access to the exposure provided by the Société des bonnes-lettres and the Académie des Jeux Floraux – their increasingly bold support for romantic literature meant those privileges only went so far. In the preface to their third volume,

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<sup>706</sup> Hugo, “Vêpres Siciliennes,” *Le Conservateur littéraire* 1: 64.

<sup>707</sup> See Chapter 1 for a discussion of political neutrality in literary journals.

<sup>708</sup> “Préface,” *Le Conservateur littéraire* 2, no 11 (1820): 1. “plus heureux encore, si nous pouvons propager le royalisme et convertir aux saines doctrines de généreux caractères.”

<sup>709</sup> Ibid. “nous distinguerons toujours, dans nos critiques, l’homme de lettres de l’homme de parti, parce que la partialité tue la vraie critique littéraire.”

<sup>710</sup> “Préface,” *Le Conservateur littéraire* 3, no 21 (1820): 6. “Nous écrirons toujours, comme nous l’avons fait jusqu’ici, d’après notre seule conscience, nous exposerons notre croyance religieuse avec tolérance, notre foi politique avec modération, et nos opinions littéraire avec mesure.”

the *rédacteurs* wrote that they, unlike other journals, received no help from the government or support from the king's ministers, and that all of their success, merited or not, could be attributed to the people of France. The people, they wrote, made it possible for the journal to survive without ministerial patronage, which proved both the journal's objectivity and its ability to speak for and appeal to the people of France. Although the subscriber base for the journal was, in reality, small, and although, as we have seen, *le Conservateur littéraire* looked to established authorities to support their writing, the *rédacteurs* clearly believed it was important to tell their readers that the journal could support itself through subscriptions, on its own merits, and could therefore be trusted to share the *rédacteurs*' true opinions and not those of its patron. Moreover, if the journal was truly popular, that bolstered its oft-made argument that it, and the literature it reviewed, represented all of France, or the true France. In the preface to the second volume, the *rédacteurs* wrote that while they expected their bold love of literature to be met with indifference, they now felt they owed their readers a profession of faith that would match up with the things they had written in the first volume.<sup>711</sup> In a review of Chateaubriand's *Mémoires, lettres et pièces authentiques*, which looked at the life and death of the Duc de Berry, Victor Hugo wrote that the book served as a consolation for "the whole of France" and that everyone had read it.<sup>712</sup> The *rédacteurs*' emphasis on their Frenchness and their representativeness seems somewhat defensive in the face of the precarious position in which royalist romantics (and all romantics) found themselves in the Restoration literary establishment. The *rédacteurs* addressed that anxiety directly in the preface to the journal's third volume, where they offered the journal as a platform for the complaints of writers who suffered at the hands of the powerful and important, by which they meant actors, journalists and booksellers in particular. "These three classes of privileged individuals," the preface continued, "are those who most readily offend writers," but if

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<sup>711</sup> "Préface," *Le Conservateur littéraire* 2:1.

<sup>712</sup> V.[ictor Hugo], "Mémoires, Lettres et Pièces Authentiques touchant la Vie et la Mort de S. A. R. Mgr. Charles-Ferdinand d'Artois, fils de France, duc de Berri; par M. le vicomte de Chateaubriand," *Le Conservateur littéraire* 2, no. 14 (1820): 127.

more journals were open to the justified complaints of men of letters it would undercut the power of those who would attack them.<sup>713</sup>

*Le Conservateur littéraire* did not initially style itself as a romantic journal, but always had romantic sympathies. For example, its second issue included Victor Hugo's lukewarm review of two Walter Scott novels (*A Legend of Montrose* and *Bride of Lammermoor*), in which Hugo declared that Scott was a genius, but that these were not his best novels. It avoided using the word 'romantic' to refer to itself, in order to maintain its purported literary neutrality. In its first year and a half or so of publication, the journal avoided discussing romanticism directly, preferring instead to call for a less proscriptive approach to literature, and an evaluation of all literature on its own merits unaffected by politics or partisanship – a clearly non-classicist position, even if not precisely an anti-classicist one. Their calls to leave politics outside of literary debate, and to review literature otherwise ignored, suggested to their readers their interest in new literary forms, which in the Restoration meant romanticism. The *rédacteurs* tried to put those ideals into practice in their reviews. One review of an anonymous satire called *Budget de la littérature pour l'an 1819* took the satire to task for its poor literary criticism, arguing that even bad books should be critiqued with propriety.<sup>714</sup> Another review, of Népomucène Lemerrier's *Ode a notre age analytique*, vowed to consider Lemerrier's book only for its literary style, rather than its ideas, but only after noting the work's antiroyalist arguments and faulty reasoning.<sup>715</sup>

In its seventeenth issue, *le Conservateur littéraire*, in a review of Auguste Bernède's *Arindal*, addressed the question of the romantic-classicist debate directly for the first time. The journal continued to claim literary impartiality, even as their vision of literary impartiality – being open to judging a work on its own merits – revealed their romantic sympathies. The reviewer,

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<sup>713</sup> "Préface," *Le Conservateur littéraire* 3: 6. "Ces trois classes d'individus privilégiés sont celles qui froissent le plus volontiers les auteurs."

<sup>714</sup> F. "Budget de la littérature pour l'an 1819, avec solde d'une partie de l'arrière, satire anonyme," *Le Conservateur littéraire* 2: 114.

<sup>715</sup> J. "Ode a notre age analytique, par M. Népomucène Lemerrier, de l'Institut de France," *Le Conservateur littéraire* 2: 236-237.

Félix Biscarrat,<sup>716</sup> wrote that classicists were growing anxious at the increased popularity of 'ossianic' literature. He argued that the classicists felt backed into a corner, which made literary crisis imminent. Everywhere romanticism succeeds, Biscarrat continued, these classicists see only bad taste and the elevation of subversive principles, and summarily dismiss new literature, even when it provokes public interest. The classicists, he argued, see no variation in quality from author to author, nor can they see the good qualities in a piece of romantic writing, because they are so blinded by what they perceive to be the bad qualities.<sup>717</sup> Biscarrat insisted that "those of us who belong to no literary sect" and are less partial, "recognize talent everywhere it is found, in whatever form it is presented, regardless of the author's other opinions and the genre he has adopted."<sup>718</sup> The *rédacteurs* of *le Conservateur littéraire*, Biscarrat contended, could admire Virgil and Horace without discounting the glory of Klopstock and Milton. This generosity, he argued, meant the journal could review new literature without partiality or attachment to literary sect, and even if the reviewer did not like a work, any author could rest assured he would receive the reviewer's true impression of the work instead of preconceived opinions about the genre to which the work belonged.<sup>719</sup>

The journal became somewhat bolder in its support of the romantic movement over time. One of the most important pieces published in *le Conservateur littéraire* was Alfred de Vigny's late 1820 review of the collected works of Lord Byron.<sup>720</sup> It demonstrates the journal's willingness to openly support romantic literature despite political, or even moral, disagreements. In the review, Vigny wrote that when we read works of genius we see into the hearts of authors, and that no one paints himself into his own poetry like Lord Byron. As a result, Vigny argued, while Byron's poetry is beautiful and truthful, it imposes its author's sadness on the reader's soul. Vigny

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<sup>716</sup> The article is signed S., which Jules Marsan attributes to Félix Biscarrat. He notes that other scholars have attributed articles signed S to Soumet, but he did not write for the journal until its third volume, and signed his article X. or A.S. Marsan, *Conservateur littéraire*, 1–1:xliv.

<sup>717</sup> S. [Félix Biscarrat], "Arindal, ou les Bardes, suivi de Gélimer, ou le Héros Vandale, du Voyageur à Clisson, de contes en vers, etc.; par M. Auguste Bernède," *le Conservateur littéraire* 2: 272.

<sup>718</sup> Ibid., 272-273.

<sup>719</sup> Ibid., 273

<sup>720</sup> Victor Hugo claimed later in life to have written this review, but scholars generally agree that Vigny wrote it. Marsan, *Conservateur littéraire*, 1–1:xxxv–xxxvi.

took issue with Byron's impiety and immorality as expressed in his poetry, but wrote that he could only spend so long criticizing such a man of genius, especially when he had the impression that so many of Byron's faults came from his profound sadness. Therefore, Vigny wrote, rather than looking at the man he would examine the works purely on their literary merits. Doing so, he found the poems were faithful to nature, and said that even though Byron's criticisms of society made his readers despair for the future, when they read his poems their hearts hurt, but they did not harden. Vigny contrasted Byron's work with the writing of the eighteenth-century philosophes, who, with their same concerns for the future, destroyed all possibility of hope.<sup>721</sup> Vigny's review, beyond demonstrating the journal's support for Europe's most famous romantic poet, specifically placed literary concerns above political and moral concerns. Vigny, as a staunchly Catholic royalist, could not agree with Byron's politics, nor could he approve of his behavior, but he could put aside politics and religion and focus on literature. Here the writers of the *Conservateur littéraire* put into practice their stated aim of not allowing political partisanship to color their literary critique.

But that did not stop members of the circle that produced *le Conservateur littéraire* from using their politics to forge connections in the Parisian literary world. Beginning in early 1821, Victor Hugo and his brother Abel became active members of the newly formed classicist-royalist Société des bonnes-lettres. Although a literary society founded on the concept that classicist literature was the true French literature, that the Bourbon monarchy was the true French government, and that it was its moral duty to promote both to ensure the vitality of French society and France's place in the world, the Société des bonnes-lettres provided an important venue for sociability and exposure for some royalist romantics. Abel Hugo gave a series of lectures on Spanish literature in 1821 and 1822, and Victor read his poetry at a number of the Society's public sessions. At the 28 February 1821 meeting, Abel gave one of his lectures, while Victor read his poem "Ode sur Quiberon," which he would later have read at a meeting the Académie des Jeux Floraux. The relatively unknown Hugo brothers attracted only a small audience, but it

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<sup>721</sup> [Alfred de Vigny], "Littérature Anglaise: Oeuvres complètes de Lord Byron" *Le Conservateur littéraire* 3 (1821): 215-216.

received them both well. The audience applauded Victor's poem in particular, a recognition *les Annales de la littérature et des arts* insisted it deserved because "despite some darkness, one found within it a profound sentiment and an animated poetics."<sup>722</sup> Other members of the *cénacle* also became involved with the Society, although not to the same extent. Emile Deschamps, for example, appears on the list of members of the society, but only had one of his poems published in their journal, *les Annales de la littérature et des arts*.<sup>723</sup> And like with the Académie des Jeux Floraux, the journal reciprocated this exposure by reprinting an abridged version of the SBL's prospectus in 1821, which mentioned that both Abel and Victor Hugo would give talks that season, and the journal would reprint poems first heard at SBL meetings.<sup>724</sup> This pattern of behavior suggests that early on these royalist romantics expressed greater loyalty to their politics than to the new and still unformed literary movement. However, it also suggests that the members of this royalist romantic *cénacle* could make strategic use of their royalist connections to promote their work and the work of the members of their circle. Their connection proved somewhat tenuous, however. When *le Conservateur littéraire* folded, *les Annales de la littérature et des arts* absorbed it. Within months, however, the members of the *cénacle* grew unhappy with *les Annales de la littérature et des arts*. Victor Hugo wrote to his uncle in October of 1821 that the former *rédacteurs* of *le Conservateur littéraire* were unhappy with their treatment by the Société des bonnes-lettres' journal, although the group would not leave to found a new journal until 1823.<sup>725</sup>

### **Societies: Société des bonnes-lettres and its rivals**

The Société des bonnes-lettres, founded in late 1820, held its first public meeting at its rooms on Rue de Grammont 15 February 1821, and received royal permission in 1823.<sup>726</sup> While

<sup>722</sup> "Société des bonnes-lettres," *Les Annales de la littérature et des arts* 2 (1821): 368. "qui a été fort applaudie, et qui méritait de l'être, parce que, malgré quelques obscurité, on y trouve un sentiment profond et une poésie animée."

<sup>723</sup> Henri Girard, *Un bourgeois dilettante à l'époque romantique: Émile Deschamps, 1791-1871*, Bibliothèque de la Revue de littérature comparée (Paris: E. Champion, 1921), 91.

<sup>724</sup> "Société des Bonnes-Lettres (Extrait du Prospectus)," *Le Conservateur littéraire* 3:362-365.

<sup>725</sup> Marsan, *Conservateur littéraire*, 1-1:xxxii-xxxiii.

<sup>726</sup> In mid-1822, the Société des bonnes-lettres moved to Rue Neuve St-Augustin. Le view Mélomane, "Fin d'une séance des bonnes-lettres," *Le Miroir des spectacles, des lettres, des mœurs et des arts* no. 497 (4 June 1822). For a discussion of the political and religious origins of

its stated goal was to uphold “les saines doctrines” (sound principles) both political and literary, its members hoped to do so through the promotion of literature, through lectures and later through their journal the *Annales de la littérature et des arts*. The name ‘Bonnes-lettres’ played on ‘belles lettres’ (literature), and implied that the Society promoted a certain kind of literature, one that followed ‘sound principles.’<sup>727</sup> Theirs, the Society argued, was the right literature. This notion of ‘correctness’ meant that literary partisanship relied on both taste or aesthetics, as well as on morality or value.<sup>728</sup> The society’s preoccupation with the moral influence of literature and its official dedication to royalism helped to politicize their aesthetic discussions. So did their membership. The SBL’s list of founders reads like a list of prominent, aristocratic, Parisian royalists – the Marquis de Fontanes, Chateaubriand, Campenon of the Académie Française, Bertin de Vaux, member of the chamber of deputies and director of *le Journal des débats*, l’Abbé Genoude. The Society became known for its royalism and its Catholicism, even more than for its classicism.<sup>729</sup>

The *Société des bonnes-lettres* produced and promoted a moral vision for the future of French society rooted in both classicism and royalism. It did this through its textual output, but more importantly through its creation of a social space. The Society saw sociability as its primary function. Its prospectus, published in *Annales* in 1821, began with the assertion that their first

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the Société des bonnes-lettres see Bernard Degout, “Les cours publics organisés par la Société des Bonnes Lettres (1821-1830), suivis de la liste de ses membres,” *Bulletin de la Société de l’histoire de Paris et de l’Île de France*, no. 113–114 (1988): 433–37.

<sup>727</sup> The Société des bonnes-lettres’ critics understood the relationship between bonnes-lettres and belles-lettres somewhat differently. In an article in *le Miroir des spectacles*, one journalist praised a members of the SBL’s book by saying it belonged to the realm of *belles-lettres* rather than *bonnes-lettres*. In an inversion of the SBL’s own understanding of their title, *le Miroir* suggested that *bonnes-lettres* was partisan distinction, where ‘belles lettres’ was distinction of quality or calibre. *Le Miroir des spectacles, des lettres, des mœurs et des arts* no. 493 (31 May 1822): 3.

<sup>728</sup> Instances of the Society referring to ‘bonnes-lettres’ in their writings are here translated as ‘good literature’ and should be taken to mean literature that is both of high literary value and is morally good. Unfortunately the correlation to ‘belles-lettres’ is lost in the translation.

<sup>729</sup> In 1828, one travel guide said the Société des bonnes-lettres was founded on the model of l’Athenée but “otherwise renowned for its monarchical and religious principles.” *Le Véritable conducteur parisien de Richard* (édition de 1828), 99. “il est renommé en outre pour ses principes monarchiques et religieux.”



object was to unite a group of men who felt a mutual esteem.<sup>730</sup> "It is rather rare," the administrative committee of the society wrote, "in our country and in our time, to see a large group where hearts beat as one, where opinions are shared; to see a society that can do some good, simply by being, in the middle of a world of agitation and division, an asylum for concord and peace."<sup>731</sup> The society was to be a corrective to this societal lacuna, just as it was to be a corrective to both literature and politics. Other societies, they claimed, have lauded the wrong literature. By applauding only good literary doctrines, the Society, they believed, would restore honor to French literature, and in doing so perform a service for the nation.<sup>732</sup>

These 'other societies' to which the Bonnes-lettres offered a supposed corrective, seems to have been principally l'Athénée des arts de Paris.<sup>733</sup> L'Athénée des arts de Paris, founded in 1781 and called Musée de Monsieur and later Lycée des arts, began as an educational institution, but by the turn of the nineteenth century transformed itself into a society, and shortly thereafter took on its new name. Despite its title, the Athénée was as, if not more, focused on science than on art or literature. However, it contributed important discourse to French letters as well. When it was still a school, La Harpe gave his famous *Lycée* lectures there, and public lectures and discussions of literature continued when l'Athénée became a society in 1803. For example, the French poet and dramatist Louis Lemercier (1771-1840) gave a series of public lectures on literature at l'Athénée des arts de Paris in 1810-1811 and 1815-1816, published in four volumes in 1817. In addition to public lectures on literature, science and art, l'Athénée

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<sup>730</sup> The prospectus was signed by the director, Ducanel, but was developed by the administrative committee of the Society during their 28 January meeting.

<sup>731</sup> Ducanel, "Société des Bonnes-Lettres (Prospectus)," *Les Annales de la littérature et des arts* 2 (1821): 236. "C'est un spectacle assez rare, dans le pays et dans le temps où nous sommes, que celui d'une réunion nombreuse, où tous les cœurs s'entendent, où toutes les opinions se correspondent; d'une société enfin qui peut produire quelque bien, par cela seul qu'elle sera, au milieu de l'agitation et de la division des esprits, comme l'asile de la concorde et de la paix."

<sup>732</sup> Ducanel, "Société des Bonnes-Lettres (Prospectus)," *Les Annales de la littérature et des arts* 2: 236

<sup>733</sup> Margaret H. Peoples, "La Société des bonnes-lettres (1821-1830)," *Smith college studies in modern languages* 5 (1923): 1. The two societies were pitted against one another in the periodical press. For example, *Le Miroir des spectacles* reported in June 1823 reported that the Société des bonnes-lettres was doing badly, but l'Athénée was as successful as always, which the journal attributed to its dedication to useful truths and generous sentiments. "Bilan de la Société des bonnes lettres," *Le Miroir des spectacles, des lettres, des mœurs et des arts* no. 875 (19 June 1823): 3.

offered meeting spaces and a reading room with newspapers and periodicals for members. New members had to be referred by two current members, and subscription was 120 francs for a man and 60 for a woman.<sup>734</sup> Despite their opposition to its politics, the Société des bonnes-lettres, which organized itself with many of these same features, seems to have found a model in l'Athenée.<sup>735</sup>

Like l'Athenée, the Society offered places of meeting. Its rue de Grammont property, in what was then the second and is now the ninth arrondissement, was divided into a number of rooms. One was intended as a 'cabinet de lecture' where members could read newspapers and other periodical literature, as well as political and religious pamphlets. A second was set aside for conversation, and the third was a library. The rooms were open to members daily from 9 am to midnight. To help extend its sociability beyond its walls, the SBL mailed a newsletter to its members semi-monthly. The newsletter contained the schedule of the semi-weekly public lectures put on by the society between the months of January and July where its members would present excerpts of their writings, or declaim on matters of literature or history.<sup>736</sup>

The SBL functioned as a hybrid public-private space. It was clearly a social space, and it had a civic goal, but access was limited and controlled, and there were different levels of access. The most obviously public aspect of it was, of course, the public lectures, which anyone could attend if they purchased tickets, at the cost of 60 francs for the season. References to women attending these lectures and the existence of reviews of the lectures in opposition journals suggest that non-members and non-adherents did attend, even if only for the purpose of later writing a scathing or sarcastic review.<sup>737</sup> Its printed materials, including but not limited to the

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<sup>734</sup> *Le Véritable conducteur parisien de Richard* (édition de 1828), 126.

<sup>735</sup> Ibid., 99.

<sup>736</sup> Ducanel, "Société des Bonnes-Lettres (Prospectus)," 241-42.

<sup>737</sup> One reference to a woman attending an SBL function is in a review of *Vertu et Scélératesse*, where the reviewer says he stopped by the home of a woman but she had not yet returned from the Société des bonnes-lettres. While the story is very possibly fictitious, the author obviously thought a woman attending the meeting was believable. "Vertu et scélératesse, ou la fatalité," *Le Miroir des spectacles, des lettres, des mœurs et des arts* no. 354 (2 February 1822): 3. For evidence of a non-member attending, or at least having access to the SBL's lectures see for example, "Fin d'une séance des Bonnes Lettres," *Le Miroir des spectacles, des lettres, des mœurs et des arts* no. 497 (4 June 1822) The author admits to having been given a ticket to the

*Annales*, were also publicly distributed and allowed a certain amount of access to the ideas of the Society, even if not its physical space. The rooms at the Society that one had to be a member to enter, including the library, reading room and conversation room, were less public, but should not be seen as entirely private either. There was hierarchy within membership – some members were founders, others only subscribers, but other than a question of prestige, it is unclear what affect this had on day-to-day activities within the Society, for example, whether founders had a greater say in decision making. While the highest level of membership – *sociétaires-fondateurs* (founding members) – was originally limited to 100 people and later to 300 people, there was the potential for an unlimited number of *sociétaires-abonnés* (subscribers). Founding members paid 200 francs a year, while subscribers were charged half that.<sup>738</sup> This meant that in practice membership was limited not only by one's politics and aesthetics, but also by one's wealth. This limited the Society's potential impact, while also reflecting its conservatism. Moreover, anyone who wanted to become a member of the Society had to be sponsored by three current members.<sup>739</sup> Wealth, gender, affinity, and social network all limited access to membership. The Society's vision for French society was precise and circumscribed, and their desired membership was a reflection of that.

On top of sociability the founders expected the Society to be a place for the development and edification of its members. Their prospectus invited all men of letters, all learned members of society, both foreign and domestic, who defended sound principles to join. The SBL hoped their society, and in particular the public lectures, would be a place for young writers to develop and perfect their works, while being exposed to good traditions and classicist models. It was of particular importance to the Society that this new generation of writers be encouraged to follow the principles of 'true' French literature, classicism. Therefore, the SBL's sociability was not merely reflective, but productive. Their prospectus argued that their society might even be an

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public lecture "semi-officially," and is glad to arrive near the end so he does not actually have to attend the meeting.

<sup>738</sup> *Statuts de la Société des Bonnes-Lettres, approuvés par le Gouvernement* (Paris: Le Normant, 1821).

<sup>739</sup> "Société des bonnes-lettres: Assemblée générale du 29 mai 1823," *Les Annales de la littérature et des arts*, XI, no. 129 (1823): 287-288.

occasion for celebrity<sup>740</sup> – a venue for the exposure and endorsement of an author's work.

Historian Bernard Degout argues that the potential exposure the Society offered young writers, especially through its journal and press coverage of its meetings, made it a haven for the ambitious.<sup>741</sup> And Henri Girard has argued that at least a nominal membership of the Société des bonnes-lettres became de rigueur for all aristocratic and literary Parisians.<sup>742</sup> The Society's critics disagreed, however. *Le Miroir des spectacles* wrote that in spite of its stated aims, the Bonnes-lettres destroyed careers. Genius, they argued, cannot thrive without truth or freedom, implying that the Society offered neither.<sup>743</sup>

But the Bonnes-lettres claimed to promote both the edification and success of its own members, as well as that of society as a whole. They believed that "working toward the rebirth of good letters means working toward pacifying minds and banishing discord."<sup>744</sup> Women had a central role in this project, and were admitted to public lectures, but could not be founders or subscribers,<sup>745</sup> which suggests that the Society saw women's education in *bonnes-lettres* as important and appropriate, but were less concerned about their contributions to them. However, some members of the SBL did believe that women, by virtue of being women and purportedly naturally royalists, encouraged good practices in men. In one talk at the Society in 1822, François Roger, of the Académie française, argued that women have always supported the correct causes, and so should be kept around in order to encourage good taste in others, especially young French men. "Royalism," he argued, "is innate in French women; it appears to be, like love, the great concern of their lives."<sup>746</sup> Roger's position however still did not allow for women to influence French letters through their own writing, instead their passive support of the monarchy and of

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<sup>740</sup> Ducanel, "Société des Bonnes-Lettres (Prospectus)," 241.

<sup>741</sup> Degout, "Les cours publics organisés par la Société des Bonnes Lettres (1821-1830), suivis de la liste de ses membres," 432.

<sup>742</sup> Girard, *Un bourgeois dilettante à l'époque romantique*, 91.

<sup>743</sup> "Poèmes, odes, épîtres et poésies diverses, par M. X. B. Saintine," *Le Miroir des spectacles, des lettres, des mœurs et des arts* no. 820 (25 April 1823): 2.

<sup>744</sup> "Société des Bonnes-Lettres (Prospectus)," 238. "Travailler à la renaissance des bonnes-lettres, c'est travailler à pacifier les esprits et à bannir les discordes."

<sup>745</sup> *Ibid.*, 243.

<sup>746</sup> "Discours de clôture de l'année 1822, prononcé dans la séance du 31 mai, par M. Roger, de l'Académie française," *Les Annales de la littérature et des arts* 7, no. 89 (1822): 384. "le royalisme est inné chez les Françaises ; il semble être, comme l'amour, la grande affaire de leur vie."

classicism on its own, he believed, would encourage the young men of France to practice sound principles.

In response to this kind of gender-based exclusion in literary circles, a group of Parisian women founded l'Athénée des dames, a women's literary society whose membership included both men and women. They began publishing their own journal in September 1823. The first issue of *Annales littéraires de l'Athénée des dames* began by stating that its aim was to promote and advertise their society, because the public continued to ignore the existence of a women's literary society in Paris.<sup>747</sup> Like the Société des bonnes-lettres, they saw their society as a venue for literary sociability, as well as for the development and improvement of French letters – but specifically for women writers, although they also opened their doors to all France's young writers,<sup>748</sup> perhaps feeling a kinship with those also on the fringes of France's literary establishment. Women, they wrote, are by law and by nature excluded from politics, and as a result men alone have access to civic and military glories. Prestige, they argued, could also come from the fruits of the mind and imagination, and since women worked to perfect themselves in those areas, why should they not have an organization designed to encourage that improvement?<sup>749</sup> The founders of l'Athénée des dames therefore saw literature as a potential avenue for women to showcase and find acclaim, in a society that excluded them from political achievements.<sup>750</sup> L'Athénée des dames' statutes specifically outlawed political discussion from their meetings, and instead focused on science, arts, and letters.<sup>751</sup> Literature, specifically by virtue of its perceived distance from politics, offered a potential alternative path for social

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<sup>747</sup> The journal had a print run of 500. Archives nationales de France, F18/118A.

<sup>748</sup> Madame Sartory said, "We have already manifested the desire to never exclude from our lectures the work of young authors who are or who will be part of l'Athénée des dames." "Discours prononcé par Madame de Sartory," 10. "Nous avons déjà manifesté le désir de ne point exclure de nos lectures les productions de jeunes auteurs qui font ou feront partie de l'Athénée des Dames."

<sup>749</sup> "Avertissement," *Annales littéraires de l'Athénée des dames* 1, no. 1 (September 1823): 2; "Discours prononcé par Madame de Sartory pour l'Ouverture de l'Athénée des Dames," *Annales littéraires de l'Athénée des dames* 1, no. 1 (September 1823): 4.

<sup>750</sup> Politics, Madame de Sartory declared, was the enemy of the gentle pleasures of the mind. It banished vibrant and collegial literary debate from society. "Discours prononcé par Madame de Sartory," 6.

<sup>751</sup> "Extrait du Règlement général de l'Athénée des Dames," *Annales littéraires de l'Athénée des Dames* 1, no. 1 (September 1823): 35-36.

recognition for these women, just as it offered a purportedly non-political arena in which to debate French society.<sup>752</sup> But, as the *cénacle* of *le Conservateur littéraire* suggests, having political connections and the 'right' political beliefs provided potential avenues for literary success and recognition. The Athenée des Dames, despite its regulation against political discussion, discussed issues of interest to French royalists – like the birth of the Duc de Bordeaux, the Duc de Berry's posthumously born son, which gave the Bourbons a direct heir, and some royalists interpreted as proof of divine support for the dynasty<sup>753</sup> – all topics that demonstrated its members' royalism despite their progressive gender politics.

The civic nature of the Société des bonnes-lettres' project was also tied directly to its founders' beliefs about the relationship between politics and literature. Louis de Bonald was one of the society's founders. In the Prospectus, Ducanel wrote that if Bonald was correct that literature is the expression of society, then it is no surprise that in the previous thirty years French literature was the literature of revolt, of impiety, of discord, because that was the reality of French society. The Society lamented the talent that was lost in the fog of France's 'troubled times,' but gave thanks to the centuries of literary models that would serve as a guide for the Society to "revive the taste for good principles and good literature."<sup>754</sup>

Inversely, Ducanel argued that historically whenever a culture's taste becomes decadent or depraved, that culture also faces political troubles. But once good taste and proper literature

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<sup>752</sup> The Athenée des Dames seems to have found little success in this endeavour. A report in *le Diable Boiteux* suggests that the women's literary society closed its doors within months of publishing its journal. Speculating on why the society folded, *le Diable Boiteux* quipped: "Did the young men and young women fight, or did they get along too well?" They continued to joke, "happily we still have the Société des bonnes-lettres, which we have so rightly nicknamed l'hotel Rambouillet of today." L'hotel Rambouillet served as the location for the famous seventeenth-century literary salon of Catherine de Vivonne, marquise de Rambouillet. Corneille, Bossuet and contemporary luminaries frequented the salon, which suggests, given *le Diable boiteux*'s consistent disdain for the SBL, that *le Diable boiteux* used this reference to mock the Society's classicism and to call them old fashioned and out of touch with the contemporary era. *Le Diable boiteux* 1, no 151 (11 December 1823), 4. "Les jeunes gens et les jeunes demoiselles de disputaient-ils, ou s'accordaient-ils trop bien entre eux ? . . . Fort heureusement il nous reste encore la Société des bonnes lettres, qu'on a si justement surnommée l'*hotel Rambouillet* de notre époque."

<sup>753</sup> "Discours prononcé le 3 Octobre 1823, par M. Cartier-Vinchon, à l'occasion de la naissance de Monseigneur le Duc de Bordeaux," *Annales littéraire de l'Athénée des Dames* 1, no. 2 (October 1823): 8-9.

<sup>754</sup> Ducanel, "Société des Bonnes-Lettres (Prospectus)," *Annales de la littérature et des arts* 2 (1821): 237. "faire revivre le goût des bonnes doctrines et des bonnes-lettres."

again take their rightful place in society, their success presages a return to political order as well.<sup>755</sup> Therefore, the Society's project to restore classicist literature was a conservative political project, and a moralist project. Because "literature is the expression of society," morality could not be separated from literature; Ducanel went so far as to argue that "morality and religion are so useful to the development of man's faculties that if we did not preach them in the interest of social order, then we would have to preach them to men of letters in the interest of their talents."<sup>756</sup> It was the *depravity* of taste that Ducanel believed led to political strife – because the moral failure of taste was also the moral failure of society. In February 1821, Mély-Janin (Jean-Marie Janin, 1777-1827) gave a speech at the SBL about contemporary literature in which he argued that literature had as much of an impact on public morals as on private joy, and that good mores depend on good taste and vice versa.<sup>757</sup> As a result, he continued, nothing could be more useful for France than the establishment of a society that would reanimate French letters.<sup>758</sup> Because its project was fundamentally about improving the morality and religiosity of France, the Society planned to offer public lectures on both literature and on morality, as well as those on the history of France (for it was only in its annals, they argued, that one finds a people's glory).<sup>759</sup> Also as a part of its perceived public responsibilities, like France's various Academies, the Bonnes-lettres held writing contests, for both poetry and prose, on questions of morality and legitimacy, the winners to be determined by the Society at the end of their season of public lectures.<sup>760</sup> Occasionally the SBL would print pamphlets of the winning essays, just as it sometimes published texts of public lectures, or provided accounts of their meetings. In this way, print extended the reach of the society into the homes of those who could not or would not attend its meetings, creating a virtual social network in addition to network created through its meetings and membership.

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<sup>755</sup> Ibid., 238–39.

<sup>756</sup> Ibid., 237. "La morale et la religion sont si utiles au développement des facultés de l'homme, que, si on ne les prêchait point dans l'intérêt de l'ordre social, il faudrait les prêcher aux hommes de lettres dans l'intérêt de leurs talents."

<sup>757</sup> "Séance du 23," *Lettres champenoises* (1821): 186.

<sup>758</sup> Ibid., 187.

<sup>759</sup> Ducanel, "Société des Bonnes-Lettres (Prospectus)," 238.

<sup>760</sup> Ibid., 243.

The journal *les Annales de la littérature et des arts*, in its role as mouthpiece of the Society, printed descriptions of its public meetings, selected texts of proclaimed papers or poems, and schedules for future talks. Therefore, *les Annales'* function was twofold. First, it provided advertising for the society, perhaps encouraging new membership, new attendants, or more active participation or attendance. Second, it proliferated and echoed the society's message and allowed it to reach into the homes or reading rooms of people who could not or would not attend meetings, even people outside of Paris (although the non-Parisian readership of these Parisian literary journals tended to be minimal). By publishing descriptions of its public meetings, texts of declaimed papers or poems and calendars of future events, the *Annales* was able to extend the reach of the Society; to bring its message of sound principles and good literature to a larger number of people.<sup>761</sup> Although *les Annales* would not become the official journal of the Society until the fall of 1822, they promoted and publicized the Society from its very inception, in part because there was significant overlap between the Society's membership and those who produced the journal. Initially, the names of the *rédacteurs* listed on the journal's title page included only MM. Ancelot, Briffaut, Dureau de La Malle, de Lourdoueix, Charles Nodier, Quatremère-de-Quincy, but more, including the Hugo brothers, once *le Conservateur littéraire* folded, would join later.<sup>762</sup> All these men belonged to the Société des bonnes-lettres, most as *associés honoraires*. Lourdoueix, who served as chief of division of the ministry of the Interior that dealt with the press and censorship from 1822 to 1827, and Quatremère de Quincy, an architectural scholar who served as both secretary general of the department of the Seine and perpetual secretary of the Académie des Beaux-Arts, were both listed as *Sociétaires-Fondateurs*.<sup>763</sup> All the *rédacteurs* of *les Annales* actively participated in SBL activities. For example, in 1825, Jean-François Ancelot, Charles Briffaut (who was also a press censor), Charles Nodier, Victor Hugo, and Quatremère de Quincy all gave talks at public meetings.<sup>764</sup> By

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<sup>761</sup> In May 1821, *les Annales de la littérature et des arts* had a print run of 500 copies. Archives nationales de France, F18/50A

<sup>762</sup> "Société des Bonnes-Lettres," *Les Annales de la littérature et des arts* 2 (1821): 280.

<sup>763</sup> *Société royale des bonnes lettres, Prospectus, 5e année – 1825* (Paris: C.J. Trouvé, 1825), 15–17.

<sup>764</sup> *Ibid.*, 2–3.



aligning themselves with the Society, the *Annales*' contributors and editors committed themselves to the project to promote good literature and the monarchy. The *Annales* announced that by doing so they were in common cause with all great minds in the "defense of literary and political principles that have provided this France, illustrious and great for many centuries, its prosperity and its masterpieces!"<sup>765</sup> This project to which *les Annales* attached itself was intended to be one of national rejuvenation and celebration.

Of course, because individuals made up both the Society and the editorial staff of the journal, their message was not homogenous. *Les Annales* in particular, in sections not dedicated to the work of the Society, included reviews and articles that ran counter to the Society's literary views.<sup>766</sup> Moreover, because the reality the Society was trying to reflect and promote did not yet exist, there was a certain amount of fluidity to its ideology, especially initially. Through *les Annales* and through their public lectures and occasional publications, the SBL presented a conglomerate that allowed a level of variety of opinion as long as it existed within the confines of their agreed-upon principles. Therefore, although the Society and *les Annales* put forward a vision of monarchical classicist France, that vision was not perfectly homogenous, and it changed over time. It was in development, it was being debated, through public lectures and printed articles, and that very debate helped to both create and promote royalist classicism in Restoration France.

Like other classicists in the Restoration, the SBL often defined its classicism in opposition to that 'disagreeable' new literary genre, romanticism. This meant that through their promotion of classicism, the Society helped to define and create romanticism as a genre and a movement that was distinctly 'other.' But as with the other examples of classicist criticism we have seen, the Society did not advance one clear understanding of romanticism, nor only one critique of it. On 19

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<sup>765</sup> "Société des Bonnes-Lettres," *Les Annales de la littérature et des arts* 2 (1821): 280.

<sup>766</sup> Charles Nodier's reviews, for example, consistently skew pro-romantic. His review of *Le Petit Pierre*, discussed in Chapter 2, distinguishes between romantic literature and the "*genre frénétique*" that critics tended to conflate with romanticism. Nodier, "Critique littéraire: Le Petit Pierre," *Les Annales de la littérature et des arts* 2: 82. For more on romanticism in *les Annales* see C. Jensen, "The 'Romanticism' of the Annales de La Littérature et Des Arts," *French Studies* 19, no. 4 (October 1965): 341–57.

February 1821, Pierre Duviquet, who was a theatre critic for the *Journal des Débats*,<sup>767</sup> gave a public lecture on the distinction between classicist and romantic literature in which he denied the existence of the romantic genre. He argued that romantic literature had no good qualities that classicists did not also have, that it provided no sentiment, or thought, no eloquence or language that did not derive from classicist models. Classicists, he maintained, in their imitation of nature had discovered all the secrets of true eloquence and poetry.<sup>768</sup> He argued that all those qualities romanticism claimed to bring to French literature could be found in classicist literature.<sup>769</sup> In a second speech delivered the next month, he expanded upon this argument, contending that those authors romantics claimed as their own, in reality, followed classicist principles.<sup>770</sup>

Duviquet's well-received argument was critical of romantic literature, but saw it as useless, rather than dangerous.<sup>771</sup> In the early 1820s the lines between romanticism and classicism were not yet clear, which is one reason why Victor Hugo, could be an active member of the SBL and Chateaubriand could be its president. Moreover, the romantics who were part of the Society in the early 1820s often did not yet define themselves as such – even though they saw themselves as promoting a more open kind of literature, they were careful to avoid the word romantic because of its negative connotations. As with the Jeux-Floraux, these romantics could use the exposure the Society offered them to promote themselves as writers, because even if their literary project ran counter to the Society's literary project, their political projects aligned. Somewhat ironically, the Society's conservatism, royalism and connections with the government meant that it afforded a certain amount of protection to people whose politics were in line with the Society's even if their literary tendencies were not. Moreover, in its early years the Society left

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<sup>767</sup> Jean Gaudon, "Un Carnet de Victor Hugo (1820-1821)," in *Studies in Modern French Literature : Presented to Percy Mansell Jones by Pupils, Colleagues and Friends*, ed. Lloyd James Austin (Manchester University Press, 1961), 118.

<sup>768</sup> "Société des Bonnes-Lettres: Séances des 19, 21 et 23 février," *Les Annales de la littérature et des arts* 2 (1821): 313.

<sup>769</sup> "Séance du 19," *Lettres champenoises* 4 (1821): 185.

<sup>770</sup> "Séance du 9," *Lettres champenoises* 4 (1821): 262.

<sup>771</sup> *Lettres champenoises* reports that his second speech was interrupted a number of times by cheers and applause. *Ibid.*, 262-263.

itself more open to variety in literature.<sup>772</sup> Initially, the Société des bonnes-lettres could and would support and promote romantic poetry as long as it was patriotic poems about the tragic death of the Duc de Berry or the glory of the Bourbons, but opposed romanticism's foreign origins and any artwork that seemed to promote or celebrate that on its own merits.<sup>773</sup> In *Racine et Shakespeare*, Stendhal argued that romantic tragedy, because it made French history interesting, was in the interest of the Chamber of Peers, which meant its corollary, the Société des bonnes-lettres, could oppose these national tragedies written in prose. "National tragedy," Stendhal wrote, "is a treasure for the bonnes lettres."<sup>774</sup> As time went on and people like Victor Hugo began increasingly to identify themselves as romantics, and as the SBL defined both romanticism and classicism in increasingly circumscribed ways, these romantics, even though they had the same politics, began to distance themselves from the Society.

The Society's anti-romanticism would only increase over time. In 1822, Roger delivered a lecture closing the SBL's second season. In it, he argued that one cannot separate sound literary doctrines from sound political principles, and that as a result that which is beautiful in literature corresponds with that which is good in politics and that "the opinions of real statesmen will be professed by men of taste."<sup>775</sup> The Société des bonnes-lettres, Roger argued, must therefore fight against the enemies of the beautiful and the good. It should "incessantly battle revolution in their

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<sup>772</sup> While I interpret the Société des bonnes lettres as fundamentally and officially classicist, but with some on the ground variety because of the fluidity of both romanticism and classicism in the early 1820s, Bernard Degout disagrees. In Degout's estimation the Société des bonnes lettres was itself not uniformly classicist – it was uniformly royalist, but its literary position was contested. The classicists, like Duviquet, saw romanticism as a manifestation of the revolution and so oppose it. Romantics, he argues, did not see the Restoration as the final solution to revolution – society, in their estimation continued to dissolve, and romantic literature expressed that dissolution. And since everyone agreed that literature should be the expression of society, romantic literature, they believed, because it was the most true to life, best expressed contemporary French society. Degout's characterisation of the nature of the romantic-classicist conflict lines up very closely with my own, I contend that the Society is more accurately represented as a classicist royalist society in development, with some romantic-leaning royalist members, rather than a literary society that ever seriously considered supporting romanticism. Degout, "Les cours publics organisés par la Société des Bonnes Lettres (1821-1830), suivis de la liste de ses membres," 440–41.

<sup>773</sup> Girard, *Un bourgeois dilettante à l'époque romantique*, 100.

<sup>774</sup> Stendhal, *Racine et Shakspeare, n° II, ou Réponse au manifeste contre le romantisme prononcé par M. Auger dans une séance solennelle de l'Institut*, 75.

<sup>775</sup> François Roger, "Discours de clôture de l'année 1822, prononcé dans la séance du 31 mai, par M. Roger, de l'Académie française," *Les Annales de la littérature et des arts* 7, no. 89 (1822): 374. "l'opinion des vrais hommes d'État serait professée par des hommes de goût "

acts, in their wishes, in their hopes, in its literature, in its language."<sup>776</sup> This meant that the Société des bonnes-lettres' literary and political mission extended beyond the anti-revolutionary and became counter-revolutionary, to rout out the revolution's influence even in language, where it had, he argued, changed the meanings of patriot, fraternity, reason, and liberty.<sup>777</sup> The revolution, he continued, also destroyed impartiality of judgment, because impartiality would have one treat a king and a regicide on equal footing.<sup>778</sup> The romantics emphasized the impartial critique of literature, without thought to politics or literary school, and here Roger associated impartiality with a lack of sound principles and with revolution. The youth of France, he argued, needed the sociability and direction offered by the Society to save them from revolutionary influence, because talent and zeal, sterile and impotent on their own, required concord and union to thrive.<sup>779</sup> *Le Miroir des spectacles* criticized Roger for misunderstanding the words he sought to save from literary influence. They insisted that his speech at the Bonnes-lettres showed no understanding of the words impartial, revolutionary, patriot, or national glory. He took patriot as a synonym of rebel or factious, but *le Miroir* disagreed. Patriot, they argued, means friend of the *patrie*, which meant that anyone who served the state was a patriot. Moreover, *le Miroir* argued that Roger should be more thankful to the revolution, because without it he would never have been elected to the Académie, which held itself to a higher standard in the ancien regime. Moreover, they criticized him for his actions during the Revolution – for not fighting for France, asking how he could speak of national glory if he had never seen cannon fire.<sup>780</sup>

Only two years after Duvicquet's first lecture on the relationship between romanticism and classicism, Charles de Lacretelle, the theatre censor and the Society's resident historian, in his remarks opening the 1823-1824 season, in December 1823, took a much more hardline

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<sup>776</sup> Ibid., 376 "Nous continuerons, Messieurs, de faire la guerre aux ennemis du *beau*, aux ennemis du *bon*. Nous combattons incessamment la révolution dans ses actes, dans ses vœux, dans ses espérances, dans sa littérature, dans son langage."

<sup>777</sup> Ibid., 377–378.

<sup>778</sup> Ibid., 381.

<sup>779</sup> Ibid., 383–384.

<sup>780</sup> "Sur quelques-uns des mots français que ne comprend pas M. le directeur de l'Académie française," *Le Miroir des spectacles, des lettres, des mœurs et des arts* no. 511 (21 June 1822): 3. The comment about cannon fire responds directly to Roger's speech, in which he inveighed against "vile pamphleteers" who spoke of national glory but had never seen more of a cannon than its smoke. Roger, "Discours de clôture de l'année 1822," 380.

approach, and made overt attempts to associate romanticism with revolution. *Le Diable boiteux* reported that it seemed Lacretelle had forgotten “that the president of the Société des bonnes lettres is the author of *Atala* and the *Martyrs*.”<sup>781</sup> In his remarks, Lacretelle noted that those who wanted to reform literature, the romantics, thought that France needed a literature that was indigenous – not one based on classical Greek models – one that reflected the time and place in which they lived. But, he argued, while it is legitimate to want to portray one’s own time, since France had just emerged from revolution, it would not do to reproduce that chaos in literature.<sup>782</sup> Lacretelle, who had survived the revolution, despite being a monarchist, by joining the army, believed, along with many members of the SBL, that pre-revolutionary France could be recaptured. That, as he said in his opening remarks, “the empire of good letters would be, I will not say created, but reestablished. The nineteenth century will open communication with the century of Louis XIV, and reject the heritage of the century of pride and of revolutions.”<sup>783</sup> Lacretelle believed that romanticism could only continue revolution. It was only by reaching back before the eighteenth century, to the height of French classicism – the era of Racine, Corneille, Boileau – that the Restoration could escape France’s recent past, he insisted. “Good letters,” he argued “are the natural auxiliaries of good works and good actions.”<sup>784</sup>

Both Roger and Lacretelle’s remarks also underscore the complicated role that France’s own history, especially of the Revolution and Terror, but also the Empire, played in the Restoration. Their concerns that romanticism would reproduce the chaos of the revolution point to the ambiguous position the revolution and Napoleonic eras held in Restoration society. While many royalists saw both the revolution and the empire as illegitimate regimes, others, and in particular liberals, felt that anyone who had fought against France in those twenty-plus years

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<sup>781</sup> “Société des bonnes-lettres, Séance d’ouverture,” *Le Diable boiteux* 1, no. 145 (6 December 1823). “qui ne s’est pas rappelé que le président de la société des bonnes lettres est l’auteur d’*Atala* et des *Martyrs*”

<sup>782</sup> “Société Royale des Bonnes-Lettres: Séance d’ouverture du 4 décembre,” *Les Annales de la littérature et des arts* 13, no. 165 (1823): 419.

<sup>783</sup> Quoted in *Ibid.*, 417. “L’empire des *bonnes lettres* fut, je ne dirai pas créé, mais rétabli. Le dix-neuvième siècle s’ouvrit, en naissant, une communication avec le siècle de Louis XIV, et rejeta l’héritage du siècle de l’orgueil et des révolutions.”

<sup>784</sup> Quoted in *Ibid.* “Les Bonnes-Lettres sont les auxiliaires naturels des bonnes œuvres et des belles actions.”

were traitors to France, traitors to the French. Depending on the politics of the observer, almost any way one had acted during the revolution could be taken as a sign of disloyalty to France. *Le Miroir*'s criticisms of Roger demonstrate that clearly, as do similar criticisms of Lacretelle. The writers at *l'Album* criticized an earlier lecture of Lacretelle's at the Society for being anti-French. The writer decried Lacretelle's hypocrisy for condemning 'revolutionary' France in his talk, when he had "sung for liberty during the republic, for power during the empire; and attacked the empire during the restoration."<sup>785</sup> And Lacretelle, like many officials of the Restoration government, had served under previous regimes. He was first appointed theatre critic, the position he continued under the Restoration, in 1810. The official policy of *oubli* with respect to the events of the Revolution and Empire, discussed in detail in chapter 1, offered one model for dealing with France's past in the present, but other methods and interpretations competed with it, making it difficult, if not impossible, for the Restoration to find political consensus.

The Bonnes-lettres' increased hostility toward romanticism, while not uniform across the Society, represented the general consensus among members. In January 1825, Henri Patin (1793-1876) gave a lecture at the Bonnes-lettres in which he argued that a compromise should be found between romanticism and classicism. His suggestions were not well received by the audience, who, *les Annales* reported, believed that allowing for foreign influence would devalue French letters.<sup>786</sup> Moreover, by 1825 the Society's influence was on the decline. The Society lost much of its standing when Chateaubriand lost his cabinet post on 6 June 1824. Instead of joining Chateaubriand in turning against the Villèle government, the Society seems to have decided to continue to support them both. This coincided with the beginnings of the Society's decline – its member list decreased noticeably in 1826, and that December Chateaubriand stepped down as president.<sup>787</sup> Moreover, references, both positive and negative, to the Society in the literary press

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<sup>785</sup> M. Bosquet-Deschamps, "Le D vouement fran ais," *L'Album. Journal des arts, des modes et des th  tres* 8, no. 136 (25 March 1823): 109. "...chanta la libert  sous la r publique, la puissance sous l'empire ; il attaqua avec fureur l'empire   la restauration."

<sup>786</sup> "Soci t  Royale des Bonnes-Lettres," *Les Annales de la litt rature et des arts* 18, no. 223 (1825): 122.

<sup>787</sup> Degout, "Les cours publics organis s par la Soci t  des Bonnes Lettres (1821-1830), suivis de la liste de ses membres," 423–24, 481.

decrease significantly after 1825.<sup>788</sup> The SBL would continue to exist until 1830, but would never again have the influence and importance it did in the first half of the 1820s.

### **Cénacle: *La Muse française* and the Académie Française**

The royalist romantics, while they were unhappy with *les Annales de la littérature et des arts* as the replacement for *le Conservateur littéraire*, would not found a new journal of their own until 1823, when a group of *gens de lettres* united to found *la Muse française*. *La Muse* built upon the connections made through *le Conservateur littéraire*, the SBL, and *les Annales* to bring together Victor Hugo, Charles Nodier, Alexandre Soumet, Alexandre Guiraud, Michel Pichy, and Alfred de Vigny to form a new *cénacle* with the production of *la Muse* at its center.<sup>789</sup> While *la Muse française* published only two volumes in 1823 and 1824, it marked an important development in royalist romanticism. Through the creation of their journal, and in the face of increasing opposition from classicism, members of the *cénacle* of *la Muse* grew increasingly bold in their support of romanticism. Moreover, in 1824 Hugo published his *Nouvelles Odes et Poésies Diverses*, which earned him a royal pension from Louis XVIII.<sup>790</sup> Despite these successes, the final months of the journal's production, however, saw a crisis for royalist romantics – in April 1824, Louis Simon Auger denounced romanticism in the name of the Académie Française, which precipitated the break-up of the *cénacle*. Moreover, when Chateaubriand lost his cabinet post on 6 June of that same year, it seemed as though royalist romantics had lost the protection of their most powerful ally. This coincided with the decline of the Société des bonnes lettres, from which Hugo and other members of the *cénacle* began distancing themselves in 1824,<sup>791</sup> and occurred only six months before the death of Louis XVIII. Charles X's reactionary politics proved less

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<sup>788</sup> The print run of *les Annales* also decreased, from 500 in 1821, to 250 in 1826 and 200 in 1827. Archives nationales de France, F18/118B.

<sup>789</sup> All the founders of the journal put up one thousand francs as startup money. Lamartine refused to be involved in the journal or be among the authors or editors, but he did contribute a thousand francs. Girard, *Un bourgeois dilettante à l'époque romantique*, 107.

<sup>790</sup> Louis XVIII granted the pension, of 1000 francs, despite not being a fan of romantic literature himself. He loved Racine and Horace, and once said of Chateaubriand's writing that he disliked its "*emphase* and *jargon ampoulé*." Mansel, *Louis XVIII*, 298–99.

<sup>791</sup> While Victor Hugo continued to appear in the list of names of people giving public talks in the SBL annual prospectus until 1830, his name was not included on the actual schedule of meetings after 1824. Degout, "Les cours publics organisés par la Société des Bonnes Lettres (1821-1830), suivis de la liste de ses membres," 424, 465–91.

compatible than his brother's with the comparatively moderate royalism of French royalist romantics. And while Hugo's invitation to write poetry for Charles X's coronation legitimized and advanced his literary career,<sup>792</sup> the loss of Academic and political avenues for support left the most of the romantics of *la Muse* with two choices: abandon romanticism in favor of the literary establishment, or push back against that establishment.

*La Muse*, much like *le Conservateur littéraire*, initially supported romanticism somewhat tentatively. In the preface to its first volume the *rédacteurs* wrote that "while the rules of art are immutable like the laws of nature, the physiognomy of literature varies with the centuries," which meant literary criticism must also change over time.<sup>793</sup> Because literature is the expression of society, they argued, the Revolution resulted in strange innovations and changes in literature. Criticism, they contended, sometimes lags behind literary development, and *la Muse* tasked itself with helping it to catch up. As with *le Conservateur littéraire*, they promised impartiality and fairness in their criticism.<sup>794</sup> The *rédacteurs* lamented that politics was noisily discussed in the *salons*, drowning out discussions of literature and forcing those who loved poetry to fall silent. They claimed that the people of France wanted poetry not influenced by politics or polemic, and that the press ignored so much of the excellent literature being produced in France. *La Muse*, they argued, would fill that lacuna, and so reignite the French public's love for poetry, by showcasing a variety of poetry, both by new and young talent, and by well-established authors.<sup>795</sup> While the preface never mentioned romanticism, as with *le Conservateur littéraire*, the references to young talent, impartiality, and new and unknown literature, all strongly hinted at *La Muse*'s romantic leanings.

Over time, however, the *rédacteurs* of *la Muse* began to support romanticism more openly and boldly. In the preface to their second volume, entitled "Nos Doctrines," Alexandre Guiraud began with an epigraph from Boileau: "Nothing is beautiful but the truth; the truth alone is

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<sup>792</sup> Bernard Degout, *Victor Hugo au sacre de Charles X, 1825* (Cazaubon, France: Eurédit, 2003).

<sup>793</sup> "Avant-propos," *La Muse française* 1 (1823): 3. "Quoique les règles de l'art soient immuables comme les lois de la nature, la physionomie des littératures varient avec les siècles, la critique doit nécessairement avoir aussi sa partie variable."

<sup>794</sup> Ibid., 3-4.

<sup>795</sup> Ibid., 1-2.



agreeable.”<sup>796</sup> But, he argued, there are two kinds of literary truth: immutable and relative.

Immutable literary truth applies equally to all literature regardless of place or time of origin.

Relative literary truth is specific to its time and place, and makes it impossible to compare works

from different contexts, because each is the unique production of its particular circumstance and

so cannot serve as a model for any other literature.<sup>797</sup> Nor can this new literature be evaluated

against ancient models, Guiraud noted, because it does not follow any. This genre, he continued,

has an individual character that one does not find in classicist literature, and while other countries

have produced this kind of unique literature in the past, it was new to France.<sup>798</sup> France, he wrote,

has been a nation of literary imitators, ironically because it had such good schools, and such a

strong and vibrant literary tradition. Guiraud noted that the degradation of French literature cannot

be blamed on the original French classicists, but rather on their imitators, who in making a copy of

a copy lost the character of the original.<sup>799</sup> The new literature, however, which was particular, but

still true, came from both the heart and the imagination, Guiraud contended. Moreover, he argued

that this new genre was growing in popularity, and that the best of these works would bring new

glory to French literature.<sup>800</sup> Pious and royalist, the new literature, Guiraud wrote, must arm itself

against the excessive rationalism of the eighteenth century. However, he continued, the literary

conflict of the Restoration cannot be conflated with its political conflict; it is a conflict “between

those who want to sometimes believe in their hearts, and those that believe only in their reason or

their memory, and trust only in roads already traveled.”<sup>801</sup> Guirard wrote that if those whose

prejudices were stronger than their talent abandoned *la Muse* in favor of classicism, it would not

stop the *rédacteurs* from making use of their work, and from searching for their true principles.

But the *rédacteurs* called on their readers to join in their project, which they believed would lead

to glory, because, Guiraud argued, in an age of representative government, the people should

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<sup>796</sup> Alexandre Guiraud, “Nos Doctrines,” *La Muse française* 2 (1824): 5. “Rien n’est beau que le vrai; le vrai seul est aimable.”

<sup>797</sup> Ibid., 6-9.

<sup>798</sup> Ibid., 10-12.

<sup>799</sup> Ibid., 12-17.

<sup>800</sup> Ibid., 26-27.

<sup>801</sup> Ibid., 27. “La lutte n’est donc pas engagée entièrement à son sujet entre deux partis politiques; elle existe entre ceux qui veulent croire quelquefois à leur cœur, et ceux qui, ne croyant qu’à leur raison ou à leur mémoire, ne se fient qu’aux routes déjà tracées.”

publicly discuss literature. It should not stay locked up in schools and salons, not when literature had as great an influence on society as politics.<sup>802</sup>

In the tenth issue of *La Muse française*, published April 1824, Charles Nodier wrote “Première lettre sur Paris: De quelques logomachies classiques,” in which he sought to determine the distinction between romanticism and classicism. He argued that classicists had never properly answered this question, and that all their attempts simply revealed their confusion and ignorance.<sup>803</sup> It had become vogue, he wrote, to attack romanticism in the press, and to pretend one understood what it was. But, the romanticism these classicists attacked did not really exist, Nodier contended.<sup>804</sup> Instead it was a fictional straw-man they built so that they might destroy it. Nodier insisted that the play, *Femmes romantiques*, which told the story of a man trying to protect his nieces from the supposed perniciousness of romanticism, had no humor, because it founded its satire on falsehoods rather than observations.<sup>805</sup> In reality, Nodier continued, the discussion should be simple, founded on the concept that nothing is beautiful but that which is true, but factions, academies, and societies, muddled the issue with their ambitions.<sup>806</sup> Journalists, he wrote, would have the naïve public believe that romantics were godless, lawless men who do not love their king, rather than simply those whose work reflects the changing time.<sup>807</sup>

On April 24th 1824, nine days after the tenth issue of *la Muse* appeared, Louis Simon Auger, who was both perpetual secretary of the Académie française and an active member of the Société des bonnes-lettres, made a speech at the annual meeting of the Institut de France’s four academies in which he denounced romanticism. While today his speech is probably most famous for having inspired Stendhal to write the second pamphlet of *Racine et Shakespeare* (its subtitle being *Or a response to the manifesto against romanticism given by M. Auger at a solemn*

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<sup>802</sup> Ibid., 29-30.

<sup>803</sup> Charles Nodier, “Première lettre sur Paris: De quelques logomachies classiques,” *La Muse française* 2 (1824): 219-220.

<sup>804</sup> Ibid., 222-223.

<sup>805</sup> Ibid., 224.

<sup>806</sup> Ibid., 225–226.

<sup>807</sup> Ibid., 227.

meeting of the Institute),<sup>808</sup> scholars of romanticism have often seen it as an important benchmark in French anti-romanticism. The Académie's official denunciation of romanticism went hand in hand with increasing opposition to romanticism from classicist circles, including, but not limited to, the Société des bonnes-lettres. Léon Thiessé, in *le Mercure du XIXe siècle*, argued Auger had not gone far enough in his criticisms at the Académie, and said the romantics presented art that was Germanic and unappealing to the French – it was mystical where the French were philosophical and offered misanthropy and lugubriousness to a people who wanted enjoyment and innocent gaiety.<sup>809</sup> In its aftermath, Auger's speech made it more complicated for romantics, especially royalist romantics, to present themselves and their art as engaged in the same project as classicist royalists. Auger's speech, or more specifically the Academy's position on romanticism it represented, is also often credited as breaking up the romantic cénacle that produced *la Muse française*.

Auger's arguments against romanticism echoed those made by other conservative classicists at meetings of the Société des bonnes-lettres, or in print in journals and pamphlets, but also took those criticisms further than most, and while doing so, spoke for the Académie française itself. Auger emphasized romanticism's nebulosity, its foreignness, and its dangerous novelty. He set out to allay the concerns of those who noticed the manifestation of a literary schism in France and to take the opportunity to declare the Académie's position against the new literary movement. Although Auger argued that there was little to fear from romanticism, and although he recognized the risk of making it appear more important by deigning to discuss it, he believed that the force and the authority of the Académie française would be enough to alleviate doubts and discourage further dissension in France's literary ranks. The romantics, he declared, had small numbers, although their adherents were young and enthusiastic, and their loud voices made them

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<sup>808</sup> *Ou réponse au manifeste contre le romantisme, par M. Auger dans une séance solennelle de l'institut.*

<sup>809</sup> Girard, *Un bourgeois dilettante à l'époque romantique*, 111–12.

seem like they posed a greater threat to classicism, and therefore French culture, than they in fact did.<sup>810</sup>

Like many critics of romanticism, Auger began with the assertion that neither the proponents nor opponents of romanticism knew how to define it. He, however, seemed unburdened by this particular failing. He noted that the romantics prided themselves on the trueness of their writing. In what seems to have been a direct reference to Guiraud's "Nos Doctrines" and Nodier's "Première lettre," Auger contended that romantics took credit for the maxim '*Rien n'est beau que le vrai*' or at least believed they alone could fulfill it. The romantics, he continued, believed that literary style borrowed from the ancients could never be true for modern times. That belief, Auger argued, formed the very heart of their philosophy, and was easily dismantled, because the truth in art consisted primarily of telling universal truths about humanity that held for all times and all places, those immutable things at the base of both man and nature, and only secondarily should art show those accidental differences that change the appearance of man and nature in different times and spaces.<sup>811</sup> Here Auger highlighted the true impasse between romantic and classicist ideology, and impasse Guiraud attempted to solve in "Nos Doctrines": whether art should reveal particular, relative truths, or universal truths.

Auger further argued that romanticism had two subsets: real romanticism, which was German, and derivative or false French romanticism, which merely imitated real romanticism.<sup>812</sup> Although Germaine de Staël had introduced German romanticism, its rules and principles, the ways in which it was distinct from classicism, to France Auger contended that "the young writers in France who are favorable to these new ideas have not dared to recommend them highly, and have certainly not put them into practice."<sup>813</sup> Auger continued, saying that only when young writers in France do recommend these new ideas highly or put them into practice themselves, will it be necessary to debate them, and to show them that these rules that they are transgressing are

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<sup>810</sup> Stendhal, *Racine et Shakspeare, n° II, ou Réponse au manifeste contre le romantisme prononcé par M. Auger dans une séance solennelle de l'Institut*, vii.

<sup>811</sup> Auger, "Discours sur le romantisme, prononcé dans la séance annuelle des Quatre Académies Du 24 avril 1824," 19.

<sup>812</sup> Ibid., 6–8.

<sup>813</sup> Ibid., 13. "Nos jeunes écrivains, les plus favorables à ces idées nouvelles, n'on pas encore osé les préconiser hautement, ni surtout les mettre en pratique."

the only foundation upon which the drama of an enlightened people can rest. These rules, he maintained, are the result of experience that developed into axioms over time, not the result of capricious imagination in ancient times. Aristotle, he argued, did not invent these rules anymore than he invented syllogistic logic. Rather, they were laws set forward in the interest of all, to bring glory to the poet, and to elevate genius and discourage mediocrity. While one might push back against these rules somewhat, Auger argued, one must never overturn or reverse them. Sometimes, Auger proclaimed, as in politics, literature might require small concessions to the era in order to shore up foundations and rejuvenate the movement, whereas “a complete revolution, reversing all it encounters, overturning all that it does not destroy, placing crimes above virtue, and stupidity over genius, engulfs in the same abyss the glory of the past, the joy of the present, and hope for the future.”<sup>814</sup>

Auger’s position on romanticism – and therefore the Académie française’s public position on it – paralleled a moderate conservative political position that gradual organic change was desirable and necessary to maintain a society (or a type of literature), but that revolution is destructive and unnatural. This is perhaps one of the strongest arguments in Auger’s speech, given how much consensus there would have been about the destructiveness of the revolution, especially for those, like Auger, who lived through it and had personal memories of its destructiveness.

Throughout his talk, Auger worked to systematically dismantle all the reasons romanticism claimed their literature offered something both unique and necessary. He said that literature has always changed with the times, and that that alone does not make romanticism, that classicist authors like Corneille and Racine and Voltaire have written about the middle ages, and that all must agree that medieval times, the modern age and religion are the subject matter that poets must now turn to, since ancient times have really been exhausted. Auger therefore insisted

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<sup>814</sup> Ibid., 14–15. “enfin, il en peut être de la littérature comme de la politique, où quelques concessions habilement faites à la nécessité des temps, préservent l’édifice de sa ruine, et le rajeunissent, tandis qu’une révolution complète, renversant tout ce qu’elle rencontre, bouleversant tout ce qu’elle ne détruit pas, plaçant le crime au-dessus de la vertu, et la sottise au-dessus du génie, engloutit dans un même gouffre la gloire du passé, le bonheur du présent, et les espérances de l’avenir.”

that none of the romantic criticisms of classicism were justified. Classicism, he argued, does not slavishly copy dead and irrelevant literature, but rather makes use of universal rules of literature as the frame for genius and creativity.<sup>815</sup>

Emile Deschamps responded to Auger's speech with a defense of romanticism. In the 11<sup>th</sup> volume *la Muse française*, in his article "La Guerre en temps de paix," Deschamps called for a cessation of hostilities against romanticism. Peacetime, he wrote, is a good time for factionalism and civil discord, where debates in the streets and in salons mean that while war is over, hatred is not. He argued that when people move away from political disputes they only move toward religious and literary ones instead, which he contended explained the current vogue for the conflict between romanticism and classicism. Now that the classicists had declared war on *la Muse française* as the organ of romanticism, Deschamps, who was willing to fight and even lose, simply wanted to know why it had come to this.<sup>816</sup> He suggested that classicists had a poor understanding of what romanticism really was – they defined it variously as literature written in the nineteenth century, literature about the middle ages, or literature that did not follow rules, or found its influence in English and German models, but Deschamps pointed to examples of literature commonly considered classicist that also did these things, and to literature commonly considered romantic that did not.<sup>817</sup> Romantic literature, Deschamps argued, should be defined by its poetry – romantic writing was poetic writing, while classicist writing was prosaic.<sup>818</sup> Deschamps contended that classicist misunderstanding of romanticism led to a system of persecution against romanticism, a kind of "literary terror" perpetrated by all the newspapers, all the theatres, the Académie française, the provincial academies and all the athenées, because of the faults they imagined romantic literature displayed.<sup>819</sup> Deschamps, in an attempt to find some kind of reconciliation in the conflict, asked romantics and classicists alike to remember that they all had the same goal – to create the best possible literature – and that polite and honest debate

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<sup>815</sup> Ibid., 17–19.

<sup>816</sup> Le jeune Moraliste [Emile Deschamps], "La Guerre en temps de paix," *La Muse française* (1824): 293-294.

<sup>817</sup> Ibid., 294-297.

<sup>818</sup> Ibid., 299-300.

<sup>819</sup> Ibid., 302.

should be the triumph of literary life. He even contended that in a world where literary debate happened in good faith it would be perfectly acceptable for an established academy to push back against the literary innovations of youth, so long as they did so in a paternal spirit, and were not overly restrictive.<sup>820</sup> In the current climate of conflict, however, both classicists and romantics misinterpreted one another and so the debate was itself illusory and unproductive.<sup>821</sup> While *la Muse* intended to discuss Auger's speech more thoroughly in their next issue, they instead included an elegy to the recently deceased Lord Byron, and said that, like in ancient battles, they would lay down their arms out of respect for a fallen soldier.<sup>822</sup>

Despite this initial response, Auger's speech, and all that it represented, had an important impact on the *cénacle de la Muse française* and on the *bataille romantique* more broadly. Auger appeared to be responding directly to both Nodier and Guiraud's manifestos from *la Muse*. *La Muse française* would publish only two more issues before it folded because Alexandre Soumet chose to distance himself from the romantic circle he believed would jeopardize his chances for election to a seat at the Académie française. Emile Deschamps, Alexandre Soumet, Alexandre Guiraud and Jules de Rességuier, out of a desire to deescalate conflict with the classicists and the Académie française, all wrote to Victor Hugo in July 1824 asking him to include their official goodbyes in the next issue of the journal. Hugo refused, the issue never appeared, and the journal folded.<sup>823</sup>

Yet in the wake of the journal's folding, some members of the *cénacle*, including Victor Hugo, Alfred de Vigny, and Charles Nodier, renewed their support for romanticism. Hugo, along with Vigny and Nodier reacted to Auger's denunciation of romanticism with increasing defensiveness. In a review of Vigny's *Eloa*, Hugo wrote that genius came from a poet's heart and soul, and that poetry came from inspiration and meditation,<sup>824</sup> where Auger had argued that the ideal in literature must be founded in the real. What would we think, Auger wrote, of a painting

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<sup>820</sup> Ibid., 309.

<sup>821</sup> Ibid., 10.

<sup>822</sup> S. de Fontenelle [Emile Deschamps], "Revue poétique," *La Muse française* 2 (1824): 340.

<sup>823</sup> Vincent Laisney, *L'Arsenal romantique: Le salon de Charles Nodier (1824-1834)*. (Paris: Honore Champion, 2002), 168.

<sup>824</sup> Victor M. Hugo, "Eloa, ou la Soeur des Anges, Mystère, par le comte Alfred de Vigny," *La Muse française* 2 (1824): 276-277.

whose foreground, instead of being distinct, had the formless confusion of something in the distance?<sup>825</sup> Nodier, who did not sign the letter to Hugo, had published a satirical poem “Adieu aux Romantiques,” which attacked both classicists and those members of the *cénacle* who had lost faith with the movement.<sup>826</sup> In June 1824, Hugo answered an attack on romanticism from the *Journal des débats*’ François-Benoit Hoffman with support for the new literary school, arguing that all those things Hoffman critiqued in romantic literature could be found in classicist literature as well.<sup>827</sup> Moreover, in an 1825 letter to Saint-Valry, Hugo asked his friend to correct anyone who said Hugo had abandoned romanticism along with Soumet. “You will be doing me a favor,” he wrote.<sup>828</sup>

Auger’s speech at the Institut also inspired the second volume of Stendhal’s *Racine et Shakespeare*. Stendhal’s reply to Auger, published nearly a year later in the form of a series of letters between a classicist and a romantic, presented the *bataille romantique* as a generational conflict. Habit, he wrote, constrains the imagination, and therefore limits the pleasures one can receive from art.<sup>829</sup> For example, he told the story of a prince who would never recognize the merits of a man with unpowdered hair, because an unpowdered head reminded him too much of the French revolution.<sup>830</sup> Moreover, he wrote that he sympathized with classicists born in an era where sons differed so significantly from their fathers. “Perhaps not in the two thousand years that we have known the history of the world,” he continued, “has so abrupt a revolution in habits, ideas, and beliefs occurred.”<sup>831</sup> In Stendhal’s opinion, the problem with this generational divide was that it created an impasse and makes it difficult to convince older classicists, whose

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<sup>825</sup> Auger, “Discours sur le romantisme, prononcé dans la séance annuelle des Quatre Académies Du 24 avril 1824,” 22–23.

<sup>826</sup> C.N. [Charles Nodier], “Adieu aux Romantiques,” *La Muse française* 2 (1824): 267–268; Laisney, *L’Arsenal romantique: Le salon de Charles Nodier (1824–1834)*, 166.

<sup>827</sup> This exchange is discussed in more detail below. Z.[ François-Benoit Hoffman], “Nouvelles Odes, par M. Hugo,” *Le Journal des débats politiques et littéraires* (14 June 1824): 3–4; Victor M. Hugo, “Variétés,” *Le Journal des débats politiques et littéraires* (26 June 1824): 3–4.

<sup>828</sup> Quoted in Spitzer, *The French Generation of 1820*, 142.

<sup>829</sup> Stendhal, *Racine et Shakspeare, n° II, ou Réponse au manifeste contre le romantisme prononcé par M. Auger dans une séance solennelle de l’Institut*, 35. “l’habitude exerce un pouvoir despotique sur l’imagination des hommes même les plus éclairés, et par leur imagination sur les plaisirs que les arts peuvent leur donner.”

<sup>830</sup> Ibid.

<sup>831</sup> Ibid., 38–39. “Depuis deux mille ans que nous savons l’histoire du monde, une révolution aussi brusque dans les habitudes, les idées, les croyances, n’est peut-être jamais arrivée.”



classicism was perfectly sincere, of the merits of romanticism, because they genuinely did not understand it.<sup>832</sup> “How,” Stendhal asked, “can we convince a fifty year-old man of letters who finds Zamore in *Alzire* natural and brilliant, that Shakespeare’s *Macbeth* is one of the greatest masterpieces of the human mind?”<sup>833</sup>

For Stendhal, this generational divide meant that old literary institutions and old models of literary sociability had lost their relevance. Stendhal wrote that “in a country with an *opposition*, there can no longer be an Académie française.”<sup>834</sup> He argued that the Académie française no longer represented public interests or desires – the very writers the public considered truly talented, would never be elected to the Académie, Stendhal wrote. This in itself was not new, it was normal for there to be a lag between public approval and the Académie’s recognition of an author. The present situation differed, Stendhal contended, because following public opinion would have meant replacing most of the *immortels*.<sup>835</sup> For Stendhal, innovation and novelty defined romanticism, and he argued that “all great writers were the romantics of their time. A century after their deaths, those who copy instead of opening their eyes and imitating nature are the classicists.”<sup>836</sup> The royalist romantics of *la Muse française* made similar claims, which suggests the extent to which the *bataille romantique* produced the myth of classicism. Accordingly, Stendhal insisted that while one could write a good work following classicist rules, it would necessarily be boring, because it would not say anything new.<sup>837</sup> But while some of Stendhal’s characterizations of romanticism and classicism mirrored those of the royalist romantics of *la Muse*, Stendhal rejected their status as romantics. No one in France, Stendhal contended, truly followed romantic principles, least of all Guiraud and the members of the royalist

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<sup>832</sup> Ibid., 46.

<sup>833</sup> Ibid., 39. “Comment persuader à un homme de lettres de cinquante ans qui trouve brillant de naturel le rôle de Zamore dans *Alzire*, que la *Macbeth* de Shakspeare est un des chefs-d’œuvre de l’esprit humain?”

<sup>834</sup> Ibid., vii. “dans un pays où il y a une *opposition*, il ne peut plus y avoir d’Académie Française.”

<sup>835</sup> Ibid., 81.

<sup>836</sup> Ibid., 40. “TOUS LES GRAND ÉCRIVAINS ONT ÉTÉ ROMANTIQUES DE LEUR TEMPS. C’est un siècle après leur mort, les gens qui les copient au lieu d’ouvrir les yeux et d’imiter la nature, qui sont classiques”

<sup>837</sup> Ibid., 24.

romantic cénacle.<sup>838</sup> On this point he and Auger agreed: in France, romanticism had not yet arrived.

The generational divide between romantics and classicists cannot fully explain the disparity between these two camps, but the concept of youth and of a new generation of writers served as a powerful rhetorical tool for romantics who often claimed to represent *la jeune France*, and for classicists who could dismiss romanticism as youthful folly. *La Muse française*, for example, presented itself as the “voice of youth,”<sup>839</sup> and Auger told the four French Académies that French romantics were young and misguided.<sup>840</sup> Neither Auger, born in 1772, nor Stendhal, born in 1783, belonged to the generation of Victor Hugo or the other younger members of the cénacle de *la Muse*. But the members of the cénacle belonged to different generations themselves. Alan Spitzer, in his *French Generation of 1820* suggests that the generational divide within the cénacle helped to ensure its ephemerality. He argues that Alexandre Soumet’s decision to distance himself from the journal in order to secure his seat in the Académie française led to a conflict that fell along generational lines. The older members of the cénacle left with Soumet, while the younger members either hoped to continue the journal without him (Hugo), or failing that, hoped Soumet would influence the Académie Française from the inside (Vigny).<sup>841</sup> Spitzer argues that Vigny incorrectly assessed Soumet’s dedication to romanticism. Soumet, Spitzer points out, in his acceptance speech at the Academy, lauded French literary rules and taste and, in his review of Hugo’s *Odes* in *la Muse*, purposefully distanced both of them from the word ‘romantic’ and some of the ‘bizarre’ foreign texts associated with it.<sup>842</sup> However, Charles Nodier, born in 1780, seems to be the clear exception to this generational division. Moreover, even though Soumet distanced himself from *la Muse* and from romanticism, he continued to produce work influenced by Schiller and Klopstock and theatre that did not follow the three unities. Soumet’s strategic denunciation of romanticism to gain access to the power of an

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<sup>838</sup> Ibid., 23.

<sup>839</sup> Spitzer, *The French Generation of 1820*, 135.

<sup>840</sup> Auger, “Discours sur le romantisme, prononcé dans la séance annuelle des Quatre Académies Du 24 avril 1824,” 15–18.

<sup>841</sup> Spitzer, *The French Generation of 1820*, 140.

<sup>842</sup> Ibid., 140–41.

established literary institution, is not significantly different from the Hugo's brothers use of the Société des bonnes-lettres as a platform to promote themselves and their own work. Perhaps the difference was that by 1824, Victor Hugo claimed to be less convinced by such a strategy for literary success. However, Hugo's government pension and his role the following year as official poet for Charles X's coronation conflict with the image of him as an independent artist raging against the establishment. Jean Massin argues that the true conflict at the heart of the breakup of *la Muse* was whether romanticism could tactically compromise with the literary establishment, or if romanticism needed to reject the Academy in order to follow its own ideals.<sup>843</sup> But perhaps it would be more accurate to say that the conflict was over whether romanticism should continue to strategically compromise with the establishment or not (or whether it should at least adopt the rhetoric of autonomy).

Some members of the *cénacle*, including Victor Hugo, seem to have decided, if not in 1824 when *la Muse* folded, then certainly by the founding of the next *cénacle* in 1827, that romanticism's success might require the establishment itself to change. In the second half of the 1820s romantics also looked increasingly to the theatre as the venue for romantic success. Alan Spitzer argues that "the very justification for the founding of the *Muse française*, the conviction that the French Revolution had created a new era requiring new forms of literary expression, could not be assimilated by a regime that had defined 1814 as the nineteenth year of the reign of Louis XVIII."<sup>844</sup> If this is true, it did not stop romantics from making significant inroads into the literary and dramatic establishment in the Restoration, inroads that would lay the foundation for romanticism's triumph under the July Monarchy.

### **Salons: Virginie Ancelot and Charles Nodier**

After *la Muse française* folded, it would take another three years for many of those same romantics to form a new *cénacle*, but the members found other avenues for literary sociability in the interim, both through contributions to a variety of literary journals, and through Parisian literary salons. Sophie Marchal argues that in the Restoration, salons, rather than simply renewing an

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<sup>843</sup> Ibid., 140.

<sup>844</sup> Ibid.

ancien regime aristocratic practice, adapted that practice to a post-revolutionary society. Salons offered a space with understood rules and practices in which to work through the reconstruction of French cultural identity and an organized structure in which to strive for intellectual, moral, and social progress and “a pacified national sentiment.”<sup>845</sup> Drawing on old models of sociability, these salons debated Restoration literary politics, and provided opportunities for authors to showcase their work and build important literary connections.

As in the eighteenth century, salons provided a significant cultural enclave for the women, including bourgeois women, who ran them.<sup>846</sup> Women ruled the salon model of literary sociability in other parts of Europe as well: Rahel Varnhagen’s Berlin salon brought together diverse members of Berlin society.<sup>847</sup> Perhaps the most important salon in Restoration Paris took place at author and painter Virginie Ancelot’s apartment in the hotel de la Rochefoucauld, on the rue Seine. Virginie Ancelot’s husband, the playwright and writer, Jean-François Ancelot belonged to the Société des bonnes-lettres, served as conservator at the Bibliothèque de l’Arsenal and Librarian of the King, and would be elected to the Académie française in 1841. Ancelot’s salon attracted precisely the kinds of well-appointed writers one would expect at an aristocratic salon, although Virginie Ancelot’s birth and circumstances did not necessarily lead her there naturally. While her mother did come from an old Nobles of the Robe family, her father was of obscure birth, and Ancelot made her connections in Restoration society through a variety of family connections, through the salon of baron Gerard, which she attended frequently, through her husband, whose 1819 play *Louis IX* many interpreted as a sign of loyal royalism, and through her own painting and writing and the circles and salons she attended to support it.<sup>848</sup> Salons in the

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<sup>845</sup> Sophie Marchal, “Les salons de la Restauration: un mythe, indice des mutations de la sociabilité au XIXe siècle? L’exemple de Virginie Ancelot,” in *Repenser La Restauration*, ed. Jean-Yves Mollier, Martine Reid, and Jean-Claude Yon (Paris: Nouveau Monde éditions, 2005), 326–27.

<sup>846</sup> For more on the salon in the Enlightenment, including women’s roles in the development of salon culture see Dena Goodman, *The Republic of Letters: A Cultural History of the French Enlightenment* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1994), esp. chp. 3.

<sup>847</sup> Liliane Weissberg, “Literary Culture and Jewish Space around 1800: The Berlin Salons Revisited,” in *Modern Jewish Literatures: Intersections and Boundaries*, ed. Sheila E. Jelen, Michael P. Kramer, and L. Scott Lerner (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2011), 31–32. Weissberg also notes the French influence on the Berlin salons. *Ibid.*, 33.

<sup>848</sup> Marchal, “Les salons de la Restauration,” 324.

Restoration, Ancelot later recalled, brought together the intelligent, the powerful, artists and poets and offered a space to debate significant issues in the midst of a “peaceful regime that inherited all that was good from the Revolution, and wished to bring back that which was best from the ancien régime,” including the practice of salons.<sup>849</sup> But, she continued, where in the restrictive society of the old regime only the powerful and aristocratic had access to salons, Louis XVIII brought to France new institutions and old practices, which opened up access to the connections and exposure these salons offered to a larger subset of society, and made it possible to discuss even scandalous ideas.<sup>850</sup> When Ancelot founded her own salon in 1822 it leaned toward romanticism, but in 1824 she, along with her husband, sided with the monarchy and the literary establishment and began a new salon, which she would hold until 1864.<sup>851</sup> Despite this, many romantics or writers with romantic sympathies attended her salon, including Victor Hugo, Alexandre Soumet, Alexandre Guiraud, Emile Deschamps, Alfred de Vigny, Xavier Boniface Santine, and Delphine Gay (who in the July monarchy, as Delphine Girardin, would host an important salon of her own). But equally, anti romantics and classicist like Frédéric Soulié (although only once), the critic Charles-Marie l’abbé de Feletz and the académiciens Edmond de Lemontey, Charles de Lacretelle and Auger also attended.<sup>852</sup> Ancelot later recalled that her society, and perhaps, she wrote, all of French society resembled the hotel de la Rochefoucauld where she lived and held the salon – old, solid and well-constructed, but with sections in need of repair that were barely inhabitable, and other newly renovated and filled with modern furniture.<sup>853</sup> She later elaborated that at the time the composition of her salon meant that she imagined it had two figurehead presidents whose portraits would hang at the end of the room – Chateaubriand for the romantics, and Jean-François Ducis for the classicists.<sup>854</sup> The conflict between romantics and classicists was only one of the divisions separating Restoration society, but it profoundly shaped literary life, and eventually political life as well, as men like Victor Hugo turned to literature to

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<sup>849</sup> Marguerite Louise Virginie Ancelot, *Un salon de Paris, 1824 à 1864* (Paris: Dentu, 1866), 57, <http://hdl.handle.net/2027/mdp.39015009157481>.

<sup>850</sup> Ibid., 58–59.

<sup>851</sup> Marchal, “Les salons de la Restauration,” 324–25.

<sup>852</sup> Ancelot, *Un salon de Paris*, 1–38.

<sup>853</sup> Ibid., 5.

<sup>854</sup> Ibid., 54–55.

make their way in Restoration society,<sup>855</sup> while others, members of the literary establishment like Auger, sought to hold fast to the privilege and connections they already had.<sup>856</sup>

Charles Nodier, who had been a contributor to *la Muse française* and *les Annales de la littérature et des arts*, also held a salon in his role as librarian of the Bibliothèque de l'Arsenal, a position granted to him by the future Charles X in 1824. In his memoirs, Alexandre Dumas recalled that the Arsenal salon took place on Sundays, in the library, where Nodier lived with his family. According to Dumas, Fontaney, Alfred Johannot, Tony Johannot, Barye, Louis Boulanger, Francisque Michel, Alfred de Vigny, Alfred de Musset, Victor Hugo, and Lamartine all attended l'Arsenal regularly.<sup>857</sup> The evenings began with a recitation by Nodier, which the attendees met with respectful silence. "We did not applaud," Dumas explained, "no, one does not applaud the murmur of a river, the call of a bird, or a the perfume of a flower; but, with the murmur silenced, the call disappeared, the perfume evaporated, we listened, we waited, we desired anew!"<sup>858</sup> Nodier would then call on Hugo or Lamartine to recite poetry, and Dumas remembered that everyone listening would be swept up in the imagery of the poem. Dancing and games followed, at which point Nodier usually retired and left his daughter Marie to host the remainder of the evening.<sup>859</sup>

Virginie Ancelot remembered Nodier as a unifier in a time of literary and political conflict. Nodier had the respect of both liberals and royalists, classicists and romantics.<sup>860</sup> But L'Arsenal also filled in the vacuum left by *la Muse*'s collapse. Vincent Laisney argues that the death of *la Muse*, instead of spelling the end of French romanticism, gave it new beginning as its proponents grew increasingly defensive of their literary school in the face of increasingly virulent opposition

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<sup>855</sup> Ibid., 10–13.

<sup>856</sup> Virginie Ancelot recalls Auger as a rather staid and rational man, who, as perpetual secretary of the Académie française, had influence and agreement – all those things he ever wanted. She wrote that it was difficult to imagine that Auger, who committed suicide in 1829, had lived with such melancholy and dislike of life, despite his achievements. Ibid., 34–35.

<sup>857</sup> Alexandre Dumas, *Mes mémoires*, vol. 5 (Paris: M. Lévy, frères, 1863), 126–27, <http://gallica.bnf.fr/ark:/12148/bpt6k205077t>.

<sup>858</sup> Ibid., 5:128. "On n'applaudissait pas, on n'applaudit pas le murmure d'une rivière, le chant d'un oiseau, le parfum d'une fleur ; mais, le murmure éteint, le chant évanoui, le parfum évaporé, on écoutait, on attendait, on désirait encore!"

<sup>859</sup> Ibid., 5:129.

<sup>860</sup> Ancelot, *Les Salons de Paris*, 123.

from the classicist establishment.<sup>861</sup> Nodier's Arsenal salon provided a focal point for the movement between the fall of *la Muse* and the birth of the *cénacle* of Notre Dame-des-Champs. Some evenings, instead of a reading, the publication of an anti-romantic article or pamphlet would trigger a literary discussion instead, and any former members of the *cénacle* de *la Muse* in attendance would gather to rail against the classicists.<sup>862</sup> The fall of *la Muse* failed to placate the classicists, who only increased their anti-romantic rhetoric.<sup>863</sup>

As noted above, shortly after the salon's founding, Hugo began exchanging public letters with one of the *Journal des débats*' critics, Hoffmann. Hoffman took his review of Hugo's own *Nouvelles Odes*, as an opportunity to discuss romanticism broadly. Hugo, he contended, had significant literary talent, but some of his poems, unfortunately, seemed influenced by the romantic style, despite Hugo's formal denunciation of the term romanticism in the book's preface. Hoffman noted that romantic partisans define the school as the literature of the age, but suggested the limitations of such a definition – all literature is the literature of its age, Hoffman contended. Hoffman argued that romantics dwell in the world of ideals, where classicists dwell in the real world, and that distinction is the best definition of romanticism.<sup>864</sup> In his response, which the *Débats* published, Hugo disagreed with Hoffman's definition of romanticism, arguing that all those things Hoffman contended characterized romantic literature, were just as likely to appear in classicist writing, and that classicists represented the ideal as often as romantics. Since Hoffman claimed that romantic and classicist literature only differed in their style, and all the style differences he noted could be dismissed, Hugo concluded that Hoffman saw no real difference between romanticism and classicism.<sup>865</sup> Hugo's defense of romanticism paralleled that of both Nodier, in his "Première lettre" in *la Muse*,<sup>866</sup> and of Emile Deschamps, in his response to Auger, which suggests that they influenced Hugo's thinking on the matter. Following the end of *la Muse*, Hugo and Nodier grew very close, and they came to think of each other as brothers. Their

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<sup>861</sup> Laisney, *L'Arsenal romantique: Le salon de Charles Nodier (1824-1834)*., 168.

<sup>862</sup> Séché, *Cénacle de la Muse française*, 236.

<sup>863</sup> Ibid., 236–37.

<sup>864</sup> Z.[ François-Benoit Hoffman], "Nouvelles Odes, par M. Hugo," *Le Journal des débats politiques et littéraires* (14 June 1824): 3-4.

<sup>865</sup> Victor M. Hugo, "Variétés," *Le Journal des débats politiques et littéraires* (26 June 1824): 3-4.

<sup>866</sup> Laisney, *L'Arsenal romantique: Le salon de Charles Nodier (1824-1834)*., 169.

friendship would sit at the center of their literary camaraderie as they supported each other's literary endeavors.<sup>867</sup> However, Nodier and Hugo's relationship would cool, beginning in 1827 as Hugo turned away from royalism, toward liberalism, and away from mentors toward young members of his circle, like the critic Charles Augustin Sainte-Beuve.<sup>868</sup>

### **Cénacle: Notre-Dame-des-Champs and the Journal that Never Was**

In 1827, Victor Hugo founded a *cénacle* on rue Notre-Dame-des-Champs, where he lived just down the street from Sainte-Beuve. This group, called sometimes the *cénacle* de Notre-Dame-des-Champs, and sometimes the *cénacle* de Joseph Delorme (for Sainte-Beuve's melancholic alter-ego), did not produce a journal.<sup>869</sup> Both Emile Deschamps and Alfred de Vigny wrote to Hugo about the possibility of publishing a journal called *La Reforme littéraire et des arts*, but these plans never developed into anything.<sup>870</sup> But the members of this *cénacle* contributed regularly to a variety periodicals, and while Anthony Glinoe argues that these were not "expressions of collective projects,"<sup>871</sup> they were public expressions of romantic theory and ideas, which were undoubtedly shaped and influenced by the meetings at of members of the *cénacle* and vice versa. There is some evidence to support this. In December 1829 Alfred de Vigny wrote to Sainte-Beuve about his recent article "Racine," published in the *Revue de Paris*, to which Sainte-Beuve was a regular contributor. Vigny said he was inspired to write after discussing the

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<sup>867</sup> Ibid., 170–72.

<sup>868</sup> Sainte-Beuve and Hugo reportedly first met when Hugo asked to be introduced after Sainte-Beuve wrote a very favourable review of Hugo's *Odes* in *le Globe* in January 1827. Michel Brix, "Sainte-Beuve, Hugo et la 'question littéraire' avant 1830," in *Repenser La Restauration*, ed. Jean-Yves Mollier, Martine Reid, and Jean-Claude Yon (Paris: Nouveau Monde éditions, 2005), 335–46, 336.

<sup>869</sup> Lady Morgan's 1829 travelogue contains an excellent description of Joseph Delorme, his textbook tragic romantic story, and the reality of his cheerful creator Sainte-Beuve. Lady Morgan's young romantic friend explains Sainte-Beuve's commercial genius: "But with all his poetical verve, he knew that he could not, under such circumstances, command success. There was not, he was aware, a single Romantic bookseller who would venture on the works of one who was in good circumstances and good health, gay, contented, and not labouring under a 'complicated pulmonary consumption.' He acted accordingly, and placed his reputation under the aegis of this *homme de circonstance*, the fanciful and fictitious Joseph de Lorme" (85). Lady Sydney Morgan, *France in 1829-30* (New York: J & J Harper, 1830), 83–85.

<sup>870</sup> Glinoe, "Collaboration and Solidarity: The Collective Strategies of the Romantic Cénacle," 39.

<sup>871</sup> Ibid., 38.



article with four people that morning and then rereading the article himself.<sup>872</sup> He praised Sainte-Beuve for his literary criticism and the originality with which he described Racine's life and work. He then asked whether he could dedicate one of his *Élévations* to Sainte-Beuve. He closed his letter with an aside about Victor Hugo, writing "Our poor Victor, what is he doing in the théâtre? How I pity him! Do you and he know that the buskers of the Académie and the theatres make a show of us?"<sup>873</sup> This referred to Hugo's recent difficulties getting his play for the Théâtre Français, *Marion Delorme*, past the censors. Therefore, even though the *cénacle* had no journal of its own, the articles members wrote for various journals featured in literary discussions between members, and helped to publicize the *cénacle*'s literary project.

Members of the *cénacle* also used the press to promote and support the work of other members. In 1828, Emile Deschamps wrote a letter to the editor in *le Mercure de France au dix-neuvième siècle* in support of Hugo's *Cromwell*.<sup>874</sup> Deschamps insisted that *le Mercure*'s review of *Cromwell* did not adequately appreciate Hugo's innovation – the way it pushed back against literary prejudices and broke with dramatic traditions.<sup>875</sup> Hugo wrote to Deschamps thanking him for his article. "How good of you," Hugo wrote, "to give the compliments of friendship such an air of conviction! You reason so well and you seem to have so invincibly uncovered the good in my verses that in reading you, I was persuaded myself!"<sup>876</sup> Hugo went on to say that his poetry only seemed good to him in Deschamps' poetic prose.<sup>877</sup> Deschamps' letter did not only promote Hugo's work, but also advanced the romantic project, and the project of literary sociability and criticism, more broadly. Deschamps argued that animated debate fueled the world of letters, and insisted that those who remained silent on the questions facing French literature and theatre only

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<sup>872</sup> Alfred de Vigny, *Correspondance de Alfred de Vigny, 1816-1863*, ed. Emma Sakellarides (Paris: Calmann-Lévy, n.d.), 34, [http://hdl.handle.net/2027/uc1.\\$b317579](http://hdl.handle.net/2027/uc1.$b317579).

<sup>873</sup> Ibid., 36. "Notre pauvre Victor, que fait-il dans ce théâtre? Que je le plains! Sait-il et savez-vous que les baladins de l'Académie et des théâtres font des parades chez nous?"

<sup>874</sup> Between 1823 and 1827 it published under the title *Mercure du dix-neuvième siècle*.

<sup>875</sup> Emile Deschamps, "Lettre à l'éditeur du *Mercure*, sur le *Cromwell* de M. V. Hugo," *le Mercure de France au dix-neuvième siècle* 20 (1828): 289.

<sup>876</sup> Quoted in Jules Marsan, *La Bataille romantique* (Paris: Hachette, 1912), 71. "Que vous êtes bon de donner ainsi aux louanges de l'amitié cet air de conviction! Vous raisonnez si bien et vous paraissez si invinciblement pénétré de la bonté de mes vers qu'en vous lisant, j'étais presque persuadé moi-même!"

<sup>877</sup> Ibid.

made the situation worse. He wrote: "Many people prefer their old boredom to a new joy! Many supposed amateurs ask nothing of poetry but a kind of warbling without energy or emotion, and think themselves happy as long as no unexpected sound reaches their sybaritic ears . . . But the great misfortune for vulgarly correct productions, is that men who know how to think and speak do not think and never speak: their silence quickly becomes forgetting."<sup>878</sup> Deschamps, along with Hugo and the other members of the *cénacle*, worked to contribute to the conversation about literature, and to combat this literary forgetting. In his letter, Deschamps went on to predict, quite accurately, that Hugo's preface to *Cromwell* would ensure the play's place as one of the most remarkable books of its time. Because, he wrote, even if not everyone agreed with or adopted his prescribed doctrines for theatre, everyone had to recognize Hugo's talent, the strength of his criticism, his reason and his poésie.<sup>879</sup> Moreover, Deschamps continued, Hugo's play represented the modern world. It, he insisted, contributed to the larger artistic revolution happening in France, which encompassed Rossini's operas; paintings by Ingres, Delacroix, Déveria and Boulanger; and the literary revolution borne by Chateaubriand's *Génie du christianisme*. "Why," Deschamps asked, "should the dramatic arts not also have their turn?"<sup>880</sup> Deschamps presented this revolution in artistic forms as a natural historical occurrence: occasionally, in all societies, the arts underwent a change in methods and form, as "new combinations of pleasures and new conditions for success became necessary."<sup>881</sup> In Deschamps opinion, this historical shift necessitated the rise of romanticism over classicism. Classicist literature, he wrote, could boast of its focused narrative, but lacked reality and vibrancy, while

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<sup>878</sup> Deschamps, "Lettre à l'éditeur du Mercure," *Le Mercure de France au dix-neuvième siècle* 20: 290. "Tant de gens préfèrent leur ancien ennui à une jouissance nouvelle! Tant de prétendus amateurs ne demandent à la poésie qu'une espèce de ramage sans énergie et sans émotion, et se croient trop heureux si aucun ... son inaccoutumé ne vient effaroucher le *sybaritisme* de leurs oreilles! ... Mais un grand malheur pour les productions vulgairement correctes, c'est que les hommes qui savent penser et parler n'en pensent rien et n'en parlent jamais: leur silence, c'est bientôt l'oubli."

<sup>879</sup> Ibid.

<sup>880</sup> Ibid., 296. "pourquoi l'art dramatique n'aurait-il pas son tour?"

<sup>881</sup> Ibid. "de nouvelles combinaisons de plaisirs, de nouvelles conditions de succès deviennent nécessaires."

romanticism traded classicism's strong narrative framing and cohesive homogeneity for vivid characters and verisimilitude of time and place.<sup>882</sup>

The *cénacle* de Notre-Dame-des-Champs proved significant, despite its lack of a cohesive literary organ, because of the role it played in the development and success of romanticism. The *cénacle* itself, through its existence and through the activities of its members, contributed to the validation of the romantic project of its members. As Deschamps recalled in an 1864 letter to a student: "I cultivated poetry only to better feel, and to better applaud them" – the writers he most admired – "Lamartine, Victor Hugo, Alfred de Vigny, Alfred de Musset, Sainte-Beuve."<sup>883</sup> The *cénacle* would oversee Victor Hugo's transition to liberalism, his most vociferous support for romanticism, and romanticism's triumph. Romanticism's late 1820s successes focused mainly on the theatre, and culminated with the premiere of Hugo's *Hernani* at the Théâtre Française in 1830. The spectacle of *Hernani*, discussed in detail in the next chapter, demonstrated the power of the *cénacle* and literary sociability more broadly. Hugo's friends and fellow romantics demonstrated their support for him, his play, and for romanticism by showing up in droves to cheer loudly, dressed in bizarre clothing to advertise their relationship with the avant-garde and to distinguish themselves from the old-fashioned and staid classicists. But, in spite of these outward trappings, the lasting importance of *Hernani*'s success relied on the prestige of the Théâtre Français – the premiere theatre in Paris. Moreover, outside the theatre, romantic literature also saw a rise in production and profitability near the end of the Restoration, even though it would not reach the height of its popularity until the 1830s.<sup>884</sup> By the end of the Restoration, romanticism could be both prestigious and profitable. Romantic success in the theatre, and its growing share of the book market gave the romantics of this late 1820s *cénacle* the same kind of external validation the romantics sought from the Académie des Jeux Floraux and the Société des bonnes-lettres in the first half of the 1820s, but now the romantics proved

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<sup>882</sup> Ibid., 295.

<sup>883</sup> Letter from Deschamps to a young man in college, Versailles, 26 May 1864, in Deschamps, *Oeuvres*, IV:292. "Je n'ai cultivé la poésie qu'afin de mieux sentir et de plus applaudir la leur."

<sup>884</sup> For example, James Smith Allen argues that, of the books he sampled, in 1820 no poetry, 3.3% of drama, 20% of fiction, 3.3% of history, and 6.7% of all books demonstrated romantic influence. In 1820 those numbers were 10% for poetry, 13.3% for drama, 26.7% for fiction, 16.7% for history, and 16.7% for all books. Allen, *Popular French Romanticism*, 65.

more willing to forcefully argue for the significance and the novelty of their literary school.

Ironically, romanticism's triumph coincided with the breakdown of the *cénacle*. Emile Deschamps attributed the *cénacle*'s collapse to both growing rivalries and political disagreements. Alfred de Musset, he wrote, left first, but without hostility or acrimony, for purely literary reasons. Vigny's defection, after he ceased being sympathetic to Victor Hugo, helped split the *cénacle* into factions, and Théophile Gautier went on to create his own group.<sup>885</sup>

But the *cénacle* de Notre-Dame-des-champs was not the only literary group that would not survive into the July Monarchy. La Société des bonnes-lettres, inextricably tied to the fortunes of the Bourbon monarchy, began to decline in the late 1820s and folded in 1830. The Society, a victim of its own success under a failed regime, would not even merit mentions in Chateaubriand or Victor Hugo's memoirs, despite their significant connections to it during the Restoration.<sup>886</sup> Other sites of Restoration literary sociability, including Virginie Ancelot's and Charles Nodier's salons, would have greater longevity and Ancelot's would thrive under the new regime, and indeed past 1848 as well.

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Literary sociability in the Restoration took many forms – Academies, *cénacles*, societies, and salons. While each type of literary group had its own logic and organizational imperative, and some groups boasted greater social and cultural capital, or more political power, they all contributed to the larger project of Restoration literary life and civil society. Each group did three things for Restoration literature. First, they served a pedagogic function, by promoting literature and literary debate and criticism to a public (the size of which varied considerably). The literature they promoted might be of a specific literary school or genre, but it need not be. Second, they acted as something like professional communities, and worked to advance the literary careers of their members, or of members of their public. Some, like the academies, did this through prizes and other forms of recognition, while others, like salons and groups with journals, offered

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<sup>885</sup> Letter from Deschamps to Monsieur Antoine de Latour, Versailles, 21 June 1867, in Deschamps, *Oeuvres*, IV:301.

<sup>886</sup> Degout, "Les cours publics organisés par la Société des Bonnes Lettres (1821-1830), suivis de la liste de ses membres," 432.

platforms to showcase work, and others still, engaged in projects of mutual promotion and support for their members. These strategies for career advancement were not mutually exclusive, and many groups engaged in more than one, or all, of them. Third, they built literary communities, both within and between these different sociable groups. These communities forged connections that could be used to promote literature, or to advance literary careers of individuals. These literary communities also promoted themselves. The success of specific members of a romantic *cénacle* meant success for the *cénacle* as a whole, meant success for other literary groups to which those members belonged, and meant success for romanticism. The interconnections of these literary groups allowed romantics, and royalist romantics in particular, to leverage membership and connections to well-established and well-connected groups in order to promote their own literary projects and their own careers.

The Restoration state, through both censorship and through the rewards it could provide to writers, either in the form of pensions, appointments, commissions, or Academic accolades, played a significant regulatory role in Parisian literary culture. The state had the power to censor, but also the power to support and promote. This meant that even though French revolutionaries had eliminated all legal privilege, and even though the literary marketplace was supposed to have done away with patronage, connections, prestige, and access mattered. Le Société des bonnes-lettres got away with political content in its literary journal because its members were members of the chambers of government, ministers, and censors. Alexandre Soumet could, without controversy, write plays that did not follow the three unities because he was respected and an *immortel*, and because he chose not to call what he was doing ‘romanticism.’ In the early 1820s, royalist romantics could use their social capital and the connections they had by virtue of their politics – to the SBL, to l’Académie des Jeux-Floraux, and to the French crown – to promote themselves and their literary ideology, even if they initially had to be tentative about it. By the late 1820s, Soumet (with l’Académie française) and Nodier (with l’Arsenal) had both found success through the state, while Victor Hugo, who had turned away from royalism, looked to the Théâtre Française, a state-owned theatre, for his (and romanticism’s) success.

## CHAPTER 6: THE *BATAILLE ROMANTIQUE* IN THE RESTORATION THEATRE

*"Moreover, it is certainly neither bold nor novel to believe that literary history can be found in social history, or, if one prefers, that political history can be found in theatrical history: this is simply another way to express M. de Bonald's well-known idea."*  
– A. Delaforest, *Théâtre Moderne, ou Cours de littérature dramatique* (1836)<sup>887</sup>

Better-known for the 'battle' of its opening night than for its plot, or its literary merit, Victor Hugo's play *Hernani* first opened on 25 February 1830 at the Théâtre-Français. *Hernani* follows the intrigue of a love triangle, or rather love-square, at a fictionalized Spanish court in the early sixteenth century. It explores themes of honor, love, and fidelity, but more importantly for the controversy it helped to create, it does not follow any of the three 'unities' of classicist theatre. Throughout the 1820s, while the *bataille romantique* raged in the press, in the halls of the Académie Française and other scholarly societies, it also did so on the stage. The theatre was a critical venue for the *bataille romantique*. When Stendhal wrote his defense of romanticism, he did so in a treatise about Racine and Shakespeare. When French classicists took issue with Lady Morgan's 1817 travelogue about France, they were most upset that she denied the genius of Racine's plays. When young romantics decided to publicly demonstrate their support for the new literature, they did so at the opening night of Hugo's *Hernani*. Afterwards, *Hernani* took on a symbolic significance as the romantic play to represent all romantic theatre, and really, all romantic literature. In 1838 Théophile Gautier wrote in *La Presse* that *Hernani* was "the field of battle, upon which romantic champions and classicist athletes gathered and fought with unparalleled eagerness and all the passionate ardor of literary hatred."<sup>888</sup> They debated the play line by line, he wrote.

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<sup>887</sup> A. Delaforest, *Théâtre moderne. Cours de littérature dramatique*, vol. 1 (Paris: Allardin, 1836), ii, <http://gallica.bnf.fr/ark:/12148/bpt6k96158834>. "Du reste, ce n'est assurément ni une hardiesse, ni une nouveauté de soutenir de l'histoire littéraire se trouve dans l'histoire sociale; ou, si on le préfère, que l'histoire politique se trouve dans l'histoire théâtrale: c'est une autre manière d'exprimer la pensée si connue de M. de Bonald."

<sup>888</sup> Théophile Gautier, "Théâtre Française: Reprise d'*Hernani*," *La Presse* no. 203 (22 January 1838), 1. "*Hernani* était le champ de bataille, où se colletaient et luttaient, avec un acharnement sans pareil et toute l'ardeur passionnée des haines littéraires."

*Hernani* is often invoked as a beginning.<sup>889</sup> And it was. It marked the beginning of romantic ascendancy in France, and especially in French theatre. Mary Gluck argues convincingly that the *bataille d'Hernani* saw the first appearance of the public bohemian in French society.<sup>890</sup> Yet, the *Hernani* episode signaled something of an end as well. It arose as the culmination of over a decade of increasing literary conflict between romantics and classicists – a conflict that paralleled and encouraged the growing popularity of romanticism, and its solidification as a genre and a movement. In 1819, a seventeen-year old Victor Hugo founded a literary journal with his brother Abel, called the *Conservateur littéraire*. Despite its often romantic and always royalist sympathies, it claimed to be non-partisan in all respects, and avoided using the word 'romantic' to refer to itself. By 1830, however, Victor Hugo was organizing public demonstrations in support of romanticism at performances of his own play. Over the course of the 1820s, the *bataille romantique* brought romanticism into the public eye, and through innumerable small manifestations built and defined romanticism as a more or less coherent phenomenon. *Hernani's* opening night was the culmination of that process.

In this interim, the theater became a critical venue for the *bataille romantique*, because classicism valued the theatre as a literary form – the exemplary seventeenth-century classical authors were playwrights – and romanticism dispensed with classicism's criteria for good taste in the theatre.<sup>891</sup> Founded on the idea that good literature, literature of taste, followed a set of specific rules, seventeenth-century classicists, then called 'the ancients,' resurrected their standard from classical antiquity. French dramatist Pierre Corneille adapted the most famous of these rules, the three unities (time, place, and action) from Aristotle's *Poetics* in his 1660

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<sup>889</sup> As Monika Schmitz-Emans notes, historians tend to place the beginning of French romanticism in 1830 with the first performance of Hugo's *Hernani*, or in 1827 with his preface to *Cromwell*, rather than in 1802 when Chateaubriand published *René*, or 1804 when Sénancour published *Oberman*. She argues that this is both because scholars tend to date the origins of epochs to sensational events, and because French romanticism only became a real threat to classicism with its success in the theatre. Schmitz-Emans, "Theories of Romanticism: The First Two Hundred Years," 18.

<sup>890</sup> Gluck, *Popular Bohemia*, 25.

<sup>891</sup> Schmitz-Emans writes, "Romanticism did not become a viable antagonist to classicism until it drew drama – which had been particularly associated with classicism – within its sphere of influence." Schmitz-Emans, "Theories of Romanticism: The First Two Hundred Years," 18–19.

*Discourse on the three unities*.<sup>892</sup> The unity of time mandated that the story of the play take place over the course of a single day. The unity of place meant that all the action of the play had to occur in one location. The unity of action, more open to interpretation, essentially required that all parts of the play had to be in service of its central plot. Corneille wrote that in a comedy the unity of action meant a unity of intrigue, and in a tragedy a unity of peril. The hero of a tragedy could face several perils or obstacles, but those obstacles had to develop naturally one from the other. Likewise, each act of the play had to build on the one that came before it, so that at the end of an act it was clear to the spectator that the play was not yet finished. Lastly, classicist plays were also written in verse, generally rhyming couplets of alexandrine (12 syllables).<sup>893</sup>

Romantic theatre discarded these rules (although it was as likely to be written in verse as in prose). Inspired by Shakespeare and by Schiller, the romantics produced historical epics that spanned weeks or even years, with scenes that took place in various locations, and with complex subplots. In 1829 one young romantic told Lady Morgan that no one went to the Théâtre Français when they played Racine. Instead, he said, the people of Paris came out in droves for “our great historic dramas, written not in pompous Alexandrines, but in prose, the style of truth, the language of life and nature, and composed boldly, in defiance of Aristotle and Boileau. Their plot might run to any number of acts, and the time to any number of nights, months or years; or if the author pleases, it may take in a century, or a millennium: and then, for the place, the first scene may be laid in Paris, and the last in Kamchatka.” In Romantic theatre, “France has recovered her

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<sup>892</sup> In the nineteenth century some attributed the first formulation of the three unities to Jean de la Taille in his *L'art de la tragédie* (1572), although his own plays did not follow the rules. Emmanuel Buron, “Jean de la Taille,” *Dictionnaire des lettres Françaises – le XVI<sup>e</sup> siècle*, M. Simonin, ed. (Paris: Livre de Poche, 2001), 694-697. Regardless, Corneille was not the only or the last word on the three unities or what we call classicist theatre. François Hedelin, l'abbé d'Audignac's *Pratique de théâtre* (1657) distinguished the differences between classicist theatre and French classical theatre. Voltaire wrote a response to Corneille's *Discourse* in a new edition of Corneille's theatre published in 1774. This usually appears in collected writings of Voltaire as “Remarques sur les Discours de Corneille.” François Hédelin abbé d'Aubignac, *La pratique du théâtre : oeuvre très-necessaire a tous ceux qui veulent s'appliquer a la composition des poëmes dramatiques* (Paris: Antoine de Somaville, 1657), <http://gallica.bnf.fr/ark:/12148/bpt6k107980n>; Pierre Corneille, *Théâtre de P. Corneille, avec des commentaires (par Voltaire) et autres morceaux intéressans*, 8 vols. (Geneva, 1774).

<sup>893</sup> Corneille himself had not always followed the three unities perfectly. Corneille's *le Cid* provoked a debate over dramatic conventions, especially the three unities in the 1630s. See Civardi, *La querelle du Cid*.



literary liberty, and makes us free to use of it.”<sup>894</sup> As more increasingly prestigious theatre directors chose to stage romantic plays, the stage became a battleground for the *bataille romantique*.<sup>895</sup>

This battle was also being fought in the theatrical press, which existed as a subset of the literary press. The theatre journals tended to be four-page dailies (or weeklies) printed in columns, like the newspaper press. Often taking a comic or satirical tone, they of course reviewed plays, but they also reviewed books, and published articles about trends and mores.<sup>896</sup> Reviewers usually wrote about premiere performances, although they sometimes touched on revivals, especially with new staging or casting, or on special occasions – like a performance of *Tartuffe* and *Maladie Imaginaire* on Molière’s birthday at the Théâtre-Français in 1825.<sup>897</sup> The first page (and sometimes later in the Restoration the fourth page) of the theatre dailies listed all the performances scheduled for that evening, and like other dailies, they tended to be a little less expensive than the weekly or monthly journals. Their format meant they printed shorter articles than did the weekly or monthly octavo journals, but they did occasionally serialize longer pieces.

Not all theatre journals were dailies. The director of *La Revue Dramatique*, which was founded in 1828 and issued monthly, claimed that his publishing schedule gave his review an impartiality impossible to achieve in the daily journals.<sup>898</sup> Meanwhile, the *Almanach des spectacles*, published annually, tracked the larger trends in theatre. Although its publication schedule prevented the *Almanach* from providing the same kind of immediate feedback on the theatre than its daily and monthly counterparts, it also offered more definitive pronouncements

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<sup>894</sup> Morgan, *France in 1829-30*, 75–76.

<sup>895</sup> The Théâtre-Français (also known as the Comédie-Français) founded in the seventeenth century, was the only state theatre in France to have its own acting troupe, and was the apex of French theatre.

<sup>896</sup> Fabrice Erre dates the satirical press to 1789, and argues that between the outbreak of revolution and 1830 the satirical press went through three generations, each dominated by a different paper. In the Restoration, Erre notes the particular importance of *le Nain jaune* (1814–1816) and *le Figaro* (1826–1834), although only the former was a theatre journal, and it was a weekly paper, both inspired imitators. Fabrice Erre, “L’invention de l’écriture satirique périodique,” *Orages*, no. 7 (March 2008): 103–18.

<sup>897</sup> “Théâtre-Français – Anniversaire de la naissance de Molière: Tartuffe – Maladie Imaginaire,” *Le Diable boiteux* 3, no. 16 (16 January 1825): 2.

<sup>898</sup> *La Revue dramatique, Prospectus* (Paris: J.M. Chaigneau fils, 1828), 3.

about the success of specific plays because its timeline allowed it to reference subsequent performances.

Theatre reviews reflect a broader picture of the dissemination of romantic ideas and art in Restoration Paris than book reviews. Because they tended to be written close to the book's release date, book reviews convey little more than the mere fact of the book's printing and that the *rédacteurs* of the journal believed it merited review (or had been paid to review it). While this information might reveal the *rédacteurs*' relationship to the romantic, it does not speak to the public's exposure to, or reception of, romantic literature and ideas.<sup>899</sup> Theatre, however, implies an audience in a more immediate way than a book does, and reviews of theatrical performances often included references to the size and receptivity of that audience. Moreover, theatre was more affordable than literature, or even newspapers, which meant the theatre reached more people than either a book or even a review ever could, an impact only expanded and extended by theatrical reviews and printed versions of plays. The anonymous pamphlet *Des Journaux et des théâtres* (1828) wrote that "newspapers are a platform, but the theatres are even more influential ones."<sup>900</sup> When an annual newspaper subscription cost around ten percent of the average worker's salary, small 'boulevard' theatres (even if not the official state theatres) could cost less than a loaf of bread.<sup>901</sup> In 1822, the most expensive seat at the most expensive theatre in Paris, the Académie Royale de Musique, cost 10 francs (at the Théâtre Français it was over 6 francs), while the cheapest seat in the cheapest theatre (a tie between the théâtre Italien and the Odéon) cost a franc and a half.<sup>902</sup> In other words, the average laborer could pay for a night at a cheap

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<sup>899</sup> Book reviews do occasionally offer insight into the popularity of a book: for example, reviews for new editions of books tell us that the previous edition or editions sold well.

<sup>900</sup> *Des Journaux et des théâtres* (Paris: David, 1828), 18. David printed 3000 copies of this pamphlet. Archives nationales de France, F18/58A. "Les journaux sont les tribunes, mais les théâtres en sont d'autres encore plus influentes." *Tribune* means both platform (both literary and figurative) and opinion column.

<sup>901</sup> Goldstein, *The Frightful Stage*, 72–73. The boulevard theatres got their name from their location, the Boulevard du Temple, which was also called Boulevard du Crime, because of the many crime melodramas that played in its theatres. Boulevard du Temple was significantly rebuilt under Haussmann, and so many of its theatres were torn down and turned into what is now Place de la République. For more on spectatorship and social life on the Boulevard du Temple see Davidson, *France after Revolution*, chp. 3. Davidson emphasizes the importance of the Boulevard for social mixing between classes, and therefore the reinforcement of social hierarchy.

<sup>902</sup> *Almanach des spectacles pour l'an 1822* (Paris: J.-N. Barba, 1822), iii–vi.

theatre with what he made in three hours, but would have to work for fifteen to pay for a night at the opera.<sup>903</sup> The theatre provided a significant source of education in a time before the advent of public education, and it provided a place for people to gather in an era when freedom of association was highly limited. This influence was compounded by the sheer amount of theatre being produced. Paris offered thirty-five thousand theatre seats,<sup>904</sup> spread over at least twenty-four theatres each night, including the four royal theatres, and those numbers do not include theatre-like amusements, like the panorama or diorama.<sup>905</sup> The theatre was an institution of civil society perhaps as vital to French politics as the press. Unsurprisingly, the French government put enormous effort into censoring the theatre.<sup>906</sup>

Because theatre enjoyed such an extensive popularity in this period and because it tirelessly alluded to the romantic-classicist debate, the *bataille romantique* reached a large and diverse audience. In fact, by the mid-1820s, the conflict between the romanticists and the classicists cropped up in plays with plots entirely indifferent to questions of literary partisanship. For example, at the Théâtre Gaîté in December 1824, a one-act vaudeville about a woman who feigned madness so she might marry her true love included a *bataille romantique* reference. In the final song, the character Edouard sings (to the tune of *Ami, voici la riante semaine*): “While here we celebrate the classicist /The English rightly cite, /as evidence of romantic brilliance /The *Walter Scotts* and especially the *Byrons*. /France, alas! Less joyful and less proud, /Can only cite, as oracles of taste, /The *Buffons*, the *Boileaus*, the *Molières*, /One must learn to be satisfied with that.”<sup>907</sup> This seemingly misplaced reference suggests that by the mid-1820s the romantic-classicist conflict loomed large in Parisian collective consciousness. It also points to two perceptions of romanticism that pervaded Restoration theatre: that romanticism was foreign (in

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<sup>903</sup> Goldstein, *The Frightful Stage*, 73.

<sup>904</sup> Ibid., 78.

<sup>905</sup> Planta, *New Picture of Paris*, 1827, 418–39. In the 1827 edition of his guide to Paris, Planta lists 24 theatres, plus 10 other spectacular amusements, including a dog-fighting ring.

<sup>906</sup> Goldstein, *The Frightful Stage*, 73.

<sup>907</sup> “Première représentation de LA FOLLE POUR RIRE,” *Almanach des spectacles pour l’an 1826* (Paris: J.-N. Barba, 1826), 225. “Lorsque chez nous on fête le classique, /Chez les Anglais on cite avec raison, /Comme soutien du brillant romantique, /Les *Walter Scott* et surtout les *Biron*. /La France, hélas! moins heureuse et moins fières, /Ne peut citer, pour oracles du goût, /Que les *Buffon*, les *Boileau*, les *Molière*, /Il faut savoir se contenter de tout.”

this case English), and it was new (both Byron – very recently dead – and Walter Scott were contemporary writers, while the French writers cited were decidedly not). Romanticism's novelty came with the corollary that conflicted with past, outdated forms – with classicism, with Aristotle's (or Corneille's) rules, and therefore potentially with France of the ancient regime.

This conflict between the old and the new animated the plays that addressed the *bataille romantique* directly; plays with stories that pitted romantic booksellers against classicist booksellers, or romantic novelists against classicist publishers, or romantic playwrights against classicist playwrights. Earlier chapters addressed two of these plays: *l'Imprimeur sans caractère* and *Roman à vendre*, in the context of the commercialization of print in Restoration Paris. This chapter will look at a third similar play, *les Deux écoles*, in the context of the *bataille romantique* in Restoration theatre, its review press, and the broader conflict of novelty and tradition at the heart of Restoration society. An era marked by attempts to build consensus that only resulted in increased polarization and conflict, the Restoration ended, not in reconciliation, but in revolution. The people who made Restoration theatre – the playwrights, actors, administrators, censors and audience members – worked to reconcile France's dual legacies of revolution and counter-revolution through the *bataille romantique*, but instead found increased conflict and acrimony. To clarify the conditions under which romantic and classicist playwrights produced their work, this chapter will first examine the role of censorship in shaping the theatre. In order to explain the stakes and intensification of the *bataille romantique* in the 1820s, this chapter will explore the role the press played in the narration of interpretation of the conflict, with a particular focus on the publication of Lady Morgan's *France*, and its attendant controversy, and Hugo's *Cromwell* (1828), with its infamous preface. It will also discuss the performance of romantic plays at public theatres, which started with Dumas' *Henri III*, the year after Hugo published *Cromwell*. The chapter ends with Lady Morgan's return to a significantly more romantic-friendly France in 1829 and the raucous opening night of Victor Hugo's *Hernani*.



Figure 6. Théâtre des Variétés and the Passage des Panoramas, c. 1820, Musée Carnavalet

### The Administration and Censorship of Restoration Theatre

The French government regulated the theatre the way it regulated the press, with an administrative apparatus responsible for licensing theatres and their directors, and with censorship laws based on Napoleon's 1810 decrees. All the theatres acted under the aegis of the Director-General of the theatre, who granted licenses (*decrets*) that dictated what theatres could and could not perform, and granted *privilèges* to those theatres' directors. The royal theatres, supported by government money, generally enjoyed more prestige, but the crown appointed their directors. A theatre director had to agree to produce a play before the playwright then submitted his play for censorship.<sup>908</sup> The government's emphasis on censorship of the theatre stemmed not only from its perceived popularity, but also from the sense that because theatre was animated, multifaceted, and public it would have a greater and more immediate impact than written words,

<sup>908</sup> Although, the situation was quite complicated because in some theaters, like the Théâtre Français the long-lasting actors who belonged to a group of *sociétaires* whose control over reparatory varied over time depending on their relationship to the director.

which were usually read privately.<sup>909</sup> To the French government, the theatre seemed much more likely to incite a riot than a novel or even a newspaper. The government was particularly concerned with the theatre's influence on the less educated, less wealthy members of society. In addition to being more strictly regulated, the cheaper 'boulevard' theatres of Paris faced harsher censorship than did the royal theatres frequented by the upper and middle classes.<sup>910</sup>

As a result, the state licensed theatres very specifically. Only the larger royal theatres could play 'real' theatre – the comedies and tragedies we most clearly associate with French theatre. Because the licensing fees for that kind of theatre were so high, only state-sponsored royal theatres could possibly afford them. The smaller theatres were limited to "pantomimes, vaudevilles, melodramas, and short skits and songs that could not easily encompass serious political critiques."<sup>911</sup> Sometimes, the licenses imposed very particular restrictions on these small theatres, forcing them go to absurd lengths to stage their shows. One theater, the Panorama-Dramatique – only allowed two speaking actors on the stage at any given time – relied on large marionettes and actors delivering lines from offstage to present their comedies, vaudevilles, and dramas.<sup>912</sup> The *Almanach des spectacles* declared that it was ridiculous to authorize a theatre and then muzzle it to the point that the poor actors had to act like fools, but that if they had to act like fools, at least they did so in the nicest building on the Boulevard des Temples.<sup>913</sup> Its license legally restricted the Funambules (which opened in 1816) to acrobatic displays, so when it moved on to the production of pantomimes, the actors began each performance by tight rope walking or tumbling in order to follow the letter of the law.<sup>914</sup> The Cirque-Olympique began as an equestrian performance, and while it later received permission to include theatrical performances as well, they continued to "admirably and astonishingly demonstrate man's ascendancy over most unruly beasts."<sup>915</sup>

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<sup>909</sup> Goldstein, *The Frightful Stage*, 73, 75.

<sup>910</sup> Ibid., 78.

<sup>911</sup> Ibid., 85.

<sup>912</sup> The Panorama-Dramatique opened in 1821.

<sup>913</sup> *Almanach des spectacles pour l'an 1822*, 227–28.

<sup>914</sup> Goldstein, *The Frightful Stage*, 85.

<sup>915</sup> *Almanach des spectacles pour l'an 1822*, 220. "Où l'ascendant de l'homme sur les animaux les plus indociles, est démontré d'une manière si étonnante et si admirable."

Theatre censorship under the Restoration was quite strict, and focused considerable attention on the political content of plays. For the 50 plays at the Théâtre Français whose censorship records survive, the censor rejected eleven outright, approved twenty-eight with changes, and accepted eleven without changes.<sup>916</sup> Under Louis XVIII, censors forbade all references to Napoleon, or, really, to any of the events of the French Revolution or First Empire, in keeping with the policy of *oubli* (discussed in chapter 1), and demonstrated particular sensitivity to any negative depictions of monarchy or aristocracy. For example, Étienne de Jouy's 1818 tragedy *Bélisaire*, which told the story of the titular general's struggles under emperor Justinian, had several verses about Belisaire's triumphs censored for their purported allusions to Napoleon.<sup>917</sup> This partial censorship would not save the play, however. *Bélisaire* was originally approved by the censor, but became controversial in the press, in part because of Jouy's well-known liberal politics.<sup>918</sup> One royalist journal, itself the target of censorship, wrote that *Bélisaire* should have been named *Bonaparte*. The public attention this controversy brought to the play encouraged the censors to reexamine the play more severely. Eventually, after again receiving permission to perform the play, and after the play had been cast, the police stopped its performance.<sup>919</sup> The printed version of *Bélisaire*, published soon after, included a detailed description of Jouy's experience with the censor and opened with a discussion of theatrical censorship, more broadly. In it, Jouy recounted a conversation with a playwright, M. Lombard, who insisted his own work remained safe from censorship since his play was not political, but a comedy, and everyone knew there was leeway for comedies to poke fun at society. Jouy disagreed. "You spoke of *glory*, of *patrie*, of *liberty*; you said the names of *kings*, of *ministers*, of *great lords*," Jouy insisted, "you suggested that a courtesan could be conceited, that a judge

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<sup>916</sup> Goldstein, *The Frightful Stage*, 88.

<sup>917</sup> Victor Hallays-Dabot, *Histoire de la censure théâtrale en France* (Paris: E. Dentu, 1862), 251, <http://archive.org/details/histoiredelacens00halluoft>.

<sup>918</sup> Jouy wrote for a number of liberal periodicals, including the *Mercure de France* and the *Minerve Française*. In a review of *Bélisaire* in the *Journal des débats*, Duviquet wrote that it was Jouy's name as much as the content of his play that led the censors to believe his play included dissident pronouncements. Duviquet, "Variétés: *Bélisaire*, tragédie en cinq actes et en vers," *Journal des débats politiques et littéraires* (9 December 1818): 4.

<sup>919</sup> Étienne de Jouy, *Bélisaire : tragédie en cinq actes et en vers* (Paris: Corrèard ; A. Eymery, 1818), xxii–xxv, <http://archive.org/details/blisairetrag00jouy>.

could be a cheat, that a state councilor could be stupid, and you believe yourself free of entanglements with the censor?"<sup>920</sup> Jouy was right. The censors forced Lombard to make so many changes to his play that by the time of its performance it was unrecognizable as his work, unintelligible, and was met with whistles.<sup>921</sup> Lombard remarked to Jouy that the theatre was lucky to have the works of Racine, Corneille, and Voltaire at their disposal, because no similar works would survive the Restoration's censorship regime.<sup>922</sup> Censorship records under the Restoration suggest that if Lombard exaggerated, he did not overstate the effects by much.

Under Charles X the censors added to these concerns about political representation, the elimination of references to religion in the theatre.<sup>923</sup> When the regime implemented a new law on sacrilege in 1827, it compounded this censorship, prohibiting any ecclesiastical characters or costumes.<sup>924</sup> In one patently ridiculous example, a censor cut the reference to wild chicory from a vaudeville scene about popular kinds of salad, because the French term for wild chicory, *barbe de capucin*, literally translates as Capuchin's beard.<sup>925</sup> But this same quest to censor all religious references led censors to cut an envoy to Rome in Alexandre Duval's *Tasse*, bishops from Paul Foucher's *Amy Robsart*, and inquisitors from Alexandre Soumet's *Jeanne d'Arc*.<sup>926</sup>

This censorship regime shaped the character of French theatre. In his travel guide to Paris, Edward Planta characterized French theatre as very moral, compared with English theatre, known for its bawdiness and dirty puns. Planta noted the irony, given that British society had the reputation for being less forgiving of moral transgressions than the French. In Britain, they "justly considered" female chastity as that "sex's point of honor, and a lapse from it is never, can never be forgiven,"<sup>927</sup> whereas the French had a more lenient attitude with respect to "fidelity to the marriage vow."<sup>928</sup> Yet, women in British plays were much more likely to do something scandalous

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<sup>920</sup> Ibid., iii.

<sup>921</sup> In France, like in much of continental Europe, audiences whistle to show displeasure, a practice similar to Anglo-American booing.

<sup>922</sup> Jouy, *Bélisaire*, viii–ix.

<sup>923</sup> Goldstein, *The Frightful Stage*, 89.

<sup>924</sup> Hallays-Dabot, *Histoire de la censure théâtrale en France*, 276.

<sup>925</sup> The Capuchin are an order of monks.

<sup>926</sup> Hallays-Dabot, *Histoire de la censure théâtrale en France*, 276.

<sup>927</sup> Planta, *New Picture of Paris*, 1827, 419.

<sup>928</sup> Ibid., 420.



than they were in a French play. Though Planta did not attribute this discrepancy to the censor, the censor undoubtedly contributed to it.<sup>929</sup> (He offered no explanation at all, and was simply pleased that French theatre could display the morality the French people failed to internalize.) In 1825, for instance, the censor Royou cut the word “desire” from Duval’s *Complot de famille*, arguing that it was indecent and “over-materialized love.”<sup>930</sup> The censor initially proscribed Alexandre Dumas’ *Angèle*, which played in 1833 at the Théâtre de la Porte Saint-Martin, because the main character is a virgin in the first act, and a mother in the second.<sup>931</sup> Theatre censors focused particularly on the morality of plays performed in the boulevard theatres, because they reached a more popular audience. Moreover, the royal theatres, which did not show vaudevilles or short scenes, and tended to perform plays from the French canon, were less likely to show works the censors considered immoral.

Other contemporary observers, and liberals in particular, expressed profound displeasure with the effects of censorship on French theatre. In Jouy’s discussion of theatrical censorship, his M. Lombard remarked that contemporaries complained about the public’s bad taste, and how it ignored the Théâtre-Français in favor of the Variétés and melodrama, and blamed playwrights and actors for their stale dramas. But, he argued, “we prohibit the former from depicting the mores of their time, the satire of vice . . . we prohibit all historical truth that does not flatter the power of the day, that does not serve the passion and interests of those in charge: what comedy, what tragedy remains?”<sup>932</sup> Several years later a writer for the new romantic liberal literary journal *Le Globe* made a similar complaint. Some say, he wrote, that one could write the history of a people with only their comedies. But, he insisted, if anyone tried to write the history his day in that fashion, he or she would find that the theatre censors have left nothing of interest to posterity.<sup>933</sup>

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<sup>929</sup> Planta offered no explanation at all for this paradox, simply expressing his pleasure that French theatre could display the morality that the French people had failed to internalize.

<sup>930</sup> Louis Allard, “La Censure Théâtrale sous la Restauration,” *Harvard Studies and Notes in Philology and Literature* 14 (1932): 211.

<sup>931</sup> Odile Krakovitch, “Les romantiques et la censure au théâtre,” *Romantisme*, no. 38 (1982): 41.

<sup>932</sup> Jouy, *Bélisaire*, xi. “mais on interdit aux premiers la peinture des moeurs de leur temps, la satire des vices, des travers et des ridicules dont la société leur offre les modèles; on leur interdit toute vérité historique qui ne flatte pas le pouvoir du jour, qui ne sert pas les passions ou les intérêts des gens en place: quelle comédie, quelle tragédie reste-t-il faire?”

<sup>933</sup> “Nouvelle littéraire,” *Le Globe, journal littéraire* 1, no. 39 (7 December 1824), 180.

Similarly, in an 1825 letter, printed in London, Stendhal observed that political liberty usually proved fatal to comedy (presumably because political repression fueled the best comedies), but that in France comedy had a different foe – censorship. The censors, whom Stendhal described as, “a group of seven or eight malevolent men of letters, under the direction of M. Lemontey,” have “worked to stop all writers from depicting the actual state of present mores.”<sup>934</sup> For this, he wrote, they gain the disdain of the public and six thousand francs a year. However, it was not all bad news. Because of the censor, Stendhal insisted, playwrights had to be subtler in their political allusions and the French public, already known for the speed of its comprehension, had become even more attuned and laughed at even the most hidden of references.<sup>935</sup> Stendhal, *le Globe* and Jouy all represented theatre censorship as a distortion of France’s literary expression. Theatre censorship, they contended, warped French theatre until it no longer reflected the truth of French society.

Yet censorship in Restoration Paris, like censorship everywhere, intended to safeguard, or enforce, a specific vision of society. The censors, deeply invested in French letters and theatre, likely saw themselves in that light, as defenders of France, rather than as distorters of French art. Like the censors for the book trade and the press, the theatre censors had lives outside the censorship commission as politically connected *gens de lettres* and even playwrights. Novelist and journalist Jacques Honoré Lelarge de Lourdoueix, as the head of the theatre division of the Ministry of the Interior, administered the censors. Perhaps the most famous theatre censor, Charles Lacretelle, (known as Lacretelle jeune to distinguish him from his famous older brother Pierre), an historian and a member of the Académie française, served as censor from 1810 until 1827,<sup>936</sup> when he quit in protest of Villèle’s new press law.<sup>937</sup> In 1821, the other men who served with Lacretelle jeune – Allisan de Chazet, Charles-Joseph D’Avrigny, and Pierre-Édouard

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<sup>934</sup> Stendhal, *Courrier anglais: London magazine, Athenaeum*, 5:190.

<sup>935</sup> Ibid.

<sup>936</sup> *Biographie des censeurs royaux*, 19.

<sup>937</sup> Hallays-Dabot, *Histoire de la censure théâtrale en France*, 276–77. Lacretelle organised with other members of the Académie Française, Chateaubriand and Villemain, to ask Charles X to repeal the bill. Two days later he was removed as theatre censor and Villemain’s nomination for Master of Requests (a high level judicial office) was revoked. Eventually the bill was repealed and Lacretelle was vindicated, and received an increase in his pension.

Lemontey – also wrote and moved among the well-connected in French politics and society. Chazet, a poet and author of over 150 plays, named to the *Ordre de la Réunion* by Napoleon and to the Legion of Honor by Louis XVIII, seems to have easily changed loyalties from one regime to the next.<sup>938</sup> He was also a founding member of the Société des bonnes-lettres, and a former newspaper editor.<sup>939</sup> D'Avrigny began his career as a censor under Napoleon and wrote both poems and comic operas.<sup>940</sup> Lemontey, a member of the Académie like Lacretelle, was best known for his political writing and histories.<sup>941</sup> The other men who served as theatre censors at different points in the Restoration boasted similar résumés. Briffault was an académicien and a poet.<sup>942</sup> François Chéron, a poet, a member of the Legion of Honor, and a journalist, worked as commissioner for the Théâtre-Français from 1818 to 1825.<sup>943</sup> Sauvo wrote for the *Moniteur*, the government's official paper. Jean Louis Laya was a playwright and critic.<sup>944</sup> Antoine-Chrysostome Quatremère de Quincy, a “*savant helléniste*,” an art critic, and an art historian, served as perpetual secretary of the Académie des Beaux-Arts.<sup>945</sup> Along with the censors, A. Delaforest, literary and theatre critic for the *Gazette de France*, acted as Theatre Inspector. In that capacity, he attended dress rehearsals or performances to judge the impact that plays had on their audiences, to ensure that the actors conformed to the changes the censor had made, and to evaluate the suitability of the staging and costumes.<sup>946</sup> In his discussion of theatre censorship in *Bélisaire*, Jouy blamed the problems with the censorship of the theatre on those men put in charge of it. Only censors, he argued, who, like Malesherbes and Argenson, proved to be friends of both national glory and of French letters, could make French theatre flourish. Instead, he wrote,

<sup>938</sup> *Biographie des censeurs royaux*, 16–17.

<sup>939</sup> Goldstein, *The Frightful Stage*, 82.

<sup>940</sup> *Biographie des censeurs royaux*, 17.

<sup>941</sup> Louis-François Raban, *Histoire d'une paire de ciseaux, suivie de la petite biographie des censeurs* (Paris: Les marchands de nouveautés, 1826), 52, <http://gallica.bnf.fr/ark:/12148/bpt6k4249866>.

<sup>942</sup> *Ibid.*, 44–45.

<sup>943</sup> Charles Louandre and Félix Bourquelot, *La littérature française contemporaine: XIX siècle. Renfermant: 1. Par ordre alphabétique de noms d'auteurs... 2. Une table des livres anonymes et polynymes... 3. Une table des sujets. Le tout accompagné de notes biographiques et littéraires. Bli - Chr.* 2, vol. 2 (Paris: Félix Daguin, 1846), 617; Hallays-Dabot, *Histoire de la censure théâtrale en France*, 277.

<sup>944</sup> Hallays-Dabot, *Histoire de la censure théâtrale en France*, 277.

<sup>945</sup> *Ibid.*, 262.

<sup>946</sup> *Ibid.*, 277; Goldstein, *The Frightful Stage*, 83.

Restoration censors diminished both works of the mind and even works of genius with their acts of censorship, and submitting such works to men who would only see their own role in the piece and judge those works according to laws on sedition signaled the height of injustice. In a representative government, he noted, authors should only be judged by their peers.<sup>947</sup> Yet, while perhaps none of the censors lived up to the legacy of Malesherbes, these censors, like the press censors, worked as both statesmen and men of letters, whereas under the July monarchy career bureaucrats increasingly replaced writers and artists in the ranks of the censors.<sup>948</sup> While Jouy was clearly unhappy with the men who served as censors in 1819, in their work as censors, insofar as they too wrote poetry, plays, and literary criticism, these men judged their peers. While they engaged in the fundamentally political work of censorship, their resumes suggested their significant investment in state of French theatre and French letters beyond their own work as theatrical censors, even if the line between the political and the literary did not remain clear.

In principal the censor ruled only on issues of politics, morality or religion, but all the theatre censors under the Restoration were classicists, which cultured their treatment of any theatre that did not meet classicist standards. In October of 1829, the censors refused approval of a play for the Théâtre-Français called *Agnès Sorel*. Officially, they concluded that it was inappropriate for a king's mistress to be heroine of a play, and improper to show France at war with England. But they also disapproved of the play because they determined it to be poorly written. In his report, Sauvo wrote:

Here, the commission finds itself on ground unfamiliar from its examination of ordinary works. Here, in spite of itself, and *against the principles of its own institution*, the commission is forced to consider literary questions, and to evaluate the choice of subjects, the manner in which they are treated, their political suitability, and the degree of talent demonstrated by the works, and the theatre to which they are destined.<sup>949</sup>

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<sup>947</sup> Jouy, *Bélisaire*, xiii.

<sup>948</sup> Goldstein, *The Frightful Stage*, 82; Krakovitch, "Les romantiques et la censure au théâtre," 42. Krakovitch writes, "L'évolution par rapport à la Restauration est moins dans l'importance de la répression que dans son esprit. La censure n'est plus exercée par un cénacle d'écrivains journalistes cultivés, qui jugeaient à partir de leurs écrits et normes qu'ils s'étaient fixées; elle émane de fonctionnaires modestes, d'un bureau composé de bourgeois parisiens."

<sup>949</sup> Quoted in Hallays-Dabot, *Histoire de la censure théâtrale en France*, 285–86. "Ici, la commission est placée sur un autre terrain que lorsqu'elle examine un ouvrage ordinaire. Ici, malgré elle, et *contre le principe même de son institution*, elle est forcée d'aborder les questions littéraires, et s'occuper du choix même des sujets, de la manière dont ils sont traités, des

Even though they were not supposed to, and recognized that fact, the censors essentially decided that *Agnès Sorel* was not a good enough play for the highest theatre in the land, and so they proscribed it. With Victor Hugo's *Hernani*, which they also disapproved of on literary grounds, the censors took a different approach. In the censorship report on *Hernani*,<sup>950</sup> Briffaut, Chéron, Laya and Sauvo made a number of stylistic pronouncements about the play, calling it bizarre, and full of extravagance and improprieties against nature. Despite these faults, they wrote, "there is no disadvantage to the authorization of the production of this play, rather it is wise policy to cut not even one word. It is good for the public to see how far afield the human mind can be mislaid when it is discharged from all rules and all propriety."<sup>951</sup> They did not choose to censor the play for its romantic style, but they did denounce it in an official censorship report. Like many classicist critics of romanticism, they assumed that they did not need to act because romanticism's faults would be its own downfall. Despite their pronouncement that no changes should be made, some parts of *Hernani* were censored. Claude-Joseph Trouvé, Master of Requests, noted a number of changes to the text in his report, including the removal of every instance of "*Jésus*" (in keeping with Charles X's administration's religious reference in the theatre policy) and the request to reword some unflattering statements about the character of the king. Reportedly, Hugo fought back against some of the changes, arguing that they were literary in nature, since the phrases in question had no political motive. As with press censorship, the censorship of the theatre operated on the contested ground of what did or did not count as 'politics' or as 'political.' The larger the sphere of politics, the more power the censor had to control both the content and style of plays. In this context, Hugo depicted his work as apolitical as a strategy to resist the power of the censor. Hugo and other *rédacteurs* used this same approach

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convenances politiques, du degré de talent dont les ouvrages portent l'empreinte et du théâtre auquel ils sont destinés."

<sup>950</sup> Which by historical accident comes to us through a printed catalogue of the document collection of Lucas de Montigny, a councillor to the Prefecture of the Seine

<sup>951</sup> Lucas de Montigny, *Catalogue de la collection de lettres autographes, manuscrits du comte de Mirabeau, Documents historiques sur la Ligne, la Fronde, la Révolution, etc.* (Paris: Laverdet, 1860), 275. "il n'y a aucun inconvénient à autoriser la représentation de cette pièce, mais qu'il est d'une sage politique de n'en pas retrancher un seul mot. Il est bon que le public voie jusqu'à quel point d'égarement peut aller l'esprit humain affranchi de toute règle et de toute bienséance."

to protect their literary journals from censorship. Censorship fundamentally entangled the literary and the political, but it also created the conditions under which less-powerful actors found it most advantageous to draw hard lines between them.

In his 1862 history of theatrical censorship in France, Victor Hallays-Dabot reflected on the Restoration as a time of turbulence and conflict. “In the theatre,” he wrote, “partisans, always on the look out for allusions the censor would let slip by, never missed an opportunity to loudly proclaim their position.”<sup>952</sup> Paradoxically, he also claimed that, “the literary fever that has seized everyone, pushes the theatre away from political preoccupations,” and that “even in the final hours of the Restoration,” only traces remained “of that reigning agitation, agitation that would soon translate into acts of violence on the one hand, and revolt on the other,” in the July Revolution.<sup>953</sup> On their face, these two characterizations of Restoration theatre appear contradictory. Could it be simultaneously true that literary concerns pushed away political concerns and that everyone was constantly trying to slip politics past the censor? Yet, Hallays-Dabot captures a certain truth: both politics and literature profoundly shaped theatre in the Restoration, and attempts to draw hard barriers between the political and the cultural could never find success. Far from distractions from politics, Restoration literature and the theatre provided venues for conflict and contestation, and censorship served as one area for simultaneously political and critical confrontation.

While censorship technically occurred behind the scenes, literary journals, printed plays (like *Bélisaire*), and pamphlets publicized the practices and consequences of theatre censorship. Censorship shaped the theatre not only through its policies of what could and could not be represented, but also by the fact of its existence and by the realities of its mechanisms. The censors, deeply invested personally in the politics and literature of Restoration France, helped to shape that politics and that literature. They should not be seen as outside actors influencing the

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<sup>952</sup> Hallays-Dabot, *Histoire de la censure théâtrale en France*, 247. “au théâtre, les partis, à l’affût de toutes les allusions que la censure laissait échapper, ne perdaient aucune occasion de manifester bruyamment leurs sentiments.”

<sup>953</sup> Ibid., 285. “La fièvre littéraire, qui s’est emparée de tous les esprits éloigne un peu du théâtre les préoccupations politiques, et, même en ces dernières heures de la Restauration, on ne trouve que de rares traces de l’agitation qui règne, agitation qui se traduira tout à l’heure en actes violents d’une part, en révolte de l’autre.”

theatre, but rather members of the community that worked together to produce theatre and theatrical meaning in Restoration Paris. That community included playwrights, actors, reviewers, printers, publishers, theatre owners, and theatre audiences. Perhaps even more than the literary world, the world of the theatre was communally constructed. While liberals like Stendhal and Jouy believed that theatre censors distorted the truth of French theatre – an understandable position – from the perspective of history censors, authors, actors and audiences all performed functions integral to the truth of Restoration theatre.



Figure 7 - Adolphe Martial Potemont - Le Boulevard Du Temple, 1862 with, from right to left, le Théâtre historique, le Cirque olympique, les Folies dramatiques, la Gaité, les Funambules, les Délassements comiques

### Lady Morgan's *France*

In the theatre, the romantic-classicist debate served as an outlet for social conflict. Moreover, it took on a special salience in the Restoration because its nuances closely mirrored the era's broader conflicts. Though the theatre served as an essential venue for the *bataille romantique*, a play did not jumpstart the debate, a book did – or more accurately, the controversy that book engendered in both the press and in literary circles did. In 1817 an Irish woman, Sydney Morgan (nee Owensen), known as Lady Morgan, wrote a study of life under the Bourbon Restoration based on her experiences traveling in France, titled quite simply *France*. By the time that Lady Morgan published *France* in London in 1817, the publication of Germaine de Staël's *De l'Allemagne* in 1813 had already primed the struggle that would become the *bataille romantique* in

France.<sup>954</sup> But Lady Morgan's comments on the French theatre helped draw that simmering conflict into a public debate. While Lady Morgan wrote several very positive things the French theatre, including that "comedy is the true genius of the French drama, and French comedians are the finest in the world," her criticisms, especially those of Racine became famous.<sup>955</sup> Lady Morgan had never been a fan of Racine, but hoped that when she traveled to France someone would explain his appeal to her. To her disappointment, she found that she could not perceive the apparent genius in Racine's work. She wrote:

Still, however, the tragedies of Racine, without one poetical image, without one philosophical observation, – without any originality of character, or invention of fable, must have some singular dramatic excellence, since one of the most enlightened, and, decidedly, the most literary nation in Europe, prefers him to every other, and speaks of him with an admiration beyond bounds, and without reservation. Where, however, this mysterious charm, this "all in all, and all in every part," lies concealed from the apprehension of foreign readers, it is not reserved for me to discover. I only judge of Racine as he affects me, the usual standard of a woman's judgment, and with a taste, perhaps, too highly excited, by the early and continual perusal of Shakespeare.<sup>956</sup>

Lady Morgan also noted that no one in France judged or debated Racine, they simply eulogized him. "There was no criticism; all was panegyric," she observed.<sup>957</sup> So she took it upon herself to do so, arguing that the literary and political constraints on Racine hampered his writing: "true loftiness of conception, and a bold range of the imagination, are utterly incompatible with the double despotism of Aristotle, and of the political system under which the French authors wrote."<sup>958</sup> Hampered by rules, Racine and his contemporaries, she argued, produced works that could not capture the fullness or complexity of human experience. Their characters mimicked humanity, but could not evoke it.<sup>959</sup>

As the product of a well-known novelist, *France* ignited immediate controversy. Lady Morgan's book made such a stir that the *Journal des débats* reviewed it before its publication in London and before the French translation was even finished. The review, written by the *Débats*

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<sup>954</sup> For an excellent discussion of *De l'Allemagne*'s impact on Napoleonic Europe and beyond see John Isbell, *The Birth of European Romanticism: Truth and Propaganda in Staël's "De l'Allemagne", 1810-1813* (Cambridge; New York: Cambridge University Press, 1994).

<sup>955</sup> Morgan, *France*, 98.

<sup>956</sup> Ibid., 66.

<sup>957</sup> Ibid.

<sup>958</sup> Ibid., 67.

<sup>959</sup> Ibid., 67, 70.



London correspondent, rather magnanimously said that Lady Morgan approached France with no prejudice for or against it, and that she painted a mostly accurate picture of France. Any errors she made the reviewer attributed to her foreignness, and her understandable unfamiliarity with the intricacies of French society.<sup>960</sup> An overall positive review, it praised Lady Morgan for putting aside national prejudices, and asked that she serve as an example to English authors writing about the French and French authors writing about England. The review pointed out that her seventh chapter, on French theatre, judged French theatre very harshly by British standards as having too strict rules. The reviewer expressed no surprise at this impression, given Shakespeare's divergence from French classical theatre, but he or she did express disappointment that Lady Morgan had found no poetry in the work of Racine.<sup>961</sup> Among the Parisian literary set, chapter seven was by far the most contentious. One Parisian translation of the book included a translator's note at the outset of chapter seven, to the effect that while Lady Morgan judged France with impartiality (except in cases of politics or the revolution) for the first six chapters of her book, the seventh showed very clearly her national prejudices. It repeated the *Débats* example that Lady Morgan found no poetry in Racine, but the translator declined to come to the defense of this "first of our poets; for he is so highly elevated that no criticisms launched at him can reach him."<sup>962</sup> The translator went on to say that it appeared France and England must perpetually war over theatrical principles, because while the French looked to Horace and Aristotle for those principles, the British looked to Shakespeare.<sup>963</sup> Before long, Lady Morgan's critics adopted a much harsher tone. A month and a half after the review, the *Journal des débats* noted that Lady Morgan's *France* made noise in literary circles, in salons and in foyers, and suggested that this furor, in part, stemmed from the book's tendency to drop names. Clearly, the

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<sup>960</sup> "La France, par lady Morgan, ci-devant miss Owenson – Londres 1817," *Journal des débats politiques et littéraires* (2 June 1817): 3.

<sup>961</sup> Ibid.

<sup>962</sup> Lady Sydney Morgan, *La France par Lady Morgan, traduit de l'anglais par A. J. B. D., seconde édition, revue, corrigée et augmentée, avec des notes critiques par le traducteur*, trans. Auguste-Jean-Baptiste Defauconpret (Paris: Treuttel et Würtz, 1817), 127–28, <http://gallica.bnf.fr/ark:/12148/bpt6k6472565s>. "Je n'entreprendrai pas la défense du premier de nos poètes; il est placé à une telle élévation, qu'aucun des traits qu'on lui lance ne peut l'atteindre."

<sup>963</sup> Ibid., 128–29.

author argued, Lady Morgan's book demonstrated that Britain and Germany stood united against the world of French literature (by which they meant classicism); while the allies had signed a peace treaty with the French government, they remained at war with France's great figures.<sup>964</sup> The journalist presented this international disagreement as significantly less defensible than had the initial reviewer, or the translator.

The perception of romanticism as foreign and novel reflected Restoration anxieties about French history and France's place in the global order. Lady Morgan's position as a foreigner—associated with the powers that had so recently defeated the French at Waterloo, and who in 1817 still occupied French soil—incontrovertibly shaped her reception in France. As explored in earlier chapters, the French had a very complicated relationship with their recent past. Restoration politicians (and monarchs) and other public figures had to maintain a balance between being perceived as either proponents of the Revolution or the Empire on the one hand, or traitors of France on the other. In the Restoration there was at times a sense that France was France regardless of its regime, and so anyone who had fought against either the Revolutionary or the Napoleonic armies could be criticized for having fought against the French people, but at the same time people who were members of or public supporters of any post-1789 government could be labeled traitors or turncoats. With literature and politics entwined, the choice to support romanticism over the literature of Racine, Corneille and Boileau—i.e., the literature that had put France at the apex of European literature in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries—appeared tantamount to treason. This sense of romanticism as essentially disloyal and unpatriotic intensified as French romanticism asserted itself and became more popular. While a classicist might forgive Lady Morgan for supporting the wrong kind of literature, a French person would not have that kind of latitude. Lady Morgan, for example, critiqued Racine in good faith, according to one reviewer, because she had been raised on Shakespeare and taught his model as normative. Of course, she was wrong—the three unities made for the best theatre because they were closest

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<sup>964</sup> "Variétés: Nouvelles littéraires et théâtrales," *Journal des débats politiques et littéraires* (28 July 1817): 3.

to nature and dictated by taste—but she had an excuse.<sup>965</sup> French classicists used all the power at their disposal, including the theatre and the growing market of theatre periodicals to try to eliminate the pernicious influence of this foreign literary school, while romantics worked to assert themselves using the same tools.

The *Journal des débats* observed that Lady Morgan indulged the modern writers much more than she did the classicist. “We have tragic poets that she speaks of with greater regard than she does the author of *Iphigénie*, and comic poets whom she treats as incomparably better than the author of *Tartuffe*,” the newspaper reported.<sup>966</sup> That Lady Morgan would prefer new French theatre to classic French theatre seemed bizarre to the journalist. The *Journal des débats* published a second review, by Charles-Marie de Féletz (1767-1850), once the book was published in Paris. Significantly more critical than the paper’s first reviewer, Féletz took offense at Lady Morgan’s pro-Revolutionary sentiment. In his opinion her book developed the “triple position” that “all that is good in France was produced by the revolution; all that is bad is a miserable remnant of that shameful century of Louis XIV, of which the revolution would have happily destroyed all vestiges, if, unfortunately, we had not stopped its fortuitous course; all that existed before the revolution was stupid, ridiculous, absurd, reprehensible, pitiable.”<sup>967</sup> Féletz equated Lady Morgan’s pro-Revolutionary sentiment with anti-royalist, anti-ancien régime sentiment that extended to literature as well as politics. He contended that “she folded all the writers, all the artists of Louis XIV into the disgrace that the monarch, according to her,

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<sup>965</sup> For example, Jean-Pons-Guillaume Viennet mentioned Lady Morgan in his 1824 poem “Aux Muses, sur les romantiques,” along with Stendhall and Schlegel. (Auguste-Jean-Baptiste Defauconpret, *Observations sur l’ouvrage intitulé la France par Lady Morgan* (Paris: H. Nicolle, 1817), 80, <http://gallica.bnf.fr/ark:/12148/bpt6k61057183>.)

<sup>966</sup> “Variétés: Nouvelles littéraires et théâtrales,” *Journal des débats politiques et littéraires* (28 July 1817): 3. The quote refers to Racine and Molière, respectively. “nous avons des poètes tragiques dont elle parle avec plus d’égards que de l’autuer d’*Iphigénie* et des poètes comiques qu’elle trait incomparablement mieux que l’auteur de *Tartuffe*.”

<sup>967</sup> A. “Variétés: *La France*, par lady Morgan,” *Journal des débats politiques et littéraires* (5 August 1817): 3. “Tout ce qui est bien en France a été produit par la révolution; tout ce qui est mal encore est un misérable reste de ce siècle honteux de Louis XIV dont la révolution auroit si heureusement fait disparaître tous les vestiges, si par malheur on ne l’avoit pas arrêtée dans sa course fortunée; tout ce qui existoit avant la révolution étoit sot, ridicule, absurde, méprisable, pitoyable: telle est la triple proposition que lady Morgan développe dans tout son livre.”

incurred.”<sup>968</sup> Félétz, having run out of room for his review, recommended to his readers the brochure *Observations sur l'ouvrage intitulé la France, par lady Morgan*. The pamphlet, written by Auguste-Jean-Baptiste Defauconpret (1767-1843), but published pseudonymously, took particular issue with Lady Morgan's belief that all good things in France came from the Revolution, and her rejection of everything from before the Revolution as universally bad.<sup>969</sup> According to Defauconpret, Lady Morgan also misidentified the spirit behind the Revolution. The revolutionaries had not wanted to change the order of things, but rather had been seduced and corrupted by the writing of authors Lady Morgan admired and their proselytizers.<sup>970</sup> The literature of Louis XIV, Defauconpret wrote, should always be considered the golden age of French literature. The pitiful writers of the next century sought to denigrate these great writers out of spite and humiliation.<sup>971</sup> But, he argued, to put down the literature of the ancien régime meant attacking the ancien régime writ large. The revolutionaries were enemies of the era because it was tied to the power of the monarchy, and Lady Morgan, in her support for the revolution, was swept up in a similar denigration of all aspects of ancien régime France.<sup>972</sup> Defauconpret portrayed Lady Morgan's literary position as fundamentally political – she hated the ancien régime, so she could never love its theatre, so she could never love Racine. In his brochure, Defauconpret considered both literature and theatre inextricable from their historical contexts and essentially tied to politics.

This early criticism of *France* did not use the language ‘romantic’ and ‘classicist,’ but instead talked about new or modern or revolutionary literature in contrast with the literature ‘of Louis XIV,’ which it called the true literature of France. These same dichotomies helped the romantic-classicist debate, but they began as nebulous distinctions unattached to specific labels, suggesting their initial fluidity. The conflict surrounding France's past (both the Revolutionary era and the ancien régime) provided a central theme of the Restoration era, which explains why Defauconpret and other reviewers categorized Lady Morgan's theatrical pronouncements in

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<sup>968</sup> A. “Variétés: *La France*, par lady Morgan,” *Journal des débats politiques et littéraires* (5 August 1817): 4. “Elle enveloppe tous les écrivains, tous les artistes de Louis XIV dans la disgrâce que ce monarque a encourue auprès d’elle.”

<sup>969</sup> Defauconpret, *Observations sur l'ouvrage intitulé la France par Lady Morgan*, 16.

<sup>970</sup> Ibid., 49.

<sup>971</sup> Ibid., 67.

<sup>972</sup> Ibid., 68–69.

terms of the 'old' and the 'new.' Defauconpret interpreted the French Revolution as a disruption not only of the French political regime, but also of its artistic and cultural production as well. Defauconpret had a very practical explanation for this – in disrupting the education of French children, the revolution created a major problem. Those children who were ten when the revolution began had benefited from “moral, religious and literary” education, but education had only begun to return to pre-Revolutionary standards starting around 1802.<sup>973</sup> The revolutionaries did not care about literature, morality or religion (at least not the literature, morality and religion of the ancien régime), and while some people had benefited from private educations, Defauconpret insisted that the revolutionaries had effectively condemned a generation of French children to ignorance.

The Restoration, caught between France's past and its future, was particularly vulnerable to debates like the one between the romanticists and the classicists, which pitted the old against the new. The controversy surrounding *France* popularized this conflict and entrenched both camps. Over time, Lady Morgan's critics and French peers associated her bias for new French literature and theatre more strongly with romanticism, in spite of the fact that those categories did not really apply to someone foreign to the French literary and theatrical context.<sup>974</sup> When Lady Morgan returned to France in 1829, an event she immortalized in *France in 1829-1830*, she knew about the impact of her first book, and that her opinions on the French theatre, and on Racine in particular, had generated the most controversy. This time, she entered France significantly more prepared for her reception as a romantic. In her subsequent book, she recalled how she had met a young romantic, who told her that her 1817 *France* had been the first book to influence his literary opinion as a boy, and that all her popularity in France grew from her perceived romantic partisanship. She noted that he seemed somewhat disappointed to find her less ardently romantic than he had expected and took particular offense to her suggestion that she introduce him to an old classicist she intended to receive as a guest.<sup>975</sup>

### **The Theatre of the Old and the New in the Press**

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<sup>973</sup> Ibid., 45.

<sup>974</sup> Jean-Pons-Guillaume Viennet, *Épîtres et satires* (Paris: Hachette, 1860), 194.

<sup>975</sup> Morgan, *France in 1829-30*, 86–87.

By the mid-1820s critics increasingly connected these discussions of old theatre and new theatre to the vocabulary of romantic and classicist. While the fluidity of these words' definitions made it easy to mobilize the terms for particular critical positions, their use also reinforced the romantic position as a real, permanent, and possibly ascendant fixture in French culture. The sense that romantic theatre as a new form, resulting from societal changes, had the force of history behind it pervaded much of the theatrical press. Of course, literary partisans disagreed as to whether this meant romanticism had to be embraced or repelled, and some classicists did interpret romanticism's newness as evidence of its ephemerality, a fad that would eventually lose favor. More often, however, when theatre critics dismissed romanticism, or dismissed the romantic-classicist debate as itself silly and unnecessary, they did so from a partisan position that suggested classicist anxiety about romanticism's purported success, or, on the other hand, romantic anxiety about classicism's established power. In an example of the former, in an 1825 review of Alphonse de Lamartine's *Épître, le Frondeur* wrote that reviewers of both Lamartine's and Casimir Delavigne's work always used their reviews as an excuse to go on a tirade about romanticism and classicism. In that same spirit, *le Frondeur* took the opportunity to declare that "for us, romantics and classicists do not exist; we see, in those who write verses, either a poet or a rhymester; a man whose heart is warmed by natural inspiration, or a fool whose brain is disturbed by an exaltation against nature."<sup>976</sup> They saw, the review continued, "a child of the Muses, whose power is ruled, like those of gods, by the bounds of reason, or an extravagant who, recognizing no order or necessary arrangements, would upset the world and bring chaos, should the management of the universe be entrusted to him."<sup>977</sup> This reviewer, while declaring neutrality in the romantic-classicist conflict, described good theatre using the language of classicism: adherence to nature and to reason.

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<sup>976</sup> "Épîtres de M. Alphonse Lamartine," *Le Frondeur, journal de littérature, des théâtres, des arts, des mœurs et des modes* no. 58 (27 September 1825): 2. "que nous voyons, dans quiconque fait des vers, un poète ou un rimailleur ; un homme dont une inspiration naturelle échauffe le cœur, ou un fou dont une exaltation contre nature dérange le cerveau"

<sup>977</sup> Ibid. "enfin, un nourrisson des Muses, dont la toute puissance est réglée, comme celle des dieux, par les bornes de la raison, ou un extravagant qui, ne reconnaissant ni ordre ni arrangement nécessaires, bouleverserait le monde, et ramènerait le cahos, si le gouvernement de l'univers lui était confié."

Many supporters of romanticism argued that romantic theatre, as a new dramatic model, could better express contemporary society than classicist theatre. But this did not necessarily mean throwing off classicist theatre or conventions entirely. In April 1823, the theatre inspector and critic Delaforest wrote a review of Jean-François Ancelot's *D'Ébroin*, in production at the Théâtre Français. In Delaforest's opinion, Ancelot's work should act as a model for a kind of alliance of the romantic and the classicist – one that united the observation of the three unities with the innovations that modern society called for.<sup>978</sup> He argued that France had arrived at a point where changes in social mores and political institutions were having a significant impact on French theatre, which was “intimately tied to the state of society.”<sup>979</sup> The French people, he argued, wanted theatre that reflected the world they lived in, and the theatre of a “tranquil, fixed and ranked society” could not do that. Delaforest, quoting Bonald, wrote that since literature is the expression of society “a new literature must be born of a different social order.”<sup>980</sup> Delaforest did not advocate abandoning France's seventeenth-century authors whose work created the models for all French genres, but, he argued, contemporary playwrights could not rely on the same resources as these classicist authors, because the contemporary world required theatre about the present. If romantic theatre must be considered the theatre of the English and the Germans, then it must also be proscribed for being anti-national. However, if the romantic simply represented the spirit with which one had to approach the production of modern theatre, then the French could adopt it without compunction, because, in this case, it simply served as a method to get at the truth. Delaforest called for a kind of middle way – a French theatre that followed the classicist rules, but, *mutatis mutandis*, written for modern society.<sup>981</sup> In subsequent reviews, Delaforest clarified his position that romantic theatre would eventually penetrate Paris' major theatres and become the dominant theatrical form. He reiterated this position in a June 1826 review of a vaudeville play called *Place à donner*, which he considered too classicist for the time. He asked the authors rhetorically whether they “felt obliged to help the movement of theatrical revolution

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<sup>978</sup> Delaforest, *Théâtre moderne. Cours de littérature dramatique*, 1836, 1:135.

<sup>979</sup> Ibid., 1:133. “intimement lié à l'état de la société.”

<sup>980</sup> Ibid., 1:133, 134. “une société tranquille, fixe et classée.” “une littérature nouvelle doit naître d'une organisation sociale différente.”

<sup>981</sup> Ibid., 1:135.

along” in its effort to “throw off the yoke of classicist unities.”<sup>982</sup> Starting with *Julien*, first performed in November 1823, Delaforest noted several boulevard theatre plays that did not observe the three unities.<sup>983</sup> He predicted that these vaudevilles, evidence of romantic theatre’s increasing influence, would become increasingly popular. “The old literature,” he wrote, “built on state of things as they existed then, no longer meets the concerns, the needs, the whims, if you will, to satisfy modern tastes, and desires take us toward a theatrical revolution, complementary to the political revolution.”<sup>984</sup> This would not happen, however, if playwrights followed in the footsteps of the authors of *Place à donner*. Then, he insisted, they would only alienate men of taste and push back the successful renovation and rejuvenation of French poetics.

Though he advocated for romantic theatre, Delaforest was by no means a staunch romantic. In an 1828 review of Soulié’s *Roméo et Juliette* he praised the play for how classicist it was compared to its English inspiration, and noted how it won over its classicist audience, who had attended intending to hate it – but he also was not a staunch classicist.<sup>985</sup> He usually maintained a moderate position, somewhat detached from the fray of the *bataille romantique*. Delaforest conveyed this ambivalence quite clearly in his thoughts on Victor Hugo. In an 1828 review of Victor Hugo’s *Amy Robsart*, he praised the play for exposing the audience to the truth of an era and to nature, even if he thought that *Amy Robsart* did not represent the best example of this style of theatre. Moreover, he wrote that Hugo, who had placed himself “at the head of the romantic crusade” was better at preaching precepts than examples – that the printed version of *Cromwell* had more value than the performance of *Amy Robsart*, even if it ultimately had no value itself. “Not,” he wrote, “that this however, precludes that some parts of Mr. V. Hugo’s ideas about

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<sup>982</sup> A. Delaforest, *Théâtre moderne. Cours de littérature dramatique*, vol. 2 (Paris: Allardin, 1836), 155, <http://gallica.bnf.fr/ark:/12148/bpt6k96129913>. “ont-ils remarqué que le théâtre cherche à secouer le joug des unités classiques, et se sont-ils crus obligés d’aider à ce mouvement de révolution dramatique?”

<sup>983</sup> Armand d’Artois and Joseph Xavier Boniface, *Julien ou Vingt-cinq ans d’entr’acte, comédie-vaudeville en deux actes* (Paris: Mme Huet, libraire-éditeur, 1823).

<sup>984</sup> Delaforest, *Théâtre moderne. Cours de littérature dramatique*, 1836, 2:156–57. “L’ancienne littérature, façonnée sur l’état de choses alors existant, ne répond plus aux préoccupations, aux besoins, aux caprices, si l’on veut, à la satiété des goûts modernes, et les vœux se portent vers une révolution théâtrale, complément de la révolution politique.”

<sup>985</sup> *Ibid.*, 2:489.



theatre are sound, just, and will eventually, I believe, become the generally held belief about literature here in a few years.”<sup>986</sup>

On the other hand, moderate reviewers like Delaforest, though willing to accept the novelty of romantic theatre, took issue with its foreignness. For romantic theatre to be acceptable for France, in Delaforest's estimation, it still had to be French. If the whole reason to accept romantic influence on French theatre was so that French theatre would more clearly reflect current society, then it made no sense to accept a romanticism that was mere foreign imitation. In his review of Soulié's *Roméo and Juliet*, Delaforest enumerated the number of ways Soulié adapted the play for French audiences – for example, Friar Lawrence was, of course, not a friar, since that would be unacceptable to French censorship, but Delaforest also found originality in Soulié's poetic style, in the character details, and in the nuances of its mores.<sup>987</sup> In contrast, he criticized *Amy Robsart* because it seemed too close to Walter Scott's *Kenilworth*. Everyone knew how the play would end, he wrote, because they had read the book.<sup>988</sup>

The theatre in France served as the locus for a certain amount of this translated 'clandestine' romanticism. It was very common to have French copies, or adaptations, of romantic plays from other countries, performed in French theatres. Notably, the article where *Journal des débats* first used the term 'romanticism' (as opposed to 'romantic') was an announcement of the *librairie* (bookseller-publisher) Ladvocat's second edition of *Oeuvres dramatiques de Schiller* (*The Plays of Schiller*), and a general discussion of the popularity of Shakespeare, Schiller, and the bookseller-publisher Ladvocat's zeal for romantic literature. The author noted that Ladvocat was planning on publishing a new volume of Lord Byron, which he noted would be "awaited with impatience by admirers of romanticism," and he also ventured that "given the taste of the day, the success of Shakespeare and Schiller seems assured."<sup>989</sup> Interestingly, given the popularity of

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<sup>986</sup> Ibid., 2:463. "ce qui n'empêche pas toutefois qu'une partie des idées de M. V. Hugo sur l'art dramatique ne soit saine, juste, et ne finisse, je crois, par devenir une croyance littéraire générale d'ici à quelques années."

<sup>987</sup> Ibid., 2:489.

<sup>988</sup> Ibid., 2:462.

<sup>989</sup> *Le Journal des débats politiques et littéraires* (23 and 24 April 1821): 2. "attendus avec impatience par les admirateurs du romantisme." "Vu le goût du jour, le succès de Shakespeare and de Schiller nous paroît assuré."

discourse surrounding romanticism's purported 'anti-Frenchness,' the reviewer highlighted the fact that one of Schiller's plays being printed was *la Pucelle D'Orléans*, which was honored by its title of *romantic tragedy* and which "should pique our curiosity and our national self-love."<sup>990</sup> In fact, references to French versions of German romantic plays, and particularly Schiller's dramas, are very frequent in the *Journal des débats*. The favorability of the reviews varied, but all tended to mention the original play and how 'romantic' the French version was in comparison to the German. One of the most popular operas of 1825, *Robin des Bois*, had been adapted from the German romantic opera *Freischütz*.<sup>991</sup> Some French playwrights, like Soulié, adapted from Shakespeare as well. A version of *The Merchant of Venice* played at the théâtre des Italiens in 1827, for example.<sup>992</sup> However, of these translations, scholars generally consider Alfred de Vigny's *Le More de Venise*, *Othello*, which played at the Théâtre Français in October 1829, the first faithful adaptation of Shakespeare for the French stage.<sup>993</sup> Vigny's *Othello* is all the more significant for having played at the Français, the most prestigious of the French theatres, especially since it was Vigny's first play.

Shakespeare had already played an essential role in the development of romantic theatre, and the theory of romantic theatre, most directly in Stendhal's *Racine et Shakespeare*, published in 1823 and 1825.<sup>994</sup> Critics could invoke Shakespeare to suggest that all good literature was compatible with classicism. A review of the collected works of Byron in *le Journal des débats* argued that beauty in literature came not from classicism nor romanticism and noted that if one reads Shakespeare one "would see if his grand scenes, his at-times sublime ideas, would be pushed away by the severity of our dramatic principles."<sup>995</sup> Moreover, classicist critics could direct their anti-romantic invective against Shakespeare and other foreign theatre. When

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<sup>990</sup> Ibid. "Doit intéresser notre curiosité et notre amour-propre national."

<sup>991</sup> *Almanach des spectacles pour l'an 1826*, 1826, 120.

<sup>992</sup> Fernande Bassan and Sylvie Bostsarron Chevalley, *Alfred de Vigny et la Comédie-Française* (Gunter Narr Verlag, 1984), 39.

<sup>993</sup> Ibid., 14.

<sup>994</sup> For more on *Racine et Shakespeare*, see chapter 5.

<sup>995</sup> R. [Étienne Béquet], "Variétés. Œuvres Complètes de lord Byron, traduites par Chastopalli. (Premier article)," *Journal des débats politiques et littéraires* (23 and 24 April 1821): 3. "Ce qui est vraiment beau n'est ni classique ni romantique : lisez Shakespeare et vous verrez si ses grandes scènes, ses idées quelquefois sublimes seroient repoussés par la sévérité de nos principes dramatiques."

Jules de Pétigny reviewed the plays of Schiller and Shakespeare, which he noted had become very common in France, in January 1822, he used the review as an opportunity to discuss the purported decadence and foreign influence that had befallen French letters and French society. Pétigny contended that the France of Louis XIV marked the height of both French political and literary power. At that time, he asserted, Paris was the literary capital of the world, and the French language became the universal standard for both science and literature. However, since the revolution, French letters had become decadent, and the foreign began to influence not only literature, but also the government and mores.<sup>996</sup> His lauding of the France of the past was about lauding a France that was culturally and politically dominant in Europe: a France that was revered, possibly even feared. Earlier in the article Pétigny proposed that good literature must come from peace, but only from peace that is the result of victory: “a peace purchased with triumphs, and where palms are intermixed with laurels.”<sup>997</sup> Restoration France, while at peace, was at peace following a defeat, and had a government in place that was put in place by those who had triumphed.

French critics rarely questioned the novelty of romanticism. That was taken as a given in the French context. However, classicist critics did contest the claim that because romanticism was new it was also better reflective of modern society. The virulently classicist and ultra-royalist journal *la Nouvelle année littéraire* conceded that if romantics and classicists agreed on anything, it was that an author must understand and represent his own time. They insisted however that romanticism, with its ogres, vampires and lachrymose verses had less to say about current mores than classical myths.<sup>998</sup>

### **Theatre of the Old versus the New On Stage**

The conflict between the old and the new, the French and the foreign, that characterized the *bataille romantique*, found its clearest expression on the stage. *Les deux écoles, ou le classique et le romantique* (*The Two Schools, or the Classicist and the Romantic*) first played at

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<sup>996</sup> Jules de Pétigny, “Traduction des théâtres de Schiller et de Shakespeare,” *Les Annales de la littérature et des arts* 6, no. 66 (1821): 105–107.

<sup>997</sup> Ibid., 106. “...une paix achetée par des triomphes, et dont les palmes sont mêlées de lauriers.”

<sup>998</sup> “Littérature: Côté gauche et côté droit,” *La Nouvelle année littéraire* 3 (April 1829): 47.

the Théâtre de L'Odéon 13 August 1825. Although it was not particularly successful, and was only performed a few times, the play epitomizes many aspects of the theatrical response to this conflict. Though the audience reportedly met the first act with frequent applause, and scattered applause and whistles thereafter, its first performance ended with the audience angrily demanding the name of the anonymous author.<sup>999</sup> While it was standard for the audience to call for the name of the author at the end of a first performance and cajole him on to the stage for cheers,<sup>1000</sup> the situation in this case was somewhat different. The author refused to appear, and the audience was only placated when told the author wished to maintain his anonymity.<sup>1001</sup> The second performance of the play was better received, but the play was mainly remembered for how similar it was to a play performed earlier in the year at the same theatre, *Roman à vendre*,<sup>1002</sup> as well as to a number of other recent plays including *l'Imprimeur sans caractère* and *les Femmes Romantiques*.<sup>1003</sup> Both plays explored the commercial competition between romantics and classicist, but, unlike *Roman à vendre*, which, at its title suggests, concerned the sale of novels, *les Deux écoles* examined romantic-classicist competition in the theatre.

Set in the home of a M. Lovermon, an old retired professor who lived in the Faubourg Saint-Germain, the old wealthy part of Paris, *les Deux écoles* departed from its more successful counterpart in that it focused primarily on the love story, and engaged in a more substantive discussion of romanticism and classicism as literary schools, and, specifically, about romanticism and classicism in the theatre and the importance of theatrical success for a literary career. The two main characters, Armand, a classicist, and Dubournet, a romantic, are rivals in both literature

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<sup>999</sup> "Théâtre de l'Odéon: Première représentation des *Deux Écoles*, comédie en trois actes et en vers" *Le Frondeur impartial, journal de littérature, des théâtres, des arts, des mœurs et des modes* no. 14 (14 August 1825): 2.

<sup>1000</sup> Planta, *New Picture of Paris*, 1827, 423. As Planta describes it: "After the successful performance of a new piece, the name of the author is loudly demanded, and his appearance on the stage required. The moment he is seen, the house rings with acclamation; he replies with a few humble *congratulations*, and retires."

<sup>1001</sup> "Théâtre de l'Odéon: Première représentation des *Deux Écoles*" *Le Frondeur impartial* no. 14: 2.

<sup>1002</sup> *Almanach des spectacles pour l'an 1826*, 1826, 130. *Roman à vendre* is explored in detail in Chapter 3.

<sup>1003</sup> "Théâtre de l'Odéon. Première représentation des *Deux Écoles*, comédie en 3 actes, en vers. – Destruction du second Théâtre-Français," *La Pandore, journal des spectacles, des lettres, des arts, des mœurs et des modes* no. 823 (15 August 1825): 2.

and love. They both have plays set to debut on the same night. They also both wish to marry M. Lovermon's daughter, Constance, who preferred Armand, but was skeptical of his devotion (although Dubournet seems most attracted to her dowry). Dubournet convinces Armand first, that he will never be successful with a classicist play, but should turn toward romanticism, and second that Constance is too ordinary to be Armand's muse. Instead, he needs a woman named something like Elodie, which conveniently is Dubournet's sister's name.<sup>1004</sup> However, when their plays open, the romantic Dubournet fails, and Armand's classicist tale enjoys great popularity. Armand and Dubournet are both too caught up in their love triangle to have heard about their plays – Constance rejects Dubournet and forgives Armand for his inconstancy, who then finds out about his play's success. The characters are discussing the romantic play's failure when Dubournet walks in and mistakes their silence for evidence that Armand's play has done badly. He tells Armand not to despair, that the public is always right, but that he is talented and will try again. Dubournet's faith in the public's ability to discern good theatre dissipates quickly when he discovers that it was actually his play the public did not like. Dubournet leaves, despairing that he will never find success.

The way the characters discuss romanticism often highlighted how novel or modern the literary school was, particularly in the face of classicism's established traditionalism. Early in the play Dubournet tries to convince Armand that he should no longer listen to the literary advice of his classicist mentor M. Lovermon, who Dubournet believes adheres slavishly to Aristotle. Armand corrects him and says he takes his models not from antiquity, but rather the *parnasse* of French literature (i.e. the seventeenth century). Dubournet dismissively proclaims that the seventeenth century now counts as antiquity. Those authors, he argues, were good for their own time, but that we must in this new time take a different path. "Art without innovation," he proclaims, "only charms by half."<sup>1005</sup> Later, Dubournet debates with Armand's mentor M. Lovermon, and calls classicism "used and decrepit," but Lovermon insists that "nature is without

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<sup>1004</sup> This seems to be a reference to the 1824 comedy vaudeville play *Les Femmes romantiques* – one of the three romantic nieces of the main character, the Baron, is named Élodie.

<sup>1005</sup> Léonard and Ader, *Les deux écoles*, 12.

limit and never ages.”<sup>1006</sup> Lovermon’s position is that classicism is the best method for imitating nature; because classicism is natural it is therefore timeless. He goes on to say that the rules of classicism are founded on universal taste, and are not mere passing whim. All romanticism has, he insists, is its novelty, and that will wear out quickly. “It will soon be old,” Lovermon argues, because “that which is false ages so quickly.”<sup>1007</sup> He warns Dubournet that following these “new voices” in order to find literary glory will only result in temporary success, because while romanticism might fool a few for a short time, it will never fool the best minds, and will never have the staying power of the true French literature – classicism. Dubournet counters that it makes no sense for all of history to march forward while literature languishes behind. Classicism, he argues, is too repetitive and people tire of hearing the same thing over and over.<sup>1008</sup> Even when he discovers that his play has failed and he despairs that the public is blind to good theatre, Dubournet refuses to turn to classicism, saying he would rather fail while being on the cutting edge.<sup>1009</sup> Both Dubournet and Lovermon believe that romanticism represents something new, but they disagree on whether or not it will persevere. Moreover, they disagree as to whether classicism is timeless, or merely old.

Unlike the other *bataille romantique* plays, *les Deux écoles* found no redeeming qualities in romanticism or in romantics, and offered no possibility for consensus or reconciliation. Dubournet is a bad playwright, a liar, a bad friend, and is overly concerned with money, and Folio, the romantic bookseller, acts unscrupulously for the sake of profit. Dubournet’s bad behavior and his lack of taste are punished. He ends up with no love (or dowry) and with no literary success. Two different reviews of the play both complained that it was completely unnecessary to make Dubournet a scoundrel, as well as a romantic. In his review in the *Journal des débats*, Duviquet said it would certainly have been enough to have his play fail because it was bad — suggesting both that being a romantic was enough of a reason to fail and that the play was too uncompromising. He argued that it made no sense for him to have two such conflicting character

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<sup>1006</sup> Ibid., 42. “La nature est sans borne et jamais ne vieillit.”

<sup>1007</sup> Ibid., 44. “Il sera bientôt vieux; le faux vieillit si vite!”

<sup>1008</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1009</sup> Ibid., 74.

traits – that one cannot be both a romantic and a reprobate. But, he wrote, at least the play would discourage young people from trying their hand at romanticism, which Duviquet wrongly believed would soon lose favor, because people had already stopped reading romantic literature, and the only reason it still sold was because libraries bought everything.<sup>1010</sup> In contrast, *l'Imprimeur sans caractère* surprised audiences by revealing that the romantic suitor and classicist suitor vying for the hand of the main character's daughter were the same man, and *Roman à vendre* showed an old classicist bookseller relaxing his anti-romantic stance somewhat and accepting that romanticism enjoyed some good qualities, even while its commerciality betrayed its lack of good taste. *Les Deux écoles* broke with the tradition of these plays by not offering a reconciliation, which might explain both the audience and critics' dissatisfaction with it. Even its classicist reviewers believed the complete downfall of the romantic character was too much, perhaps because it left open no possibility for accord: it offered no hope that the Restoration might find harmony in the conflict of France's pasts and present.

In that same review Duviquet wrote that the play should have left the literary criticism to the *Académie*, the *Société des bonnes-lettres*, or the *Athénée*, where it belonged, claiming that theatre was not the correct venue to debate literary matters.<sup>1011</sup> Despite Duviquet's protests the theatre was a venue for literary criticism and debate, as the existence of this play and similar plays, like *l'Imprimeur sans caractère* and *Roman à vendre*, attest. *Les deux écoles*, because it told the story of rival playwrights, particularly reinforced the critical role the theatre played in the promotion and dissemination of the *bataille romantique*. Moreover, the characters spend considerable stage time debating the relative merits of romanticism and classicism, which probably did not help the play win over its audience, but suggests that the theatre could help to disseminate some of the nuances of the romantic-classicist conflict, and not merely the fact of its existence.

*Les Deux écoles* and the other plays of its ilk (*l'Imprimeur sans caractère*, *Roman à vendre*) formed part of a larger subgenre of mid-1820s theatre built around a conflict between a

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<sup>1010</sup> Pierre Duviquet, "Théâtre de l'Odéon: Première représentation des *Deux Écoles*, comédie en trois actes et en vers, par M\*\*\*," *Journal des débats politiques et littéraires* (19 August 1825): 1.

<sup>1011</sup> Ibid.

post-revolutionary and an old-regime practice, custom, or profession. These plays, like the plays that explicitly addressed the *bataille romantique*, feature two main characters, one modern and one traditional, and their difference of opinion, as well as a love triangle or other romantic intrigue, drive the plot. The *Almanach des spectacles* captured the essence of these plays best in its description of *les Deux tailleurs* (*The Two Tailors*), which played at Théâtre des variétés for the first time on 17 February 1825.<sup>1012</sup> They wrote that “These two *Tailors*, one a classicist and the other a romantic, remind us of the *Hairdresser and the Wig-maker*; the first is an old gatekeeper, the second a young elegant who visits his clients in a cabriolet; the latter marries his colleague’s daughter, and that union ends their quarrel.”<sup>1013</sup> Notably, the *Almanach* used ‘romantic’ and ‘classicist’ as synonyms for ‘modern’ and ‘traditional’ or ‘new’ and ‘old.’ The text of the play included no literary discussion or references; here romantic and classicist refer to styles of dress.<sup>1014</sup>

These plays, like *l’Imprimeur sans caractère* and *Roman à vendre*, generally end with an attempt to find some kind of compromise between the old and the new, or with a recognition that it is a tension that must be lived with. In several of these plays, like *les Deux tailleurs* and *l’Imprimeur sans caractère*, a wedding seals the diplomatic rift between new and old, but in other cases the new consensus takes rhetorical form. As Northrop Frye argues, comedy uses the reconciliation of a conflict between two characters to show the shift from one kind of society to another. He notes that “at the beginning of the play the obstructing characters are in charge of the play’s society, and . . . at the end of the play the device in the plot that brings hero and heroine together causes a new society to crystallize around the hero, and the moment when this

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<sup>1012</sup> *Les Deux tailleurs* was apparently successful, despite a few whistles, and in spite of the fact that the *Almanach des spectacles* found it “a bit *unstitched* [*décousus* – disjointed, or incoherent].” *Almanach des spectacles pour l’an 1826*, 1826, 202.

<sup>1013</sup> Ibid. “Ces deux *Tailleurs*, l’un classique et l’autre romantique, rappellent le *Coiffeur et le Perruquier*; le premier est un vieux portier, le seconde un jeune élégant qui va chez ses clients en cabriolet; ce dernier épouse le fille de son confrère, et cette union termine leur querelles.”

<sup>1014</sup> We see this same distinction made the in *bataille romantique* theatre, where characters clothes are used to demonstrate their literary loyalties. Or, in one scene in *les Deux écoles* an actress from Dubournet’s plays is said to be “en costume romantique.” Léonard and Ader, *Les deux écoles*, 51.



crystallization occurs is the point of resolution in the action.”<sup>1015</sup> The play then celebrates that resolution, and the creation of the new society, usually with a wedding. It is in precisely this way that the old versus new theatre, and its subgenre of *bataille romantique* theatre, expressed and encouraged the shift from the societies of the ancien regime and the Revolution to Restoration society.

One of the earliest example of this particular sub-genre is Eugène Scribe and Jean-Henri Dupin’s *l’Intérieur de l’étude, ou le procureur et l’avoué* (Inside the Study, or the Prosecutor and the Solicitor). It played for the first time at the Théâtre des Variétés in February of 1821, a “grand succès,” according to the *Almanach des Spectacles*.<sup>1016</sup> *L’Intérieur de l’étude* follows a old prosecutor and a young solicitor who disagree on any number of fronts, from the mundane (like how much to heat an office) to the more serious (like marriage.) The young solicitor wants to marry for love, while the old prosecutor insists he must find a wealthier wife given his financial situation. The generational divide between the characters is at the heart of the play’s conflict, and it ends with their reconciliation when the two work together, using their particular talents to solve a problem for a client.<sup>1017</sup> The play ends, as was common in vaudeville, with a song sung by all the characters, in this case, celebrating the union of “youth and experience” and declaring that “yes, respect the ancien régime, /but let us not insult the new one.”<sup>1018</sup> It closes with one character breaking the fourth wall to tell the audience they would have liked to share with the audience some verses from Piron, Panard or Laujon, but those songwriters “were all from the ancien régime, /We are only from the new.”<sup>1019</sup> While we cannot return to a pre-Revolutionary world, they suggests, we can try to move forward in the one we have.

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<sup>1015</sup> Northrop Frye, *The Anatomy of Criticism: Four Essays* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1973 [1957]), 163.

<sup>1016</sup> *Almanach des spectacles pour l’an 1822*, 284.

<sup>1017</sup> Eugène Scribe and Jean-Henri Dupin, *L’intérieur de l’étude, ou le procureur et l’avoué, comédie-vaudeville en un acte* (Paris: Barba, 1821).

<sup>1018</sup> *Ibid.*, 35–36.

<sup>1019</sup> *Ibid.*, 36. “Étaient tous de l’ancien régime, / Nous ne sommes que du nouveau!”

It would not be surprising if Scribe's *l'Intérieur de l'étude*, (along with his later play *le Coiffeur et le perruquier*, discussed below) inspired some of the other plays in the sub-genre.<sup>1020</sup> Eugène Scribe, a highly prolific and successful playwright throughout the early nineteenth century, whose work focused on vaudeville and the boulevard theatres, but who also distinguished himself as a librettist for grand opera, and had his first comedy performed at the Théâtre Français in 1827.<sup>1021</sup> Scribe is sometimes evoked as an example of mechanized or formulaic literary production, because of his role in the development of the theatrical genre known as the well-made play (*pièce bien faite*), and because he had a workshop and many of his plays were co-written. Théophile Gautier remarked that he could not understand how Scribe, the "cherished author of women and the bourgeois,"<sup>1022</sup> became the most popular playwright of the era, even though he lacked "poetry, lyricism, style, philosophy, truth, nature" and was opposed by both critics and the well-read.<sup>1023</sup> Scribe came under particular fire from literary journalists when he became a stakeholder in and principal playwright for the théâtre du Gymnase (then called the Théâtre de Madame, for its patroness the Duchess de Berry).<sup>1024</sup> Eugène Scribe wrote a vaudeville about this conflict with the theatre press called *le Charlatanisme*, which opened at the Gymnase in May 1825.<sup>1025</sup> Yet despite criticisms against him, Scribe was enormously successful and his 'well-made play' model of theatrical production influenced theatre in France and the world.

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<sup>1020</sup> Of course, having a play revolve around the conflict between two people was not revolutionary. Some of Scribe's own earlier plays, including the 1817 *les Deux précepteurs, ou asinus asinum fricat*, followed a similar formula. But in these plays the two antagonists did not represent two eras of French history, or two potential models for Restoration life in the same way as the plays in the 'old v. new' sub-genre.

<sup>1021</sup> Yon, "Paris 1820," 166.

<sup>1022</sup> Théophile Gautier, *Histoire de l'art dramatique en France depuis vingt-cinq ans.*, vol. 2 (Paris: Hetzel, 1859), 351, <http://gallica.bnf.fr/ark:/12148/bpt6k2093630>. "l'auteur chéri des dames et des bourgeois."

<sup>1023</sup> *Ibid.*, 2:234. "dénudé de poésie, de lyrisme, de style, de philosophie, de vérité, de naturel."

<sup>1024</sup> "The Dramatic Genius of Eugène Scribe," *The American Monthly Magazine* 4 (New York: Monson Bancroft, 1835): 31.

<sup>1025</sup> In his excellent account of this conflict and the play Jean-Claude Yon shows how Scribe and his co-author Mazères used the play to denounce journalistic camaraderie – the bias of journalists toward specific writers, and their mutual support for one another. Jean-Claude Yon, "Le Charlatanisme de Scribe, 'peinture exacte et vraie,'" *Orages*, no. 9 (March 2010): 195.

Moreover, this theatre of the old and the new generally tried to reconcile the generational conflict at its heart –through marriage, through some sort of compromise, or through a situation that showed the characters they were not as diametrically opposed as it seemed. *Le Magasin de lumière*, a play about whether new gas lamp technology would replace oil lamps played for the first time on 4 February 1823 at the Théâtre du Gymnase.<sup>1026</sup> The play surrounds Legras, an oil lamp entrepreneur, his son Isidore, Robinet, a gas lamps entrepreneur, and his sister Estelle. Isidore and Estelle want to marry, but there is some concern about money and the viability of the gas lamp business. The marriage, Legras says, would be the only way to create understanding between “the old and the new method”<sup>1027</sup> (That Robinet has a sister who is young enough to marry Legras’ son suggests that he was meant to be younger than Legras, possibly an entire generation younger). Scribe and his workshop produced other plays that also fit in this sub-genre, including *le Coiffeur et le perruquier* (*The Hairdresser and the Wig-maker*), which played for the first time in January 1824, at the Théâtre du Gymnase Dramatique to whistles, but had a successful second performance. The *Almanach des spectacles* noted its similarities to both *l’Intérieur d’une étude* and *les Deux Précepteurs*.<sup>1028</sup> That same February a very similar play entitled *le Perruquier et le Coiffeur* appeared. In February of the next year the Variétés played *les Deux Tailleurs*. Given the high association of romanticism with stylish dress and classicism with old-fashioned dress, and particularly wigs, these three plays very closely paralleled the conflicts in the *bataille romantique* plays. *Le coiffeur et le perruquier* directly compared the old and new practices of hairstyling to classicism and romanticism.<sup>1029</sup> The play *les Passages et les Rues*, which played in 1827, and examines the conflict between businesses on the street on those in newly build arcades, also fits into this sub-genre. Although not a play, in 1825 *le Diable Boiteux* published “Les deux époques” a short fictional dialogue between an old Marquis and a young commoner standing in the foyer of the Opera, on the day of a masked ball. The Marquis

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<sup>1026</sup> Ferdinand et al., *Le Magasin de lumière: Scènes à propos de l’éclairage par le gaz* (Paris: Mme Huet, libraire-éditeur, 1823).

<sup>1027</sup> *Ibid.*, 5.

<sup>1028</sup> *Almanach des spectacles pour l’an 1825* (Paris: J.-N. Barba, 1825), 168.

<sup>1029</sup> Eugène Scribe, Edouard Mazères, and M. Saint-Laurent, *Le coiffeur et le perruquier* (Paris: Pollet, 1824), 32, <http://archive.org/details/lecoiffeuretlepe00scri>.

complains that there is nothing good in the century, to which the commoner replies that it seems to him that everything in this century is slightly better than the one that came before it. The Marquis disagrees, and contends the opposite: things are not progressing, but rather degenerating. They go on to disagree about whether the past or the present is better, and the commoner ends by saying that society is taking giant steps forward and the Marquis cannot stop

that from happening.<sup>1030</sup> Even Casimir Delavigne's most celebrated comedy *l'École des vieillards* (1823) centers on a generational conflict, albeit a private one – an older man whose young wife is seduced by Parisian life and a young duke – and ends with a reconciliation.<sup>1031</sup>

Placing the *bataille romantique* plays in the context of this larger genre of 'new vs. old' theatre highlights the extent to which the romantic-classicist debate was perceived as a generational conflict in the Restoration. In this frame, the conflict between romantics and classicists fit into a larger conversation about the role of France's past in its future. Regardless of whether they occurred between

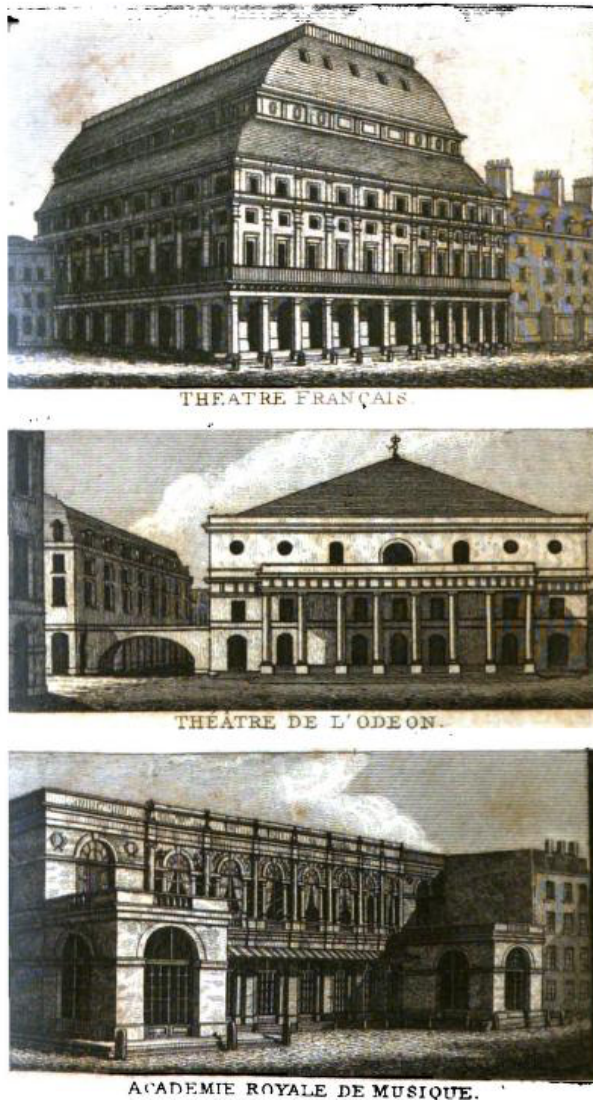


Figure 8 – Royal Theatres, from Edward Planta, *A New Picture of Paris*

<sup>1030</sup> "Les deux époques," *Le Diable boiteux* no. 29 (29 January 1825): 3.

<sup>1031</sup> *L'almanach des spectacles* called *l'Écoles des vieillards* the best play of 1823. *Almanach des spectacles pour l'an 1825*, 70. It is also generally considered the play that secured Delavigne's seat at the Académie Française, to which he was appointed in 1825.

literary schools or tailors, the cultural conflicts in the Restoration, like its political conflicts, tried to somehow reconcile a reactionary regime with an increasingly modern world. In his *Marianne into Battle*, which studies republican imagery between 1789 and 1889, Maurice Agulhon argues that the interplay between revolution and counter-revolution played an important symbolic role throughout the nineteenth century.<sup>1032</sup> While his book touches on the Restoration only briefly, it clarifies that that symbolic struggle between revolution and counter-revolution generated much of Restoration culture and politics, including the theatre of 'the old v. the new' and the *bataille romantique*. Therefore, recasting the Restoration as the era of romanticism's genesis highlights the liminal and contested nature of the regime. The mechanisms and machinations of romanticism's growth, reveal that the Restoration built itself through its press, its theatre, and the innumerable people and processes that contributed to their production.

### ***Cromwell, Henri III and the Narrative of Romantic Ascendancy***

*Les Deux écoles* emphasized the importance of the theatre for literary success in the Restoration. Dubournet is not the only character who believes that his play's failure would have reverberations for his literary career. Folio, the romantic publisher who bought a book of Dubournet's poems for fourteen thousand francs at the beginning of the play despairs that, with the failure of the play, he will not even manage to recoup the cost of the paper (but he manages to trick the classicist bookseller into buying the manuscript from him.)<sup>1033</sup> As one review of *les Deux écoles* noted, it seemed rather unlikely, given the importance both Armand and Dubournet placed on the success of their plays throughout the show that they would be the last to find out whether or not they were successful.<sup>1034</sup> Competition for the theatre was quite fierce in the Restoration. The theatre journal, *Le Frondeur* recounted a story of a playwright who tried to trick a vaudevillist into missing his meeting with the deciding council of one the theatres by sending him a letter arranging an amorous encounter during the scheduled time for his meeting. The playwright then attended the meeting in the vaudevillist's stead in order to pitch his own play. The

<sup>1032</sup> Agulhon, *Marianne into Battle*.

<sup>1033</sup> Léonard and Ader, *Les deux écoles*, 60.

<sup>1034</sup> "Théâtre de l'Odéon: Première représentation des *Deux Écoles*," *Le Frondeur impartial* no. 14: 2.

vaudevillist, however, undeceived, arrived at the meeting and exposed the playwright's trickery.<sup>1035</sup> This (possibly apocryphal) story, suggests the highly competitive atmosphere in which playwrights worked and struggled to get their plays accepted by the theatre. As discussed above, the rigorous censorship process could prohibit plays from being performed even after the theatre agreed to their performance, or even after they were cast. Or the censor could pull a play after a single performance, as in the case of *Bélisaire*. Once performed, the audience's reception determined a play's viability. As one reviewer put it, "fortune is most changeable in the theatre; talent cannot always find it: what does it matter how solidly constructed a building if it rests on sand? You believe you have written a good tragedy; but have you including in your considerations the public's whim?"<sup>1036</sup>

*Les Deux écoles* showcased the critical role that theatre played in the *bataille romantique*. Dubournet confidently tells Lovermon that the success of his play will prove that Lovermon is wrong about romanticism. Acquiescent, Lovermon asks Dubournet to take his place as Armand's mentor, in the event that his play succeeds better than Armand.<sup>1037</sup> In one scene Folio, the romantic bookseller, reads the journal *le Sincère*'s announcement for the two plays' performances to Dubournet. The announcement declares: "These plays, written following opposing doctrines, will without a doubt decide an important literary question."<sup>1038</sup> *Le Sincère* goes on to predict the success of Dubournet's *Sapho*, although the dialogue suggests Folio wrote the announcement, and it is actually a piece of *réclame* (covert advertisement).<sup>1039</sup>

Theatrical print culture, including the theatre press and printed versions of plays, promoted and reinforced this sense that the theatre functioned as the true locus of romantic-

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<sup>1035</sup> "Barraterie Littéraire," *Le Frondeur, journal de littérature, des théâtres, des arts, des mœurs et des modes* no. 41 (10 September 1825): 3.

<sup>1036</sup> "Jeanne D'arc et Cléopâtre," *Le Diable boiteux* no. 109 (19 April 1825): 2. "C'est au théâtre surtout que la fortune est changeante ; le talent ne peut toujours la fixer : qu'importe qu'un édifice soit solidement construit s'il repose sur du sable ? vous croyez avoir fait une bonne tragédie ; mais avez-vous fait entrer dans vos calculs les caprices du public ?"

<sup>1037</sup> Léonard and Ader, *Les deux écoles*, 45–46.

<sup>1038</sup> *Ibid.*, 17. "Ces pièces, faites d'après des doctrines opposées, vont sans doute décider une grande question littéraire."

<sup>1039</sup> *Ibid.* Folio says that *le Sincère*'s publisher, out of friendship, interleaves his journal with impartial announcements of his new books. Moreover, after reading the announcement Dubournet tells him that he pushed the criticism a bit far, implying that Folio authored the piece.

classicist debate, and, therefore, that theatrical success for either literary school signaled total success, especially as romanticism gained a foothold in French theatre. In 1828, the new monthly romantic journal *la Revue dramatique* began its prospectus with the assertion that France enjoyed unrivaled mastery of the theatre, and noted that it was Paris' periodical press that announced the theatre's successes and failures to its readers.<sup>1040</sup> The prospectus went on to say that all existing theatre reviews were full of lies, and were often owned or paid for by people directly involved with the theatre, but that *la Revue dramatique* would prove thoughtful and impartial. *La Revue dramatique* correctly observed that significant overlap occurred between those involved in the theatre and those involved in the press. Delaforest served as both theatre inspector and theatre critique for the *Gazette*, and Charles-Jean Harel, who became director of the Odéon in 1829, had founded the theatrical paper *le Miroir*, and was one of the rédacteurs of both *le Nain jaune*, and *le Minerve littéraire*. The plurality of voices in the press also complicated the theatre press' ability to shape the narrative of theatrical successes and failures. In the classicist journal *l'Incorruptible*, M.F. noted that "the isolated man, who wants to form an opinion on a work or on an author finds himself in a strange confusion; one journal tells him *Admire*; the other, *Don't admire*. It is a chaos of contradictory criticism, where often the truth is no where to be found."<sup>1041</sup> M.F. then told the story of a boy who wanted to know whether Victor Hugo's *Cromwell* was good. So he asked a variety of people who all gave him differing opinions. Many were negative, some indifferent, and one very positive. The boy decides that the only way to judge *Cromwell* is to read it for himself.<sup>1042</sup> Despite the fact that M.F. explicitly recognized that uncertain readers could arrive at their own conclusions, *l'Incorruptible* had blamed both the theatre and the press for romanticism's success. In an article on journalism, 'le chev Robert' argued that the theatre directors supported romanticism, and more than that they "armed itself with its [romanticism's] journals to attack the national literature, and to ruin the theatres of which they

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<sup>1040</sup> *La Revue dramatique, Prospectus*, 1.

<sup>1041</sup> "Critique littéraire," *L'Incorruptible, Journal littéraire et des théâtres* no. 16 (12 February 1828): 2. "L'homme isolé, qui cherche à se former une opinion sur un ouvrage et sur un auteur se trouve dans un étrange embarras ; un journal lui crie *Admirez* ; l'autre, *N'admirez pas*."

<sup>1042</sup> *Ibid.*

were in charge.”<sup>1043</sup> Two days later Béraud charged that the theatre administration artificially maintained romanticism’s success. Left on its own, he declared, “the reign of romanticism would be short and ephemeral” and that “the pieces played at our first rate theatre will soon show that it [romanticism] could only have been created by a fanatical brain and by false ideas.”<sup>1044</sup> Unsurprisingly, the Romantic reviews disagreed. The first issue of *la Revue dramatique* published in October of 1828 predicted that the winter would bring a literary regeneration. He intended his journal to show that “the spirit of the new school is not bizarreness, and that if France should create a romantic theatre, it will be more national, more tasteful than the old scene pledged to the Greeks and Romans.”<sup>1045</sup>

The traditional narrative about the beginning of romantic success focuses on Victor Hugo’s *Cromwell* (1828) and Alexandre Dumas’ *Henri III* (1829). These plays both represent watershed moments for romanticism. Contemporaries generally considered *Henri III* the first romantic play to be performed at the Théâtre-Français. The conception of both *Cromwell* and *Henri III* as turning points in the ascendancy of romantic theatre did not emerge in hindsight, but rather was a narrative promoted by the press at the time. Romanticism did not begin in the Théâtre Français. It first had to rise through the ranks of the less prestigious theatres. As discussed above, Delaforest argued that romantic success in the smaller theatres would only lead to success in the more prominent theatres, and he traced its origins to vaudeville plays that did not obey the three unities. Earlier plays in smaller less prestigious theatres, like those Delaforest discussed, helped pave the way for *Henri III*, and later *Amy Robsart* and *Hernani*, to play at the Théâtre Français. In 1823 *l’Almanach des spectacles* wrote that while lord Byron and Walter

<sup>1043</sup> “Du Journalisme, IIe article,” *l’Incorruptible, Journal littéraire et des théâtres* no. 2 (29 January 1828): 2.

<sup>1044</sup> “Sur le genre romantique protégé par plusieurs directeurs des théâtres,” *l’Incorruptible* no. 3 (30 January 1828): 3. “Ce fait étant vrai, nous pourrions en tirer la conséquence que ces messieurs, ou ne connaissent point, ou ne savent pas apprécier les beautés de *Corneille*, de *Racine*, de *Molière* et de *Régnard*. Cependant, sans vouloir contrarier leurs inclinations, et parlant seulement dans l’intérêt de l’art dramatique, nous leur ferons observer que le règne du genre romantique a été court et éphémère, que les ouvrages qui ont placé notre scène au premier rang, démontrèrent bientôt qu’il n’avait pu être créé que par un cerveau exalté et à idées fausses.”

<sup>1045</sup> “Coup d’oeil sur les théâtre royaux,” *La Revue dramatique, politique et littéraire* no. 1 (8 October 1828): 7. “l’esprit de la nouvelle école n’est pas la bizarrerie, et que si la France parvient à se constituer un théâtre romantique, il sera plus national, plus goûté que notre vieille scène inféodée aux Grecs et aux Romains.”



Scott might play on the boulevards, the audience at the Français would laugh them back to the Gaîté and l'Ambigu-Comique.<sup>1046</sup> But romantic and romantic-inspired literature played in increasingly prestigious theatres over the course of the Restoration. In 1824, for example, the Théâtre de l'Odéon played Alexandre Soumet's *Cléopâtre*, and in 1825 his *Jeanne d'Arc*. By this point Soumet was a member of the Académie Française and had already denounced the cénacle of *la Muse française*, but neither play respected the unities of place or time. In 1826, the Odéon put on some adaptations of foreign romantic works, including *Ivanhoé*, Rossini's opera based on Walter Scott's novel, and Gustave de Wailly's *l'Intrigue et l'amour*, adapted from Schiller.<sup>1047</sup> Moreover, as we have seen, even if romantic plays were not commonly performed before the end of the Restoration, romanticism and its debate with classicism were important components in rhetoric about and criticism of the theatre, and in plays themselves.

*Cromwell* exemplified the essential role that print and the press continued to play in romantic theatre, even after its initial success. During the Restoration, the play existed only in print, and its notoriety extended more from its preface than from the play itself. In *Cromwell's* preface, Victor Hugo described both himself and romanticism as liberal. In doing so, he tied the new school of theatre to the modern world and to young France, and relegated classicism to the old guard, speaking to a generation of people who do not understand them.<sup>1048</sup> "The tail of the eighteenth century trails into the nineteenth," he wrote, "but it is not us, young men who have seen Bonaparte, who carried it."<sup>1049</sup>

Although contemporaries recognized *Cromwell* as a romantic manifesto early on, Hugo's theories and his position on the romantic theatre were not universal, not even among other liberal romantics. In the review of *Cromwell* in *le Globe*, the reviewer, C.R. expressed a somewhat lackluster support for Hugo, even though he claimed they more or less agreed on art and that the play itself "was conceived in the dramatic system we believe will renew the future of our

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<sup>1046</sup> Merville and Antoine-Marie Coupart, *Almanach des spectacles pour l'an 1823* (Paris: J.-N. Barba, 1823), 192, <http://gallica.bnf.fr/ark:/12148/cb32688157h/date>.

<sup>1047</sup> *Almanach des spectacles pour l'an 1827* (Paris: J.-N. Barba, 1827), 114–31.

<sup>1048</sup> Hugo, *Cromwell*, lxi.

<sup>1049</sup> Ibid. "La queue du dix-huitième siècle traîne encore dans le dix-neuvième; mais ce n'est pas nous, jeunes hommes qui avons vu Buonaparte, qui la lui porterons."

theatre.”<sup>1050</sup> This attitude might have extended from *le Globe*’s waning enthusiasm for romanticism beginning in 1827, as documented by Jean-Jacques Goblot in his thorough study of the journal,<sup>1051</sup> but their review also exposes the division between converted liberals like Hugo and those partisans who traced their liberalism to before the Restoration, and how divided romantics could be on issues like the adaptation of romantic principles to the stage.

Despite its tepid review, *le Globe* argued that *Cromwell* represented a significant achievement for romanticism in the theatre. C.R. wrote, “the greatest merit M. Hugo achieved with this work will always be having undertaken it.”<sup>1052</sup> Hugo, C.R. observed, clearly knew that French theatre needed rejuvenation, and he undertook the task and the risk with a well-planned and well-executed work, rather than simply producing something quickly and sloppily. For his part, Hugo claimed that he did not write *Cromwell* for the stage, because he knew that performing it in Paris would be impossible, “between the academic Charybdis and the administrative Scylla, between the literary juries and political censorship.”<sup>1053</sup> Instead, he said that he wrote it without practical constraints, as a kind of ideal of romantic theatrical theory.<sup>1054</sup> Hugo believed that true romantic theatre would require not only a change in censorship practices, but also a transition to longer plays. At the time, the major theatres put on two different plays each night, and the smaller theatres often played three. But even an extract of *Cromwell*, designed for the stage, Hugo argued, would require the whole night at the theatre.<sup>1055</sup> An imagined performance of *Cromwell* would dispense, not just the three unities, but with the fundamental experience of a night at the

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<sup>1050</sup> C.R. “Cromwell, drame; par Victor Hugo,” *Le Globe* 6 (1827-1828): 155.

<sup>1051</sup> Goblot, *La jeune France libérale*.

<sup>1052</sup> C.R. “Cromwell, drame; par Victor Hugo, IIe article,” *Le Globe* 6 (1827-1828): 171. “Mais le plus grand mérite de M. Hugo dans cet ouvrage sera toujours de l’avoir entrepris.”

<sup>1053</sup> Hugo, *Cromwell*, lvi. “entre le Charybde académique et le Scylla administratif, entre les jurys littéraire et la censure politique.”

<sup>1054</sup> Ibid., lv. Deschamps, in a letter to *le Mercure de France au dix-neuvième siècle*, suggested that *Cromwell*’s success lay in its impossibility. Because he knew he would never get the play past the censors, Hugo felt free to take his imagination as far as it would go and “the reader gains, in rich and interesting developments, all that the spectator would have to lose.” Emile Deschamps, “Lettre à l’éditeur du Mercure, sur le Cromwell de M. V. Hugo,” *le Mercure de France au dix-neuvième siècle* 20 (1828): 292. “le lecteur y gagne, en développemens riches et curieux, tout ce que le spectateur serait obligé de perdre.”

<sup>1055</sup> Hugo, *Cromwell*, lvii-lviii.

theatre in Paris as well as the underlying commercial model of the theatre, and would therefore be both revolutionary, impossible, and likely unprofitable.

*Cromwell*'s existence as a theoretical piece of theatre that lived only on the page limited its perceived influence, so the romantic press interpreted *Henri III* as the beginning of romanticism's success in the theatre. And successful it was. After debuting in Paris in February 1829, *Henri III* performed in a number of cities around France, including Orleans, Nancy, Valenciennes, Lyon, and Mans.<sup>1056</sup> That year, the journal *la Jeune France* noted two principle issues with classicist theatre: it did not try to realistically capture its historical settings, and it did not have an appreciation for the full range of human experience and emotion.<sup>1057</sup> Today's theatre, the journalist continued, had none of these faults. However, *la Jeune France* acknowledged that censorship made it difficult to explore France's new mores in the theatre. Though the journalist predicted that romantic theatre would enjoy future success, he or she noted that only one play has seen success so far – Alexandre Dumas' *Henri III. Cromwell*, while admirable as a thought-piece, he wrote, had never been performed. *Henri III* "satisfied new needs and proved that audiences cared less about ancient idols than their own pleasures. This work, which is moreover remarkable, must be cited because it begins a new era. The arena is open and will not lack for competitors: we will do better, no doubt; but there will always be the glory for having paved the way, and have shown it to his followers."<sup>1058</sup>

The review of *Henri III* in *l'Album national* argued that the day of the play's premiere should mark "the creation of a *new manner*."<sup>1059</sup> The reviewer, L.J., wrote that so many playwrights, both successful and unsuccessful, claimed to be the leader of the new theatrical

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<sup>1056</sup> The biweekly, *Journal des Comédiens*, whose first issue came out April of 1829, was unusual among Parisian theatre papers because it reported on departmental theatres. *Journal des Comédiens* (April 1829).

<sup>1057</sup> "Littérature dramatique," *La Jeune France* no. 6 (5 July 1829): 44.

<sup>1058</sup> Ibid., 45. "Une seule pièce qu'un succès prodigieux a couronnée, le *Henri III* de M. Alexandre Dumas, est venue satisfaire à des besoins nouveaux et prouver que les spectateurs tenaient moins à d'anciennes idoles qu'à leurs plaisirs. Cet ouvrage, d'ailleurs remarquable, doit surtout être cité parce qu'il commence une ère nouvelle. L'arène est ouverte et les concurrents ne manqueront pas : on fera mieux, sans nul doute ; mais il y aura toujours de la gloire à s'être frayé la route, et à l'avoir montrée à ses émules."

<sup>1059</sup> "Théâtre Français. Première représentation de *Henri III*," *L'Album national, revue des journaux, des sciences, de la littérature des tribunaux, des arts et des modes* no. 27 (14 February 1829): 215. "Nous croyons de ce jour seulement date la création d'une manière nouvelle."

school. These pretenders, L.J. insisted, wanted to lead the new school for the perceived praise it would engender, and so added heroics to otherwise banal plots, or inaccurate historical elements. All of them, even as they proclaimed the need for originality in theatre, wrote adaptations of Schiller and mixed romantic couplets with classicist tragic elements in a confusion of genres. Dumas, with *Henri III*, produced what L.J. considered to be the first true romantic play in Paris – one that achieved the level of historical accuracy for which romantic theatre strove.<sup>1060</sup> With this play, Dumas heralded the success of romantic theatre.<sup>1061</sup>

### **Lady Morgan returns to France**

Over a decade after her account of her travels in France caused such a scandal, Lady Morgan wrote a second travelogue about France, *France in 1829-1830*. In it, Lady Morgan remarked on the striking changes in the Parisian theatre scene between 1817 and 1830. She had returned to the topic of French theatre with a wariness that reflected an understanding of her earlier reception and an effort to be more open-minded about Racine and his contemporaries. Upon her return to France, however, Lady Morgan did not find the virulent classicism of the early Restoration, but, instead, encountered romanticism that surpassed her own sense of partisanship.

Fundamentally, her opinions had not changed: she still preferred Shakespeare to Racine. She began the chapter on romanticism and classicism in her *France in 1829-30* with a quote from the *Quarterly Review*'s vicious review of *France in 1816*. They said she hated Racine for his piety and that "in defiance of the unanimous voice of France,"<sup>1062</sup> she claimed he was not a poet. Lady Morgan conceded. She had no love for Racine and preferred Shakespeare. His work, she wrote, displayed a genius suitable for his own time, but not for the present. "With respect to the unanimous voice of France," she wrote, "I have some reason to think that it is now with me; or at least that it soon will be, at the rate at which opinion is changing in this particular."<sup>1063</sup> And that

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<sup>1060</sup> Romantic theatre, and romantic literature more broadly, was known for its faithful reconstructions of historical eras. One of the most common words that *le Globe* used in its reviews of romantic theatre was *vérité* - truth. Yon, "Paris 1820," 160.

<sup>1061</sup> "Théâtre Français. Première représentation de *Henri III*," *L'Album national* no. 27: 215.

<sup>1062</sup> Morgan, *France in 1829-30*, 73.

<sup>1063</sup> Ibid.

was certainly the case. Her position found many more French supporters in 1829 than it had in 1817. The Théâtre Français played a faithful translation of Shakespeare for the first time in 1829 (*Othello*, translated by Vigny).<sup>1064</sup> Lady Morgan's young romantic companion noted that not only did the Théâtre Français now play Shakespeare, but that the French now thought even Shakespeare did not go far enough, since, while he did not follow classicist rules, he did follow some rules of his own making (five acts over the course of three hours).<sup>1065</sup>

The contrast between *France* and *France in 1829-1830* suggests not only the growth of romanticism's popularity over the course of the Restoration, but also highlights important particularities of French romanticism. While Lady Morgan found that more people agreed with her assessment of Racine on her second visit to France, she found they disagreed with her on many other points, including the definition of romanticism, and particularly whether or not it reflected a recent phenomenon. Both the young romantic and the older classicist Lady Morgan discussed in her book saw romanticism as particular to the present, and therefore, the output of a specific historical moment. She quoted her classicist friend:

'Romanticism is of a much more modern date; it began in the salons of Madame de Staël; it was, I grieve to say helped on by Talma, and has been assisted by the deserters of the *Comédie Française* from the oriflamme of the national literature, by the mistaken calculations of the *commissaire royal*, Monsieur Taylor, and by the multiplication of vaudevilles. It has been urged on by all the servile journalists, and by the ambitious vanity of the young writers in the 'Globe;' but above all by Monsieur Scribe, who counts his productions by the hundred.'<sup>1066</sup>

Lady Morgan disagreed. To her, romanticism expressed the spirit of novelty, a change in conventions and practices, that extended back to the days of Charles VI, when stories of apostles replaced passion plays, and then again when domestic follies replaced the lives of apostles, and so on.

Lady Morgan perceived romanticism as universal. She located romanticism everywhere that new forms overtook old forms, and everywhere that innovation won over tradition in art. In

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<sup>1064</sup> Bassan and Chevalley, *Alfred de Vigny et la Comédie-Française*, 14. Vigny also translated *Romeo and Juliet*, which was never performed, and the *Merchant of Venice*, which was only performed after his death.

<sup>1065</sup> Morgan, *France in 1829-30*, 79.

<sup>1066</sup> Morgan, *La France par Lady Morgan*, 90.

France, classicists and romantics alike defined romanticism as not just novel, but as particular.<sup>1067</sup> Romanticism, for the French, dispensed with classicist conventions in favor of historical epics and art that spoke to the truth of the current age. French conceptions of romanticism as historically novel, rather than a manifestation of the spirit of novelty, grew out of the French context, and that context inflected its content. The debate over the nature of romanticism, replicated in scholarship on romanticism, reveals its contingency. In France, classicists and romantics alike, interpreted romanticism as a new literary school founded in the recent past, because of the particular features of French society, including the existence of a rival theatrical school that was both based on a set of universalist rules and ideas, and had been founded in a specific historical moment, the France of Louis XIV, with which it was indelibly associated. In a state dealing with a revolutionary legacy in the context of a counter-revolutionary regime, that particular historical moment represented a critical point of cultural or political reference (or, at times, a point of simultaneously cultural and political reference). But classicism also had roots in the Enlightenment and embraced a universalist aesthetic: in classicist ideology the three unities apply everywhere and in all cases to always make art better and more natural. French romanticism, interpreted as classicism's opposite and rival, must therefore embrace the particular and reject classicism's legacy, while critics' own political partisanship determined whether they located that legacy in universalism or royalism. In 1829, *la Méduse* printed a previously unpublished article originally written in response to an 1818 article in the *Mercure de France* by Benjamin Constant. In it, the author argued that the innovative spirit of the eighteenth century continued to have a profound influence on the beginning of the nineteenth. When it sought to break down prejudices in favor of enlightenment, he argued, this innovative spirit had a positive effect, but, now, it had wrong-

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<sup>1067</sup> One notable exception to this general trend: Stendhal. As noted above, in *Racine et Shakespeare* Stendhal argued that Molière, as an innovator, was a romantic of his age. Indeed, "ALL GREAT WRITERS WERE ROMANTICS OF THEIR TIME. It is only a century after their deaths, it is only those who copy them instead of opening their eyes and imitating nature who are classicists." While Stendhal's language differed, his argument is consistent with romantic insistence that they had no issues with the genius of Racine, only with those who copied him. Stendhal, *Racine et Shakespeare, n° II, ou Réponse au manifeste contre le romantisme prononcé par M. Auger dans une séance solennelle de l'Institut*, 40. "TOUS LES GRAND ÉCRIVAINS ONT ÉTÉ ROMANTIQUES DE LEUR TEMPS. C'est un siècle après leur mort, les gens qui les copient au lieu d'ouvrir les yeux et d'imiter la nature, qui sont classiques"

headedly started to go after the respected, venerated, and natural – namely the theatre of the era of Louis XIV.<sup>1068</sup> This new spirit of innovation went after Boileau, Corneille, and Racine simply “because lady Morgan and Schlegel are unmoved by the charms of his divine poetics, they conclude that it is not worth much.”<sup>1069</sup> The author feared that left to its own devices this innovative spirit would destroy French theatre and replace its favored comedies and tragedies with English and German monstrosities.<sup>1070</sup> He called for the innovators to renounce their project, and to leave historical drama and romantic literature to other countries, so that France could remain where it always had been – on the summit of the *Parnasse*.<sup>1071</sup>

To classicists, romantic success reflected a denunciation of France. Lady Morgan's classicist friend, who measured literary success by the theatre, believed that romanticism achieved that success not on its own merits, but because of the betrayal of the Comédie Française, the pernicious actions of journalists, and the formulaic, mechanically-produced, ‘well-made plays’ of Eugène Scribe. When Lady Morgan asked him why the Théâtre Français played romantic theatre he said that they had “given up the altars of Corneille and Racine to the worship of the golden calf of romanticism.”<sup>1072</sup>

### **The Battle of *Hernani***

*Hernani* debuted at the Théâtre Français on 25 February 1830. It sold out in advance and young artists and painters flocked to Hugo to try to get tickets to its first performance. Victor Hugo, only 28 years old, handcrafted personalized tickets for these young men out of red paper, and distributed them to his friends to redistribute to their friends. These young romantics, including Théophile Gauthier, Gerard de Nerval, Edouard Thierry, Hector Berlioz, and Gustave Planche, took up the mantle of the *bataille romantique* at Hugo's own urging. He said to them “I put my play in your hands, and in your hands alone. The fight that will take place at *Hernani* is

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<sup>1068</sup> “Partie Littéraire: De la littérature dramatique en France, et particulièrement du théâtre français et du théâtre étranger,” *La Méduse, journal mensuel, royaliste, politique et littéraire* no 1 (19 November 1829): 5.

<sup>1069</sup> Ibid. “Parce que lady Morgan et M. de Schlegel sont insensibles au charme de sa divine poésie, il s'ensuit de là qu'elle ne vaut pas grand chose.”

<sup>1070</sup> Ibid., 6.

<sup>1071</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1072</sup> Morgan, *France in 1829-30*, 94.

one of ideas and of progress. It is a common struggle. We will fight that old crenelated closed-off literature . . . This siege is the battle of the old world and the new world, and we are all of the new world.”<sup>1073</sup>

On the night of the performance people began lining up two hours in advance to get access to the fifty tickets reserved for the parterre. The police had to intervene with those angry patrons sent away ticketless. Hugo instructed the young romantics with their personalized tickets to enter via a side door that would be locked at 3pm, and to remain inside the theatre until the performance. They showed up dressed in bizarre costumes, including old-fashioned hats and Spanish coats and ribbons. Some, including Théophile Gauthier, wore Robbespierrean vests. Knowing they had a long wait, they came prepared with bread, cheese, and apples – any food they could carry in their pockets.<sup>1074</sup> The jewels, silk and lace of the wealthy classicists contrasted with the eclectic attire of the romantic youth. Where the former represented staid thinking and retrograde ideas, the latter represented intelligence and progress.<sup>1075</sup> The loud conversation and noises stopped once the curtain rose. During the third act someone yelled “Vive les femmes!” and slowly the noise level in the theatre began to rise. A classicist whistled, and the young romantics responded in kind with loud cheers until the sounds of whistles died out.<sup>1076</sup> The *Gazette littéraire*

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<sup>1073</sup> Adèle Hugo, *Victor Hugo raconté* (Paris: Plon, 1985), 459. The description of *Hernani*'s first performance comes from Victor Hugo's memoirs, as told to his wife Adèle. While earlier editions of these memoirs, usually published under the title *Victor Hugo raconté par un témoin de sa vie*, were altered before publication, this 1985 edition published by Plon is reconstructed from the original manuscript. “Je remets ma pièce entre vos mains, entre vos mains seules. La bataille qui va s'engager à *Hernani* est celle des idées, celles du progrès. C'est une lutte en commun. Nous allons combattre cette vieille littérature crénelée, verrouillée. Saisissons-nous de ce drapeau usé hissé sur ces murs vermoulus et jetons bas cet oripeau. Ce siège est la lutte de l'ancien monde et du nouveau monde, nous sommes tous du monde nouveau.”

<sup>1074</sup> Ibid., 462.

<sup>1075</sup> Ibid., 464.

<sup>1076</sup> Ibid., 464-466.; The disruptions during performances of *Hernani* were all the more significant, because French theatre audiences were generally silent (in contrast to British audiences at this time). Planta notes this in his travel guide, and in the English essayist William Hazlitt's account of his trip to Paris in 1824 he wrote that in the Parisian theatre “the order, the attention, the decorum were such as would shame any London audience. The attention was more like that of a learned society to a lecture on some scientific subject, than of a promiscuous crowd collected together merely for amusement, and to pass away an idle hour.” Lady Morgan observed these same highly attentive French theatre audiences. She wrote: “The theatres of other countries assemble *spectators*, but an *audience* is only to be found in a French theatre. – Through the whole five acts attention never flagged for a moment; not an eye was averted – not an ear unattending: every one seemed to have the play by heart, and every one attended, as if they had never seen it



wrote that young romantics made it clear they would accept no interruption of the play except cheers,<sup>1077</sup> in effect censoring any negative reactions to the play by drowning them out. The play finished to loud cheers, and the announcement of the author's name was "crushed by applause."<sup>1078</sup> The *Journal des débats* reported *Hernani* a "brilliant success."<sup>1079</sup> In this moment, young, new romanticism triumphed over the classicism of old.

In 1838, when the Théâtre Français reprised *Hernani*, Théophile Gauthier recalled in *la Presse* that never before had a play produced so much noise as this work had in 1830, when it became the battleground for the conflict between romantics and classicists.<sup>1080</sup> The *Journal des débats* discussed it on two separate occasions in the week before it played. The first article, from 24 February, announced *Hernani* would play the following Thursday and gave an account of Hugo's history with the censor. The second, published the next day, gave a brief account of Carlos V, whose fictionalized counterpart appeared in *Hernani*. In the first article the journalist noted that in 1829 the Français had intended to put on Hugo's *Marion Delorme*,<sup>1081</sup> but Hugo apparently requested that *Marion Delorme* not be submitted to the commission of censors. As men of letters and partisans of classicism, the censors represented Hugo's "natural enemies."<sup>1082</sup> Instead, he asked that the play be submitted only to Martignac.<sup>1083</sup> The minister allowed Hugo to select a single censor to examine the play, and that censor apparently took exception to Hugo's belief that his work would not be fairly evaluated. Theatre censors, the censor is said to have insisted, were not men of letters when doing their jobs. They eliminated political allusions, but

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before. For myself, it was with the greatest difficulty and only, I believe, owing to the exquisite acting of Talma, and Mademoiselle George, that I could sit it out." The silent audience, however, was a fairly recent phenomenon, which James Johnson explores in his *Listening in Paris*. Planta, *New Picture of Paris*, 1827, 420; Hazlitt, *Notes of a Journey Through France and Italy*, 59; Morgan, *France*, 68; James H. Johnson, *Listening in Paris: A Cultural History* (University of California Press, 1994).

<sup>1077</sup> "Théâtre-Français, Première représentation de *Hernani*," *Gazette littéraire, revue française et étrangère de la littérature, des sciences, des beaux-arts* (4 March 1830): 221.

<sup>1078</sup> "Hernani," *Journal des débats politiques et littéraires* (27 February 1830): 3.

<sup>1079</sup> *Journal des débats politiques et littéraires* (26 February 1830): 1.

<sup>1080</sup> Théophile Gauthier, "Théâtre Français: Reprise d'*Hernani*," *La Presse* (22 January 1838): 1.

<sup>1081</sup> *Marion Delorme* would be performed two years later, in 1831.

<sup>1082</sup> "Hernani," *Le Journal des débats politiques et littéraires* (24 February 1830): 3.

<sup>1083</sup> Ibid.

must never take into account “the literary color of the work they are censoring.”<sup>1084</sup> Despite this pronouncement, he proscribed *Marion Delorme*. As discussed earlier in this chapter, the censors cared deeply about *Hernani*’s romanticism. When Hugo submitted *Hernani* to the censor, although apparently only two copies of the manuscript existed (one with the theatre and the other at the censor) somehow counterfeit and unauthorized copies of the play began circulating, and the public believed the censor had leaked the play. *Le Moniteur* later denied that the censor had been involved.<sup>1085</sup> Regardless, the circulation of those manuscripts, and the lack of secrecy surrounding the censorship process, helped stir passions before the play even opened. The press surrounding *Hernani*, both positive and negative, meant that its first audience went into the play with certain expectations.

Whereas the romantic press reported on *Cromwell* and *Henri III* as evidence of romanticism’s rise, they interpreted *Hernani* as its triumph, despite the fact that the Académie Française still supported classicism. Philippe de Ségur’s induction to the Académie Française in July of 1830, Charles Lautour-Mézeray’s journal *la Mode* reported, included two speeches against romanticism. *La Mode* asked why l’Académie continued in this useless opposition to literary reform that they could not stop. The madness of power, *la Mode* continued, made the Académie think they could go up against Victor Hugo and its comrades, because it would only take a second *Hernani* to make the vogue of Racine a thing of the past.<sup>1086</sup>

Classicists also recognized the importance of the play, and its role in changes to theatrical practice. Duviquet, literary critic for the *Journal des débats*, reviewed not only the first performance of *Hernani*, but also its second. In both he declared the play to be a great success. In his first, he noted that *Hernani* could not properly be characterized as a comedy or a tragedy, but rather a drama, a new and increasingly popular genre.<sup>1087</sup> The *Gazette littéraire*, even as it fully rejected the romanticism’s rhetoric of originality, pointing to all the ways it imitated, and questioned whether the theatre needed to be a locus of public debate and instruction in a society

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<sup>1084</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1085</sup> *Journal des débats politiques et littéraires* (28 February 1830): 1.

<sup>1086</sup> “Revue et causeries du monde,” *La Mode, revue des modes, galerie des mœurs, album des salons* (9 July 1830): 21.

<sup>1087</sup> “Hernani,” *Journal des débats politiques et littéraires* (27 February 1830): 1.

with press freedom and vibrant intellectual life, recognized Hugo's talent and his success.<sup>1088</sup> No one denied *Hernani*'s success as a play. The play performed 54 times,<sup>1089</sup> often several performances a week, even after the July Revolution. It continued to enjoy success and draw large crowds,<sup>1090</sup> and like *Henri III* would eventually play in other cities, like Fontainebleau.<sup>1091</sup>

But why *Hernani*? It was not the first romantic play performed at the Théâtre Français – as Hugo himself points out in his remembrance of *Hernani* Dumas' *Henri III* opened there a year earlier on 11 February 1829, and was both successful and mostly uncontroversial. Likely a number of factors account for its success and its place in romantic mythology, including Hugo's very public disavowal of royalism in favor of liberalism in the preface to *Cromwell*, and his insistence that romanticism both granted liberty from classicism rules, and the expressed the literature of political liberalism. He reinforced that position in the preface to *Hernani*. He wrote, "*Ultras* of all types, classicists or monarchists, will unsuccessfully try to rebuild the *ancien régime* in all its pieces, society and literature, every progress of the country, every development of minds, every step of liberty will crumble all that they have developed. And, definitively, all of their efforts at reaction will prove useless."<sup>1092</sup> Moreover, the production of *Hernani* and the performance of the young romantics at it, presented a logical next step for Hugo after *Cromwell* and after the success of *Henri III*. Hugo used *Cromwell* to demonstrate that true romantic theatre, that accurately portrayed its historical context and broke with the three unities in favor of an adherence to truth, was theoretically possible. *Hernani* demonstrated both that the theory was practically applicable, and that romantic theatre could succeed in the face of classicist entrenchment, and therefore surpass traditional French theatre. Moreover, *Hernani* came at the end of a protracted public debate and struggle over the state of Parisian theatre and the role of

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<sup>1088</sup> "Hernani," *Gazette littéraire, revue française et étrangère de la littérature, des sciences, des beaux-arts* (4 March 1830): 221-223.

<sup>1089</sup> Hugo, *Victor Hugo raconté*, 477.

<sup>1090</sup> *Journal des débats politiques et littéraires* (20 March 1830): 1.; *Journal des débats politiques et littéraires* (28 June 1830)

<sup>1091</sup> *Journal des débats politiques et littéraires* (27 April 1830)

<sup>1092</sup> "Les *ultras* de tout genre, classiques ou monarchiques, auront beau se prêter secours pour refaire l'ancien régime de toutes pièces, société et littérature, chaque progrès du pays, chaque développement des intelligences, chaque pas de la liberté fera crouler tout ce qu'ils auront échafaudé. Et, en définitive, leurs efforts de réaction auront été utiles." Victor Hugo, *Hernani*, ed. James D. Bruner (New York: American Book Company, 1906).

romanticism in that theatre. *Hernani*'s meaning came across clearly to anyone paying attention, or anyone reading the press about it, because it built upon a decade of playwrights, journalists, censors, actors and audiences working together to produce the narrative, the rhetoric and the spectacle of the *bataille romantique*

The spectacle of *Hernani* brought the *bataille romantique* to the theatre in a new way. The play enacted the romantic-classicist conflict, not through its plot, but through the behavior of the audience members. The first performance of *Hernani* should be interpreted as a kind of *bataille romantique* performance piece, orchestrated by Victor Hugo and carried out by the young romantics of Restoration Paris. But the power of that performance echoed and multiplied as the press retold the story, both at the time and over the years, so much so that to invoke *Hernani* invokes the performance of romanticism.

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The cultural significance of theatre and particularly classicist theatre ensured that the romantic-classicist conflict would unroll on the Parisian stage and in its theatrical press. The quality of that conflict was determined, therefore, by the various forces that worked together to produce and interpret Parisian theatre. This included not just playwrights and actors, but also theatre administrators, censors, journalists, and theatre audiences. But the *bataille romantique* in the theatre was also shaped by the political, social, and cultural realities of Restoration Paris, and by the symbolic struggle between revolution and counter-revolution that characterized the era. Because the French interpreted romanticism as historically new and classicism as founded at the apex of the ancien régime, the struggle between romantic and classicist theatre became part of and contributed to a larger struggle between the old and new elements of Restoration life. Even when romantics were royalists and classicists were liberals, as they often were, they were still searching for something novel and for something traditional, respectively, to hold on to. It is easy to see how the novelty of romanticism would appeal to those who wanted to build a new France deeply founded on the traditions of the old, and how it would appeal to those who sought a liberalization of more than just the rules governing theatre. It is also understandable that classicism, with its historical foundation but universalist claims would appeal to both the inheritors

of the Enlightenment and the reactionary supporters of ultra-royalism. The theatre, and the theatre press, even when it was highly partisan, tried to work toward some sort of reconciliation for these struggles – tried to find some way for France to deal with its revolutionary and counter-revolutionary histories.

We now know that the triumph of romanticism in the theatre with *Hernani* would come on the heels of an, albeit temporary, revolutionary triumph. The July revolution was not without its theatre, and not without its romanticism. In July of 1830, the audience, and other people in the Paris Opera house, including guards and stage hands, took up the hero's cry of "Independence or Death" during a rehearsal of Rossini's *William Tell*, and joined the revolution in the streets.<sup>1093</sup> *William Tell*, Rossini's last opera, was inspired by Friedrich Schiller's play of the same name, and its performance in Paris marked the triumph of romantic opera, and of *rossinisme*, just as *Hernani* marked the triumph of romantic theatre.<sup>1094</sup>

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<sup>1093</sup> Goldstein, *The Frightful Stage*, 81.

<sup>1094</sup> Rossini proved very popular in Paris, especially after he moved there in 1823, but a contingent of anti-rossinistes who opposed his opera on patriotic grounds rose up to oppose that popularity: Rossini was not French, even if the libretti to his operas sometimes was. William Weber demonstrates the role the theatrical press played in anti-rossinisme and suggests the two contingents found a sort of consensus by the end of the period. William Weber, "La critique patriotique de *Rossinisme* donnée par journaux quasi-libéraux dans les années 1820," in *Presse et opéra en France, 1750-1850 : Croisements, échanges, représentations*, Colloque 13-15 November 2014, University of Lyon, to be published on [www.medias19.org](http://www.medias19.org).

## EPILOGUE: THE JULY REVOLUTION AND THE LEGACY OF ROMANTICISM

The July Revolution took place over the course of three hot days in July of 1830. On Monday, July 26<sup>th</sup> the pro-ministerial newspaper *le Moniteur* published Charles X's Four Ordinances, which eliminated freedom of the press, dissolved the chamber of deputies, and made changes to electoral laws in order to disenfranchise the middle class, whom the government believed were a liberal stronghold. Several journalists band together and vowed to continue printing, despite the ordinance against it. Revolution began the next day. By 29 July, the revolutionaries began putting together a provisional government, and on 2 August, Charles X abdicated in favor of his grandson. One week later, the Chamber of Deputies instead put Louis-Philippe, duc d'Orléans, and Charles X's cousin, on the throne. Louis-Philippe, who took the title King of the French, instead of King of France, and was considered a liberal and pro-revolutionary King, would rule France until he himself was deposed by the revolutions of 1848.

But the story of the Revolution really begins in August 1829, when the ultra-royalist Polignac ministry came to power. Knowing that the majority of the legislature would not support their ultra-royalist position, they delayed calling the Chamber of Deputies to session for as long as possible – until March 1830. In his speech from the throne opening the new session of the legislature, Charles X outlined some innocuous domestic policies, described France's planned invasion of Algiers, and then warned the chamber not to go against his ministry, using language that echoed Louis XVI's in his address to the Estates General. This speech caused significant controversy and in response the chamber drafted an address saying that the King should only choose ministers responsible to the chamber (which Polignac certainly was not), and then a majority of the chamber voted in support of that address. In response, instead of dismissing his ministers, the King dissolved the Chamber and postponed elections until September, to give the government as much time as possible to control the electoral process. That July they enacted the Four Ordinances.<sup>1095</sup>

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<sup>1095</sup> For a concise and highly readable description of the run up to the Revolution see Munro Price, *The Perilous Crown: France between Revolutions, 1814-1848* (London: Macmillan, 2007), 126–50.

Like other ministries in the Restoration, the Polignac ministry saw in the press a serious threat to their particular vision of France. They also saw the free press as a threat to their electoral success. Before enacting the four ordinances, the members of the ministry wrote a report to Charles X outlining their plans. The report suggested that there was no way for Charles X's monarchy to continue if the press continued unchecked. They insisted that the press "always wanted to uproot the last germ of religious sentiment from the heart of the people," and that by attacking faith the press corrupted public morality. They insisted that "no force" could resist the power of the press and that anywhere the press was unshackled it caused disruption. We only need to look at the last fifteen years, Polignac and his ministers contended, to see evidence of that, and to see the influence it has had on the public and on elections, warning that the unfettered press would necessarily mean revolution.<sup>1096</sup> Regular censorship measures are not enough, the report continues, and the press is a danger to public safety. The report also argues that article 8 of the Charter does not enshrine freedom of the press, and that the press law of 1814 should be considered as a kind of amendment to article 8.<sup>1097</sup> The solution, they argued, was also in the Charter – in article 14, which the report argued invested the King with the power to act outside the law (although, they insisted, in accordance with the charter).<sup>1098</sup>

Outcry against the Four Ordinances was as much about their actual content as it was about the larger issue of the King acting outside the law. The revolutionaries did not believe that the charter gave the King the right to ignore it or to place himself above the law. Freedom of the press, which had been a significant political issue throughout the Restoration, was therefore only

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<sup>1096</sup> "Documens officiels: Rapport au Roi," *Revue des deux mondes, journal des voyages, de l'histoire, de la philosophie, de la littérature, des sciences et des arts* 2, no 3 (July 1830): 136-137. "Elle veut, elle voudra toujours déraciner dans le coeur des peuples jusqu'au dernier germe des sentimens religieux"

<sup>1097</sup> *Ibid.*, 138.

<sup>1098</sup> *Ibid.*, 139. The text of article 14 reads: "The King is the supreme head of State, he commands the armed forces and the navy, declares war, makes treaties of peace, alliance, and commerce, appoints all public administrators and makes the necessary regulations and ordinances for the execution of the laws and the security of the state." "Assemblée Nationale - Charte Constitutionnelle Du 4 Juin 1814." "Le roi est le chef suprême de l'Etat, il commande les forces de terre et de mer, déclare la guerre, fait les traités de paix, d'alliance et de commerce, nomme à tous les emplois d'administration publique, et fait les règlements et ordonnances nécessaires pour l'exécution des lois et la sûreté de l'Etat."

one aspect of a larger debate about constitutionalism, but the press also played an important role in the Revolution, and in its immediate aftermath.

The July Revolution took place on the streets and in the pages of the periodical and newspaper press. Daniel L. Rader argues that the press had a significant impact in the lead up to Revolution, and also that it did much to shape the nature of the revolution and the regime that would follow. Rader argues, for example, that the newspaper *le National's* decision to post a placard calling for Louis-Philippe to replace Charles X helped to popularize the idea of replacing one constitutional monarchy with another.<sup>1099</sup> Some other key events of the Revolution also took place at *le National's* office. *Le National*, a relatively new paper directed by future French president Adolphe Thiers, was the first to call for action against the ordinances. He argued that in this situation, where the regime had broken the law and itself become illegal, the law no longer had to be obeyed. He wrote that while the press could not do the work of an illegally suppressed Chamber of Deputies, it could call on the Deputies to push back against its suppression, even though it too would be in violation of the laws. The Chamber, he argued, had just as much a right to violate the law suppressing it as the press.<sup>1100</sup> Forty-eight journalists from eleven newspapers signed on to Thiers' protest, which they then set out to publish as quickly as possible.<sup>1101</sup>

The press did important work spreading the news of Revolution, sharing information, and crafting a narrative for the Revolution. *Le Revue des deux mondes*, which published monthly, noted in their July 1830 issue that because their monthly journal appeared a full week after the revolution had taken place, there was nothing left for them to say that had not already been said.<sup>1102</sup> Even those papers that did not continue to publish despite the ordinance took up the cause of spreading information about the Revolution as soon as possible. After pausing

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<sup>1099</sup> Rader, *Journalists and the July Revolution in France*, 244.

<sup>1100</sup> "Organisation et progrès de la résistance," *Revue des deux mondes, journal des voyages, de l'histoire, de la philosophie, de la littérature, des sciences et des arts* 2, no 3 (July 1830): 148–149.

<sup>1101</sup> Price, *The Perilous Crown*, 142.

<sup>1102</sup> They instead decided to reprint all the important documents related to the revolution, beginning with the report on the suppression of the Charter, and followed by the four ordinances themselves, and Thiers' letter of protest, as well as other newspaper accounts of events of the Revolution. "Révolution française de juillet 1830," *Revue des deux mondes, journal des voyages, de l'histoire, de la philosophie, de la littérature, des sciences et des arts* 2, no 3 (July 1830): 131–147; "Organisation et progrès de la résistance," 148.



publication for two days, *le Journal des débats* dedicated its 29 July issue, only a page long, to a reproduction of the “Protestations des députés” and a recounting of the unfolding of Revolution.<sup>1103</sup> The next day it again published only news of the Revolution, including a notice about a grave for the 80 or so people who had died in the violence in Paris; their funerary inscription read “To the French who died for liberty!”<sup>1104</sup>

While the Revolution seemed like a significant shift for French society and politics, and like the triumph of liberty, the July Monarchy continued on broadly the same path forged by the Restoration. The tension between revolution and counter-revolution shaped politics and culture in the July Monarchy as much as in the Restoration. Historians Munro Price and Philip Mansel have argued that the Restoration and July Monarchy are best conceived as one era: monarchies bookended by Napoleons, by revolutions, and by empires.<sup>1105</sup> While recognizing the ways in which the July Monarchy was more liberal and more democratic than the Restoration, they suggest that there is more continuity between the two eras than difference. The basics of French government all carried over from one regime to the next, including the charter, which was modified but not discarded. Price argues that “1830 proves not the system’s weakness, but its resilience; it emerged from the revolution on firmer foundations, to reach its apogee under Louis-Philippe.”<sup>1106</sup> From the perspective of both the literary press and the romantic-classicist conflict there is much to recommend this approach. There are significant continuities between the Restoration and July monarchy with respect to both the development of romanticism and the production of the literary press. It is not surprising that many studies of romanticism in France take *Cronwell* or *Hernani* as romanticism’s starting point, and so focus on the period after 1828 or 1830 when romanticism was more or less fully formed as a movement and also seemed to winning its conflict with classicism, and taking the period from 1814-1848 as a whole would underscore the broader arc of romanticism’s formation and ascendancy. Moreover, several of the important papers and journals that published under the Restoration continued to do so in the July

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<sup>1103</sup> *Journal des débats* (29 July 1830).

<sup>1104</sup> *Journal des débats* (30 July 1830), 1. “Aux français mort pour la liberté!”

<sup>1105</sup> Price, *The Perilous Crown*; Philip Mansel, *Paris between Empires, 1814-1852* (London: John Murray, 2001).

<sup>1106</sup> Price, *The Perilous Crown*, 2.

Revolution. This is particularly true of the papers founded in the last years of the Restoration – like *Revue de Paris* (1828–1845), and *Revue des deux-mondes* (1829–1971) – but also of long lasting periodicals, like *Journal des débats* (1814–1944).<sup>1107</sup>

The processes and changes that began in the Restoration only continued through the July Monarchy. Journalists turned to advertising with increasing frequency, and print continued to commercialize. As lithography became more common and more affordable, and with the (temporary) elimination of censorship on caricatures, publishers began to produce illustrated periodicals, and artists produced political caricatures to critique the regime. Printers took greater advantage of new technologies to produce more books and periodicals at lower costs. The number of periodicals and their readership also grew, and romanticism became increasingly popular. James Smith Allen's study of popular romantic books demonstrates a clear increase in romanticism's popularity throughout the 1830s. Similarly, Martin Lyons' study of the best-sellers of nineteenth-century France shows that romantic books made up a larger and larger percentage of the most printed books up through 1840.<sup>1108</sup> This increase in the sale of romantic books is attributable not only to their growing popularity, but also to romanticism's shift toward the novel as their genre of choice. Victor Hugo published his first novel in 1822, but wrote his most famous novels, including the very popular *Notre-Dame de Paris*, in the 1830s. Stendhal published *le Rouge et le Noir* in 1830, and Théophile Gautier wrote *Mademoiselle de Maupin* in 1835. Alfred de Musset wrote his most famous novel *la Confession d'un enfant du siècle* in 1836.

The theatre continued to play *Hernani*, and premiered Hugo's *Marion Delorme*, which had been censored under the Restoration, in 1831, and his *le Roi s'amuse* in 1832. And although Louis-Philippe initially promised no censorship, the 1835 "September laws" significantly limited

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<sup>1107</sup> The *Débats* took on the name it had during and after the Restoration – *Journal des débats politiques et littéraire* in 1814, but it was really the continuation of the earlier papers

<sup>1108</sup> Lyons argues that Victor Hugo and Walter Scott were the most popular romantic authors – but also notes the success of Lamartine's poetry and the frequent reprinting of Alfred de Vigny's *Cinq-Mars*, which went through 9 editions between 1826 and 1846, which Lyons contends meant 16 to 20 000 printed. For comparison, in the same period between 1846 and 1850, La Fontaine's *Fables*, a perennial bestseller, went through 26 editions and an estimated 80 to 100 000 copies printed. Lyons, *Reading Culture and Writing Practices in Nineteenth-Century France*, 20–27, 33.

freedom of the press, theatre, and caricature.<sup>1109</sup> The *cénacle de Notre-Dame-des-Champs* ended in 1830, but the practice of *cénacles* persisted throughout the nineteenth century,<sup>1110</sup> and continued to exist alongside older forms of literary sociability. Virginie Ancelot continued to hold her salon in hotel de la Rochefoucauld, although she noted a number of changes in Paris immediately after the Revolution – aristocratic families moved away, people sold their businesses, and royalists rioted. In the face of that discord and uncertainty it did not seem possible to meet with friends in order to enjoy oneself, and she remembered that many of the salons of the Restoration stopped meeting. But she noted “it was still morning for me and my young friends.”<sup>1111</sup> Adversity, she suggested, only made her stronger.

The *bataille romantique* and the polarization of literary camps also continued. In December 1830, François-Joseph Grille published a satirical dialogue called *la Jeune romantique, ou la bascule littéraire* (*The Young Romantic, or the literary turn*), which looked much like the *bataille romantique* theatre of the mid-1820s. It featured a similar cast of characters, including romantic and classicist rivals and booksellers, a conflict over literature, over business, a love triangle, and it ended with a the promise of a wedding.<sup>1112</sup> In 1835, the New York journal *The American Monthly Magazine* noticed that “literary reputation has become a sort of monopoly in France since the Revolution.” They laid the blame for this on the periodical press and the insular sociability it engendered. They wrote: “each journal has its club, its writers, its favorites, and its creatures; all within its particular circle are flattered and eulogized, while the simple public are often made to believe in the existence of superior merit, where in truth there is nothing to support

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<sup>1109</sup> Goldstein, *The Frightful Stage*, 93.

<sup>1110</sup> For more on *cénacles* during and after the romantic period see Anthony Glinoe and Vincent Laisney, *L'âge des cénacles: confraternités littéraires et artistiques au XIXe siècle* (Paris: Fayard, 2013).

<sup>1111</sup> Ancelot, *Un salon de Paris*, 63.

<sup>1112</sup> Unlike the *bataille romantique* plays, however, *la Jeune romantique* presented a clear preference for romanticism, and the romantic protagonist's play finds *Hernani*-like success. And the compromise between the romantic protagonist and the father of his future bride was more begrudging. The father finally agrees to let him marry his daughter but remarks: “Boileau, close your eyes!” (79). François-Joseph Grille, *Le Jeune romantique, ou la Bascule littéraire, tableau satirique en 5 parties et en vers* (Paris: Levavasseur, 1830).

such a belief.<sup>1113</sup> Despite romanticism's increasing popularity, classicist opposition to the "new literature" continued. Between 1833 and 1834 a journal titled *l'Anti-romantique*, which wrote things like "these men prefer in literature a stabbing or the swing of an axe to the harmonious expression of a true sentiment,"<sup>1114</sup> published 58 issues. And this literary conflict remained a site for political conflict by other means. As the publisher's preface to *le Jeune romantique* argued, the poet hates despotism in all its forms; "he fights it in politics just as he attacks it in literature."<sup>1115</sup> But, the preface continued, while the political conflict resulted in sorrow, perhaps the poet would have better luck fighting despotism in literature, perhaps that would bring him joy.<sup>1116</sup>

In 1830 the Académie des Jeux-Floraux announced that their essay contest query would be, "Was it by imitation or invention that French literature has made the most progress?"<sup>1117</sup> This question gets to the heart of the *bataille romantique* – to the classicists romantics imitated foreign literary forms and invented new literary conventions, and to the romantics classicists imitated old literary forms, which were not universal or natural, but invented by people. Classicists saw themselves as maintaining a tradition, and following rational universal principles. Romantics saw themselves as reinvigorating stale art and connecting more fully with reality. The dichotomy of invention and imitation also suggests the central tension of Restoration politics. Is it by invention or by imitation that we can build the best society?

This same tension, between old and new, between tradition and innovation, did not begin with the Restoration (as the quarrel of the ancients and the moderns attests), nor did it end with it. The *bataille romantique* continued into the July monarchy and beyond, and continued to help shape debates about the nature of society and political culture. Moreover, romanticism has proved an excellent foil for political conflicts throughout modern French history. Even in its origins

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<sup>1113</sup> "The Dramatic Genius of Eugène Scribe," *The American Monthly Magazine* 4 (New York: Monson Bancroft, 1835): 30.

<sup>1114</sup> Quoted in Berthier, *La presse littéraire et dramatique au début de la monarchie de juillet (1830-1836)*, 199.

<sup>1115</sup> Grille, *Le Jeune romantique, ou la Bascule littéraire, tableau satirique en 5 parties et en vers*, viii.

<sup>1116</sup> *Ibid.*, vii.

<sup>1117</sup> *Revue des deux mondes, journal des voyages, de l'histoire, de la philosophie, de la littérature, des sciences et des arts* 2, no 3 (July 1830): 419. "Est-ce par l'imitation ou par l'invention que la littérature française a fait le plus de progrès?"

romanticism proved compatible with both royalist and liberal (and later socialist) political ideologies, and its denouncers on both sides of their political spectrum used their anti-romanticism as a tool for their politics. Romanticism galvanized a strong protective impulse among its detractors. The quarrel of the ancients and the moderns, along with literary criticism and the development of the idea of taste in the eighteenth century, had done much to establish what we now call French classicism as the canon of French culture, and the perceived threat of romanticism to that canon caused a panic. When so much about France had changed and was changing, it is understandable that some people wanted to hold fast to something they perceived as both quintessentially French and fundamentally unimpeachable, for who, they wondered, could doubt the genius of Racine? (It is equally understandable that others felt the changed world required changed art.) In that context, those who doubted Racine's genius became unpatriotic traitors who, in their attempts to popularize new literary forms, were trying to destroy France.

The strength of that narrative, as well as its potential political malleability, means we have seen echoes and reverberations of it time and again. As Claude Millet and the contributing scholars demonstrate in the edited volume *Politiques antiromantiques*, political actors have continued to mobilize anti-romanticism to advance both liberal and conservative positions. For example, Franck Laurent argues that in debates about colonialism in Algeria both anti-colonialists and pro-colonialists invoked a critique of romantic exoticism in support of their cause.<sup>1118</sup> Albert Camus denounced romanticism as “reactionary,” and George Bataille argued that romanticism did not live up to its revolutionary promises, but in the Belle-époque criticism of Madame de Stael saw a rapprochement between anti-romanticism and anti-feminism.<sup>1119</sup>

Liberal anti-romanticism persisted in the July Monarchy, and also in the second republic. Under the July Monarchy, some centrist and liberal Deputies complained of the “literary,” “lyrical,” or “romantic” tendency in political discussion. While in the Restoration literary critics sought to protect literature from the corrupting influence of politics, in the 1830s and 40s, François Guizot

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<sup>1118</sup> Franck Lauren, “L’Antiromantisme En Situation Coloniale: Le Cas Algérien,” in *Politiques Antiromantiques*, ed. Claude Millet, *Études Romantiques et Dix-Neuviémistes* 23 (Paris: Classiques Garnier, 2012), 125–39.

<sup>1119</sup> Claude Millet, ed., *Politiques antiromantiques*, *Études romantiques et dix-neuviémistes* 23 (Paris: Classiques Garnier, 2012), 142, 195, 105.

and Alexis de Tocqueville both argued against the corruption of politics by literature. Tocqueville accused Lamartine of confusing political oration with literature – but one was meant to find the common good, and the other to entertain.<sup>1120</sup> In the second republic, the symbolist poet Charles Baudelaire, critical of Victor Hugo, argued that the alliance of romanticism and democracy in the Revolution of 1848 was “adulterous,” insisting that romanticism did not represent literary and political progress as it claimed, but instead demagoguery and socialism.<sup>1121</sup> Also under the second republic critics of romanticism began conflating the literary ideology with the format of the roman-feuilleton and worked to suppress it as a result. Alfred-Auguste Cuvillier-Fleury argued that the roman-feuilleton, because it tried to reach a popular audience, served demagogues and socialists.<sup>1122</sup>

On the conservative side, Charles Maurras, leader of the counter-revolutionary *Action française* revived the royalist anti-romanticism of the Société des bonnes lettres, even making many of the same arguments Charles de Lacretelle made in 1823.<sup>1123</sup> Maurras tied romanticism to revolution and liberalism – it overturned the aesthetic traditions at the foundation of French nationalism, and its supposed affiliation with royalism and classicism’s with liberalism was an error of superficial understanding rectified with the passage of time.<sup>1124</sup> Around the same time that Maurras was writing, the conservative German jurist Carl Schmitt denounced German romanticism for failing to offer a substantive or useful response to the French Revolution.<sup>1125</sup> His *Politische Romantik* (1919) connected romanticism to economic liberalism (he wrote “the bearer

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<sup>1120</sup> Dominique Dupart, “L’Antilyricisme Parlementaire: Guizot, Tocqueville, Baudelaire,” in *Politiques Antiromantiques*, ed. Claude Millet, Études Romantiques et Dix-Neuviémistes 23 (Paris: Classiques Garnier, 2012), 50–51.

<sup>1121</sup> Bernard Le Drezen, “Romantisme, Antiromantisme Dans Les Débats Parlementaires et Littéraires de La Deuxième République,” in *Politiques Antiromantiques*, ed. Claude Millet, Études Romantiques et Dix-Neuviémistes 23 (Paris: Classiques Garnier, 2012), 59, 71.

<sup>1122</sup> Ibid., 69–70.

<sup>1123</sup> Bernard Degout, “Récurrence de l’antiromantisme royaliste: De Charles Maurras à la Société des Bonnes-Lettres,” in *Politiques antiromantiques*, ed. Claude Millet, Études romantiques et dix-neuviémistes 23 (Paris: Classiques Garnier, 2012), 87–88.

<sup>1124</sup> Ibid., 90–96.

<sup>1125</sup> Philip Knee, “Antiromantisme et Subjectivation de La Politique: Schmitt et Sartre,” in *Politiques Antiromantiques*, ed. Claude Millet, Études Romantiques et Dix-Neuviémistes 23 (Paris: Classiques Garnier, 2012), 173–75.

of the romantic movement is the new bourgeoisie")<sup>1126</sup> and argued that it had contributed to a depoliticization of society, by promoting pluralism and ignoring the importance of authority and unity. Schmitt himself recognized that romanticism could be a tool of both conservatism and liberalism – he called romanticism's association with reactionary politics and nationalism a paradox, since, he argued the "first romantics" called themselves revolutionaries,<sup>1127</sup> but also criticized the romantic model of organicist conservatism for its inaction and passivity, in comparison with the more active conservatism of Burke, de Maistre, and Bonald.<sup>1128</sup>

The tradition of French anti-romanticism flourishes, Millet argues, precisely because romanticism, or the spirit of romanticism, is perceived as a current and persistent threat (even if these anti-romantics often inveigh against a straw man of their own creation).<sup>1129</sup> This anxiety persists in spite of the fact that French romanticism flourished only for a few decades, and, with the clear exception of Victor Hugo, Alexandre Dumas, and Chateaubriand, few French romantics remain famous today. Yet many of the tenets of romanticism have, as its detractors feared, permeated western culture to such an extent that they are no longer immediately recognizable as romantic ideas – that new ideas result from the genius of the author, or that a work of art should be evaluated on its own merits. And the tension between revolution and counter-revolution, between tradition and invention, that we see repeated in the political and aesthetic debates of the last two hundred years, is one romantic writers and critics strove to resolve.

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<sup>1126</sup> Carl Schmitt, *Political Romanticism* (Cambridge Mass.: MIT Press, 1986), 12.

<sup>1127</sup> Ibid., 26.

<sup>1128</sup> As Philip Knee explains Schmitt defined politics as conflict between entities, rather than the conciliation of differences. Ibid., 99–122; Knee, "Antiromantisme et Subjectivation de La Politique: Schmitt et Sartre," 173.

<sup>1129</sup> Millet, *Politiques antiromantiques*, 12.

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