

Regicide and the Eloquence of Silence: The Expulsion of Manuel from the Assembly (1823) and Béranger's *Chansons nouvelles* (1825)

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ABSTRACT: This article examines the politics and esthetics of silence in the Restoration through Jacques-Antoine Manuel's 1823 speech in the Chamber of Deputies, alleged to condone regicide, and Pierre-Jean de Béranger's politically radical *Chansons nouvelles* of 1825. Although an official policy of forgetting was enshrined in the *Charte constitutionnelle* of 1814, various political forces struggled over competing memorializations of the Revolution and its central event, the execution of the King. The imposition of a narrative of expiation by the right effectively silenced the left's program of completing the Revolution. The defiant display of silence after Manuel's expulsion from the Assembly was mirrored by the public ambiguity surrounding his intimate relationship with Béranger, as well as by the ellipses marking ostensibly censored passages in Béranger's songs. Silence might mask any terrifying or scandalous secret that Manuel's opponents or Béranger's readers could imagine, as the Revolution was continued through other means.

The aesthetics of "reticence, allusion and ellipsis" (Counter 126) that characterized the Restoration were politically enshrined in the 1814 *Charte constitutionnelle*'s wish to erase from memory the history of France since the execution of Louis XVI, an event which it nonetheless did not precisely name (Rosanvallon 251). The regime's attempt to efface from public view all "symbols, rituals, and practices" of the Revolutionary and Napoleonic interregnum (Kroen 41) was countered by a desire for expiation which drove the returned ultramontane Church to elicit "public confessions for sins against God and [the] King" that had been committed during the Revolution (Kroen 77). Meanwhile, rumors circulated of conspiracies from the "dark and sullen opposition" identified with the military plots of the Carbonari or with reactionary forces "hostile to the Charte and conspiring to destroy it", led perhaps by the Jesuits (Spitzer 24, 32). Interpreting silence became necessary for the self-preservation of the regime, but also indispensable to the struggle to construct a political future for France. Silence in the Restoration was complex, shifting, multiple, in politics, in literature, and in private life; invisible complicities linked these three spheres. An examination of silences in two characteristic texts of the period,

Jacques-Antoine Manuel's 1823 speech in the Chamber of Deputies, alleged to condone regicide (*Archives* 434–39), and Pierre-Jean de Béranger's politically radical *Chansons nouvelles* of 1825, can help us understand the dangerous power silence might wield.

In the preamble of the *Charte*, Louis XVIII proclaimed a politics of forgetting: “Nous avons effacé de notre souvenir, comme nous voudrions qu'on pût les effacer de l'histoire, tous les maux qui ont affligé la patrie durant notre absence” (Rosanvallon 251). Evoking a painful memory that must be ignored, signaling a horror that must not be named, the *Charte* enshrines a terrifying absence that would haunt the Restoration. The painful memory is further specified yet still not named in Article XI of the *Charte*: “Toutes recherches des opinions et votes émis jusqu'à la restauration sont interdites” (252). The reference must have been clear to contemporaries, for whom “votant” was a well-understood euphemism for the *conventionnels* who had voted for the death of the King (Huard 289–90); the text elicits a memory it expressly forbids. As a commentator on the *Charte* observed in 1819: “[O]n est allé jusqu'à observer qu'à la différence du roi, *le monde n'avait pas promis d'oublier*, et jusqu'à prévoir que *le monde pourrait bien rompre le silence*. [...] [L]'anathème [...] retombait sur la nation presque entière” (Lanjuinais 1: 78; emphasis in original). The commentator, Lanjuinais, was a member of the Convention who had voted against the regicide; his prominent role during the Revolution in instituting national control over of the French Church (Robert 3: 579) may explain his shocked reaction to the religious condemnation of the entire nation that accompanied the Bourbons' return.

Hidden under a veil of silence, yet always obliquely present and threatening to emerge, was a memory carefully preserved yet rarely named. According to the *émigré* and ultra-royalist Clausel de Cossergues (Robert 2: 121–22): “Il est impossible à un Français de transcrire l'article

XI de la Charte sans sentir le besoin de rappeler l'horreur qu'inspira à toute la France le *parricide* commis sur la personne du meilleur des rois" (105–06, emphasis in original).

"Parricide" is a euphemism for a forbidden word nonetheless already evoked by Clausel a few pages earlier in his discussion of the law of general amnesty proposed by Louis XVIII after the Hundred Days. Moved by "l'horreur qu'inspirait à la France le forfait des régicides" (104), the *Chambre des députés*, dominated by ultra-royalists, added an amendment: "Ceux des régicides qui, au mépris d'une clémence presque sans bornes, ont voté pour l'acte additionnel ou accepté des fonctions ou emplois de l'usurpateur, et qui, par là, se sont déclarés ennemis irréconciliables de la France et du gouvernement légitime, sont exclus à perpétuité du royaume" (105). The regicides are singled out from the mass of Frenchmen who supported Bonaparte during the Hundred Days for permanent exclusion from France, defined by the amendment as necessarily a legitimate monarchy. If for Clausel "toute la France" demands with horror the exclusion of the regicides, one wonders whether anyone who publicly resists that exclusion or disavows that horror can themselves avoid being excluded. On the one hand, regicide must be forgotten and not named; on the other, it can at any time be brandished as an accusation or referenced as a threat, as it continually resurfaces in one or another telling of the history of France.

I. Manuel's Silence

When liberal politician Jacques-Antoine Manuel spoke in the Chamber of Deputies on 26 February 1823 against the invasion of Spain intended to rescue its Bourbon King from a liberal rebellion, he was interrupted in mid-sentence and shouted down by the ultra-royalists, who were convinced he was about to condone regicide. The incident has been thoroughly described elsewhere (Caron; Bonnal 376–96; Garrigues 161); it is not my purpose here to contribute new details to the history of the event, and much less to uncover the truth of exactly what Manuel

said. As Caron rightly notes, Manuel's words have been covered over in a flurry of competing versions, a plethora of interpretations (10–11). What I wish to emphasize here is how his enforced silence and the struggle to control the representation of his interrupted speech resulted in a defiant and menacing absence which could be exploited for the undermining of the regime.

The interruptions started nearly as soon as Manuel began speaking. If war was declared against Spain, he claimed, it would be in defiance of "l'avis national": "[Q]uiconque cherche avec bonne foi les intérêts de son pays, ne peut que se révolter contre le projet présenté. (*Des murmures s'élèvent*)."¹ Manuel's slippage between national interest, public opinion, and revolt sketches out a liberal political theory in resistance to the official narrative of restored stability and forgetful silence; its complex allusiveness threatens more than it directly states. Manuel is repeatedly interrupted as he attempts to reinterpret the regime's official version of history invoked to justify war, impugning Foreign Minister Chateaubriand's knowledge of diplomatic history (436), hinting that it was the British Lord Castlereagh's regret for his policy of foreign intervention that led to his suicide (436), and labeling the government of the Spanish King "atroce" (438). At this point the conservative Chamber President Ravez (*Robert* 5: 94–95) intervenes against the clamor of voices to distinguish Manuel's disrespect for a government from an attack on a sovereign, a distinction rejected by the right: "*Voix à droite*: Le gouvernement, c'est le roi" (438), to which Manuel replies: "[Si] les interrupteurs [...] avaient pris la peine de me laisser achever la phrase, ce qu'ils ne font jamais, ils auraient vu que ma critique ne s'adressait pas au souverain" (438). Manuel's insistence that he be allowed to expand, rearrange, and modify his words in order to avoid an imposed and scandalous interpretation will later cause his interrupters to deny him any right to clarification and lead to his silence.

According to Manuel, a foreign invasion would only enflame the passions at play in Spain. If it is true, he says, that Ferdinand is a prisoner in danger of losing his life, France must not intervene:

Il faut promptement empêcher qu'un troisième exemple ne vienne offrir un code de jurisprudence à l'usage des peuples contre les rois. [...] Ne renouvelez pas les circonstances qui précisément ont conduit à l'échafaud ceux pour qui vous témoignez en ce moment un si vif intérêt, et j'oserai dire un aussi légitime intérêt. [...] Avez-vous oublié, Messieurs, que c'est parce que les puissances étrangères étaient venues en France, que Louis XVI a été précipité... (*Murmures à droite*). (438)

Manuel counteracts historical forgetfulness in order to prevent a historical return of an event he does not name. Underneath his complex circumlocution, where “people” stands against legitimacy, and where a third example of an unspecified punishment might raise precedent to the status of a code, lies an obscure threat that is almost silenced by the noisy reaction of the Chamber.

Manuel continues. The analogy, he says is clear: the Stuarts were lost because they rejected the public opinion of the nation to depend on foreign powers; as for the French royal family: “Ai-je besoin de dire que le moment où les dangers de la famille royale en France sont devenus plus graves, c'est lorsque la France... la France révolutionnaire a senti qu'elle avait besoin de se défendre par une forme nouvelle, par une énergie toute nouvelle...” (439). The outcry in the Chamber did not allow him to complete his phrase, and he was accused of condoning regicide.

At least that is the official version of the incident as recounted in the *Archives parlementaires*. But exactly what Manuel said is unclear. According to the letter he published the

next day in the *Moniteur universel* (Manuel) and which was inserted in the proceedings of the Chamber and thus in the *Archives*, what he said was: “[A]lors la France révolutionnaire, sentant le besoin de se défendre avec des forces et une énergie nouvelles...”²: *forces*, not *forme*, although it was the word *énergie* that had especially offended the Chamber president: “[P]arlant d’un évènement qui a fait couler les larmes de toute la France, et qui sera pour elle un éternel objet de douleur et de regrets, le qualifier de résultat d’une énergie nouvelle...” (439). *Forces*, insists Manuel, because he had intended to complete his phrase thus: “[La France] mit en mouvement toutes les masses, exalta toutes les passions populaires et amena ainsi de terribles excès, et une déplorable catastrophe au milieu d’une généreuse résistance” (441). He had intended to warn against popular passions, not advocate revolution. Yet a note from the Chamber secretary rebuts Manuel’s version: “[N]ous avons entendu l’orateur dire *une forme nouvelle*, et non *des forces nouvelles*” (441).

There are other versions of the offending phrase. After rebuking Manuel, the Chamber president repeats what he thought he heard:

Voici ce qu’il a dit: “Faut-il donc dire que le moment où les dangers de la famille royale devinrent plus graves, ce fut celui où la France révolutionnaire sentit qu’elle avait besoin de recourir à une énergie nouvelle...” *Grand nombre de voix à droite*: Il a dit cela... Oui, oui!... [...] Ôtez-lui la parole!... (439)

Neither *forme* nor *force*. A contemporary pamphlet claiming to be an accurate transcription of the debate with an introduction signed by the liberal journalist Félix Bodin gives an entirely different version: “Auriez-vous donc oublié que, dès le moment où les puissances étrangères envahirent le territoire français, la France révolutionnaire, sentant le besoin de se défendre par des forces nouvelles, par une nouvelle énergie... (Explosion à droite)” (*Compte rendu* 16).

Revolutionary France's new energy is here directed against foreign invaders, not the royal family, a reading also suggested by the subtle interpolation made by Manuel's Third Republic biographer: "Ai-je besoin d'ajouter que les dangers de la famille royale sont devenus surtout plus graves *lorsque l'étranger eut envahi notre territoire*, et que la France, la France révolutionnaire, sentant le besoin de se défendre par des forces nouvelles et par une nouvelle énergie..." (Bonnal 379, emphasis added).

This alternative reading had indeed been offered by Manuel when he defended himself on 27 February: "Je disais [...]: Ne vous souvient-il pas que les Autrichiens et les Prussiens avaient envahi notre territoire? et que c'est alors que la France, la France révolutionnaire a cru devoir recourir à des forces et à une énergie nouvelles. *Voix à droite*: Vous avez dit: à des formes" (*Archives* 448). Manuel says his memory isn't clear; he has consulted friends and read conflicting newspaper accounts;³ he will own either word. "Je dirai donc *des formes et une énergie nouvelle*" (448).

The struggle between versions was largely symbolic: neither Manuel nor his accusers ultimately insisted on either of the disputed words. As *doctrinaire* Royer-Collard observed of the ensuing debate: "[O]n ne cite pas les paroles" (475). Rather, the *ultras* insisted on their right to cover the text with an imposed interpretation: "[N]ous ne voulons plus entendre de maximes régicides!" (439), as they brandished their refusal to repeat Manuel's words: "Je ne rappellerai point ce discours, Messieurs, je craindrais d'en renouveler le scandale" (444), and often referred to his crime only with tortured circumlocutions: "des expressions d'autant plus affligeantes qu'elles ne nous ramènent à l'époque la plus douloureuse de notre histoire que pour nous en présenter l'apologie la plus criminelle" (444).

Manuel's ultimate response to the proliferation of veiled allusions that sought to replace his speech was silent resistance brandished as a sign of freedom. Just before the final vote, the Chamber president twice offered him the chance to speak in his defense, and twice he refused. At the third offer, he replied: "Je demanderai la parole quand il me paraîtra convenable de la prendre" (491), and a few moments later he deigned to take the floor, although he refused to justify himself, since this would "avilir la représentation nationale", that is, it would debase the electors who had chosen him to represent the Nation. As the voice of the citizens who had granted him their vote, he was superior to anyone who would arrogate the right to censor his speech:

[J]e ne reconnais ici à personne le droit de m'accuser ni de me juger. [...] [D]ès que la résistance est un droit, elle devient un devoir. [...] [J]e devrais cet exemple de courage à ces dignes citoyens de la Vendée qui ont donné à la France un si noble exemple de courage et d'indépendance en me donnant [...] leurs suffrages [...]. [J]e ne dois sortir [de cette Chambre] que par la violence de ceux qui veulent s'arroger le droit de m'en exclure. (491)

Nonetheless, the Chamber voted his exclusion. The next day he returned to take his seat: "[J]'ai annoncé hier que je ne céderais qu'à la violence; aujourd'hui je viens tenir parole" (495). This pronouncement would become famous. The National Guard was called, and as he refused to cooperate with what he considered an illegal order, they dragged him out (Bonnal 393).

The strategy of the left was to protest by participating in Manuel's silence. They had already warned that the precedent was being set for the wholesale exclusion of the opposition (488) and demanded an explicit display of force: "Excluez-nous tous!" (469). After the vote, the leftist deputy Demarçay had expressed his solidarity with Manuel's speech: "[J]e viens déclarer

que [...] j'aurais dit [...] tout ce qu'a dit M. Manuel. [...] *Un grand nombre de membres de la gauche se lèvent en s'écriant: Très-bien! Très-bien! Nous en disons tous autant!*" (494).

Solidarity with Manuel's speech became solidarity with his exclusion, and ultimately with his silence. As Manuel was dragged from the Chamber, a number of deputies from the left accompanied him: "Emmenez-nous aussi! nous voulons le suivre! [...] Le côté gauche reste tout à fait dégarni" (495). The next day, the left submitted a petition of protest, but the Chamber, under pressure from the right, refused to allow it to be read. "Eh bien, chassez-nous tous! [...] Faites venir de nouveau les gendarmes!...' [...] Les membres composant la gauche se lèvent au milieu d'une vive agitation, et sortent de la salle" (511–12). The left did not return for the rest of the session (Bonnal 395), thus freely participating in Manuel's exclusion and his enforced silence, and leaving a prominent and menacing absence in the Chamber. As Spitzer notes of a similar withdrawal of the left during the June riots of 1820: "Its royalist enemies were left to predict that it would turn to illegal and irregular means of defense against the dynasty itself" (39); Manuel was soon afterwards rumored to be the one of the leaders of a hidden conspiracy against the crown (44–47). Silence might be interpreted as any threat, including, perhaps, regicide.

II. Political Friendship: Manuel and Béranger

Manuel's defiant words when he returned to the Chamber after his exclusion are immortalized on a bronze plaque affixed to the monument over his tomb in Père-Lachaise cemetery, but in an altered form: "Hier j'ai annoncé que je ne céderais qu'à la force; aujourd'hui je viens tenir ma parole" (*Inventaire* 235–36). *Violence* has been replaced by *force*, one of the pair of words central to the scandal the inscription intends to evoke. Manuel died in 1827; he lies in a tomb with his intimate friend Pierre-Jean de Béranger, who died thirty years later. At the top

of the monument above their grave are two medallions positioned so that the two men seem to gaze into each other's eyes. Neither their relationship nor the monument itself seem to have elicited much comment until the twenty-first century, when the image was used as frontispiece and dust jacket illustration for a recent book about political friendship, and the author speculated that "their bond may have encompassed erotic as well as platonic forms of affection" (1).

The two became friends in 1815; they were long associated with the political circle around the rich banker and liberal patron Jacques Laffitte. After Manuel's expulsion and his subsequent defeat in the elections of 1824, Béranger moved in with him, and the two lived together until Manuel's death in 1827 (Touchard 1: 311–16). In a letter written during this period Manuel said they shared "les mêmes goûts, les mêmes opinions, les mêmes liaisons et une tendre amitié" (qtd. in Touchard 1: 316); Béranger later wrote that if Manuel had survived: "Je l'aurais suivi, les yeux fermés, par tous les chemins qu'il lui eût fallu prendre pour revenir bientôt sans doute au modeste asile que nous partagions" ("Préface" xxiii). Yet we might wish to resist resolving the ambiguity of their relationship by describing it in modern terms.

It is important to remember, for instance, the heteroclitite origin and multiple agencies that lie behind the monument over their tomb: Manuel was buried in 1827 in a perpetual concession purchased by Laffitte; the monument was erected later in the early years of the July Monarchy. Béranger was buried in a state funeral during the Second Empire in 1857, and his medallion added nine years later using private funds (Steele). What the tomb encrypts is an enigma. Like the multiple versions and competing readings of Manuel's interrupted phrase, any interpretation of the relationship between the two supplements evidence that is precise but opaque. The undecidability of the erotic in the Restoration posited by Counter may signal impotence, celibacy or the ecstasy of platonic love, or, we might add, friendship (Foucault); the temptation we may

feel to limit any of this to a precise category risks anachronism. In the 1820s, the crime against nature was no longer explicitly mentioned in the criminal code (Pastorello 205-09) and cohabiting male couples were not uncommon,⁴ although public scandal could result in legal action (Pastorello 226) or social exclusion (Counter 143-44), and any friendship was subject to police surveillance (Horowitz 50-51). The passionate political friendship between Béranger and Manuel is an open display of emotional commitment with subversive force which invites yet resists specific interpretation. What looks to us like imposed secrecy might instead have signaled political and social defiance, its conspiratorial menace only increased by its imprecision.

Indeed, the ambiguity of the relationship between Manuel and Béranger reflects a similar undecidability in Restoration politics and literature, in which absences, allusions, and multiple versions may support alternative readings and display both submission and rebellion. If we resist the impulse to arrest these ambiguities, to fill in the gaps, decide between versions, penetrate the voids, but rather limit ourselves to attending to the absences displayed within their forms, we may come closer to appreciating the force of what Counter calls their “tortured aesthetics of avoidance” (20), but which some might call the complex play of freedom.

III. Silence in Béranger’s *Chansons*

While Manuel and Béranger were living together, Béranger prepared for publication his *Chansons nouvelles*, which included a song dedicated to the “éloquence et [...] courage” (194) of Manuel. Yet most surviving copies of the *recueil* are littered with ellipses, missing verses, names left blank or indicated by initials, even in songs explicitly championing verbal revolt against the Monarch. Béranger later blamed this apparent lack of courage on his publisher (*Ma Biographie* 222–23), although doubts remain (Brivois 7–8). Perhaps, as we shall see, the absences are more courageous than what was omitted.

A strategy of conspicuous silence had already been used by Béranger in his *Chansons* of 1821, a collection whose lighthearted anti-clericalism earned him a 3-month term in prison. He was also indicted but acquitted on other charges including offense against the person of the King. The specific nature of this offense remained obscure for contemporaries, since although prosecuting attorney Marchangy's speech was printed in the *Moniteur*, the section detailing the case against Béranger on this charge was omitted ("Cour d'assises"); nonetheless it could be reconstructed from the rebuttal by defense attorney Dupin aîné published separately ("Procès"). At issue were two lines of ellipses in the song *L'Enrhumé*:

Mais la charte encor nous défend;

Du roi c'est l'éternel enfant;

Il l'aime, on le présume.

.....

..... (2: 198)

Marchangy claimed, according to Dupin ("Procès" 229), that the two blank lines were an attempt to focus attention on the phrase "on le présume" (one presumes that the King loves the Constitution, but...). Dupin proposed an anodyne alternative: "Que dis-je? Moi j'en suis certain; / Mais les *ultras* n'en croiront rien" ("Procès" 231, italics in original). Other sources give a more scabrous version, some variation of the following, an apparent allusion to Lot's incestuous relations with his daughters: "Mais le papa, qui tient la dot, / Traita sa fille comme Loth" (Béranger, *Chansons: Supplément* 69, first sequence). The ravishment of a drunken old man by young women desperate to extend their lineage (Genesis 19: 31–36) would not have been flattering to Louis XVIII; indeed, Liprandi sees the entire song as a satire of the King's oft-rumored impotence and the deviant pleasures he enjoyed with his mistress (10–14). Ridiculing

the King in the Restoration was an attenuated version of the vitriol that had led to the regicide (Darriulat 28), and thus was indictable, although language in the originally proposed text of the press law of 1819 which sought to criminalize “imputations ou [...] allégations offensantes ou [...] injures envers la personne du roi” had been suppressed as beneath the King’s dignity and had been replaced by merely “offenses” (Grattier 1: 164). In Béranger’s trial, public reticence shrouded the nature of the offence and the veiled language of the law hampered conviction. The ellipses survive even in later unexpurgated versions of Béranger’s songs, with the explanation that they were after all only “une bien froide épigramme” (cf. *Œuvres complètes* 2: 245). The flurry of omissions, suppressions, silences, and disavowals that disguise yet display an attack on the King renders any definitive interpretation suspect.

The collection of 1825 was written under the shadows of the earlier trial and Manuel’s political failure. Many of the songs are about the trial or were written while Béranger was in prison, and many others echo themes from the debate over Manuel’s expulsion. The collection as a whole eschews the lighthearted eroticism and casual anti-clericalism that are the hallmarks of Béranger’s earlier collections. Love is replaced by friendship, which too is rejected: “Fuis donc Amour [...] / [...] vers moi vient l’amitié / [...] Ses soins sont doux, mais j’en abuserais” (148). Numerous songs depict lost hopes, wrecked aspirations, destruction, chaos. The last line of the collection is characteristic. The poet imagines escaping to Greece: “Sous ce beau ciel, je suis venu mourir” (211). Longing for death, brandishing silence, the poet engages another form of rebellion.

In the song “Le Vieux Sergent,” a retired Napoleonic soldier remembers his glorious past and mourns its betrayal by those who have abandoned one throne for another in order to flatter tyrants. The refrain bemoans shameful survival as it longs for a renewed honor sealed in death:

“Dieu, mes enfants, vous donne un beau trépas” (153). The old man’s daughter interrupts him to sing under her breath forbidden songs which,

[...] les frappant de crainte,

Ont en sursaut réveillé tous les rois.

.....

..... (155–56)

Her songs of revolt which reinvigorate a dormant struggle remain silent: the songs are replaced by ellipses, and the old man repeats his wish for a beautiful death for his grandsons.

In surviving unexpurgated copies of the collection, the two verses omitted in most copies nonetheless do not contain the words of the daughter’s songs, but rather this exchange: “‘People, à ton tour, que ces chants te réveillent!’ / ‘Il en est temps!’ dit-il aussi tout bas” (156). This version includes an urgent call for immediate action, while the version with ellipses does not.

But in the version with ellipses, absence draws attention to itself with a menacing blank that begs under the pressure of unfulfilled form to be completed, the form of meter and rhyme, but also the form of melody and allusion.

Béranger’s songs were written to familiar tunes exploiting the “rapports de sens entre le texte et le support mélodique” (Leterrier 59), with the name of the tune printed above the lyrics. In this case the tune is “Dis-moi, soldat, dis-moi t’en souviens-tu,” Debraux’s lament for past Napoleonic glory that also evokes despairing political friendship (Duneton 2: 444). The printed page echoes with song bearing layers of meaning which continue to resonate as the text is read (Duneton 1: 13). The desolation displayed by the gaping blank may be overcome by the rebellious voice of the reader,⁴ or the suspicious gaze of the censor, each free within the play of lyrics and melody to fill the silence with any imagined threat a monarch might fear.

The same pressure to completion is present in “Le Malade”, in which a recuperating poet is recovering his voice in the spring: “Pour mon pays que de chansons encore! / D’un lâche oublié vengeons les trois couleurs” (100). Rebellion against the *Charte*’s injunction to forgetfulness is a call to reclaim the honor of the Republic. Yet the movement of the song is again toward death, as “beaux jours” in the refrain (“Il est encor de beaux jours à chanter”, 99) is replaced by pleasure, then glory, then triumph, then... martyrdom. Joy is replaced by desolation. The final stanza brandishes two lines of ellipses:

Mais dans nos cœurs le courage sommeille;

.....

La Grèce expire, et l’Europe est tremblante;

.....

Reviens ma voix, faible, mais consolante,

Il est encor des martyrs à chanter. (101)

Since the song has already called for avenging the forbidden tricolor and expressed regret for the fate of Napoleon (“À l’aigle éteint nous redevons des pleurs”, 100), and since the song’s tune “Muse des bois” was also used earlier in this collection for “Adieux à la campagne”, written as Béranger was about to leave for prison (17), one wonders what censored martyrdom, what forbidden “beau trépas” the suppressed verses might have evoked. Yet in the unexpurgated copies they depict only discouragement. “Chargé de fers, chacun se dit: J’attends!”; “Seuls, nos pleurs seuls osent se révolter” (101).

Oppressed solitude, speaking only to itself, mourning, yet waiting: the words in this version fill in the silent rebellion the ellipses also express, but without the menacing

implication that the longed-for revolt is even more terrible than that which the rest of the song dares to specify.

The complete destruction of Europe is threatened in “Le Chant du Cosaque,” in which a Cossack calls for his steed to “foule[r] aux pieds les peuples et les rois” (127). Here, as so often in this collection, one historic figure bleeds into another: “J’ai d’un géant vu le fantôme immense / Sur nos bivouacs fixer un œil ardent. / Il s’écriait: ‘Mon règne recommence!’” (128). The giant is “Attila” (128), but the specter of Napoleon is surely present (indeed, the tune here as in “Le Vieux Sergent” is “Dis-moi, soldat”). If the Cossack’s horse is ordered to “Efface[r] [...] / Temples, palais, mœurs, souvenirs et lois” (129), the song’s historical ambiguity authorizes doubt about the poet’s attitude toward the general destruction. Indeed, the Revolution and its Napoleonic continuation also destroyed palaces and churches, changed manners and laws, effaced memories. The chaos of destruction echoes in counterpoint the long list of destroyed values and symbols in “La Déesse”, an anguished requiem for the lost promise of revolution as remembered in a long-ago festival of the Goddess of Liberty: “char, autel, fleurs, jeunesse, / Gloire, vertu, grandeur, espoir, fierté, / Tout a péri” (97). Which historical force is being bemoaned or delighted in? What violent desire might such chaotic representations unleash? Four lines of ellipses present a gaping blank at the center of the text just before the Cossack’s celebration of having “humili[é] et le sceptre et la croix” (127), thus inviting the reader to imagine which unspeakable humiliations might merit this extensive gap while leaving unclear whether the allusion to the degradation of King and Church is a warning, an aspiration, or an indictable offense. Where a censor might perceive the justification of an unnamable crime, another reader might conjure up a cathartic return.

The unexpurgated version limits the ellipses' insurrectionary ambiguity by addressing specific historical abuses:

Comme en un fort, princes, nobles et prêtres,

Tous assiégés par des sujets souffrants,

Nous ont crié: Venez! Soyez nos maîtres.

Nous serons serfs pour demeurer tyrans. (128)

The enslavement of the revolutionary French people has been effected by traitorous collusion between tyrants and foreign powers. A footnote clarifies the context by evoking memory and secrecy: "On doit se rappeler les notes secrètes" (128), an allusion to an alleged conspiracy in 1818 between the ultra-royalists led by Vitrolles and the foreign powers occupying France (*Note secrète*; Démier 313). This version tends to fix the meaning of the song despite its layered ambiguities; the specificity of its veiled attack limits the unleashed destruction the ellipses threaten.

IV. Breaking Silence

In 1828, one year after Manuel's death, the *Chansons nouvelles* were reprinted as part of a luxurious limited edition of Béranger's works with hand-colored illustrations (*Chansons anciennes*). The songs mostly follow the text of the 1825 unexpurgated version, but with a number of unannounced textual changes. Ellipses in songs about the trial are now preceded by initials, thus easing the deciphering of personal allusions ("M...", a name of three syllables in a song about the trial, is easily understood). Anticlericalism is sharpened. "Crasse d'oisiveté" (22) becomes "Crasse de papauté" (2: 15); "Chantez Bacchus, ainsi qu'un prêtre / Parle des Dieux sans les connaître" (76) becomes "[...] un prêtre / Parle de Dieu sans le connaître" (2: 48): a priest is now not only ignorant of the gods, he does not know God. Sexual references are less

restrained. A young woman with an older husband is counseled in 1825: “Un philtre heureux, plein de tendres chaleurs, / De votre époux exhument la jeunesse, / Peut de la vôtre épanouir les fleurs” (80); in 1828, veiled allusions give way to specific physical details: “Qu’un philtre heureux, par vos mains préparé, / De votre époux rallumant la jeunesse, / Donne à la vôtre un fils tant désiré” (2: 50). All of these changes were encouraged by a partial liberalization of the regime under Martignac, accompanied by the waning of “l’influence du ‘parti prêtre’” sealed by the ordinances of 16 June 1828 which broke the power of the Jesuits (Démier 797–99).

This was the same year as the appearance of Béranger’s *Chansons inédites*, which were also included in the deluxe edition. *Chansons inédites* contains three songs that tested the tolerance of the new regime and earned Béranger another prison sentence: “Le sacre de Charles le Simple” and “Les infiniment petits, ou, La Gérontocratie,” with their pointed attacks on Charles X, and “L’Ange gardien,” accused of denying the efficacy of the sacraments (“Procès” 345). In this context, the mild changes to the songs from 1825 included in the deluxe edition seem not to have attracted much attention. The prosecution focused on the virulence of the attacks in Béranger’s new songs: formerly “ses allusions étaient fines et légères; elles étaient enveloppées d’un voile assez épais pour que l’œil du vulgaire ne pût les pénétrer”; now his “plume audacieuse” spews “mépris” and “dérision” (352). The veils of the Restoration were unraveling.

Béranger’s *Œuvres complètes*, published after the July Revolution in 1834, contained all the changes made in the 1828 edition, and filled in a few ellipses that remained. For instance: “Marchangy, ce vrai sage, / M’a fait par charité / Sentir de l’esclavage / La légitimité” (2: 348–49), replacing the “M...” of 1828 (*Chansons anciennes* 2: 14) and the ellipsis without initial of 1825 (21). Political allusions are explained in footnotes: to Napoleon (3: 15), to Louis XVIII (3:

18), to the police (3: 49). The gradual elimination of ellipses and the clarification of allusions seem to presage a new era of openness.

However, the apparent frankness must be nuanced by an examination of the silent changes to “Le Vieux Sergent.” In 1825 and 1828, the song is dated “1815” (153; 2: 91) and the “drapeau que je ne connais pas” is explained in a footnote: “La France était alors couverte de drapeaux étrangers” (154; 2: 91). In 1834, the date is changed to “1823” (3: 59), and the footnote about the flags is gone. Each version makes reference to a time distinct from the date of publication: in one case, to the time depicted, the moment of the invasion of foreign powers after the Hundred Days; in the other, to the time of writing, the year in which Manuel’s warning against foreign intervention was crushed by the ultra-royalists and Spain was invaded. In either case the *drapeau* (not, as the footnote claims, the *drapeaux*) may be read as the white Royalist flag in distinction to the old sergeant’s familiar tricolor. The 1825 footnote may be a transparent feint to avoid prosecution, no longer necessary in 1834 when the tricolor had been restored. However, the new date and lack of footnote may be an attempt to clearly locate the song in the midst of the previous regime and thus distance the song from a critique of the July Monarchy, already lurching toward greater repressiveness.

The visible changes in the 1834 *Œuvres complètes* may seem to signal the greater openness of the regime, an illusion soon dispelled by repressive laws passed the next year after Fieschi’s attempt against the life of the King, notably the press law of 9 September 1835 which criminalized openly identifying as a republican (Grattier 2: 284, 311). Indeed, none of the new songs written after 1830 contain explicit political critique. As Béranger sought to position himself within the sentimental socialism of the 1830s, for instance in “Les Fous”, a song in praise of Saint-Simon, Fourier and Enfantin (*Œuvres* 4: 47–50), ellipses disappeared from his

work, but so did attacks against the government. By 1857, he was deemed worthy of a state funeral; his recuperation was complete.

When Manuel and the left opposition chose the defiant display of silence as a means of resistance, they left a gaping space in the Assembly their opponents might imagine filled by any number of conspiratorial threats, including the very anti-dynastic menace Manuel's expulsion was intended to preclude. Manuel's visible but impenetrable political relationships, including his friendship with Béranger, could be feared to conceal dangerous or scandalous secrets as they evoked both the promise and menace of liberty. The display of ostensibly censored passages in Béranger's *Chansons nouvelles* of 1825 defiantly courts political reaction as the pressure of meter, rhyme and melody induces the reader to fill in the form, to participate in the creation of the forbidden text, and perhaps to imagine revolution. Silence was not the only form of resistance employed either in Manuel's politics or in Béranger's poetics, but in each case it was a significant component of the strategies they deployed. As we re-evaluate the Restoration, we would do well to reconsider the subversive force of such silently defiant displays.

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Notes

¹ *Archives* 435. All italics in quotations from the *Archives* are present in the original. The debate is reprinted in Anceau 91–96 and Lebrun 65–71.

² 441. The *Moniteur* has “nouvelle.”

³ Caron discusses the variant newspaper accounts (16–17).

⁴ Counter 76; see also Martin, especially pages 157-61.

⁴ Benini 41, following Darriulat 212–26, discusses the eruption of “chant spontané” in moments of “effervescence politique”.