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«Une littérature qui doive, avec des modifications convenables, servir de règle aux autres»: changes in classical tragedy at the Comédie-Française

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"Une littérature qui doive, avec des modifications convenables, servir de règle aux autres":
changes in classical tragedy at the Comédie-Française

Abstract

In terms of French theatre history, the Napoleonic Empire is frequently recognised as a key turning point in the development of the term "classique", and thus the evolution of our scholarly understanding of "classicism". This article concentrates on an 1814 manuscript from the Comédie-Française that details the corrections, cuts, and changes it made to its repertoire. The analysis of this manuscript reveals that the plays at the basis of theatrical classicism – notably the tragedies by Pierre Corneille, Jean Racine, and Voltaire – were much more malleable than current studies acknowledge, which fundamentally challenges our current scholarly understanding of "classique" and "classicism".

In 1813, the critic Jean Joseph Dussault asked «s’il y a une littérature classique [...] une littérature qui doive, avec des modifications convenables, servir de règles aux autres». Scholars have long recognised that the Empire was a turning point in the development of the term classique and its associated movement classicism, and much scholarly ink has been spilt over the last two centuries on this topic. Although recent studies have been less homogenising than those of the post-war period, this article will show that not only is classicism a much less coherent model than current studies have espoused, but that the plays at the basis of this model were revised to a far greater extent than studies currently acknowledge. These changes are even more important as they were in place as the concept of classique came into being.

The theatre, and tragedy in particular, provided the arena in which the rules of classical literature were the clearest. As such, tragedy became a battlefield during the transition from classicism to romanticism, both in terms of theory – notably in the works of Germaine de Staël and August Wilhelm Schlegel – and in practice with Don Pèdre, ou le Roi et le laboureur (1802). During the Napoleonic era, we can discern a tragic performance canon around the playwrights Pierre Corneille, Jean Racine, and Voltaire. The tragic trinity accounted for sixty-three per cent of tragic performances at the Comédie-Française, France’s premier theatre for spoken drama, thus clearly underlining its canonical position. What is more, there was public demand for a concentration of this kind: a tragedy was financially more profitable for the Comédie-Française, taking an average 2130 francs per evening during the period 1799 to

(4) A.-V. Arnault, Don Pèdre, ou le Roi ou le laboureur, n. p., n. d.
1815 as opposed to 1412 francs for a comedy. Critics considered these tragedies by Corneille, Racine, and Voltaire to be canonical masterpieces; they were included in the new school curriculum and they constituted the benchmark by which new works were judged.

However, the actual textual condition in which these “classical plays” at the basis of the “classical model” were performed has not been properly addressed by scholars, nor have they considered the impact that these modified plays could have on the transition between classicism and romanticism in French theatre. Modern critical editions, even those in the Pléiade series and Les Œuvres complètes de Voltaire, do not include the variants in place during this period, even though they sometimes constituted the de facto performance text for over 150 years. Likewise, scholarship on plays with these variants is far from exhaustive: Ralph Albanese details the reception of Corneille by different critics during the Napoleonic era, but he does not interrogate the state that these plays were performed in, which the critics he cites (such as Jean François de La Harpe and Julien-Louis Geoffroy) discuss overtly in their observations on Corneille.

My discovery of an 1814 manuscript at the Bibliothèque-Musée de la Comédie-Française has provided some significant new information to fill these gaps in the field. Written by the actor François-Proposer Lanchantin Valmore, it is entitled Corrections, coupures et variantes faites par la Comédie Française sur les pièces de son répertoire. It transcribes oral tradition and practice into text, meticulously recording the changes and variants for fifty-two tragedies and sixty-two comedies from the seventeenth to the early nineteenth centuries, offering a far greater insight to the ‘corrections’ that the Comédie-Française, as a collective, believed necessary.

The manuscript has now been bound with another post-1830 notebook that undertakes the same task, underlining how the Comédie-Française has consistently rewritten the plays on its repertoire. However, from the paper, ink, handwriting, and the binding, as well as separate indexes, we can easily identify which changes were recorded in 1814, although the actual alterations themselves may date from the seventeenth or eighteenth centuries. These corrections are organised by author and play. The section to be altered is signalled by the act and scene number, and the first line before the change is given for reference. If the Corrections propose a cut, a bracket is used, and sometimes the reason for this cut is given, be it for a court performance or censorship, and occasionally the date of the change is given. Sometimes the pre-existing lines are reordered, with Arabic numbers showing the new line order. This reordering can also be a means of recording certain suppressions. Elsewhere, lines are ad libertum, or new variantes are proposed.

The changes in the Corrections are far more extensive than even the major work by Sabine Chaouche has unearthed. Chaouche mentions sixty plays that were reworked from 1756 to 1790. These include twenty-nine premières, eight reprises, and eighteen remises. Chaouche also identifies the manuscripts of several tragedies


(7) Paris, Bibliothèque-Musée de la Comédie-Française (BMCF), Ms Rés 048.

(8) Ibidem, p. 80 and p. 112.

(9) Ibidem, p. 96.

(10) Ibidem, p. 94 and p. 105.
that were remises: *Cinna* (1641), *Nicomède* (1651), *Venceslas* (1647), *Marius* (1715), *Zulime* (1740), *Caliste* (1760), *Hamlet* (1769), *Macbeth* (1784), and nine tragedies that were retouchées in their printed edition\(^{11}\). My findings are not only quantitatively more substantial than those of Chaouche, with this 1814 manuscript recording a total of 114 plays to be reworked compared to the sixty Chaouche has unearthed, but all these changes stem from the same source, exposing the Comédie-Française’s policy. Moreover, the volume, as an internal document, is overtly explicit in the changes made rather than just noting that a version is a remise, for example, allowing us to see how the very basis of the classique model was in flux as the term came into being.

This article will focus on the tragic canon, although a longer study of all the 114 corrected plays remains to be written. The first section of this article therefore focuses on the agents of these corrections, revealing that some date back to the seventeenth century, belying a longer process of revision of tragedies that must be taken into account in the history of classicism. The second section investigates how these corrections modified the model that was supposed to be the basis of classicism. These two lines of investigation reveal that the classical heritage was far from stable, and that a proper acknowledgement of the malleability must be integrated into the history of the transition from classicism to romanticism in French theatre, with significant consequences for our current understanding of classicism as a movement.

### Agents of Rewriting

The Corrections detailed by Valmore raise important questions about the practices of authorship, collaboration, and rewriting (here, a later figure changing a pre-existing text) both during the playwrights’ lives and after. These changes are made and authorized «par la Comédie-Française», in other words by a collective of agents who reworked the source text for performance. Some of these agents were the authors themselves: Corneille rewrote his own plays, notably *Le Cid*, which went from a tragi-comédie in 1637 to a tragédie in 1648, with further changes in 1660, especially in terms of bienséances, making Chimène and Rodrigue wait longer before their marriage. Voltaire even rewrote one tragedy to create three in the case of *Adélaïde Du Guesclin* (1734/1765) with later variations including *Le Duc d’Alençon, ou les Frères ennemis* (1751-52), *Amélie ou le duc de Foix* (1752), and *Almaire* (c. 1765)\(^{12}\). Voltaire’s revisions created some confusion: Valmore had to stipulate that in the only correct text for *Mabomot*, the third act opens with the line «Demeure quel est donc ce secret sacrifice» and not «Quoi Zopire en secret demande a nous parler»\(^{13}\). The need to specify not only the right edition, but to quote the incorrect one, exhibits the importance of Voltaire’s changes in the eyes of the Comédie-Française. It also belys the chaotic layering of rewritten texts and the fear that actors might muddle them, as the star eighteenth-century actors Henri-Louis Lekain and Mademoiselle Clairon had when their individual lines for *Venceslas* did not match up because they were working off different revised versions\(^{14}\).

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(13) BMCF, Ms Rés 048, p. 90 and p. 106.
Playwrights were often not the only authors, however: collaboration was much more common than accepted opinion would admit. Even the great Racine had frequently consulted Nicolas Boileau15, and Valmore’s manuscript exposes how the true nature of tragic authorship in this period is very much a case of collaboration and revision long after the play’s premiere, and to a much greater extent than current studies allow for. The partnership between Voltaire and the great actor Lekain during the Ancien Régime is a good example. Lekain revised and staged Voltaire’s Adélaïde Du Guesclin in 1765, thirty years after its première, and in 1814 the Comédie-Française noted that the text with Lekain’s name on it was still the only correct text16. Lekain’s rewriting remained the dominant version of Adélaïde Du Guesclin even half a century later.

Lekain’s partnership with Voltaire and his proposed alterations for Corneille’s works also served as an authority to license new revisions of the tragic trinity’s works. In 1805, François Andrieux legitimized his own changes to Corneille’s Nicomède (1651) through Lekain. Lekain’s Napoleonic equivalent, the star actor François-Joseph Talma, helped Andrieux with his adaptation too. Interestingly, Andrieux’s own revisions frequently occurred in sections that Lekain had altered himself, changing them yet again. One such example is line in II.3 when the king and the Roman ambassador offer Nicomède territories and a royal marriage, paving the way for his rival brother to inherit the throne. Corneille had originally written «La pièce est delicate, et ceux qui l’ont tissée» (II.3.711). However, by Lekain’s age, the first hemistich was often perceived as comic, and so Lekain changed it to «La trame est bien ourdie, et ceux qui l’ont tissée», and Andrieux went even further with «L’intrigue est bien conduite, et ceux qui l’ont tissée» because his audience had evolved further17. The Corrections thus expose the significant role of actors in revising these plays, making sure the tragedy stays serious and worth of a matter of state. Nicomède «par la Comédie-Française» is thus a combination of (at least) Corneille’s original, Lekain’s modifications, and Andrieux and Talma’s revisions.

Like Andrieux, other rewriters took it upon themselves to modify plays after their author’s death. As I have detailed elsewhere but is important to include here, in 1734 Jean-Baptiste Rousseau reworked Le Cid to remove the Infante18. This revision was still in place during the Napoleonic era and would last until 1882, bar the odd performance, because by the nineteenth century Comédie-Française believed that Corneille himself had cut the part19. Likewise, in Corneille’s Cinna, the empress Livie no longer appeared on stage; she was only referred to. The suppression of both the Infante and Livie entailed substantial rewriting but modern editions do not engage with this history, and render it difficult to understand how some of Corneille’s tragedies were performed over more than a century and a half, in the major theatre of France, and above all during the transition from classicism to romanticism.

As the interventions of Lekain and Talma show, actors had a prominent role in altering canonical tragedies. Firstly, in most of the plays, the changes noted by Val-

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16 BMCF, Ms Rés 048, p. 83.
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more often occur in places where previous actors had altered the lines, such as the section where Clairon had removed the couplet «Voilà ce que cent voix, en sanglots superflus, Ont appris dans ces lieux à mes sens éperdus», from her part in L’Orphelin de la Chine (1755) because of the contradiction between «voix» and «sanglots».

Following in Lekain’s wake, after the reprise of Polyeucte (1643) in 1803, Talma adapted the role of Sévère in II.1 and introduced his own modification for the part of Vendôme in Adélaïde Du Guesclin, which he took over from 1802. In Act II of the latter, Talma significantly extended Vendôme’s part to emphasize his character’s stance as an isolated hero, including lines such as «Tu tiens entre tes mains le destin de ma vie», foreshadowing later romantic figures. Significantly, these changes were still in circulation during the 1830s at the height of theatrical Romanticism in France.

Whilst the role of collaboration between authors in the composition of theatre and the performative ability of actors to transform a classical play for a Romantic audience have been recently studied, Valmore’s manuscript reveals that the actors’ influence in shaping the text is much greater than we have hitherto assumed, and their changes fundamentally altered the impression of major characters and passions, which scholarship on classicism has taken to be central to the model.

It was not only actors and rewriters who shaped the performed text, but critics, too, albeit in a more hands-off way. Voltaire in his role as a critic lamented how Le Cid in performance – and often in print – started at I.3 of the 1660 revised version with a scene between the political male rivals of the Comte and Don Diègue. This entailed the omission of the scenes where Chimène, the Comte’s daughter, explains her love for Rodrigue, which is what makes the tragedy’s conflict of duty and love so difficult.

The Comédie-Française still performed the version starting at I.3 in the 1800s and 1810s, but Valmore notes that the play could also open at the 1660 version of I.1, offering more space for Chimène’s passion to be explained. Le Cid is not a lone case: in Tancrède (1760), John Henderson details how the prominent eighteenth-century scholar Jean François de La Harpe considered lines such as «Suscourons sa valeur qui devient imprudente, / Et cet emportement que nous désapprouvons» to be «inutilles et prosaïques». By 1814 both these areas have been cut by the Comédie-Française.

Censorship, too, shaped the performance of these plays. This political rewriting was dependent on the immediate context, but it might remain in place when the political situation changed. In 1814, Adélaïde Du Guesclin was still performed as Lekain’s adaptation, but the Comédie-Française also retained its cuts from 1789.

Horace (1640), Phèdre (1677), Brutus (1731), and La Mort de César (1735) had all
been reworked during the Revolutionary decade\(^28\). This practice continued after the Revolution: the censor Joseph Esménard composed variants for Corneille’s *Héraclius* (1647) in 1806 to ensure it conformed to imperial ideology, fundamentally transforming the image of the tragedy’s usurper emperor to separate it from any possible confusion with Napoleon\(^29\).

Whereas the changes to *Héraclius* were still in place by 1814, Voltaire’s *Mérope* (1744) is a more complicated case. The representation of a queen mourning her dead husband and monarch made *Mérope* politically problematic. It had been censored during the Revolution but was authorized from 1800 to 1802, and in 1806. In 1800 the Ministry of the Interior provided the modified licensed text\(^30\). Unfortunately this script has since been lost, but it is not clear from Valmore’s volume whether the cuts marked for II.3 – where Égisthe bemoans his fate as he is arrested for allegedly killing Mérope’s son (who is actually Égisthe, unknown to himself) – and the variant for V.6 where Isménie speaks of the «foule inhumaine» are the changes demanded in 1800 or whether these corrections were implemented following the discussion of the play’s interdiction during 1805-06\(^31\). Racine’s *Athalie* (1691), a play that has its own history of re-appropriation\(^32\), had also been banned at the outset of the nineteenth century, but was finally performed in 1806 “par ordre”, though in a revised version by the censor Pierre-Édouard Lémontey that removed references to the Revolution. However, by 1814 there had been further interventions and suppressions. Valmore notes all the following sections as cuts from 1813: I.1.141-48, when Abner explains how Athalie believes she had killed the King’s son but maybe he had escaped; IV.3.1335-58, which includes lines such as «Venger vos Princes morts»; Joad’s plan to overthrow Athalie; and IV.3.1373-80, where Azarias swears to join Joad’s conspiracy. By 1814, only the lines cut from I.1 have been re-established: in 1814 the idea of a king’s return remains politically suitable (Louis XVIII would be restored to the throne that year), but the idea of overthrowing the current ruler and this receiving popular support is not, as it was too close to the Revolution\(^33\).

In reviewing the agents of these adaptations, then, we have come across a variety of agents – playwrights, adapters, critics, actors, and the state – who challenge the idea of a single, authoritative playwright setting the performed version of the tragedy. Collaborative authorship both between individuals, as a collective, and across time was a much more common occurrence than we can currently appreciate and we must take it into account when considering the performance history of classical tragedy and the transition between theatrical movements.

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\(^{30}\) Letter from the Minister of the Interior to the Sociétaires, 11 April 1800, BMCF, 3-AA-1799-1807.

\(^{31}\) Letter from Lucien Bonaparte to the Sociétaires, 11 April 1800, BMCF, 3-AA-1799-1807; BMCF, Ms Ms Rés 048, p. 104; H. Welschinger, *La censure sous le Premier Empire cit.*., p. 229.


\(^{33}\) BMCF, Ms Ms Rés 048, pp. 80-82.
Reworking the model

Having analysed the agents of rewriting, we now turn to the corrections themselves that the tragedies acting as the classical model underwent. There is not space to analyse all these changes, but a comparative analysis of the corrections reveals that classical tragedies were altered in terms of their structure, the presentation of characters (especially the «grands personnages»), their passions, and bienséance. These changes fundamentally question the classical model that dominates modern scholarship.34

Significant modifications to a play’s structure were often necessary to rework the dramatic cruxes at the heart of a tragedy’s effect. In Corneille’s Rodogune (1647), seventy-six lines were cut during the exposition from I.4.212-88, where Laonice, Cléopâtre’s confidante, explains Nicanor’s infidelity, the rivalry of the sons, and Cléopâtre’s hatred of Rodogune.35 Certainly, these elements of the plot are detailed elsewhere, but not so succinctly as one would expect in the first act. Act V was also a frequent site for revision: the Comédie-Française removed the first scene of Act V from Zaire (1732), so that the act opened with a scene full of activity, and the first line was not part of a couplet, meaning the alexandrine – theoretically required – was broken.36 The final four lines of the play were also cut so that the action of Orosmane’s suicide ends the tragedy: Orosmane no longer encourages his men to follow his former rival Nérestan and the tableau – an increasingly important throughout the eighteenth century – dominates the stage.37 This adaption may appear abrupt, but the practice of altering such dramatic highlights was not novel. Indeed, during the Revolution, the last act of Horace was not performed, so as to avoid representing a king on stage. This produced a four-act format that was retained in 1800 and 1801.38 However, when Act V was restored, it was still modified: the cuts of V.3.1595-1630 and 1635-1646 entailed the omission of Sabine, Horace’s disgusted wife and the sister of his slaughtered rival Curiace. Act V now only contained male characters and allowed Horace’s masculine glory to radiate even further, unabated by his wife’s grief.39 The extensive alteration of this structural highpoint indicates its importance in conveying the tragedy’s effect, and the theatre’s eagerness to ensure the positive reception of the tragedy. These changes challenge the rationale that every element of a play had a role to fulfil by explicitly demonstrating how malleable classical tragedies were, and thus the basis of classicism.

The Comédie-Française was dependent on spectators for money and therefore the representation of society and its transformations were common sites for revision by the early nineteenth century. «Grands personnages» had been a tenet of tragic theory since Aristotle and in French tragedy the «grand» was often understood as rank. The monarchy was also a key topos, despite its sensitivity for post-revolutionary society. It is, therefore, not surprising to see the removal of lines such as «Le Roi, de son pouvoir se voit déposséder» in Iphigénie (1674), where Eurybate, one of Agamemnon’s servants, underlines the limits of loyalty to one’s monarch and the over-

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(34) See for example R. Bray, La formation de la doctrine classique en France cit.
(35) BMCF, Ms Rés 048, p. 43.
(38) BMCF, Ms Rés 048, p. 88.
(39) Horace is restored to five acts on 24 July 1802, BMCF, R 326.
(40) BMCF, Ms Rés 048, pp. 10-11.
whelming power of the conquering forces \(^{(41)}\). Likewise, *Rodogune* was altered to remove the recollection that King Nicanor’s rival, Tryphon, believed he could seize the crown and rule, forcing Nicanor to flee \(^{(42)}\); Nicanor’s family return to defeat Tryphon \(^{(43)}\); and Cléopâtre’s mistaken belief that her husband and king was dead \(^{(44)}\). In *Sémiramis* (1749), by deleting «Babilone, seigneur, en ce commun effroi, / Ne peut se rassurer qu’en revoyant son roi», the political stability brought by a king was removed \(^{(45)}\). Likewise, the cuts to the end of *Sémiramis* eradicated the direct lesson to kings: «Rois, tremblez sur le trône, et craignez leur justice» \(^{(46)}\). The Comédie-Française prepared variants for *Sémiramis* «quand on ne veut pas mettre le bandeau sur le théâtre», such was the sensitivity of the portrayal of monarchy \(^{(47)}\). Classical tragedies were clearly adapted to differing circumstances and not moulded on their original politics alone. The model at the basis of classicism was continually updated.

If kings were tricky, so were emperors, even if allusions to past imperial rulers and to Caesar were a staple of Napoleon’s image. Esménard extensively reworked the role of the Emperor Phocas in *Héraclius* to distance Corneille’s emperor from that of France \(^{(48)}\). *La Mort de César* was also potentially problematic, but like *Héraclius* Napoleon authorised it. However, the Comédie-Française omitted the lines «Dans une heure, Brutus, César change l’État. | De ce Sénat sacré la moitié corrompue» and «Le nom de Roi du moins fait encore quelque horreur», although they had been included in the 1793 version by the Justice Minister, Louis Gohier, as well as the licenced 1801 edition \(^{(49)}\). Both during the Revolution and the Empire, the portrayal of rulers posed major ideological issues and as such classical tragedies had to be updated with the political status quo.

Whilst the Comédie-Française paid great attention to the image of rulers, it was equally vigilant of its portrayal of the people. For example, in *Alzire* (1736), the following lines about the murder of the Governor of Peru, Gusman were removed: «Du Peuple qui l’aimait, une troupe en furie, | S’empressant près de lui, vient se rassasier | Du sang de son épouse et de son Meurtrier» \(^{(50)}\). Here, the mass of people is out of control and for the state and those in charge of public order its exclusion was opportune, both after the Revolution and within the theatre, an arena where spectators were arrested or could die. In *Sémiramis*, the Comédie-Française removed the description of the people, who «enfin commence | À sortir du respect, et de ce long

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\(^{(43)}\) P. Corneille, *Rodogune* cit., I.4.279-86; BMCF, Ms Rés 048, p. 43.

\(^{(44)}\) P. Corneille, *Rodogune* cit., I.4.229-30; BMCF, Ms Rés 048, p. 43.


\(^{(46)}\) Voltaire, *Sémiramis* cit., V.8.276; BMCF, Ms Rés 048, p. 90.

\(^{(47)}\) BMCF, Ms Rés 048, p. 90.

\(^{(48)}\) Ibidem, p. 27.


silence»\(^{31}\). Theatre was a site where norms were internalised and politics debated: the Comédie-Française had to set the right tone.

Along with characters, passions were a key element of classical tragedy, but the Comédie-Française adjusted their depiction over time. \textit{Le Cid}'s famous dilemma of love or duty was transformed by the removal of many lines relating to love, lending more weight to the imperative of duty. The Comédie-Française trimmed the text of \textit{Rodogune} so that Laonice no longer recounts the affairs of Cléopâtre's husband and king, nor how «changeant à regret son amour en horreur, | Elle abandonne tout à sa juste fureur»\(^{52}\). Not only do these modifications take out the extremity of passion that was integral to the original tragedy, but they rework the image of the relationship of Cléopâtre and Nicanor: the removal of the husband's infidelity interrupts the description of the wife's anger and cancels out images of love's «furieux effets», including regicide and filicide. Indeed, Cléopâtre no longer chillingly says «J'ai commencé par lui, j'achèverai par eux»\(^{53}\). With these changes, Cléopâtre's malice can not be licenced by her husband's deeds: the role of love has been subdued. Racine had characterized Phèdre since 1677 as neither entirely guilty nor innocent\(^{54}\). Yet because the Comédie-Française deleted Phèdre's explanation that it was Ònone, who, «abusant de [s]a faiblesse extrême», accused Hippolyte, leading to his charge of incest and his ensuing death, the nineteenth-century Phèdre is unconditionally guilty, without the complexity and ambiguity of the original seventeenth-century character\(^{55}\). Passions had to be updated.

The expectations of \textit{bienséance} with respect to death had relaxed since the seventeenth century: Lekain even managed to enact murder on stage, albeit at the back\(^{56}\). However, as political stability returned, critics increasingly denounced the lack of \textit{bienséance} in classical plays and the descriptions of mortality. The Comédie-Française removed the vivid descriptions of the bloodbath that ends \textit{Bajazet} (1672)\(^{57}\), revised scenes featuring capital condemnation, such as that in \textit{Polyeucte}, when Albin chastises Félix for ordering the title character's execution since it will lead to the death of the former's daughter, Pauline. Likewise, the Comédie-Française removed Polyeucte's reasoned justification of his martyrdom\(^{58}\). Here, the difficult discussion of death mixes with politics: the government originally banned Corneille's \textit{tragédie chrétienne} because of its fanaticism which could be religious or political in nature\(^{59}\), and these amendments par la «Comédie-Française» help ease the tension within these ideas. What was once tolerated onstage was no longer fitting for revolutionized France.

The \textit{Corrections, coupures et variantes} recorded by Valmore offer us a precious snapshot onto how canonical tragedies were rewritten in line with changing ideology and aesthetics. Given the prominence that scholars have accorded to the classical model of tragedy, these changes fundamentally challenge much of the homogenizing scholarship undertaken during the twentieth century and more recent interpretations of these playwrights' afterlives. This article is but a brief analysis of the tragedies highlighted in Valmore's volume but nearly one hundred plays remain for further

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(51) Voltaire, \textit{Sémiramis} cit., IV.2.211-12; BMCF, Ms Rés 048, p. 89.
(52) P. Corneille, \textit{Rodogune} cit., I.4.229-48 and 257-58; BMCF, Ms Rés 048, p. 43.
(53) P. Corneille, \textit{Rodogune} cit., I.4.261; BMCF, Ms Rés 048, p. 43 and IV.7.1490; \textit{Ibidem}, p. 46.
(55) J. Racine, Phèdre, in J. Racine, \textit{Œuvres complètes} cit., t. I, V.7.1629; BMCF, Ms Rés 048, p. 78.
(57) J. Racine, \textit{Bajazet}, in J. Racine, \textit{Œuvres complètes} cit., t. I, V.11.1707-10; BMCF, Ms Rés 048, p. 79.
(58) P. Corneille, \textit{Poliyuecte}, II.6.672 and 677; BMCF, Ms Rés 048, p. 49.
(59) Paris, Archives nationales, 28 germinal an IX, F/21/998.
study to show the extent of the changes made subsequent to their first publication and performance. This article also represents but a glimpse of the changes that the Comédie-Française carried out in order to keep the canon alive; it is but a snapshot of a longer history of rewriting that it is imperative to research further, not only to understand how these plays were actually performed, but how they were understood as the transition from classicism to romanticism in the theatre occurred.

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