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# David, architecture, and the dichotomy of art

Heidi Elizabeth Kraus  
*University of Iowa*

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DAVID, ARCHITECTURE, AND THE DICHOTOMY OF ART

by

Heidi Elizabeth Kraus

An Abstract

Of a thesis submitted in partial fulfillment  
of the requirements for the Doctor of  
Philosophy degree in Art History  
in the Graduate College of  
The University of Iowa

July 2010

Thesis Supervisor: Professor Dorothy Johnson

## ABSTRACT

In recent decades, the art and life of Jacques-Louis David have sparked a renewed surge of interest in the academic community. It is startling, however, that the often prevalent and imposing elements of architecture found in David's paintings have received little scholarly attention. This study fills a lacuna in David studies by providing a new perspective on his passionate engagement with architecture and its impact on his art. I begin by demonstrating that, following his trips to Rome early in his career, architecture became central to many of the artist's most celebrated compositions. Focusing chronologically on an approximately thirty-year period of the artist's career, I explore key paintings by David that serve as principal examples of the emphasis he placed on architecture and its ability to reaffirm, complement, intensify, and contribute layers of meaning to the central themes of his paintings. Throughout the dissertation, I identify principal architectural elements contained within these works and seek to determine their significance.

David's engagement with architecture began at a young age. He was born into a family of architects and throughout his adolescence was surrounded by some of the most important thinkers, artists, and architects of the eighteenth-century. This unique upbringing and inclusion within Paris's elite cultural milieu had a tremendous impact on how David would come to understand architecture as an aesthetic vehicle capable of enhancing his works with added narrative and metaphorical meanings. The dissertation takes as its starting point an investigation into David's period as a *pensionnaire* at the French Academy in Rome where he became profoundly inspired by the Antique. David recorded the impact of the Roman experience on his artistic development within the pages of a dozen albums, which contain a vast number of drawings depicting the Italian landscape, ancient buildings and monuments, and antique sculpture. The Roman albums

reveal the importance David placed on architecture during this period and mark the beginning of the transformative effect the medium would have on his subsequent work.

David's obsession with the art and architecture of ancient Rome revealed in his Roman albums, for example, combined with his fascination for the popular *vedute* genre exemplified in compositions by Robert, Panini, and Piranesi, inspired him to reconsider how architecture could be used in new and significant ways in representations of historical subjects. This study investigates the multiple sources of architectural inspiration that served David throughout his career and inspired him to create a powerful architectural language. Comparisons between painting and architecture, including representations of architecture in painting, are fully explored for in the art of David, painting and architecture are not dichotomous. Rather, the two mediums are inextricably linked and together can be understood to embody the thoughts, pursuits, and passions of an epoch.

Abstract Approved:

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Thesis Supervisor

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Title and Department

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Date

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Graduate College  
The University of Iowa  
Iowa City, Iowa

CERTIFICATE OF APPROVAL

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PH.D. THESIS

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This is to certify that the Ph.D. thesis of

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Wallace Tomasini

For Catherine



In Rome, without even meaning to, you can live like a lord at little expense; you stroll past fallen grandeurs, you learn, if you deign to occupy yourself with them, the secrets of Europe. Walking over the ruins of the past, you can glimpse the present, you see arise the clamour of factions, which to the eyes of a serene and observant spirit confirms that spectacle of peace and instruction which Rome offers to her sons, and to those who come to entreat her to be a tender mother for them too.

Chevalier d'Agincourt

In G. Moroni, *Dizionario di Erudizione Storico-Ecclesiastica*, vol. LVII

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## INTRODUCTION

Copious amounts of art historical scholarship have been written on the compositions of the oeuvre of Jacques-Louis David. Be it corporal aesthetics, the portrayal of *grands hommes*, the influence of the Revolution or the question of gender, the works of David have been widely examined and discussed. *David contre David*, a colloquium and later publication organized by Régis Michel which coincided with the 1989 David retrospective at the Louvre, served as a catalyst in the reinvestigation of the artist in recent decades.<sup>1</sup> Many scholars who participated in the colloquium (whose contributions to the field I will discuss at length in the pages that follow) helped to change the way we understand David's works through their adoption of new and varied perspectives. A sustained interest in the artist is further demonstrated by another exhibition held in 2005, one which focused on David's later works completed under Napoleon I and during his exile in Brussels. Under the direction of Philippe Bordes, *Jacques-Louis David: Empire to Exile* – its exhibition, symposium, and accompanying catalog – afforded the viewer the rare opportunity to view this compendium of David's works in the United States (the exhibition and symposium were held at the Sterling and Francine Clark Art Institute in Williamstown, Massachusetts) and, moreover, gave much needed attention to a frequently misunderstood and often unappreciated period in the artist's career.

Despite this renewed surge of interest in the academic community concerning the artist and his work, it is startling, however, that only a small amount of research can be uncovered concerning the often prevalent elements of architecture included in David's paintings. Following his first trip to Rome, architectural components contained within David's works began to take on various symbolic and at times metaphorical purposes that

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<sup>1</sup> Régis Michel, ed., *David contre David*, 2 vols. (Paris: La documentation Française, 1993).

remain relatively unpronounced in his work prior to this point. This study fills a lacuna in David studies and provides a new and exciting viewpoint by its assertion that, following his Italian sojourns, architecture no longer simply inhabits the background or provides a context for David's compositions. Focusing chronologically on an approximately thirty-year period of the artist's career, I explore several paintings by David which serve as principal examples of the emphasis he placed on architecture and its ability to reaffirm, complement, intensify, and contribute layers of meaning to the central themes of his paintings. Throughout the dissertation, I identify principal architectural elements contained within these works and seek to determine their significance.

### Historiography

One of the many challenges in seeking to providing a new perspective on David's art is coming face-to-face with the existence of an immense bibliography. However, despite the vastness of the Davidian literature, the prominent role of architecture in the artist's work and the significance of the built environment to his aesthetic has been largely ignored. Much of the myth and legend surrounding David, his life, and art was codified by Delécluze in his monograph, *Louis David, son école et son temps* of 1855. This intimate and detailed account presented by Delécluze, himself a former pupil of David's, has done much to impede a fuller understanding of the artist. In the monograph, Delécluze portrays David as an uneducated artist and asserts that his late mythological works serve as evidence of his artistic decline following the prolific 1780s – a decade that produced some of David's most celebrated works including, *Andromache Mourning Hector*, *The Death of Socrates*, and the *Oath of the Horatii*. Written thirty years after David's death, this account by Delécluze (one based largely on oral tradition) has until recent years remained largely unquestioned as an essential starting point for the history of David and his students.



Delécluze's motive in the publication of his monograph on David, that is, the author's promotion of the neoclassical aesthetic as supremely demonstrated by his teacher, must be understood in conjunction with the art historical circumstances of the period. 1855 served as a benchmark in the history of nineteenth-century French art. It represented a fundamental shift in taste from the perceived inflexibilities associated with traditional artistic values (namely, the supremacy of antique subjects, the importance of the drawn form over color, and a preference for the invisible brushstroke) to the so-called "truthful" works associated with the burgeoning Realist movement. Indeed, by 1855, the art of Jean-Auguste-Dominique Ingres (1780-1867) – now the figurehead of David's School and the purveyor of Classicism in France – was begin contested, viewed by supporters of the Realist revolution (including Charles Baudelaire and Ingres's bitter rival, Eugène Delacroix) as unimaginative and even lacking intelligence.<sup>2</sup> Recent studies have attempted to prove such orthodox statements concerning Ingres's work as false and reductive.<sup>3</sup> It is indisputable that, certainly by the 1855 Exposition Universelle in Paris (and due in no small part to the 1848 Revolution), art which challenged the social and political assumptions of the period was gaining favor. It is at the height of this aesthetic debate concerning the relevancy and acceptability of the classical style as it applied to modern art that Delécluze was writing on its greatest proponent: Jacques-Louis David. The personal, political, and aesthetic prejudices of Delécluze himself, therefore, must not be ignored in our reading and interpretation of his important study.

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<sup>2</sup> See Charles Baudelaire, "The Universal Exposition of 1855," in *Baudelaire: Selected Writings on Art and Literature*, trans., P. E. Charvet (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1972), 126; and Eugène Delacroix, "15 Mai 1863," in *Journal, 1822-1863*, ed. André Joubin (Paris: Plon, 1996), 507: "c'est l'expression complète d'une incomplète intelligence."

<sup>3</sup> Most recently, see Susan L. Siegfried, *Ingres: Painting Reimagined* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2009).

Over the past three decades, Davidian studies have largely focused on research, revision, and reinterpretation. This new investigation into the artist and his social milieu was spearheaded by Robert Rosenblum in his seminal text on late eighteenth-century art, as well as his many articles.<sup>4</sup> Rosenblum's text is an essential component to this study, as the author, more than any other scholar, laid the groundwork for a deeper investigation into David's relationship with architecture. Despite a growing interest during the late eighteenth-century in architectural styles from other times and places, Rosenblum discusses the predominance of the Greco-Roman architectural tradition in conjunction with archeological revelations of the period, namely the discoveries at Pompeii and Herculaneum. Briefly referring to the architectural backgrounds in several of David's works from the 1780s (including the *Oath of the Horatii* and the *Death of Socrates*), Rosenblum asserts that David—like many French painters and architects of the period—could find rich political associations in the architecture of Antiquity.<sup>5</sup>

However, Rosenblum's interest in David's use of architecture focuses on the artist's implementation of a geometric purism and an anti-Rococo austerity in his backgrounds—forms which clearly mirror David's depictions of archaic stoicism—rather than looking beyond the surface to examine possible symbolic or metaphorical purposes such architecture might suggest. Rosenblum does make note of David's desire to maintain archaeological accuracy in his use of classical architecture, despite the criticism the artist endured by contemporary archeologists concerning its authenticity.<sup>6</sup> In the text, Rosenblum describes the architecture within David's history paintings as “fictive” and “invented,” and does not suggest sources of inspiration which might have influenced such

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4 Robert Rosenblum, *Transformations in Late Eighteenth Century Art* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1967).

5 Ibid., 124.

6 See René Crozet, “David et l'architecture neoclassique,” *Gazette des Beaux-Arts*, 6e période, XLV (April 1955): 211-220.

architectural manifestations.<sup>7</sup> It is precisely these sources of inspiration, both architectural structures of the past and those contemporaneous with David's own career, that I address at length in this study.

In addition to these decisive efforts by Robert Rosenblum to reassess David's career, attention must also be paid to the work of Thomas Crow. Crow's 1978 study of pre-Revolutionary radicalism in the *Oath of the Horatii* inaugurated a surge of interest in the political and social content of David's masterpieces by scholars including Albert Boime, Norman Bryson, and Ewa Lajer-Burcharth.<sup>8</sup> Several studies in past decades have chosen to focus on aesthetic and cultural issues relating to David and his work – issues that, to this point, had been wholly neglected or inadequately explored. As was mentioned previously, many of these new and varied perspectives were included in the *David contre David* colloquium and accompanying publication. One of the scholars who participated in the colloquium was Dorothy Johnson, whose numerous articles published in the 1980s provided critical insight into the grossly understudied and misunderstood works that constitute David's late mythological period.<sup>9</sup> Furthermore, Johnson's seminal text, *Jacques-Louis David: Art in Metamorphosis* (1993) sought to elevate the status of David from that of uneducated artist (as purported by Delécluze) to *peintre-philosophe* –

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7 Rosenblum, *Transformations*, 125.

8 Thomas Crow, "The Oath of the Horatii in 1785: Painting and Pre-Revolutionary Radicalism in France," *Art History* I, no. 4 (1978); See also Thomas Crow, *Painters and Public Life in Eighteenth-Century Paris* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1985); Albert Boime, "Jacques-Louis David, Scatological Discourse in the French Revolution and the Art of Caricature," *Arts Magazine* (February 1988): 72-81; Norman Bryson, *Tradition and Desire: from David to Delacroix* (Cambridge, 1984); and E. Lajer-Burcharth, *Necklines: The Art of Jacques-Louis David after the Terror* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1999).

9 Dorothy Johnson, "'Some work of noble note': David's La Colère d'Achille Revisited," *Gazette des Beaux-Arts* (December 1984): 223-230; Dorothy Johnson, "Desire Demythologized: David's L'Amour quittant Psyché," *Art History* 9, no. 4 (December 1986): 450-470; and Dorothy Johnson, "Corporality and Communication: the Gestural Revolution of Diderot, David and the Oath of the Horatii," *The Art Bulletin* 71 (March 1989): 92-113.

an uncompromisingly complicated artist, well-educated and informed by antiquity, one who was continually reinventing himself and his style to suit the demands of the present time and situation.<sup>10</sup> While many monographic studies on the artist's career are in existence – namely those by Hautecoeur, Brookner, and Schnapper – Johnson abandoned the typical monographic format and arranged the text in a series of interrelated essays which focused on works executed by David during transformative periods in his career.<sup>11</sup> In addition to this much deserved elevation of David to the status of painter-philosopher, this study owes much to Johnson's assertion that, by the time David painted his famous *Coronation of Napoleon and Josephine* (1805-7), the artist had become disillusioned with both the Empire and Napoleon himself. More will be said on this in the chapters that follow.

Other book-length studies and catalogs on David have likewise proved essential to this investigation of David's relationship with architecture. Primary among these are David Dowd's study of David's involvement with the Revolutionary festivals, an in-depth examination of David's *Brutus* by Robert Herbert, Régis Michel's contributions to *David e Roma*, and Philippe Bordes's *Le Serment du Jeu du Paume*.<sup>12</sup> In addition, Antoine Schnapper's catalog of the 1989 David retrospective, while lacking in interpretation, nonetheless serves as the most complete source for images, documentary

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10 Dorothy Johnson, *Jacques-Louis David: Art in Metamorphosis* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1993).

11 Louis Hautecoeur, *Louis David* (Paris: La Table Ronde, 1954); Anita Brookner, *Jacques-Louis David* (London: Thames and Hudson, 1980); and Antoine Schnapper, *David, témoin de son temps* (Paris: Bibliothèque des Arts, 1980).

12 David Lloyd Dowd, *Pageant-Master of the Republic: Jacques-Louis David and the Revolution* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1948); Robert Herbert, *David, Voltaire, "Brutus" and the French Revolution* (New York: The Viking Press, 1972); *David e Roma* (Rome: De Luca Editore, 1981); and Philippe Bordes, "Le Serment du Jeu de Paume" de *Jacques-Louis David: le peintre, son milieu et son temps de 1789 à 1792* (Paris: Réunion des musées nationaux, 1983).

and historical accounts, as well as bibliographic references related to the artist.<sup>13</sup> For these reasons, the importance of Schnapper's catalog to the corpus of Davidian literature cannot be underemphasized. As mentioned previously, of particular relevance to the study of David's art and political involvement from the Napoleonic era through his exile in Brussels is a recent catalog by Philippe Bordes.<sup>14</sup> The catalog offers interpretive analyses of major works that constitute the artist's post-Revolutionary period within the context of a biographical and historical narrative.

My examination of David's architectural proclivities in this study is largely based on primary documents. I consider writings, correspondence, drawings, and the paintings themselves to belong to this category. Invaluable to this study was the 1973 publication of D. and G. Wildenstein's *Documents complémentaires au catalogue de l'oeuvre de Louis David*, a compendium of primary documents that provide a reconstruction of David's life and career through letters and official government documents from the period. Equally important was the two-volume catalogue raisonné of David's drawings compiled by Pierre Rosenberg and Louis-Antoine Prat.<sup>15</sup> Rosenberg and Prat's catalog allowed for the investigation into David's relationship with architecture in a way that proved virtually impossible prior to its publication in 2002, that is, by affording an examination of virtually all of David's extant drawings (located today in countless collections across the globe) from one location. Likewise, a first-hand examination of these drawings gave me the opportunity to understand David's intimate relationship with

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<sup>13</sup> *Jacques-Louis David. 1748-1825*, ed. Antoine Schnapper (Paris: Réunion des musées nationaux, 1989).

<sup>14</sup> Philippe Bordes, *Jacques-Louis David: Empire to Exile* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2005).

<sup>15</sup> Pierre Rosenberg and Louis-Antoine Prat, *Jacques-Louis David, 1748-1825: Catalogue raisonné des dessins*, 2 vols. (Milan: Leonardo Arte, 2002).

drawing, its importance to his creative process, and how such drawings served him both pedagogically and as a source of inspiration throughout his career.

### Brief Biography and Early Influences

An overview of David's paintings reveals that architecture played a prominent role in David's drawings and paintings from the early days of his career in Italy to his works created in exile. We are led to wonder why David gave architectural elements such prominence in his oeuvre. To begin to answer this question we must look to his early biography and artistic interests. David was born in Paris on 30 August 1748. His father, Louis-Maurice, was a successful wholesale iron merchant and his mother, Marie-Geneviève Buron, came from a family of distinguished architects. His father was killed in a duel in 1757, and the event had an impact on David both emotionally and we can assume artistically as well. After the death of Louis-Maurice, David's mother played a small role in her son's life and the young artist was placed in the consecutive care of his two uncles, both of whom were architects and contractors. It was expected that David would learn from them and follow in their footsteps. David was sent away to boarding school at the age of seven and attended university at the Collège des Quatres Nations where he received a fine education in the classics.

Marie-Geneviève was insistent on her son becoming an architect, even though he preferred drawing, and these demands led to a tense relationship between mother and son. In the eighteenth-century, a career as an artist was still considered precarious and was viewed as inappropriate for an up-and-coming member of the bourgeoisie. David remained committed to painting despite the encouragement of so-called "higher intellectual pursuits" and rumored architectural training.<sup>16</sup> Advised by his cousin, the renowned Rococo painter François Boucher (1703-70), David entered into an

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<sup>16</sup> Brookner, 40.

apprenticeship with Joseph-Marie Vien (1716-1809) in 1765. Vien was known to be a progressive teacher, eager to move away from the delicate sensibilities of the prevailing Rococo style and instead began favoring classical subjects painted in a more severe style. While at times disregarding his own advice, Vien encouraged his pupils to paint directly from nature and study Renaissance masters like Raphael and Michelangelo. Vien's influence on David cannot be understated. In addition to serving as one of David's many surrogate fathers, Vien insisted that his young pupil look to the antique for inspiration. Because of his upbringing by family members who were architects, it would make sense that David might be attuned to architecture from an early age.

David's architectural perspicacity, however, developed from numerous sources, as this study seeks to demonstrate. The impact of various artists and theorists on David's aesthetic – including Poussin, Winckelmann, Diderot, and Rousseau – is well-known. However, it is necessary to consider less obvious yet no less important early sources of inspiration that changed the way David looked at architecture and how he conceptualized it in some of his greatest works. Little attention, for example, has been paid to the influence wielded by David's two uncles, François Buron (1731-1818) and Jacques-François Desmaisons (c. 1720-89). Both Buron and Desmaisons were accomplished architects and the latter was particularly celebrated within his field. He was a member of the Royal Academy of Architecture and also served as an official in the department of the *Bâtiments du Roi*.<sup>17</sup> Desmaisons, along with David's mother, expected the young artist to pursue a career in architecture – an expectation that was not fulfilled. In addition to his two uncles, David was also exposed to architecture through his godfather, Michel-Jean Sedaine. Sedaine was a playwright and opera librettist, but also served as secretary to the Academy of Architecture. After living with Buron in the Rue Sainte-Croix de la Bretonnerie and with Desmaisons in the Rue de Jouy Saint-Antoine a year later, David

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17 Ibid., 40.

moved in with Michel Sedaine in 1769 at the impressionable age of twenty-one.<sup>18</sup> David resided with Sedaine in the Louvre where he could participate in his godfather's intellectual gatherings, including frequent visits by Diderot. Unlike his mother and Desmaisons (not to mention Vien), Sedaine had no predetermined goals for David. He became yet another father-like figure in David's life, and Sedaine's architectural involvements likely had an effect David's aesthetic development.

The influence of Sedaine and his milieu is evident, I would suggest, in two of David's earliest compositions: *The Death of Seneca* of 1773 and *Antiochus and Stratonice* of 1774 (Figs. 1-2). In both compositions, the prominence of architecture is undeniable. The first of these paintings, *The Death of Seneca*, marked David's second albeit unsuccessful attempt at obtaining the Prix de Rome. The eclectic arrangement of architectural elements contained therein is reminiscent of a stage set and the architecture appears to serve no real purpose beyond providing a context for the antique subject portrayed in the foreground. The architecture in the *Death of Seneca* seems oddly disconnected from the figures in the foreground, which clearly are the focus of David's painting. The same can be said of *Antiochus and Stratonice*, David's third and successful attempt at the Rome Prize. Both paintings demonstrate that while David was aware of architecture and its importance to the compositions, he had not yet experienced classical architecture first-hand in an original antique context. His knowledge of classical architecture, to this point, was through his surroundings in Paris and through second-hand sources of learning (namely, at the Academy, through his uncles, as well as Sedaine and his circle). It would not be until his first journey to Rome, as this study demonstrates, that the ability of architecture to imbue his works with added meaning would be fully realized. Once in Rome, David would understand the power, harmony, and sentiment

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18 Ibid., 42.



that architecture could provide. Architecture in his paintings would, from that point on, take on an important, often metaphorical role.

As part of this study we will explore some of the major eighteenth-century French architects, theories, and structures David knew and was inspired by. Situated between the Classical Age and the beginnings of industrialization, architecture of Enlightenment France found itself in a transitional position. Inextricably linked during this period were notions of tradition and innovation, that is, the attitude of eighteenth-century architects towards the so-called “classical manner” that came before and its relevance to contemporary architecture. Developments during this era led to the architecture of the Revolutionary period, to neoclassicism and eclecticism, while the prevailing architectural taste of the *Grande Siècle* – epitomized by Mansart, Lemercier and Le Vau – would fall out of favor.<sup>19</sup> Because of his interest in architecture and the significant role it played in French culture, David was acutely aware of architectural developments in France during his own time. Architecture created during this period – including Jacques-Germain Soufflot’s Church of Ste. Geneviève (as well as its transformation into the Panthéon during the Revolution) and the Paris *barrières* by Claude-Nicolas Ledoux – embodied the transformations in thought and behavior that resonated in the late eighteenth-century.

The general populace, regardless of social class or intellectual capacity, was provided with visual equivalents of Enlightenment ideas through architecture – views that were previously reserved only for the privileged few.<sup>20</sup> The fine arts were considered, and to a certain extent remain, elitist. Throughout the eighteenth-century, however, thousands of people from all walks of life viewed works at the annual Salons in Paris. Yet works were frequently commissioned for private enjoyment by wealthy patrons – not

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<sup>19</sup> Antoine Picon, *French Architects and Engineers in the Age of Enlightenment*, trans. Martin Thom (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1992), 1-7.

<sup>20</sup> Allan Braham, *The Architecture of the French Enlightenment* (Berkeley: The University of California Press, 1980), 9.

for the benefit of the general public. It is this element of exclusivity that scholars suggest separates architecture from painting and sculpture. This concept of “art for the people” is exemplified in David’s exhibition of *The Sabine Women* (a work which this study will investigate in depth) by which the artist wanted to free art from the constraints of private patronage by providing a public exhibition independent of the Salon. Regardless of rank, the general populace was able to “share” in the patronage of the painting by paying a modest entry fee, thereby participating with the art both financially and aesthetically. It is the primary goal of architecture to serve society and be visible in the public domain, making it a supreme vehicle by which the new thoughts and ideas of the Enlightenment could be expressed to the population at large.

The Enlightenment led to various transformations in society and the buildings it constructed. Theaters, hospitals, and prisons increased in societal importance during a time when the strict rules of *convenance* that had governed French domestic architecture were crumbling along with established authority. More private buildings were being erected and patronage began to shift from the French monarchy to bankers and tax farmers.<sup>21</sup> Cities throughout France including Lyon, Bordeaux, and Marseille experienced a boom in population. By the later part of the eighteenth-century, the population of Paris had exceeded half a million people, pushing the city’s borders west and north beyond its original walls. With narrow, foul-smelling streets and with many districts void of fountains and squares, the city of Paris lacked embellishment and was in desperate need of reform. By and large, Paris remained a product of pre-classical times. The city needed to establish a system or design – a plan by which architectural harmony could be achieved.<sup>22</sup> In *Symbolic Space: French Enlightenment Architecture and Its*

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21 Ibid., 9-10.

22 Wolfgang Herrmann, *Laugier and Eighteenth Century French Theory* (London: A. Zwemmer, 1962), 136-7.

*Legacy*, Richard Etlin describes an eighteenth-century vision of Paris (one which would be realized decades later under Louis Napoleon and Baron Haussmann) as well as various architectural proposals surrounding the reordering of the city:

...the west-east axis would extend from the Pont de Neuilly to the hill of the Etoile, down the Champs-Élysées to the place Louis XV (now place de la Concorde), then through the Tuileries Garden to the Louvre, across the city to the Bastille, on the place du Trône (now place de la Nation), and out along the avenue de Vincennes. Long before Napoleon's triumphal arch was raised on the hill at the Etoile, this eminence had been the subject of numerous proposals for colossal monuments, including a triumphal arch, an amphitheater, an obelisk, a giant elephant, and an immense fountain. The arid gardens between the Etoile and the Tuileries Palace were the subject of numerous projects of embellishment, which ranged from André Le Notre's plan to dig a canal through the middle of the Tuileries Garden to Pierre Chaussard's proposal for an Elysium to dead military heroes beside a meandering stream that would be added to the Champs-Élysées.<sup>23</sup>

The inhabitants of Paris wanted their city not only to be aesthetically pleasing, but also a suitable place to live. Up until this point, town planning had rarely been addressed in French architectural writings. Laugier, a Jesuit priest, moved to Paris in 1744 and began to lecture on and write about artistic concerns. Laugier argued that all architecture should be based on the so-called "primitive hut", comprised of the column, entablature, and pediment.<sup>24</sup> Each part of a structure should have a clearly visible support beneath it, emphasizing a clarity and rational design that would lead the fine arts back to nature. Such a theory suggests Laugier's knowledge of the Rousseauian idea that human beings have regressed from the simplicity found in their natural, primitive state – an idea that,

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23 Richard A. Etlin, *Symbolic Space: French Enlightenment Architecture and Its Legacy* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1994), 5. See Yvan Christ, *Paris des utopias*, rev. ed. (Paris: Balland, 1977), 120-121; Christian Dupavillon and Francis Lacloche, *Le Triomphe des Arcs* (Paris: Gallimard, 1989), 1; and Pierre Chaussard, *Monuments de l'héroïsme français; nécessité de ramener à un plan unique, et de coordiner à ceux déjà existents, les monuments qu'on propose d'élever à Paris sur l'étendue comprise entre les Tuileries de l'Etoile...* (Paris, year X).

24 Braham, *The Architecture of the French Enlightenment*, 48.

we shall see, was also expressed by David in the figures and architecture depicted in his many of his paintings.

We can imagine that David, as a citizen of Paris who had access to architects in his youth via his family and later befriended architects such as Percier and Fontaine and architectural theorists such as Quatremère de Quincy, would have been aware of discussions to improve and embellish the city of Paris. While it is not the intent of this study to reexamine the well-studied architectural harmonization that took place in France during the eighteenth-century, I would like to briefly call attention to a select few building projects and improvements that occurred in Paris which, I feel certain, influenced David and his interest in architecture: the *parvis* projects of the 1750s, the development of the Place Louis XV, and the importance of the cemetery movement on the urban landscape. As regular districts were being developed on the outskirts of the city to accommodate the surge in population growth, a simultaneous regularization of the inner city was undertaken in the eighteenth-century, which included a number of *parvis* projects intended to isolate major Parisian buildings (including the Louvre, Notre-Dame, and Saint-Sulpice) from encroaching buildings.<sup>25</sup> This freeing of the aforementioned structures from surrounding buildings of lesser importance created a sense of architectural theatricality, that is, feelings of revelation or awakening in the viewer – be it a spiritual revelation or one related to the *gloire* of the monarchy. As we shall see, the idea of architectural theatricality, the ability of a work of architecture to actively involve and subsequently inspire the viewer, would become a central tenant in David's paintings of the 1780s.

I would suggest that of unquestionable influence to David, the way he viewed architecture and its importance in eighteenth-century French culture, was the

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<sup>25</sup> *Paris: genèse d'un paysage*, ed. L. Bergeron (Paris: Picard, 1989), 156, 161-3, 186.

development of the Place Louis XV (today the Place de la Concorde) by Ange-Jacques Gabriel (Fig. 3).<sup>26</sup> Arguably the most important building project in Paris during the latter eighteenth-century, Gabriel had the immense task of designing the *place* (and its accompanying statue of Louis XV) on the Esplanade between the Champs-Élysées and the Tuileries Gardens. This location is significant, because the Place Louis XV – its equestrian statue, the elegant classical facades of the two large *hôtels* by Gabriel (which were inspired by the east façade of the Louvre), and the Rue Royale – is a mere four blocks from the Louvre where David was residing with Sedaine in the years preceding his departure for Rome. We can imagine David walking on axis from the Louvre, leisurely making his way through the Tuileries Gardens, only to be met by Gabriel’s breathtaking display of architectural splendor and urban design. Indeed, the scale of Gabriel’s project was unknown anywhere else in Paris. Its architectural significance as well as the important role of the *place royale* in French culture would not have been lost on David. As this study will explore, the multifunctional purposes of *places royales* – their ability to impress the viewer, give order to the urban environment, exist as a space for the happenings of daily life, and glorify the king – was well-known to David and would be utilized by the artist in his key role as pageant-master of the Republic during the Revolution.

One of the most extensive improvements to the city of Paris that took place in the second half of the eighteenth-century was the closing of the old Parisian cemeteries, beginning with the Cimetière des Saints-Innocents in 1780.<sup>27</sup> The closing of the Parisian

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<sup>26</sup> See Richard L. Cleary, *The Place Royale and Urban Design in the Ancien Régime* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1999), 97-107, 209-242.

<sup>27</sup> Erica Naginski, *Sculpture and the Enlightenment* (Los Angeles: Getty Research Institute, 2009), 49. For the most extensive discussion on the cemetery movement in Paris in the late eighteenth-century, see Richard A. Etlin, *The Architecture of Death: The Transformation of the Cemetery in Eighteenth-Century Paris* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1984), 199.

cemeteries was part of a movement by its promoters (including Diderot in the *Encyclopédie* as well as medical professionals) to move parishes cemeteries outside the city walls and signaled their gradual removal from Church jurisdiction. Aside from the central concern of public hygiene, the cemetery movement was a reflection on the late eighteenth-century obsession with the cult of death, which included debates concerning the design, location, and function of the cemetery in urban spaces. As Richard Etlin has discussed, the presence of the dead served an important function in late eighteenth-century France, namely, as *memento mori* or reminders of human mortality.<sup>28</sup> The architectural designs for both cemeteries and funerary monuments during this period reflect austere, grand, and geometric sensibilities, as well as an interest in the pyramid and its importance as a commemorative symbol.<sup>29</sup> This aesthetic preference for the pyramid (one rooted in the architecture of both ancient Egypt and Rome) would continue to be utilized by artists and architects during the Revolution – including David. More will be said on this in the chapters that follow.

#### Organization of the Dissertation

The dissertation is organized into five chapters. The first chapter, “David, Italy, and the Roman Albums,” emphasizes David’s period of study at the French Academy in Rome and focuses attention on drawings completed by the artist during his first trip to Italy. These drawings, I suggest, present us with an insight into David’s fascination with architecture, as well as provide important evidence as to the artists and works that inspired him during this pivotal period in his artistic development. The second chapter is devoted to an investigation of David’s most celebrated paintings of the 1780s, including the *Oath of the Horatii*. More than a straightforward recounting of the most active

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<sup>28</sup> Etlin, *Symbolic Space*, 148.

<sup>29</sup> Etlin, *The Architecture of Death*, 77.

decade in David's career, my argument centers on the notion that David continually referred to his architectural drawings executed in Italy in an effort to imbue these compositions with added sentiment and meaning. "David and the Architecture of Revolution," the third chapter of the dissertation, focuses on how David continued to be inspired by the art, literature, architecture, and urban planning of Antiquity in his pursuit of a new iconography – one unique to the events and circumstances of the 1789 Revolution. Little studied sources of architectural influence on David's aesthetic during these tumultuous years of political and personal struggles are addressed.

Chapter Four explores the importance of architecture in David's works created during the years immediately following the Revolution. Entitled "Reinvention, 1793-1799," this chapter focuses on three projects David undertook while incarcerated – *The View from the Luxembourg*, *Homer Reciting His Verses to the Greeks*, and *The Intervention of the Sabine Women* – and investigates how the artist relied on the language of architecture in each to reflect on contemporary issues and internal struggles. In the last chapter of the dissertation, "From Hero to Usurper: David, Napoleon, and the Disillusionment of Empire," various sources of inspiration for David's monumental *Coronation of Napoleon and Josephine* are explored, including the importance of architecture in the formulation of the artist's concealed message of disillusionment. Indeed, this chapter asserts that the *Coronation* – arguably David's most famous work – was not subservient to the ideals of empire and a work of mere historical illustration. I take the radical position that, through the use of architecture, an awareness of the built environment, and a knowledge of art history, David's *Coronation* in subtle yet unambiguous way portrays Napoleon as a usurper and an illegitimate new monarch. Rather than an image of empirical glorification (a position that is almost unanimously supported in the scholarship on the painting), this chapter demonstrates that David viewed Napoleon as no better than the Bourbon dynasty he sought to replace. In conclusion, this study will suggest that David's use of architecture does not end with the

*Coronation.* Rather, he continued to use architecture in meaningful and symbolic ways during the Restoration while exiled in Brussels. We shall see that this unique and innovative architectural language in painting will not end with David, but will continue on in the work of his most celebrated students well into the nineteenth-century.

Through the course of this study, I seek to demonstrate that David was aware of the role architecture played in the late eighteenth- and early nineteenth-centuries, and was familiar with contemporary architects and theories. Though in the depiction of architecture, in his drawings and paintings, David promotes the ideas of the Enlightenment. Comparisons between painting, architecture, and representations of architecture in painting are often left unexplored. More frequently than not, scholars choose to examine the two mediums separately, as if to say that painting and architecture are entities unto themselves and remain unaffected by each other. Often architecture is considered as a means to establish a historical setting or background. However, this study suggests that much more is at stake. In the art of David, painting and architecture are not dichotomies but rather are inextricably linked and together can embody the thoughts, pursuits, and passions of an age.



## CHAPTER 1: DAVID, ITALY AND THE ROMAN ALBUMS

An architect who does not draw the figure can adequately compose a regular and pure Architecture; but it will always be cold... In a word, figure drawing is the source of Sublime in Architecture.<sup>30</sup>

### Introduction

After a series of failed attempts at obtaining the Academy's coveted Prix de Rome, Jacques-Louis David finally won the prestigious competition with *Antiochus and Stratonice* in 1774. Determined not to be seduced by the antique, David left for Rome in 1775, having denigrated the art of the past as controlling, cold and rigid. Yet as a student at the French Academy in Rome from 1775-80, he came to embrace the classical aesthetic he had previously resisted. While in Rome the young artist made a vast number of drawings that he would use as a visual vocabulary and which would serve as a continual source of inspiration throughout his career. This compendium of drawings, gathered together in what are known as the Roman albums, although referred to in the David literature, have been little studied.<sup>31</sup> This is a remarkable lacuna in David studies for the drawings offer precious insights into what the artist observed during his lengthy

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30 Charles-Axel Guillaumot, *Remarques sur un livre intitulé, Observations sur l'architecture de M. l'abbé Laugier* (Paris: De Hansy le Jeune, 1768), 51-53: "Un Architecte qui ne dessine point la figure, pourra bien composer de l'Architecture régulière et pure; mais elle sera toujours froide... En un mot, le dessein de figure est le germe du Sublime en Architecture." English translation in Naginski, *Sculpture and the Enlightenment*, 7.

31 After David's death in 1825, David's sons Jules and Eugène initialed the extant drawings from their father's first sojourn to Italy and compiled them into a dozen so-called "Roman albums". See Rosenberg and Prat, *Jacques-Louis David, 1748-1825*. The existing albums can be found in the collections of the following institutions: Album 1 -- Cambridge, Fogg Art Museum, Harvard; Album 3 -- Stockholm, Nationalmuseum; Album 4 -- Washington, The National Gallery of Art; Albums 7 and 9 -- Paris, Musée du Louvre, Département des Arts graphiques; Album 8 -- New York, The Pierpont Morgan Library; Album 11 -- Los Angeles, The Getty Research Institute. The location of Albums 2 and 12 is currently unknown, while Albums 6 and 10 have been disassembled and are located in various collections. Album 5 was recently discovered by Pierre Rosenberg and Benjamin Peronnet. See Pierre Rosenberg and Benjamin Peronnet, "Un album inédit de David," *Revue de l'art*, no. 142 (Feb. 2004): 45-83.

Roman sojourn and reveal to us the individual choices he made about what to record, interpret and remember.

In this chapter I will examine a fascinating, recurrent element found in the albums, namely the artist's multifarious representations of architecture. This corpus of imagery remains the most neglected and least understood of all the drawings for scholars, when they do discuss the Roman albums, tend to focus on the figural studies after Renaissance paintings and antique sculpture.<sup>32</sup> In studying the Roman albums we notice that many drawings accurately depict architectural structures that David sketched on site, including a large number of antique Roman buildings. In addition to copying whole structures, complex interior scenes and architectural motifs, David drew numerous scenes throughout Italy that included cityscapes and landscapes. It is curious to note that human figures are absent from a majority of his architectural imagery (more will be said about this later). The large number of drawings from David's two visits to Italy reveals the artist's architectural propensities and his desire to capture architectural detail in an authentic manner.<sup>33</sup>

In 2002, Pierre Rosenberg and Louis-Antoine Prat published the first comprehensive catalogue of David's drawings, including the extant drawings from his Roman albums. While catalogues of David's drawings existed prior to this point – most notably by Arlette Sérullaz, who concentrated on David's drawings in the Louvre's collection – never before had scholarship produced such a vast and, moreover, readily

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32 For the most comprehensive study on David in Rome, see *David e Roma*. Most recently, see Christopher Johns, "The Roman Experience of Jacques-Louis David, 1775-80," in *Jacques-Louis David: New Perspectives*, ed. by Dorothy Johnson (Newark: University of Delaware Press, 2006), 58-70. See also Heidi E. Kraus, "David's Roman *Vedute*," in *Studies in Eighteenth-Century Culture*, vol. 38 (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 2009): 173-198.

33 David's second trip to Italy took place from 1784-5. He was accompanied by Drouais, Wicar and Debret, also a student of painting and a young relation of David's. See Thomas Crow, *Emulation: David, Drouais, and Girodet in the Art of Revolutionary France*, rev. ed. (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2006), 31.

accessible record of the artist's thought process as it presents itself through the medium of drawing.<sup>34</sup> Upon careful scrutiny of Rosenberg and Prat's immense two-tome catalogue, the vast number of drawings by David that contain prominent and dramatic architectural components – particularly from his Roman albums – is striking. At first glance, one might mistake the drawings for mere student exercises. Yet these architectural renderings – almost portrait-like in their expression of sentiment – reveal the artist's passionate engagement with architecture and an understanding of its great potential to express emotions and ideas.

We will look at a several salient examples from David's Roman albums that reveal the artist's remarkable and intense involvement with architecture during his time as a *pensionnaire* and consider them within the context of the Roman *vedute* genre, made popular in the late eighteenth century by artists such as Panini, Piranesi and Robert. In his earliest paintings produced prior to his Italian sojourn, David, in accord with stylistic norms of his time, used architecture as a decorative backdrop or setting for historical narratives (as one finds, for example, in the *Death of Seneca* from 1773, or *Antiochus and Stratonice* from 1774). Following his first Roman sojourn, architectural components contained within his paintings begin to assert themselves and take on a new, dramatic role in the narrative, often conveying various symbolic and metaphorical meanings. The architectural drawings from the Roman albums mark a decisive moment in David's career when the medium of architecture receives an important, newfound purpose.

#### From Emulation to Invention: David and the Academy

Much has been written on the origins and development of the French Royal Academy of Painting and Sculpture and, for that matter, David's pivotal role in its

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<sup>34</sup> See Arlette Sérullaz, *Inventaire général des dessins. École française. Dessins de Jacques-Louis David, 1748-1825* (Paris: Réunion des musées nationaux, 1991).

abolishment.<sup>35</sup> While it is not the purpose of this study to reduce such a well-studied subject as the Royal Academy to a few pages, nevertheless certain aspects of this formidable institution – namely its founding principles and practices – must be reiterated in order to provide a context for David’s Roman albums and concurrently illustrate their uniqueness. In 1648 (due in large part to the international acclaim achieved by Simon Vouet and Nicholas Poussin), French artists founded the Academy in Paris and, like Vasari a century earlier, seized the opportunity to achieve an elevated position in society. Modeled on the Italian academies instituted during the Renaissance, it was the desire of the Academy’s founders to escape the rigid system of the medieval guilds in an effort to raise the status of the artist from a position of mere craftsman to one of educated gentleman.<sup>36</sup> As irony would have it, the stifling conventions and restrictions placed on these artists – their choice of subject matter, style and technique – in the end, proved no better than the system it was designed to replace.

The early life of the Royal Academy proved problematic, as it was plagued by financial difficulties, material woes and a monarchy that paid it scant attention – despite the Academy’s risky decision to pledge their allegiance to the throne during the Fronde. It was Jean-Baptiste Colbert (chief administrator of royal building projects under Louis XIV) and not the king who realized the immense potential of the fine arts in general and the Academy in particular to celebrate the grandness of the French monarchy. For

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35 For seminal texts on the origins and development of the French Academy, see Henri Lapauze, *Histoire de l’Académie de France...Rome*, 2 vols. (Paris, Librairie Plon: 1924); Nikolaus Pevsner, *Academies of Art, Past and Present* (Cambridge, 1940; reprint, New York, 1973); Jacques Thuillier, “Académie et classicisme en France: Les débuts de l’Académie royale de peinture et de sculpture (1648-63),” *Il mito del classicismo nel seicento*, ed. S. Bottari, (Messina and Florence, 1964), pp. 181-209; *Procès-verbaux de l’Académie royale de peinture et de sculpture 1648-1792*, ed. A. de Montaignon (Paris, 1875), 10 vols.; and Antoine Schnapper, “Le portrait à l’Académie au temps de Louis XIV,” *XVIIIe siècle* 183 (January-March 1983): 97-123.

36 Antoine Schnapper, “The Debut of the Royal Academy of Painting and Sculpture,” in *The French Academy: Classicism and Its Antagonists*, ed. by June Hargrove (Cranbury: Associated University Presses, Inc., 1990), 28-9.

Colbert, it was the king's duty to protect the arts and to ensure France's preeminent position ahead of Italy that, Colbert asserted, had held the scepter of the arts for far too long.<sup>37</sup> In an effort to exert governmental control over the arts, a hierarchical system of art education was established and Salon exhibitions were held regularly beginning in 1737.<sup>38</sup> In addition to the study of painting, antique sculpture and classical architecture, students would take courses in mathematics, geometry, perspective and anatomy. Classical themes were upheld above all others and, for those ambitious painters who were capable of producing such complex narrative compositions, the Academy would afford them their highest award: the *Prix de Rome*.

A meeting place, cultural embassy, workshop and school of art, the French Academy in Rome would become both the visible and tangible expression of French aesthetic aspirations.<sup>39</sup> So important was the Royal Academy's Italian counterpart that, in their entry for the Academy in the famed *Encyclopédie*, Denis Diderot and Jean Lerond d'Alembert proclaimed, "...It has been one of the greatest causes of the perfection of art in France."<sup>40</sup> Founded in 1666, the primary purpose of the French Academy in Rome was to receive a small number of students (usually around twelve) from the Royal Academy in Paris – all having received the *Prix de Rome* either in painting, sculpture or architecture. Under the guidance of a director, the *Prix de Rome* laureates would spend up to five years in Rome where they would come face-to-face with

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37 Ibid., 29-33.

38 See Crow, *Painters and Public Life*, 1-22.

39 Paul Duro, "The Lure of Rome: The Academic Copy and the Académie de France in the Nineteenth Century," in *Art and the Academy in the Nineteenth Century*, ed. Rafael Cardoso Denis and Colin Trodd (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 2000), 133.

40 Victor Carlson, *Hubert Robert: Drawings and Watercolors*, exh. cat. (Washington, D.C.: National Gallery of Art, 1978), 18. For the original French source, see Denis Diderot and Jean Lerond d'Alembert, *Encyclopédie* (Paris: Pellet, 1777), 238.

the works of Michelangelo, Vignola, Domenichino and Raphael – artists who, along with works by the ancient Greeks, it was argued, could provide greater instruction than any modern master. In their entry, Diderot and d’Alembert elaborated on the importance of the Italian sojourn for the young artist:

For artists, Italy is truly a classical world. Everything there attracts the painter’s eye, everything teaches him, everything arouses his attention. Aside from modern statues, what a great number of ancient ones are contained within the walls of magnificent Rome, these ancient statues that, by the exact proportion and the elegant variety of their forms, served as models for the artists of the recent period and must serve as models for all those of all centuries!<sup>41</sup>

This idea of *émulation* – copying after Old Masters as means of preparation for the making of an original work of art – was central to the Academy’s artistic ideology. While a large number of paintings by skilled Italian masters existed in France, these works were frequently in royal or private collections where access was often limited. In Rome, a *pensionnaire* need only walk out the doors of the Academy to be confronted by great paintings of the Italian Renaissance with each church, monastery and palazzo serving as a gallery for the artist to explore with sketchbook in hand.

It is important to reiterate that drawing was considered to be the pillar of French artistic education. A mastery of drawing – specifically drawing from life – was an essential step before the student could advance to the higher mediums of painting and sculpture. In his *Abrégé de la vie des plus fameux peintres*, first published in 1754, Antoine-Joseph Dezallier d’Argenville stressed the importance placed on academic drawing and its place within the process of artistic creation:

Drawings, infinitely superior to prints, occupy a level exactly between them and paintings; these are the first ideas of a painter, the first figure of his imagination, his style, his spirit, his way of thinking... Drawings demonstrate the artist’s fecundity,

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41 Carlson, 18. For original French source, see Diderot and d’Alembert, 239.

the liveliness of his genius, his nobility, the level of his sentiments, and the facility with which he expresses them.<sup>42</sup>

Despite the disdain for the Academy that David would acquire and continued to possess for the remainder of his career, he nonetheless recognized the considerable value of drawing and composition over execution. In her seminal text, *Jacques-Louis David: Art and Metamorphosis*, Dorothy Johnson elegantly describes the central role David assigned to drawing:

The basic principle of David's own art education—like that of his contemporaries—was drawing, considered the foundation of academic art. David's rejection of the prevailing style of academic drawing he had learned at the Royal Academy, and his adaptation in Rome of a personal drawing style based on the compelling contour of the sculpted figure, also constitute essential aspects of his artistic reform... For as early as 1779 he began to understand and use drawing as a separate artistic register distinct from the expressive field of painting. Throughout his career David would consistently use drawing as a form of experimentation and exploration of ideas, an alternate vehicle for conveying meaning.<sup>43</sup>

David used the medium of drawing in a vastly different way than his contemporaries and, according to Johnson, this was do in large part to his exploration of corporality – his veritable obsession with “the idea of the eloquent body”.<sup>44</sup> David's modernity can best be discerned by examining his drawings; they serve as a testament to his constant evolution in style and shifting ideas towards the nature of representation – both the representation of the human body and, I would add, the representation of architecture. It is critical to remember that during David's first Roman period, drawing took the place of painting as the artist's primary mode of artistic expression and representation. For this reason, his Roman albums, and more specifically the numerous depictions of architecture

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42 Pierre Rosenberg, *From Drawing to Painting: Poussin, Watteau, Fragonard and Ingres* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2000), 66. For the original French source, see Antoine-Joseph Dezallier d'Argenville, *Abrégé de la vie des plus fameux peintres...* rev. ed., 4 vols. (Paris, 1762), I: xxxviii.

43 Johnson, *Art in Metamorphosis*, 8.

44 Ibid.

contained therein, demand our attention. “Feeling and drawing,” David would write to his pupil Wicar in 1798, “here are the true masters to learn how to move your brush.”<sup>45</sup>

### David à Rome

In 1775, the year David departed for Italy, his teacher Joseph-Marie Vien was appointed to the directorship of the French Academy in Rome.<sup>46</sup> On 2 October Vien, Mme. Vien and three of his pupils – David, Peyron and Bonvoisin – left Paris for Rome. Following a brief stop in Lyon to pick up another pupil, the party continued onward to Rome via Turin, Parma, Bologna and Florence, arriving at their final destination on 4 November 1775.<sup>47</sup> The party arrived at the Palazzo Mancini on the via del Corso, which had housed the French Academy in Rome since 1725.<sup>48</sup> There is little evidence to suggest that the five years David spent as a student at the French Academy was a pleasant period in his life. David was hotheaded and experienced periods of depression, resulting

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<sup>45</sup> Jean-Pierre Mouilleseaux, “David: A Classical Painter Against the Academy and a Teacher of the French School,” in *The French Academy: Classicism and Its Antagonists*, ed. June Hargrove (Cranbury, N.J.: Associated University Presses, Inc., 1990), 137. For the original French source, see Daniel and Guy Wildenstein, *Documents complémentaires au catalogue de l’oeuvre de Louis David* (Paris: Fondation Wildenstein, 1973), no. 207.

<sup>46</sup> On the relationship between David and Vien, see Robert Rosenblum, “David and Vien: Master/Pupil, Father/Son,” in *Jacques-Louis David: New Perspectives*, 45-57.

<sup>47</sup> Brookner, 51. Shortly after his arrival in Rome, Vien was to be in charge of twenty-two students: the painters Bonvoisin, Giroux du Paris, David, Jombert, Lemonnier, Peyron, J.-B. Regnault, and Suvée; the sculptors Bacarit, Delaistre, Dupasquier, La Bussière, Lamarie, Segla, Suzanne and Millot; the architects Jean-Louis Després, Deseine, de Gisors, de Lannoy, Le Moine, Renard and Crucy. Lapauze, 1: 359. In a letter from Vien to the comte d’Angiviller (who served as the surintendant des bâtiments du roi) shortly after arriving in Rome, the new director’s goal of reestablishing institutional discipline at the Academy and, moreover, elevating its reputation is made clear: “Cette maison,” Vien writes, “ne respire que l’étude; je ne lesserai point refroidir cette chaleur-ci proper à faire des grands hommes lorsqu’ils sont nais pour le devenir.” Anatole de Montaiglon and Jules Guiffrey, eds., *Correspondance des Directeurs de l’Académie de France à Rome avec les Surintendants des Bâtiments*, 18 vols. (Paris: Librairie de la Société de l’Histoire de l’Art Français), 13: 164.

<sup>48</sup> Johns, 58-9.



in feelings of isolation and anguish due to his resentment of increased academic regulation and control. Although unquestionably strict and demanding, Vien nevertheless cared deeply for David's professional and psychological well-fare. It was Vien who set his pupil on a rigorous drawing regime – one which led to the discovery of a uniquely personal drawing style that would ignite neoclassical thought and practice.

The via del Corso stretches approximately eight blocks from the piazza del Popolo at the east end to the piazza Venezia at the west. Buildings located on the Corso are today, as they were in David's time, rich with architectural styles and significance. The interiors of these structures contain some of the most important art from Renaissance and Baroque Rome.<sup>49</sup> To the left of the Palazzo Mancini sits the small church of San Marcello al Corso, whose late seventeenth century façade was designed by the influential Roman architect Carlo Fontana.<sup>50</sup> Yet our interest lies not with the church structure itself, but rather with a series of paintings contained in its interior. Following his decoration of the Mattei Chapel in Santa Maria della Consolazione in 1556, Taddeo Zuccari was commissioned by Mario Frangipani to decorate his family chapel in San Marcello al Corso. A classic example of a Cinquecento independent chapel decorative program, the Frangipani Chapel was completed by Federico Zuccari following his brother's death in 1566.<sup>51</sup> The decorative paintings found in this small family burial chapel illustrate the life of St. Paul and, with the exception of the slate altarpiece (which depicts Paul's conversion), are executed in fresco.

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<sup>49</sup> It is also worth noting that the Church of Santa Maria del Popolo, whose centrally-planned Chigi Chapel (1513-16) by Raphael serves as a masterpiece of Italian sixteenth-century architecture, is located in the piazza del Popolo.

<sup>50</sup> John Pinto, "Architecture and Urbanism," in *Art in Rome in the Eighteenth Century*, eds. Edgar Peters Bowron and Joseph J. Rishel (New York: Rizzoli, 2000), 127.

<sup>51</sup> Cristina Acidini Luchinat, "Pitture di Taddeo e Federico: il tempo della commissione Frangipani," in *Taddeo e Federico Zuccari: fratelli pittori del Cinquecento*, 2 vols. (Rome: Jandi Sapi Editori, 1998), vol. 1, 59-78.

David copied at least two paintings from the Frangipani Chapel cycle in his Roman albums: *The Blinding of Elymas* and *The Healing of the Cripple at Lystra* (Figs. 4-5). Both scenes (located on the left and right walls of the chapel, respectively) represent miraculous deeds of St. Paul as recorded in the *Acts of the Apostles* – scenes which emphasize the power of faith and ultimately, the Church. In addition to the robust Michelangesque figures, what is particularly noteworthy in these paintings is Taddeo's complex use of architecture, which acts like a stage set for the unfolding scene. In addition to David's interest in the corporal expressivity of the figures, in both drawings he has paid careful attention to the classical architecture both in the foreground and – especially in reference to *The Healing of the Cripple at Lystra* – the architecture in the distance, remaining faithful to the original paintings. With the central idea of *émulation* in mind, these two drawings in David's albums reveal to us that his interest in copying the Frangipani Chapel paintings was not limited to the human body. David was also interested in the important role architecture plays in both paintings, not only in establishing context but also how Taddeo successfully and believably anchored the figures within a constructed architectural space, thereby serving as an important Renaissance prototype that David could consult later in his career.

#### Poussin and the Establishment of Italian View Painting

David was one in a long line of celebrated French painters who studied in Italy and sketched architectural structures as part of his artistic training. Nicolas Poussin, who first reached Rome in 1624, comes to mind as an important predecessor and inspiration for David. In addition to his unmistakable clarity and directness of form, Poussin revolutionized French history painting through his idealized vision of classical antiquity, one that he enriched with realism, a strong emotional presence and a desire for archaeological exactitude. During his early years in the Eternal City, Poussin's aesthetic achieved this new sense of clarity and precision due in large part to his examination of

paintings by Annibale Carracci, Domenichino and Pietro da Cortona.<sup>52</sup> A brief examination of select works executed by Poussin during his first years in Rome will demonstrate the extent to which the artist was influenced by classical architecture and, above all, the Italian landscape. The seventeenth century landscape views of Rome and its environs completed by Poussin would prove vital in igniting a surge of interest in the *vedute* genre during the eighteenth century, a subject that will have a great effect on David's Roman albums.

Thought to be one of his earliest Roman drawings (although its attribution is debated by some), Poussin's drawing entitled *The Ponte Molle* appears to have been completed hastily, as if rendered by a nervous hand (Fig. 6). The loose, bold lines and dynamic use of space seems at odds with the linear clarity and structural rigidity that characterize earlier drawings by the artist.<sup>53</sup> *The Ponte Molle* drawing represents a suppression by Poussin – all be it a temporary one – of the rigid geometric structure of the French style and suggests a new freedom of expression found under the Italian sun.<sup>54</sup> In later sketches of ancient monuments and buildings, like his drawing of *The Arch of Janus Quadrifons*, one senses a greater awareness of the effects of light and shadow as well as a heightened interest in the accuracies of conveying structural volume and texture. His use of line has become thinner, more crisp than in the *Ponte Molle* drawing and his

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52 G. Perocco, "G. B. Piranesi and XVIII century landscape artists in Rome," in *Piranesi and the XVIII Century View of Rome* (Rome: Artemide Edizioni, 1998), 16.

53 A drawing by Poussin in the Musée Condé in Chantilly entitled *View of Fort-Saint-André, Villeneuve-les Avignon from the Rhone*, provides an example of the artist's treatment of landscape prior to his arrival in Italy. As Konrad Oberhuber has observed, Poussin's Avignon drawing is characterized by the arrangement of space in flat layers in which a foreground, middle ground and background are clearly distinguished. Aside from demonstrating the artist's ability to render movement within a landscape, in *The Ponte Molle* drawing (in comparison to his Avignon rendering) Poussin has achieved a greater sense of visual unity through his dynamic use of form and space. Konrad Oberhuber, *Poussin: The Early Years in Rome* (New York: Hudson Hills Press, 1988), 63-5.

54 *Ibid.*, 65.

choice of perspective and arrangement of space provides for an interesting, complex view of the monument.

It is with the Roman landscape that Poussin found his greatest inspiration and the perfect backdrop for his compositions, evident in such early mythological paintings as *Venus and Adonis*, *Midas Before Bacchus*, and *Amor Vincit Omnia*. In the latter, Poussin used elements of nature to create a sense of unity, tying together the foreground, middle ground and background. Despite a complex and ordered arrangement of space, Poussin's idealized figures appear at ease in the equally idealized Arcadian landscape. From the treatment of the Italian light to the rendering of the trees, every aspect of nature within the painting is treated with a soft, delicate touch. In Italy, Poussin completed an endless number of studies after nature and these drawings reveal the artist's interest in the structure of landscape, its varied textures and the play of light and shadow amidst natural elements like trees and forest pathways. In 1741, 169 landscapes of Rome and its surroundings completed by Poussin in Italy were auctioned at the estate sale of Pierre Crozat.<sup>55</sup> Pierre-Jean Mariette penned the sale catalogue and noted the following in regards to the importance Poussin placed on drawing and specifically the drawing of landscapes:

There are very few finished drawings by Poussin. When he drew, his only aim was to put his ideas down on paper, and they flowed in such an abundance that a single theme provided him with an infinity of different sketches. A simple line, sometimes accompanied by a few strokes of wash, was enough for him to express clearly what his imagination had conceived... The indispensable need to go and study the subject in place led him to make a great number of very careful Landscape drawings from Nature. He not only observed forms religiously, but he devoted extreme attention to capturing the lively effects of light, which he transposed to his paintings with great success. Furnished with these Studies, he next composed in his Studio these beautiful Landscapes, in which the viewer could think himself transported to

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<sup>55</sup> Rosenberg, *From Drawing to Painting*, 101-2.

ancient Greece, and in the changed Valleys described by the Poets.<sup>56</sup>

Many Italian landscape drawings by Poussin depict various scenes one might encounter while venturing throughout the fields and forests of the Roman Campagna, others show carefully framed views of the city and its surroundings rendered from a considerable distance. In *View of Rome from the Monte Mario*, Poussin does not appear interested in accurately drawing identifiable Roman monuments (Fig. 7). Rather landscape drawings of this type, we can feel certain, must have aided him in constructing the pastoral backdrops for many of his paintings. It is interesting to note that as Poussin's career progresses, so does the use of architecture within his paintings. Poussin would later use careful studies of architecture, such as his view of Raphael's Villa Madama, as sources for major backgrounds in his paintings – in this case, as scholars have suggested, as an architectural setting for his *Death of Germanicus*.<sup>57</sup> Just as Poussin utilized landscape drawings for backgrounds in his painted compositions, he would come to use precise architectural drawings for the same purpose.

In his Roman albums, we can begin to catch a glimpse of the important role that Poussin's architectural views would play later in David's career, specifically in reference to *The Sabine Women* (1799), which will be thoroughly examined later. Entitled *Paysage avec une fortification et deux personnages au premier plan*, David has constructed a

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56 Ibid., 103. "L'on a un très-petit nombre de Dessesins finis du Poussin. Quand il dessinoit, il ne songeoit qu'à fixer ses idées, qui partoient avec tant d'abondance, que le même sujet lui fournissoit sur le champ une infinité de pensées différentes. Un simple trait, quelquefois accompagné de quelques coups de lavis, lui suffisoit pour exprimer avec netteté, ce que son imagination avoit conçu... L'indispensable nécessité d'aller étudier sur le lieu le modèle [sic], lui a fait dessiner un grand nombre de Païsages d'après Nature avec un soin infini. Non-seulement il devenoit alors religieux observateur des formes; mais il avoit encore une attention extrême à saisir des effets piquans de lumiere, dont il faisoit une application heureuse dans ses tableaux. Muni de ces Etudes, il composoit ensuite dans son Cabinet ces beaux Païsages, où le spectateur se croit transporté dans l'ancienne Grece, et dans ces Vallées enchantées décrites par les Poëtes." Original French from the Pierre Crozat (1665-1740) sale catalogue written by Pierre-Jean Mariette, 1741, 114. Reproduced in Rosenberg, *From Drawing to Painting*, 103.

57 Oberhuber, 165.

quintessential Poussinesque view of the Italian countryside, complete with idle figures in the right foreground and trees that serve as framing devices on both sides of the composition (Fig. 8). In this drawing, David's interest centers on a large fortification, evident on the right of the drawing, and the city (presumably Rome) seen from a good distance away. He is interested in portraying the non-specific (this is echoed by the drawing's rather ambiguous title), the serene and pastoral quality of the landscape and the meditative quality that such a scene evokes. Although not known in the history of art as a landscapist, the drawing nonetheless echoes the artistic sentiment of Poussin and, quite rightly, Annibale Carracci, Domenichino and Salvador Rosa.

Poussin was by no means the first artist to construct a "view" of Rome and its environs. His contribution to the genre lies in his ability to create captivating landscapes based on the Italian countryside that served as the background for myths, legends, biblical and historical stories of Rome, inspiring countless artists in the eighteenth century to look at the Eternal City in a new way. Poussin's compositions combine his use of the imagination, a high classical style and an idealistic sentiment (which becomes clear in such early Roman paintings as *Amor Vincit Omnia*) that helped open the door for an Italian school of view painting founded in the late seventeenth century by the Dutchman Gaspar Adriaensz. van Wittel. Following in the artistic tradition of his teacher, Matthias Withoos (himself a painter of landscapes, still lifes and panoramas), Van Wittel arrived in Rome from his native Flanders in 1674.<sup>58</sup> Van Wittel managed to separate his Roman views from earlier scenes by various artists due to his skill in drawing and perspective, as well as his ability to create dramatic compositions that were

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<sup>58</sup> Edgar Peters Bowron, "Painters and Painting in Settecento Rome," in *Art in Rome in the Eighteenth Century*, 456. The works of Van Wittel are also known by his Italianized name, Vanvitelli. For further information on the life and work of Van Wittel, see Giuliano Briganti, *Gaspar van Vittel*, new edition, ed. Laura Laureati and Ludovica Trezzani (Milan: Electa, 1996).

often constructed from a higher vantage point.<sup>59</sup> Van Wittel was able to refer to an inventory of views that supported him throughout the remainder of his career, often repeating successful compositions multiple times.<sup>60</sup> Van Wittel preferred to create views of the modern city of Rome – such as the Piazza del Popolo and St. Peter’s Square – as opposed to focusing on the city’s antique monuments. Although unquestionably instrumental to his compositions, Poussin’s landscape views often occupy a secondary position to the figural action that occupies the foreground. For Van Wittel, on the contrary, the landscape “view” was of primary importance. While many of his compositions depicted the general landscape and natural features of the Roman Campagna, he often focused his attention on the city itself and the various sites and monuments contained therein. With his works widely available throughout Italy (due in large part to patronage by some of Italy’s most wealthy and influential families), Van Wittel’s paintings had a tremendous impact on the next generation of *vedute* painters who often referenced his views of Rome – as well as the towns and countryside that rest nearby – in their own compositions.<sup>61</sup>

An example of Van Wittel’s influence can be seen in the work of Claude-Joseph Vernet, one of the most famous marine and landscape painters of the eighteenth century. Vernet spent twenty years in Italy from 1734 to 1753, during which time he painted *Jousting on the River Tiber at Rome* of 1750 (Fig. 9). Similarly to the previously discussed landscape views of Poussin, Vernet’s elegant painting is chiefly concerned with the action in the foreground set against the backdrop of the city and the prominence of the Castel S. Angelo in the distance. The architecture in the background, both ancient and modern, is not the focus of the work but seeks to establish the context for the unfolding

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59 Ibid., 456.

60 Ibid., 457.

61 Ibid.

scene. Nevertheless, Vernet's composition bears a striking resemblance to a painting executed by Gaspar van Wittel at the beginning of the century, nearly fifty years prior – *The Castel S. Angelo and the Ponte S. Angelo from the South* – and its similarities suggest that Vernet must have been familiar with his work (Fig. 10). In the painting, Van Wittel has depicted one of his favorite subjects – the River Tiber. Both compositions by Van Wittel and Vernet have nearly identical vantage points and contain similar structures that must have inhabited the river banks during the eighteenth century. While Van Wittel's painting contains some figures in the foreground, they become secondary to the grandeur and massive scale of the Castel S. Angelo and the Ponte S. Angelo in the distance. In Van Wittel's view, the artist was not only concerned with accurately representing the city, its architectural components and the Tiber; he was compelled to create an idealized view that depicted a “real” place, causing one to meditate on the nature of truth and the significance of the individual amid such reality.<sup>62</sup> These notions of reality, ideality and meditation would find their supreme expression in the *vedute* prints of the Venetian architect Giovanni Battista Piranesi.

#### David and Piranesi

In 1748 Giovanni Battista Piranesi created *Antichità romane de' tempi della Repubblica, e de' primi imperatori*, his first edition of etchings dedicated exclusively to depicting the monuments of ancient Rome. In the etchings, Piranesi's archaeological fascinations become intertwined with interesting landscapes and an architectural inquisitiveness. These faithful representations by Piranesi demonstrate superior skill in the technique of etching and establish him today as one of the greatest artists in the history of the *vedute* genre.<sup>63</sup> Piranesi's etchings enjoyed international prestige and we

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<sup>62</sup> Perocco, 16.

<sup>63</sup> Subsequent volumes by Piranesi were to follow, including *Le Antichità Romane* (1756), *Della Magnificenza ed Architettura de' Romani* (1761) and the prolific



know that David was aware of the artist and his works.<sup>64</sup> It is important to remember that Piranesi was, in fact, an architect and ardently believed that architecture had the ability to revolutionize the world. In effect, Piranesi wanted to restore the ancient splendor of Roman architecture through his utopian visions of the past glory of her monuments. Piranesi's etchings revealed the city of Rome in a way that it had never been seen before. Whether illustrations of ancient décor, ruined antique monuments, monumental churches or caprices of his imagination, etchings by Piranesi revealed – and continue to reveal – an imagined antiquity that would come to inspire a new romantic vision of Rome. This new vision informed the Roman drawings of Jacques-Louis David.

Numerous, startling parallels can be drawn between Piranesi's views of Rome and those found in David's Roman albums. A few select images by both artists will be examined, which depict some of the most famous monuments from antiquity: the Pantheon, the Roman Forum (specifically the Arch of Septimius Severus and the Temples of Saturn and Vespasian) and the Colosseum. Located in Album 4, two related views of the Pantheon made by David deserve our close attention. The first drawing, entitled *La Place du Panthéon à Rome avec une calèche traversant la place et sur la gauche, des personnages autour d'une table*, illustrates David's rather unconventional depiction of the Pantheon and its adjoining piazza (Fig. 11). In this drawing, David is not interested in a more typical examination of the façade of the ancient Roman temple as he is with the expansive piazza that it faces. On the left side of the drawing, the vast size of

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*Vedute di Roma*, which compiled various works by the artist from the 1740s until his death in 1778.

<sup>64</sup> In *Andromache Mourning Hector*, painted by David in 1783, David includes an antique candelabra on the right of the composition that was inspired by an etching by Piranesi. *Jacques-Louis David, 1748-1825*, 148. For several years during the directorate of Charles Natoire at the French Academy in Rome, Piranesi's print shop was located across from the Palazzo Mancini. Kristin King Gilbert, "Pedagogical Innovation and Reform at the Académie de France à Rome During the Directorate of Charles-Joseph Natoire" (1752-1775), 2 vols. (Ph.D. diss., The University of Iowa, 2005), 1: 236.

the Pantheon's portico with its immense marble columns is made clear by a group of diminutive figures that rest near its base, obscured by the dark shadows of the monument to their left. A central scene depicting a horse and cart is surrounded by a conglomeration of architectural structures lining the piazza, each with terra cotta roofs and rough brick exteriors. In the center of the piazza, David represents an Egyptian obelisk that calls to mind the power and authority of ancient Rome – a power that is made manifest in the architecture of the Pantheon.

Drawn from the opposite side of the piazza, *Vue du Panthéon a Rome* presents us with a more conventional portrayal of the building by David, including an accurate representation of the façade and dome with its famed central oculus (Fig. 12). In comparing this second drawing of the Pantheon with an engraving by Piranesi of the same subject, some interesting observations can be made. In *Veduta del Pantheon d'Agrippa oggi Chiesa di S. Maria ad Martyre*, Piranesi – like David – has chosen a vantage point slightly to the right of center, which reveals the circular plan of the building (Fig. 13). The use of a similar vantage point by David and Piranesi is also made clear by the partial inclusion of a rusticated structure on the right of the picture plane, evident in both compositions. Yet particularly striking in David's second drawing is the complete absence of figures. In this composition the artist focuses exclusively on architecture and space. Piranesi, on the other hand, includes numerous figures in the foreground that are completely overwhelmed by the colossal Pantheon behind them.

David's *Vue du Forum, avec l'arc de Septime Sévère* (originally in Album 6) is similarly devoid of human representation (Fig. 14). The composition centers on a depiction of the Temple of Saturn, surrounded at right by a crop of mature trees. To the right of the temple, barely visible through the centuries of accumulated dirt and debris, are the three columns of the Temple of Vespasian, which sit opposite the Arch of

Setimius Severus.<sup>65</sup> David appears to have been influenced by Piranesi's *Arco di Severo, e Caracalla*, in which a strikingly similar vantage point is presented (Fig. 15). The Temple of Saturn is no longer placed in the center of the composition, but rather off to the right next to a single tree. The adjacent three columns of the Temple of Vespasian are again noticeable, peeking out of the small hill of raised earth below. Furthermore, the viewer is astounded by the amount of architectural detail on the part of Piranesi. The reason for such detail is explainable not only by his preferred medium of etching (which allows for intricate details and sharp, clean lines not as easily achievable in drawings), but also by his audience. Unlike David's Roman drawings, which were never intended by the artist to be seen by the public, Piranesi's etchings were made to be published and – much like our modern postcard – sold as souvenirs during the Grand Tour.<sup>66</sup>

David's drawing is personal and intimate. Although concerned with architectural accuracy, he is not interested in representing the ancient structures in precise and complex detail; after all, Piranesi had already achieved this. Moreover, he is not concerned how his drawing will be perceived by the public for it was not intended for public exhibition. Rather, through the depiction of architecture, David meditates on the passage of time, conveys feelings of solitude, and utilizes his imagination. David's drawing of the Forum – one of the most toured sites in Rome, both in David's day and in our own – is eerily silent and empty. He has created a preternatural, dreamlike scene in which we as viewers imagine ourselves standing in this typically crowded place, surrounded by these ancient Roman buildings; yet ultimately, we are alone. Located on the far right of the drawing, behind the three columns from the Temple of Vespasian, is

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<sup>65</sup> Rosenberg and Prat, 1245. The caption for the drawing reads: “La vue, partiellement fantaisiste, montre l'arc de Septime Sévère, le temple de Saturne, les trois colonnes du temple de Vespasien et la pyramide de Cestius.”

<sup>66</sup> See Andrew Wilton and Ilaria Bignamini, eds., *Grand Tour: The Lure of Italy in the Eighteenth Century*, exh. cat. (London: The Tate Gallery, 1996).

the Pyramid of Cestius.<sup>67</sup> As any archaeologist would readily admit, the Pyramid of Cestius never existed in the Roman Forum, nor is it viewable from this location. Similar to *vedute* of Paris by Hubert Robert, David has combined different architectural structures from various places throughout Rome to create his own imagined view of antiquity.<sup>68</sup>

In addition to his sketched views of architectural exteriors, David's albums likewise display a fascination with interior spaces. One of the most interesting interior scenes depicted in the Roman albums is *Vue interieur du Colisée à Rome, trois personnages assis au premier plan*, located in Album 9 (Fig. 16). The drawing, which David has simply titled "Colisée" in the lower left hand corner, illustrates an interior passageway of the Roman Colosseum lined with a series of archways. David's chosen perspective emphasizes the circular construction of the Colosseum which, accompanied by both interior archways and those that surround the exterior of the building, creates a sense of movement and rhythm. The play of light and shadow created by the juxtaposition of interior and exterior archways capped by a barrel vault above generates an organic, albeit claustrophobic feeling on the part of the viewer. David has included three figures in the scene who, as in his first drawing of the Pantheon, are represented in the murky shadows created by the architecture surrounding them.<sup>69</sup> One feels in this drawing again, a sense of emptiness, of vastness, even imprisonment (be it physical or

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<sup>67</sup> David created several drawings of the Pyramid of Cestius and the Porta San Paolo. See Rosenberg and Prat, 552-3, 1183. See also Rosenberg and Peronnet, 68.

<sup>68</sup> See Robert's *Some of the Principal Monuments of Paris* (1788) reproduced in J. Clay, *Romanticism* (New York: Vendome Press, 1981), 264, pl. 479.

<sup>69</sup> This placement of figures in shadows appears also in David's later paintings, including *The Lictors Returning to Brutus the Bodies of His Sons* (1789) and *The Coronation of Napoleon and Josephine* (1805-7). In both paintings, Dorothy Johnson has suggested that David has created a metaphor for the darkness of human nature, "a state of mind and character." See Johnson, *Art in Metamorphosis*, 68-9, 197-8.

psychological) within the massive walls of the amphitheater, calling to mind the dark events that occurred there centuries before.

In *Le Antichità Romane*, Piranesi likewise depicted an interior view of the Flavian amphitheater, better known today as the Colosseum.<sup>70</sup> Yet rather than depict a dark scene from an interior passageway, Piranesi has chosen a vantage point from inside the ruined arena that is exposed to the Italian sky overhead. In Piranesi's etching, despite the massive scale of the ruined architecture in relation to the figures at its base, we do not harbor the same feelings of emptiness and imprisonment found in David's drawing; the viewer does not feel physically trapped in Piranesi's view, which is much more open and picturesque. David's interest in the use of architecture to convey elements of the psychological owes a great deal to Piranesi, whose *Carceri* or *Prisons* (1744-49), for example, are understood today as archetypal expressions of the darker recesses of human consciousness amid enigmatic, symbolic and allegorical pictorial fantasies.<sup>71</sup> For example, in *Carcere XI (The Arch with a Shell Ornament, 2<sup>nd</sup> state)* the grand scale of Piranesi's imagined architecture creates a sense of confusion and entrapment (Fig. 17). His dramatic use of light and dark as well as his interest in the repeating archway motif becomes immediately apparent and, we can assume, inspiring to the young David.

#### David and the *Vedutisti*

The engravings of Piranesi provided an obvious reference point for the way in which David came to understand the symbolic importance architecture could play in his

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<sup>70</sup> The official title of the engraving is *Veduti degli avanzi dell'Anfiteatro Flavio dalla parte interna...* See Luigi Ficacci, *Piranesi: The Complete Etchings* (New York: Taschen, 2000), fig. 207.

<sup>71</sup> While the psychological aspect present in David's work has been given recent attention, specifically in reference to his late mythological paintings, few scholars seem willing to acknowledge the artist's interest in psychology (both his own and that of the viewer) prior to the appearance of his *Oath of the Horatii* at the Salon of 1785. For the importance of the psychological in David's late mythological works, see Johnson, *Art in Metamorphosis*, 221-72.

own work. Another artist who, I would suggest, was of equal importance for David in this regard is Hubert Robert. Best known for his depictions of grand ruins, both real and imagined, Robert spent a total of eleven years completing his artistic education in the Eternal City before spending the remainder of his long and prestigious career in Paris.<sup>72</sup> Robert was a student of the sculptor Michel-Ange Slodtz (1705-1764) and protégé of the Duc de Choiseul (formerly the comte de Stainville), but little is known about him prior to his arrival at the French Academy in Rome late in November of 1754.<sup>73</sup> It is interesting to note that, rather than study with an established painter of the Royal Academy, Robert turned to the studio of a sculptor who was just beginning to establish himself in Paris after spending a decade in Italy.<sup>74</sup> Following his apprenticeship with Slodtz, Robert traveled to Italy where he was greatly influenced by Giovanni Paolo Panini (1691-1765), the most renowned view painter in eighteenth-century Rome. Before continuing our discussion of Robert and his influence on David's first Roman period, first let us examine the important role Panini played in the establishment of the Roman *vedute* genre, his contributions to the artistic dialogue that existed between Italy and France during the eighteenth-century, and the impact of Panini's work on David.

Scholars have suggested that Hubert Robert may have been a pupil of Panini's during his time in Rome, a conclusion that seems logical given the artists' similarity in

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<sup>72</sup> The literature on Hubert Robert is quite extensive. Particularly useful in relation to Robert's period in Italy is the extensive catalogue from the exhibition held at the Villa Medici in Rome in 1990-1: J.-P. Cuzin, P. Rosenberg and C. Boulot, J. H. *Fragonard e Hubert Robert a Roma*, exh. cat. (Rome: Fratelli Palombi Editori/Edizioni Carte Segrete, 1990).

<sup>73</sup> Bowron, "Painters and Painting in Settecento Rome," 417. The Duc de Choiseul served as the French ambassador to Pope Benedict XIV and was also a patron of Panini. For a discussion of Robert's early life, see Jean de Cayeux, *Hubert Robert* (Paris: Fayard, 1989), 21-27.

<sup>74</sup> Paula Rea Radisich, *Hubert Robert: Painted Spaces of the Enlightenment* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1998), 7.

style and subject matter.<sup>75</sup> For twelve years Robert worked in the same genre as Panini, painting ruins enriched with small figures diminished against the grandness of the Italian landscape. Over the course of his life Robert acquired twenty-five works by Panini, a testament to his admiration for and emulation of the Italian master.<sup>76</sup> Unlike images created by his contemporaries, namely Roman *vedute* by Piranesi, Panini's views of both ancient and modern Rome were not idealized or symbolic representations of the city's past splendor. As was common practice by artists working in Rome during the eighteenth century, Panini tapped into the marketability of the Grand Tour – particularly among British tourists – creating numerous picturesque *vedute reale* in the 1740s and 1750s that both accurately and objectively represented the most famous and memorable sights of Rome.<sup>77</sup> Aside from their purely aesthetic value, these representations of famous Roman views (which were believed to be faithfully depicted) provide further value in their ability to accurately portray such sites as they appeared in the eighteenth century before the excavations of the nineteenth century began. Yet that is not to suggest that the artist could not or did not rely on his imagination in the creation of art, for nothing could be less true. Aside from his famous view paintings, Panini also painted fantastical views of ruins and imagined interior scenes which contain depictions of Rome's famous sites, both ancient and modern.

Panini studied architectural painting and stage design as a youth in his native Piacenza (then part of the Duchy of Parma), and his interest in architecture and perspective is documented as early as 1708. By the time Panini left for Rome in 1711, he had also received some training as an architect.<sup>78</sup> During his early career in Rome,

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<sup>75</sup> Bowron, "Painters and Painting in Settecento Rome," 417.

<sup>76</sup> Radisich, *Hubert Robert*, 7.

<sup>77</sup> Bowron, "Painters and Painting in Settecento Rome," 417.

<sup>78</sup> *Ibid.*, 416. Panini's earliest Roman architectural projects include Cardinal Valenti's villa (destroyed) and the chapel in S. Maria della Scala, 1734-5). See Edgar

Panini chiefly worked as a fresco decorator, working in the luxurious villas and palazzi of the Roman aristocracy and Church nobility. Aside from his prolific painting career, Panini worked as an architect, designed stage sets, and produced festival apparatuses and architectural decorations for various Roman *fêtes* and ceremonies.<sup>79</sup> His associations with the French in Rome had a profound effect on his career – specifically his close relationship with the French Academy where he taught perspective. Following the death of his first wife, Panini married the sister-in-law of Nicolas Vleughels (director of the French Academy in Rome from 1724-1737) and in 1732 he was received as a member of the Royal Academy in Paris, an honor rarely afforded to foreign artists.<sup>80</sup> Panini's influence on the French in Rome was so pronounced that he was considered as a possible successor to the directorship following Vleughels' death in 1737.<sup>81</sup>

A stunning example of one of Panini's faithful "modern" views is his *View of the Piazza del Popolo, Rome* (1741) which, along with its pendant *View of St. Peter's Square, Rome* (1741), depict two of the city's most famous squares (Fig. 18). Details concerning the commission and original ownership of the two paintings is unknown, yet the popularity of these monumental public spaces and their contribution to Rome's unique urban landscape suggest that Panini conceived the above mentioned scenes with a Grand Tourist audience in mind.<sup>82</sup> In his *View of the Piazza del Popolo*, Panini

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Peters Bowron, "A View of The Piazza del Popolo, Rome, by Giovanni Paolo Panini," *The Nelson and Atkins Museum Bulletin* 5 (Jan. 1981): 37-55.

<sup>79</sup> Ibid., 416-17. See Michael Kiene, *Pannini* (Paris: Éditions de la Réunion des musées nationaux, 1992), pp. 29-62.

<sup>80</sup> Kiene, 19.

<sup>81</sup> Edgar Peters Bowron, "A View of The Piazza del Popolo, Rome, by Giovanni Paolo Panini," *The Nelson Gallery and Atkins Museum Bulletin* 5 (Jan. 1981): 42.

<sup>82</sup> Bowron, "Painters and Painting in Settecento Rome," 421-3. Panini's *View of St. Peter's Square, Rome* is currently in the collection of the Toledo Museum of Art, and his *View of the Piazza del Popolo, Rome* is in the Nelson-Atkins Museum in Kansas City.



constructs a reliable view of the public space looking south from a higher vantage point (taken either on or near the top of the Porta del Popolo) towards the grand twin churches of S. Maria di Montesanto and S. Maria de' Miracoli in the distance. Meticulous in his accurate observation of the piazza's architectural features and surroundings, on the left of the composition Panini includes the Villa Medici as well as the church and convent of S. Trinita dei Moni identifiable on the horizon.<sup>83</sup>

Panini's view of the Piazza del Popolo had a special significance to the eighteenth century tourist, assuring the work's marketability. The Piazza del Popolo served as the principal entrance into Rome for all visitors coming from the north and it existed in this capacity throughout much of the nineteenth century.<sup>84</sup> Branching out from the southern end of the piazza, three major streets – the Babuino, Corso and Ripetta – led tourists into the heart of the ancient city. Eighteenth century British novelist Tobias Smollett described his experience upon entering the piazza and his reaction seems in accordance with many recorded from the period:

The Porta del Popolo (formerly, Flaminia,) by which we entered Rome, is an elegant piece of architecture, adorned with marble columns and statues, executed after the design of Buonaroti. Within-side you find yourself in a noble piazza, from when three of the principal streets of Rome are detached. It is adorned with the famous Aegyptian obelisk, brought hither from the circus Maximus, and set up by the architect, Dominico Fontana, in the pontificate of Sixtus V. Here is likewise a beautiful fountain designed by the same artist; and at the beginning of the two principal streets, are two very elegant churches fronting each other. Such an august entrance cannot fail to impress a stranger with a sublime idea of this venerable city.<sup>85</sup>

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<sup>83</sup> For a brief history of the Piazza del Popolo, as well as a further investigation of various structures depicted by Panini in the painting, see Bowron, "A View of The Piazza del Popolo," 40-42.

<sup>84</sup> Bowron, "A View of The Piazza del Popolo," 37.

<sup>85</sup> Ibid. See Tobias Smollett, *Travels through France and Italy* (London, 1776).

It seems logical that Panini would have paired his painting of the Piazza del Popolo with a similar scene depicting St. Peter's Square, given that the former served as the secular entrance to the city, while the latter symbolized a religious entrance for the countless pilgrims who passed through Bernini's colonnade to enter St. Peter's Basilica.<sup>86</sup>

Given Panini's artistic interests and notoriety in both Italy and France, we can feel certain that David was well-acquainted with Panini's views and such works must have had an effect on his thinking about architecture and urbanism. In fact, David need not walk far from the French Academy to find examples of Panini's work, as a fresco for the Palazzo de Carolis, painted by Panini in 1720, was located just steps from the Academy on the via del Corso.<sup>87</sup> Like Panini, and countless other artists living and working in Settecento Rome, David also depicted a view of the Piazza del Popolo and its environs (Fig. 19). Located in Album 4, David's rendering of the Piazza del Popolo is particularly interesting when compared with the above mentioned view by Panini. Rather than choosing a southern vantage point of the piazza, as demonstrated in Panini's work, David orientates the viewer north with the Porta del Popolo in full view. Instead of constructing a view that looks towards the twin churches of S. Maria di Montesanto and S. Maria dei Miracoli, as Panini demonstrates, David has chosen the location of these two churches as his vantage point. This decision by David not to construct the southern view of the piazza is noteworthy, as the noble churches were applauded by contemporary accounts as

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<sup>86</sup> This decision to construct these two views as pendants was by no means Panini's invention. Gaspar van Wittel had likewise paired scenes of the Piazza del Popolo and St. Peter's Square. Bowron, "Painters and Painting in Settecento Rome," 421.

<sup>87</sup> Bowron, "Painters and Painting in Settecento Rome," 416. The Palazzo de Carolis, located at 307 via del Corso and also referred to as the Palazzo Simonetti, is today the Banca di Roma. The original structure, designed by Alessandro Specchi, was executed in 1712-14.

the supreme feature of the piazza, serving as a majestic backdrop to the public space they look upon.<sup>88</sup>

The center of David's composition is dominated by the expansiveness of the piazza and the centralized Egyptian obelisk transported from the Circus Maximus to the square in the sixteenth century under Sixtus V. Behind the obelisk and adjacent to the Porta del Popolo, the façade and dome of S. Maria del Popolo is visible, as is the high walled entrance to the garden of the Augustinian friars. Although situated in the background amid the shadows, I would argue that the focus of David's drawing was not on the piazza but rather the Porta del Popolo itself. On the bottom right of the drawing, David's own hand has written, "L'entrée de Rome vu [sic] / la porte du peuple". One familiar with famous sites in Rome could assuredly determine the location depicted by David without its inclusion in the title, but nevertheless the artist gives no mention of the piazza by name. Rather his image, solidified by his own words, focuses on the Porta del Popolo and its function in the drawing as the only viewable exit from the square. This change in vantage point is significant and serves as an example of David's frustration and eventual rejection of prevailing academic norms. Aware of such traditionally prized views of the piazza, as epitomized by Panini's work, David quite literally looks the other way.

Rather than Panini's expansive, optimistic view of a Rome waiting to be discovered by the Grand Tourist, David's image projects a feeling of entrapment, one that suggests a longing for an existence outside the city gates – freedom both physically and artistically from the academic rigors of the Academy and perhaps Rome itself. In this drawing, David has used elements of the urban environment to conjure emotions previously expressed in his work only by the human form – feelings of longing, sadness

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88 Bowron, 416.

and isolation.<sup>89</sup> It is also worth noting that no drawing by David has surfaced that illustrates St. Peter's Square which, as mentioned previously, frequently accompanied the view of the Piazza del Popolo in the eighteenth century. Yet the absence of this pendant drawing makes sense when we consider the purpose of the Roman albums. David was not interested in the rendering of conventional, predictable views. This had been done, and done quite exquisitely, by many of the *vedute* artists already mentioned. Rather, the drawings in his albums provide the viewer with a commentary – a visual diary – of what he thought was interesting, provocative and worthy of emulation in his later works.

While recognizing various sites and monuments in the Roman albums will prove fruitful when compared with his later paintings, it is also important to note what he left out of the albums and why. In David's drawing of the Piazza del Popolo, two figures in the left foreground of are shown engulfed in the shadows of S. Maria de' Miracoli situated behind them. In comparison with the substantial architecture and vast urban space created by the piazza, the figures – like those in Panini's painting – appear diminutive. When compared with similar images by Piranesi, the focus in David's Roman drawings is not on the figural. Rather David's image is interested in the detail, complexity and the sheer volume of the urban space. The representation of man made miniature against a vast constructed landscape must have resonated not only with tourists that visited Rome – coming to the realization of how small one is in relation to the world around them – but also to David who, for the first time, was away from Paris and all that was familiar.

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<sup>89</sup> In constructing his northern view of the Piazza del Popolo, it is possible that David had in mind a similar image of the piazza executed by Giuseppe Vasi. In his *Magnificenze di Roma Antica e Moderna* published between 1747 and 1754, Vasi depicts a panoramic side view of the Piazza del Popolo, which includes many of the noted monuments present in David's drawing – including the Porta del Popolo. While certain similarities fundamental to the *vedute* genre do exist between the two views (i.e. the monumentality of the architecture in comparison to the figures represented), the psychological and emotional qualities that I argue are present in David's drawing are absent in Vasi's view. Marketability was of chief concern to Vasi; David's Roman albums were not intended for public consumption but rather for personal and artistic reflection. For a reproduction of Vasi's view of the Piazza del Popolo, see Giuseppe Vasi, *Vedute di Roma nel '700*, vol. 1 (Rome: Dino Audino Editore, 1990), 21.

“Robert des Ruines”

Like David, Hubert Robert left his life in France to study in Rome. Although his official term as a *pensionnaire* ended in October 1762, Robert stayed in Italy through the summer of 1765, likely supporting himself through commissions and kindness of friends – namely Piranesi and Panini.<sup>90</sup> Robert was keenly aware of the marketability of antique views, whether to visitors on the Grand Tour or the longing reader in Paris, dreaming of the Eternal City from afar. Like Piranesi and Panini, Robert catered to this market, producing a large number of paintings and drawings depicting famous Italian monuments.<sup>91</sup> As previously mentioned, Robert’s period in Rome overlapped with that of Jean-Honoré Fragonard with whom he would share a friendship and close working relationship. We can assume that the two artists influenced each other’s work and this is made clear in their sketches of the Roman Campagna. Often working along side one another while in Italy, the attribution of the Roman drawings of Robert and Fragonard has at times remained murky due to their similarity in style and subject matter. It is necessary, therefore, in addressing the Roman period of Robert, to briefly examine a few Roman drawings by Fragonard. A closer look at the two artists work in Italy will assert that, aside from his undeniable skill as a draughtsman and acute ability to frame a scene, Fragonard’s Roman drawings have little in common with those David would execute nearly twenty-five years later. Yet, as I will demonstrate, the influence of Robert’s Italian period on David’s Roman albums seems undeniable and, moreover, has been virtually unexplored.

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<sup>90</sup> Victor Carlson, “Hubert Robert in Rome: Some Pen-and-Wash Drawings,” *Master Drawings* 39:3 (Autumn, 2001): 288. Admission to the French Academy in Rome was restricted to students who had studied at the Académie Royale de Peinture et de Sculpture in Paris and, moreover, those who had won the prix de Rome. Robert was neither a student at the Académie nor prix de Rome winner, yet his patronage under the Duc de Choiseul allowed the artist to accompany him to Rome – not to mention live and study at the French Academy. It was not until 1759, four years after first arriving in Rome, that Robert was awarded a position as a pensionnaire.

<sup>91</sup> Radisich, *Hubert Robert*, 7.

Like many artists who descended on Rome during the eighteenth century, Fragonard was completely overtaken with his own inadequacies as an artist when first confronted with works of antiquity and the Italian Renaissance. He arrived in Rome at the end of December 1756 in the company of Mme Carle Vanloo (the wife of his master and herself a native Italian) and two of his fellow schoolmates at the *École royale des élèves protégés*.<sup>92</sup> Not much is known of Fragonard's four-year period in Rome and the majority of "official" works executed by the artist during his stay at the Palazzo Mancini are now lost. Yet a large number of red and black chalk drawings completed by the Fragonard in Italy are extant and can be divided generally into landscapes and copies after the Old Masters.<sup>93</sup> In many of his Roman drawings, Fragonard displays a keen interest in depicting nature, creating scenes that demonstrate the lush Italian landscape which seemingly overtakes architectural structures both ancient and modern. For example, in his drawing entitled *The Seesaw* (1760), Fragonard's whimsical setting depicts a pastoral Rome in which adolescents play games in the foreground against a backdrop of classical architecture being consumed by exuberant vegetation, such as cypress trees and towering umbrella pines. While aesthetically pleasing and beautifully executed, the image is nonetheless an odd juxtaposition of rococo levity – that which neoclassicism and the work of David would seek to eradicate – and a serious, meditative quality typically associated with ruin imagery.

*The Temple of Vesta and the Temple of the Sibyl at Tivoli* (1760), a drawing by Fragonard in the collection of the Musée des Beaux-Arts in Besançon, further demonstrates the artist's heightened sensitivity to representing untamed nature but also serves as an example of his lack of interest in rendering architectural monuments in a

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<sup>92</sup> Pierre Rosenberg, *Fragonard*, exh. cat. (New York, NY: The Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1988), 61. See also Jean-Pierre Cuzin, *Fragonard: Life and Work*, trans. Anthony Zielonka and Kim-Mai Mooney (New York, NY: Harry N. Abrams, Inc., 2003).

<sup>93</sup> *Ibid.*, 63-4.

way that makes them appear dramatic – sublime, in fact – and not just another element of the natural landscape (Fig. 20). Fragonard's use of light, thin and flowing lines remains consistent throughout the Besançon drawing, in which the artist gives little variation in the quality of the line to suggest emphasis of form or depth of space. Although Fragonard's rendering of the temple is reasonably accurate and his use of shadows give a sense of three-dimensionality to the structure, his interest lies less with the architecture and more with its relationship to the surrounding natural landscape. The image is a romantic one, echoing the beauty of the natural scene of which the temple has become apart.

The Temple of Vesta at Tivoli was a site admired by many artists and architects during the eighteenth century. Thus, it is not surprising that Hubert Robert created numerous renderings of the building and it became one of his favorite motifs. A red chalk drawing by Robert in the collection of the Musée des Beaux-Arts in Valence displays how the two artists' treatment of architecture differed despite their depiction of the same monument (Fig. 21). While both drawings show a direct, centralized view of the temple taken from similar vantage points, Robert's drawing focuses more on the architectural structure itself as opposed to its relationship to the natural environment. In the Valence drawing, Robert has banished any trace of rococo sentiment (both aesthetically and in his treatment of the subject) and has instead focused on the noble simplicity and quiet grandeur of the ancient structure that occupies the majority of the picture plane. The viewer is immediately aware of the temple's massive scale in relation to the clearly rendered figures in the foreground – a reflection of the power and authority exerted by the ancient Romans.

While many drawings created by Robert during his period in Italy display the lush vegetation of the surrounding landscape, his strength and clearly his passion was in depicting monumental works of architecture – both ancient and modern – in new and dramatic ways. Despite the fact that more attention is often given to Robert's paintings,

the drawings and watercolors from his Roman period illustrate to a great extent the influence of antiquity on his later painted compositions executed in Paris. Over fifty sketchbooks were listed in the auction sale catalogue following Robert's death, yet only two complete sketchbooks are extant today and both date from the artist's latter years in Italy.<sup>94</sup> Additionally, other groups of Italian drawings are known and, in their original form, likely comprised similar sketchbooks or albums.<sup>95</sup> An examination of a few of these select drawings completed in Italy (as well as how those drawings might have been utilized by Robert in later compositions) will prove instrumental when compared with similar drawings found in David's Roman albums. Such an examination will show not only that an artistic dialogue between the two artists must have existed, but also seeks to establish Robert directly as a vital source for David's architectural awareness. Within this context, renderings by both artists of three Roman landmarks will be scrutinized: Michelangelo's constructions on the Capitoline Hill, the Villa Medici and the Colosseum.

Likely inspired by Bramante's Cortile del Belvedere as well as antique precedents, Michelangelo transformed the previously disorganized complex located on the Capitoline Hill (the ancient seat of the city's government) into a symmetrical composition by unifying multiple entrances, constructing a paved, level piazza, and

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<sup>94</sup> Carlson, *Hubert Robert*, 56, 74. According to Carlson, the two albums are in the collections of the Pierpont Morgan Library in New York and a private collection in Paris. The Pierpont Morgan sketchbook dates to c. 1760-63, while the Paris album (sometimes referred to as Robert's "Album de Voyage") is thought to be conceived later, c. 1762/1763-65.

<sup>95</sup> The Louvre is in possession of two volumes of drawings by Robert. The first contains thirty-nine of forty drawings that must have originally formed an album. The majority these drawings, which date to c. 1764-65, are highly finished and frequently contain watercolor accents. The second volume in the Louvre's collection, compiled by the artist himself in 1783, consists of a major group of drawings pasted onto notebook pages. Completed at various times, the drawings contained therein were executed both in Italy and Paris. In addition, over one hundred drawings from various periods of Robert's career (including his time in Italy) are in the Cailleux Collection, Paris. See Carlson, *Hubert Robert*, 74.



creating three new façades for pre-existing palaces.<sup>96</sup> Before Michelangelo's vision for the hill in the sixteenth-century, which included a ramp from the base to its summit, the Capitol was isolated on a summit above the everyday life of the city and the hill was virtually inaccessible; the only paved access to the hill was a stairway that descended from the transept of the Church of Santa Maria in Aracolei.<sup>97</sup> In *Vue prise de la place du Capitole*, David has chosen to depict a view from the Church of Santa Maria in Aracoeli that emphasizes Michelangelo's ramp (known as the *Cordonata*) and surrounding buildings (Fig. 22). Various architectural structures and, interestingly, an imagined obelisk (one likely recalled from the another Roman site and transformed by the artist's imagination) are visible in the distance, while a corner of the Palazzo Conservatori is seen in front of two equestrian statues of Castor and Pollux flanking the top entrance of the ramp. A second drawing by David of the Capitoline Hill, entitled *Vue du Capitole à Rome*, depicts a less familiar few of the hill looking north in the direction of the Tabularium, which was used to house the state archives including laws and Senate decrees. On the right of the drawing, somewhat hidden by what appears to be an ink spill, the three columns of the Temple of Vespasian are visible. A staircase on the left of the composition leads upwards to reveal a portion of the Palazzo Conservatori.

It is important to always keep in mind the location of the Palazzo Mancini in relation to the drawings depicted in David's Roman albums. In his albums, David made numerous drawings of the Capitoline which he could observe daily on his walks through his neighborhood. In fact, David need only walk out the front door of the Academy, turn

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<sup>96</sup> James Ackerman, *The Architecture of Michelangelo* (New York: 1961), 57-59. Bramante was inspired by antique prototypes in his design for the Belvedere, in which he developed a series of rectangular courts on successive levels. The different levels were connected by stairways and ramps, contributing to the fundamental importance of a central axis. In addition to the emphasis of a central axis, Bramante also employed symmetry and utilized perspective in his construction.

<sup>97</sup> Ibid.

left and proceed approximately three blocks before being confronted by Michelangelo's constructions on the Capitoline Hill, followed shortly thereafter by the ruins of the Roman Forum. Given his interest in this significant feature of the urban landscape, it should not surprise us that he would incorporate the Capitoline Hill in a painting that represents the foundation of the city of Rome itself: *The Sabine Women* of 1799.

Scholars have hitherto paid scant attention to the pronounced incidence of architecture in this painting. With *The Sabine Women*, following successive imprisonments during the Revolution for his allegiance to Robespierre, David marked his return to history painting. In an outward attempt to avoid controversial contemporary subjects, David chose to depict the classical past and with it, ideas of ancient Rome. *The Sabine Women* provided a perfect opportunity for David to use his Roman albums for sources of architectural inspiration, a subject which I will revisit and examine in detail in the chapters that follow.

The Capitoline Hill had served as a source of great fascination for Hubert Robert as it would for David. Nine drawings which illustrate the Capitol and its architecture exist in the collection of the Musée de Valence alone.<sup>98</sup> An example of a drawing from this collection, entitled *Vue de la Place du Capitole*, was drawn by the artist in 1762 – towards the end of his Roman sojourn (Fig. 23). In the drawing, Robert has accurately depicted the famous square and emphasized the architecture as the subject of the work, as opposed to the small human figures sketched in the foreground. Arguably the most pleasing of his Capitoline views both in tone and technique, Robert has captured the grandness of the architecture by choosing a lower vantage point – one that is taken from the base of Michelangelo's ramp looking upward. In the background, the Palazzo del Senatore (flanked at left by the Palazzo del Museo Capitolino and the Palazzo dei Conservatori on the right) is sketched with a comparatively lighter touch, indicating to

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<sup>98</sup> See *Hubert Robert: Les Sanguines du Musée de Valence*, exh. cat. (Paris: Musée Jacquemart-André, 1969).

the viewer its position in the distance – a drawing technique also often utilized by David when depicting architecture in the Roman albums.

Yet Robert's drawings of the architecture on the Capitoline Hill are more than conventional views of the square. As Victor Carlson has noted, when Robert's drawings of the Capitoline taken from various collections are viewed collectively, they literally provide the viewer with a visual tour of the square and its monuments – presenting a three-hundred-and-sixty degree view of what the artist saw and, consequently, felt was worth recording.<sup>99</sup> Such a systematic investigation of the Capitoline, its buildings and monuments suggests to me that Robert had a greater purpose in mind for these drawings. I would argue that Robert intended to utilize various architectural components from the Capitoline Hill that he sketched on site in future painted compositions once back in Paris. The usage of architecture from his Roman drawings in this capacity, that is, as a visual library for later compositions, would establish an important precedent in French art for David to emulate.

For example, in *Musiciens sur un balcon de la Villa Médicis* (c.1764-65), as its title implies, Robert depicts musicians playing on the balcony of the Villa Medici (Fig. 24). The Villa Medici, as we shall see, will become a popular subject for Robert. The drawing, which dates to Robert's latter period in Italy, served as the basis for a painting executed by the artist in Paris – *Fête à la Villa Médicis* (1768). When compared with engravings of the Villa Medici from the period – namely those by Vasi, Piranesi and Falda – scholars have noted that in the drawing, as well as in the finished painting, Robert has deliberately chosen not to accurately render the loggia on the garden façade of the

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<sup>99</sup> Carlson, *Hubert Robert*, 50. Carlson also notes that these views were drawn on paper that varied only slightly in dimension from one to the next. The majority of these drawn views of the Capitoline were created by Robert in 1762.

Villa Medici.<sup>100</sup> Instead, he has taken liberties with the architecture, including adding a second story of windows to the façade and adding a curved portico on the right of the villa.<sup>101</sup> Of greatest concern for our purposes, that is, in relation to the Capitoline drawings, is Robert's rendering of the villa's balcony and double staircase. In his drawing, Robert's balcony is rendered as square and rather high in relation to the figures below, contributing to its sense of grandness and monumentality, and two immense staircases flank both sides of the balcony. Both the balcony and staircase of the loggia as represented by Robert differ considerably from engravings of the period. In an engraving from 1684, Falda clearly depicts the balcony as convex in shape – not square – and significantly less massive in scale than in Robert's drawing. Furthermore, the same image by Falda shows a fountain supporting a sculpted figure in the center of the balcony's balustrade – a feature that is completely absent in Robert's image.<sup>102</sup> Frankly, Robert's balcony and staircase bare little similarity at all to that of the Villa Medici's garden façade as shown in the engravings.

Yet Robert did provide a clue in his drawing as to the source for his balcony and staircase. A Roman drawing executed by the artist in 1762, entitled *Capitole, Fontaine de la Place du Capitole*, clearly identifies Robert's source of inspiration for the rendering of the Villa Medici balcony and staircase (Fig. 25). In the drawing, Robert has represented the east side of the Campidoglio (a similar drawing by Robert depicts the west side of the square), showing the Palazzo Senatore, its double staircase and fountain.

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<sup>100</sup> Ibid., 78. For reproductions of the engravings, see Glenn M. Andres, *The Villa Medici in Rome*, 2 vols. (New York: Garland Publishing, Inc., 1976), figs. 52, 59-60.

<sup>101</sup> Ibid.

<sup>102</sup> In addition to Falda's rendering of the balcony, these features can also be clearly seen in Vasi's engraving of the Villa Medici from his *Vedute di Roma*. See Andres, 1: fig. 60. More importantly, a sketch by Robert illustrating the garden of the Villa Medici (as seen from the interior of the Loggia looking out towards the garden) reveals the fountain in the center of the balustrade. See Carlson, *Hubert Robert*, folio 8).

Unlike Robert's rendering of the garden façade of the Villa Medici, here the drawing in question is a reasonably accurate view of the city's civic center. The two grand ramp staircases on the façade of the Senate meet at the top of a tall squared balcony, which is flanked by the figures of two river gods, each holding a cornucopia. These are in fact the same river gods that Robert depicts surrounding both sides of the balcony in *Musiciens sur un balcon de la Villa Médicis*. Indeed, no such figures were to be found anywhere in the Villa Medici garden.<sup>103</sup> Robert created in this drawing (and its eventual adaptation into paint) a kind of architectural fantasy in which he implemented elements of reality and imagination, as well as sketches found within the pages of his Roman notebooks. This combination of real and imagined elements would become one of the hallmarks of his style. While Robert was undoubtedly capable of precisely drawing the Villa Medici's garden façade, he nonetheless consciously rejected a mimetic rendering.<sup>104</sup>

The influence of Hubert Robert, specifically his use of light and dark, is strongest in David's renderings of the Colosseum's interior, mentioned previously in relation to an image of the Colosseum located in Piranesi's *Le Antichità Romane*. In *Vue interieur du Colisée à Rome, trois personnages assis au premier plan*, located in Album 9, David illustrates an interior passageway of the Roman Colosseum lined with a series of archways (Fig. 16). While the influence of Piranesi seems indisputable (specifically in relation to David's interest in architectural accuracy and his ability to convey structural form), nevertheless a reference to the sublimity of Robert is readily apparent. The subject of the Colosseum and its environs was a popular subject for Robert (as well as with Panini and Piranesi) and this becomes clear in drawings from his Roman notebooks and

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<sup>103</sup> Ibid. Carlson also mentions that a sketch in Berlin contains a separate study of the river god below the left staircase.

<sup>104</sup> Ibid. A more accurate pen and wash drawing illustrating the garden façade of the Villa Medici can be found in another Roman-period notebook of Robert's located in a private collection in Paris.

in later paintings. Aside from his interest in the building's exterior structure, Robert shares David's fascination with the complex and psychological nature of the interior scene. Painted during his period in Rome, Robert's *Intérieur du Colisée* (1759) depicts the dark and ruinous interior of the Flavian Amphitheater with its rhythmic arches and barrel vaulted ceiling, the enormous architecture emphasizing the smallness of the human figures scattered in the foreground (Fig. 26). Robert places the viewer within a ruined monument from classical antiquity, allowing one to meditate on the nature of time itself as well as the grandeur of the Roman Empire. On the right of the painting the rhythmic and repetitive nature of the arches lead the eye to another of antiquity's most famous monuments, the Arch of Constantine, emphasizing the past splendor and triumph of ancient Rome which now is experienced as magnificent ruins. Despite the painting's obvious similarity in both subject matter and composition to David's drawing, it is Robert's ability to create a sublime scene – one based almost entirely on his use of architecture revealed through dramatic use of chiaroscuro – that demands such a comparison. While certainly Panini and Piranesi were capable of illustrating the sublime in their *vedute* images, here Robert has taken the architectural exactitude of Panini and Piranesi's expert use of light and dark and has combined them to create an image that is sensual, intimate and meditative.

Aside from their mutual interest in the architecture of the Capitoline Hill and the Colosseum, the artistic dialogue between David and Robert can be seen in other examples. In a drawing located in Album 8, entitled *Vue de la loggia de la Villa Médicis à Rome*, David depicts the interior loggia of the Villa Medici looking outward towards the balcony, gardens and surrounding structures (Fig. 27). Instead of a frontal view of the loggia's interior, our perspective is slightly skewed and the focus of the drawing is clearly architectural, as no figures are visible. David centers his composition on the Villa Medici's Palladian-style loggia with its large central arch supported on either side by smaller squared sections. Despite the heavy shadows of the interior space, David

carefully records specific architectural elements of the loggia, including Ionic capitals that support the heavy weight of the entablature. On both sides of the central arch, a sculpture of a lion is positioned between two sets of paired columns. In the scene, which could serve as a metaphor for Renaissance artistic ideology, the lions, much like the viewer, gaze out past the architectural structure of the loggia itself (a window, if you will) onto the world beyond. The drawing appears immediately meditative and contemplative.

David's drawing bears an uncanny resemblance to a painting executed by Robert in 1777, which likewise illustrates the interior of the Villa Medici loggia (Fig. 28). All of the major architectural components present in David's Roman drawing are clearly identifiable in Robert's painting: the Palladian-style loggia, paired columns with Ionic capitals, the balcony, and even the two lion sculptures. Furthermore, both David's drawing and Robert's painting have adopted a similar skewed perspective. Unlike David's rendering of the loggia, Robert includes small figures in the foreground, adding a narrative quality to the painting. Not surprisingly, Robert's inspiration for the painting can be found in a drawing dating to his Roman period. The drawing, entitled *Portique de villa romaine avec personages*, again presents the viewer with the now familiar interior of the loggia of the Villa Medici (Fig. 29). However, the architecture in the drawing is markedly different from that in Robert's painting. In Robert's Roman drawing, the four sets of paired Ionic columns have been replaced with eight single ones, four on each side of the central arch. A large fountain now occupies the foreground along with the figures, and the two lion statues have vanished. Although unmistakably a view of the loggia of the Villa Medici, why this change in the architecture from Robert's Roman drawing to the finished painting, executed by the artist in Paris over ten years later? Furthermore, the similarity between David's drawing (completed in c. 1775-80) and Robert's contemporaneous painting seems remarkable and suggests that an artistic dialogue between the two artists must have existed. It is also worth considering the possibility that David might have had access to Hubert Robert's Roman sketchbooks, which would

account for their similarity both in subject and style. Upon Robert's return to France in 1765, Jean-Claude-Richard de Saint-Non (1727-1791) engraved a *Recueil de vues dessinées d'après nature dans les villas et environs de Rome* based on Robert's drawings.<sup>105</sup> Perhaps David gained access to Robert's notebooks via Saint-Non's engravings, yet this possibility demands further investigation.

If David did have access to Robert's notebooks, which the above discussion intends to suggest, a precedent does exist. A chalk counterproof illustrating the crypt of San Martino ai Monte by Jean Francois Thérèse Chalgrin (1739-1811) is evidence that Robert allowed his fellow students to copy his Roman drawings *directly* (Figs. 30-31).<sup>106</sup> Chalgrin was a student of architecture at the French Academy in Rome at the same time as Robert and apparently copied the image of San Martino from a drawing completed by Robert early in his Roman period, perhaps as early as 1757.<sup>107</sup> While Robert's sublime images of ruins (epitomized in his *Vue Imaginaire de la Grande Galerie en Ruines*, 1796) resonate today in the art historical consciousness of every student of eighteenth century French painting, surprisingly it is Robert's drawings that enticed his contemporaries and, it would appear, stirred up controversy. In *Abecedario*, Pierre-Jean Mariette remarks that Robert's drawings were actually aesthetically superior

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105 Joseph Baillio, 'A Hermit in the Garden' *By Hubert Robert (1733-1808): A New Acquisition for the Speed Art Museum* (Louisville, KY: The Speed Art Museum, 2001), 11.

106 Carlson, *Hubert Robert*, 151.

107 Both drawings, today in the collection of the Bibliothèque Municipale in Besançon, were previously in the possession of Pierre-Adrien Pâris (1745-1819) who, like Chalgrin, was a student of the famed visionary architect Étienne-Louis Boullée (1728-1799). For sources on Boullée and Pâris, respectively, see Marie Perouse de Montclos, *Étienne-Louis Boullée (1728-1799): de l'architecture classique à l'architecture révolutionnaire* (Paris: Arts et métiers graphiques, 1969) and Pierre Pinon, *Pierre-Adrien Pâris (1745-1819), architecte, et les monuments antiques de Rome et de la Campanie* (Paris: École française de Rome, 2007).



to his paintings and comments on their high public demand.<sup>108</sup> Mariette's insight concerning the popularity of Robert's drawings are echoed by Denis Diderot who, in an outburst in the 1771 Salon, ordered Robert to keep his drawings out of public view.<sup>109</sup> It seems in character with David that, during this early stage in his career, David would have been drawn to such controversial images.

Why the controversy? For Diderot, as Paula Radisich has recently examined, Robert became the representative for a series of generally negative associations linked to the artist's "*la vie privée*," a term used by the Salon critic to refer to matters of morality and its relationship to the nature and purpose of art. For Diderot, as made apparent in his Salon criticism of 1771, Robert's artistic sketchiness (for which he greatly criticized the artist) can be equated to the eighteenth century rhetoric of *luxe*. In essence, according to Diderot, Robert's mass production of imagery was a reflection on his need to feed his lavish lifestyle.<sup>110</sup> And perhaps Diderot did not have it all wrong. After all, even before his return to France, Robert's work already graced some of the most prestigious aristocratic collections in Paris and powerful individuals, like Mme. Marie-Thérèse Geoffrin, would continue to advance his career.<sup>111</sup> By the early 1790s, Robert would be the most sought after painter of landscapes and garden designer in France and his success was due in no small part to his social skills with members of the French and Russian aristocracy.<sup>112</sup>

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<sup>108</sup> Pierre-Jean Mariette, *Abecedario* (Paris: J.B. Bumoulin, 1857-58; rpt. Paris: F. de Nobele, 1966), 414. "Chacun lui en demande."

<sup>109</sup> Radisich, *Hubert Robert*, 8.

<sup>110</sup> *Ibid.*, 2-5.

<sup>111</sup> *Ibid.*, 15-53.

<sup>112</sup> Baillio, 13.

### Conclusion

While the construction of an artistic relationship between Robert and the young David has been to this point conjectural, that the two artists knew of each other's work later in David's career seems indisputable. There can be no question as to Robert's prosperity under the Ancien Régime, both due to his artistic merits and his various administrative posts, including *Dessinateur des Jardins du Roi* and the curator of the Louvre, where Robert also resided.<sup>113</sup> Yet by 1792, Robert's luck began to change, as the political and social turmoil of the Revolution resulted in the overthrow of the French monarchy. In October 1793, Robert was arrested and imprisoned under the Law of Suspects because he failed to renew his "carte de civisme".<sup>114</sup> The notion of *luxé* that Diderot had ascribed to Robert over a decade earlier appeared insidious to Revolutionaries, not to mention his associations with the monarchy, and likely played a larger role in his arrest and incarceration than the expiration of a lapsed or missing certificate.<sup>115</sup> While the influence of Robert on David's Roman albums seems overwhelming, by 1793 the tables have turned with the art of Robert reflecting – or rather parodying – the art of David who, following the unparalleled success of his *Oath of the Horatii* (1785), had become the unrivaled exemplum of the French School.

A drawing by Robert, completed by the artist after his arrest entitled *Le Sommeil de Marat*, depicts the doctor-turned-Revolutionary journalist, Marat – infamous author of the influential yet feared *Ami du Peuple* (Fig. 32). The reference to David's *Marat assassiné* (1793) is obvious and, moreover, deliberately cunning on the part of

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113 Ibid., 13-14.

114 Radisich, *Hubert Robert*, 119. See Catherine Boulot, Jean de Cayeux, and H  l  ne Moulin, eds. *Hubert Robert et la R  volution*, exh. cat. (Valence, Le Mus  e de Valence, 1989).

115 Ibid.

Robert.<sup>116</sup> He has adopted several identifiable features from David's painting, notably Marat's reclining position, the quill in his seemingly lifeless hand, the turban, sheets and a strong, dramatic use of light that focuses our attention on the figure. However, absent from Robert's depiction of Marat is the sense of martyrdom – of dying gloriously for a just cause – that is so central to David's remarkable painting. Instead, Robert shows Marat and his surroundings as rather ordinary. Marat is depicted not as dead but sleeping as the title of the watercolor, pencil and ink drawing makes clear. To add further insult to injury, Robert has placed a long wooden spear mounted horizontally above the bed with its metal arrow pointing to a bust of Marat himself. The mounted spear and sword (which hangs on the left of the spear) are direct illusions to the weapons that dominate David's *Oath*, a painting that epitomizes heroicism and civic responsibility. In his drawing, Robert is asserting that David and other revolutionaries have lost sight of the Republican virtues extolled in the *Oath of the Horatii* in favor of glorifying Marat, who Robert has mocked and pointed to – quite literally, in fact – as the cause for society's downfall.

*The Oath of the Horatii* proved to be David's tour-de-force and, one might argue, his greatest artistic statement. Existing scholarship has been chiefly concerned with the painting's use of corporal expressivity, its relationship to contemporary theater and pre-Revolutionary overtones. Yet, as we shall see, *The Oath* also serves as a testament to the new classical language of architecture acquired by David during his first Roman period. Using his Roman albums as a visual reference for classical inspiration, he would break free from the prevailing academic practice of emulation and instead begin to rely on his own drawings, insights and experiences to formulate his compositions. Indeed, with *The Oath of the Horatii*, David moved from the realm of *emulator* to the *emulated*.

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116 Ibid., 124-127.

## CHAPTER 2: FROM ROME TO PARIS, 1780-1789

### Introduction

The 1780s proved to be the most important decade of David's career. When he returned to Paris in the summer of 1780, after spending the previous five years as a Prix de Rome recipient, David was confronted with the seemingly insurmountable task of establishing his career as a painter amongst rigorous competition. Impassioned by his successive failures to win the Prix de Rome in the early 1770s, David knew that in order to succeed as an artist in Paris he had to work within the constraints of the Academy whose established practices and artistic constraints he loathed. David's work during the first half of the 1780s was, therefore, geared towards securing his acceptance to the Royal Academy of Painting and Sculpture and upholding his reputation within this most prestigious institution. By the end of the decade, David had become one of the most influential instructors at the Academy and the figurehead of the neoclassical style in France and throughout Europe.<sup>117</sup> His overtly loud self-confidence, his unwillingness to be intimidated by artistic "superiors," and his refusal to compromise even on established commissions all contributed to David's success.

The Royal Academy of Painting and Sculpture had undergone significant changes by the time of David's return in 1780. The Comte d'Angiviller was appointed Directeur des Bâtiments in 1774 and, under his directorship, historical painting was to hold an even higher position in the Academy than before. "Lesser" genres including landscape and portraiture were viewed secondarily to the moral edification grand history painting could provide. D'Angiviller sought to restore order to the Academy by attempting to recreate the institution as it existed under Colbert. In 1776, Turgot, the Comptroller-General under Louis XVI and close political ally of D'Angiviller, issued a proclamation

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<sup>117</sup> Hubertus Kohle, "The Road from Rome to Paris: The Birth of a Modern Neoclassicism," in *Jacques-Louis David: New Perspectives*, 71.

abolishing art guilds, apprenticeships and associations.<sup>118</sup> The harshness of such a policy virtually insured that, in order for an artist to become known in Paris, they would have to receive the Academy's approval and exhibit exclusively at the state-sponsored Salon. David was hopeful that his first major commission, *St. Roch Interceding for the Plague Stricken*, would be lauded by the Academy.

This chapter will examine this pivotal decade in David's career and, for the first time, will consider his most important works from the 1780s specifically within the context of the architectural language acquired by the artist as a *pensionnaire* in Rome. I will begin this discussion with an examination of works completed during the first half of the decade: *St. Roch Interceding for the Plague-Stricken* (1780), the *Portrait of Count Potocki* (1781), *Belisarius Begging Alms* (1781), and *Andromache Mourning Hector* (1783). These works, as we shall see, gradually begin to rely on architecture more and more as we proceed to the creation of David's masterpiece, *The Oath of the Horatii*, in 1784-5. It is with the *Oath* that David's new engagement with architecture in painting becomes undeniable and, as such, it will serve as a benchmark for our understanding of the artist's architectural proclivity both prior to the painting's execution and throughout the remainder of his career. The chapter will conclude with an investigation into two select works completed by David in the latter 1780s following the immense success of the *Oath*: *The Death of Socrates* (1787) and *The Lictors Returning to Brutus the Bodies of His Sons* (1789). In these works, I will examine how David used architecture in new and innovative ways, namely, as a vehicle for narration and the unique expression of sentiment.

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<sup>118</sup> Antoine Schnapper, *David*, (New York: Alpine Fine Arts Collection, Ltd., 1980), 60. See also Crow, *Painters and Public Life*, 186-191.

*St. Roch*

Completed while still in Rome, *St. Roch Interceding for the Plague Stricken* was commissioned by the municipal public health agency in Marseilles and was intended as an altarpiece for the hospital chapel (Fig. 33). As is well-known, the commission was first offered to Joseph-Marie Vien – the director of the French Academy in Rome and David’s teacher – who turned the project over to his student. Before its delivery to Marseilles in March 1782, the *St. Roch* was exhibited in the Salon of 1781 where the painting was largely well-received.<sup>119</sup> This marked an important moment David’s career because it was the first time his work was displayed in the Salon, the most prestigious artistic venue in the *ancien régime*, typically reserved for the exhibition of paintings by Academy members.<sup>120</sup> Not only did the exhibition of the *St. Roch* provide David with critical insight from academicians aside from Vien, but it also allowed his work to be seen by a large audience.

The composition centers on the figure of St. Roch – the patron saint evoked during times of plague – shown kneeling before the Virgin and Child, hands clasped in prayer. St. Roch, identifiable by his pilgrimage clothes, loyal dog, and characteristic walking stick, is surrounded by the dead and dying struck down by the onslaught of plague. The Virgin is shown looking not at St. Roch but rather at the Christ Child, who reaches for his mother’s face in a gesture of consolation. Her right arm is extended with her index finger pointing to the kneeling figure of St. Roch below. The turban-wearing figure in the foreground is particularly noteworthy. Although depicted as stoic, he wears an expression of hopelessness and despair – perhaps even anger due to the calamity – and

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<sup>119</sup> In addition to the *St. Roch*, David also exhibited the *Portrait of Count Potocki*, the *Death of Patroclus*, the *St. Jerome*, *Belisarius Begging Alms* and the academies of *Hector* and *Patroclus*. Other lost or unknown works by David were also included in the 1781 Salon. See Brookner, 63.

<sup>120</sup> Kohle, 72.

his left hand is turned unnaturally to the left of the picture plane. To the right of the composition, the dead and dying are shown before the city of Marseilles. The rococo treatment of the sky, with its blue-grey tones and peach highlights, echoes the sky in David's *Death of Patroclus*, likewise completed by the artist in Rome a year prior.

The *St. Roch* exists as an anomaly in David's oeuvre for several reasons. Perhaps most obvious is his choice of subject matter. Although the subject of St. Roch was prescribed by the Marseilles public health agency as previously mentioned, David completed very few religious works.<sup>121</sup> Let us also return to the turbaned male figure in painting's foreground. The horizontality of the figure, shown reclining with his right hand supporting his head, the use of drapery and his unresolved facial expression all recall the central male figure in Delacroix's *Massacres of Chios* (1824), a painting whose subject and treatment epitomizes French Romanticism. The composition is likewise uncharacteristic of David's mature style. The triangular arrangement of figures (which cover the majority of the picture plane) is more in step with works by Italian Renaissance masters like Guerchino and Raphael. The painting's subject allowed for David to emulate the compositions of Renaissance masters he had encountered and was subsequently surrounded by in Rome. In the *St. Roch*, David has not yet adopted his characteristic neoclassical format, epitomized by the *Oath of the Horatii*, whose horizontality is reminiscent of a theater set.

The *St. Roch* is a virtual melting pot of David's artistic past, present and future. We see in aspects of the painting, such as his use of color and in the treatment of the sky, hints of the rococo. David's depiction of the Virgin recalls the calm dignity of Vien's female figures rather than, for example, the stoic monumentality of Hersilia in his *Sabine Women* of 1799. The turban-headed man in the foreground likewise marks an important

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<sup>121</sup> A notable exception to David's abandonment of religious subjects is his *Christ on the Cross*, painted by the artist in 1783.

moment in David's career because it signals the beginning of the artist's dialogue with elements of the psychological. His interest in psychology and corporal expressivity (as well as physiognomy) are largely responsible for the David's stylistic metamorphosis during the 1780s. According to David's friend and art critic Pierre Chaussard, the reclining male figure in the *St. Roch* would be one of the most beautiful figures David ever painted.<sup>122</sup> David's eloquent use of corporal expressivity and an interest in the psychological nature of the turbaned figure in David's *St. Roch* must have come to influence Delacroix, Géricault and other Romantics – including David's own student, Girodet. Although the architecture represented in the *St. Roch* is small in comparison to the figures in the foreground, its significance should not be diminished, namely, because the influence of Poussin is becoming more pronounced. As we shall see, from this point on in David's history paintings as well as portraits completed during this period, such as the *Count Potocki*, architecture begins to take on a more central role both compositionally and symbolically.

#### The Count Potocki

David's *Portrait of Count Stanislas Potocki* hung along side the *St. Roch* at the 1781 Salon and contributed to the resounding success of the burgeoning young artist (Fig. 34). A member of one of the wealthiest and influential families in Poland, Potocki met David in Rome in 1780 while on the Grand Tour.<sup>123</sup> Potocki would – like David – come to distinguish himself in both art and politics, serving as the president of the Polish Senate as well as a translator of Winckelmann. Preparations for the painting began in Rome and the work was completed in Paris.<sup>124</sup> David depicts Potocki on horseback, his

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<sup>122</sup> Pierre Chaussard, *Le Pausanias français* (Paris, 1806), 149. See also Johnson, *Art in Metamorphosis*, 23.

<sup>123</sup> Schnapper, *David*, 53.

<sup>124</sup> *Ibid.*



right arm extended and holding a hat in a salutatory gesture, while his left hand clutches the reins. On the bottom left of the composition, the head and front legs of a dog are visible as it glances upwards to be met by the horse's eyes. A dialogue seems to be taking place between the two animals, which is unparalleled in any of David's other known paintings; a reference to the artist's interest in Flemish painting. Antoine Schnapper has noted that David actually sketched the forepart of the horse in the *Potocki* directly from the tapestry of Decius Mus after Rubens.<sup>125</sup> Furthermore, the painting's enormous scale and format recall the full-length portraits of both Rubens and van Dyck. Anita Brookner specifically mentions two portraits by van Dyck that David might have seen and subsequently influenced his conception for the *Potocki: Prince Tommaso of Savoy* and *Giulio Brignole Sala*.<sup>126</sup>

David's painting of Count Potocki demonstrates both a mastery of color and an interest in ordered grandeur. The composition is remarkably simple, free from ornament and excess. The background consists primarily of a stone wall, so high in fact that it reaches above the mounted figure of Count Potocki. Weathered and aged, the stone wall is topped by two column bases that contribute to the massive scale of the architecture. The permanence of the architecture is enhanced by the artist's inclusion of ivy, its vines encircling the column bases. Scholars to this point appear generally dismissive in regards to the architecture in David's *Potocki*; some are frankly unsure about what to make of it. For example, Anita Brookner writes:

The incident is set against a wall, a wall of quality, massive, with lovingly painted irregularities and for some reason supporting columns which begin at an immense height from the ground. Perhaps the *manège* is a sunken area; perhaps the other side of the wall is reassuringly commonplace. Or perhaps it is merely a construct, a way of solving David's perspective problems:

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<sup>125</sup> Ibid., 54. David's sketch after Rubens is in the collection of the Musée du Louvre, Paris.

<sup>126</sup> Brookner, 62.

figures must be stapled to an architectural feature, and the less distance there is between them the more vigorous the effect will be.<sup>127</sup>

I would propose that David's inclusion of the wall in the painting serves a greater purpose than Brookner suggests. The wall created an antique framework for the portrait, recalling the colossal walls illustrated by Piranesi in *Antichità Romane, Della Magnificenza ed Architettura de' Romani* and especially his *Carceri* series. For the first time in a finished painting, David has used the architecture not merely as a background to provide a context for the painting. After all, what context does a large wall provide without some intended meaning behind it? It is important to remember that in Rome David developed a new relationship with classical architecture. We saw in his Roman albums that David used architecture as a new language for conveying meaning. In this case, the inclusion of an antique wall (as well as the two column bases) is intended to enhance the meaning of the work in a subtle yet deliberate way.

In order to understand the meaning David intended for the architecture in the *Potocki*, it is necessary to examine the trends in Roman portrait painting during the eighteenth-century. David's use of architecture within a large-format portrait painting likely found its inspiration with one of the most influential painters working in Rome during the Settecento – Pompeo Batoni. Batoni's artistic reputation owes much to his Grand Tour portraits. In these portraits (which found initial popularity among British tourists), Batoni relied on classical architecture, antiquities, and views of Rome to establish the sitter within the city. The purpose of the architecture and antiquities within these portraits was not only in establishing a background or context for the painting. The inclusion of these classical elements – including architecture – was intended to reinforce the leisured aristocratic nature of the sitter by emphasizing their learnedness and high level of cultivation. Although Batoni was not responsible for the invention of the Grand

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127 Ibid., 62-3.

Tour portrait, he nonetheless surpassed his Italian predecessors in his use of color, precise draughtsmanship, and polished handling – all characteristics we find David's *Portrait of Count Potocki*.<sup>128</sup>

A connection between the work of David and Batoni is well-known. Batoni played a pivotal role in the establishment of the Accademia del Nudo which, established on the Capitoline Hill in 1751, allowed young artists free access to draw after posed male models. It should come as no surprise that David (as well as Antonio Canova) frequented the small studio during his period in Rome, given his passion for contour drawing and the studio's reputation as a center for artistic and cultural exchange.<sup>129</sup> Christopher Johns has suggested that Batoni – perhaps even more than Vien – recognized the true talent present in the young artist. Batoni publicly lauded David's work and pleaded with him to stay in Rome following the exhibition of his *St. Roch* at the Palazzo Manini in 1780. Even though David ultimately refused Batoni's invitation, it nonetheless must have been extremely gratifying to receive such praise from the figurehead of the Roman school.<sup>130</sup> As early as the 1730s, altarpieces by Batoni executed in Rome reflected a classicizing style that anticipated Neoclassicism of the later eighteenth-century – a style to which David would become the French heir-apparent. Scholars have asserted that David was inspired by the restrained elegance of Batoni's idealized figures, his masterful use of drapery and simplified compositions, evidenced in such works by David as *The Loves of Paris and Helen* (1787-89) and *Sappho, Phaon, and Amor* (1809).<sup>131</sup> The idea that David looked to Batoni's use of architecture within a full-length portrait for his *Count*

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128 Bowron, "Painters and Painting in Settecento Rome," 306. The majority of features associated with Batoni's portraiture were anticipated by other Italian painters working in the previous decades, including Francesco Trevisani, Andrea Casali, Marco Benefial, Antonio David, and Agostino Masucci.

129 Johns, 60.

130 Ibid.

131 Ibid. See also Hautecour, *Louis David*, 36.

*Potocki* is logical given his admiration for Batoni and, moreover, is virtually unexplored in existing scholarship.

### *Belisarius*

David exhibited *Belisarius recognized by a soldier who had served under him at the moment that a woman gives him alms* at the Salon of 1781, in addition to his *St. Roch* and *Count Potocki* (Fig. 35). Two versions of the painting are in existence: David's original painting of 1781, today in the collection of the Musée des Beaux-Arts in Lille, and a second, smaller version completed by François-Xavier Fabre in 1784 is located in the Musée du Louvre, Paris. A preparatory drawing from 1779 (École polytechnique, Paris) indicates that David's conception for the *Belisarius* dated to his first Roman period. His decision to paint the subject of Emperor Justinian's disgraced former general was not unique. The publication of Jean François Marmontel's enormously popular novel *Bélisaire* in 1776 provided a resurgence of interest in the story. First described in the sixth century historical accounts of Procopius, Belisarius was implicated in a plot to kill the emperor. Although no reliable accounts from the period discuss the general's eventual fate, later medieval sources suggest that Belisarius was blinded and reduced to beggary.<sup>132</sup> However, in Marmontel's novel, Belisarius is portrayed quite differently. No longer the ruthless commander of Justinian's forces, Marmontel depicts Belisarius as an Enlightenment *philosophe* and a loyal public servant – despite the emperor's erroneous charges of treason and his decision to have Belisarius blinded and exiled as punishment.<sup>133</sup> With its pervasive themes of justice and intolerance, Marmontel's novel presents Belisarius as the victim of a monarchical and, moreover, aristocratic conspiracy – a perspective that scholars feel certain David held as well. Most recently, Hubertus

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<sup>132</sup> Crow, *Painters and Public Life*, 198.

<sup>133</sup> *Ibid.*

Kohle has discerned that David decided upon the theme of Belisarius while Voltaire was concurrently defending the French general Lally-Tollendal, whose rehabilitation the *philosophe* was finally able to secure. Similar to Belisarius, Lally-Tollendal had fought with valor and distinction for his country and was likewise accused of treason.<sup>134</sup> David's decision to depict the theme of Belisarius marks the artist's first outward expression of political sentiment in a finished painting – a characteristic of David's oeuvre that, I will argue in a later chapter, extends well into the his works commissioned by Napoleon I.

It is important to examine a few possible sources of inspiration for David's composition and, moreover, its prominent use of architecture. Jollain and Durameau were the first to take up the theme of Belisarius in 1767 and 1775, respectively, and the following year François-André Vincent followed suit with his cabinet-sized, half-length painting intended for d'Angiviller (Fig. 36).<sup>135</sup> Vincent's *Belisarius* depicts the recognition scene between the blind general, now reduced to begging, and a former officer. The substantial figure of Belisarius is shown leaning slightly over a young boy, whose outstretched arms hold the general's helmet to receive alms from the officer. The figures, although clearly engaged with one another, are silent – juxtaposed with the expansive sky at their backs. At left, a small portion of an architrave is visible; the presence of architecture in the painting is almost entirely absent.

David's decision to paint the recognition scene demonstrates the influence of Vincent, who arrived at the French Academy in Rome a few years prior to David. The composition in both paintings centers on three main figures in the foreground. In

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<sup>134</sup> Kohle, 74. See also Crow, *Painters and Public Life*, 200.

<sup>135</sup> Crow, *Painters and Public Life*, 198. See footnote 67, page 273. Johnson notes that Van Dyck painted the canonical version of the theme, though it seems likely that David was more interested in surpassing versions by Vincent and Peyron. See Johnson, *Art in Metamorphosis*, 26.

Vincent's version, as previously mentioned, attention is given to the figures of Belisarius, a young male guide (perhaps a reference to Belisarius' former youth and fecundity?) and an officer previously in the general's service. David has retained the figures of Belisarius and the young guide in the foreground but now the officer is set back slightly in the distance – his arms raised in a gesture of horror at the sight of his former leader. Alms in David's version are provided by a female figure instead of by the former officer. The woman is shown draped in finery, slightly hunched over – practically kneeling, in fact – with her left hand touching her cheek in a compassionate gesture. Her eyes look sympathetically on the figures of Belisarius and the boy with the tenderness one would expect of a mother. In her face, and that of the two figures opposite her, David's expertise in conveying facial expressions reaches far beyond Le Brun's prescribed *têtes d'expressions* upheld by the Academy.

While certain similarities between the two paintings are evident (the influence of Vincent's oeuvre on that of David's should not be overlooked), nonetheless Vincent's *Belisarius* offers little in terms of architectural inspiration for David's painting. However, David did not have to look far. In 1778, Jean-François-Pierre Peyron was commissioned to paint *Belisarius receiving hospitality from a peasant who had served under him* (Fig. 37). While David struggled during his time in Rome to distinguish himself among such rivals as Vincent and Peyron, the latter was “le plus fort de la bande” – Vien's prized student during his directorship at the French Academy in Rome.<sup>136</sup> It was Peyron who, in 1773, won the *grand prix* with his *Death of Seneca* instead of David, resulting in an extreme bitterness David would carry with him for the remainder of his life. Peyron completed the painting in 1779 while both he and David resided at the

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<sup>136</sup> Letter from Jean-Baptiste Marie Pierre, First Painter to the King, to Joseph-Marie Vien, Director of the French Academy in Rome, dated 6 September 1779, published by Udo van de Sandt in *Archives de l'Art français*, vol. 28, 1986, p. 101.

Palazzo Mancini and it was Peyron who lent David a copy of Marmontel's *Bélisaire*.<sup>137</sup> What is immediately evident in Peyron's painting is his reliance on a compositional arrangement remarkably similar to that of his prize-winning *Death of Seneca*, now known only through an engraving (Fig. 38). In both paintings, his *Death of Seneca* and the *Belisarius*, Peyron has divided the figures into three distinct groups with many figures bearing remarkable similarities to one another. In his *Belisarius*, for example, Peyron depicts a figure on the left of the composition with his back turned to the viewer; his left foot is slightly raised off the ground, his right arm bent. Clearly Peyron was referencing a strikingly similar figure (also located on the left of the composition) from the *Death of Seneca* painted by the artist five years earlier. Furthermore, both paintings by Peyron contain an architectural loggia with a series of archways.

In the *Death of Seneca*, Peyron relied on the elegant and refined Composite order to establish an architectural context for the scene, one that is enhanced by the inclusion of antique sculpture beneath the aforementioned archways. Yet in his *Belisarius*, the artist clearly abandons any trace of so-called "elegant" architecture for a much more rustic proto-Doric type. Simply put, the stark architecture in Peyron's painting *looks* Italian and it becomes evident that he, like David, must have been influenced by the surrounding Roman architecture – and perhaps even by David's Roman albums. In Peyron's *Belisarius*, the artist emphasizes the archway as vehicle for conveying depth of space and bringing the viewer into another scene – a technique that figures prominently throughout the Roman albums and which, as we shall see, David utilizes in later paintings like *The Oath of the Horatii* and *The Death of Socrates*. As my previous chapter demonstrated, artistic exchange did take place between students at the French Academy in Rome. Thus

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<sup>137</sup> *Lettre d'un amateur de Paris à un amateur de province sur le Salon de peinture de l'année 1787, Paris 1787*, Deloynes no. 381, pp. 11-12. Peyron remained at the French Academy in Rome from 1775-1782,

the possibility that Peyron knew David's architectural drawings and perhaps even consulted them should not be dismissed.

While no such architectural loggia exists in David's *Belisarius*, Peyron's prominent use of architecture in both his *Death of Seneca* and *Belisarius* certainly provided a source of inspiration from which to draw. Given his rivalry with Peyron (not to mention Peyron's high standing with both Vien and d'Angiviller), David – while clearly aware of and influenced by artistic precedents for the subject – had the opportunity to show his innovation as an artist; the painting would, after all, serve as David's *morceau d'agrégation*. I would suggest that David's use of architecture in the *Belisarius* served two purposes: it allowed him to display his newly acquired classical vocabulary found in the Roman albums, and it demonstrated how he could utilize architecture in an innovative way – that is, as a language for conveying meaning. For example, the three immense fluted columns on the right of the picture plane quite literally support the blind Belisarius, as well as add a sense of rhythm to the foreground and balance to the composition; the figures are in direct dialogue with the architecture contained therein. These columns, like the former general now reduced to begging and in a state of physical and assumingly emotional decay, appear aged and tattered – a shadow of the glory they previously possessed. The architecture in the painting's foreground is not simply ornamental nor does it exist only to establish an antique context. Rather the architecture echoes and solidifies the central ideas of the painting.

Certain distinctions can be made between a well-developed drawing by David for the *Belisarius* (completed while in Rome in 1779) and the final painting, specifically in regards to the arrangement of space (the drawing is orientated vertically, as opposed to the horizontal nature of the final painting) (Figs. 35 and 39). It is noteworthy that the three fluted columns in the foreground remained relatively unchanged between the initial drawing and the finished painting. What did change architecturally between the drawing and painting is the background scene located on the left of the composition. In the



drawing, a few nondescript structures are identifiable behind a high wall. Yet in the painting, due to its new horizontal orientation, architectural structures in the background take on a new prominence. No longer simply a compositional device used to suggest depth of space, the architecture in the distance (which prominently includes an obelisk, temple pediment and other various classical structures) enhances notions of power and grandeur associated with empire – in this case, with Emperor Justinian. These ideas are juxtaposed with the fallen general in the foreground, himself a victim of empire and exile, who is visually separated from the city in the background by a high wall.

David's decision to include an architectural scene in the distance is not new. As mentioned previously, his *St. Roch* contains a distant scene of the city of Marseilles on the right of the painting (See Fig. 33). This type of compositional arrangement in which a central scene in the foreground is set (rather theatrically in fact) against an architectural backdrop with another architectural view identifiable in the distance is much in debt to Poussin. A preliminary drawing for *The Death of Julius Caesar* (c. 1779) located in Album 1 reveals the extent to which David was influenced by Poussin during his Roman period, specifically with respect to the placement of architecture within a composition (Fig. 40).<sup>138</sup> In *The Death of Julius Caesar*, which was never realized in paint, David uses architecture to visually contain the pandemonium of the scene taking place in the foreground. The façade of a Doric temple is shown at left, slightly askew, while in the background various architectural structures are visible behind a high wall. It seems likely that, as Christopher Johns has suggested, the classical Poussinist setting created by David in *The Death of Julius Caesar* anticipates the architecture he would use in the

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<sup>138</sup> Given the identical dimensions of both drawings (98 x 129 mm), it has been suggested that they were intended for a potential patron. The exact purpose of the drawings is unknown because neither an oil sketch nor documentary evidence concerning a commission for the subject are extant. Johns, 62. See also Agnes Mongan and Miriam Steward, *David to Corot* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1996), 47-48.

*Belisarius*.<sup>139</sup> Compositional arrangements similar to *The Death of Julius Caesar* can be found in drawings throughout David's Roman albums. Many of these drawings were copied by the artist after Italian Renaissance masters including Guerchino, Garofolo and the Brothers Zuccari.<sup>140</sup> While the influence of Poussin is undeniable, it is also worth considering the impact these Italian Renaissance works had on David's ideas concerning the compositional use of architecture and how he could rely on architecture in an innovative way.

The importance David placed on architecture in his *Belisarius* can also be viewed in the Louvre version completed by his student, Fabre, in 1784 (Fig. 41). According to Antoine Schnapper, Fabre was asked by his teacher to complete a smaller version of the painting to which David added the finishing touches himself.<sup>141</sup> Despite the obvious similarities between the original painting and its copy, several differences are worth noting. The central figures are now joined by two figures in the background, whose position in the composition gives an added sense of depth to the painting. In the background, a female figure is shown climbing a staircase that has been added in front of the high wall. The most dramatic difference, however, between David's original painting and Fabre's copy is the architectural scene in the distance. While certain architectural elements remain true to the original (although slightly diminished), including the temple portico and obelisk, others have been added including an amphitheater (perhaps a reference to the Coliseum) and what appears to be an aqueduct located in front of the mountain at right. Furthermore, the three fluted columns in the foreground appear to be in much worse condition than in the original painting. Why change the architecture in the

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139 Ibid.

140 See Rosenberg and Prat, 741, 932, 957.

141 Schnapper, *David*, 63-66. Schnapper asserts that the copy of the *Belisarius* was owned by the Noailles family who likewise commissioned David's last religious painting, *Christ on the Cross* (1782).

copy from the original painting? Could the increased attention to the architecture in the Louvre version serve as evidence of David's growing political assertiveness? Having achieved full membership into the Academy with his *Andromache and Hector* in 1783 it seems plausible that, with this second version of the *Belisarius*, David could be freer in his implementation of an architectural language – one which he used to criticize the power and authority of the monarchy and aristocracy.

### *Andromache Mourning Hector*

The importance placed on architecture and the continued influence of David's Roman experience can be seen in his next work, *Andromache Mourning Hector*, which, as mentioned previously, served as his *morçeau de reception* (Fig. 42). The subject of the painting is taken from Homer's *Illiad* and, like the *Belisarius*, was popular with artists of the period. David's painting depicts the private mourning of a hero's death by his wife and young son amidst an opulent antique setting.<sup>142</sup> As the title makes clear, it is the bereaved Andromache – the wife of the deceased Hector – and not the cadaverous body of the fallen hero who demands the viewer's attention. Although Andromache's grief appears boundless, her gestures are powerful as her left hand holds the arm of their son, Astyanax, while her right extends outward to her dead husband in a sign of helplessness and uncertainty. David has placed Hector's lifeless body on a gold antique deathbed, complete with relief scenes depicting the *Farewell of Hector and Andromache* and Hector's murder by Achilles (I will return to discuss the significance of these relief scenes in the paragraphs to follow).<sup>143</sup> In the background, the now familiar inclusion of

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<sup>142</sup> For his depiction of the scene, David was particularly inspired by book 24 of the *Iliad*, specifically lines 725-28. See Jack Johnson, "David and Literature," in *Jacques-Louis David: New Perspectives*, 82.

<sup>143</sup> Dorothy Johnson, *Art in Metamorphosis*, 29. See also Jack Johnson, "David and Literature," 82-83.

classical architecture on the part of David is visible, although partially concealed by drapery hung on a high wall.

I would suggest that *Andromache Mourning Hector* can be viewed a reflection by the artist on his first Roman sojourn and likewise presents the viewer with a glimpse of what the David will be capable of producing by the end of the 1780s. In order to understand this perspective, it is necessary to discuss the artistic scene in Rome during the eighteenth century and how various artists and techniques impacted David's constantly evolving style, including his reliance on the language of architecture. While in Rome (if not before), David was exposed to a series of well-known engravings on Homeric subjects engraved by Cunego in 1764 after paintings by Gavin Hamilton. In addition to painting, Hamilton, a native Scotsman, was also an archaeologist and merchant living in Rome. Hamilton's representations from the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* embodied the noble, edifying subjects proposed by the critic La Font de Saint-Yenne in 1747 and by the Comte de Caylus a decade later.<sup>144</sup> The series also enjoyed the praise of Winckelmann who admired Hamilton's "Greek" forms.<sup>145</sup> Hamilton, like Batoni and Mengs, was principally inspired by Winckelmann's *Gedanken über die Nachahmung der griechischen Werke in der Malerei und Bildhauerkunst* of 1775, in which the author emphasized the importance of contour and expression in ancient Greece. According to Winckelmann, contour could not be found in nature but rather existed with the artist alone.<sup>146</sup> In Rome, David was surrounded by an international milieu that preferred the *dessin au trait* or contour drawing, which became associated with the revival of antique

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144 In his *Tableaux tirés de l'Iliade et de l'Odyssée d'Homère et de l'Eneide de Virgile avec des observations générales sur le costume*, Caylus had a tremendous impact on the revival of Homeric subjects in painting. In the text, Caylus and suggested specific scenes and counseled artists on how to paint antique objects and costumes. See Jack Johnson, "David and Literature," 82.

145 Schnapper, *David*, 36.

146 Johnson, *Art in Metamorphosis*, 36.

themes. This outline style contradicted all David had learned about drawing in Paris and subsequently had an immense impact on his artistic metamorphosis. Despite transformations in his style over the course of his career, David continued to utilize contour as a vehicle for conveying intellectual and emotional significance.<sup>147</sup>

I would like to return to the significance of the relief scenes located on the antique deathbed in *Andromache Mourning Hector* in respect to the influence of the contour style on David's work following his first Roman sojourn. The relief scenes depicted by David in the painting are a direct allusion to his most important work completed in Rome before returning to Paris: *Funeral of a Hero* of 1778-80 (Fig. 43). Likely inspired by the writings of Homer, this monumental finished drawing depicts the death of a warrior between the figures of Athena and Herakles at left and the Fates at right, followed by the funeral procession of the slain warrior.<sup>148</sup> Specifically, the death of the warrior from the *Funeral of a Hero* reappears slightly altered on the right of the deathbed in the *Andromache*, visible beneath Hector's feet. Dorothy Johnson has argued that the *Funeral of a Hero* supremely illustrates the developments in both contour drawing and corporal expressivity David had achieved in Rome. Furthermore, the drawing demonstrates the artist's reliance on sculpture, not painting, as a model for artistic reform.<sup>149</sup> Monochromatic friezes inspired by Roman reliefs had been in vogue in Italy since the early Renaissance, yet they enjoyed a resurgence throughout Europe during the second half of the eighteenth-century. These friezes, inspired by antique subjects and styles,

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147 Ibid., 36-37.

148 Ibid., 50. The frieze measures 2.25 m x 26 cm. The death of the warrior (detached from the frieze) is located in the Musée de Peinture et de Sculpture in Grenoble, while the funeral procession is in the collection of the Crocker Art Museum in Sacramento. Johnson notes that the original destination of the drawing is unknown. See also Jacques de Caso, "Jacques-Louis David and the Style All'Antica," *The Burlington Magazine* 144 (1972): 686-690 and S. Howard, *Sacrifice of the Hero: the Roman Years. A Classical Frieze by Jacques-Louis David* (Sacramento, 1975).

149 Johnson, *Art in Metamorphosis*, 50.

enjoyed immense popularity in architectural décor and were occasionally painted to convey the appearance of sculpted relief.<sup>150</sup> Thus in the *Andromache* David is referencing a sculptural and ultimately architectural style learned in Rome to convey the same notions of death and grief epitomized in his *Funeral of a Hero*.

Hamilton's Homeric series (and its canonical place within the dominant Neoclassic aesthetic) successfully and famously reflected this expressive outline style that David successfully implemented in his *Funeral of a Hero*.<sup>151</sup> Consequently, it is not surprising that David was greatly inspired by Cunego's engraving after Hamilton's *Andromache Mourning Hector* for his own version of the subject – both in his use of contour drawing and compositional arrangement (Fig. 44).<sup>152</sup> The affinities between the two versions are immediately apparent. In the engraving (which, by nature of the medium, exists as a mirror image of Hamilton's original painting), Hamilton displays the lifeless body of Hector on an antique deathbed with head, chest and feet exposed. Remarkably similar to David's version, the dead hero's body is propped up under a number of pillows resulting in a rather awkward protrusion of the chest. Rather than depict a private moment between the slain Hector, Andromache and Astyanax, Hamilton illustrates a very public scene of mourning. There is no restrained grief in the engraving as we find in David's painting, which subtly but powerfully uses controlled gestures to convey feelings of sadness and despair. Instead, Hamilton gives a variety of emotions to

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<sup>150</sup> Ibid., 50. See also Howard, 69-70.

<sup>151</sup> Johnson notes that, aside from Cunego's engravings after Hamilton, the most acclaimed work executed in the outline style was completed by d'Hancarville in his illustrations for the *Antiquités étrusques, grecques, et romaines.. gravées, avec leur explications* (1767-76). The *Antiquités* was used by artist, Johnson explains, as a reference for antique subjects and style. Johnson, *Art in Metamorphosis*, 36.

<sup>152</sup> Locquin was among the first scholars to point out the dependency of the figures in David's *Andromache Mourning Hector* with those in Hamilton's version of the same subject. See Jean Locquin, *La Peinture d'histoire en France 1747 à 1785* (Paris: Arthéna, 1978), 157.

his figures both through the use of expressive gestures and facial expressions. Unlike David's painting, Hamilton relies on a Poussinist composition, one that emphasizes the horizontal orientation of the image and resembles a theater set. David's composition, as we shall see, is wholly modern and signals a new neoclassical aesthetic.

David was unquestionably influenced by the figures and compositional arrangement in Hamilton's *Andromache Mourning Hector*. Yet he was equally inspired by Hamilton's use of architecture and inclusion of antique objects within his image. David's decision in the *Andromache* to cover a portion of the background wall with black drapery does not strike the viewer as out of the ordinary. Black, the traditional color of mourning, is appropriate given the painting's subject matter and the placement of the drapery creates a stark visual contrast between the figures in the foreground and the architecture in the background. David must have been inspired by Hamilton's inclusion of drapery in his version of *Andromache*, yet differences between the two are noteworthy. In Hamilton's image, the drapery is placed much higher in the background, all but covering the architecture. Interestingly, the voluminous and flowing drapery mimics the unbridled emotions of the figures in the foreground (note also the inclusion by David of the exact same floor as in Hamilton's version). David approaches the treatment of the drapery and its juxtaposition with the architecture quite differently. In his painting, the presence of three fluted column shafts and their bases appear familiar and, I would suggest, reference the architecture in the *Belisarius*. With *Andromache Mourning Hector*, it becomes clear that David will use architectural elements – in this case classical columns – to strengthen the central figures in his paintings. For example, in the *Belisarius* the three principal figures are the alms-bearing woman, the young guide and Belisarius – all are echoed in the three columns on the right of the composition. In the *Andromache*, the three columns mirror the figures of Hector, Andromache and Astyanax. In the aforementioned paintings, David contrasts the character of each of the figures with a column, reinforcing ideas of strength, dignity and nobility that one associates with

classical architecture. Furthermore, David's decision to include a high wall topped by classical columns is again a reference to Piranesi and David's use of architecture in the *Count Potocki*. In both the *Potocki* and *Andromache Mourning Hector*, the artist uses columns to lengthen the composition, creating a tension between the figures and the architecture that would not exist if the paintings were orientated horizontally; architecture rather than the figures themselves dictated David's use of space. In these post-Roman works, as we will continue to see throughout the 1780s, architecture serves as a unifying and connective vehicle that link David's paintings together.

Another Hamiltonian reference is evident is David's decision to include a candelabra on the right of the composition behind the seated figure of Andromache. Although David's placement of the candelabra is much more pronounced than that of Hamilton's (whose candelabra is placed on the far left of the composition and is greatly reduced in size comparatively with that of David's), its inclusion in both works is noteworthy. Hamilton's usage of the candelabra appears to be purely utilitarian while David goes a step further, using the base of the candelabra in his painting to display verses from the *Iliad* in the original Greek. The translated verses read:

Husband, perished from out of life art thou, yet in thy  
youth, and leavest me a widow in thy halls; and thy son is still but  
a babe, the son born of thee and me in our haplessness.<sup>153</sup>

While David likely looked to Hamilton's *Andromache* for inspiration concerning the inclusion of the candelabra, his decision to include the original Greek verses on its base serves as a prime example of David's desire to illustrate a scene from Homer's epic text in an original and subtle way. Furthermore, the presence of the candelabra – which differs considerably in style and importance from Hamilton's – again points to the influence of Giovanni Battista Piranesi and David's Roman experience. Antoine

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<sup>153</sup> Jack Johnson, "David and Literature," 83. Homer, *The Iliad*, trans. A. T. Murray, Loeb Classical Library bilingual edition (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1985), 617.



Schnapper has suggested that David's candelabra in the *Andromache* was inspired by an engraving by Piranesi, although Schnapper does not cite to which engraving he is specifically referring.<sup>154</sup> Schnapper bases his argument on a Roman drawing by David of a classical pedestal (located in Album 1), yet there is no compelling evidence that the drawing in question is a direct reference to Piranesi (Fig. 45).<sup>155</sup> In fact, David's drawing of a classical pedestal bears little similarity at all to the candelabra in his final painting.

It seems probable that if, as Schnapper suggests, David was inspired by an antique candelabra after an engraving by Piranesi, he likely looked to a book of engravings by the Italian printmaker entitled *Vasi, candelabra, cippi, sarcophagi, tripodi, Lucerne, ed ornamenti antichi*. Piranesi worked on the series from 1768 until his death in 1778. Scholars feel certain that the series, based on drawings by Giovanni Battista, was entirely executed by his son Francesco and his school following his father's death.<sup>156</sup> One plate in particular from the series entitled *Vari candelabra, un vaso e due urne cinerarie* contains a central candelabra that bears a striking resemblance to that in David's painting (Fig. 46). It is possible that David had access to Giovanni Battista's original drawings or his son's engravings during his period in Rome as a *pensionnaire*. For several years during the directorate of Charles Natoire at the French Academy in Rome, Piranesi's print shop was located across the street from the Palazzo Mancini.<sup>157</sup> The existence of an artistic dialogue between Piranesi and students at the French Academy in Rome, therefore, is not conjectural. As a student in Rome, David had access to numerous classical collections, including those at the Borghese Gallery, Vatican, and Capitoline

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154 Jacques-Louis David, 1748-1825, 148.

155 Schnapper, *David*, 46.

156 Ficacci, 128.

157 Gilbert, 1: 236.

Museum. It is well known that students at the French Academy in Rome studied these antique collections as part of their academic training. It should not come as a surprise that Piranesi and his workshop could have also served as a source of academic learning for the young David.

The Oath of the Horatii

In February 1785, Jacques-Louis David asked the Marquis de Bièvre to ensure that a new painting executed during his second trip to Rome received prominent placement at the Paris Salon.<sup>158</sup> The painting, despite arriving in Paris a few days late, received overwhelming critical acclaim as it had in Rome a year prior.<sup>159</sup> According to one reviewer, the painting could not adequately be described in words; it had to be experienced personally:

One must absolutely see it to know the extent to which it merits being admired... {It is} a composition filled with energy, sustained by a powerful and frightful expression, that contrasts superbly with the despondency that prevails in the group of the women. Finally, if I judge the reaction of others by my own, one experiences in seeing this painting a feeling that elevates the soul, and if I can use an expression of J.-J. Rousseau, it has something *poignant* that attracts you.<sup>160</sup>

The literature on David is saturated with endless theories that seek to uncover what exactly made David's *Oath of the Horatii* so compelling both to contemporary viewers and to those of modern day. Thomas Crow, for example, has written on the

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<sup>158</sup> Schnapper, *David*, 74. David returned to Rome sometime in 1784 with his wife, two sons and pupil Drouais; the exact date of their arrival is disputed. See Brookner, 76.

<sup>159</sup> Wildenstein, 18-22; and Hauteceur, 75-59.

<sup>160</sup> "Il faut absolument le voir pour savoir jusqu'à quel point il mérite d'être admiré... Une composition pleine d'énergie, soutenue d'une expression forte et terrible, qui contraste supérieurement avec l'accablement qui règne dans le groupe des femmes. Enfin si je juge de la sensation des autres par la mienne, on éprouve en voyant ce tableau un sentiment qui vous élève l'âme et qui pour me servir de l'expression de J.-J. Rousseau a quelque chose de poignant qui vous attire." *Journal de Paris* (Sept. 17, 1785): 519. English translation in Johnson, *Art in Metamorphosis*, 62.

importance of the theater for David's conception of the *Oath* – specifically Corneille's *Horace*, which David viewed at the Comédie française in 1782.<sup>161</sup> Most recently, Dorothy Johnson has brought attention to David's use of psychology and corporal expressivity in the painting in relation to his constantly evolving style.<sup>162</sup> And naturally one cannot engage in a discussion of the *Oath* without mentioning the social and political nexus surrounding the painting's inception, in particular its reading as evidence of David's anti-monarchical discontent.<sup>163</sup> Yet in regards to the use of architecture in the painting and its inherent meaning, scholars have remained relatively quiet.

As we have seen with other post-Roman works by David, the artist uses architectural elements in the *Oath* (in this case, archways) to emphasize three figural groups in the foreground: (from left to right) the three Horatii brothers, their father Horatius, and a group of women and children (Fig. 47). The walls remain free from any kind of architectural ornamentation and the square-tiled floor remains equally as stark. While together the rounded arches and stark Doric column shafts certainly recall a stage set, the architecture nevertheless emulates the stoicism and severity present in the figures of the unfolding scene. An examination of the architecture within the painting reveals three archways which, obscured by shadows, exposes what appears to be another room behind the far right bay. In a study for the *Oath of the Horatii*, David clearly renders a staircase and window behind the far right bay; the staircase is indistinguishable in the final painting while only a portion of the window remains visible (Fig. 48). This interest in the archway motif finds its origins in the Roman albums, most notably in David's

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161 Crow, *Emulation*, 33.

162 Johnson, *Art in Metamorphosis*, 57-66.

163 See Crow, "The Oath of the Horatii in 1785," 424-471; and David Carrier, "Was David a Revolutionary before the Revolution? Recent Political Readings of The Oath of the Horatii and The Lictors Returning to Brutus the Bodies of His Sons," in *Jacques-Louis David: New Perspectives*, 108-118.

drawing of the interior of the Colosseum (see Fig. 16). When several drawings of interior scenes from the albums are examined side-by-side, it becomes clear that David was transfixed by the ability of a rounded archway to lead the viewer into another space. At times David uses the arch as a window to look onto another scene whose distance is conveyed by varying the thickness and firmness of the drawn line. This interest in recessed space creates a kind of architectural layering, which further contributes to a sense of three-dimensionality and gives added depth, movement, and complexity to the drawings. Some of these drawings that contain prevalent archways also include staircases, frequently located beneath an archway on the right of the composition – as we see implemented in the *Oath*.

In David's finished painting, a single spear is shown mounted horizontally on the wall behind the arcade, subtly placed within the deep shadows of the architecture (this aspect of the painting is difficult to see in reproductions, but is clearly visible in the preparatory drawing for the *Oath* discussed previously). This is not the first time David has chosen to display a spear mounted horizontally in the background behind his central figures. In a preliminary drawing for *Andromache Mourning Hector* dated 1782, in place of the classical columns David included a mounted spear on the back wall that extends the length of the composition but David chose not to include the spear in his final painting (Fig. 49). In the *Oath*, David conveys the importance of the spear by placing the weapon's pointed end (and the majority of its handle) in the arcade's central bay – that is, in the center of the composition, just above the three swords being held by Horatius. The horizontality of the spear, followed by the verticality of the three swords, leads our eye downward, past the feet of the brothers, to the base of yet another spear. Projecting upwards from the floor at a forty-five degree angle, this second spear is being held (rather awkwardly in fact) by the Horatii brother nearest to the viewer. With his body turned towards his father, the spear-bearing Horatii holds the weapon behind his back with his left hand, as if hiding the weapon from his father and the women. His right arm extends

outward, perfectly straight, parallel to the mounted spear on the wall to his left. The viewer is compelled to follow the rightward direction of the mounted spear and the Horatii's outstretched arm through the center of the composition, past the figure of Horatius. There we are met by the figures of Sabina and Camilla. Sabina, the central female figure, was a wife of one of the Horatii brothers and also sister to the Curiatii of Alba – the enemies the Roman Horatii brothers have sworn to fight. The figure to the left of Sabina (shown slumped over with her head resting on her right hand) is Camilla who is a sister to the Horatii. To complicate this familial drama further, Camilla was engaged to one of the Curiatii whom her brothers have sworn to kill.

Only one of Camilla's brothers survives the battle and, following his return, slays Camilla because she mourns the death of her fiancé. Guilty of killing his sister, Horatius pleaded with the Romans not to put his only surviving son to death, a scene which David originally considered for the subject for his painting.<sup>164</sup> Could the spear-bearing Horatii in David's *Oath* be the brother that survives the battle against the Curiatii, only to return and slay his sister? Might the spear he holds, as well as the mounted spear on the wall behind the arcade, be an allusion to Camilla's murder – a scene that David originally intended to depict but was dissuaded? As in his Roman albums, David has used these rounded archway motifs to lead the viewer into another space – this time revealing a weapon of war and death, its meaning only enhanced by a shroud of shadowy darkness.

Scholars have pointed to a drawing depicting the courtyard of the Palazzo Vecchio in Florence executed by David while in Italy as the source for the architecture in *The Oath* (Fig. 50). Located in Album 9, the Palazzo Vecchio drawing is markedly different from other interior views found in the albums and raises a number of questions. The Palazzo Vecchio served as the seat of civic government and is today, as it was in the

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<sup>164</sup> Johnson, *Art in Metamorphosis*, 59. David was discouraged by his friends who thought the subject of a father condoning the murder of his daughter by his son had questionable moral implications. Cited in Wildenstein, no. 666.

late eighteenth century, one of the most important monuments in Florence. It was not a building dating from the Roman republican past but from more recent history. Why would the artist choose a famous example of Florentine Renaissance architecture as a setting for a historical narrative taken from Roman history?<sup>165</sup> Would it not make better sense and be more in accord with his thinking about architecture for David to reference Roman architecture rather than Florentine? After all, he had an entire collection of Roman architectural structures, both ancient and modern, from which to draw inspiration.

If we look closely at the Palazzo Vecchio drawing we do see three archways. But they are much taller than the archways in the *Horatii* and we see in this drawing a heightened interest in ornamentation (specifically the stucco decoration on the column shafts) that does not accord with David's drawings of Roman architectural motifs that typically exhibit a restrained simplicity and interest in pure geometric form.<sup>166</sup> Restrained simplicity and purity of form characterize the archways in the painting. In comparing further the Palazzo Vecchio drawing with the painting we also note that the artist has not used the Composite order of the Palazzo Vecchio columns in the final painting but represents instead two baseless, primitive Tuscan Doric column shafts, each capped with a plain astragal and equally plain abacus. Derived from an ancient type of Etruscan temple, the Tuscan order (Vitruvius writes in his seminal first century A.D. treatise, *de Architectura*) is primitive in nature with wide spaces between the columns involving timber beams and was regarded by sixteenth century theorists as proto-Doric,

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<sup>165</sup> David saw a performance of Corneille's *Horace* at the Comédie française in 1782 and, enthused by the play, was well aware that the tragic subject he chose to depict in his painting concerned the championing of ancient Rome – not Florence. See Crow, *Emulation*, 33.

<sup>166</sup> The construction of the Palazzo Vecchio has been attributed to Arnolfo di Cambio (1296-1314). The courtyard was restored by Michelozzo in 1454, but the stucco decoration was not added until 1565. See Sérullaz, *Inventaire général des dessins*, 130.

the crudest, and most massive of the five orders.<sup>167</sup> The use of the Tuscan Doric suggests an understanding of elements of architecture by the artist given the masculine, militaristic nature of the painting.<sup>168</sup> If David was inspired by the architecture of the courtyard of the Palazzo Vecchio, why did he eliminate these characteristic elements from the final painting?

I believe we need to turn to other sources of architectural inspiration found in the Roman albums in order to better understand David's conception for the architecture in the *Oath of the Horatii*. Two drawings in particular echo the architecture in the painting and both – like the Palazzo Vecchio drawing – illustrate interior courtyards of famous palazzi. The first drawing (contained in Album 8) represents the two-story interior courtyard of the Palazzo Venezia in Rome which, designed in an Albertian spirit, was commissioned by Paul II in the 1455 (Fig. 51).<sup>169</sup> David emphasizes the importance of the double arcades by increasing the thickness of his line, while using a lighter touch to sketch in the surrounded structure that is not the central focus of his drawing. His interest was with the arcades, capturing the rhythm of the their rounded archways (similar to his drawing of the interior of the Coliseum) and relishing in the absolute economy of detail shared by the building's master architect. We note that David conveys a sense of three-dimensionality strictly through his use of line; there are no shadows in the drawing, no

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167 John Summerson, *The Classical Language of Architecture* (Cambridge: The M.I.T. Press, 1963), 52. See also Ingrid D. Rowland and Thomas Noble Howe, eds., *Vitruvius: Ten Books on Architecture* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1999).

168 In Book IV of his sixteenth century treatise on architecture, Sebastiano Serlio makes it apparent in his discussion of the Tuscan “that the five orders form a series not only of rising proportions but also of increasing ornament and decoration. Tuscan is the ‘most solid [sodo] and the least ornate [ornato] order...the least thinness [sottigliezza] and slenderness [gracilità].’” John Onians, *Bearers of Meaning: The Classical Orders in Antiquity, the Middle Ages, and the Renaissance* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1988), 271.

169 Ludwig H. Heydenreich and Wolfgang Lotz, *Architecture in Italy, 1400-1600*, trans. by Mary Hottinger (Baltimore: Penguin Books, Ltd., 1974), 67. The architect of the building is unknown.

representation of human figures. The monumentality of the arcades, their antique shape, immense volume and lack of ornamentation evident in the Palazzo Venezia drawing all call to mind the architecture in David's *Oath*.

Identified by David's own hand as "palais farnhese," a second drawing from the Roman albums (found in Album 9) likewise depicts rounded archways and rhythmic arcades present in the *Horatii*, as well as an extensive study of the Doric order (Fig. 52). The most important extant work by Antonio da Sangallo (Michelangelo contributed to the building's construction following Sangallo's death in 1546), the Palazzo Farnese serves as a hallmark of Cinquecento architecture and the effect of its courtyard, according to Heydenreich and Lotz, was unmatched by any later building.<sup>170</sup> In David's drawing, entitled *Vestibule du palais Farnèse à Rome*, a series of Doric columns flank both sides of an immense rounded archway that leads the viewer through the palazzo's vestibule to the central courtyard identifiable in the distance. While both drawings do not specifically represent the Tuscan Doric order, as depicted by David in the *Oath*, it is important to remember that the location of Albums 2 and 12 are still unknown and that Albums 6 and 10 have been disassembled. The possibility, therefore, that a specific drawing referencing the Tuscan Doric exists in one of the above mentioned albums is probable. Furthermore, we can not forget the influence of architecture included in paintings David copied while in Italy. As mentioned previously, David frequently copied after Renaissance masters in his Roman albums including the Brothers Zuccari, Veronese and the Carracci, whose paintings often include prominent elements of classical architecture that likewise could have inspired the architecture in David's *Oath*.

Lastly, an examination of Renaissance courtyards in Rome that potentially served as a source of inspiration for the architecture in David's painting would not be complete without considering the courtyard of the *Cancellaria* or Papal Chancellery (Fig. 53).

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<sup>170</sup> Heydenreich and Lotz, 200.



Construction on the Cancelleria began in c. 1485 and even today scholars disagree on the building's architect, citing such Renaissance masters as Bramante, Raphael, Antonio da Sangallo and Francesco di Giorgio Martini as the possible authors of the project. I am principally interested in the building's courtyard, which is arguably the most beautiful of any built in the Early Renaissance. The courtyard of the Cancelleria is particularly noteworthy because of the sense of openness it provides, as well as its inclusion of new motifs and fine craftsmanship.<sup>171</sup> The architecture of the Cancelleria courtyard is markedly more simple than that of both the Palazzo Farnese and Palazzo Venezia, an architectural simplicity that would have appealed to David for use in his *Oath*. In the Cancelleria, the arcades consist of rounded arches supported by true Doric columns (as opposed to engaged columns) and, with the exception of small rosettes between each archway, remain relatively free from ornamentation.

The Cancelleria is also significant because of the architecture it inspired. The combination of Roman, Florentine and Urbinesque architecture epitomized by the Cancelleria marked a transition to the classic style of the early Cinquecento.<sup>172</sup> The style of the Cancelleria was repeated in later palazzi design throughout Rome, including the Palazzo Doria Pamphilj. The oldest part of the palazzo, which includes a Bramante-style courtyard, dates to the early sixteenth-century when it was commissioned by Cardinal Giovanni Fazio Santori (Fig. 54).<sup>173</sup> The location of the courtyard is of particular interest because its entrance opens onto the via del Corso immediately across the street from the entrance to the Palazzo Mancini. While no drawings in the extant Roman albums have been specifically identified as the courtyard of the Cancelleria or

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171 Heydenreich and Lotz, 69.

172 Ibid., 69-70.

173 The history of the Palazzo Doria is quite complex and architects of the building throughout its lengthy construction include Bramante, Antonio del Grande and Gabriele Valvassori.

Palazzo Doria, we can presume that David would have been extremely familiar with both courtyards and, given his status as a *pensionnaire*, was likely allowed access. Yet to assume that David merely copied and pasted his architectural drawings from the Roman albums into his finished paintings would be giving this most learned and imaginative of artists far too little credit. The architecture observed and recorded in the Roman albums contributed greatly to his artistic metamorphosis; taking what he has learned during his period of study in Italy, David transformed his ideas and meditations on architecture into his finished paintings. He did not transcribe the drawings in their entirety directly into paint. As is well known, while in Rome David transformed his way of thinking about and making art – I suggest that this extended to his conception of architecture and its representation as well.

#### *The Death of Socrates*

In 1780 d'Angiviller commissioned Pierre Peyron – through then Director of the French Academy in Rome, Joseph-Marie Vien – to paint two works based on the life of Socrates.<sup>174</sup> Peyron decided to depict *The Funeral of Miltiades* (also known as *The Sacrifice of Cimon*), completed by the artist in 1782 (Fig. 55), and *Socrates and Alcibiades*.<sup>175</sup> *The Funeral* was completed shortly before Peyron left Rome and was submitted late to the Salon of 1783, resulting in its omission from the catalog.<sup>176</sup> The painting illustrates a scene from the second century B.C. *Philippic History of Trogus*

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<sup>174</sup> Letter from d'Angiviller, published in Anatole de Montaiglon and Jules Guiffrey, eds., *Correspondance*, 14: 14.

<sup>175</sup> Pierre Rosenberg, "A New Death of Socrates by Peyron," in *Final Moments: Peyron, David, and The Death of Socrates*, ed. Claudia Einecke (Omaha, NE: Joslyn Art Museum, 2001), 8. *The Funeral of Miltiades* is located in the collection of the Musée du Louvre, Paris. *Socrates and Alcibiades* is located today in a private collection in Aix-en-Provence, although it was previously thought to be lost. See Pierre Rosenberg and Udolpho van de Sandt, *Pierre Peyron 1744-1814* (Neuilly-sur-Seine: ARTHENA, 1983), 98-102.

<sup>176</sup> Bowron, "Painters and Painting in Settecento Rome," 429.

*Pompeius* (Book II, Chapter 15), in which the Athenian General Miltiades is unfairly accused of treason following an failed military campaign. As punishment, Miltiades was sentenced to death and required to pay a heavy fine, which he was unable to pay. The former general was subsequently thrown into prison where he would later die. On the left of the painting, Peyron depicts an interior prison scene with the dead Miltiades being carried away by two men. At right, Cimon – our hero’s loyal and grief-stricken son – refuses to look at the funeral procession of Miltiades and is consequently chained by a jailer rather than dishonor his father. The architecture in the background is virtually indistinguishable, given the deep shadows of the stark prison cell created by Peyron’s dramatic use of light and dark. An engraving after *The Funeral* (dated c. 1782) gives a much clearer indication of the architecture in Peyron’s painting (Fig. 56). In the engraving the shadows are lessened, revealing a staircase and large archway on the right of the composition followed by a large grate. The placement of the archway divides the composition in half (as it does in the painting), resulting in a dark niche and slightly illuminated wall. The architecture – with its staircase, archway, thick masonry, chains, and dark recesses – certainly recall the *Carceri* of Piranesi, an artist who assuredly had an impact on Peyron’s conception (see Fig. 17). With themes of heroic injustice and filial piety, coupled with a brilliant new approach to painting, it is clear why Peyron was considered to be the unstoppable proponent of the neoclassical style.

Peyron’s composition for *The Funeral of Miltiades* contains elements (specifically with regards to the architecture) that he would return to in his next painting, *Death of Socrates* – a royal commission due in large part to d’Angiviller’s intercession (Fig. 57).<sup>177</sup> David learned of Peyron’s order from the king to paint a large *Death of*

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<sup>177</sup> I am specifically referring to Peyron’s oil sketch for *The Death of Socrates* (1787) located in the Statens Museum for Kunst, Copenhagen. Peyron’s sketch and final painting (which was later exhibited at the Salon of 1789 and is today located in the Assemblée nationale in Paris) are virtually identical in both composition and style.

*Socrates* in 1786 and, confident that his painting of the same subject would surpass that of his rival, obtained the commission from his patron Charles-Michel Trudaine de la Sablière (Fig. 58).<sup>178</sup> Seen side-by-side at the Salon, David was confident that his painting of the same subject would surpass Peyron's. The subject of David's painting – *Socrates at the Moment of Grasping the Hemlock* – would have appealed to Trudaine de la Sablière, a young intellectual jurist well-known in pre-Revolutionary Parisian society.<sup>179</sup> A preliminary drawing suggests, however, that David was interested in depicting the subject as early as 1782 – the same year Peyron completed his *Funeral of Miltiades* upon which his *Death of Socrates* would be largely based (Fig. 59). The drawing, referred to in the David literature as a study for *The Death of Socrates*, illustrates a compositional reliance on Peyron's *Funeral*, specifically with regard to David's use of architecture. Scholars have asserted that *The Funeral of Miltiades* was likely exhibited at the Palazzo Mancini in 1782, allowing for David to see Peyron's painting up close.<sup>180</sup> David has retained Peyron's Piranesi-like interior complete with immense walls constructed of large masonry blocks, chains, and dark shadows. In the drawing, David has reversed the architectural background in Peyron's painting, placing the large niche on the left of the composition as opposed to the right. Within the niche David has included a circular grate (clearly indicating that the interior is that of a prison) and a faint outline of a column supporting a double arcade. In David's drawing, the influence of Peyron is further felt by his use of raking light that creates a deep triangular shadow in the niche, evident in Peyron's *Funeral* above the figure of Miltiades. Interestingly, this triangular shadow reappears in David's final painting above the figure of Socrates.

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178 Claudia Einecke, "On Reading The Death of Socrates," in *Final Moments: Peyron, David, and The Death of Socrates*, 18.

179 Crow, *Emulation*, 94.

180 Bowron, "Painters and Painting in Settecento Rome," 430.

The existence of the sketched double arcade in the 1782 drawing provides a window into David's thought process, suggesting that he was considering extending the interior space beyond the niche. In his finished painting of 1787, David does not include a niche on the left of the composition but rather creates an archway that leads the viewer into another space. Here David again relies on the archway motif he acquired in Rome to give added depth and complexity to the painting. David uses the architecture in his *Socrates* to continue the narrative that begins in the foreground among the Greek philosopher and his bereft disciples. The architecture behind the figure of Socrates remains free of ornamentation (David's original drawing of 1782 contains a bookshelf that was omitted by the artist in the final painting); the wall echoes the strength and stoicism of the unfolding narrative. At the foot of the bed sits an aged Plato, Socrates' most loyal disciple, whose body is framed by the archway at left. Immediately behind Plato a disciple is shown with his arms raised above his head, clinging to the right side of the archway in an expression of grief. The archway leads the viewer to a short staircase and iron grate, remarkably similar to the arrangement in the engraving after Peyron's *Funeral of Miltiades*. Three disciples are shown walking up a larger staircase to the world above; the last of the figures turns around to face the viewer and waves goodbye.

Peyron's *Death of Socrates* was not completed in time for the Salon of 1787; Peyron subsequently entered a finished sketch in its place, which was (as with his *Funeral*) a late submission.<sup>181</sup> The comparisons that were naturally drawn between David's version and that of Peyron at the Salon of 1787 proved fatal to the latter's career, resulting in his eventual retreat from public life.<sup>182</sup> It is worth investigating why Peyron's painting received such harsh criticism in comparison with David's seemingly like-minded work. As one critic remarked:

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<sup>181</sup> Rosenberg, "A New Death of Socrates by Peyron," 9. D'Angiviller would later take the oil sketch with him to Denmark where he emigrated after the Revolution.

<sup>182</sup> See Rosenberg and van de Sandt, 12.

[N]ot that the two paintings resemble each other, because, on the contrary, each shines through a quality that is directly opposed to the other and that also shows up completely different shortcomings.<sup>183</sup>

The two paintings did not differ, however, in terms of content. Both paintings depict the same “significant moment” when Socrates reaches for the hemlock, simultaneously chastising his friends for their expressions of grief. Based on Plato’s *Phaedo*, the death of Socrates was seen as the embodiment of the *exemplum virtutis* as upheld during the later eighteenth-century by both the Academy and Diderot in his *Traité de la poésie dramatique*, published in 1758. The difference between the two paintings, as Claudia Einecke has discussed, lies in their divergent narrative strategies; that is, *how* each artist chose to tell the story.<sup>184</sup> Peyron depicts the event dramatically, calling on profound emotions, bold colors, and spot lighting (contributing to the extreme chiaroscuro for which Peyron was largely criticized); he relied on the emotional response of the viewer to tell the story. In David’s painting, time has seemingly stopped. The poses and gesticulation of his figures signal emotions rather than enact them, calling instead for a logical, psychological response to the painting.<sup>185</sup> There is a restrained elegance in David’s composition as well as his chosen color palate; the uniformly dispersed light places equal emphasis on the figures and architecture. David’s schematic approach to the narrative provided for a legible reading of its meaning. That is not to say that David’s painting was not without its own criticism. One critic remarked that the painting lacked chiaroscuro; he disliked the artist’s use of color, and was displeased with

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183 “[N]on pas que les deux Tableaux se ressemblent, car chacun, au contraire, brille par un mérite absolument opposé à l’autre, et laisse remarquer aussi des défauts tout différents.” Louis-François-Henri Lefebure (?), *Verités agréables ou le Salon vu en beau, Par l’Auteur du Coup de patte (1789)*, in Collection Deloynes, vol. XVI, no. 415, p. 15.

184 Einecke, “On Reading The Death of Socrates,” 18.

185 Ibid.

his layering of figures.<sup>186</sup> Yet in the end, it was David's version – not Peyron's – that the won over the Salon of 1787 and, ultimately, would define the course of neoclassical history painting.

### The *Brutus*

In a letter to d'Angiviller following the closing of the 1787 Salon, Peyron announced that he was beginning a new *Death of Socrates* that would improve upon his previous painting in regards to its composition, lighting and drapery (Fig. 60).<sup>187</sup> Peyron's second *Socrates*, located today in the Joslyn Art Museum, was completed by the artist in 1788. For his second version, Peyron chose to depict the moment *after* Socrates drank the poison, thereby focusing on the philosopher's impending mortality rather than his prior demonstration of heroism.<sup>188</sup> Yet despite this difference in the significant moment, Peyron's second version reveals an obvious reliance on the formal elements found in David's *Socrates*. While Peyron has retained his characteristic usage of exaggerated chiaroscuro and strong colors, the arrangement of space in his second *Socrates* is simpler and more unified. Peyron has abandoned his previously complex layering of figures in exchange for a more Davidian, frieze-like composition. It is also significant to note the influence of David's *Socrates* on Peyron's use of architecture in his second version. As in David's painting, Peyron chose to present the unfolding drama on an even plane in the foreground in an effort to simplify the composition and allow for a clearer reading. Although Peyron does not include an archway at left (this would have

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186 “[C]e tableaux...manque entièrement d’effet de clair-obscur, &...la dégradation de la lumière n’y est nullement observée...[L]es figures de ce Tableau viennent en avant les unes sur les autres, comme si elles étoient collées, & cela, grace à ces obligeans rayons de Lumière, dont la couleur ferrugineuse & l’effet meurtrier ne s’accordent aucunement avec le ton des chairs & des draperies.” Anonymous, *Merlin au Salon de 1787 (Rome, 1787)*, in *Collection Deloynes*, vol. XV, no. 383, p. 19.

187 Einecke, “On Reading The Death of Socrates,” 23.

188 Ibid., 24.

been too direct an illusion to David's *Socrates*), he does include a niche that contains a familiar semi-circular grate found in the Davidian prototype. Likewise, he has placed an imposing wall – void of all ornament and slightly illuminated – behind the figure of the dying Socrates.

Peyron exhibited his second *Death of Socrates* at the Salon of 1789 where he was, yet again, eclipsed by another painting by David: *The Lictors Returning to Brutus the Bodies of his Sons* (Fig. 61). Propelled by the success of the *Oath of the Horatii*, David was commissioned by the Comte d'Angiviller to create a painting taken from the history of Coriolanus for the Salon of 1787. Despite the wishes of d'Angiviller (and perhaps fueled by republican sentiments), David substituted the “monarchical” themed Coriolanus for a subject from the life of Lucius Junius Brutus. Brutus, along with his co-Consul Collatinus, were responsible for the establishment of the first Roman republic in 508 B.C.<sup>189</sup> For reasons unknown David decided not to depict a *Oath of Brutus*, most famously represented by Beaufort and Hamilton. As relayed by Livy and Plutarch, the virtuous Lucretia (the wife of Brutus's cousin Collatinus) has killed herself after being raped by the son of Tarquin the Proud, the last king of Rome. In order to restore her honor, Brutus has taken the dagger from Lucretia's body and vows to rid Rome of the Tarquins and the monarchy.<sup>190</sup> Rather than depict the oath, David chose a scene from later in the life of Brutus following the establishment of the Republic. David's painting takes place after Brutus has ordered and witnessed the execution of his two sons as a result of their involvement in a royalist conspiracy.<sup>191</sup>

The theme of familial sacrifice for the preservation of the state is not new to David's oeuvre; it lies at the very heart of the *Oath of the Horatii*. Many modern critics

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189 Herbert, 18.

190 Schnapper, *David*, 90.

191 See Plutarch, *Lives*, I, pp. 516-8.



suggest that the *Brutus* – like the *Oath* – serves as evidence of David’s pre-Revolutionary views. It is important to note, however, that there were no republicans in France before 1791; David began working on the painting in 1788.<sup>192</sup> The events of 1789 to 1794 (as well as David’s political activities during that period) have caused the painting to be reexamined in a Revolutionary context that did not exist at the time of its creation. That said, David was certainly aware of the political implications of such a subject, especially at the time in which it was painted. As with the *Oath of the Horatii*, David was likely inspired by the theater – specifically Voltaire – for his conception of the *Brutus*. Whether or not he actually saw the single performance of Voltaire’s *Brutus* in 1786 is unclear, but he was certainly aware of the play and its anti-absolutist sentiments. Voltaire’s tragedy, which was likely banned, would not be shown in Paris again until November 1790 – over a year following the fall the Bastille and the exhibition of David’s *Brutus* at the Salon of 1789.<sup>193</sup>

David divided the painting into two sections: at left, Brutus is seated in partial shadow before the bodies of his executed sons being carried in by the lictors; on the right, four female figures are situated around a table and chairs, bathed in the raking light from overhead. As with the *Oath*, the male and female figures have been separated and placed on opposite ends of the composition. Brutus’s wife, herself related to the expelled Tarquin king, is shown with her right arm extended outward towards the bodies of her two sons.<sup>194</sup> In her left arm, she holds one of her daughters who has fainted at the sight of her slain brothers. Another daughter (dressed in white with accents of blue) has raised her hands in front of her face, shielding herself from the horrific scene. Behind the three

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192 Schnapper, *David*, 92.

193 Herbert, 15.

194 A preliminary study for the *Brutus* reveals that David originally intended to display the severed heads of the two sons on pikes. See Crow, *Emulation*, 107.

figures sits a nurse whose grief has seemingly overtaken her. Unable to look at the bodies, the nurse hides her face with a portion of her blue garment. The conspicuous difference in finish between David's *Oath* and the *Brutus* is also noteworthy. The *Oath of the Horatii* exhibits a flawless, mirror-like surface – a result of even handling one typically associates with conventional neoclassical paintings. The *Brutus*, on the other hand, exhibits an inconsistency in the painting's surface. As Thomas Crow has noted, aspects of the painting – such as the Chardin-like still life on the table – are executed with a rather thick impasto comparatively to the polished treatment of the women's flesh and drapery.<sup>195</sup> Crow suggests that such surface inconsistencies are a result of David allowing key portions of the painting to be completed by two of his pupils: François Gérard and Girodet. Rather than have his students execute secondary areas of the painting, David allowed for their uniqueness to take center stage along with his own.<sup>196</sup>

The *Brutus*, like David's *Oath*, takes place in the central courtyard of a Roman villa. While the architecture in the *Oath* mimics the strength and stoicism of the unfolding scene, in the *Brutus*, the architecture – like the first consul himself – remains partially hidden by shadows; David uses both light and architecture to mimic the psychological state of the central figure. The architecture literally splits the composition in two, creating both a visual and metaphorical divide between the family. Behind the female figures, the Doric colonnade is partially covered with bluish-grey drapery.<sup>197</sup> While certainly one could argue that the drapery exists as a compositional tool used to set off the female figures visually from the columns in the background, this decision by David to partially cover the architecture in this distinctive way can also be found in

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<sup>195</sup> Crow, *Emulation*, 102.

<sup>196</sup> *Ibid.*, 102-103.

<sup>197</sup> Herbert suggests that David's use of drapery might have been inspired by illustrations to Voltaire by Moreau-le-Jeune. See See Herbert, 78.

*Andromache Mourning Hector* – a painting which echoes similar themes of death, grief and sacrifice (see Fig. 42). As we shall see, throughout the *Brutus* David revives such architectural “tools” from some of his most important paintings from the 1780s.

Unlike the *Oath of the Horatii*, David’s Roman albums offer little in terms of architectural prototypes for the Doric colonnade as it presents itself in the *Brutus*. The reason for this is unclear. The painting was, however, deeply influenced by ancient Roman sculpture David recorded in the Roman albums, including the Capitoline *Brutus* of which he owned a copy.<sup>198</sup> Robert Herbert has suggested that perhaps David did see the sole showing of Voltaire’s play in 1786 and was subsequently inspired by the set design for the architecture in his painting. A contemporary engraving by Moreau-le-Jeune illustrates a scene from Voltaire’s *Irène* which reflects the classical staging of his plays and bears a striking resemblance to the architecture in David’s *Brutus* (Fig. 62).<sup>199</sup> The similarity can be taken a step further when the female figure in the engraving is compared with the pose of Brutus’s wife from an early drawing for the painting executed by David c. 1788 (Fig. 63).<sup>200</sup> In Moreau-le-Jeune’s engraving, the female figure has just risen from her chair (as in David’s painting) and directs her attention to our left. The positioning of her body and the flowing nature of her garments all suggest that she has risen suddenly, although we are not privy as to the reason for her urgency. Behind her, Doric columns extend from ceiling to floor in a similar “L”-shaped manner found in David’s *Brutus*. The positioning of the light overhead in Moreau-le-Jeune’s image indicates that the scene is taking place in a courtyard and casts familiar shadows over the

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<sup>198</sup> Herbert recounts that on 19 November 1790, during the second night of the revival of Voltaire’s *Brutus*, David placed his bronze copy of the Capitoline bust on one side of the stage and Houdon’s *Voltaire* on the other. See Herbert, 15.

<sup>199</sup> Ibid., 78. It is well-known that the illustrations to Voltaire by Moreau-le-Jeune and Gravelot served as major sources of inspiration for David and later for his pupil Gros.

<sup>200</sup> Sérullaz, *Inventaire général des dessins*, 153, 194v.

architecture as in David's painting. While the influence of the 1786 production of Voltaire's *Brutus* on David's conception is strong, productions of the tragedy had occurred regularly since 1730. It is worth considering, therefore, that he also might have been influenced by the architecture from previous productions.<sup>201</sup>

The planar nature of the architecture in David's *Brutus* is certainly indebted to the artist's *Death of Socrates* of 1787. While the *Socrates* lacks any semblance of a Doric colonnade, both paintings use architecture to divide the composition in two; David uses the architecture in both as a narrative vehicle. Furthermore, the space created by the architecture in the *Brutus* is virtually identical to that in the *Socrates*. Both paintings contain a darkened hallway on the left of the composition, while at right figures are illuminated against an architectural background. By the end of the 1780s, and epitomized by the *Brutus*, David's paintings take on a relief-like appearance. Figures like those in the *Brutus* appear shallowly fixed against broad planes of architecture – recalling his monumental *Funeral of a Hero* frieze – reiterating the impact of David's Roman sojourns on his oeuvre. His art is no longer merely informed by ancient Roman sculpture and architecture, as is the case earlier in the decade. Rather, by the dawn of the Revolution, David has created a new type of painting that *is* sculptural and *is* architectural in nature.

### Conclusion

The severity and stoicism of the architecture in David's paintings unquestionably aided in the extinguishment of the rococo style by the late eighteenth-century. As this study seeks to demonstrate, David possessed historical and aesthetic interests in architecture – interests that were heightened due to his familial ties to architects and his friendships with them. This hypothesis is supported by scholars like Crozet and Honour who have suggested that David must have been familiar with the work of contemporary

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<sup>201</sup> See Herbert, 141, note 72. It is my goal to expand upon this idea of David having been inspired by stage and theater sets in future research.

architects and theories of his time.<sup>202</sup> Referred to by Emil Kaufmann as the “generation of 1730,” the so-called architects of the French Revolution – including Peyre, De Wailly, Neufforge, and the visionary architects Boullée, Ledoux and Lequeu – broke with Renaissance conventions concerning carefully calculated proportions as well as the illusionism and perfect unification associated with the Baroque.<sup>203</sup> This group of architects (who worked principally before the Terror) centered their attention on the naturalness and personality of a structure and less on its remote beauty. Decades before David’s reformation in painting, French architecture itself underwent a revolution. Beginning in the 1760s, attitudes started to change toward the material and the desired effect on the spectator; architects began to depart from the time-honored, well-established patterns of the Renaissance and Baroque; and new forms were introduced.<sup>204</sup> While formality remained (as it did of course in David’s paintings), the so-called “generation of 1730” nonetheless rejected the prevailing notion that architecture should resemble pictures. Architecture, they thought, should serve as an expression of morality and should conjure emotions in the viewer.

The idea of using architecture to express morality and emotion were also central tenants in David’s work beginning with his first Roman period. David’s interest in implementing a simplified architectural vocabulary in painting, one centered on the use of pure geometric forms, closely parallels the work of the French Revolutionary architect Claude-Nicolas Ledoux. Some of Ledoux’s earliest works from the 1760s (most notably the Hôtel d’Hallywl on the rue Michel le Comte) already displayed an austerity that

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202 See Crozet, 211-20; and Hugh Honour, *Neo-classicism* (New York: Penguin Books, 1968).

203 The “generation of 1730” refers to those architects born between roughly 1715 and 1745. See Emil Kaufmann, *Architecture in the Age of Reason: Baroque and Post-Baroque in England, Italy and France* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1955), 141.

204 Kaufmann, 141-142.

would come to define the French neoclassical style in architecture.<sup>205</sup> Amidst all of Ledoux's numerous achievements, including the saltworks of Arc and Senans, the theatre of Besançon, and the Parlement and prisons of Aix, he is best known for Parisian tollhouses (or Les Barrières) erected in Paris between 1784 and 1789. David must have been aware of these tollhouses and, we can assume, was inspired by Ledoux's ability to take old forms and transform them into new grand conceptions. One of the greatest similarities between Ledoux and David is their desire to create *architecture parlante*. Both architect and painter shared this central idea that architecture should speak to the spectator; that architecture can and should be used as a vehicle for conveying meaning and evoking a mood. As the next chapter will demonstrate, the importance of the visionary architects for David would only increase in the decade to come.

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<sup>205</sup> Honour, 42. Honour notes that Ledoux slightly revised his designs for the Hôtel d'Hallywl for publication in 1790, further simplifying the architecture.

CHAPTER 3: DAVID AND THE ARCHITECTURE OF REVOLUTION,  
1789-1794

A hero is defined as a man steadfast in difficulties, intrepid in peril and very valiant in combat; these qualities are linked more to temperament and to a certain configuration of the organs than to nobility of spirit. The great man is something very different – he joins the majority of moral virtues to talent and genius; he has only lofty and noble motives for his behavior... The title of *hero* depends upon success, that of the great man does not always depend upon it. His principle is virtue which is as unshakable in prosperity as in misfortune.<sup>206</sup>

Introduction

Although David's artistic and political role in the Revolution are well-established in the art historical literature, it will be helpful here to summarize some of the main facts. This summary will serve as a guide to my understanding of David and his involvement with and representations of architecture during the Revolution. With the dawn of the Revolution comes an inevitable shift in the subject matter and audience of David's work. The overthrow of the monarchy (and subsequent dispersal of the aristocracy) led David to create a new kind of art, this time for the people and their edification – not for the pleasure and *gloire* of the *ancien régime* who had sponsored his work prior to this point. No longer was it necessary for David to look to antiquity for subject matter or employ an allegorical language in his historical paintings. Rather he need only look to contemporary France, whose popular uprisings, revolutionary *fêtes*, and new republican government rivaled any potential subject from Greco-Roman history. Yet scholars are

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206 “On définit un héros, un homme ferme contre les difficultés, intrépide dans le péril et très vaillant dans les combats; qualités qui tiennent plus du tempérament & d’une certaine conformation des organes, que de la noblesse de l’âme. Le grand homme est bien autre chose; il joint aux talens & au génie la plupart des vertus morales; il n’a dans sa conduite que de beaux et nobles motifs... Le titre de héros dépend du succès, celui de grand homme n’en dépend pas toujours. Son principe est la vertu, qui est inébranlable dans la prospérité, comme dans les malheurs.” “Héros,” in *Encyclopédie ou dictionnaire raisonné des sciences, des arts et des métiers, par une société des gens de lettres, ed. Diderot and d’Alembert* (Neufchâtel, 1760), 8:182. English translation in Johnson, *Art in Metamorphosis*, 76.

often contentious when drawing connections between David's paintings during the late 1780s and those completed (or at least planned) during the revolutionary decade. When such parallels are drawn, inevitably one hears of the supposed revolutionary intent of the *Horatii* (painted four years before the Revolution) or the political implications of the *Brutus* prior to their reexhibition at the Salon of 1791. This chapter, rather, seeks to demonstrate that while the subject of David's work has assuredly changed, the principal themes he adopted during the 1780s continue to pervade his art during the Revolution, namely, the commemoration of "grands hommes" and "great events". David does not abandon the antique during this period. Rather he is continually inspired by the ancients – their art, literature, architecture, and urban planning – to inform a new and unique revolutionary iconography that he would become instrumental in creating.

As is well-known, the origins of David's activities in the Revolution of 1789 are chiefly political in nature, namely, his desire to obtain a more democratic constitution for the Royal Academy of Painting and Sculpture. As I have discussed in previous chapters, David's grievances with the Academy centered principally with its unwavering academic regulations and desire for artistic control. Yet scholars (including David's friend and biographer friend Alexandre Lenoir) have cited other factors that likely contributed to the artist's disdain for the Royal Academy and his role in its eventual abolishment.<sup>207</sup> David's frustration with the Academy began early in his career. In 1771, against the advise of his teacher Vien, David entered his *Combat between Minerva and Mars* into the Prix de Rome competition and suffered a devastating loss. The following year another painting by David, *Diana and Apollo Killing the Children of Niobe*, was also rejected and resulted in an attempt by the young artist to take his own life.<sup>208</sup> David finally won the

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<sup>207</sup> Lenoir suggests that David's uncharacteristic behavior at this time was provoked by a personal tragedy. See Alexandre Lenoir, *David. Souvenirs historiques* (Paris, 1826) and Brookner, 97.

<sup>208</sup> J. L. Jules David, *Le peintre Louis David, 1748-1825: souvenirs & documents inédits* (Paris: Victor Harvard, 1930), 4-6. See also Crow, *Emulation*, 8-9.



competition in 1774, yet the bitterness he felt towards the Royal Academy (coupled with his resentment towards Vien for his prior losses) contributed to his desire for reformation within the Academy's walls.<sup>209</sup>

The initial contempt David felt towards the Academy as a result of his failed consecutive attempts at achieving the Prix de Rome reached its breaking point following the death of his beloved pupil, Jean-Germain Drouais in 1788. Drouais, whose *Marius at Minturnae* of 1786 echoed the neoclassical sentiments of his master and suggested imminent artistic greatness, died in Rome of cholera at the age of twenty-four before he could receive any real recognition of his own. At nineteen, Drouais entered David's studio where he competed among (and frequently overshadowed) older more experienced students. Despite his privileged upbringing and accounts of his social magnetism, Drouais remained unequivocally devoted to his art – even at the expense of his own health.<sup>210</sup> It was Drouais' artistic sophistication and technical virtuosity combined with a mutual affection between teacher and pupil that prompted David to make his second journey to Italy in 1784 – only ten days after Drouais won the Prix de Rome.<sup>211</sup> The majority of Drouais's first year at the French Academy in Rome was devoted to David's entry for the next Salon: *The Oath of the Horatii*. Work began on the painting within a month of their arrival.<sup>212</sup> While Drouais's assistance with the *Oath* was not without

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209 Rosenblum, "David and Vien: Master/Pupil, Father/Son," 45.

210 J.-B.-A. Suard, "Eloge de M. Drouais, élève de l'Académie royal de peinture," *Mélanges de la littérature* (Paris: Dentu, 1806), III, pp. 273-84. See also Crow, *Emulation*, 21.

211 Crow, *Emulation*, 18, 30. In addition to Drouais, David was also accompanied by his pupil Jean-Baptiste Wicar and a young painting student and young relative, Jean-Baptiste Debret, whose account of the trip has provided much information on the genesis and maturation of the Oath.

212 According to Debret, Drouais was initially in charge of creating drawings after drapery arranged on mannequins by David that would later be transferred to canvas. As rapid progress on the painting continued, David entrusted Drouais with the figure of Camilla on the far right of the composition. See Alexandre Péron, *Examen du tableau du serment des Horaces, peint par David* (Paris, 1839), 33.

conflict (specifically with regards to his desire to exert his own independent thought on elements of his master's composition), the nature of the collaboration reveals a great deal not only about David's style of teaching but also indicates the remarkably high esteem he felt for his student.<sup>213</sup>

Drouais's premature death three years later would prove to be a defining moment in David's political life. David wanted to create a memorial exhibition of his pupil's work, yet the idea was rejected by the Academy. Drouais had died before presenting his *morceau de reception*; he was not a full academician. In October 1789, a bitter discussion took place between the Academy (represented by Vien and Secretary Renou) and David concerning the permissibility of Drouais's works.<sup>214</sup> Outraged by the Academy's opposition, David seemingly foregoes his relationship with Vien in favor of the preservation of his student's memory. It seems plausible that David's bitterness over his prior Prix de Rome defeats had an effect on his subsequent abandonment of Vien for Drouais. David took the first step towards the democratization of the Academy by calling for a revision of its statutes and proposing the creation of a new constitution with the assistance of a fellow academician and the essential support of Drouais's artistic comrades. It must be remembered that on 26 August 1789, the Declaration of the Rights of Man was presented to the French people proclaiming equality of opportunity for all. Therefore David's desire to persuade the Academy to alter its well-established, autocratic rules in favor of a democratic constitution should not be surprising as new forms of egalitarianism were spreading throughout France at the time.<sup>215</sup> Nevertheless, officers of the Academy headed by Vien immediately rejected David's call for academic reforms.

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<sup>213</sup> Crow, *Emulation*, 48-49.

<sup>214</sup> Brookner, 87.

<sup>215</sup> Brookner, 98.

Yet David's artistic reputation afforded a greater importance to his argument than might not have otherwise existed, particularly among the younger academicians.

In December 1789 David was elected president of the dissident members of the Academy. These academic rebels campaigned for significant reforms of organization and function, including freer teaching methods and the equal right to publicly exhibit in the Salon or elsewhere.<sup>216</sup> Meetings were held at David's house throughout 1790 where discussions centered on the despotic nature of the Academy. In 1791 David reported grievances to the National Assembly and later the Jacobin Club. By September that same year, David had created the rival Commune des arts that welcomed all regardless of privilege and threatened the Academy's ancient monopoly on the arts in France.<sup>217</sup> In a petition from the Academy to the National Assembly dated 7 November 1791, Secretary Renou provides a shrewd commentary on David's recent activities and offers an explanation for the artist's scorn towards the Academy:

Apart from his talent M. David is a negligible man; moreover he is full of pride and contempt for his colleagues; he wants to destroy the Academy by force of slander because the King has not made him director of the French Academy in Rome, a position he is quite incapable of filling, because it is almost a diplomatic post... Such a post could not go to a man who, outside the limits of his talent, does not know how to comport himself and cannot speak properly.<sup>218</sup>

David's political involvement reached its apex in September 1792 when he was elected Deputy for Paris to the National Convention and a member of the Committee of Public Instruction. Under this position he established a revolutionary jury to evaluate the

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<sup>216</sup> Helen Weston, "Witnessing Revolution," in *Jacques-Louis David: New Perspectives*, 121.

<sup>217</sup> The Commune des arts was under the direction of David (himself still a member of the Academy) for three years until it was suppressed by the 1792 Convention and replaced by the Société populaire et républicaine des arts. See Brookner, 100.

<sup>218</sup> For the original French source, see Archives Nationales, F. 17, 1065, no. 25. English translation in Brookner, 101.

quality of works for exhibition, began to establish a Central Museum, and called for the suppression of the Academy.<sup>219</sup> On 8 August 1793 David delivered an impassioned speech to the National Convention calling for the suppression of all academies. With the memory of Drouais not far from his thoughts, he concluded his speech with the following words:

Au nom de l'humanité, au nom de la justice pour l'amour de l'art, et sur-tout par votre amour pour la jeunesse, détruisons, anéantissons les trop funestes Académies, qui ne peuvent plus subsister sous un régime libre. Académicien, j'ai fait mon devoir; prononcez.<sup>220</sup>

The Royal Academy of Painting and Sculpture was suppressed that same day and all academies were sealed on 14 August 1793.

#### *The Oath of the Tennis Court*

The finished drawing for *The Oath of the Tennis Court*, as well as the incomplete canvas of the same subject, marks the beginning of David's artistic involvement with the Revolution (Figs. 64-65).<sup>221</sup> On June 17, 1789, in an act of defiance against King Louis XVI and his government, the deputies of the Third Estate (as well as some members of the Clergy and Nobility) proclaimed themselves the National Assembly of France. Three days later, the Assembly found themselves locked out of their official meeting place in the Hôtel des Menus Plaisirs at Versailles in an obvious attempt by the monarchy to quash the efforts of the newly established legislative body. Despite such intimidation on

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<sup>219</sup> Weston, "Witnessing Revolution," 121.

<sup>220</sup> Wildenstein, no. 477.

<sup>221</sup> Contrary to the writings of Virginia Lee, Philippe Bordes points out that there is no documentary proof that David participated in the storming of the Bastille or the march on Versailles in July and October of 1789, respectively. Furthermore, Bordes also notes that there is no evidence suggesting that David was present at Versailles for the Oath of the Tennis Court on June 20, 1789. See Philippe Bordes, "Jacques-Louis David's 'Serment du Jeu de Paume': Propaganda without a cause?," *Oxford Art Journal* 3, no. 2 (October 1980): 19-25; and Virginia Lee, "J.-L. David: The Versailles Sketchbook," *The Burlington Magazine* (April 1969): 197-208; (June 1969): 360-369.

the part of the Crown, the Assembly was not dissuaded in their efforts and decided to meet instead at the nearby *jeu de paume* (a significant space measuring 30 x 12 m) located just outside the precincts of the Château. There, under the leadership of their president, Bailly, 630 deputies pledged an oath to remain in session until a constitution was adopted – a undertaking that would not come to fruition until 1791.<sup>222</sup>

On 28 October 1790, at a meeting of the Paris Jacobin club, the deputy Dubois-Crancé proposed the sponsorship of an artistic project to commemorate the first anniversary of the Tennis Court Oath. It was proposed that the painting be completed on an enormous scale by David, himself a member of the Société des Amis de la Constitution (the official title of the Jacobins), and it would hang in the National Assembly as a gift to the French people. Dubois-Crancé also proposed that thousands of subscriptions to an engraving after David's composition be sold to pay for the cost of the colossal painting, first to members of the French Jacobin club and then to the public at large. Dubois-Crancé's motion received the resolute support of the gifted orator Mirabeau (who was present at the historical oath), who wrote a speech on behalf of the Jacobins to the Assembly that obtained official acceptance of David's painting.<sup>223</sup> It is misleading, however – as Philippe Bordes has written – to conclude that the Jacobins commissioned David's painting of the *Oath of the Tennis Court*, despite this popularly held notion by many scholars to the contrary.<sup>224</sup> Bordes argues that the motion

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<sup>222</sup> Bordes, "Propaganda without a cause?," 19. For the seminal account of David's *Oath of the Tennis Court*, see Philippe Bordes, *Le Serment du Jeu de Paume de Jacques-Louis David: Le peintre, son milieu et son temps, de 1789 à 1792* (Paris: Réunion des musées nationaux, 1983). See also Hauteceur, 114-118; and Dowd, 36-44.

<sup>223</sup> Dowd, 36-37. See also Bordes, "David et les Jacobins (de juillet 1790 à décembre 1791)," in *Le Serment du Jeu de Paume de Jacques-Louis David*, 45-54. The subscription campaign proved to be a failure and, in the end, the government paid for the cost of the painting. See Bordes, "Propaganda without a cause?," 19.

<sup>224</sup> Virginia Lee and Albert Boime have suggested that the idea for a painting to commemorate the Oath of the Tennis Court likely originated in the circle of Robespierre and then was further developed within the Jacobin club. See Virginia Lee, "The

presented to the Paris Jacobin club by Dubois-Crancé was actually penned by David, who had already begun work on the painting some six months prior. Bordes also asserts that David's *Oath of the Tennis Court* does not present a uniquely Jacobin version of the event. David was given artistic license over the work and was, as the author puts forth, motivated by the acquisition of such a large, prestigious and financially lucrative commission rather than by any political sympathies towards the Jacobin cause.<sup>225</sup> This artistic independence afforded to David is significant because, as we shall see, such freedoms allowed the artist to reconcile a contemporary scene from French history with antique inspiration drawn from ancient Roman literature, art, and architecture he encountered first hand during his Italian journeys.

Bordes suggests that David had completed the general conception for his composition by October 1790.<sup>226</sup> An examination of the painting's complete sketchbook at Versailles reveals a note, written in David's own hand, that supports Bordes's claim. Located on the top of the first page of the sketchbook David writes: "ce 14 mars 1790 la veille de mon depart pour Nantes". Frequently cited in the David literature as the first clear indication of the artist's burgeoning political fervor, David traveled to Nantes to paint an allegory commemorating the city's protest against the abuses of the clergy and nobility during the winter of 1788-89.<sup>227</sup> Accompanied by two former *pensionnaires* from his days in Rome – the architect Crucy and sculptor Lamarie – David also was invited to paint the portrait of the town's mayor, Kervégan, who was an

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Versailles Sketchbook," 199; and Albert Boime, *Art in an Age of Revolution 1750-1800* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1987), 428.

225 Bordes, "Propaganda without a cause?," 19-20.

226 Ibid., 20.

227 Weston, "Witnessing Revolution," 119. See also Claude Cosneau, "Un grand projet de J.-L. David (1789-1790): L'art et la Révolution à Nantes," *La revue du Louvre et des musées de France* 4 (1983): 255-63; and C. Mellinet, "David à Nantes," *Annales de la Société académique de Nantes* VII (1836): 419-463.

ardent supporter of the Revolution.<sup>228</sup> Although the aforementioned projects were never realized (as was typical during the Revolutionary years), the drawings from Nantes contained in the Versailles sketchbook convey feelings of great excitement as well as solemnity that must have inspired David's composition for the *Oath of the Tennis Court* and similarly informed his ideas for the great Revolutionary festivals that he would later be instrumental in creating.<sup>229</sup> More will be said on David's involvement with these festivals in the pages that follow.

As mentioned previously, the complexity of *The Oath of the Tennis Court* lies in its masterful ability to convey a contemporary event in the history of the new French Republic while concurrently referencing the antique past. Yet David was not only faced with the challenge of creating a history painting *par excellence* – one that conjured feelings of equality, freedom, and patriotism – he also had to create a composition that would reflect the constantly changing nature of current events; the painting had to be recognized as a part of the immediate present.<sup>230</sup> For the first time in David's career, he would be faced with creating an epic work taken from modern history and he would do so by breaking with established artistic conventions. In the summer of 1790, when David began work on *The Oath of the Tennis Court*, a large-scale painting depicting contemporary history in a non-allegorical manner was viewed as inappropriate by the Academy outside of genre painting and the print medium.<sup>231</sup> Despite recent precedents in both British and American art, David's decision to paint *The Oath of the Tennis Court* and the manner in which he painted it outwardly rejected the prevailing artistic norms he

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228 Hauteceur, 113.

229 Lee, "The Versailles Sketchbook," 197.

230 Ibid., 199.

231 Johnson, *Art in Metamorphosis*, 82-83.

had largely embraced during the 1770s and 1780s.<sup>232</sup> David's progressive thoughts concerning the depiction of modern history and his bold decision to abandon established conventions would have an immense impact both on his fellow artists and his students.

The finished drawing for the *Oath*, which served as the model for the engraving to be sold by subscription, was exhibited in David's studio in June of 1791 and at the annual Salon in September.<sup>233</sup> David presents the space and the event itself in a remarkably rational way. The composition can be divided in half vertically: the top register primarily emphasizes the architectural space of the tennis court itself – the location of the historic event; the bottom register is almost completely figural and concentrates on the act of oath-taking. In the upper left hand corner of the drawing, lightening is shown striking the roof of the royal chapel through the window; the billowing curtain to the right of the scene echoes the stormy conditions outside. It is important to note that, in actuality, the royal chapel cannot be seen from the interior of the tennis court. Yet its inclusion in the *Oath* was deliberate, as is evidenced by a detailed preparatory drawing of the royal chapel located in the Louvre's collection (Fig. 66).<sup>234</sup> As Bordes discusses, the royal chapel symbolizes the political-religious system that serves as the foundation for an absolute monarchy; the lightening bolt is intended to evoke the violence of Revolution.<sup>235</sup> David used architecture to fill his composition with added meaning, this time suggesting that revolution (inaugurated at the Oath of the Tennis Court) will result in the overthrow of both the clergy and king.

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232 Ibid., 83; and Bordes, *Le Serment du Jeu de Paume*, 24-25, 37-38.

233 The drawing is on permanent display at Versailles, Musée national du château, yet it remains apart of the collection of the Musée du Louvre, Paris.

234 Rosenberg and Prat, p. 962, no. 1453 recto.

235 Bordes, "Propaganda without a cause?," 23.



Although viewed from slightly further back, a preparatory drawing from the Versailles sketchbook illustrates the interior of the tennis court taken from a similar vantage point as in the finished drawing (Fig. 67).<sup>236</sup> What becomes clear in both the preparatory renderings of the building's interior and the architecture presented in the finished drawing is David's expert abilities as a draughtsman. The clarity of line and geometric precision evident in the finished drawing of the *Oath* suggests that – as we know from his Roman albums – David was both well-trained in architectural drawing and aware of modern architectural theorists. The challenge for David was in representing the interior of a relatively modern French building (the tennis court was constructed in 1686) as accurately as possible. Unlike his previous commissions, there would be little room for artistic liberty as far as the architecture was concerned. After all, he was charged with depicting a contemporary historical event in the actual location it occurred.

In order to better understand how effectively David used the architecture of the *jeu de paume* to enhance the drawing with added meaning, let us compare David's composition with another contemporaneous illustration of the Tennis Court Oath by Jean-Louis Prieur (Fig. 68). In Prieur's drawing, the artist has, similarly to David, emphasized the monumentality of the architecture in comparison with the figures below. However, the corporal expressiveness of the figures – the actual gesture of oath-taking – is greatly diminished by the massiveness of the architecture seen from an oddly skewed perspective. It seems that, in Prieur's drawing, an architectural background rather than the oath itself served (rather uninspiring, in fact) as the subject of his work. In fact, nearly half of Prieur's *Oath* is devoted to a blank wall of the tennis court completely void of figural or narrative content. As in David's drawing, Prieur does include the upper

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<sup>236</sup> Versailles sketchbook, page 33 verso. The drawing is identified by David's hand as "jeu de paume de versailles," located on the right wall. On the left and bottom of the end wall he has written "noir" and at top, "paille". See Bordes, *Le Serment de Jeu de Paume de Jacques-Louis David*, fig. 118.

story windows yet there are no billowing curtains to suggest the winds of change, no imaginative representation of the royal chapel, no overwhelming feeling of emotion associated with the historical event occurring below. In Prieur's drawing, the architecture and the figures included therein appear disjointed, unrelated, and unaffected by each other. It is this mutual reliance on and celebration of architecture and figural representation in David's work that makes his composition so successful.

While the prescribed interior of the tennis court at Versailles left little room for architectural creativity, the influence of classical architecture on David's aesthetic (as well as the artist's active imagination) can be found in the arrangement of figures in the foreground. As Dorothy Johnson has demonstrated, the figures are arranged symmetrically in the shape of a sculpted pediment.<sup>237</sup> President Bailly, an astronomer and the mayor of Paris, is positioned at the design's apex and is shown standing on a table reading the oath. Shown in descending height on either side of Bailly, David represents the most important participants in the day's events including Dubois-Crancé, Michel Gérard, Robespierre, Mirabeau and Barnave. This unique decision to base a modern historical composition on the shape of a sculpted pediment reveals the importance David placed on the sculpted form as well as the artist's knowledge of the propagandistic nature of classical architecture. A sculpted pediment, whether its intended message be secular or religious, is typically placed on a building of civic importance. The function of a sculpted pediment is – as it was in antiquity – to communicate to the “people” in a straightforward and deliberately permanent way.<sup>238</sup> For example, the

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<sup>237</sup> Johnson, *Art in Metamorphosis*, 77. David's unique pedimental design was so influential that his student, the sculptor David d'Angers, referenced his master's compositional structure for the actual pediment of the Chamber of Deputies in the 1830s that likewise took The Oath of the Tennis Court as its subject. Jacques de Caso, *David d'Angers: Sculptural Communication in the Age of Romanticism*, trans. Dorothy Johnson (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1992), 121-123.

<sup>238</sup> Ibid.

West pediment of the Parthenon tells the story of the beginning of Athens (specifically the struggle between Athena and Poseidon over who will be the patron deity of Athens), while the East pediment depicts the birth of Athena. Both sculpted pediments reinforce the building's civic purpose on the post-Persian Acropolis. That is, the two pediments echo the religious significance of the Parthenon and contribute to its identification as an enduring symbol of Athenian democracy.

In a letter to the President of the National Assembly, dated 5 February 1792, the importance David placed on the historic oath – both to the French people and to our shared human history – is made clear:

Oh my country! Oh my dear country! We will therefore no longer have to try to find subjects for our painting in the history of ancient peoples. Artists used to lack subjects and needed to repeat themselves, now subjects will lack artists. No history of any people offers me anything as great or as sublime as the Oath of the Tennis Court which I must paint. No, I will not have to invoke the gods of the myths to inspire my genius. French Nation! I wish to propagate your glory. People of the universe, present and future, I wish to teach you this great lesson. Holy humanity, I wish to remind you of your rights, through a unique example in the annals of history. Oh, woe to the artist whose spirit will not be inflamed when embraced by such powerful causes!<sup>239</sup>

David's decision to position the participants in this unusual compositional structure was not arbitrary. Rather it serves as another example of how David used classical architecture to imbue his work with meaning. The finished drawing of *The Oath*

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239 "O ma patrie! O ma chère patrie! nous ne serons donc plus obligés d'aller chercher dans l'histoire des peuples anciens, de quoi exercer nos pinceaux. Les sujets manquaient aux artistes, obligés de se répéter, et maintenant les artistes manqueraient aux sujets. Non, l'histoire d'aucun peuple ne m'offre rien de si grand, de si sublime que ce serment du Jeu de Paume, que je dois peindre. Non, je n'aurai pas besoin d'invoquer les dieux de la fable pour échauffer mon génie. Nation française! C'est ta gloire que je veux propager. Peuples de l'univers, présents et futurs, c'est une grande leçon que je veux vous donner. Sainte humanité, je veux rappeler tes droits, par un exemple unique dans les fastes de l'histoire. O! malheur à l'artiste dont l'âme ne serait pas échauffée, embrasée par de si puissants motifs! Archives parlementaires de 1787 à 1860, ed. J. Marival, E. Laurent, et al. (Paris, 1862), 38: 247-248. Cited in Bordes, *Le Serment du Jeu de Paume de Jacques-Louis David*, 165. English translation in Johnson, *Art in Metamorphosis*, 81-82.

of the Tennis Court (and its various incarnations in print) was intended – like a sculpted pediment on the exterior of a civic building – to be seen and understood by the French people. Its message is unmistakably propagandistic: through this monumental commemoration of the Tennis Court Oath, David and the National Assembly were asserting the event’s central importance to the history of the Revolution. The patriotic intent of *The Oath of the Tennis Court* was further enhanced by David’s decision to display the finished drawing beneath his *Oath of the Horatii* at the Salon of 1791, driving home the obvious correlation between the antique and modern oaths.<sup>240</sup>

David did not abandon sources of classical inspiration in his pursuit of depicting contemporary history. Rather, he based a modern historical composition on the shape of a sculpted pediment; that is, an element of classical architecture. This is by no means the only antique reference to be found in David’s seemingly “modern” depiction of the Tennis Court Oath. Throughout the composition, David included subtle figural references to one of the most famous architectural and sculptural monuments in ancient Rome: the Column of Trajan.<sup>241</sup> This allusion is made clear by comparing the seemingly endless sea of figures in the foreground of David’s drawing (shown with their arms outstretched in an oath-taking gesture reminiscent of the *Horatii*) with similar scenes from the continuous narrative bas reliefs on the Column of Trajan (Fig. 69). Trajan’s Column was among the most admired and copied antique structures during the late eighteenth-century. Artists during this period were drawn to the Column’s bas reliefs because they illustrated ancient Roman life, providing a visual encyclopedia of military and civilian customs and manners. Located in a small courtyard within Trajan’s Forum, the column reaches over 44 meters in height (150 Roman feet) and is surrounded by some of the most important structures from antiquity, including the Basilica Ulpia and the

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240 Johnson, *Art in Metamorphosis*, 80-81.

241 Bordes, *Le Serment du Jeu de Paume de Jacques-Louis David*, 43.

Temple of Divine Trajan.<sup>242</sup> A sculpted podium depicting the spoils of war supports the towering column shaft and its famous spiraling bas reliefs, while a Tuscan capital originally supported a massive gilded statue of Trajan.<sup>243</sup> The Column's bas reliefs provided David with a historical precedent for his contemporary depiction of modern French history through its commemoration of a "great event" in Roman history by a "great man". In the *Oath of the Tennis Court*, however, David has – in keeping with Revolutionary ideology – shifted the focus of commemoration from one individual to a collective assembly.

We know that David placed considerable importance on drawing the bas reliefs from Trajan's Column during his first Roman sojourn. The significance of the drawings, both during David's period at the French Academy in Rome and throughout his oeuvre, is made clear in an autobiographical notice on the artist dated April 1793.<sup>244</sup> While several drawings of the Column can be found in various *carnets*, only two drawings after the bas reliefs – both depicting male heads – are located in the extant Roman albums.<sup>245</sup> The absence of further drawings from the albums is puzzling, given their apparent value to David while in Italy and references to the bas reliefs that can be found in studies for later paintings, including *The Sabine Women*, *Leonidas at Thermopylae*, and *Mars*

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242 Penelope J. E. Davies, "The Politics of Perpetuation: Trajan's Column and the Art of Commemoration," *American Journal of Archaeology* 101, no. 1 (January 1997), 101. See also Filippo Coarelli, *The Column of Trajan*, trans. Cynthia Rockwell (Rome: Editore Colombo, 2000).

243 *Ibid.*, 42-43. Davies notes that the original statue was replaced in 1588 by Sixtus V with Giacomo della Porta's statue of St. Peter.

244 *Autobiographie de David, avril 1793*. Paris, École des Beaux-Arts, ms 323, d. 3. The document is reproduced in Bordes, *Le Serment de Jeu de Paume de Jacques-Louis David*, 174, no. 19.

245 Rosenberg and Prat, nos. 922 verso and 978 verso.

*Disarmed by Venus and the Graces*.<sup>246</sup> It seems plausible that more drawings by David of Trajan's Column did exist, yet have since been lost. Aside from his own representations of the Column, David must have consulted books of engravings that contained detailed reproductions of the bas reliefs for use in his own work. The sheer height and relative inaccessibility of the frieze, particularly towards the top of Trajan's Column, points to this conclusion. Some of the first engravings of the reliefs were produced in the sixteenth-century by the school of Marcantonio Raimondi as well as in an erudite French treatise entitled *De Re Navali* (1536).<sup>247</sup> Girolamo Muziano (also known as Hieronymus Mutianus), likewise working during the sixteenth-century, completed over one hundred and thirty plates of the frieze to accompany a scholarly commentary on the Dacian Wars by Alonso Chacon. In the seventeenth-century, a Roman publisher named Giovanni Giacomo de Rossi commissioned Pietro Santo Bartoli to create one hundred and fourteen plates after the Column to accompany a reprinted version of Chacon's text.<sup>248</sup> The book still held resonance in the early nineteenth-century despite efforts by Piranesi to replace it with his own edition of sixteen plates depicting the Columns of Trajan and Antoninus Pius called *Trofeo* (Rome, c. 1774-1775).<sup>249</sup> The

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246 Rosenberg and Prat, nos. 1494, 1784, and 1929. David also made several calques after the bas reliefs. See Rosenberg and Prat, pp. 831-833; nos. C 198, C 484, C 486-488, C 534, and C 535.

247 Jacopo Ripanda, a pupil of Raimondi, was the first to draw the frieze in its entirety. Francis Haskell and Nicholas Penny, *Taste and the Antique: The Lure of Classical Sculpture 1500-1900* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1998), 46.

248 See Pietro Santo Bartoli, *Colonna Traiana eretta dal Senato e popolo romano all'Imperatore Traiano augusto nel suo foro in Roma. Scolpita con l'Historia della Guerra dacica la prima e la seconda espeditione et Vittoria contro il Re Decebalò...Nuovamente disegnata et intagliata da Pietro Santo Bartoli. Con l'espositione latina d'Alfonso Ciaconne* (Rome, 1672).

249 The full title of the edition by Piranesi is *Trofeo o sia Magnifica Colonna Coclide di marmot composta di grossi macigni ove si veggone scolpite le due guerre daciche fatte da Trajano inalzata nel mezzo del Gran Foro eretto al medesimo imperadore per ordine del senato e popolo romano doppo i suoi trionfi il tutto architettato da Apollodoro l'iscrizione che nel piedistallo di essa colonna leggesi addita*

plates of the Column of Trajan contained in *Trofeo* focus on the monument itself – its construction and architectural features – rather than engravings of the bas reliefs. Aside from plaster casts and engraved reproductions after the frieze, the Column was also frequently reproduced in miniature.<sup>250</sup>

Another classical source for David's *The Oath of the Tennis Court* study can be seen in the representation of an elderly man, located in the lower left hand corner of the drawing (Fig. 70). The elderly figure, whose blank stare and feeble appearance suggests to the viewer that he is blind, is being carried into the Tennis Court on a chair by two attendants. One of the attendants is shown wearing a Phrygian cap – a subtle but noteworthy inclusion on the part of David because the Phrygian cap would be used by Revolutionaries to identify themselves with heroes from antique republics.<sup>251</sup> The prominent placement of this figural group within the composition, the grandness by which the figures enter the Tennis Court from the left, the venerability of the old man, and his absence of sight all suggest that David had a special symbolic purpose behind their inclusion that deserves our attention.<sup>252</sup> Despite conflicting nineteenth-century sources that identify the elderly man in question as either Maupetit de la Mayenne (1742-1831) or Jean-Francois Goupilleau (1753-1823), Andrew Kagan has noted that (among other discrepancies) both men were simply too young at the time of the Tennis Court Oath to be depicted in such a manner – forty-seven and thirty-six, respectively.<sup>253</sup>

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*il taglio dei monti Quirinale e Capitolino fatto per introdurvi molte fabbriche che circondavano ed ornavano quell gran foro.*

<sup>250</sup> The most famous replica of the Column was completed by Luigi Valadier in 1780 and purchased by Elector Karl Theodor of Bavaria three years later. Haskell and Penny, 47.

<sup>251</sup> Andrew A. Kagan, "A Classical Source for David's 'Oath of the Tennis Court'," *The Burlington Magazine* 116, No. 856 (July 1974): 395.

<sup>252</sup> *Ibid.*, 395-396.

<sup>253</sup> *Ibid.*, 395. See J. L. Jules David, *Le Peintre Louis David* (Paris, 1980) and A. Robert and G. Cougny, *Dictionnaire des Parliementaires français* (Paris, 1889-91).

Attempts to identify every figure in David's composition has proved futile, despite an anonymous explication contained in J. L. Jules David's *Le Peintre Louis David* to the contrary.<sup>254</sup> David's own feelings regarding the representation of specific individuals in the finished drawing is made clear in the 1791 Salon catalog: "L'auteur n'a pas eu l'intention de donner la ressemblance aux membres de l'assemblée".<sup>255</sup> Indeed, this seems a confusing and perhaps politically motivated statement on the part of the artist considering the historical nature of the represented scene. While scholars seem in agreement that the likenesses of a few deputies are unmistakable (including the representations of Mirabeau, Bailly, and Robespierre, for example), the majority of figures contained both in the Versailles sketchbook and in the finished study itself remain anonymous.

If David's representation of the elderly man in the composition's left foreground is not that of Maupetit or Goupilleau, just who is he and why is this significant? Kagan points to Plutarch's *Lives* for answers – specifically, a passage from the "Life of Pyrrhus". During the campaigns of 280 B.C., the Epiran king sent an ambassador to the Roman Senate to offer terms of peace with the condition that Rome would surrender without further resistance:

At this point Appius Claudius, a man of great distinction, but who, because of his great age and loss of sight, had declined the fatigue of public business, after these propositions had been made by the King, hearing a report that the senate was ready to vote the conditions of peace, could not forbear, but commanding his servants to take him up, was carried in his chair through the forum to the senate house.<sup>256</sup>

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<sup>254</sup> See Philippe Bordes, *Le Serment de Jeu de Paume de Jacques-Louis David*, fig. 240.

<sup>255</sup> Armand Brette, "Le Serment de Jeu de Paume et ses Signataires: La Légende et l'Histoire," *La Révolution Française* XX (1891): 542.

<sup>256</sup> Plutarch's *Lives*



Plutarch tells us that Appius then gave an inspiring speech before the Senate in which he asked them to recall the former glory of Rome and emphasized the importance of never accepting peace based on the terms of a foreign invader. Thanks to the heroism of Appius Claudius Caecus (the Blind), the senators discovered a new enthusiasm for the war and ultimately Pyrrhus's ambitions were thwarted.<sup>257</sup>

David was intimately familiar with Plutarch's *Lives* and – we can feel certain – the famous recounting of Appius Claudius, and his decision to represent Appius in *The Oath of the Tennis Court* is particularly appropriate.<sup>258</sup> As Kagan notes, Appius is a supreme example of a classical *exemplum virtutis* – a term described by Robert Rosenblum as a “moralizing current in French art” – which had dominated David's major works during the 1780s, including the *Belisarius* (1780-81), *Horatii* (1784), *Socrates* (1787), and *Brutus* (1789).<sup>259</sup> This classical allusion within David's modern composition further supports the notion that *The Oath of the Tennis Court* does not constitute a break in with antique sources or ideas. Rather, by the symbolic inclusion of Appius and his attendants, David subtly reinforced the importance of heroic civism and republican ideals – ideas central to the Revolution and its contemporary iconography.<sup>260</sup>

In addition to consulting classical sources of inspiration for the figures in the *Oath of the Tennis Court*, David was also inspired by great works of the Italian Renaissance. Several figures from David's Versailles sketchbook were informed by Michelangelo's frescoes in the Sistine Chapel, Raphael's Stanze, and those sketched in his own Roman albums.<sup>261</sup> David's painting of the *Oath of the Tennis Court* was never realized beyond

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<sup>257</sup> Kagan, 395-396.

<sup>258</sup> Dowd, 11. Dowd notes that David owned his own well used and annotated copy of the *Lives* and could quote long passages from memory.

<sup>259</sup> Kagan, 396. See also Robert Rosenblum, *Transformations*, 51.

<sup>260</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>261</sup> Lee, “Jacques-Louis David: The Versailles Sketchbook,” p. 204.

a surviving fragment whose date and precise chronology remains uncertain (see Fig. 65). He worked intermittently on the painting for several years in the former Church of the Feuillants until the space was demolished in 1803, by which point the political climate of France had completely changed.<sup>262</sup> David's desire to depict a "great event" from contemporary French history was, in the end, left unfinished and appeared dated at that. Nevertheless, David's final drawing of the *Oath* marks the first step in the development of visual vocabulary invented by the artist to express the ideas of the Revolution – a vocabulary that reached its zenith in the short years that followed.

### Architecture and the Revolution

The destruction of royal monuments and the architectural transformations that occurred in Paris and throughout France as a result of the new republican government were known to David and, as we shall see, influenced his work during this period. Following the overthrow of the monarchy in August 1792, citizens immediately demanded the removal of statues depicting the Bourbons from public squares, including the Place Royale, the Place des Victoires, the Place Louis-le-Grand, the Place Louis XV, and the Hôtel de Ville. The deputy Sers, upon hearing the news that Parisians were intent on removing the royal statues, proposed that the destruction of such monuments be conducted only by well-qualified individuals – such as engineers or architects – rather than members of the general public.<sup>263</sup> Several of Sers's colleagues in the Assembly supported his proposal and took it a step further: the deputy Thuriot suggested that some of the monuments may be valuable to the arts and should be preserved, while Albitte recommended placing a statue of Liberty on each pedestal that formerly displayed a

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<sup>262</sup> Johnson, *Art in Metamorphosis*, 88.

<sup>263</sup> James A. Leith, *Space and Revolution: Projects for Monuments, Squares, and Public Buildings in France 1789-1799* (Buffalo, NY: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1991), 119.

monument to tyranny.<sup>264</sup> Ultimately, the Assembly approved a decree that placed municipal officials in charge of overseeing the removal of royal statues, low-reliefs, inscriptions, and other monuments from squares, churches, gardens, parks, and public buildings.<sup>265</sup> Although these statues were removed shortly thereafter, it took longer for the disappearance of the less conspicuous albeit plentiful reminders of monarchical rule that remained in the form of symbols, coats of arms, and fleur-de-lis. Certain works were saved and placed in the newly created Musée des monuments français (located in the former Augustine convent in Paris) despite the inevitable destruction of some works of art as a result of this Revolutionary iconoclasm. Under the direction of Lenoir, the government-sponsored museum allowed for the preservation of such monuments – both religious and monarchical in nature – because they had been removed from their political contexts and were to be valued exclusively on their artistic merit.<sup>266</sup> We will return to Lenoir in Chapter 5.

This period of destruction and delegitimization brought about by the deposition of the Bourbon dynasty was soon replaced by an atmosphere of renewal and relegitimization – one that demanded a transformation and purification of the urban space.<sup>267</sup> On 21 September 1792 the newly elected Convention declared France a republic and structures were needed to house the new legislative bodies. Countless building proposals were put forth by the most renowned architects of the period not only for utilitarian purposes but,

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264 “Décret pour faire enlever les statues existantes dans les places de Paris du 11 août 1792,” *Collection des décrets (Collection Baudouin)*, 10 août-1 septembre 1792, no. 1325, p. 66. See also Leith, 119.

265 Leith, 119. For more on the destruction of royal statues, see Louis Réau, *Histoire du Vandalisme: Les monuments détruits de l’art français* (Paris: Éditions Robert Laffont, 1994), 296-337.

266 *Ibid.*, 120. See Louis Courajod, *Alexandre Lenoir, son journal et le Musée des monuments français* (Paris, 1878-87).

267 *Ibid.*, 120-21.

perhaps more importantly, to immortalize the Revolution. Included in these grandiose proposals were Alexandre-Maximilien Le Loup's plan for a so-called Temple of the Nation to house the representatives of the Estates-General, Pierre Rousseau's project for a complex on the Left Bank, and E.-L. Boullée's progressive project for a National Assembly.<sup>268</sup> Boullée's design for the immense legislature (which he referred to as a "Palace") was intended for the site of the Couvent des Capucins or the Place du Carrousel. Greatly influenced by Kersaint's *Discours sur les monuments publics*, Boullée's plan provided him with the perfect opportunity to display his theories concerning architecture and public monuments, namely, the ability of a building to incorporate elements of poetry.<sup>269</sup> The building's clean lines, antique references (the structure's central dome was modeled on the Roman Pantheon, while the entire building was to be flanked on both sides by full-scale replicas of Trajan's Column), and use of simple geometrical shapes projected on an enormous scale were typical of the architect's "revolutionary" style.<sup>270</sup>

Other plans called for the renovation of pre-existing structures during the Revolution to serve new republican purposes. For example, Charles de Wailly, one of the original architects of the Odéon, oversaw the building's conversion into the Théâtre du Peuple where popular revolutionary plays were to be made available to the general public.<sup>271</sup> One of the most important projects to emerge during this period was the transformation of the Tuileries Palace into a meeting place for the Convention whose

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268 De Montclos, *Etienne-Louis Boullée 1728-1799*, 182.

269 See Armand-Guy Kersaint, *Discours sur les monuments publics, prononcé au Conseil du département de Paris, le 15 décembre 1791* (Paris, 1792).

270 Leith, 81-83, figs. 79-81.

271 Guillaume, III: 135, 390. De Wailly initially presented his plans for the theater in December 1793. For illustrations of De Wailly's conversion plans, see Leith, figs. 152-157.

main task was to draft a republican constitution. The deputy Broussonnet proposed that the representatives move from the tight quarters of the Manège to an area of the Palace previously occupied by the Théâtre-Française which, although not much larger than the former stable, conveyed a greater sense of prestige and symbolism.<sup>272</sup> While a modified plan by Pierre Vignon was initially selected, a design by Jacques-Pierre Gisors eventually won out after the latter claimed he could execute a similar, less expensive proposal.<sup>273</sup> Gisors's plan for the assembly hall serves as a perfect demonstration of the egalitarian political culture that was developing in France in the early 1790s. The hall consisted of ten tiered rows of continuous benches arranged in a semicircle that faced the raised desks of the president and secretaries, while a podium for speakers was situated slightly lower.<sup>274</sup> In addition, this newly conceived arrangement of space within the hall also consisted of galleries for the public and journalists to assemble and even address the deputies. No longer were French laws to be created in secret as they had been during the *ancien régime*; rather the new revolutionary ideology called for the government to legislate in full view of the public.<sup>275</sup>

As was mentioned previously, with the Revolution and the rising civic cult came a lessening belief in Christianity as legislated by the state. A central tenant of Christianity, that being life after death, soon lost its persuasiveness as the idea of achieving immortality through history gained favor. Following the death of Mirabeau, it was

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272 Leith, 134, fig. 144.

273 Vignon wrote a pamphlet defending his version and also complained of plagiarism on the part of Gisors. See [Alexandre-] Pierre Vignon, *A la Convention nationale, sur la nouvelle sale dans le Palais des Tuileries* (Paris, 1792).

274 The shape of Gisors's assembly hall was largely conceived with Pierre-Adrien Pâris's alterations for the Menus-Plaisirs at Versailles in mind. Pâris undertook the renovations of the Menus Plaisirs in May of 1789 in order to accommodate the Estates-General. See Leith, 83-84.

275 Leith, 136.

proposed that the Parisian church of Sainte-Geneviève be converted from a Roman Catholic church into a Temple of the Fatherland – a place where the tombs of great men could be venerated as altars of liberty. Ideally suited to become a monument to great Frenchman, the neoclassical church of Ste-Geneviève was transformed into the Panthéon by Antoine-Chrysostome Quatremère de Quincy (1755-1849), a strict neoclassical theoretician and friend of David (Fig. 71).<sup>276</sup> The architect Jacques-Gabriel Soufflot had begun work on the rebuilding of the medieval church of Ste-Geneviève in 1757. Soufflot implemented a Greek cross plan, thus rejecting French prototypes, and instead chose to reference the works of Bramante, Michelangelo, and Christopher Wren. Yet unlike St. Peter's in Rome or St. Paul's in London, Soufflot based his conceptualization on the employment of freestanding Corinthian columns and straight lintels rather than pilasters and piers.<sup>277</sup> The enormous Pantheon-inspired dome, portico, and twenty-four colossal columns rest on a giant pediment that is accessible from three sides. On the interior, Soufflot was concerned with creating an effect of spaciousness evident by his use of columns, windows, and piers that support the dome. In what would become a hallmark of eighteenth-century neoclassical design, Soufflot combines sculpture and architecture by replacing the dome's lantern with a huge statue of Ste-Geneviève – only adding to the temple-like appearance of the church. Ste-Geneviève marked a decisive shift from tradition to an examination of historical prototypes, the antique, and an employment of reason and intellect that set the standard for architectural excellence throughout the eighteenth-century.

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<sup>276</sup> Braham, *Architecture of the French Enlightenment*, 81. See also Naginski, *Sculpture and the Enlightenment*, 217-288; Marie-Louis Biver, *Le Panthéon à l'époque révolutionnaire* (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1982); Pierre Chevallier and Daniel Rabreau, *Le Panthéon* (Paris: Caisse National des Monuments Historiques & des Sites, 1977); and Gabriel Vauthier, "Le Panthéon français sous la Révolution," *Annales révolutionnaires* 3 (1910): 395-416.

<sup>277</sup> *Ibid.*, 33.

Soufflot died in 1780, leaving the church unfinished until Quatremère's secular transformations began in 1791. Although Quatremère acknowledged Soufflot's elegant style and architectural variety, he felt it inappropriate for a religious setting. He found Ste-Geneviève to be lacking "the great simplicity of lines and details, the severity of forms, the density of colonnades, [and] the economy of ornaments" that should abound in a sacred building.<sup>278</sup> In addition to the suppression of the bell towers, Quatremère also had the windows blocked in to rid the former church of any lightness reminiscent of the Gothic style. Two reports in 1792 and 1793 concerning the on-going conversion of the church into a Temple of Immortality discuss Quatremère's abandonment of Christian iconography, namely, the depictions of Christ and the Virgin, in favor of the goddess *la Patrie* and republican imagery based on Jean-Guillaume Moitte's new pediment of the Fatherland Crowning the Civic Virtues.<sup>279</sup> Soufflot's statue of Ste-Geneviève on the building's dome was to be replaced by an enormous allegorical figure of Renown by Claude Dejoux. On the interior of the Panthéon, the entrance nave was decorated with allegories related to History, Political Knowledge, Legislation, and Morality, while the four subsequent naves were dedicated to Science, Philosophy, the Arts, and Patriotic

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278 Ibid., 81-82. See Erika Naginski, "Un parcours initiatique pour le citoyen: le 'chemin de croix' de Quatremère de Quincy au Panthéon" in *Le Progrès des Arts Reunis 1763-1825: Mythe culturel, des origines de la révolution and la fin de l'empire?*, ed. Daniel Rabreau and Bruno Tollon (Bordeaux, 1992), 329-336.

279 Leith, 139. See A.-C. Quatremère de Quincy, *Rapport fait au Directoire de Paris, le 13 novembre 1792, l'an première de la République Française, sur l'état actuel du Panthéon français; sur les changemens qui s'y sont opérés; sur les travaux qui restent à entreprendre* (Paris, 1792); and Quatremère de Quincy, *Rapport fait au Directoire du Département de Paris sur les travaux entrepris, continués ou achevés au Panthéon Français depuis le dernier compte, rendu le 17 Novembre, et sur l'état actuel du monument, le deuxième jour du second mois de l'an 2e* (Paris, 1793). Moitte's pediment was completed in 1792 and replaced another low-relief by Coustou which represented the Triumph of the Faith. The pediment would be replaced again during the July Monarchy by Jacques-Louis David's student, David d'Angers, who completed it in 1837. See de Caso, 118. Portico reliefs depicting the lives of the saints by Houdon, Julien and others were likewise destroyed by Quatremère during this transformative period. See Braham, 82.

Virtues. Quatremère also proposed the design of a sculptural group to be placed in the eastern nave depicting *la Patrie* – whom he called “the idol of a free people” – enthroned at center flanked by personifications of the Genius of Equality to her left and Liberty on her right.<sup>280</sup>

Ste-Geneviève was certainly not the only religious building to be secularized during the Revolution and placed into the service of the Republic. Churches, monasteries, and convents throughout France were transformed into revolutionary temples or used as meeting places for political clubs. A significant marker in this widespread emergence of de-Christianization occurred in November 1793 when the Parisian cathedral of Notre-Dame was transformed into a Temple of Reason.<sup>281</sup> Notre-Dame served as the nucleus for the Festival of Reason, which was originally to be held in the Palais-Royal. The festivities commenced with an anthem by Chérnier, while musicians of the National Guard and the Opéra performed hymns to Liberty in the streets. Inside the nave of the former cathedral, a small round temple dedicated to Philosophy was placed at the top of a mountain; a flame dedicated to the goddess of Reason burned below.<sup>282</sup> By this time Notre-Dame had already paid witness to the Revolution first hand. On 14 February 1790, prior to the one-year anniversary of the storming of the Bastille, various civic leaders (including deputies, representatives of the Commune, and the Parisian National Guard) gathered at Notre-Dame to collectively renew an oath they had previously taken separately. Located in the Bibliothèque Nationale, an unsigned plan reveals how the interior of the cathedral was manipulated to create a kind of amphitheater for the event. It is interesting to note that the plan contains an Altar of the Fatherland

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<sup>280</sup> Leith, 140-141, fig. 149.

<sup>281</sup> For more on de-Christianization during the Revolution, see Mona Ozouf, *Festivals and the French Revolution*, trans. Alan Sheridan (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1988), 93-94, 99, 107.

<sup>282</sup> Ozouf, 98.



located in the nave – a clear reference to the rising civic cult – despite the predominant involvement in the ceremony by the Catholic Church.<sup>283</sup> In 1792 religious and monarchical statues contained in the five portals on the façade of the former cathedral were systematically destroyed and extensive vandalism was done to the building's interior transept.<sup>284</sup>

### Revolutionary Festivals and the Urban Space

These grand *fêtes* or pageants, like the aforementioned Festival of Reason, served vital political, social, religious, and aesthetic functions during the French Revolution. The most important purpose of Revolutionary festivals – that is, mass propagandistic displays of patriotism, political solidarity, and moral unity – was their ability to shape public opinion. Festivals during the French Revolution were (as such demonstrations had been in antiquity and would continue to be during the twentieth-century) particularly effective both in their ability to unify the populace behind the government and in establishing roles for the public not merely as spectators, but also as active participants. In particular, these *fêtes* were successful in their ability to communicate Revolutionary principles to illiterate members of the population or those who could not afford to buy a newspaper, join a “patriotic” club, or attend the theater.<sup>285</sup> In order to convey their message of patriotic fraternity, the Revolutionary government implored the greatest writers, musicians, and artists of the period – including Chénier, Gossec, and David – to create such propagandistic spectacles. These festivals can be grouped into three general

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<sup>283</sup> Leith, 41. The plan is in the Bib. Nat., Estampes, Coll. Destailleurs, Ve 53 c-h, no. 575. A photograph of the plan can be found in the Musée Carnavalet, Paris. Leith also suggests Pierre-Adrien Pâris as the project's otherwise anonymous architect.

<sup>284</sup> Réau, 380-381.

<sup>285</sup> Dowd, 45. For the most complete history the Revolutionary festival, see Ozouf, 14-32.

categories: funerals for Jacobin heroes, triumphal *fêtes* that commemorated various republican achievements, and religious festivals.<sup>286</sup>

David's role as organizer of the Revolutionary festivals and pageants began with the pantheonization of Voltaire on 11 July 1791 (Fig. 72). Contemporary accounts reveal the strong influence of antiquity on the *fête*, specifically with regard to the trappings, costumes, and musical instruments designed by David.<sup>287</sup> Of particular note was a massive chariot designed by David and pulled by twelve white horses that carried the great philosopher's remains from the Bastille to the Panthéon. The funeral cortege stopped at a series of "stations" throughout Paris, including the Opéra, the Comédie Française and an unscheduled stop at the Tuileries.<sup>288</sup> In the planning for the festival décor, David relied upon his Roman albums where he could consult drawings of architecture and antiquities he encountered and was subsequently inspired by during his Italian sojourns.<sup>289</sup> As the pageant-master of the Republic, David, perhaps more so than ever before, relied on his own intimate experiences with antiquity contained in the Roman albums for reference and inspiration in the creation of a unique Revolutionary iconography. In addition to the Roman albums, David was also likely inspired by Abbé Barthélemy's enormously popular, four-volume *Le Voyage du jeune Anacharsis en Grèce* (1788) as well as other illustrated works in the creation of the festival, including those by Banier and Le Mascrier.<sup>290</sup>

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<sup>286</sup> Ibid., 99. For a chronology of the festivals that took place during the Revolution, see Ozouf, xv-xviii.

<sup>287</sup> *Lettres choisies de Ch. Vilette* (Paris: Clousier, 1792), 190; and *Chronique de Paris*, no. 186 (July 5, 1791): 745.

<sup>288</sup> Dowd, 49-50.

<sup>289</sup> Ibid., 49.

<sup>290</sup> For illustrations by Banier and Le Mascrier, see *Cérémonies et coutumes religieuses de tous les peuples du monde...figures...de Bernard Picard*, 9 vols. (Amsterdam: Bernard, 1782-43). See Dowd, 49.

The importance of the Roman albums continued to be felt in David's planning for the next Republican festival, this time in honor of the Swiss of Châteaueux – a regiment that had rebelled against their aristocratic and abusive officers at Nancy in August 1790 in the wake of spreading revolutionary sentiment following the Festival of the Federation.<sup>291</sup> The Festival of Châteaueux, also known as the Festival of Liberty, was held on 15 April 1792.<sup>292</sup> The procession – envisioned by David with neoclassical art and allegorical symbols of the new religion – left the Faubourg Saint-Antoine late in the morning and traveled halfway around Paris with relative ease despite the enormous crowd before arriving at the Champs de Mars by nightfall. Citizens carried two stone tablets inscribed with the Declaration of the Rights of Man throughout the city, while antique sarcophagi served as a reminder to the participants of those soldiers who had died at Nancy in their quest for liberty. David designed an immense chariot (the foundations of which were used for Voltaire's apotheosis) to carry a statue of Liberty, "the sovereign of the French People," to the Bastille.<sup>293</sup> A contemporary anti-Royalist press, *Révolutions de Paris*, describes the chariot and gives a sense of the republican sentiment that surrounded the festival:

The chariot, modeled on the antique, was an imposing construction. On one of its sides, the happy painter of the Revolution, M. David, had sketched the story of Brutus the Elder, himself sentencing to death his conquering sons for disobeying the

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291 The first of the Revolutionary festivals, the Festival of the Federation was held on 14 July 1790 to commemorate the first anniversary of the storming of the Bastille. For more on the Festival of the Federation and its importance in establishing a model for subsequent Revolutionary fêtes, see Ozouf, 33-60.

292 The Festival of Châteaueux is often contrasted with the more ceremonial funeral of Simonneau, or Festival of Law, organized by Quatremère de Quincy. For Ozouf's discussion of these two antagonistic festivals, see Ozouf, 66-79.

293 For contemporary accounts of the Festival of Liberty, see *Détail et ordre de la marche de la fête en l'honneur de la liberté donnée par le peuple à l'occasion de l'arrivée des soldats de Château-Vieux... 15 Avril, 1792...* (Paris, 1792); *Mercure de France*, no. 16 (April 21, 1792): 204-06; *Moniteur*, no. 108 (April 17): 444; and *Annales patriotiques*, no. 108 (April 16): 475-476, no. 109 (April 17): 478-479.

law. On the other side is depicted William Tell, aiming a javelin, the target of which is an apple on his own son's head; but at his feet we glimpse the tip of another javelin, one that was to bring independence to Switzerland by slaying the Austrian governor. The statue of Liberty, seated on her throne, her hand resting on a bludgeon, commanded respect and would have made a king lower his eyes if he happened to pass her on the way. We should never forget that the scepter of liberty is a bludgeon. It should also be said that the prow at the front of the chariot was formed by six daggers whose tops touched and seemed to threaten any despotism bold enough to impede the triumphal march of liberty.

With steady step twenty democratic horses (if we may be permitted to use the adjective) drew the chariot of the sovereign of the French people; their progress had none of the insolence of those idle coursers fed in the stables of Versailles or Chantilly. They did not hold their heads high; their manes were not plaited with gold, nor adorned with white plumes; their backs were covered in long-hanging scarlet cloth; they walked rather ploddingly, but they kept a steady course.<sup>294</sup>

David would not have to look far for inspiration in the creation of his antique funeral *char*. The Roman albums contain a plethora of drawings after Roman chariots, presumably completed by David as studies for the *Combat of Diomedes* or the *Funeral of Patroclus* (1779) while in Italy.<sup>295</sup> David also likely consulted his Roman drawings of antique chariots for the design of an opera curtain, known today through two drawings in the Louvre and Musée Carnavalet (Fig. 73). Although its exact date, history, and current location remains unclear, scholars have suggested that the purported curtain – known as the *Triumph of the French People* – was created for a performance of an opera entitled *The Reunion of the Tenth August, or the Inauguration of the Republic*, performed in Paris on 5 April 1794.<sup>296</sup> The opera was closely related to the 1793 Festival of Republican

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<sup>294</sup> *Revolutions de Paris*, no. 145 (April 17, 1792): 265-266. English translation in Ozouf, 68-69.

<sup>295</sup> *The Combat of Diomedes* was never completed, but a drawing of the composition (dated 1776) reveals David's conception for the painting. See Rosenberg and Prat, pp. 36-37 and W. Hoffmann, "Un dessin inconnu de la première époque de J.-L. David," *Gazette des Beaux-Arts* (March 1958): 156-168. For drawings of chariots found in David's Roman albums, see Rosenberg and Prat, nos. 712 recto, 712 verso, 713, 714, 736-739, 820, 821, and 1485 recto.

<sup>296</sup> Weston, "Witnessing Revolution," 126-127.

Union (also known as the Festival of Unity and Indivisibility), which celebrated the anniversary of the overthrow of the monarchy and the subsequent achievements of the Republic.<sup>297</sup> The opera was divided into five acts that mirror the festival's five "stations" situated throughout Paris and designed by David to commemorate the progress of the Revolution. Beginning at the Place de la Bastille and ending at the Champ de Mars, each station consisted of temporary architecture or sculpture and served as ceremonial stopping points for the festival procession.<sup>298</sup> The processional nature of the Festival of Republican Union can likewise be seen in the curtain's design. David's design focuses on a colossal figure of the People as Hercules, shown seated on an antique chariot pulled by oxen and holding a club in his left hand. The dynamic scene includes both contemporary and historical figures, including Cornelia and her children, Brutus, William Tell, and the Revolutionary martyrs Marat and Lepelletier.<sup>299</sup> The strong anti-monarchical sentiment of the curtain is further enhanced by the inclusion of sans culottes shown attacking kings with long blades, while royal insignia and garments are simultaneously trampled beneath the wheels of the chariot.

### The Funeral of Lepelletier and the Influence of Egyptian

#### Architecture

In his designing of Revolutionary festivals, David used the city of Paris as his canvas and the common people as his brush. The participation of the people, the

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297 For the report of the festival to the Convention on 11 July 1793, see Wildenstein, 459. For more on the Festival of Republican Reunion, see Leith, 130-134, fig. 142; Ozouf, 172-174; and Dowd, 133.

298 David designed three of the five allegorical statues for the Festival of Republican Reunion, including a seated figure of Nature, a statue of Liberty, and a colossal figure of the French People. See Johnson, 112-117, figs. 58 and 59.

299 The figures of Marat and Lepelletier (as well as Chalier, Pierre Bayle, and Beauvais de Préau) were added by David in the second drawing for the *Triumph of the French People* located in the collection of the Musée Carnavalet, Paris. See Weston, "Witnessing Revolution," 127.

adoption of a Revolutionary iconography, the erection of statues and architecture at various “stations” throughout the city, and the importance of the city itself in the procession – all would constitute major characteristics of the festivals that followed. The propagandistic techniques David acquired through the planning and orchestration of Revolutionary festivals in 1791 and 1792 afforded him the necessary tools to create elaborate commemorations of the Jacobin heroes martyred during the Terror: Lepelletier, Lazowski, and Marat. Michel Lepelletier de Saint Fargeau, a deputy to the Convention and liberal aristocrat, was the first of the Revolutionary martyrs David (along with Chénier) would be charged with bestowing commemorative honors upon.

On 21 January 1793, Louis XVI was sent to the guillotine. The night before the king’s execution, a former royal guard (who was unable to locate his initial target, the Duc d’Orléans) murdered Lepelletier while dining in a restaurant in the Palais Royal. While the Royalists would receive their martyr through the execution of King Louis the following day, the Jacobins now had their own in Lepelletier. Aside from designing his public funeral and giving the eulogy, David sought to pay homage to this “grand homme” of the Revolution in two different artistic mediums: a marble sculpture depicting Lepelletier on his deathbed (which was never completed) and a painting of the slain martyr offered by the artist as a gift to the Convention.<sup>300</sup> David’s painting of Lepelletier (now lost and known only through A. Devosge’s drawing and an engraving by P.-A. Tardieu after the painting) gives a clear indication of how the artist must have conceived of the body’s public viewing in the Place Vendôme (Fig. 74). For the funeral, Lepelletier’s semi-nude body was placed on an antique-inspired deathbed, raised high above the ground on a triangular platform, with the fatal knife wound to his lower abdomen exposed to the crowd of mourners gathered below. David designed the raised

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<sup>300</sup> Johnson, *Art in Metamorphosis*, 95. David presented his painting of Lepelletier to the Convention on 29 March 1793.

platform to encompass the pedestal of the toppled statue of Louis XIV that had previously existed in the Place Vendôme (formerly the Place Louis-le-Grand).<sup>301</sup> In doing so, David symbolically replaced a statue representative of the Bourbon dynasty with a new albeit temporary “monument” to the Revolution by referencing both the antique past and Christian iconography. Indeed, the reclining figure of Lepelletier was strikingly similar to that of David’s Hector (*Andromache Mourning Hector* of 1783) and traditional representations of Christ in a *Pietà* (see Fig. 42). The deathbed scene held particular resonance for the contemporary middle-class family because it symbolized a moral and/or intellectual legacy for those who survived. Poussin’s *The Death of Germanicus* and *The Testament of Eudamidas* – painted images of antique heroes who died virtuously – inspired further representations of the theme during the eighteenth-century.<sup>302</sup>

Yet it is the significance of the triangular platform, conceived by David, that demands our attention. A contemporary engraving by Allais depicts the public exhibition of Lepelletier before his body was ceremonially transported to the Panthéon (Fig. 75).<sup>303</sup> According to the engraving, two immense staircases flanked both sides of the triangular-shaped structure, while at the base of each staircase, two antique censors (reminiscent of those found in Piranesi’s 1778 *Vasi, candelabra, cippi...*) sent plumes of dark smoke heavenward. An epitaph is visible within an architectural frame on the front of the funeral platform, located beneath the supportive wooden sarcophagus and fictive deathbed displaying the body of the slain martyr. Furthermore, Allais’s engraving clearly

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301 Leith, 129.

302 Johnson, *Art in Metamorphosis*, 95-96. See also Rosenblum, *Transformations*, 50-106.

303 The engraving, entitled “Exposition du corps de L. Michel Lepelletier sur le piédestal de la ci-devant statue de Louis XIV place des Piques le 24 janvier 1793,” was likely engraved by Allais. The print is located in the Bib. Nat., Estampes, Coll. De Vinck, vol. 30, no. 5026.

juxtaposes the triangular structure against the architectural backdrop of the Place Vendôme – a point I will return to later. The triangle – specifically, the pyramid – was a shape that held particular meaning in antiquity and during the Revolution. The pyramid was and continues to be a traditional shape used to commemorate the dead with the base symbolizing the earth, while the apex points upwards suggesting the afterlife. Similar in meaning to a pyramid, obelisks are generally thought of as solar symbols and were erected in pairs outside Old Kingdom tomb entrances and some temples.<sup>304</sup> Both the pyramid and the obelisk would be adopted by the ancient Romans (and later the French) as funerary monuments, building adornments, and central foci within urban spaces.

The earliest evidence of Egyptian influence on Roman culture can be found in the cult worship of the Alexandrian deities Isis and Sarapis, established by the late Republic during the 1<sup>st</sup> century BCE. While Egyptian culture had influenced Mediterranean peoples for thousands of years, the Romans were the first to relish Egyptian objects purely for their exoticism. Following the Roman conquest of Egypt in 30 BCE, Egyptian antiquities were brought to Italy where they served as public monuments, decorated villas and gardens, and adorned temples of the Egyptian gods.<sup>305</sup> This Western fascination with Egyptian art and culture did not end with the dawn of Christianity; rather it continued in the Middle Ages, through the Renaissance, and well into the nineteenth-century. The French monarchy exhibited a fondness for so-called “Egyptianisms” beginning with François 1<sup>er</sup> and reached its height under Louis XIV at Versailles. The French Academy in Rome encouraged the integration of Egyptian motifs into French design through the excavation and study of antiquities.<sup>306</sup> At the same time in Egypt,

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304 John Baines and Jaromir Malek, *Cultural Atlas of Ancient Egypt*, rev. ed. (New York: Oxford Limited, 2000), 227.

305 Baines and Malek, 222.

306 James Stevens Curl, *The Egyptian Revival: Ancient Egypt as the Inspiration for Design Motifs in the West* (London and New York: Routledge, 2005), 139.



French missionaries established relatively permanent centers in Cairo and elsewhere that contributed to the discovery and identification of various tombs, temples, and monuments. The French Consul-General in Egypt under Louis XIV, Benoît de Maillet (1656-1738), used his diplomatic sway to obtain Egyptian antiquities for European collections. In 1735 de Maillet published his *Description de l'Égypte* which, focusing on antiquities, was the first attempt to describe all of Egypt. Other eighteenth-century French publications that significantly contributed to the understanding of ancient Egypt and its culture include Paul Lucas's *Voyage fait en 1714* (1720) and Montfaucon's influential *L'Antiquité expliquée* (1719-24).<sup>307</sup> These volumes would be the predecessors to the volumes documenting Napoleon's Egyptian campaign in the early nineteenth-century.

David's decision to design a temporary funeral platform in the shape of a truncated pyramid was informed both by his knowledge of ancient art and Revolutionary precedence. The primary temporary structures constructed during the Revolution were created as monuments to the slain republican martyrs. The first of these temporary structures to be built was a pyramid erected in the Tuileries Garden on 26 August 1792 to commemorate those who had recently died in the overthrow of the monarchy (Fig. 76).<sup>308</sup> The pyramid served as the centerpiece of the ceremony, which included over 350,000 participants. Allegorical figures of Liberty and the Law sat on square pedestals that framed the scene; low-relief sculpture and inscriptions decorated all sides of the pyramid, as well as the two pedestals.<sup>309</sup> Other Egyptian-inspired ephemeral monuments were also created during the Revolution prior to David's funerary platform

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<sup>307</sup> Curl, *The Egyptian Revival*, 140-1. See Bernard de Montfaucon, *The Supplement to Antiquity Explained* (New York: Garland Publishing, Inc., 1976), 224-240.

<sup>308</sup> Leith, 126.

<sup>309</sup> Ibid. For the original French source, see *Moniteur universel*, no. 244, le 31 août 1792, 572.

for Lepelletier. As was stated earlier, many of the statues of the Bourbons were replaced with temporary monuments that glorified the republican cause following the collapse of the monarchy. One such monument was an obelisk erected on a vacant pedestal on the Place des Victoires that replaced a toppled statue of Louis XIV and was inscribed with the Declaration of the Rights of Man (Fig. 77).<sup>310</sup> The influence of the Egyptian pyramid during the Revolution was not limited to ephemeral architecture. Paintings and sculpture from the period likewise display a fascination with the pyramid and its symbolic place within Revolutionary iconography.<sup>311</sup>

The importance David afforded to the architecture of ancient Egypt is clear in his Roman albums, specifically in his multiple renderings of the city's obelisks and the pyramid tomb of Gaius Cestius (c. 18 BC). Because the monument was later incorporated into the city's fortifications near the Porta San Paolo, the Pyramid of Cestius remains one of Rome's best preserved ancient buildings. The pyramid tomb held a certain fascination for David, as is evidenced by seven extant drawings of the monument completed by the artist during his first Italian sojourn.<sup>312</sup> Most of these drawings do not focus explicitly on the pyramid itself, but rather depict its incorporation into the Porta San Paolo (Fig. 78). In his drawings of the Pyramid of Cestius, David was aware of and

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310 Leith, 126. For the original French source, see *Moniteur universel*, no. 229, le 16 août 1792, 414. The obelisk replaced the gilded-bronze statue of Louis XIV by Martin Desjardins (dedicated in 1686) that depicted the monarch in his coronation robes as the personification of Hercules. See Richard L. Cleary, *The Place Royale and Urban Design in the Ancien Régime*, 198-202 (p. 72, fig. 40).

311 For examples of the pyramid/triangle in Revolutionary painting, see *La Liberté* (1793-1794) by Nanine Vallain. *Vizille*, Musée de la Révolution française, currently deposited in the Musée du Louve, Paris; and *La République* (1794) by Antoine-Jean Gros. Versailles, Musée National du Château; in sculpture, see *La Liberté et l'Égalité* (1793) by Joseph Chinard. Lyon, Musée des Beaux-Arts. All are reproduced in Philippe Bordes and Régis Michel, *Aux armes & aux arts! Les arts de la révolution 1789-1799* (Paris: Éditions Adam Biro, 1988), figs. 93, 108, and 109.

312 See Rosenberg and Prat, nos. 552, 553, 1183, 1247, 1251, and 1252; see also Rosenberg and Peronnet, *Un album inédit de David*, feuillet 14.

inspired by Piranesi's romantic engravings of the monument located in his subsequent publications, including *Varie vedute di Rome* (1752), *Le Antichità Romane* (1757), and *Vedute di Roma* (1778) (Fig. 79).<sup>313</sup> We know that Piranesi's etchings often illustrated architectural structures beyond anything that ever existed in ancient Rome. The etchings of Piranesi reveal an obsession with elements of the ancient world – both architectural and otherwise – including pyramids, Greek Doric columns, obelisks, urns, and sarcophagi. It must be remembered that Piranesi had almost a cult-like following among the *pensionnaires* at the French Academy in Rome. The impact his images had on shifting the tastes of young artists and architects away from the delicacies of the Rococo cannot be overstated. David was not alone in his admiration for the Pyramid of Cestius, or for that matter an eighteenth-century fascination with the brooding grandness of Egyptian architecture. In his *Oeuvres d'Architecture* (1763), Marie-Joseph Peyre echoed the sublime scale and neoclassical motifs found in Piranesi's etchings and demonstrated works that exhibited Egyptianizing features.<sup>314</sup> Another influential source on young French architects during the late eighteenth-century was Quatremère de Quincy's *De l'architecture Égyptienne*. Although it was not published until 1803, Quatremère's treatise was first submitted to the Académie des Inscriptions et Belles-Lettres as an essay in 1785 and was likely known to his fellow architects, including Boullée.<sup>315</sup> In his treatise, Quatremère emphasizes the monumentality and grandness of Egyptian architecture, which he compares with the architecture of ancient Greece.

Boullée was likewise influenced by the engravings of Piranesi – his design for a monumental *Cénotaphe dans le Genre Égyptien* of c. 1785 recalls Piranesi's interest in

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<sup>313</sup> See Ficacci, pp. 74, 276, 278-279, 692, and 716.

<sup>314</sup> Curl, *The Egyptian Revival*, 173-174.

<sup>315</sup> Ibid., 181. See Antoine-Chrysostôme Quatremère de Quincy, *De l'architecture égyptienne, considérée dans son origine, ses principes et son goût, et comparée sous les mêmes rapports à l'architecture grecque* (Paris: Barrois, 1803).

the sublime and monumental scale (Fig. 80).<sup>316</sup> Other fantastical projects by Boullée demonstrate the influence of Egyptian architecture in his own work, including a design for a *Chapelle des Morts*, whose immense low pyramidal form and absence of decoration emphasizes the isolation and sublimity of death.<sup>317</sup> While such architectural fantasies never came to fruition, the Egyptian-inspired designs by Boullée and others nonetheless reinforce the neoclassical desire to extinguish the perceived frivolities of the Rococo style by relying on the architecture of antiquity – particularly in the implementation of huge, flat walls void of ornamentation. In what he termed *architecture parlante*, Boullée mixed the grand, ordered, and geometrical architecture of Egypt with that of ancient Greece and Rome, giving root to a unique neoclassical type of funerary architecture that likely inspired David's conception for Lepelletier's funeral platform.

Two drawings from the Roman albums (both of which are entitled *Croquis d'une pyramide*) bear witness not only to an Egyptianizing influence on David while in Rome, but also are remarkable in their allusion to a roughly contemporaneous design by Boullée for a cenotaph (Fig. 81-2). Originally located in Album 10, the drawings by David depict two views of the same massive pyramid with a squared rather than traditional pointed apex.<sup>318</sup> The colossal scale of the truncated pyramid is emphasized by a hemi-dome that we can presume constitutes the entrance to the structure; two obelisks, diminished in size by the enormous pyramid, flank the structure on both sides. When compared with Boullée's design – simply entitled *Cenotaphé* (c. 1781-1793) – the similarities with David's pyramid drawings become unmistakable (Fig. 83). Like David, Boullée's

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<sup>316</sup> Boullée was also greatly influenced by J. B. Fischer von Erlach's *Entwurf einer historischen Architektur* (1721), a likely source of inspiration for Piranesi as well. See James Stevens Curl, *Death and Architecture*, rev. ed. (Gloucestershire: Sutton Publishing Ltd., 2002), 192.

<sup>317</sup> Curl, *The Egyptian Revival*, 179-181.

<sup>318</sup> Rosenberg and Prat, nos. 1063, 1064. Due to the dismemberment of Album 10, the current location of the two pyramid drawings in question is unknown.

*Cenotaphé* depicts a gigantic truncated pyramid (frequently described as a funerary triumphal arch) with a hemi-domed entrance and flanking obelisks; the colossal scale of the pyramid is juxtaposed with small figures that are barely recognizable in the foreground – a clear reference to the diminutive figures often present against monumental architectural structures in Piranesi’s work.<sup>319</sup> It is also important to note the massive steps that rise up the sides of the pyramid in the drawing by Boullée. Might these steps in Boullée’s design have provided the inspiration for those on the sides of the truncated pyramid constructed to display the body of Lepelletier (see Fig. 75)? The obvious similarities between David’s two drawings and Boullée’s cenotaph suggests that David must have been aware of the visionary architect’s drawings and, moreover, that he was inspired by them in his designs for ephemeral funerary architecture during the Revolution.

In addition to the influences of Piranesi and Boullée on David’s Egyptian aesthetic, a lesser known source of inspiration should also be considered. Louis-Jean Desprez was a *pensionnaire* at the French Academy in Rome at the same time as David, having received the Prix de Rome in architecture in 1776.<sup>320</sup> As a student in Rome, Desprez studied painting, drawing, and architecture, in addition to exhibiting an interest in stage-design. During this period Desprez also contributed illustrations (along with Fragonard, Hubert Robert and Chatelet to name a few) to Jean-Claude Richard, Abbé de Saint-Non’s monumental *Voyage Pittoresque, ou Description des Royaumes de Naples et Sicile* (1781-86). Most significant for our purposes, however, are a number of water-

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319 Curl, *Death and Architecture*, 192.

320 Campbell Dodgson, “New Light on a French Painter-Etcher,” *The Burlington Magazine* 64, no. 370 (Jan. 1934): 36. For the seminal texts on Desprez, see Nils G. Wollin, *Desprez en Suède: sa vie et ses travaux en Suède, en Angleterre, en Russie, etc., 1784-1804* (Stockholm: A. B. Thule, 1939); Börje Magnusson, *Louis-Jean Desprez, 1743-1804: peintre, graveur, architecte et décorateur de théâtre en Italie et en Suède* (Paris: Centre culturel suédois, 1974); and Régis Michel, *La chimère de Monsieur Desprez* (Paris: Réunion des musées nationaux, 1994).

color drawings that depict imaginary tombs completed by Desprez in Italy. The tomb drawings (completed between 1778 and 1784) are noteworthy because of their incorporation of Egyptian architecture and sculpture, namely, the segmental arch, which Neoclassical designers associated with primitivism and Egyptian architecture.<sup>321</sup>

One tomb design by Desprez depicts an Egyptian-style sepulcher complete with Egyptianizing figures with nemes head-dresses and a lion located beneath a tomb-slab (Fig. 84). Framed by a segmental arch, a naked male body is shown atop a starkly simple monolithic sarcophagus supported by primitive Doric columns and an equally plane base. Certain similarities do exist between Desprez's aforementioned drawing and David's conception for Lepelletier's funeral in the Place Vendôme, as recorded by Allais's print. On the most basic level, both drawing and print depict the exhibition of a dead, partially nude body amidst an Egyptian-inspired architectural context. But beyond that we see an interest on the part of both David and Desprez in the stark simplicity of Egyptian forms and how those forms (such as the segmented arch and pyramid) can be used to enhance the sublimity of death. It is also worth pointing out that David's Roman albums contain several drawings of crouching lions similar to the one lying beneath the tomb-slab in Desprez's design.<sup>322</sup> One such drawing by David depicts two views of a lion resting on a platform engraved with Egyptian hieroglyphs (Fig. 85). As noted by Rosenberg and Prat, the Egyptian-inspired lions illustrated by David in Album 8 were originally part of the Fontana dell'Acqua Felice in Rome, also known as the Moses Fountain (1585-87).<sup>323</sup> Sculptures of lions – especially as a part of fountain designs – were common

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321 Curl, *The Egyptian Revival*, 175. Segmental shapes like the crescent-moon, bow of Diana, and segmental pediments on temples, shrines, and aedicules had been associated with Egyptian art and architecture since ancient Roman times.

322 Rosenberg and Prat, nos. 858-861.

323 Rosenberg and Prat, no. 604. Today the Egyptian-inspired lion is preserved in the Museo Gregoriano Egizio at the Vatican. See P. Botti-P. Romanelli, *Le sculture del Museo Gregoriano Egizio* (Cité du Vatican, 1951), 14, no. 26. Both David and Desprez must have been aware of Piranesi's etchings after the Fontana dell'Acqua Felice

sites throughout Rome during the eighteenth-century and we can assume that Desprez, like David, was well aware of their existence.

From the Place de Nos Conquêtes to the Place des Piques

To this my point attention has been focused on the temporary architecture designed by David for the funeral of Lepelletier de Saint-Fargeau and how that ephemeral structure might have been inspired by the architecture of ancient Egypt as well as contemporary French architects and theorists. The question that persists is how the architecture, sculpture, and design of the Place Vendôme – its history and persistence as an urban space – might have impacted David’s ideas for Lepelletier’s funeral that took place in the square over a hundred years after it was first conceived. In order to address this question fully, we must first understand how the Place Vendôme (known in its first incarnation as the Place de Nos Conquêtes) came to be and, moreover, how its design fits into the broader concept of *places royales* that existed during the *ancien régime*.

The idea for the Place de Nos Conquêtes was devised early in 1685 by First Architect Jules Hardouin-Mansart and the director of the Bâtiments du Roi, the marquis de Louvois. The *place* was envisioned as a bigger and better counterpart to the largest *place* in Paris at the time – the Place Royale (Place des Vosges). The initial purpose of the Place de Nos Conquêtes was to glorify the military, religious, and cultural conquests of Louis XIV. However, like many *places royales*, the Place de Nos Conquêtes underwent several incarnations throughout the eighteenth-century, accounting for its difficult and sorted history.<sup>324</sup> Unlike the privately funded Place des Victoires (which

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as well as drawings of lions by Augustin Pajou. See Ficacci, 83, 715; and J. D. Draper and G. Scherf, “Augustin Pajou dessinateur en Italie 1752-1756,” *Archives de l’Art français* 33 (1997): 75, no. 2, 45-46 rep.

<sup>324</sup> For a detailed account of the history of the Place Vendôme, see Rochelle Ziskin, *The Place Vendôme: Architecture and Social Mobility in Eighteenth-Century Paris* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1999).

Mansart was also designing), the Place de Nos Conquêtes was a monarchical commission with the crown assuming all costs associated with its construction as well as the design and erection of a royal statue dedicated to Louis XIV to be placed in the center of the square. Under the guidance of Mansart and Louvois, Louis foresaw the *place* as a central location for a number of cultural and intellectual institutions dedicated to promoting the *gloire* of his Apollonian reign. Government institutions located in the *place* were to include the royal library, the academies, the royal mint, and new short-term residences for *ambassadeurs extraordinaires*.<sup>325</sup>

The central purpose of the Place de Nos Conquêtes, as Rochelle Ziskin has persuasively argued, was to demonstrate France's cultural dominance both to native Frenchman and, moreover, to visiting foreign dignitaries.<sup>326</sup> Louvois's centralizing scheme for the *place* surpassed the efforts of his predecessor Colbert in his desire to contain state-sponsored institutions within an impressive urban space, serving as a testament to Louis's artistic patronage as well as his military and religious authority throughout Europe.<sup>327</sup> Mansart's initial designs for the Place de Nos Conquêtes consisted of three ranges of buildings linked by a continuous façade; the south side of the *place* along the rue St.-Honoré was left open, similar to a traditional forecourt of a French château. Opposite the rue St.-Honoré, the otherwise homogenous façade was broken on the northern side by the inclusion of a triumphal arch. The arch, which projected slightly outward from the façade, afforded an axial view of the new church of the Capuchin convent at one end and the colossal bronze equestrian statue of Louis XIV at the

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325 Cleary, 203.

326 Rochelle Ziskin, "The Place de Nos Conquêtes and the Unraveling of the Myth of Louis XIV," *Art Bulletin* 76 (March 1994): 151, 156.

327 Ziskin, "The Place de Nos Conquêtes," 151.



other.<sup>328</sup> The statue (designed by François Girardon and cast by Jean Balthasar Keller) depicted the king in Roman military dress riding a horse modeled on the Roman statue of Marcus Aurelius.<sup>329</sup> In fact, Mansart's design for the *place* – three buildings arranged in a “U” shape centered around an equestrian statue – bore a striking resemblance to Michelangelo's Campidoglio in Rome (Fig. 86).<sup>330</sup> While differences between the two sites certainly existed (namely, their varied topographies as well as the space and articulation of the facades), the idea that Mansart would look to Roman urban design for contemporary inspiration is central to understanding the importance of the *place royale* during the reigns of Louis XIV and Louis XV.

During the late seventeenth- and eighteenth-centuries, the term *place royale* was used to denote a specific type of public space created to glorify the reigning French monarch and was distinguishable as such do to the presence of a royal statue and ennobling architecture of uniform design.<sup>331</sup> While royal statues existed in cities throughout France prior to this point, it was only after the 1680s that *places royales* were created explicitly for the purpose of displaying royal statues. Courtiers and officials of the Crown often developed ideas for *places royales* as a way to honor the monarch, while provincial or municipal treasuries provided the financial resources for its construction.<sup>332</sup> Thus the importance of a royal statue set against a dignified and

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328 See E.-J. Ciprut, “Ancienne Église du Convent des Capucines de la Place Vendôme,” *Bulletin de la Société de l'Histoire de l'Art Français* (1956): 259-269; and F. Souchal, “Le Portail de l'Église des Capucines à Paris,” *Gazette des beaux-arts* 73 (1969): 193-205. Mansart went through several designs for the triumphal arch between 1685 and 1691. See Paris, Bibl. Nat., Est. Va 234.

329 Cleary, 205. The statue's pedestal was designed by Mansart.

330 Ziskin, “The Place de Nos Conquêtes,” 149.

331 Jacques-François Blondel, *Cours d'architecture, ou traité de la décoration, distribution, & construction des bâtimens*, 6 vols. (Paris: Desaint, 1771-7), 2: 256-261. The most important source on *places royales* is Pierre Patte, *Monumens érigés en France à la gloire de Louis XV* (1st ed., 1765; 2nd ed., Paris: Rozet, 1767).

332 Cleary, 4.

harmonious architectural setting was central to the purpose of a *place royale*; together the sculpture and architecture functioned as an ensemble.<sup>333</sup> French patrons, artists, and architects were inspired by the interplay of monumental sculpture and architecture in the imperial fora of ancient Rome (which they had experienced first-hand experience or through prints) in their design and execution of *places royales*. Furthermore, these patrons and designers (like Mansart) were aware of the creation of more recent public spaces in Italian cities including Michelangelo's constructions on the Capitoline Hill, Bernini's Piazza San Pietro in Rome, and the Piazza San Marco in Venice.<sup>334</sup> By subtly referencing the great *piazze* of modern Rome, the French could demonstrate their impressive knowledge of Italian urban planning while concurrently reinterpreting such spaces as the Place de Nos Conquêtes in distinctively French terms. Paris was to become the new Rome.

The political message of the *place royale* was reinforced by linking it to the relationship between the architecture, sculpture, and urban design of imperial Rome. The intended message was clear: Louis XIV and Louis XV were equals to the ancients and, like Augustus, would lead France into a new golden age. With its historical importance firmly rooted, the Roman Empire served as the standard by which the *ancien régime* measured their own success. During the reign of François I (1515-1547), for example, the French king was commonly depicted as a Roman emperor both in the visual arts and in contemporary literature.<sup>335</sup> By the time of Louis XIV, the association was

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333 For more on the placement of royal statues within places royales as well as the interplay of sculpture and architecture within these spaces, see François Lemée, *Traité des statues* (Paris: Arnould Seneuze, 1688); Charles-Augustin Daviler (or d'Aviler), *Cours d'architecture*, 2 vols. (Paris: Langlois, 1691); and Abbé Jean-Louis de Cordemoy, *Nouveau traité de toute l'architecture ou l'art de bâtir* (Paris: 1714; reprint ed., Farnborough: Gregg Press, 1966).

334 Cleary, 5.

335 Ibid., 134. See Charles Maumené and Louis d'Harcourt, "Iconographie des rois de France," *Archives de l'art français*, nouvelle période 15 (1929) and 16 (1932).

inescapable. The most celebrated examples of this imagery that combines ancient and contemporary references to glorify the king can be found at Versailles in the Salon of War, Hall of Mirrors, and the Salon of Peace. Through the harmonious blending of sculpture, painting, and architecture, the three rooms immortalize the reign of Louis XIV by aligning his triumphal Peace of Nijmegen (1678) with great victories achieved by ancient Roman emperors.<sup>336</sup> As with the aforementioned imagery at Versailles, the statues of Louis XIV and Louis XV erected in *places royales* served as evidence of their perceived Augustinian heritage and enduring legacy.

The king's passion for the Place de Nos Conquêtes began to fade following a series of military turnabouts, financial strains, and defeat during the War of the League of Augsburg (1688-1697). Following the death of the marquis de Louvois in 1691, all construction on the large public square was halted. By 1699, the king wanted to erase all memory of the Place de Nos Conquêtes by paving over the razed public square with new streets and permanently storing the colossal equestrian statue of his likeness away from the public.<sup>337</sup> Municipal officials were eventually able to persuade Louis XIV to preserve the *place royale* and display the statue, but on the condition that the square be reworked. Mansart and his collaborators envisioned a new plan for the former Place de Nos Conquêtes, shifting the focus of the once public square from a propagandistic nucleus of governmental institutions to a more private residential program.<sup>338</sup> Public space was reduced; the triumphal arch was removed; the open loggia was replaced with a blind arcade (Fig. 87). In general, efforts were taken to make the architecture appear less imperialistic and more appropriate for the private realm. This is apparent, for example, in

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<sup>336</sup> Ibid. The three rooms were designed as an ensemble by Charles Le Brun between 1679-1680.

<sup>337</sup> Ziskin, *The Place Vendôme*, 5.

<sup>338</sup> Ibid., 6.

Mansart's addition of a tall French roof located above the new cornice, whose function better accommodated residential needs.<sup>339</sup> The more private, domesticated *place* was officially renamed the Place Louis-le-Grand – known more popularly as the Place Vendôme.

The Place Vendôme largely lost its identification as a public space following its second transformation by Mansart. Yet its association with the monarchy remained steadfast throughout the eighteenth-century. The Place Vendôme, like many *places royales* throughout Paris, was often used during this period to celebrate royal births and weddings. One of the grandest of these royal *fêtes* was the marriage of the Dauphin to Marie-Thérèse of Spain on the 23 February 1745. The elaborate celebration consisted of a series of temporary ballrooms placed at six locations throughout the city: the Place de l'Estrapade, the rue de Sèvres, the Place du Carrousel, the Porte St.-Antoine, the Place Dauphine, and the Place Vendôme.<sup>340</sup> A pair of ballrooms (each measuring thirty-one meters in length) were placed on both sides of the now infamous statue of Louis XIV in the center of the square (Fig. 88). Adorned with rows of chestnut trees, arbor and lattice work walls, the décor of the ballrooms was intended to evoke springtime and the goddess Flora.<sup>341</sup> A contemporary print of the scene located in the Bibliothèque Nationale gives a perspective view of the *place* as it appeared on that day. The regal and ornate décor of the ballrooms is balanced by the simplified yet elegant architecture of the Place Vendôme which, similar to Bernini's colonnade in the Piazza San Pietro, seemingly embraces the ephemeral structures. Temporary architecture was also constructed for the less decorous Foire Saint-Ovide, a month-long fair sponsored by the Capuchin convent located just

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339 Ibid.

340 Cleary, 124. See also Stephen Robert Rombouts, "The Celebration of Public Events in Eighteenth-Century France," Ph.D. dissertation (Vanderbilt University, 1986), 288.

341 Ibid., 126.

north of the Place Vendôme (Fig. 89). Beginning in 1762, each summer the Foire Saint-Ovide filled the Place Vendôme with various merchants, acrobats, musicians, and temporary theaters. In 1771 the fair was moved to the Place Louis XV (Place de la Concorde) due to complaints from residents concerning loud music and late hours held by shopkeepers.<sup>342</sup>

On 10 August 1792 the public and private sectors again collided in the Place Vendôme, only this time violence ensued. An angry mob intent on killing Louis XVI left the Tuileries Palace and took nine royalist prisoners from the former Feuillant monastery (located just south of the *place*) into the Place Vendôme where they were decapitated and their heads displayed on pikes. The square was renamed the Place des Picques to commemorate the insurrection and the following day the equestrian statue of Louis XIV was removed and subsequently destroyed.<sup>343</sup> The following year the *place* would serve as the backdrop for the funeral of Lepelletier de Saint-Fargeau, the first of the Revolutionary martyrs. The above discussion seeks to demonstrate that the decision to display the slain Lepelletier in the Place Vendôme was a symbolic choice. But it was also likely a pragmatic one. As mentioned previously, Lepelletier was murdered by a royalist while dining in a restaurant at the Palais Royal, located just three blocks southeast of the Place Vendôme on the rue St.-Honoré. Following the attack, Lepelletier was taken to his brother's house located in the Place Vendôme (no. 8) where he later died. His body would remain at the residence until the funeral.<sup>344</sup> Taking Lepelletier to the Place Vendôme seemed a logical choice, given that his own home in Le Marais was on

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<sup>342</sup> Ibid., 127. See also Robert M. Isherwood, *Farce and Fantasy: Popular Entertainment in Eighteenth-Century Paris* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1986), 131-132.

<sup>343</sup> Ziskin, *The Place Vendôme*, 161.

<sup>344</sup> Ibid., 162 and 177, n36.

the rue de Sévigné was a significant distance (approximately 3 km) from the Palais Royal.

The public funeral and exhibition of the first Republican martyr in a former *place royale* was a deliberate insult to both the monarchy and the royalist cause – a fact David was not only aware of but depended upon. The intended purpose of the funeral, while certainly commemorative, was undeniably propagandistic. The crowds that gathered in the Place Vendôme to see Lepelletier’s exposed body were reminded by his image of the urgency of their own liberty and the freedom of the nation. By referencing antique sources – both from the Greco-Roman world and ancient Egypt – David afforded a hero-like status to Lepelletier. David’s awareness of the importance of public squares in both ancient and modern Italy is evidenced by several drawings of *piazze* in his Roman albums, including the Piazza del Popolo, the Piazza Esquilino, and the Piazza del Campidoglio.<sup>345</sup> Under David, the Place Vendôme – whose initial purpose as the Place de Nos Conquête was to glorify the reign of Louis XIV – had become a monument to the Revolution.

### Conclusion

Following the funeral of Lepelletier and, we can assume in the wake of David’s Egyptianizing influence and Revolutionary precedence, the architecture of ancient Egypt was again referenced in the commemoration of two Republican martyrs: Lazowski and Marat. The rumored poisoning of Lazowski, a member of the Paris Commune and distinguished proponent of multiple anti-Girondin insurrections that took place in 1793, led to the second canonization of a *Montagnard* saint.<sup>346</sup> The grand public funeral, designed by David with reportedly as much success as Lepelletier’s, was held on 28 April

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<sup>345</sup> Rosenberg and Prat, nos. 626, 786, 777, and 789.

<sup>346</sup> Dowd, 103.

1793 with music by Gossec and a eulogy by Robespierre.<sup>347</sup> The body of Lazowski was buried at the foot of the Tree of Fraternity on the Place de la Réunion (Place du Carrousel) following a procession through the streets of Paris. A monument to Lazowski in the shape of an obelisk was erected on that spot where he had given the signal for the storming of the Tuileries on the 10 August.<sup>348</sup> A contemporary engraving on the monument indicates the patriotic sentiment the obelisk was intended to evoke among the people:

This little edifice, the same which contains the remains of the patriot Lazouwiki [Lazowski], one of the leaders of the brave men who were triumphant on that memorable day, all inspiring in the true and good sans-culottes sorrowful and gratifying sensations that ought to nourish sublime thoughts that should prove valuable to liberty.<sup>349</sup>

Similar sentiments of patriotism and immortality were echoed in the Egyptianizing monument dedicated to Marat. On 13 July 1793, Jean-Paul Marat – the radical publisher of the *Ami du Peuple* and third of the prominent Revolutionary martyrs – was assassinated by the royalist Charlotte Corday while soaking in his bathtub. David was again called upon by the National Convention to organize Marat’s funeral, give a eulogy, and complete a painted representation of the slain doctor turned Revolutionary journalist to be exhibited along side his painting of Lepelletier. Consistent with David’s conception for the exhibition of Lepelletier, the rapidly decomposing body of Marat was displayed atop an antique-inspired deathbed in a traditional reclining pose inside the Church of the Cordeliers. Marat was buried in the adjacent church garden following a simple, peaceful funeral. The sculptor François Martin (at the behest of the Cordeliers

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<sup>347</sup> Ibid. For a contemporary account of Lazowki’s funeral, see *Premier journal de la Convention*, no .28 (April 28): 111.

<sup>348</sup> Ibid., 103-104.

<sup>349</sup> Leith, 130, fig. 131. For the original French, see Bib. Nat., Estampes, Coll. de Vinck, vol. 32, nos. 5321 and 5322.

Club) designed a cave-like tomb for the martyr covered in grass and topped by a four-sided pyramid surmounted by an urn bearing the inscription: "Here rests Marat, the Friend of the People, assassinated by the enemies of the people, the 13<sup>th</sup> July 1793."<sup>350</sup>

David's involvement with the Revolution was to rise and fall with the Festival of the Supreme Being, which took place in Paris at the height of the Terror on 8 June 1794. Under David's guidance, the highly orchestrated festival celebrated the mystical deistic religion created by Robespierre (the president of the Convention) to unify the wavering factions of the Revolution and promote republican sentiments. Temporary architectural structures and sculpture were again erected to serve as the backdrop for antique rites and observances. An enormous mountain was constructed on the Champs de Mars to symbolize Nature; along side it a huge Doric column topped with a figure of the People represented culture and civilization.<sup>351</sup> Less than two months after the festival, Robespierre's authority was overthrown and he was executed on 27-28 July 1794. David, who was closely affiliated with Robespierre and his government, narrowly escaped execution but not imprisonment. During his successive imprisonments, David would abandon contemporary subjects he had adopted during the Revolution. Instead, as we shall see, he returned to classic subjects from Greco-Roman history with a fresh perspective.

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350 Ibid., 129-130, fig. 140.

351 Ibid., 213, fig. 255. See J.-L. David, *Plan de la fête de l'Être suprême qui doit être célébrée le 20 prairial...* (Paris, Imp. Nat., 1794).



## CHAPTER 4: REINVENTION, 1794-1799

Introduction

Je suis dans un abandon total, je sens combien votre amitié m'était chère, je vous cherche en vain les soirées, et je ne vous retrouve plus. Je gémis seul; une consolation me reste, c'est que vous êtes plus heureux que moi; vous jouissez au moins de votre liberté.<sup>352</sup>

In the summer of 1794, Jacques-Louis David found himself in a precarious position. Since the beginning of the Revolution, David had occupied positions of power and authority, be it as a deputy of the National Convention (over which he once presided), a leading member of the Jacobin club, or his active participation in the daily operations of the Terror as a member of the Committee of General Security. Most importantly, David was the leading member of the Committee for Public Instruction by which he became the pageant master of the Jacobin Republic and – through his grand festivals, costumes, and cultural projects – created a symbolic language of republicanism.<sup>353</sup> David's involvement with the Republic was also personal, as it was understood that he maintained a close friendship with and allegiance to Robespierre. During this period, David frequently abandoned paintings – such as the *Oath of the Tennis Court* – because of the unstable political climate, which inevitably contributed to his fall from power. The most well-known painter in France was, by the mid-1790s, viewed by his enemies as a blood-thirsty fanatic, a tyrant of the arts, and a traitor.

Following the fall of Robespierre on 27 July 1794, David was twice imprisoned for his Revolutionary activities – from 2 August to 29 December 1794 in the Hôtel des Fermes and the Luxembourg Palace, respectively, and 29 May to 3 August 1795 in the

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<sup>352</sup> Letter from David to his friend M. de Mainbourg, 8 November 1794. Reproduced in Wildenstein, no. 1143.

<sup>353</sup> Lajer-Burcharth, 8-10. See also Dowd, *Pageant-Master of the Republic* and Ozouf, *Festivals and the French Revolution*.

Collège des Quatre Nations.<sup>354</sup> David pleaded his innocence in a letter to the Committee of General Security, revealing his frustration with what he viewed to be as an unjust imprisonment:

...Je le répète avec une ferme assurance, représentants du peuple, on ne peut me reprocher qu'une exaltation d'idées qui m'a fait illusion sur le caractère d'un homme que beaucoup de mes collègues plus éclairés que moi regardaient comme la boussole du patriotisme; mais l'exultation des idées favorables à la liberté ne peut être un crime aux yeux des patriotes qui savent qu'elle n'est que le produit de cet amour ardent de la patrie, de cette chaleur de sentiment et de cette vigueur de l'âme sans lesquels il n'y aurait point eu de Révolution.

On ne pourra jamais me reprocher aucun fait répréhensible parce que mes intentions ont toujours été droites et que je n'ai jamais coopéré ni directement ni indirectement aux trames criminelles que les conspirateurs ourdissaient dans le silence et bien à mon insu.

Le jour n'est pas plus pur que le fond de mon coeur.

Je demande donc, représentants du peuple, que le Comité veuille bien enfin s'occuper de l'examen de ma conduite, et qu'en attendant il me soit permis de me livrer ici à la culture d'un art dont je n'ai jamais si bien senti le prix que lorsque j'ai pu le faire concourir à l'affermissement d'une Révolution au succès de laquelle jamais personne ne s'est plus dévoué...<sup>355</sup>

By November 1794, while still imprisoned, David's health was beginning to deteriorate, money was scarce, and a lack of models was preventing him from continuing work on his most important composition of the Directory: *The Sabine Women*.<sup>356</sup>

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354 Dorothy Johnson, "David and Napoleonic Painting," in *Jacques-Louis David: New Perspectives*, 131. David was first imprisoned in the Hôtel des Fermes before being transferred to the Luxembourg Palace on 15 September 1794 where he was held on the upper floor of the pavilion at the south-west of the palace. See Anna Ottani Cavina and Emilia Calbi, "Louis Gauffier and the Question of J.-L. David's 'Vue présumée du jardin du Luxembourg'," *The Burlington Magazine* 134, no. 1066 (Jan., 1992): 27, note 2; Anna Ottani Cavina, "Rome 1780: le thème du paysage dans le cercle de David," in *David contre David*, 2 vols., ed. by Régis Michel (Paris: La Documentation française, 1993), I, 81-92; and Brookner, 124.

355 Letter from David to the representatives of the Committee of General Security, 15 September 1794. Reproduced in Wildenstein, no. 1138.

356 See Wildenstein, no. 1142.

Earlier that year, David's wife and manager divorced him and, while in prison, he rarely saw his children. He was completely alone. Yet during his incarceration, which lasted approximately seven months, David began a period of reinvention both artistically and personally. Throughout his career, David exercised his gift for stylistic transformation, that is, his uncanny ability to adapt his style and choice of subject matter to the current situation. This was no exception. While confined, David abandoned the controversial subjects he immortalized during the Revolution and instead looked deeply within himself and to antiquity for sources of inspiration.

This chapter will examine three projects David undertook while incarcerated: *View from the Luxembourg*, *Homer Reciting His Verses to the Greeks*, and *The Intervention of the Sabine Women*. An exploration of the first work completed in prison, *View from the Luxembourg*, will concentrate on David's little understood relationship with landscape and will place the painting within the context of the artist's Roman albums, eighteenth-century French landscape painting, and his ongoing dialogue with architecture. Two drawings for the Homer project will likewise be explored in which David's metaphorical use of architecture again takes center stage. In both *Homer Reciting His Verses to the Greeks* and his monumental *Sabine Women*, attention will be placed on David's imagined view of antiquity and how he used architecture to address contemporary issues as well as internal struggles. In their own ways, all three projects are a reflection on the fragility of civilization, the isolation of man, and the reinvention of self.

### *View from the Luxembourg*

Thinking about David in terms of a landscapist is understandably jarring as a methodological approach. After all, David is known as the father of Neoclassicism (and, Delacroix would argue, the father of Modernism), distinguished as he is for painting moralizing depictions of noble men and women from the classical past on a monumental

scale. What distinguished the art of David from his contemporaries was not his reliance on the antique for subject and form, but rather the clarity, intelligence, and expressivity with which he did so. David was, first and foremost, a history painter and on this point we can all agree. Yet what if we were to challenge the notion put forth in recent scholarship that David exhibited no interest in painting landscapes?<sup>357</sup> What could we learn about David and his prolific career if we look beyond the constraints of the prescribed academic hierarchy of painting in the eighteenth-century (which placed history painting above all other types) and considered his work from the perspective of landscape? As I intend to suggest, examining David's work within this context is not so far reaching after all.

In 1794, while imprisoned in the Luxembourg Palace, David painted a landscape scene from his prison window. The painting, known in the literature as the *Vue présumée du jardin du Luxembourg* and currently in the collection of the Musée du Louvre, is fraught with controversy surrounding its attribution despite convincing primary documentation to the contrary (Fig. 90). These documents include a letter by Madame David, an entry by the artist himself citing the painting in question, and a correspondence by P. M. Delafontaine dated August 1794.<sup>358</sup> Delafontaine, himself a student of David's, makes note of "deux paysages" by his master painted from his window in the Luxembourg Palace. While until recently art historians had largely accepted that the Louvre painting was indeed by David, a second landscape by the artist – as purported by Delafontaine – has never surfaced. The existence of a second landscape is further drawn

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<sup>357</sup> See Rosenberg, *From Drawing to Painting*, 113-118; and Ottani Cavini and Calbi, "Louis Gauffier and the Question of J.-L. David's 'Vue présumée du jardin du Luxembourg,'" 27-33.

<sup>358</sup> The letter by Delafontaine is reproduced in Wildenstein, *Documents complémentaires*, no. 1131. For the content of Mme. David's letter, see Wildenstein, *Documents complémentaires*, no. 1212; The painting in question is mentioned by David in a checklist of his works completed in 1817. See Wildenstein, no. 1810.

into question by Delécluze who writes in his 1855 biography of the artist, “Des croisées de sa prison il peignit les arbres du jardin et fit le seul paysage qu’il ait jamais exécuté.”<sup>359</sup> It is, however, important to reiterate that Delécluze was writing thirty years after David’s death and it is possible that he was mistaken in his assertion. It would seem that the letter by Delafontaine, written at the time of the painting’s execution, is a more reliable source.

Regardless, all of the sources mentioned above confirm that David painted at least one landscape scene. Despite the existence of such compelling and rare primary sources (including the painting’s well-documented provenance), a recent article by Anna Ottani Cavina and Emilia Calbi argues that not only is the so-called *View from the Luxembourg* not by David, it makes the claim that the artist showed “no inclination towards landscape-painting during his long career”.<sup>360</sup> The article gives credit to Antoine Schnapper who first questioned the painting’s authorship in the catalog for the 1989 David retrospective at the Louvre.<sup>361</sup> Chief among Schnapper’s concerns was the depiction of the buildings in the background of the painting which, although French in style, never existed in the Luxembourg quarter. Doubt was cast over the location depicted in the painting and thus its authorship too was questioned.

A quote by Alphonse de Gisors in his *Le Palais du Luxembourg* (published in 1845) provided Ottani Cavina and Calbi with the evidence they felt necessary to prove the Louvre landscape is not by David. The authors suggest that the immediacy of Gisors’s quote indicates that he composed it directly in front of the canvas, although it is

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<sup>359</sup> Delécluze, 178.

<sup>360</sup> Ottani Cavina and Calbi, “Louis Gauffier and the Question of J.-L. David’s ‘Vue présumée du jardin du Luxembourg’,” 27. For an account of the painting’s provenance beginning in the collection of Sosthène Moreau, see J. David, I: 313, 641.

<sup>361</sup> *Jacques-Louis David 1748-1825*, 306, no. 136. Cavini and Calbi, “Louis Gauffier and the Question of J.-L. David’s ‘Vue présumée du jardin du Luxembourg’,” 32.

not clear where he physically saw the painting. Because of its relevancy to my argument, I have included the quote from Gisors in its entirety:

Il reste de lui [David] une esquisse assez curieuse d'une partie du jardin du Luxembourg, prise de la chambre où il était renfermé, à l'étage supérieur de l'ancien pavillon d'angle situé à l'Ouest du palais. On aperçoit sur le premier plan un vaste enclos en planches qui devait exister sur l'emplacement qu'occupent actuellement les jardins particuliers du palais et de la Chancellerie; au delà sont les allées mises en culture pendant la Révolution. Plus loin à travers les arbres plantés sans symétrie, on voit les bâtiments du café tels qu'ils sont encore aujourd'hui; ils avaient été construits depuis peu pour y établir les bureaux d'administration des ateliers d'armes qui furent, à cette époque, organisés dans l'ancien clos des Chartreux. Dans le lointain se dessinent les collines de Meudon et Bellevue...<sup>362</sup>

While similarities between Gisors's quote and the Louvre landscape do exist, namely, the view from the west of the palace and the "vaste enclose en planches" in the foreground, this is where the comparison ends, specifically with regards to the buildings in the background. In addition, Gisors's omits the figures in the painting from his description. Based on the aforementioned quote, the authors come to the conclusion that the Louvre landscape is not the one Gisors's saw and consequently wrote about; it does not show the Luxembourg gardens and therefore cannot be by David. While the quote does admittedly seem at odds with the Louvre painting, nowhere in the article do the authors suggest that Gisors's might have viewed and subsequently described the second now missing landscape by David mentioned in Delafontaine's letter. Instead they are quick to discredit the painting's authorship and push forward their own scholarly agenda, that is, attributing the painting to one of David's contemporaries, Louis Gauffier. According to Ottani Cavina and Calbi, the painting's high viewpoint, rigid geometric organization, and the quick graphic nature of the figures in the foreground reoccur in landscapes painted by Gauffier – most notably in his Vallombrosa series and in his

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<sup>362</sup> A. de Gisors, *Le Palais du Luxembourg* (Paris, 1845), 67-68. Quote reproduced in Ottani Cavini and Calbi, "Louis Gauffier and the Question of J.-L. David's 'Vue présumée du jardin du Luxembourg'," 30.

*bozzetti* or exploratory sketches located today in the Musée Fabre, Montpellier (Fig. 91).<sup>363</sup> The authors take the position that the Louvre canvas is in fact a *bozzetto* by Gauffier, as is evidenced by its small format and irregular course-weave canvas. Furthermore, the free and spontaneous technique exhibited by the artist (in addition to areas where the painting seems unfinished) suggests its purpose as a sketch rather than a finished painting. The comparison of the Louvre landscape with Gauffier's *bozzetti* leave the authors with little doubt as to the painting's authorship.

Needless to say, the evidence for disattribution presented by Ottani Cavina and Calbi is less than convincing – especially, I would argue, when considered in the context of David's Roman albums. Many of the drawings in the Roman albums contain landscape scenes and some even depict what can be considered pure landscapes – that is, landscapes free from narrative content (Fig. 92).<sup>364</sup> Landscapes found in the Roman albums exhibit the artist's skill at rendering nature, specifically trees and rocky formations. In the albums (as I have discussed at length in previous chapters), David frequently places architectural structures within landscape settings in the manner of some of the most famous landscape painters in the history of Western art, namely, Annibale Carracci, Domenichino, Poussin, and Claude. While it is reasonable to assume that these landscape drawings were the result of the Academy's prescribed curriculum, their sincerity of approach, uniqueness, and emotional tenor distinguish the drawings from

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<sup>363</sup> Ibid. Gauffier, identified primarily as a history painter and portraitist, painted the well-known landscape series during his Italian sojourn in the late 1790s. Gauffier won the Prix de Rome in 1784 (sharing his win with Jean-Germain Drouais in painting and Antoine-Denis Chaudet for sculpture) and remained in Italy with rare exception until his death in 1801. See P. Marmottan, "Le peintre Louis Gauffier," *Gazette des Beaux-Arts* 13 (1926): 281-300; M. Sandoz, "Oeuvres de Louis Gauffier nouvellement apparues," *Revue des Arts* 4 (1958): 195-8; and Celia Alegret, "Gauffier, Louis," in *Grove Art Online, Oxford Art Online*, <http://www.oxfordartonline.com.proxy.lib.uiowa.edu/subscriber/article/grove/art/T031007> (accessed March 11, 2009).

<sup>364</sup> See Rosenberg and Prat, nos. 703, 880, 893, 896-899, 1028, 1079, 1080, 1168-1170, and 1254.

mere works of pedagogy. Ottani Cavina and Calbi make note of the high viewpoints and rigid geometric organization as being characteristic of Gauffier's landscapes, but these so-called identifying characteristics also occur in sketched views by David and countless other French artists working in Rome in the later part of the eighteenth-century.<sup>365</sup> Simply put, the landscape drawings in David's Roman albums prove that the artist did create such renderings; the possibility, therefore, that he painted landscape scenes like the *View from the Luxembourg* should be reconsidered.

We can also turn to the Roman albums for an explanation of the buildings in the background of the painting which, as mentioned earlier, bear no resemblance to any such structures in the Luxembourg quarter. Ottani Cavina and Calbi discuss the presumed location of the landscape at length in their article, suggesting that both the setting and architecture depicted in the painting are not Italian but French – perhaps even identifiable in the Faubourg Saint-Antoine where Gauffier might have stayed during his brief visit to Paris in 1789.<sup>366</sup> However, it seems more likely that the landscape and architecture depicted by David in the *View from the Luxembourg* was based largely on memory and his imagination rather than any specific location. As was the case throughout the Roman albums, David would often combine different architectural structures and elements – both real and imagined – to create his own unique views (see Fig. 22). This use of architecture and landscape as a springboard for creativity is logical given his confinement and, we can assume, his relatively restricted view of the outside world.

This notion of the imagination and its importance to David's oeuvre can also be seen in a painting likewise completed by the artist in captivity. Before he was moved to

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<sup>365</sup> It is worth noting that at least two drawings in David's Roman albums bear a striking resemblance to Italian drawings by Gauffier. See Rosenberg and Prat, nos. 877, 877a, 897, and 897a.

<sup>366</sup> Ottani Cavini and Calbi, "Louis Gauffier and the Question of J.-L. David's 'Vue présumée du jardin du Luxembourg'," 33.



the Luxembourg Palace in September 1794, David was held prisoner in the Hôtel des Fermes where he painted a portrait of himself as an artist seated with palette and brush held tightly in hand (Fig. 93). One sees in this self-portrait how David painted when *he* was the intended audience – not members of the *ancien régime* or Revolutionary government. Although David was actually forty-six at the time the self-portrait was painted, he imagined himself as a young man with pink cheeks and brown hair free from the inevitable streaks of grey that come with age and experience. His expression is one of honesty, bewilderment, anxiety, and certainly frustration at his present situation. To convey these feelings David has abandoned his characteristically tight, controlled brushstroke for a looser, more rapid one. The artist stares back at us, the viewer, with his piercing brown eyes desperate to tell us his side of the story and profess his innocence. Interestingly, David employs the same color palette in the *Self-Portrait* as he does in the *View from the Luxembourg*, namely, yellow-grey and brown tones. The warm browns and reds juxtaposed with the cool yellows and greys create a visual tension in both works, contributing to their overarching themes of entrapment and aggravation. Gone are the vibrant Rubensian hues that permeated his paintings of the previous decade. Rather than using color to convey notions of power, authority, and regality, during his imprisonment David uses color to express his mood – a characteristic that, as we shall see, continues in his *Sabine Women*.

The most significant piece of evidence to support David's authorship of the Louvre landscape lies with his representation of the sketched figure group in the foreground. The classical nature of the figures is notably strange when juxtaposed with the "modern" surroundings of late eighteenth-century Paris. Several scholars – including Toussaint, Schnapper and Schmoll – have all commented on the classical feeling evoked by the group, although efforts to determine a specific antique source for the figures has

proved largely fruitless.<sup>367</sup> Most convincing is the argument put forth by Schmoll who claims the figures in question represent a scene preceding the death of Archimedes.<sup>368</sup> According to Schmoll, the choice by David to depict such an episode would be an appropriate one and can be read as an autobiographical allusion by the artist to his presumed fate. Ottani Cavina and Calbi, however, reject Schmoll's assertion because the scene is missing the figure of the Roman soldier who kills Archimedes for drawing circles on the ground. Yet the inclusion of an episode from a classical source would raise the painting's status to that of *paysage historique* – a far more acceptable genre for an artist of David's status than a mere landscape (I will address the importance of the *paysage historique* to eighteenth-century landscape theory in the pages that follow). Regardless, Ottani Cavina and Calbi focus their discussion on the “generic” nature of the figures, included by Gauffier at the last minute, they presume, to give a sense of scale and depth to the painting.<sup>369</sup> Thus the inclusion of the group (although admittedly classical in feeling) was, according to the authors, a flippant addition by the artist intended simply to reinforce spatial order.

As we have seen, David frequently includes quickly sketched figure groupings in his Roman drawings to establish scale and depth. Often these figures are placed in front of or even within monumental works of architecture in an effort to reiterate the timelessness of such ancient structures and the relative impermanence of man. The figures represented in his *View of the Pantheon in Rome* are characteristic of this type (see Fig. 12). In the drawing, David sketched the figures in the foreground with a rapid

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367 Ibid., 31, note 19.

368 J.-A. Schmoll gen. Eisenwerth, “J.-L. David's ‘Vue du jardin du Luxembourg’ von 1794 als Parabel der Gefangenschaft des Malers,” in *Florilegium Artis. Festschrift für Wolfgang Götz anlässlich seines 60. Geburtstag*, Searbrüch (1983), 125-32.

369 Ottani Cavini and Calbi, “Louis Gauffier and the Question of J.-L. David's ‘Vue présumée du jardin du Luxembourg’,” 31.

touch – a technique that is at odds with the clarity and dexterity associated with the artist's depiction of the human body in his finished paintings; absent is his strong sculptural aesthetic and trademark corporeal expressivity. Instead David uses quick abstract lines and splotches of dark wash to give a sense of three-dimensionality to his figures. When compared to the group in the *View from the Luxembourg*, similarities with the figures in David's Roman albums become immediately apparent. In the Louvre painting, David renders the figures in a similar sketch-like fashion, using deep shadows, line, and spatial voids to establish form. As in the Roman albums, the figure group in the *View from the Luxembourg* appears emotionless and generic in their anonymity. The smallness of the figures in relation to the landscape they inhabit conveys – as it does throughout the albums – feelings of isolation and insignificance. These feelings are enhanced by the presence of another figure in the painting (perhaps a young boy) not mentioned in Ottani Cavina and Calbi's article, shown walking alone along the garden fence. The figure has no interaction with the group in the foreground and, interestingly, does not convey the same classical sentiment either in dress or activity; his identity and purpose within the painting is a mystery. Another figure – the only woman in the painting – is barely identifiable on the left of the composition, walking briskly down a path on the other side of the fence with a water pot on her head.

We are left to wonder why an artist made famous for his grand history paintings and elegant portraits of the French elite would turn to the "lesser" genre of landscape. Certainly David must have been looking for any kind of visual stimulation by which to express himself during his imprisonment, but let us consider the possibility that David's only extant landscape painting was not merely a bi-product of confined artistic spontaneity. Could David's *View from the Luxembourg* represent a reflection on another period of imprisonment, albeit psychological, during the period in his life as a young student in Rome more than ten years prior – a turning point in David's artistic career in which studies of landscape and ancient architectural structures played an important new

role amidst feelings of anxiety, self-doubt, and isolation? Could not the *View from the Luxembourg* be viewed quite literally as a *carceri*? I intend to argue that the painting serves as another example of David's transformational style and modernity. In order to understand this possibility further, let us examine the French landscape tradition at the end of the eighteenth-century, specifically, the impact of an artist who, I believe, had a significant effect on the new way David viewed landscape: Pierre-Henri de Valenciennes.

### Valenciennes, David, and the French Landscape Tradition

Pierre-Henri de Valenciennes (1750-1819) and Jacques-Louis David had much in common. Both artists worked during a period of immense social, political, and artistic change in France and each would become known as the chief exponents of their respective genres: David in history painting and Valenciennes in landscape.

Valenciennes, like David, was markedly influenced by the classical tradition and archaeological discoveries of Italy, first visiting Rome in 1769 at the age of nineteen. Receiving his early training at the academy in Toulouse under the guidance of history painter Jean-Baptiste Despaz (1709-73), it was during his Italian sojourns that Valenciennes was exposed to important artists and historical monuments (as well as an understanding of perspective) that would forever influence his art and theoretical writings.<sup>370</sup> In Rome, the young Valenciennes saw first-hand the Italianate landscape that informed the paintings of his artistic heroes, namely, Claude, Poussin, and Gaspard

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<sup>370</sup> Wendy M. Watson, "Tradition and Innovation: Pierre-Henri de Valenciennes and the Neoclassical Landscape," in *Valenciennes, Daubigny, and the Origins of French Landscape Painting* (South Hadley, MA: Mount Holyoke College Art Museum, 2004), 25. The seminal text on Valenciennes is Robert Mesuret, *Pierre-Henri de Valenciennes*, exh. cat. (Toulouse: Musée Paul-Dupuy, 1956). Other important studies include: Paula Rea Radisich, *Eighteenth-Century Landscape Theory and the Work of Pierre-Henri de Valenciennes* (Los Angeles: University of California at Los Angeles, 1977); Whitney Wheelock, "Pierre-Henri de Valenciennes (1750-1819)" (M.A. thesis, Courtauld Institute of Art, London, 1975); and Geneviève Lacambre, "Pierre-Henri de Valenciennes en Italie: Un Journal de voyage inédit," *Bulletin de la Société de l'Histoire de l'Art français*, année 1978 (1980): 139-72.

Dughet. Valenciennes returned to France in 1771 and became a pupil of Gabriel-François Doyen, the renowned history painter and student of François Boucher.<sup>371</sup> Under the guidance of Doyen, whom he referred to as “mon très honoré maître,” Valenciennes gained an interest in sketching the landscapes surrounding Paris as well as in Fontainebleau, Compiègne, and Amboise.<sup>372</sup> While a pupil in Doyen’s studio, it is likely that Valenciennes met Hubert Robert – a foremost landscapist of the period – who also created nature studies at Chanteloup near Amboise.<sup>373</sup>

Valenciennes returned to Rome in 1777 firmly committed to landscape. He would remain in Italy until 1784 with the exception of a brief visit to Paris in 1781-82.<sup>374</sup> While in Italy, Valenciennes was surrounded by some of the most brilliant artistic minds of the period including Giovanni Battista Piranesi, Thomas Jones, Phillip Hackert, J.-R. Cozens, Henry Fuseli, Jean-Baptiste Regnault, and Jacques-Louis David. While the extent of the relationship between David and Valenciennes remains uncertain, during his second trip to Rome Valenciennes received an unspecified drawing from David that he would treasure for the rest of his life.<sup>375</sup> Clearly this indicates the high esteem

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371 It should be remembered that Boucher was the cousin of David and staunch proponent of his artistic education.

372 Watson, “Tradition and Innovation,” 25-26. For the original quote source, see Pierre-Henri de Valenciennes, *Elémens de perspective pratique, à l’usage des artistes, suivis de réflexions et conseils à un élève sur le genre du Paysage* (Paris: Desenne, 1800; 2nd edition, Paris: Chez Aimé Payen, 1820), xvii.

373 Watson, “Tradition and Innovation,” 26.

374 Peter Galassi, “The Nineteenth Century: Valenciennes to Corot,” in *Claude to Corot: The Development of Landscape Painting in France*, ed. Alan Wintermute (New York: Colnaghi, 1990), 233. Due to his status as a landscape painter, Valenciennes was not a recipient of the Prix de Rome which, at this point, was reserved exclusively for history painters. During his trip to Paris in 1781-82, Valenciennes met Claude-Joseph Vernet who proved instrumental in teaching him perspective as it applied to painting. See Valenciennes, xviii.

375 Radisich, “Eighteenth-Century Landscape Theory and the Work of Pierre-Henri de Valenciennes,” 216. David was a student at the French Academy in Rome from 1775-1780 and returned to the Eternal City in 1784-85 to paint the *Oath of the Horatii*.

Valenciennes had for David's work and, conversely, the respect David must have had for Valenciennes. What is apparent from their respective drawings is that both artists shared a strikingly similar view of the Italian landscape and how to approach it in their art. Like David, Valenciennes made countless drawings (Valenciennes was particularly fond of the oil sketch) during his two trips to Italy that document the Eternal City as well his visits to Tivoli, Naples, Paestum, and Sicily.<sup>376</sup> In these drawings, we can picture Valenciennes – as we have David – wandering the streets of Rome, climbing the sides of ancient hills and venturing throughout the countryside. Throughout his expeditions, Valenciennes paid close attention to architectural structures – both ancient and modern – and, above all, the changing effects of light and atmosphere on such buildings and the Italian landscape.

It is this last point that makes the Italian drawings of Valenciennes so relevant to David's conception of landscape and foreshadows nineteenth-century advances in the genre by Achille-Etna Michallon, Jean-Victor Bertin, and Jean-Baptiste-Camille Corot.<sup>377</sup> Prior to Valenciennes, eighteenth-century artists like Fragonard and Hubert Robert used landscape primarily as a context for displaying ruins and monuments. Their focus was often not on the landscape itself or a historical moment, but rather on the archaeological-romantic sentiment such monuments conveyed.<sup>378</sup> Certainly David's Roman albums pay tribute to this monument-centered ideology, one that focused on the

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<sup>376</sup> Watson, "Tradition and Innovation," 27. The majority of Valenciennes's Italian sketchbooks and oil sketches are located today in the collections of the Louvre and Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris. In 1930 the Louvre acquired one hundred and twenty-five sketches by Valenciennes from the collection of the Princesse de Croÿ, who inherited them from her grandfather, M. de l'Espine. De l'Espine purchased the sketches in 1819 and 1825 at the posthumous sales of Valenciennes and his pupil Anne-Louis Girodet. See Geneviève Lacambre, "Les paysages de Pierre-Henri de Valenciennes 1750-1819," *Dossier du département des Peintures, Louvre II* (1976), n.p.; and Philip Conisbee, "Pierre-Henri de Valenciennes at the Louvre," *The Burlington Magazine* 118, no. 878 (May, 1976): 336-334.

<sup>377</sup> See Galassi, 233-249.

<sup>378</sup> *French Landscape Drawings and Sketches of the Eighteenth Century*, Roseline Bacou, ed. (London: British Museum Publications Ltd., 1977), 99.

splendors of ancient civilizations, death, decay, and the legacy of the artist. It is, after all, the central argument of this thesis that David used architecture as a vehicle for conveying meaning in his paintings. However, evidence of an appreciation for landscape in its purest form also exists in David's Roman albums, further supporting his authorship of the *View from the Luxembourg*. In some drawings, specifically those illustrating expansive views of Rome, David uses architecture simply as an element in a landscape composition. For example, in his drawing entitled *Vue de Rome avec l'église San Sebastiano fuori le Mura sur la gauche*, no one building or monument is given visual precedence over the other; the architecture was not David's primary concern (Fig. 94). Rather the drawing emphasizes perspective, atmospheric conditions, and the transient effects of light and shadow on the landscape. The movement of the clouds and the deep shadows cast by the warm Italian sun reflecting against the buildings all indicate that David was interested in capturing a specific time of day and even time of year. Rather than using ruins to provide commentary on the fleeting aspect of life, here he uses the changing effects of nature on the landscape to convey the passage of time. The simplicity and functionality of the architecture in the drawing, coupled with the absence of a figural narrative component, suggests that David's interest in the drawing was solely in depicting the Roman landscape. For David and his School, as Pierre Rosenberg has discussed, representations of Rome held the same moralizing, philosophical, and ideological content as history paintings.<sup>379</sup> The severity of style identifiable in Roman buildings and the spirit of antiquity that permeates the Italian countryside is at once translatable to David's conception of history painting rather than being at odds with it.

David was able to capture the transient aspects of landscape in his Roman drawings in a way that Fragonard, Robert, and many of his contemporaries like Vincent and Suvée did not through his choice of medium. Both David and Valenciennes

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379 Rosenberg, *From Drawing to Painting*, 117-118.

abandoned the traditional red and black chalk in their Italian landscape sketches in favor of pen and wash – a medium frequently used by seventeenth-century artists like Claude and Poussin to explore the effects of light and shade on the landscape. By using pen and wash, both David and Valenciennes were able to construct their landscapes and the architecture included therein in terms of broad masses of light and dark. The artists' distinctive use of pen and wash to establish form is clear in their drawings of the Roman church of Sant'Onofrio (Figs. 95-6). An examination of the two drawings side-by-side reveals uncanny similarities in the artists' shared technique, subject matter, perspective, and use of light and shade. The dramatic, expansive shadows created by the wash in both works conveys a sense of movement and repetition as the eye moves from planes of empty space to those characterized by darkness. In their two drawings, David and Valenciennes were principally interested in capturing the changing effects of light on the landscape, specifically with regards to the architecture. Given the striking similarities between their drawings of Sant'Onofrio, it is plausible that the two artists created their respective renderings at the same time and worked *en plein-air*. The possibility that Valenciennes might have informally instructed David on landscape during his period at the French Academy in Rome seems logical and is virtually unexplored.

This curiosity with capturing the dramatic effects of light and shade on the Italian landscape – particularly with regards to architecture – can also be seen in the Roman drawings of Gauffier and David's most promising yet ill-fated student, Jean-Germain Drouais. Gauffier (to whom, we must remember, Ottani Cavina and Calbi attribute David's *View of the Luxembourg*) and Drouais both shared the 1784 Prix de Rome along with the sculptor Antoine-Denis Chaudet. Gauffier's period as a *pensionnaire* at the French Academy in Rome lasted from 1785-1789; Drouais, who accompanied David to



the Eternal City in 1784, remained in Rome until his death in 1788.<sup>380</sup> The impact of the aforementioned Roman architectural drawings by Valenciennes and David on those of Gauffier and Drouais is readily apparent. In Gauffier's *View of Saint John Lateran* (c. 1785) and Drouais's *Landscape with Santa Agnese Fuori le Muri* (c. 1788), for example, both artists demonstrate this distinctive and dramatic use of light and dark shadows first evidenced in similar drawings by Valenciennes and David (Figs. 97-8). The drawings by Gauffier and Drouais share a formal quality in which the architectural structures are seemingly deconstructed into geometric shapes formed by planes of light and dark. As we saw in the drawings of Sant Onofrio by Valenciennes and David, Gauffier and Drouais also used pen and wash (as well as graphite) rather than red or black chalk to achieve the extremes of light and shade.

The stylistic similarities between the landscape sketches of Valenciennes, David, Gauffier, and Drouais suggest that all four artists shared a common interest in nature's effects on landscape and the built environment and, we can feel certain, prominent theories concerning the genre and its depiction. Prior to the sixteenth-century, landscape played a minimal compositional let alone narrative role. Artists like Brueghel and Titian were among the first to push the boundaries of landscape by no longer strictly relegating it to the background of their narrative compositions. For example, in Brueghel's *Fall of Icarus* (c. 1558) and Titian's *The Pastoral Concert* (c. 1508-9) both artists used landscape as a mode of entry – a visual device intended to draw the viewer into the narrative of the painting (Figs. 99-100). In Brueghel's image, the landscape in the foreground *physically* draws the viewer into the scene. Titian, on the other hand, relies on his use of a poetic, pastoral landscape to establish the tone of the painting, thereby

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<sup>380</sup> For further study on Gauffier and Drouais, see *Jean-Germain Drouais 1763-1788*, exh. cat. (Musée des Beaux-Arts de Rennes, 1985); Crow, *Emulation*; P. Marmottan, 281-300; and R. Crozet, 100-13.

drawing the viewer in *emotionally*.<sup>381</sup> These two roughly contemporaneous works by Brueghel and Titian, although stylistically opposed, are both inspired by classical texts and demonstrate the humanistic theory of painting which had a tremendous impact on the emergence of the landscape genre: *ut pictura poesis* – “as is poetry, so is painting”.<sup>382</sup> This close association between the sister arts of poetry and painting, born during the Renaissance and rooted in antiquity, presses upon the artist the importance of depicting scenes from classical texts. By choosing elevated subjects from classical sources, artists demonstrated their own erudition as well as their patron’s. This ancient simile, famously coined by Horace, remained a central principle in Western art until the mid-eighteenth-century and, subsequently, delayed the acceptance of pure landscape painting (as well as genre scenes) as an independent form of artistic expression. It would not be until 1817, at the behest of Valenciennes, that a separate Rome prize was awarded by the Academy in landscape painting.<sup>383</sup>

Of unquestionable influence on the French conception of landscape was the Bolognese artist Annibale Carracci (1561-1609). While Annibale both painted and sketched pure landscapes, it was his creation of an “ideal landscape” that warrants our attention.<sup>384</sup> Annibale’s ideal landscapes combined the pastoral landscapes found in the

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381 John Varriano, “Landscape Painting Before Valenciennes,” in *Valenciennes, Daubigny, and the Origins of French Landscape Painting*, 9. For more on the Flemish and Venetian landscape traditions see Christopher Brown, “The Flemish Landscape Tradition,” in *Ruben’s Landscapes: Making and Meaning* (London: National Gallery Publications, 1996); and Walter S. Gibson, *Pleasant Places, The Rustic Landscape from Bruegel to Ruisdael* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2000).

382 See Rensselaer W. Lee, *Ut Pictura Poesis: The Humanistic Theory of Painting* (New York: W. W. Norton and Co., Inc., 1967).

383 Varriano, 20.

384 *River Landscape*, c. 1590 (National Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C.), serves as an example of a pure landscape by Annibale. The painting is reproduced in Varriano, 10, fig. 4. For the seminal text on the Carracci, see Catherine Enggass, trans., *The Lives of Annibale and Agostino Carracci* (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1968).

Venetian tradition as well as his own views of the Roman *Campagna*. Paintings from his mature period placed classical and religious subjects in ordered outdoor settings often enhanced by Roman ruins – a reminder of our own decay and the passage of time. One of six lunettes by Annibale commissioned for a chapel in the Palazzo Aldobrandini (today in the Galleria Doria-Pamphili) entitled *The Flight into Egypt* (c. 1603-04) exemplifies this type of landscape in which nature, architecture, and humanity are in perfect accord (Fig. 101).<sup>385</sup> A series of intersecting diagonals emphasize the importance of the Holy Family in the foreground, while the architecture in the background is seemingly absorbed into the surrounding landscape. The line between where the architecture ends and the landscape begins is barely distinguishable in Annibale's harmonious painting.

The rise of the ideal, historicized landscape promulgated by Annibale is critical to understanding how Valenciennes, David, and other French artists would come to view the genre. While Annibale's pupil, Domenichino, would preserve the ideal landscape tradition in Italy, it was seventeenth-century French painters – namely Poussin and Claude – that advanced landscape painting within the established aesthetic hierarchy.<sup>386</sup> As was noted in my first chapter, Poussin, the father of the French heroic landscape, reached Rome in 1624 where he would remain for the rest of his life except for a short trip to Paris in 1640-42. Poussin, like Annibale and Domenichino (whose studio Poussin joined briefly upon his arrival in Rome), was primarily a history painter and scenes of nature did not begin to dominate his paintings until the later 1640s, as exemplified in

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<sup>385</sup>Varriano, 10-11.

<sup>386</sup> Ibid., 11. However, that is not to dismiss the influence of Domenichino on David's oeuvre. Several drawings from David's Roman albums are studies completed after Domenichino, one of which is a landscape. See Rosenberg and Prat, nos. 634, 736, 1021, and 1134.

*Landscape with the Body of Phocion Carried out of Athens* (1648).<sup>387</sup> The rational, systematic depiction of landscape and architecture from this period in Poussin's career complemented his frequently pessimistic narratives, which illustrated moral themes such as stoicism and tragedy found in the pages of classical texts.<sup>388</sup>

Yet it is Claude who best carried on Annibale's remarkable ability to create this seemingly indistinguishable boundary between architecture and landscape evident in the Roman landscapes of David and Valenciennes. Claude achieves this harmonious effect by bathing both his landscapes and buildings in the same radiant light so characteristic of the central Italian countryside. This light (perhaps best represented in Claude's 1648 *Italianate Landscape at Sunset*) diffuses the harsh lines of the buildings and contributes to the peaceful, organic co-existence of architecture and nature in his paintings; it is as if architecture and nature are one and the same. In a late painting entitled *Landscape with Ascanius Shooting the Stag of Silvia* (1682), Claude uses the columns and entablature of a dilapidated classical structure on the left of the composition as a *repoussoir*, directing the viewer's attention to the figures below and the stag at right (Fig. 102). Rather than relying on the more typical usage of trees to draw the viewer into the painting, Claude uses architecture and nature interchangeably – the four long column shafts mimicking the thin, elegant tree trunks to the right of the ruinous structure, while what remains of a weighty classical entablature finds its counterpart in the full leaves and branches that comprise the adjacent tree canopy. While Claude maintains Poussin's desire for order and rationality amidst a classical setting, he nonetheless does so in a decidedly less rigid, more naturalistic fashion.

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<sup>387</sup> Anthony Blunt has suggested that there is evidence that Poussin's interest in landscapes began much earlier, perhaps as early as 1630. See Anthony Blunt, *Poussin* (Washington, D.C.: The National Gallery of Art, 1967), 268.

<sup>388</sup> Varriano, 13-14.

The question of how an artist should envision nature and, consequently, how he should portray it became exceedingly important in the eighteenth-century. At issue was the significance of the artist's imagination. Should the artist depict "true" nature or should he attempt to render nature as "beautiful" even beyond his own observations?<sup>389</sup> A seemingly endless number of texts from the period discuss this duality of nature described above, yet Roger de Piles' chapter on landscape from his *Cours de peinture par principes* (1708) was arguably the most famous and it had a substantive effect on both Valenciennes and, I would suggest, David as well. In the *Cours de peinture*, De Piles limits his discussion of landscape to two types: the heroic and the pastoral or rural. Concerning the heroic style – that is, a composition that finds inspiration from both art and nature – De Piles makes note of two visions of nature, all the while notably attempting to raise the status of the landscape painter within the academic hierarchy:

And if nature appear not there, as we every day casually see her, she is at least represented as we think she ought to be. This style is an agreeable illusion, and a sort of enchantment, when handled by a man of fine genius, and good understanding, as Poussin was, who has so happily expressed it.<sup>390</sup>

De Piles also includes a discussion of buildings in his chapter on landscape. Buildings, according to De Piles, were more appropriate for heroic landscapes rather than rural scenes. He writes:

Buildings in general are a great ornament in landscape, even when they are *Gothick*, or appear partly inhabited, and partly ruinous: they raise the imagination by the use they are thought to be designed for... Poussin has very elegantly handled the *Roman* manner of architecture in his works as *Bourdon* has done with the *Gothick*.<sup>391</sup>

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<sup>389</sup> Marianne Roland Michel, "Landscape Painting in the Eighteenth Century: Theory, Training, and its Place in Academic Doctrine," in *Claude to Corot*, 99.

<sup>390</sup> Roger de Piles, *The Principles of Painting*, trans. (London, 1743), 124. For the original French, see Roger de Piles, *Cours de peinture par principes* (Paris: Jacques-Estienne, 1708).

<sup>391</sup> *Ibid.*, 136.

For De Piles, the purpose of buildings within a landscape was to evoke history – as epitomized in the paintings of Poussin and Bourdon. Yet it is significant to note his comment concerning the poetics of ruins and their ability to “raise the imagination”. This sentiment is in keeping with the ideas of Diderot, who encouraged meditation on ruins as a means of reflecting upon the human condition.<sup>392</sup> Thus De Piles emphasized both the historical and emotional sensibilities that buildings are capable of conveying – an idea that, I believe, is central to understanding David’s conception of architecture both in his Roman albums and later paintings.

Encouraged by his students to publish his theoretical system on perspective, Valenciennes wrote his own treatise on landscape with the young artist in mind. *Elémens de perspective pratique à l’usage des artistes* was the most detailed and complete study on landscape painting published in the eighteenth-century.<sup>393</sup> Yet the title of the book is misleading because only the first half of the nearly three-hundred-page treatise is devoted to perspective.<sup>394</sup> The second half was concerned with raising the status of landscape by equating it to the *beau idéal*. To do this, Valenciennes applied many concepts to landscape previously used to glorify history painting. For Valenciennes, the landscape painter created only one type of painting: the *paysage historique*.<sup>395</sup> The *paysage historique* was an expression of the ideal in nature – how nature *should* be. This perfection in nature was not limited to aesthetics. Rather it extended to a careful scholarly study of ancient texts and mythology as a moral foundation for the composition,

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392 Michel, “Landscape Painting in the Eighteenth Century,” 101.

393 Radisich, “Eighteenth-Century Landscape Theory and the Work of Pierre-Henri de Valenciennes,” 177.

394 See Pierre-Henri Valenciennes, *Elémens de perspective pratique à l’usage des artistes* (Paris, 1799).

395 Radisich, “Eighteenth-Century Landscape Theory and the Work of Pierre-Henri de Valenciennes,” 179-180.

as was mandated in history painting and promoted by Diderot. In order to create these ideal representations, it was necessary for the artist to master the vocabulary of nature – as Valenciennes and David had achieved during their respective periods in Italy.<sup>396</sup> The best way to master nature and its elements, according to Valenciennes, was to copy it directly.

For Valenciennes, the importance of working *en plein-air* cannot be overstated. While creating studies outdoors was far from a new concept, how Valenciennes instructed his pupils to utilize such drawings is significant. Since the seventeenth-century, artists like Claude and Dughet relied on close studies after nature as *aides-mémoire*, that is, as part of their artistic education, often using the studies in later compositions.<sup>397</sup> It is important to remember that these preparatory studies were not considered finished works and were never intended to be seen beyond the context of the artist's studio. Valenciennes, on the other hand, rarely used his *plein-air* studies in finished exhibition paintings, suggesting a theoretical rather than concrete purpose for the studies.<sup>398</sup> A close observation of nature would afford the student a first-hand knowledge of the contrasts and harmonies of nature, as well as an understanding of its imperfections. In keeping with the ideas of Poussin, nature was not always beautiful and – according to Valenciennes – required the artist to improve upon it.<sup>399</sup> To do this, the artist must rely on his imagination.

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396 Watson, "Tradition and Innovation," 26.

397 For more on the tradition of working *en plein-air*, see Philip Conisbee, "The Early History of Open-Air Painting," in *In the Light of Italy*, ed. Philip Conisbee (Washington, D.C.: The National Gallery of Art, 1996), 29-47.

398 Watson, "Tradition and Innovation," 33. See also Jeremy Strick, "Nature Studied and Nature Remembered: The Oil Sketch in the Theory of Pierre-Henri de Valenciennes," in *In the Light of Italy*, 79.

399 Valenciennes, *Elémens de perspective*, preface.

Although the *Elémens* was not published until 1800, I am suggesting that Valenciennes' ideas concerning landscape were known to David during their time in Italy in the 1770s and 1780s. An examination of David's landscape drawings from his Roman albums reveals the extent to which Valenciennes' view of nature and that of De Piles' influenced his own conception of the genre. Rather than depict Rome and its environs as they actually existed, David frequently made a conscious decision – as Piranesi did – to depict the landscape, its architecture, and inhabitants as he imagined it to be. By doing so, David revealed his active imagination, uncompromising artistic adaptability, and progressiveness. David's interest in landscape did not end with the Roman albums or his *View from the Luxembourg*. On 7 July 1815, David, accompanied by a servant, left Paris for Switzerland to embark upon a “voyage pittoresque”.<sup>400</sup> Numerous landscape drawings by David (now in a private collection in Paris) document the journey through the Franche-Comté and depict the environs surrounding Besançon, Chamonix, and Geneva. The drawings provide keen insight into the artist's state of mind only months prior to his exile from Paris in January 1816, revealing an interest in the serenity and autonomy of the landscape – its expansive valleys, mountains, and trees. With rare exception, the pen and brown ink drawings are void of narrative content and are reflections on nature itself. Only two drawings sketchily depict architectural structures, namely, the Priory of Chamonix, as noted in the artist's own hand. Here again, as he had during his Roman sojourns and imprisonment in the Luxembourg, David turned to landscape as a vehicle for expression and self-identity.

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<sup>400</sup> Rosenberg and Prat, Jacques-Louis David 1784-1825, *Catalogue raisonné des dessins*, p. 1280; nos. 1883-1887. See also M. Sandoz, “Dessins peu connus du peintre Louis David dans la vallée de Chamonix en 1815,” in *La Revue Savoisienne* (1981): 56-59.



### Homer Reciting His Verses to the Greeks

Je n'ai jamais cherché autre chose dans mes ouvrages que d'inspirer l'amour des vertus; jamais je n'ai aimé à représenter sur la toile des scènes de fureur ou de trahison et de vengeance. Les seules passions sublimes de l'âme ont eu des attrait pour moi. On ne m'appellera pas un peintre ami du sang.<sup>401</sup>

In addition to his high regard for history and interest in landscape, David also shared a deep love of literature. It was during his stay at the French Academy in Rome that he became truly engaged with works by Homer and, in particular, the *Iliad*. David created several compositions from 1775 to 1780 based on his reading and interpretation of the *Iliad*, including *Diomedes and Minerva*, *The Funeral of Patroclus*, and the monumental *Frieze in the Antique Genre*. By the 1780s, David's engagement with the grandeur and tragedy of Homer reached its zenith with *Andromache Mourning Hector* and the *Loves of Paris and Helen*. Five years after the completion of the *Loves*, David was imprisoned in the Luxembourg Palace. During this period, David revisited the subject of Homer for his next monumental painting – a work that was never completed: *Homer Reciting His Verses to the Greeks*.<sup>402</sup> A letter written by David to the vicomte Charles-François de Mainbourg reveals the artist's irritation with what he viewed as an unjust imprisonment, the constraining nature of incarceration on his art, and an urgent desire to return to the studio:

Je m'ennui actuellement parce que mon sujet d'Homère est totalement composé. Je brûle de le mettre sur la toile, parce que je

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<sup>401</sup> A letter by David to Boissy d'Anglas, 16 November 1794. Reproduced in Wildenstein, no. 1145.

<sup>402</sup> For the principal sources on David's Homer project, see Rosenberg and Prat, 158-160, nos. 144-45; Sérullaz, 159-161, figs. 200-01; Lajer-Burcharth, *Necklines*, 71-88; Michael Fried, *Absorption and Theatricality: Painting and Beholder in the Age of Diderot* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1974), 175-78, 241-242, fig. 70; Jon Whiteley, "Homer Abandoned: A French Neoclassical Theme," in *The Artist and the Writer in France: Essays in honor of Jean Seznec*, ed. F. Haskell and A. Levi (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1974), 40-51; and David A. Wisner, "David en prison, 1794-1795: l'image post-thermidorienne de la Révolution," in *les Actes du colloque L'image de la Révolution, Sorbonne, July 1989* (1990).

sens intérieurement qu'il fera faire un pas de plus à l'art. Cette idée m'enflamme, et l'on me retient dans les fers. On m'empêche de retourner à mon atelier dont, hélas, je n'aurais jamais dû sortir.<sup>403</sup>

Two drawings for the Homer project completed by David in the Luxembourg Palace between mid-September and early November 1794 are located today in the Département des Arts graphiques at the Louvre.<sup>404</sup> The first drawing, known in the literature as *Homère endormi* (*Homer Asleep*), was certainly the earlier of the two drawings based on its less advanced stage of development (Fig. 103). It is likely that the second, more complete drawing (which I shall refer to from this point on as *Homer Reciting His Verses*) would have served as the basis for David's painted composition that was never executed (Fig. 104). Unlike his previous compositions which relied on the works of Homer for artistic inspiration, *Homer Reciting His Verses* was not based on a specific literary source – at least one written by Homer. Recent scholarship has suggested that David's project was inspired by André's Chénier's poem "L'aveugle," in which the blind Homer is depicted as a heroic figure outcast by society.<sup>405</sup> The subject sounds all too familiar, recalling David's *Belisarius* of 1781 (as well as his 1784 replica)

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403 Letter to M. de Mainbourg, 8 November 1794. Wildenstein, no. 1134. "I am frustrated now because my subject of Homer is totally composed. I am burning to put it on canvas, because I sense internally that it will mark a step forward in art. This idea puts me on fire, and they are keeping me in chains. They prevent me from returning to my studio, which, alas, I should have never left." English translation in Lajer-Burcharth, *Necklines*, 72.

404 While only two drawings for the project are extant (in addition to three pages from David's prison notebook), David's 1826 after-death sale catalog lists four drawings on the subject of Homer. *Le catalogue des tableaux, dessins, études, livres et croquis de J.-L. David* (Paris, 17 April 1826), nos. 30, 34, 37, 47.

405 Chénier's poem was not published until 1819, but it has been suggested that David likely knew the poem prior to its publication. Chénier, it must be remembered, was a close friend of David's who exerted an artistic and political influence on his work during the 1780s. Their friendship became strained during the Revolution due to David's increasingly radical positions. Chénier was guillotined in March 1794 and his brother, Marie-Joseph Chénier, became a staunch critic of David and his cultural policies during the Terror. See Lajer-Burcharth, *Necklines*, 73-77 and 319; Whiteley, "Homer Abandoned," 41; and Fried, 176.

in which the blind, outcast Byzantine general is shown begging for alms before a massive column on the right of the composition. The composition for *Homer Reciting His Verses* is, as first purported by Michael Fried, an adaptation of the *Belisarius*.<sup>406</sup> How does the figure of Homer represented in David's prison drawings compare with Belisarius created by the artist over a decade earlier? Might the architecture represented in the Homer drawings reveal – as it did in the *Belisarius* – something of David's psychology, informed imagination, and the importance he placed on architecture in his work?

Two schools of thought have surfaced concerning the intended meaning of the Homer project: one purports that the painting served as a kind of historical portrait of David's literary hero, another that the figure of the blind Homer was intended by the artist as a vehicle for self-representation, that is, David chose to depict himself, like Homer, as an outcast genius and *grand homme*.<sup>407</sup> Ewa Lajer-Burcharth has suggested that David turned to the erudite subject of Homer during his imprisonment in an effort to plea for his own freedom and regain his artistic identity. Thus, according to Lajer-Burcharth, the painting of *Homer Reciting His Verses* was to serve as an urgent attempt by David to restore his public image amidst growing allegations of artistic despotism.<sup>408</sup> As this discussion will demonstrate, David's use of architecture in both Homer drawings supports Lajer-Burcharth's claim.

Let us first examine the architecture in the presumably earlier drawing, *Homer Asleep*. According to Fried, David's first drawing appears unfinished, simpler, and is the less impressive of the two drawings.<sup>409</sup> I could not disagree more with Fried's assertion.

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406 Fried, 176-78.

407 See Jack Johnson, "David and Literature," 84; and Lajer-Burcharth, *Necklines*, 75.

408 Lajer-Burcharth, *Necklines*, 72-74.

409 Fried, 175.

Although David seems uncertain as to the placement of his figures in the composition (evidenced by the comparatively lighter renderings of a figure and dog in the foreground), there is no hesitation in his chosen perspective and the carefully rendered architectural background. The dramatic spatial arrangement adopted by David in the early drawing (and preserved in the latter) is anything but simple. Known in late Baroque stage settings as *scena per angolo*, the composition consists of two intersecting perspectives formed by the architecture that creates a corner vision which opens up two diagonal vistas to the left and right of the figure of Homer at center – a spatial structure likewise used by David in the *Belisarius*.<sup>410</sup> Homer, deep in thought with his head resting on his hand, is shown reclining on the edge of a vacant courtyard, seated in the raking light radiating from the left of the picture plane. Two female figures, bathed in the same light stand immediately behind Homer in front of a massive pillar. The figures appear diminutive against the substantial architecture that surrounds them, a device utilized by David in his Roman albums. As we saw in his Italian landscape drawings, David again turns to broad, dramatic expanses of light and dark to give form to the architecture. While the pillars in the foreground are void of excess decoration, the courtyard beyond is rendered with precision and detail. The attention to and deliberateness of the architecture in David's drawing leaves little speculation that he had a specific architectural background in mind for the composition. In this first drawing, David has created a magnificent and complex architectural study in which the conceived space is the focus rather than the figures.

The literature remains relatively silent in regards to the architecture represented by David in this first drawing. However, as Arlette Sérullaz has suggested, the architecture in David's drawing strongly resembles the *cour d'honneur* of the

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410 Lajer-Burcharth, *Necklines*, 80-81.

Luxembourg Palace.<sup>411</sup> Such a comparison is logical given David's confinement in the palace at the time the drawing was completed. The principal architect of the Luxembourg Palace was Salomon de Brosse (1571-1626), who was appointed to the post by Marie de Medici after winning a competition for the building's design in the early seventeenth-century.<sup>412</sup> Marie, who was by this time both Regent and Queen of France, wrote a letter to her aunt, the Grand Duchess of Tuscany, expressing her desire to build a Parisian palace of her own based on the Palazzo Pitti in her native Florence:

Ma tante. Estant en volonté de faire bastir et accomoder une maison à Paris pour me loger et voulant en quelque chose me regler sur la forme et modelle du Palais de Piti... je vous fais celle cy pour vous dire que Jauray à singulier plaisir que vous m'en faciez faire un plan en son entier avec les élévations et perspectives de bastiments... Ma tante, vous me feres bien plaisir de menvoyer le plan et les desseings du Palais de Piti dont ie me veux server pour l'ordre et ornement de ma maison...<sup>413</sup>

Marie dispatched the architect Louis Métezeau to Florence to make plans and drawings after the Palazzo Pitti. Upon his return, de Brosse likely saw Métezeau's drawings and was inspired by them in his creation of the Luxembourg.<sup>414</sup> The Luxembourg Palace consists of a main building to the south bordering the gardens with projecting pavilions to the east and west (Fig. 105). The main building opens onto a large enclosed courtyard, known as the *cour d'honneur*, whose northern wall borders the rue de

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411 Sérullaz, *Les Dessins français: Le néoclassicisme*, 23. –find biblio source.

412 The Luxembourg Palace was under construction from 1615 to 1622. For the seminal sources on the palace, its history, architecture, and decoration, see Arthur Hustin, *Le Luxembourg, ses transformations, son agrandissement, ses architectes, sa décoration, ses décorateurs* (Paris: P. Mouillot, 1904); Pasteur Pannier, *Un Architecte Français au commencement du XVIIe siècle, Salomon de Brosse* (Paris, 1911); Reginald Blomfield, *History of French Architecture 1494-1661* (London: G. Bell and Sons, 1911); and G. Hirschfeld, *Le Palais du Luxembourg* (1931).

413 A letter from Marie de Medici to the Grand Duchess of Tuscany, 6 October 1611. Reproduced in Pannier, 258.

414 Pannier, 56 and Rosalys Coope, *Salomon de Brosse and the Development of the Classical Style in French Architecture from 1565 to 1630* (London: A. Zwemmer Ltd., 1972), 110-113.

Vaugirard. This northern boundary wall (referred to in the literature as the entrance screen) contains the entrance-pavilion, complete with its lantern dome, and links the eastern and western pavilions.

The Palazzo Pitti had no influence on de Brosse's plan for Marie's new palace, which was based on the traditional French château plan rather than that of an Italian palazzo. In fact, de Brosse looked to his châteaux at Verneuil and Coulommiers for the plan of the Luxembourg rather than the Pitti.<sup>415</sup> The influence of the Palazzo Pitti is evident, however, in de Brosse's use of rustication throughout the Luxembourg and in the construction of the building's central courtyard represented by David. The courtyard of the Pitti was constructed by Ammanati in the later half of the sixteenth-century and was surrounded by three-story buildings on three sides.<sup>416</sup> The strong, rusticated facades of the Palazzo Pitti give a dramatic sculptural effect to the building's surface (Fig. 106). While certain areas of the Luxembourg retained Ammanati's severe treatment of the Pitti facades, de Brosse exercised a comparatively lighter touch in his use of an incised, Vignolesque rustication.<sup>417</sup> While the Luxembourg underwent a series of adaptations in the nineteenth-century, the courtyard maintains its original proportions. The biggest alteration to the courtyard was the removal of the terrace, semi-circular steps, and balustrade in front of the *corps-de-logis* opposite the entrance pavilion.<sup>418</sup>

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<sup>415</sup> Coope, 110-113. See also Louis Hauteceur, *Histoire de l'architecture classique en France* (Paris: A. Picard, 1943), I, 525. For sources on the Châteaux of Verneuil-sur-Oise and Coulommiers-en-Brie, see Coope, 214-222, and 274-277.

<sup>416</sup> See P. J. Murray, *The Architecture of the Italian Renaissance* (New York: Schocken Books, 1964), 213; and J. Shearman, *Mannerism* (Penguin: New York, 1967), 110 and fig. 57.

<sup>417</sup> Coope, 113. De Brosse used this same kind of rustication treatment at Verneuil and Blérancourt.

<sup>418</sup> The palace underwent an extensive restoration from 1733-1736, as documented in Blondel, *Architecture Française*, II, 50. In 1804, Chalgrin began his renovations to the building including a new great staircase, Assembly Hall, changes to the entrance-screen, and the first floor of the entrance-pavilion. Alphonse de Gisors began his alterations in 1834. See Coope, 265.

I share Sérullaz's speculation that, in his first drawing for the Homer project, David looked at the architecture of the Luxembourg Palace closely. However, inconsistencies between the architecture represented in David's drawing and that of the palace as it actually existed must be addressed and, moreover, placed within the context of David's ongoing relationship with architecture. In *Homer Asleep*, David's chosen perspective from the interior central courtyard directs our view towards the northwest pavilion and the adjacent entrance-screen of the Luxembourg. My attention, therefore, will primarily be focused on the palace's entrance front as seen from the central courtyard. To begin, the square angle-pavilions on the entrance front each consist of three storeys topped by a pointed roof that gives a dramatic and powerful appearance to the palace (Fig. 107). The ground floor of the pavilions are comprised of double pilasters of the Tuscan order between which are rusticated arched openings. For the second storey, de Brosse made the openings between the double pilasters square rather than arched and the frieze (which was left blank on the ground floor) is enhanced by triglyphs, metopes, and bukrania; guttae decorate the architrave. It is also worth noting the rusticated niche on this floor located between the window-bays and its contribution to the strong sculptural sense of the building. The decoration on the pavilion facades becomes more and more ornate as we proceed upwards to the attic storey, which consists of short, squatty pilasters capped by stylized Corinthian capitals with dentils lining the cornice.

The single-storey screen of the Luxembourg includes four Ammanati-inspired bays separated by pairs of Tuscan pilasters raised on pedestals (Fig. 108). The use of the Tuscan order thus gave continuity to the ground floor of the palace that stretches from the eastern and western angle-pavilions to the entrance-pavilion where it was continued (Fig. 109). The screen was originally closed until Chalgrin's renovations to the palace in the early nineteenth-century created arched openings within each bay.<sup>419</sup> De Brosse's

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419 Coope, 117.

elevations of the building reveal that the screen's square bays at first contained a centrally placed rectangular panel void of decoration. This is an important point I will return to later in my discussion. The first floor of the entrance-pavilion contains a massive rusticated archway flanked by two sets of paired columns raised on pedestals. The Tuscan order used on the first floor is likewise utilized on the second. The second story provides a paved balustraded platform for the drum of the ribbed dome to rest upon. The purpose of the screen was to link – both visually and physically – the eastern and western pavilions with the entrance-pavilion at center. But the entrance-pavilion must have also succeeded in de Brosse's intended emotional impact on Marie de Medici, that is, as a powerful reminder of her home in Florence.<sup>420</sup>

In David's earlier drawing, the first two stories of the northwest pavilion (and a small sliver of the attic storey), the left portion of the screen, and part of the entrance pavilion are represented (see Fig. 103). David has, by and large, maintained the integrity of de Brosse's design. So detailed was David's drawing that he accurately included a sculpture within a niche on the second story of the angle-pavilion. Yet noticeably absent from David's drawing is the use of rustication by de Brosse, both on the facades of the pavilions and on the entrance-screen. This point is critical because unless one was familiar with the construction of the building's interior courtyard, a chief identifying characteristic of the Luxembourg Palace is completely omitted. Why would David deliberately abandon the building's distinctive use of rustication but retain its architectural framework? What we have discovered thus far in terms of David's engagement with architecture is that he rarely – if ever – represents a structure as it actually exists or once existed. To do so would extinguish his active imagination, one that thrived on adapting architecture and its elements to achieve his desired result be it emotional, moralizing, or propagandistic.

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420 Ibid., 118.



David was being extremely mindful of his post-Thermidorian audience to whom the composition was directed. While David unquestionably refers to the architectural structure of the Luxembourg in *Homer Asleep*, I would suggest that he abandons the use of rustication because it provided too direct a reference to the palace itself and all it symbolized. The Luxembourg was, after all, where David was being held because of his compromising revolutionary past. To copy the architecture of the palace verbatim would remind the Thermidorians of the traumatic effect David had during the Revolution and his position as the symbolic figurehead for the Jacobin cause. His writings from the period, at least on the surface, indicate that David desired to be useful to the Republic and wanted to help define their political identity as well as redefine his own identity as an artist – not remind them of his immediate past.<sup>421</sup> Moreover, a direct reference to the Luxembourg would serve as a reminder of the grandeur of the monarchy. A celebration of monarchical building projects would hardly gain the favorable approval of moderate republicans and assist David in redefining his artistic persona.

Let us return to Chalgrin's alterations to the entrance-screen of the Luxembourg mentioned previously. As was noted, Chalgrin modified de Brosse's design early in the nineteenth-century by creating arched openings in the screen (essentially resulting in an arcade) rather than maintain the subtlety of the original square bays. Curiously, both of David's drawings for the Homer project represent the bays as arched rather than square as they actually existed at the time. Yet we can be certain that the drawings were created some ten years before Chalgrin's renovations to the entrance-screen took place. Were the original bays another identifying characteristic of the palace that David wanted to disguise or might the starkness of the classical rounded arches have been more appropriate for his antique subject? Might David's drawings have inspired Chalgrin's renovations to the screen? As we saw in his Roman albums (and most famously in the

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421 See Wildenstein, nos. 1134, 1138, and 1142.

*Oath of the Horatii*), David frequently used rounded arches to give a sense of movement, rhythm, and dynamism to his compositions. This change is yet another demonstration of how David manipulated existing architectural structures to enhance his compositions.

Several changes concerning the architecture are apparent when the first drawing for the Homer project, *Homer Asleep*, and the second, more complete *Homer Reciting His Verses* are compared. First, it is important to note the increased number of figures in the second drawing as well as the prominence they now hold within the composition. While the architecture remains a dominant visual element in the drawing, some of its massiveness has been lost and less attention is placed on the architecture and more on the figures themselves – namely, that of Homer. In *Homer Reciting His Verses*, the epic bard is shown performing rather than sleeping (or perhaps deep in thought) as we saw in the previous drawing; it is an active rather than passive image. In terms of the architecture, we see a return to David's distinctive use of wash to establish form in terms of light and dark first evidenced in his Roman albums – a technique likely inspired by Valenciennes. The strong use of raking light on the blind Homer is even more pronounced in this second drawing. David uses light and shadow compositionally as well as metaphorically, that is, as a reflection on Homer's physical blindness and psychological state. The architecture represented in the second drawing is by comparison less specific; the crispness and detail present in *Homer Asleep* is lost. Moreover, the clear references to the Luxembourg's *cour d'honneur* evinced in David's first drawing are now barely recognizable. Gone are the distinctive paired columns, classical architraves, and elegant balustrades. With the exception of a decorative sculptural frieze above the central archway, the architecture represented in this second drawing is markedly simple and void of ornamentation.

Due to the constraints of his imprisonment and for reasons still unknown, David never finished the Homer project. By the time he was released in the summer of 1795 his attention had shifted to his first post-revolutionary masterpiece, *The Intervention of the Sabine Women*, which would consume the artist for the next five years. During the

Revolution, it is important to remember that David's focus was not on painting; his primary role in the planning and organization of grand festivals, funerals for fallen heroes, and the creation of a republican identity occupied the majority of his artistic efforts. Yet the two drawings for the Homer project signal a return to the powerful metaphorical language of architecture utilized by David in his painted compositions of the 1780s and not seen since his *Oath of the Tennis Court*. Thus, in an effort to restore his artistic reputation, David looked not only to subjects and compositions from his great works of the previous decade, but also to the language of architecture he first learned in Rome. David knew that architecture could provide his work after Thermidor with a dichotomy of meaning – it could allow for reflections on society and its leadership that, for his own safety and continued success as an artist, had to remain obscured beneath layers of meaning. Beginning with *The Sabine Women* and continuing through the Napoleonic years, this dichotomy will reach its zenith.

*The Sabine Women*

... ament meminisse periti.<sup>422</sup>

On 21 December 1799, approximately six weeks after Napoleon's coup d'état, David's *Sabine Women* was exhibited independently of the Salon in the meeting hall of the former Academy of Architecture at the Louvre (Fig. 110).<sup>423</sup> The painting remained on private exhibition for five years. During this period, David became extremely wealthy as a result of an entry fee charged to those who wished to view the painting. Although this mode of exhibition was intensely criticized, the work itself was met with resounding praise. In the past twenty years, David's *Sabine Women* has been the subject of renewed

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<sup>422</sup> "...let it be enjoyed by those who are able to remember". From *Le Tableau des Sabines exposé publiquement au Palais national des sciences et des arts, salle de la ci-devant académie d'architecture: Par le Cen David...* (Paris, Year VIII [1799]), 8. Original source of Latin quote unknown.

<sup>423</sup> Johnson, "David and Napoleonic Painting," 131.

attention in art historical literature, yet the study and significance of the architecture in the painting has not been investigated in detail. This is surprising given its prominence in the painting. As we shall see, many scholars have chosen to focus their attention on the more controversial aspects of the painting, particularly its unconventional exhibition, the artist's use of nudity and the diverse visual sources that may have influenced the figural groupings.

Scholars have agreed that *The Sabine Women* is a complex painting with multiple layers of meaning that should not be appreciated only on a purely narrative level. While the anti-war sentiment and call for reconciliation of the French people (themes reiterated in recent art historical literature) were clear to initial observers such as Chaussard who devoted a pamphlet to the painting, *The Sabine Women* can also be understood on a psychological level as well.<sup>424</sup> In addition to the framework of political allegory, David utilized an ancient textual source to bring modern notions of art, aesthetics, and gender to the forefront. *The Sabine Women* is a visual manifestation of the artist's reflections on civilization – its genesis, maturation and ultimate triumph.<sup>425</sup> I will suggest that, in addition to establishing a historical and narrative setting, the architecture serves an important metaphorical function as well.

Following his release from prison, David focused on portrait painting and also returned to the classical past and ideas of ancient Greece and Rome in a conscious attempt to avoid controversial contemporary subjects. With *The Sabine Women*, David marked his return to history painting; he completed studies for the composition during his imprisonment.<sup>426</sup> As mentioned earlier, interpreted by some art historians as an allegory

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<sup>424</sup> See Pierre Chaussard, *Sur le Tableau des Sabines, par David* (Paris: Charles Pougens, 1800).

<sup>425</sup> Johnson, *Art in Metamorphosis*, 123.

<sup>426</sup> Rosenberg and Prat, no. 977. The official title of the painting is *Les Sabines arrêtant le combat entre les Romains et les Sabins*.

of reconciliation, *The Sabine Women* illustrates a powerful shift from despair towards hope for a cohesive post-Revolutionary France.<sup>427</sup> *The Sabine Women* depicts the decisive moment when Hersilia, followed by her fellow Sabine women, rushed onto the battlefield to prevent war between the Romans and Sabines. Years before the Romans, led by Romulus, kidnapped the women of Sabina with the hopes of ensuring the population growth of their city. Rather than the more typical representation of the rape, David depicts the Sabine women after they had become Roman wives and mothers.

In the foreground, the scantily clothed Hersilia is placed in between the nude figures of two men engaged in battle. On the left we see Tatius, father of Hersilia and leader of the Sabine people. On her right, the depiction of Romulus, Hersilia's husband and leader of the Romans, who prominently holds a shield displaying the legendary She-Wolf and the word "ROMA". David portrays Hersilia, dressed in white with arms outstretched, as a heroine – literally placing herself both physically and emotionally between her father and the man she has grown to love. The scene around Hersilia is a chaotic one. Dead soldiers and endangered children clutter the battlefield. A woman to the left of Hersilia is seen kneeling on the ground grasping the leg of Tatius with one arm, while the other desperately holds on to her child. Three children wrestle in front of the white-clad heroine; a dark-haired mother with breast exposed extends her arms in disbelief. One of the children reaches out to the woman, while the other children stare out towards the viewer. To the right of Hersilia an old woman sinks to her knees in dismay. A young female figure, dressed in red with her arms raised covering her forehead, gazes in our direction. These gazing figures compel the viewer's attention and engage us directly with the composition. We are not allowed to view the painting

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<sup>427</sup> In "Nudity à la grecque", Darcy Grimaldo Grigsby disagrees with this idea that the Sabine Women served a reconciliatory function. Instead, Grigsby argues that the painting did the opposite and failed in its attempt to use antiquity as a "unifying metaphorical language". See Darcy Grimaldo Grigsby, "Nudity à la grecque", *The Art Bulletin* vol. LXXX, no. 2 (June 1998): 312.

passively from a distance. Rather the viewer becomes psychologically engaged with the painting's moral questions.

Next to the woman in red, another figure – presumably a mother – steps onto an architectural fragment; one of many that litter the battlefield. With her elegant movement, the young woman rises above the crowd and holds her crying baby high above her. With spears and swords only footsteps away, the death of her child – and perhaps her own – seems imminent. The elevated child draws the spectator's eye upward, where the horizontal strength of Hersilia's outstretched arms are mirrored by massive architectural structures that are situated in front of the Capitoline Hill and Tarpeian Rock. A close examination of the architecture reveals a series of crenellated round towers, which some have believed to be an allusion to the Bastille.<sup>428</sup> We will see that it is unlikely that this is the case. A large tower on the left of the composition extends slightly into the foreground and is depicted in what appears to be a medieval style. The tower is supported by a tall wall, void of decoration and massive in scale when compared to the warring Romans and Sabines in the foreground.

Because he wanted to leave little to speculation, David wrote a pamphlet entitled *Le tableau des Sabines* that accompanied the painting's exhibition in 1800 and that contains his description of the event. David rarely describes the subjects of his own work. For this reason it is important to read the excerpt in its entirety:

Mais que ne peuvent à-la-fois l'amour conjugal et l'amour maternel! Tout-à-coup les Sabines enlevées par les Romains accourent sur le champ de bataille, tout échevelées, portant leurs petits enfants nus sur leur sein, à travers les monceaux de morts et le chevaux animés au combat. Elles appellent à grands cris leurs pères, leur frères, leurs époux, s'adressant tantôt aux Romains,

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<sup>428</sup> In a quest to avoid controversy and portray a theme of reconciliation, I do not believe David would have chosen to represent the Bastille where, in Paris on 14 July 1789, a crowd of nearly a thousand people stormed the prison in search of weapons and ammunition to fight the king's forces. See Robert Rosenblum, "Essai de synthèse: les Sabines," in *David contre David*, Tome I, ed. R. Michel (Paris, 1993). Rosenblum refers to the architecture as an allusion to the Bastille.

tantot aux Sabins en leur donnant les plus doux noms qui soient parmi les hommes. Les combattants, émus de pitié, leur font place; Hersilie, l'une d'elles, femme de Romulus, dont elle avoit eu deux enfants, s'avance entre les deux chefs; elle s'écrie: 'Sabines, que venez-vous faire sous les murs de Rome? Ce ne sont point des filles que vous voulez rendre à leur parents, ni des ravisseurs que vous voulez punir; il falloit nous tirer de leurs mains lorsque nous leur étions encore étrangères; mais maintenant que nous sommes liées à eux par les chaînes les plus sacrées, vous venez enlever des femmes à leurs époux et des mères à leurs enfants. Le secours que vous voulez nous donner à présent nous est mille fois plus douloureux que l'abandon où vous nous laissâtes lorsque nous fûmes enlevées. Si vous faisiez la guerre pour quelque cause qui ne fût pas la nôtre, encore aurions-nous des droits à votre pitié, puisque c'est par nous que vous avez été faits aïeux, beaux-pères, beaux-frères et alliés de ceux que vous combattez. Mais si cette guerre n'a été entreprise que pour nous, nous vous supplions de nous rendre, parmi vous, nos pères et nos frères, sans nous priver, parmi les Romains, de nos maris et de nos petits enfants'. Ces paroles d'Hersilie, accompagnées de ses larmes, retentissent dans tous les coeurs. Parmi les femmes qui l'accompagnent, les unes mettent leurs enfants aux pieds des soldats, qui laissent tomber de leurs mains leurs épées sanglantes; d'autres lèvent en l'air leurs nourrissons, et les opposent comme des boucliers aux forêts de piques, qui se baissent à leur aspect. Romulus suspend le javelot qu'il est prêt à lancer contre Tatius. Le général de la cavalerie remet son épée dans le fourreau. Des soldats élevent leur casques en signe de paix. Les sentiments de l'amour conjugal, paternel et fraternel, se propagent de rang en rang dans les deux armées. Bientôt les Romains et les Sabins s'embrassent, et ne forment plus qu'un peuple.<sup>429</sup>

*Le tableau des Sabines* was the first writing on the painting and suggests that David wanted to express his ideas concerning the painting first.

Since the painting's first exhibition in 1799, *The Sabine Women* has generated a plethora of criticism and varied interpretations. Dorothy Johnson in a recent essay entitled, "Ideality and the Mirror Image: David's *Sabine Women* Reconsidered," revisits the painting's exhibition and provides fascinating insight into the viewing of David's controversial painting and the artist's decision to position an extremely large mirror opposite the painting, which would reflect the work in its entirety. The use of a large-scale mirror in a private exhibition space, Johnson argues, acted as a tour-de-force

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<sup>429</sup> Wildenstein, no. 149.

whereby David's ability to achieve aesthetic perfection by the painting's convincing imitation of nature could be demonstrated.<sup>430</sup> Johnson's discussion of the mirror stands in sharp contrast to an article written in 1991 by Ewa Lajer-Burcharth entitled, "David's *Sabine Women*: Body, Gender and Republican Culture Under the Directory". In her study, Lajer-Burcharth claims that the mirror used by David in the display of *The Sabine Women* was a *psyché*—a narrow, vertical boudoir mirror invented in the late eighteenth-century. According to Lajer-Burcharth, it was David's intention that viewers see themselves vis-à-vis the painting's reflected image.<sup>431</sup> Essentially, the viewers were invited to become part of the historical event by physically placing themselves in the scene. Yet writings by Chaussard and other critics of the period suggest otherwise, noting that the entire painting was reflected in a large mirror, not a small one such as a *psyché*. Johnson also makes clear that not a single critic of the time mentions seeing spectators viewing themselves in the mirror as part of the painting. Such a comic display of eighteenth-century bourgeois spectators enacting a scene from antiquity while juxtaposed with classic nudes would have completely undermined the moral gravity of the painting.

While *The Sabine Women* was well received by many, the greatest debate surrounding the painting arose over what was considered by some to be an inappropriate

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430 Dorothy Johnson, "Ideality and the Mirror Image: David's *Sabine Women* Reconsidered" in *The King's Crown: Essays on French Literature and Art in Honor of Basil Guy*, ed. Francis Assaf (Louvain: Editions Peeters, 2005), 140-51.

431 Ewa Lajer-Burcharth, "David's *Sabine Women*: Body, Gender and Republican Culture Under the Directory," *Art History* XIV no. 3 (September, 1991): 406. In April 1797, an installation of drawings from the royal collections was exhibited at the Louvre in which mirrors were used for lighting purposes. "...People were reported to have run back and forth between the physiognomical charts by Le Brun displayed on the walls and the mirrors, comparing the artist's diagrams of human expression with their own faces, as if in search of codes that would translate, as one critic put it, 'the secrets of their souls' and thus give them meaning." Lajer-Burcharth suggests that this exhibition, held three years before the exhibition of the *Sabine Women*, could have inspired the painting's unconventional viewing.



use of nudity—a decision that David himself attempted to defend in the pamphlet accompanying the painting’s exhibition. Darcy Grimaldo Grigsby explores the early reception of David’s painting and issues of women, sexuality and the public sphere that surrounded *The Sabine Women* in “Nudity à la grecque”. Grigsby argues in her article that, “it was the commercial presentation of antiquity as a site of nakedness and the mingling of genders” which caused David’s painting to be so hotly contested by critics.<sup>432</sup> While David might have viewed idealized, classical nudity as an aesthetic force by which France could be united, the bourgeoisie may have seen it as threatening and foreign to their tastes and traditions. Aside from the controversial exhibition and issues of nudity, Robert Rosenblum addressed the possibility that a largely forgotten painting might have served as a major source for David’s *Sabine Women*. François-André Vincent exhibited his colossal *Battle of the Romans and Sabines Interceding for the Sabine Women* at the Salon of 1781 – the same Salon that David exhibited his *Belisarius*.<sup>433</sup> Rosenblum argues that the scale alone of Vincent’s painting would have had an impact on the young David and naturally the title suggests the painting as a possible prototype. Many similarities and possible sources of inspiration for David can be found in Vincent’s *Sabines*, particularly the artist’s depiction of the landscape and architectural background.

An examination of several preparatory drawings for David’s *The Sabine Women* prove valuable in achieving a better understanding of the artist’s architectural conceptions within the painting. From the first sketch to the final painting, David remains true to his original architectural conception with little deviation. He changes the figures in rather dramatic ways but we note small transformations in the

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432 See Grigsby, “Nudity à la grecque,” 311-335.

433 Robert Rosenblum, “A New Source for David’s *Sabine Women*,” *The Burlington Magazine* vol. CIV, nos. 706-717 (January-December, 1962): 158-62.

architecture. In terms of architectural significance, two sketches in particular illustrate a curiosity with architecture, as well as a reliance on historical precedents during the painting's conception. We find in Rosenberg and Prat's enormously rich, two-volume catalogue raisonné of David's drawings an initial sketch for the architecture in *The Sabine Women* (Fig. 111). Empty of figures and focusing specifically on the citadel and surrounding structures, the drawing suggests that the architecture was intended to serve an important function within the painting. Clearly David had a specific idea in mind.

The second drawing that refers specifically to the architecture of *The Sabine Women*, which is also reproduced in Rosenberg and Prat's catalogue, focuses on a large tower structure that does not exist in any other drawings for *The Sabine Women* or in the final painting itself (Fig. 112). The authors suggest that the architecture in the drawing (entitled by David *Tour fortifiée et mur d'enceinte, d'après Enea Vico; femme en buste, les bras écartés, d'après Raphaël*) was based on an engraving by the Renaissance printmaker, Enea Vico.<sup>434</sup> Nearly five hundred prints by Vico are recorded, including numerous etchings based on paintings by Michelangelo, Raphael and Parmigianino.<sup>435</sup> In fact, so important was Vico that Bartsch dedicated an entire volume of *The Illustrated Bartsch: Italian Masters of the Sixteenth Century* to his engravings. The architecture constructed by David in the preparatory drawing is

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434 Rosenberg and Prat, no. 986. Enea Vico da Parma (1523-67) was considered to be one of the most exceptional printmakers of the sixteenth-century. In his *Lives*, Vasari praises the work of Vico and declares, "Many others have engaged in copper engraving, but have not attained such perfection". See Rosemarie Mulcahy, "Enea Vico's Proposed Triumphs of Charles V," *Print Quarterly* vol. XIX, no. 4 (December, 2002): 331-339.

435 Jane Turner, ed. *The Dictionary of Art*, (New York, 1996), 32: 412.

derived from an engraving entitled *The Army of Charles V Crossing the Elbe*, created by Enea Vico in 1551.<sup>436</sup>

The engraving by Vico contains aggrandized allegorical figures and emblems set within an oval frame. Clearly visible in the engraving is the image of a large tower, which nearly reaches the same height as an adjacent church steeple. Below the tower sits a kind of substructure, perhaps a reinforcement wall or fortification, which David also includes in his drawing. Yet the architectural similarities stop there. While it seems probable that David referred to the Vico engraving, he chose to abandon the form altogether in the later, more complete drawings for *The Sabine Women*. One can only speculate as to his reasoning, yet it suggests that David looked to Renaissance prototypes for architectural inspiration and reaffirms the importance of the sketch in the artist's thought process.

It is important to remember that earlier sources of inspiration for David emphasized the role of architecture. The subject of the rape of the Sabine women, depicted by well-known sixteenth-century artists including Pietro da Cortona and Giambologna, provided important precedents for later representations by Nicolas Poussin, a principal source of inspiration for David and his peers.<sup>437</sup> Poussin painted

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<sup>436</sup> Rosenberg and Prat, no. 986. "L'architecture copiée, comme David lui-même le précise, une autre gravure d'Enea Vico, *L'Armée de Charles Quint franchissant l'Elbe* et sera utilisée, avec quelques modifications, pour la forteresse de *Sabines*."

<sup>437</sup> Jane Costello, "The Rape of the Sabine Women By Nicholas Poussin," *Bulletin of the Metropolitan Museum of Art* 5 (April 1947): 197-8. See P. Schubring, *Cassoni* (Leipzig, 1915). Although a popular subject during the Roman Empire, the subject of the rape of the Sabine women all but vanished during the Middle Ages. In the fifteenth-century, the theme again became popular and was frequently painted on wedding cassone panels, which were frequently painted with classical scenes inspired by ancient classical literature. Poussin was the ultimate classicist and spent much of his career in Rome under the influence of the works of Raphael. Faithful to the writings of Livy, Plutarch and Virgil, Poussin wanted to transform from stone into paint the carved scenes he had seen on famous ancient monuments throughout Rome. Diderot regarded Poussin as a model for contemporary painters to emulate and his works demonstrated the seriousness of subject, high moral content and intellectual fervor that characterized the neoclassical style. David was inspired by Poussin's use of architecture, rational

two versions of *The Rape of the Sabine Women* – one in the Metropolitan Museum of Art (1634-1635), the other in the Louvre (1637-1639) (Figs. 113-14).<sup>438</sup> Despite their identical subject matter and similar dimensions, Poussin executed the paintings quite differently. In both versions, the artist makes clear references to the compositions of Pietro da Cortona and Giambologna through his employment of architectural elements, compositional arrangement and figural organization. The Metropolitan version gives prominent placement in the composition to Romulus, who is raised above the crowd on a temple-like pediment. Two fluted columns behind him, whose capitals are cropped by the picture plane, mimic the strong verticality of Romulus and emphasize his power and authority as king. The same strength and sense of permanence exerted by the columns can also be seen in the architecture on the upper right of the composition. Four pilasters aid in the division of space and support the entablature and second story of the building. In the foreground, the Sabine women raise their arms in gestures of horror while the elderly and young children look on in disarray, grasping the feet of Roman soldiers. Weapons, animals and drapery swirl amongst Poussin's statuesque figures, adding to an overwhelming sense of panic and giving the painting a dramatic sense of movement. In the distant background structures rest on and around the Capitoline Hill, reaffirming Rome as the historical location of the event. Plutarch writes:

It was in the fourth month after the founding of the city, as Fabius writes, that the rape of the Sabine women was perpetrated. And some say that Romulus himself, being naturally fond of war, and being persuaded by sundry oracles, too, that it was the destiny of Rome to be nourished and increased by the wars till she became the greatest of cities, thereby merely began unprovoked hostilities

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compositional organization and his use of the body to convey emotions and ideas. See Johnson, *Art in Metamorphosis*, 20.

<sup>438</sup> Avigdor Arikha, *Nicolas Poussin, The Rape of the Sabines: (The Louvre Version)* (Houston: Museum of Fine Arts, 1983), 8. The author, as well as many scholars, including Pierre Rosenberg, dates the Paris version later than the version in New York. Yet after researching the painting, it appears the dates are still debatable.

against the Sabines; for he did not take many maidens, but thirty only, since what he wanted was war rather than marriages...

First a report was spread by him [Romulus] that he had discovered an altar of a certain god hidden underground. They called this god Consus, and he was either a god of counsel or an equestrian Neptune. For the altar is in the Circus Maximus, and is invisible at all other times, but at the chariot-races it is uncovered...

Now when this altar was discovered, Romulus appointed by proclamation a splendid sacrifice upon it, with fumes, and a spectacle open to all people. And many were the people who came together, while he himself sat in front, among his chief men, clad in purple... Armed with swords, then, many of his followers kept their eyes intently upon him and when the signal was given, drew their swords, rushed in with shouts, and ravished away the daughters of the Sabines, but permitted and encouraged the men themselves to escape.<sup>439</sup>

Painted after the version in the Metropolitan Museum of Art, the Louvre painting demonstrates a heightened interest in architectural specificity, thereby suggesting an increased desire by Poussin to place the rape within a specific geographical context. It is clear that Poussin was concerned with the elements of classical architecture; he employs them to convey a historical place and time, as well as consistency, power and order in the most chaotic of settings. The architecture functions like a theater set, giving a contextual location and providing a background for the scene. In the Louvre version, Poussin presents a clear, accurate depiction of what has been confirmed by scholars as the Temple of Jupiter Optimus Maximus.<sup>440</sup> Reportedly the largest temple of its kind ever built, the Temple of Jupiter Optimus Maximus became the center of Roman state religion and politics. By the end of the sixth century BCE, the temple was still standing but was stripped of its statues and roof tiles. The enormous podium is all that remains to be seen

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<sup>439</sup> Bernadotte Perrin, trans., *Plutarch's Lives* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1914), 1: 127-131.

<sup>440</sup> Arikha, 19. The temple is also referred to as the Temple of Jupiter Best and Greatest Capitolinus. The fifth king of Rome, Tarquin the Elder (616-576 BCE), vowed the construction of the temple during the war against the Sabines. The temple was built on the Capitoline Hill in Rome and was dedicated in 509 BCE.

today.<sup>441</sup> It was a huge, square Etruscan-style temple, with eighteen stone columns on the porch and three cellas. The temple burned down in 83 BCE, 69 CE and again in 80 CE, retaining its original foundation with each subsequent rebuilding. Originally the Tuscan order was used for the temple, but was later changed to the Corinthian order by Domitian in 89 CE. In the Louvre version, Poussin chose to depict the temple in its original Tuscan order, a significant change from the Corinthian order first employed by the artist in the Metropolitan version. One can deduce that this switch from Corinthian to Tuscan signifies Poussin's desire to achieve a greater level of historical as well as architectural accuracy.

Anita Brookner makes reference only to Poussin's later version in the Louvre as being inspirational to David, despite compositional similarities with the Metropolitan version. According to Brookner, David viewed the Louvre version at the Galerie d'Orléans before a trip to Rome in 1784, but she gives no indication that David ever saw or was influenced by the earlier version.<sup>442</sup> As is well-known, prints of Poussin's paintings were widely disseminated throughout the eighteenth-century, and it is likely that David would have come into contact with the Metropolitan version via this means. When Poussin's Metropolitan *Rape of the Sabine Women* and David's *Sabines* are compared side-by-side, parallels between the two become obvious. Aside from the figural arrangement and gestural expressiveness, David was clearly inspired by Poussin's portrayal of the Capitoline Hill in the distance. While unquestionably influenced by the architectural specificity and references to antiquity present in the Louvre version, David identifies more compositionally with the Metropolitan *Sabine Women* and he is inspired by Poussin's placement of the Capitol on the left of the composition to establish the

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<sup>441</sup> Amanda Claridge, *Rome: An Oxford Archeological Guide* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998), 231-8.

<sup>442</sup> Brookner, 75-6.

background for his own depiction of the *Sabine Women*. It is important here to reiterate that the intervention occurred three years after the rape. In David's painting, it appears he has picked up the next important stage in the narrative where Poussin left off.

With Poussin's historical and architectural settings in mind, David faced the challenge of placing the scene of the intervention in an historically accurate location. At the same time, he wanted to create a setting for the scene that would convey the awesome power and authority of ancient Rome – a setting that would reiterate Rome as the foundation of Western civilization. David greatly admired the ancient Roman historian Plutarch, who influenced his conception of the painting. Plutarch gives his historical account of the scene and cites a precise location for the intervention in his *Lives*:

They made their first stand, then, where now is the temple of Jupiter Stator, which epithet might be interpreted as *Stayer*. Then they closed their ranks again and drove the Sabines back to where the so-called Regia now stands, and the temple of Vesta. Here, as they were preparing to renew the battle, they were checked by a sight that was wonderful to behold and a spectacle that passes description. The ravished daughters of the Sabines were seen rushing from every direction, with shouts and lamentations, through the armed men and the dead bodies, as if in a frenzy of possession, up to their husbands and their fathers, some carrying young children in their arms, some veiled in their disheveled hair, and all now calling with the most endearing names now upon the Sabines and now upon the Romans...

For the intervening space, in which they were to join battle, being surrounded by many hills, seemed to impose upon both parties a sharp and grievous contest, owing to the difficulty of the field, where flight and pursuit must be narrowly confined and short. It happened, too, that a deep and blind slime had been left in the valley where the forum is now.<sup>443</sup>

The Regia and the Temple of Vesta are both located in the Foro Romano, on the slope of the Palatine Hill. From this location, the *Monte Tarpeio* ( or Tarpeian Rock) is visible and would have provided an accurate vantage point for David's conception. Plutarch continues in his *Lives* by discussing the significance of the Tarpeian Rock:

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443 Perrin, 145-9.

The city was difficult of access, having as its fortress the present Capitol, on which a guard had been stationed, with Tarpeius as its captain, -- not Tarpeia, a maiden, as some say, thereby making Romulus a simpleton. But Tarpeia, a daughter of the commander, betrayed the citadel to the Sabines, having set her heart on the golden armlets which she saw them wearing, and she asked as payment for her treachery that which they wore on their left arms. Tatius agreed to this, whereupon she opened one of the gates by night and let the Sabines in. Antigonus was not alone, then, in saying that he loved men who offered to betray, but hated those who had betrayed; nor yet Caesar, in saying of the Thracian Rhoemetcalces, that he loved treachery but hated a traitor...

This, too, was the feeling which Tatius then had towards Tarpeia, when he ordered his Sabines, mindful of their agreement, not to begrudge the girl anything they wore on their left arms...All his men followed his example, and the girl was smitten by the gold and buried under the shields, and died from the number and weight of them...

However, Tarpeia was buried there, and the hill was called from her Tarpeius, until King Tarquin dedicated the place to Jupiter, when her bones were removed and the name of Tarpeia died out, except that a cliff on the Capitol is still called the Tarpeian Rock, from which they hurl male-factors.<sup>444</sup>

This narrative of greed, treachery and betrayal associated with the Tarpeian Rock is important in understanding David's composition because it links the story of the intervention with notions of betrayal and forgiveness, rape and reconciliation, which underpin the origins of Western civilization. One must keep in mind the period of continued social and political upheaval in which David is painting.

Although David himself makes no mention of the Tarpeian Rock in the brochure that he wrote to accompany the painting's exhibition in 1800, David's friend, the ardent Republican Chaussard, does make such a reference in his *Sur le tableau des Sabines, par David*, written that same year.<sup>445</sup> We remember that Poussin decided not to include the

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444 Ibid., 141-145.

445 "Une plaine vaste, deux armées en présence. Là dominant, s'élèvent les hauteurs de Rome, les roches célèbres par la trahison et le nom de Tarpéia: les Sabins les occupent; leur ordre de bataille se développe au pied des remparts." Chaussard, *Sur le Tableau des Sabines*, 7.



distinctive contours of the Tarpeian Rock in the Metropolitan painting of *The Rape of the Sabine Women*. While Poussin alludes more ambiguously to the unique shape of the rock in his painting, David makes the reference unmistakably clear. For his representation of the Tarpeian Rock, David must have referred to an etching by Piranesi in order to fully capture the specificity and exactness of such a monument (Fig. 115). The study by Piranesi, which appeared in his *Della Magnificenze ed Architettura de' Romani* of 1761, depicts the substructure of the Capitoline and bears remarkable similarity to the crag-like hill in David's painting. David could have relied on a mirror or reversed image of the etching by Piranesi, thereby allowing him to paint the rock from the correct vantage point. Whatever the case, David had to rely on the audience's ability to recognize the rock, thereby providing the viewer with the key to unlocking his embedded message of treachery, betrayal and eventual reconciliation.

A modern photograph of the Tapeian Rock illustrates the extent to which David must have utilized both his imagination and Piranesi's etching as a basis for his representation of the rock in *The Sabine Women* (Fig. 116). While the photograph was taken over two hundred years after the creation of David's painting (and from a close-up perspective), it nonetheless clearly reveals the dilapidated state of the ancient landmark. During the late 1920s, Mussolini began various building projects to "liberate" ancient Roman monuments, tearing down buildings he deemed to be of little or no historical value and leveling old working-class neighborhoods near the Capitoline Hill.<sup>446</sup> These structures surrounding the Tarpeain Rock are still visible in photographs before the totalitarian dictator imposed his Fascist vision on Rome.

While David looked to Poussin for inspiration in his creation of the architectural site, he also looked to Renaissance precedents. Surprisingly, little scholarship has been

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<sup>446</sup> Borden W. Painter, Jr., *Mussolini's Rome: Rebuilding the Eternal City* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005), 7-9.

dedicated to the impact of the Italian Renaissance on the oeuvre of David, not to mention its influence on his architectural expressiveness. It is no secret that David, like his contemporaries, revered Raphael, who was upheld as a standard of perfection by the Academy. Although Raphael was chiefly admired as a history painter, in the eighteenth-century his architectural contributions were also viewed as significant. In 1514, Pope Leo X appointed Raphael architect-in-chief of St. Peter's in Rome after the death of Bramante. In addition to the utilization of plans and models, Raphael asserted that an architect must be able to clearly see and discern all dimensions of a building. All aspects of the building must be clearly represented by three views: a ground plan, an elevation and a section with orthogonal projection.<sup>447</sup> It is this new conception of space that places Raphael as an important figure in the history of architecture. Unlike what we find in Bramante's church interiors, Raphael requires that the observer stand in the space itself rather than view it from a distance. In the construction of the Villa Madama for Cardinal Giulio de' Medici (later Pope Clement VII), for example, Raphael again stresses the interior view, as there was no vantage point from which one could fully take in the villa as a whole; it had to be viewed successively. Yet even more important is Raphael's reproduction of ancient Roman building types, replicated more faithfully than had ever been done before.<sup>448</sup> In addition to containing living quarters, the villa was to be situated on the slope of a hill with a round courtyard, gardens, a theatre and hippodrome. The influence of Pliny and references to the fresco decoration of the Golden House and the Baths of Titus are reflected in the villa's theater and garden loggia. Raphael found inspiration in architectural ruins from the time of Nero and the Flavian Dynasty and

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447 Heydenreich and Lotz, 174.

448 Ibid., 172.

hoped to re-establish the harmony that once existed among architecture, painting and sculpture in antiquity.<sup>449</sup>

This fusion between landscape and architecture is even more pronounced in many of Raphael's paintings. Monumental architecture, inspired by the ruins of ancient Roman baths and basilicas, serves as the epic setting for his famous *School of Athens* (1509) in the Vatican Palace (Fig. 117).<sup>450</sup> Raphael places this scene of secular learning within an impressive architectural conglomeration, revealing his acute understanding of perspective on a two-dimensional surface. In addition to affirming his architectural precision, Raphael again demonstrates his desire for historical accuracy.<sup>451</sup> Of course, this is not the only example of Raphael including architecture in his paintings. Other examples, including *The Expulsion of Heliodorus*, *The Sea Battle of Ostia*, and *The Fire in the Borgo*, all serve as testimony to Raphael's love of antiquity and passion for architectural specificity.<sup>452</sup> Raphael began to incorporate into his paintings what he had observed in the ruins of ancient Rome as David and others would later do. The idea that architecture can play a significant narrative role in painting can be viewed as perhaps Raphael's largest influence on David.

In addition to the inspiration of Raphael, David's *Sabine Women* may also have been inspired by Michelangelo's construction on the Capitoline Hill (see Fig.

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449 Ibid., 173.

450 Leopold D. and Helen S. Ettliger, *Raphael* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1987), 89. *The School of Athens* occupies part of a wall in the Stanza della Signatura in the Vatican Palace, Rome. The room was originally intended as Julius II's private study.

451 Ibid., 90-91. Renaissance scholars were aware that both Roman and Greek philosophers met for discussions in public baths, and the remains of such buildings were readily available in Rome.

452 Ibid., 99-115; 170-74. *The Expulsion of Heliodorus* is located in the Stanza d'Eliodoro in the Vatican Palace, Rome, and was commissioned by Julius II. *The Fire in the Borgo*, also located in the Stanza d'Eliodoro, was completed later under the patronage of Leo X. *The Sea Battle of Ostia* is located in the Stanza dell'Incendio.

86). Before Michelangelo's vision for the hill in the sixteenth-century, no communal piazza existed in Rome as it had in virtually every other major Italian city since the Middle Ages.<sup>453</sup> The Capitol was isolated on a summit above the everyday life of the city and the hill was virtually inaccessible; the only paved access to the Capitol was a stairway that descended from the transept of the Church of Santa Maria in Aracolei.<sup>454</sup> Most likely inspired by Bramante's Cortile del Belvedere as well as antique precedents, Michelangelo transformed the previously disorganized complex into a symmetrical composition by unifying multiple entrances, constructing a paved, level piazza, and by creating three new façades for pre-existing palaces.<sup>455</sup> When we compare Michelangelo's ramp with an architectural sketch by David for *The Sabine Women*, we note that, although David does not refer to a specific topographical environment, he constructed what appears to be a ramp-like structure to the left of the main round tower. Aside from being inaccurate in scale and severity, the inclusion of the ramp suggests that perhaps David was basing the architecture in the painting on structures that were visible on the hill during the late eighteenth-century. At the same time, the central building on top of the hill in David's sketch and the two fortified towers bear little resemblance to any building that ever existed on the Capitoline.

In his creation of *The Sabine Women*, David was aware that Rome was – and still is to a great extent – dominated by the city's imperial walls, predominantly the Servian

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453 Ackerman, *The Architecture of Michelangelo*, 58.

454 Ibid., 58. The possibility might exist that David was referring to the steps that lead up to S. Maria Aracolei. In his *Vedute di Roma*, Piranesi illustrates the steps, which appear steeper than Michelangelo's ramp. See Ficacci, figs. 225, 927.

455 Ibid., 57-59. Bramante was inspired by antique prototypes in his design for the Belvedere, in which he developed a series of rectangular courts on successive levels. The different levels were connected by stairways and ramps, contributing to the fundamental importance of a central axis. In addition to the emphasis of a central axis, Bramante also employed symmetry and utilized perspective in his construction.

Wall and the Walls of Aurelian and Honorius. Although these walls were built after the time of Romulus, they demonstrate the power and permanence of the Roman Empire – a concept that David wanted to convey in his depiction. After all, David was concerned with depicting the fundamental moment of civilization that included references to its origins, development and persistence. Several ancient gates or *portas* bear striking similarity to David's fortifications in the *Sabine Women*, including the Porta Ostiensis and the Porta Appia. The Porta Appia (or its modern name, the Porta San Sebastiano) served as the original gateway in the Aurelian Wall (Fig. 118). As was frequently the case with Roman gates, the Porta Appia was named after the street that passed through it – the Via Appia. The gate as we see it today was restored by Honorius and Arcadius in c. 401-2 CE and was evidently never used for defensive purposes.<sup>456</sup>

The outer side of the Porta Appia bears striking resemblance to the architecture in David's painting, suggesting that he quite possibly looked to such structures for inspiration. A drawing in David's Roman albums, entitled *Vue de la Porta San Sebastiano à Rome*, confirms that the artist was well-acquainted with the ancient Roman gates and, consequently, was inspired by them for the architecture in his painting (Fig. 119). Immediately we recognize the crenellated round towers and supportive walls, stark in decoration yet imposing in scale. The rounded windows and tripartite division of the gate itself all point to architectural elements that can be found in David's *Sabine Women*. Here again we are confronted with David referring to the architecture in the Roman albums as a visual resource for compositions later in his career. It is also worth mentioning David's original rendering of the round towers. In the *première pensée* and the preparatory drawing, David depicts the towers without the crenellation we see in architectural drawings and the final painting.<sup>457</sup> Instead, he opted to cover the top of the

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<sup>456</sup> Ernest Nash, *A Pictorial Dictionary of Ancient Rome* (New York, 1961), 2: 198.

<sup>457</sup> Reproduced in Sérullaz, *Inventaire général des dessins*, nos. 202-203.

towers with a distinctive roof-like structure, an example of which can be seen on the tower roofs of the Porta Asinaria (Fig. 120). Why David decided to return to his original idea for the towers is unknown, yet it serves as another example of his architectural perceptiveness and reconfirms that nothing included in his paintings was accidental or without careful thought.

*The Sabine Women* provided David with a perfect opportunity to examine his Roman albums for sources of architectural inspiration and one in particular demands our attention. The drawing, entitled *L'entrée d'une citadelle avec un pont*, represents three crenellated towers of differing height connected by high massive walls (Fig. 121). Neither the structure being represented nor its actual location are indicated by David, but Rosenberg and Prat suggest that the drawing might represent a fortress in Tivoli, located just east of Rome.<sup>458</sup> The perspective chosen by David in the drawing depicts the medieval-inspired architecture on the left of the composition, while a bridge and river are rendered to the right. When the architecture between the drawing and David's painting is compared the similarities are astounding. David has taken his depiction of the largest, central tower in the drawing and transferred it to painting, remaining true to the scale, crenellation and high walls present his original rendering. In the final painting, he has even adopted a similar vantage point to that of the drawing, placing the architecture in both compositions virtually in the same position on the left of the picture plane.

However, as we would expect, David has not merely copied the Roman drawing. For example, while the citadel David portrays in the drawing appears to be free-standing, in the painting the tower is surrounded by other massive structures that either equal or surpass it in height and volume. None of these structures bear any resemblance to the

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<sup>458</sup> Rosenberg and Prat, no. 1098. The caption for the drawing reads, "Non localisé; pourrait-il s'agir de la citadelle de Tivoli?" It seems likely that the fortress being depicted by David is the Rocca Pia in Tivoli. Tivoli is best known for the Villa d'Este and its gardens, as well as the ruins of Hadrian's Villa (known as the Villa Adriana).

same arrangement of architectural elements found in David's drawing executed in Rome nearly twenty years earlier. David appears to have depicted a conglomeration of several different structures to achieve what he imagined the Capitol to have looked like at the time of *The Sabine Women*. City walls and fortifications of such magnitude, as depicted by David in both preparatory drawings and the final painting, had not yet been built at the time of Romulus. Besides being historically inaccurate, immense structures of this magnitude never existed on the southwestern slope of the Capitoline Hill. This matter is further complicated by David's own description of the scene, again in the painting's exhibition catalogue, in which the artist specifically mentions the Sabines before the "walls of Rome".<sup>459</sup> Ultimately we are faced with eclectic elements of historical architecture from ancient Rome and the Renaissance transformed by David's imagination. This notion of architectural fantasy is, of course, not new. As my first chapter demonstrated, David was influenced by popular eighteenth-century ruin imagery by artists such as Piranesi, Pannini, and Robert, and shared in their preoccupation with the distant past, aspects of decay, our own mortality and elements of the sublime. In David's *Sabine Women*, as is the case in eighteenth-century images of ancient ruins, imagination transcends reality.

### Conclusion

The architecture included in David's *Sabine Women* is significant and moreover, calculated. David, like Poussin, left nothing to chance in his compositions and had a purpose for every element. Yet even beyond this, David recognized that architecture could promote the ideas of the Enlightenment to the population at large. Through the use of architecture, David was able to demonstrate the superiority of Rome and its power and

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<sup>459</sup> Wildenstein, no. 149. It is possible that the French translation of Plutarch or Livy that David referred to took certainly liberties in translating from the original text, thereby accounting for David's rendering of grandiose fortifications.

importance in the origins of Western civilization. The inclusion of architecture enhances this narrative of reconciliation and emphasizes the importance of family as the ultimate foundation in society. The story of Romulus and Remus, the mythical founders of Rome, underscores the entire painting and must not be forgotten. Romulus, overtaken by greed and rage, killed his brother in order to gain control over their new settlements situated in the hills above the river where they were saved by the She-Wolf. Ultimately, *The Sabine Women* depicts two peoples, the Romans and the Sabines, overcoming bitterness and betrayal to be united under a single government. Indeed, David depicted a painful episode from ancient Roman history with the hopes for a cohesive and peaceful post-Revolutionary France. David painted what was and continues to be—the struggle of man to survive, to succeed, or be defeated.

The works undertaken during his imprisonment (and *The Sabine Women* planned in prison and executed shortly thereafter) demonstrate the artist's need for reinvention in his artistic career as well as in his political and personal life. In a conscious effort to avoid controversial contemporary subjects, David turned to landscape and subjects from antiquity for sources of inspiration. While David's decision to paint landscape views in prison seems at odds with the artist's oeuvre, this discussion has suggested otherwise, pointing to David's interest in landscape during his trips to Italy (as recorded in his Roman albums), his association with the works and theories of Pierre-Henri de Valenciennes, and an understanding of the French landscape tradition. David was looking to reclaim his damaged artistic reputation by returning to antique themes which had provided him with international acclaim during the 1780s. The similarities in subject and composition between the Homer project and the *Belisarius* illustrates this point. Furthermore, David's decision to represent the figure of Homer serves as a reflection on his own psychology and inventiveness. As we have witnessed throughout this study, it is David's engagement with architecture – his uncanny ability to combine its use with his trademark corporeal expressivity, an active and romantic imagination, and a thoughtful



sensibility informed by antiquity – that makes his art exceedingly complex and layered in meaning. His works from the second half of 1790s are no exception.

Yet David's decision to abandon politics – both in art and life – was not to last. Around 1800, while completing *Leonidas at Thermopylae* (which was to serve as the pendant to *The Sabine Women*), David was appointed artistic director to Napoleon Bonaparte. As First Consul and later Emperor, Napoleon would rely heavily on David's expertise acquired during the Revolution to create a mythical image of the Empire. From 1800 to 1815, David would be extensively involved in designing costumes, interior décor, architecture, sculptural monuments, as well as projects centered on artistic reformation. The most celebrated image to arise from this period, the colossal *Coronation of Napoleon and Josephine*, serves as an encapsulation of David's artistic pursuits during these years. More than any other work painted by David, the *Coronation* uses architecture to both contextualize and reflect upon the philosophical and political issues associated with empire. While typically viewed as a celebration of the Emperor and his ideals, the next chapter will demonstrate that, at the hand of David, all is not as it appears.

## CHAPTER 5: FROM HERO TO USURPER

## DAVID, NAPOLEON, AND THE DISILLUSIONMENT OF EMPIRE

Introduction

Although David's Napoleonic period has been extensively written about, much remains to be explored, for the paintings are often misinterpreted or only partially understood. A number of recent studies that engage in various interpretive analyses of David's Napoleonic paintings attest to the complexity and fascination of these works whose meaning and content shifted during the years David worked on them while his relationship with Napoleon and the political realities of the period continued to shift.<sup>460</sup> With the exception principally of the work of Dorothy Johnson, it has been the general consensus in the literature on David that Napoleonic commissions served as evidence of the once Revolutionary and Republican artist's happy acceptance of the Emperor and the philosophies that constitute authoritarian rule.<sup>461</sup> David was, according to most scholars, willing to abandon his Revolutionary principles in exchange for achieving personal glory as the recorder of grand imperial events. The historiography in general indicates that these paintings, which depict the birth of an empire and celebrate its leader, can be understood as straightforward historical representations. If this is true, then David painted monumental subjects that were categorically at odds with his fervent personal and political convictions. Did David abandon his Republican beliefs and reject once closely held ideals in order to promote his career or is this simply not in keeping with the artist's character? This is one of the questions addressed in this chapter.

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<sup>460</sup> See Mark Ledbury, ed., *David after David: Essays on the Later Work* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2007); and Todd Porterfield and Susan L. Siegfried, *Staging Empire: Napoleon, Ingres, and David* (University Park: The Pennsylvania State University Press, 2006).

<sup>461</sup> Johnson, *Art in Metamorphosis*, 174-220.

Under Napoleon, David largely abandoned his reassessment of the antique of the late 1790s in favor of representations of modern history. Depicting contemporary historical events had been one of his goals during the Revolution as we know from the never completed *Oath of the Tennis Court*. His *Sabine Women* and the masterful *Leonidas at Thermopylae* (contemporaneous projects which, in the case of the latter, would occupy David throughout the Napoleonic period) drew inspiration from antiquity but were executed without commissions. In his representations of Napoleon, David was faced with a new set of challenges he had previously not encountered in the creation of his art, namely, predetermined subjects of contemporary historical events, figures, settings, costumes, and fixed precedents in terms of iconography and style.<sup>462</sup> In 1804, Napoleon commissioned David to paint four monumental works depicting the most significant events associated with the inauguration of his new imperial realm: the *Coronation of Napoleon and Josephine*, the *Enthronement*, the *Distribution of the Eagles*, and the *Arrival at the Hôtel de Ville* – works which all would emphasize architectural sites and settings. In a report to Minister of the Interior Daru dated 19 June 1806, David uses an appropriate tone and subservient language to note the importance of the commission:

I will be punctual in fulfilling the commitments I have made to his Majesty. I understand only too well the importance of such works. What painter, what poet could ever be in a better position than I: I will glide into posterity in the shadow of my hero.<sup>463</sup>

David goes on to describe the four works in detail, revealing that the paintings collectively would celebrate various symbolic, cultural, and social structures of the new

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462 Ibid., 175.

463 “Je serai exact à remplir les engagements que j’ai contractés envers Sa Majesté. Je sens trop bien l’importance de pareils ouvrages! Quel peintre! quel poète fut jamais mieux placé que moi: je me glisserai à la posterité à l’ombre de mon héros.” Wildenstein, no. 1474. Quoted and translated into English in Johnson, *Art in Metamorphosis*, 176.

empire. Similar to the arrangement of Rubens's Medici cycle in the Luxembourg Palace, Napoleon intended his series to be exhibited in a room specially designed with its display in mind.<sup>464</sup> The specifics of the planned installation are unknown. Nonetheless, it is interesting to consider aspects of the room such as its size and how David's paintings would have been arranged within a palace built by the Bourbon, presumably the Louvre.

In the end, the *Coronation of Napoleon and Josephine* (1805-7) and the *Distribution of the Eagles* (1810) were the only two works from the commission to be completed (Figs. 122-23). As many scholars have discussed, the commissioned series was riddled with ideological conflict, financial disputes, interferences, and resentment. What has been relatively neglected, however, is the question of architecture. What symbolic or metaphorical role did architecture play in the historical events surrounding the inception of Napoleon's empire and in their representation by David? I seek to address these issues in this chapter and in so doing contribute new perspectives on the Napoleonic paintings and projects. As we have seen in preceding chapters, architecture often played a central role in the meaning of David's works. The Napoleonic commissions afforded him a ideal opportunity to make architectural settings a meaningful aspect of historical events.

David was not alone in his early adulation for the young Corsican-born general. Bonaparte was viewed as the embodiment of ideals central to the Revolution and represented hope for the French people. I believe, however, that by the time of Napoleon's Coronation, however, the high regard David once held for the hero-turned-dictator had turned to disillusionment. In the course of this chapter I hope to demonstrate that David's painting of the *Coronation of Napoleon and Josephine* contained many

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<sup>464</sup> "L'Empereur en me commandant ces ouvrages, me dit-il, veux faire construire une salé exprès, où seront appelés ces tableaux." *Ecole National Supérieure des Beaux-Arts*, Ms. 316, no. 12; and *Notice sur la vie et les ouvrages de M. J.-L. David* (Paris, 1824), 46.

elements that expressed the artist's disappointment. David was compelled, however, to subtly express his political views under the guise of imperial glorification. We will explore how he used architecture, sculpted reliefs, and monuments that were part of the built environment to help achieve this for, as we shall see, these elements convey meanings that sometimes seem at odds with the ostensible celebration. A careful reexamination of the painting itself (as well as preparatory drawings) in light of the role played by architecture and its accoutrements will reveal new layers of allegorical and symbolic meaning. Attention will be paid to various sources of inspiration for the *Coronation*, in particular Gros's *Bonaparte Visiting the Plague-Stricken at Jaffa* of 1804. This painting, an immediate precedent for David and painted by one of his most gifted students, played a primary role in the establishment of the Napoleonic propaganda machine and also made brilliant use of its architectural setting. I hope to show that the *Jaffa* was likewise painted by an artist who had become disillusioned with the First Consul and that Gros served as a model for his teacher's implementation of a metaphorical language of disillusionment in painting. Furthermore, new light will be shed on the impact of Rubens's Marie de' Medici cycle on David's *Coronation*, as well as the importance of the Gothic aesthetic in the formulation of the painting's composition and its reaffirmation of anti-monarchical as well as anti-imperial sentiment.

Before continuing, I would like to clarify my usage and interpretation of the word "propaganda". In this study, I use the term narrowly to describe the intentional, systematic efforts of the Napoleonic regime to directly sway public opinion in favor of the most effective image of the new leader. It is important to remember that, under Napoleon, free and open criticism of church and state was prohibited. Freedom of the press – a direct result of the 1789 Revolution – was abruptly ended by Bonaparte's *coup d'état* in November 1799.<sup>465</sup> While the 1790s were not completely free from censorship

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<sup>465</sup> For seminal studies on the Revolutionary press, see Jacques Godechot, "La Presse française sous la Révolution et l'Empire," in *Histoire générale de la presse*

(specifically in regards to journals associated with discredited political factions), by January 1800 the number of political newspapers was cut from seventy-three to thirteen. By 1801, the number had fallen from thirteen to four.<sup>466</sup> Under Napoleon, the legitimist royal press was suppressed and the Republican press had been virtually eliminated. This narrowing of public opinion greatly affected the arts which, under the new directorship of Vivant Denon, saw the glorification of the Empire and its supreme leader as its primary focus.

This level of censorship is germane to our understanding of David's use of the setting in the *Coronation* to undermine the ostensible celebration of the event. Throughout this chapter we will consider sources of inspiration for David's *Coronation* – those that were predetermined by Napoleon, his family, friends, and ministers – as well as sources that have been virtually unexplored to this point, namely, the important aspects of architecture in the formulation of the painting's concealed meaning. The architects Percier and Fontaine played a leading role in creating an architectural façade and backdrop for the *Coronation of Napoleon and Josephine*. Charles Percier, along with and his friend and associate Pierre-François-Léonard Fontaine, are widely acknowledged as the originators of the Empire style in France. Percier and Fontaine first met as architecture students in Paris under the guidance of Marie-Joseph Peyre (1730-1785) before studying the art and architecture of antiquity in Rome during the 1780s. In 1801, following their return to Paris during the Revolution, Percier and Fontaine were named

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*française*, ed. Claude Bellanger et al., I (Paris: Presses universitaires de France, 1969); A. Martin and G. Walter, *Catalogue de l'histoire de la Révolution française*, V (Paris, 1943); and Robert Darnton and Daniel Roche, eds., *Revolution in Print. The Press in France, 1775-1800* (Berkeley: The University of California Press, 1989).

<sup>466</sup> Susan L. Siegfried, "The Politicisation of Art Criticism in the Post-Revolutionary Press," in *Art Criticism and its Institutions in Nineteenth-Century France*, ed. Michael R. Orwicz (New York: Manchester University Press, 1994), 9. See André Cabanis, *La presse sous le Consulat et l'Empire (1799-1814)* (Paris, 1975).

*architectes du gouvernement* under Napoleon. It is during the Napoleonic period that the architecture and interior design of Percier and Fontaine reached its apogee, including renovations to the Louvre and Tuileries palaces, the Rue de Rivoli, and grand estates such as Fontainebleau and Malmaison, the country house of Empress Josephine.

The transformation of Malmaison by Percier and Fontaine helped to inaugurate *le style Empire* through a use of simple geometry, the implementation of rich materials and pale colors. The Arc du Carroussel (1806-7), arguably their most famous work, echoes antiquity in its reliance on the Arch of Trajan – assuredly inspired by the two architects' earlier studies in Rome.<sup>467</sup> A strong connection between Percier and Fontaine and David emerges during the early years of the nineteenth-century, when the three men find a shared patronage under Napoleon. Percier and Fontaine had the immense task of transforming the interior of the Cathedral of Notre-Dame into a glorious backdrop for Napoleon's Coronation, complete with fabricated architecture, tribunes draped with curtains of velvet, and carpets to cover the cold floor. In addition, the architects were charged with designing the imperial carriage, overseeing the creation of a huge tent in front of the archbishop's palace next to the cathedral, and illuminating the Tuileries palace and gardens.<sup>468</sup> This study will investigate how David's *Coronation* was influenced by Percier and Fontaine, as well as how the court architects' aesthetic was impacted by David's central role in the development of the Neoclassical style.

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<sup>467</sup> See Marie-Louise Biver, *Pierre Fontaine, premier architecte de l'empereur* (Paris: Librairie Plon, 1964).

<sup>468</sup> P.-F.-L. Fontaine, *Journal*, 2 vols. (Paris: École Nationale Supérieure des Beaux-Arts, 1987), 88. See also Katelle le Bourhis, ed., *The Age of Napoleon: Costume from Revolution to Empire, 1789-1815* (New York: Metropolitan Museum of Art/Harry N. Abrams, Inc., 1989), 138.

The Nascence of the Napoleonic Myth: Gros and the  
Paradigm of the *Jaffa*

Gros a ranimé ma verve. – David<sup>469</sup>

As mentioned above, David's student, Gros, created one of the first major propaganda paintings for Napoleon, one that set an important precedent for David. Working in Italy painting portraits for French expatriates, Antoine-Jean Gros secured a meeting with Josephine, the wife of Napoleon Bonaparte, with the hopes of gaining a prestigious commission. Shortly thereafter, Gros was granted permission to paint a portrait of the young General Bonaparte leading a charge across the bridge at Arcole on 15 November 1796 (Fig. 124).<sup>470</sup> Rather than paint a conventional portrait in which the sitter would be depicted passively, Gros's image diverged from traditional conventions of portraiture by representing Bonaparte actively engaged in battle. This dramatic and powerful image of the General would become central in the establishment of the Napoleonic myth and inspired Gros in the creation of his most famous work: *Bonaparte Visiting the Plague-Stricken in Jaffa* of 1804 (Fig. 125).<sup>471</sup> As we will see with the *Jaffa* – and, most importantly for our purposes, in David's *Coronation of Napoleon and Josephine* – Bonaparte constantly and masterfully relied on the press, art, and architecture for propagandistic purposes, namely, to aggrandize the often less than heroic circumstances associated with his quest for empire.

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469 J. David, 72.

470 David O'Brien, *After the Revolution: Antoine-Jean Gros. Painting and Propaganda Under Napoleon* (University Park: The Pennsylvania State University Press, 2006), 32.

471 For more on the iconography of Napoleon and the establishment of the Napoleonic myth in art, see Albert Boime, *Art in an Age of Bonapartism, 1800-1815* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1990), 35-96.



For example, in a letter released by the general to the press shortly after the battle at Arcole, Bonaparte glorified his role with the intent of demonstrating his leadership and patriotism to the French citizens:

This village [Arcole] stopped the avant-garde of the army the whole day. In vain, all the generals, recognizing the importance of time, rushed to the front to compel our columns to cross the little bridge of Arcole: too much courage [trop de courage] hurt them—they were almost all wounded; Generals Verdier, Bon, Verne, and Lannes were knocked out of action. Augereau grabbed a flag, carried it to the extremity of the bridge [...], and stayed there several minutes without producing any effect. It was imperative, however, to cross the bridge, or make a detour of several leagues, which would have ruined our entire operation. I went up myself: I asked the soldiers if they were still the victors of Lodi. My presence produced a reaction in the troops that convinced me to attempt the crossing again. [Two more generals fall.] We had to abandon the idea of a frontal assault on the village.<sup>472</sup>

In reality, Bonaparte's charge was halted before the bridge and, according to other firsthand accounts, he was knocked into a ditch by retreating troops and covered in mud before several officers came to his aid.<sup>473</sup> Nevertheless, as far as the public was concerned, Bonaparte was a hero and Gros's fictionalized depiction of his role in the event confirmed this.

This heroic yet falsified depiction of Bonaparte reached its apex with the First Consul's representation in the *Jaffa*, which, as mentioned above, I believe served as an important precedent for David's *Coronation*. Gros's painting commemorates a dismal

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<sup>472</sup> O'Brien, 34. For the original French, see Letter to the Directory, 19 November 1796, published in *Correspondance de Napoléon Ier*, ed. J.-B.-P. Vaillant et al., 32 vols. (Paris, 1858-70), 2:147-48.

<sup>473</sup> O'Brien, 34. For firsthand accounts of Bonaparte at Arcole, see J. Kryn, *Le Petit tambour d'Arcole* (Paris, 1987), 221-35; Marcel Reinhard, *Avec Bonaparte en Italie d'après les lettres inédites de son aide de camp Joseph Sulkowski* (Paris, 1946), 178-79; A.-F.-L. Viesse de Marmont, *Mémoires de maréchal Marmont, duc de Raguse, de 1792 à 1841*, 3rd ed., vol. 1 (Paris, 1857), 236-37. For a summary and compilation of other firsthand accounts, see J. Durieux, "Bonaparte au pont d'Arcole," *Revue des études napoléoniennes* 2 (1912): 182-89; and E. Trolard, *De Montenotte au pont d'Arcole* (Paris, 1893), 463-79.

episode from the French expedition to Egypt – a campaign that resulted in a disastrous military failure despite convincing published accounts to the contrary.<sup>474</sup> On 19 May 1798, Bonaparte, authorized by the Directory and accompanied by over 34,000 troops, set sail for Egypt from Toulon, France. The purpose of the expedition was to strike at the economic heart of Great Britain by invading Egypt, thereby severing Britain's land route to India. Freeing the Egyptians from tyrannical Mameluke control, however, provided the French with a further albeit superficial objective.<sup>475</sup> In addition, Napoleon was not without his own personal aspirations for the Egyptian campaign. Along with troops, artists, animals, and war machinery, General Bonaparte, now a twenty-nine year old hero due to his Italian conquest for the French Revolutionary government, brought over 150 engineers, cartographers, surveyors, scientists, mathematicians, architects, and artists on the voyage to describe and document ancient and modern Egypt.<sup>476</sup> Their combined efforts resulted in the publication of the *Description de l'Égypte*, a monumental work that launched the modern discipline of Egyptology, proved vital in deciphering the Egyptian hieroglyphs, and led to a virtual obsession with all things Egyptian in France and throughout Western Europe.<sup>477</sup> A group of draftsmen was led by Vivant Denon (1747-

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474 See René N. Desgenettes, *Histoire médicale de l'armée d'Orient* (Paris: Croullebois, 1802); D. J. Larrey, *Relation historique et chirurgicale de l'expédition de l'armée d'Orient, en Egypte et en Syrie* (Paris: Demonville et Soeurs, 1803); H. Mollaret and J. Brossollet, "La Peste, source méconnue d'inspiration artistique," *Jaarboek 1965, Koninklijk Museum Voor Schone Kunsten* (Antwerp, 1965): pp. 3-112; and H. Mollaret and J. Brossollet, "A propos de 'Pestiférés'," *Jaarboek 1968, Koninklijk Museum Voor Schone Kunsten* (Antwerp, 1968): 263-308.

475 The Mameluke beys (or princes) had controlled Egypt since 1230 and by the nineteenth-century were seen more as adversarial than subservient to the Turkish Sultan. For a brief history of the Mamelukes and their dominion over Egypt, see *Napoleon's Legacy: The European Exploration of Egypt*, exh. cat. (Ann Arbor: Kelsey Museum of Archaeology, 1984), 10-11.

476 *Napoleon in Egypt*, exh. cat. (Burlington, VT: Robert Hull Fleming Museum, c. 1988), 3.

477 The official title of the publication is *Description de l'Égypte ou recueil des observations et des recherches qui ont été faites en Égypte pendant l'Exposition de l'Armée Française*. See Terence M. Russell, ed., *The Napoleonic Survey of Egypt*

1825), who would become a central figure in the reestablishment of the arts following the Revolution. He was also a bitter rival of David. In 1799, Denon began work on his *Voyage dans la Basse et la Haute Égypte pendant les campagnes du général Bonaparte*, which provided much of the foundation for the *Antiquités* volumes of the *Description* and served as an important reference for Gros and other artists.<sup>478</sup> While Bonaparte's military expedition in Egypt would end in failure, his artistic and intellectual crusade was a resounding success.

On 7 March 1799, the French launched an assault on the town of Jaffa, killing nearly 2,000 Ottoman soldiers. In the days following the attack, Napoleon ordered the execution of an additional 2,500 to 3,000 enemy soldiers who had surrendered on the condition that their lives would be spared.<sup>479</sup> Even more disturbing to European audiences who learned about details of the event was Bonaparte's callous treatment of his own men. Plague broke out in the summer of 1798 while the French army was still in Egypt and, by the time the campaign reached Syria, approximately 1,000 French soldiers had perished. Despite the severity and contagion of the disease, Bonaparte referred to it only as a "fever".<sup>480</sup> The crisis climaxed in Jaffa where a Roman Catholic monastery

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(Burlington: Ashgate, 2001). For more on "Egyptomania," see *Egyptomania: Egypt in Western Art, 1730-1930*, exh. cat. (Paris: Réunion des musées nationaux, 1994); and James Stevens Curl, *The Egyptian Revival: Ancient Egypt as the Inspiration for Design Motifs in the West* (New York: Routledge, 2005).

478 Johnson, "David and Napoleonic Painting," 133. See also Pierre Lelièvre, *Vivant Denon: Directeur des Beaux-Arts de Napoléon* (Paris: Librairie Floury, 1942); and Susan L. Siegfried, "Naked History: The Rhetoric of Military Painting in Post-Revolutionary France," *Art Bulletin* 75 (June 1993): 235-58.

479 In an effort to conserve gunpowder, Bonaparte ordered the use of bayonets to conduct the mass execution of the surrendered Ottoman soldiers. See J. Christopher Herold, *Bonaparte in Egypt* (New York: Harper & Row, 1962), 272-77; C. de La Jonquière, *L'Expedition en Egypte*, 5 vols. (Paris, 1899-1907) 4:574-80; Jacques Derogy and Hesi Carmel, *Bonaparte en terre sainte* (Paris: Fayard, 1992), 201-23; and Jean Thiry, *Bonaparte en Egypte, Décembre 1797-24 août 1799* (Paris: Berger-Levrault, 1973), 317-21.

480 O'Brien, 98. See Herold, 278 and Marmont, *Mémoires de duc de Raguse*, vol. 1, 412.

was transformed into a temporary hospital for plague-stricken soldiers. There Bonaparte ordered his physicians to poison the bedridden men with laudanum upon his retreat from the city in May 1799. Some soldiers survived and when the British seized the city shortly thereafter, the abandoned men recounted the atrocities to the English.<sup>481</sup> British propagandists took full advantage of the opportunity to validate their war against the French, publishing Jaffa survivor accounts in newspapers and contemporary histories, and satirizing the event in popular prints.<sup>482</sup> A small number of these publications did make their way into France notwithstanding strict censorship laws put in place by Bonaparte as First Consul.<sup>483</sup>

Despite the advancement of the Egyptian campaign, political and economic turmoil under the Directory forced Bonaparte to return to France in secret on 23 August 1799. With a lack of leadership and the number of soldiers dwindling, the French army was weakened and the British seized their opportunity at the Battle of Canopus in March 1801. Great Britain won the battle and the Treaty of Alexandria was signed between the British and the French six months later. The defeated French army left Egypt on 14 September 1801 having been forced to relinquish most of their collected antiquities to the British (including the Rosetta Stone) as a result of the treaty.<sup>484</sup> Bonaparte, as mentioned above, abandoned the Egyptian campaign and returned to France in October 1799. The following month his coup d'état led to the creation of the Consulate. While still in Egypt and Syria, Bonaparte supported and commissioned history paintings

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481 O'Brien, 97. See Herold, 308; Derogy and Carmel, 435-39; and Thiry, 380.

482 See Robert Wilson, *History of the British Expedition to Egypt*, vol. 2 (London, 1803), 118-19; *L'Anti-Napoléon: Caricatures et satires du Consulat à l'Empire*, exh. cat. (Malmaison: Musée nationaux des chateaux de Malmaison et Bois-Preau, 1996), 24.

483 Grigsby, *Extremities*, 96.

484 *Napoleon in Egypt*, 6-7. See also *Napoleon's Legacy*, 11-12.

depicting the campaigns. These images were intended to be heroic representations of the regime, projections of France's authority and superiority over non-Europeans, and were to serve as demonstrations of an enduring political legacy. Bonaparte and his generals held competitions for the acquisition of these important state commissions, the first of which was won by Gros with *The Battle of Nazareth* in 1801. Yet Napoleon stopped production on the painting (only an oil sketch of *The Battle of Nazareth* exists today) and instead ordered Gros to paint a different scene from the Egyptian campaign: *Bonaparte Visiting the Plague-Stricken in Jaffa*.<sup>485</sup> The reason for the change (in addition to Bonaparte becoming First Consul) was a result of the negative stories that had emerged from the Egyptian expedition, namely, Bonaparte's treatment of his soldiers at Jaffa. He wished to counter these stories with a monumental history painting. Furthermore, it must be emphasized that the *Jaffa* was commissioned during the extremely volatile period of transition from Consulate to Empire. While Napoleon had announced his Coronation the previous spring, the actual ceremony in all its splendor would not occur until December of 1804.<sup>486</sup> It was up to Gros and his *grande machine* to counter the mounting charges against the First Consul amidst the backdrop of a fundamentally unstable government. Gros was charged with representing Bonaparte as a caring, competent, and compassionate leader with supernatural healing powers – one who risked his own life to boost the morale of his troops.

Measuring more than five by seven meters, the monumentality of Gros's *Jaffa* cannot be understated. A size previously reserved for epic subjects from classical

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<sup>485</sup> Although never executed, *The Battle of Nazareth* was to be a massive work. The canvas measured 25-feet in length – so large, in fact, that Gros was granted studio space at the jeu de paume at Versailles to complete the project. Gros would use the huge canvas intended for *The Battle of Nazareth* for two paintings: the *Jaffa* and the *Battle of Aboukir* (1806). Todd Porterfield, *The Allure of Empire: Art in the Service of French Imperialism, 1789-1836* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1998), 53.

<sup>486</sup> Grigsby, *Extremities*, 69.

history, monarchical history and allegories, the Bible, or mythology, the composition centers on the figure of Bonaparte reaching with arm outstretched to touch a plague-stricken French soldier. This healing gesture on the part of the General is an unmistakable reference to Christian iconography, recalling depictions throughout the history of Western art (the art of Renaissance Italy, in particular) of similar gestures by Saints Roch, Charles Borromeo, Vincent de Paul and, most importantly, Christ. However, we can glean from the report made by Desgenettes, the hospital's chief physician, that Bonaparte's visit took place not because the General desired to bring the soldiers physical comfort and spiritual relief.<sup>487</sup> Rather the purpose of Bonaparte openly exposing himself to the plague was to demonstrate to his soldiers that their preoccupying fears of contagion were baseless. In fact, there is no mention in contemporary reports of Bonaparte ever making such a healing gesture during his visit to the hospital.<sup>488</sup>

We can conclude that the idea to depict the General conducting this supernatural gesture was the decision of Gros. In doing so, Gros was evoking the ancient custom of the *touche des écrouelles*, or the "king's touch," by which kings as recently as Louis XVI were believed to have healing powers. Thus Gros deliberately alludes to the Bourbon dynasty by depicting Bonaparte as a new *roi thaumaturge*.<sup>489</sup> Why would Gros make such a direct allusion to the monarchy who, by 1804, Bonaparte was actively seeking to replace? By referencing the so-called magical healing powers afforded to French kings, is Gros not undercutting the painting's desired intent, that is, to convey an image of Bonaparte as the physical embodiment of the Revolution – a heroic and self-made man,

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<sup>487</sup> See René N. Desgenettes, *Histoire médicale de l'armée d'Orient* (Paris: Croullebois, 1802).

<sup>488</sup> Walter Friedlaender, "Napoleon as 'Roi Thaumaturge'," *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes*, Vol. 4, No. ¾ (Apr. 1941-Jul., 1942): 139-40.

<sup>489</sup> Friedlaender, 140. See also Marc Bloch, *Les rois thaumaturges* (Paris, 1924).

one free of royal blood, and imbued with Enlightenment ideals? More will be said about this in the pages that follow.

Gros relies on architecture in the *Jaffa* not only to provide a context for the scene, but also as an expression of power. The Catholic monastery-turned-hospital has been transformed by Gros into a magnificent mosque with characteristic Islamic horseshoe and pointed arches, a large central courtyard, and minaret. It is important to note that, in my research on the painting, it is unclear whether or not the hospital at Jaffa was originally built as a mosque or whether the decision to portray it as such was the decision of Gros. Nonetheless, Gros used elements of Islamic architecture, namely the orientalized archways in the middle ground, to present a series of episodic moments that, I would suggest, provide commentary on the state of religion in France following the Revolution. The first of these episodes is visible on the left of the composition where an orientalized, horseshoe-shaped arch painted with blue and white stripes affords the viewer a diagonal perspective of the left interior of the building. The white wall is void of decoration, except for the addition of five horseshoe-shaped windows that contain what appear to be stained-glass. I would suggest that this decision by Gros to include a representation of stained-glass windows, a characteristic element of French Gothic cathedrals, is a reference to Christianity (representative of the light of Christ) and specifically, Roman Catholicism. It must be remembered that the hospital was converted from a Roman Catholic monastery, thus providing the perfect opportunity for Gros to include such an allusion in the painting.

This episodic moment at left is juxtaposed with another religious reference on the right of the composition, viewable through the third pointed archway. Rather than subtly referencing Christianity through the inclusion of stained-glass, in this architectural episode Gros depicts a minaret – an architectural structure synonymous with the religion of Islam. The representation of the minaret, not to mention Gros's depiction of the Islamic architecture of the hospital in general, would have been fascinating to a European

audience – one obsessed with the Orient and this idea of “otherness”. These two episodes, framed by orientalised archways, represent two different religions – one representative of the main religion in France, and the other representative of the religion of the people France was seeking to overtake. These two episodic moments come together symbolically when analyzed in conjunction with the scene visible through central archway. The central archway frames the citadel in the distance and reveals the French *tricolour* – a symbol born of the Revolution that evoked notions of freedom, equality, and brotherhood. By his placement of the *tricolour* within this central and dominant episodic moment – literally situated between allusions to Roman Catholicism and Islam – Gros refers to the Revolution and the Republic but also asserts the domination of Bonaparte over both the Islamic religion and the enemy other. It is important to note that while the Concordat of 1801 ended France’s breach with the Church as a result of the French Revolution, it did not establish Roman Catholicism as the state religion – despite being acknowledged as the religion of the majority of French citizens. Thus according to Gros’s painting, it would be Napoleon and civic authority, not the Church, who would have the final say in matters of the state.

What is central to this discussion is recognizing that Gros is using architecture in the *Jaffa* as David had in his *Oath of the Horatii*, that is, to lead the viewer deeper into the painting and its layers of meaning (see Fig. 47). We have seen in the *Horatii* and throughout David’s oeuvre how the artist used archways in particular to give a sense of movement, rhythm, and dynamism to the composition. As with the *Horatii*, the architecture in the *Jaffa* is an expression of power and authority – in this case, Bonaparte’s control over the mysterious and exotic Orient, his unwavering leadership and devotion to his troops, and the resiliency of the French people. The potency and permanence of the architecture is in direct opposition to the vulnerability of the dead and dying in the foreground. The commanding columns and massive archways can be understood as



metaphors for the strength of Bonaparte who, in Gros's image, is the allegorical healer of the French body politic.

*Bonaparte Visiting the Plague-Stricken in Jaffa* was met with resounding critical praise.<sup>490</sup> Delécluze recounts the enormous success of the painting among Gros's fellow artists and makes note of the pride David felt as a result:

L'admiration sincère qu'excita cette composition fut si générale, que les peintres de toutes les écoles en réputation alors se réunirent pour porter au Louvre une grande palme, que l'on suspendit au-dessus du tableau de Gros. David a répété souvent que ce succès, obtenu par l'un de ses élèves qu'il chérissait personnellement, avait été un des moments de sa vie où il s'était senti le plus heureux.<sup>491</sup>

Gros's victory was due in large part to the political and artistic climate following the Revolution. While the Revolution brought with it ideas of liberty and equality, classical history painting suffered as a direct result. History painting required government support that the Revolution had obliterated and, in order to survive, art was forced to appeal to a much greater extent to the general public rather than to the educated, high-minded elite.<sup>492</sup> Furthermore, insufficient funds coupled with the instability of government during the Revolution often accounted for commissioned works to be abandoned, such as David's *Oath of the Tennis Court*. While the Consulate and Empire restored official state patronage, aesthetics often took a secondary role to the propagandistic demands of the regime.<sup>493</sup> It was Napoleon's goal for the arts to shape popular sentiment by allowing little room for interpretation. In order for a work to be a successful piece of propaganda,

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<sup>490</sup> Jean-Baptiste Boutard, "Salon de l'an XII," *Journal des débats* (25 September 1804): 3.

<sup>491</sup> Delécluze, 291-2.

<sup>492</sup> O'Brien, 4.

<sup>493</sup> See Quatremère de Quincy, *Recueil de notices historiques lues dans les séances publiques de l'Académie royale des beaux-arts* (Paris, 1834), 316-19.

the general public had to be able to relate to the subject being depicted and clearly understand the regime's intended meaning.

Gros's painting appeared to successfully achieve these ends. The *Jaffa* was, after all, a government-sponsored commission intended to improve public opinion during a controversial period of transition from Consulate to Empire.<sup>494</sup> In order for the painting to be believable, it had to confront the well-known atrocities at Jaffa head-on while concurrently transforming Bonaparte from villain to hero. Gros chose to address one horrific aspect of the event in particular, the outbreak of plague, and he does so in gruesome detail. The murderous act of Napoleon poisoning his sick soldiers and their subsequent abandonment is understandably excluded from this state-sanctioned representation. It is however, alluded to in the powerful images of the dead and dying in the foreground. Gros appears to focus on Bonaparte as Christ-like healer, contributing to a central idea of the painting that the General was not responsible for the plague or its proliferation. However, Bonaparte is not depicted in the foreground nor does he dominate the composition. Many figures compete for attention and, in fact, divert attention from the General.

In addition to his depiction of Bonaparte in the *Jaffa* as a new *roi thaumaturge*, as discussed previously, the strongest evidence for Gros's undercutting of Bonaparte can be seen in the images of the dead and dying French soldiers in the foreground. A figure on the left of the composition is particularly jarring to the viewer. Seated in the deep shadows, he appears to be naked under a hooded cloak with his elbows resting on his knees. With a look of despair and resignation, the figure engages the viewer directly rather than focusing his attention on the Christ-like depiction of Napoleon. In fact, the viewer encounters first the dying soldiers in the foreground that extend beyond the edges

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<sup>494</sup> Darcy Grimaldo Grigsby, "Rumor, Contagion, and Colonization in Gros's *Plague-Stricken of Jaffa* (1804)," *Representations* 51 (Summer, 1995): 4.

of the painting. Thus we, the viewers, are positioned as one of the dead and dying – poisoned not by laudanum but by the words and deeds of a charismatic young general overtaken by his own ambition.

The *Jaffa* definitively established the popularity, sustainability, and importance of large-scale propagandistic representations of contemporary events – a feat attempted but left incomplete by David’s *Oath of the Tennis Court*. This shift in the arts is due in no small part to the events of the Revolution, which rivaled if not surpassed the drama, issues of morality, and epic grandeur that constituted classical history painting. No longer were artists relegated to subjects from ancient Greece and Rome for inspiration and edification. Rather, still trained in the neoclassical style and equipped with a classical vocabulary of forms, artists began to look to the present so-called “glories” of Napoleon’s Empire. This was also where they could find government commissions and support. In the *Jaffa*, Gros did not represent his figures as beautiful, semi-nude heroes in the classical style as we have seen *par excellence*, for example, in David’s *Sabine Women*. Instead, Gros depicted contemporary figures clothed in contemporary dress, emphasized the corruptibility and susceptibility of the human body, and set the entire scene within an orientalized rather than classical context, using costume but also architecture to frame the scene and the narrative.

David recognized the subversive power of Gros’s masterpiece, a painting which history would later acknowledge as a work central to the Romantic movement.<sup>495</sup> In his preparation for and execution of the *Coronation of Napoleon and Josephine*, David must have looked to Gros’s example – specifically the scope of his imagination, use of color, range of emotion, and his ability to manipulate history to better serve political needs. He also, I believe, was very attuned to Gros’s brilliant use of the architectural setting. As we know, David continually changed his style and approach to painting in order to make

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495 Brookner, 154.

both himself as an artist and his work applicable to the times. In order to become an asset to Napoleon and the formation of his imperial iconography, David had to remain current by enthusiastically embracing the source of Gros's excitement, that is, using the language of history painting as a vehicle for depicting contemporary subjects.<sup>496</sup> These respective works by David and Gros reveal a similarity, however, not only in the grandness of the paintings and in their uniqueness of approach, but also in the questionable sincerity of their images. Scholars widely agree that Gros believed in Napoleon, his legitimacy, and authority as the leader-savior of the French people. While this was certainly the case early in Napoleon's career (as it was for David), we are led to wonder if Gros's opinion of the First Consul changed? Strict censorship laws and a desire to gain prestigious, lucrative commissions likely compelled Gros – like David – to outwardly support the regime even if he had political misgivings. Although considerably more moderate in his political beliefs than David, Gros had supported the Revolution and was even commissioned to create an allegorical figure of the French Republic by the French envoy Villars in 1794.<sup>497</sup>

This leads to an important question, one central to this chapter: was it necessary for Napoleon's artists to be in favor of empire in order to represent it when commissioned to do so? Certainly Gros was ignited by the possibilities of painting modern history on a grand scale and Napoleon proved the perfect muse. Working in the service of Napoleon freed Gros from the monotony of his many portrait commissions, afforded him the opportunity to prove himself to David, and gain the artistic acclaim he greatly desired. Is it not possible, however, that Gros – as I suggest with my analysis of the hooded figure and the dead and dying in the *Jaffa* – was disturbed by the actions which led to Napoleon's rise to power? We find a similar commentary by the artist in Gros's

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496 Ibid.

497 O'Brien, 26.

*Napoleon at Eylau* of 1808, in which the dead and dying soldiers in the foreground undercut Napoleon's heroic and merciful appearance on the battlefield. I intend to argue that – by the time of the *Coronation* – David, too, had become disillusioned with Napoleon and would use the most powerful tool at his disposal to express his republicanism beneath the guise of imperial glory.

### David and Napoleon

Before discussing the *Coronation*, we should review David's rapport with Napoleon. After Thermidor, it was in David's best interest to remain politically uninvolved. Yet his own quest for redefinition in regards to his art and professional persona would not allow for a complete withdrawal from public life. David remained a social outcast throughout the Directory and Consulate despite official professional recognition. While his immense talent and status as a leading artist of the day was readily acknowledged, it was his involvement with the Terror that continued to tarnish his reputation. On 25 October 1795, one month after he was granted Directorial amnesty, the new republican government seemed willing to overlook David's past transgressions and acknowledge his artistic stature by nominating him to the newly formed Institut national des Sciences et des Arts. There David (along with the still-life painter Gerald Van Spaendonck) was put in charge of creating the Section of Painting in the Classe des Beaux-Arts – a position that placed him at the center of the art world under the Directory.<sup>498</sup> Aware of David's past outspokenness and quest for power within the arts, one would assume that he took full advantage of this opportunity to become the spokesman for the emergent Republican art culture. Instead he remained passive and self-protective in the wake of Revolution. Darcy Grimaldo Grigsby has asserted that this inward retreat was a strategic attempt by David to become an institution unto himself – a

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<sup>498</sup> Lajer-Burchart, *Necklines*, 217-18.

one-man academy, if you will – by focusing attention on his studio and offering pupils an alternative to the Academy he helped to abolish. During this period David’s studio became a place for his aesthetic and personal reconstruction.<sup>499</sup> Although he kept a low public profile in the years immediately following his release from prison, we have evidence that David remained committed to radical republicanism and the democratic ideals of the Robespierreist period – ideals which he expressed over again in his Brussels exile.<sup>500</sup>

David’s desire to remain out of the political limelight soon faded. In December 1799 he proposed the creation of a powerful and influential *conservateur* post (a position he likely envisioned for himself) with the purpose of overseeing art education, national art collections, and state porcelain and tapestry workshops.<sup>501</sup> The reason for David’s renewed interest in seeking an official role within the reformed arts administration during the Consulate was two-fold. First, this demonstration of his regained social and artistic confidence resulted from the enthusiastic response to the exhibition of his *Sabine Women*, which had opened in the artist’s studio that same month. The painting was largely met

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499 Ibid., 218-21. Of particular note here is David’s interest in exploring the pure forms of Greek art, as exemplified in his *Sabine Women*. It should also be mentioned that David remarried his wife in March 1794, whom he had divorced at the start of the Terror. This also indicates a desire to reorder his life in the wake of imprisonment. See Bordes, *Empire to Exile*, 7, 9.

500 Bordes, *Empire to Exile*, 5. In the spring of 1796 David was listed as a subscriber to the journal of Gracchus Babeuf, the most radical critic of the Directory.

501 “L’organisation et la surveillance de tout ce qui tient directement aux arts du dessin sont confiés à un conservateur qui prend le titre de conservateur des monuments nationaux, manufactures et arts. Le conservateur a la direction des écoles des arts, des établissements et des manufactures nationales qui ont pour base les arts du dessin, des édifices publics lorsqu’ils sont soumis à des embellissements ou à des constructions nouvelles. Il présente au gouvernement les projets que les artistes proposent. Il est l’organe de la reconnaissance nationale envers eux et le dispensateur des récompenses que la République leur accorde. Il s’adjoint un conseil privé composé d’un architecte et d’un administrateur comptable...” Fontaine, *Journal*, 1987, vol. 1, p. 93. See also *Jacques-Louis David 1748-1825*, 360.

with critical praise which assuredly bolstered his position within the art community.<sup>502</sup> Secondly, David's proposal was submitted approximately two months following Bonaparte's coup d'état. David's history of admiration for charismatic political leaders did not end with Robespierre; he was destined to admire the First Consul from the start. Bonaparte's successful Italian campaigns were a source of immense national pride, and his victories appealed to David's ardent republican sympathies and commitment to creating civic-minded art. A chance to play a central role in the nation's art policy during this exciting new phase of Revolutionary history seemed too great an opportunity for David ignore.

David's *conservateur* project received no official response. Two months later, in a seemingly consolatory gesture, the First Consul named David *peintre du gouvernement* – a strictly honorary title that David ultimately rejected as beneficial only to himself and not the arts.<sup>503</sup> During the early years of the Empire, David was named *chevalier de la Légion d'Honneur* and *premier peintre de l'Empereur*, the latter of which guaranteed him a steady income, housing, and state commissions.<sup>504</sup> While the title of First Painter bore historical similarity to the relationship of Charles Le Brun and Louis XIV, it offered little in terms of official responsibilities. A history of bitterness with the Academy, his radical political views, tyrannical behavior concerning the arts during the Revolution, as well as his own prevailing aesthetic agenda contributed to David's limited official role within the arts during the Napoleonic period. Despite the decision not to place David in a central position of authority, Napoleon recognized the importance of compiling a group of

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<sup>502</sup> For accounts of the critical reception of David's *Sabine Women*, see Wildenstein, no. 1327.

<sup>503</sup> Bordes suggests that David turned down the title to discourage rumors of greed and commercialism surrounding the exhibition of the *Sabine Women*. See Bordes, *Empire to Exile*, 31.

<sup>504</sup> See Delécluze, 235-6; *Jacques-Louis David 1748-1825*, 360; and Wildenstein, no. 1410.

trustworthy artists and advisors to help create an imperial vision – especially David, the most celebrated artist of the day. David and his atelier (namely Gérard, Gros, Girodet, and Ingres), as well as the architects Percier and Fontaine, would become essential in the development of this iconography.

David first became acquainted with Napoleon Bonaparte in 1797 at an official reception at the Palais du Luxembourg to celebrate the General's successful Italian campaign. Prior to this point, both were eager to meet the other and later Bonaparte arranged for them to sit next to each other at a private dinner party.<sup>505</sup> As a result of this encounter, David succeeded in getting Bonaparte to sit for a large portrait of the General holding the Treaty of Campo Formio while surrounded by staff officers in an Alpine landscape (Fig. 126). Although the sitting lasted only three hours, Bonaparte proved an unwilling model and, despite David's enthusiasm for his sitter, the painting was reluctantly abandoned.<sup>506</sup> What survives is a fragment of the painting with only the head of the General complete, and the torso lightly sketched in. Yet the unfinished *Study for a Portrait of General Bonaparte* provides us with a glimpse into David's superb abilities as a portrait artist and represents the sitter as a "grand homme," subtly revealing the young, valiant General's unique character and psychology similar to Gros's *Bonaparte at the Bridge of Arcole*.<sup>507</sup> Delécluze notes David's unbridled enthusiasm for Bonaparte, especially with regard to the General's physiognomy. It is clear that, according to Delécluze, David discovered a source of inspiration that he had previously only found in antiquity:

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<sup>505</sup> Paul Spencer-Longhurst, "Premier Peintre de l'Empereur: The Role of Jacques-Louis David Under the Empire," *The Connoisseur* 193, no. 779 (December 1976): 318. See Bordes, *Empire to Exile*, 75-9.

<sup>506</sup> Ibid.

<sup>507</sup> Johnson, *Art in Metamorphosis*, 178.



Oh! mes amis quelle belle tête il a! C'est pur, c'est grand, c'est beau comme l'antique! ... Enfin, dit-il, mes amis, c'est un homme auquel on aurait élevé des autels dans l'antiquité; oui, mes amis; oui, mes chers amis! *Bonaparte est mon héros!*<sup>508</sup>

In 1800, re-energized after Bonaparte's victory at Marengo and recent coup d'état, David began work on his second Napoleonic portrait: *Bonaparte Crossing the Alps at Mont Saint-Bernard* (Fig. 127). This historical portrait commissioned by Bonaparte depicts the First Consul not as a civic leader, but rather as a great military commander equal to the likes of Charlemagne and Hannibal (whose names are etched into the rocks in the foreground next to his own).<sup>509</sup> The mythologized Bonaparte, seated upon a gleaming white horse, is shown conquering the rocky backdrop against a stormy sky and windy atmosphere, demonstrating his power, leadership, and valor amid such a sublime setting. Chaussard describes the scene and compares David's idealized depiction of the General to that of an antique hero in his contemporary criticism on the painting:

Le manteau de ce dernier [Bonaparte] est jeté de manière qu'il ressemble, ainsi que me le disait l'artiste, aux ailes qui soutiendraient un demi-Dieu planant dans l'espace. Ajoutez qu'à l'exemple des Anciens, David a élevé le caractère de la physionomie du héros jusqu'à l'idéal.<sup>510</sup>

As we have come to expect with Napoleonic imagery, this representation of Bonaparte as *le beau idéal* deviated considerably from accounts of the actual event.<sup>511</sup> In *Bonaparte Crossing the Alps*, David portrays the First Consul as the allegorical representation of the new French Republic, a central idea underscored by the painting's

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508 Delécluze, 203-4.

509 Bordes, *Empire to Exile*, 89. The painting was originally commissioned by Charles IV of Spain for his "Salon des grands capitains" in the Royal Palace in Madrid. Five versions of the painting followed, one of which was commissioned by Bonaparte. The version I am discussing is largely considered to be the original painting located today in Malmaison. See also *Jacques-Louis David 1748-1825*, 381-386.

510 Chaussard, *Journal des Arts*, 17 (Sept. 1801): 421.

511 Johnson, *Art in Metamorphosis*, 179.

exhibition in 1801. David exhibited the first two versions of *Bonaparte Crossing the Alps* (there were five versions in all – see note 15) on both sides of his monumental *Sabine Women* – a painting that, as this study emphasizes, came to symbolize the reconciliatory tone necessary to heal post-Revolutionary France. As David O’Brien has recently noted, the central placement of David’s *Sabine Women* along side these epic portraits makes a clear connection for the viewer that the artist sees Bonaparte as the answer to recent political divisions.<sup>512</sup>

The *gloire* of Napoleon was further enhanced by the publication of Vivant Denon’s *Voyage dans la Basse et la Haute Égypte* in 1802. Following an extensive advertising campaign, Denon’s fascinating and, moreover, readable account of the Egyptian expedition enjoyed instant success and, as mentioned earlier, truly inaugurated the Egyptian Revival in the nineteenth-century.<sup>513</sup> Moreover, Denon developed a relationship with Napoleon during the Egyptian expedition that, in September 1802, resulted in his appointment to the most powerful position within the arts in France: the newly established Directeur-Général du Musée Central des Arts.<sup>514</sup> Despite his varied experiences during the *ancien régime*, nothing Denon had achieved to this point could prepare him for the immensity of the post and the power that it afforded. Denon’s primary focus was to ensure that art effectively served the needs of the regime, namely, as political propaganda and court decoration.<sup>515</sup> Denon constantly interfered with

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512 O’Brien, 60.

513 Curl, *The Egyptian Revival*, 204.

514 As Director, Denon was in charge of the Musée Central des Arts (the Louvre), the Musée des Monuments Français, the Musée Spécial de l’Ecole Française à Versailles, the galleries of government palaces, the design of medals, the national print workshops, the national collection of engraved gems and mosaics, the porcelain factory at the Sèvres, the Gobelins tapestry works, the factory at Savonnerie, and the acquisition and transport of art works. O’Brien, 92. See also Marie-Anne Dupuy, “Vivant Denon, ou les paradoxes du directeur des Arts,” in *Dominique-Vivant Denon: L’Oeil de Napoléon*, exh. cat. (Paris: Réunion des musées nationaux, 1999), 270-75.

515 O’Brien, 92-3.

Napoleonic commissions over the course of his directorship, including those by David, and his tone towards artists was often one of condescension – viewing them as impetuous, erratic, and in need of discipline.<sup>516</sup> The ability of history painting to spark public debate on ethical and political issues was restricted under the controlling art policies enacted by Denon.<sup>517</sup> However, as we shall see shortly, Denon’s oppressive control would not stop David from using state-sponsored paintings to express his criticism of the Empire. Denon’s position as Director was likely coveted by David and it was a contributing factor in his progressive disillusionment with Napoleon and his regime.

The patriotic culture of republicanism supported officially by the Consulate ended in December 1802. Napoleon, now “Consul for Life,” adopted a new constitution over which he had supreme authority. The Italian treaties and the signing of the Peace of Amiens with the British brought French citizens a long-awaited albeit brief period of peace which led many to turn a blind eye to Napoleon’s growing monarchical aspirations.<sup>518</sup> Philippe Bordes has suggested that David and Napoleon enjoyed a close relationship during the Consulate. He believes that the two continued to hold each other in high regard well after the fall of the Empire.<sup>519</sup> Yet a lack of concrete evidence to support this point, coupled with David’s well-known frustration with securing payment for his commissions throughout the Napoleonic period, suggests that their relationship might have been more strained than Bordes is willing to concede. At the heart of this financial dispute was Denon’s criticism of modern artists and their ostentatious lifestyles. In an effort to moderate what he considered to be excessive affluence, Denon wanted to

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<sup>516</sup> Johnson, *Art in Metamorphosis*, 175. See *Vivant Denon*, 2: 1247.

<sup>517</sup> O’Brien, 93.

<sup>518</sup> Bordes, *Empire to Exile*, 37.

<sup>519</sup> *Ibid.*, 36.

lower artists' pay for government commissions.<sup>520</sup> David requested 100,000 francs for the *Coronation*; he would ultimately receive 65,000.<sup>521</sup> David's artistic reputation rightly demanded a high price and, contrary to his public persona, David lived a rather modest middle-class life.<sup>522</sup> Furthermore, in a letter to Wicar in 1808, David cited a personal reason for demanding the high cost for the *Coronation*, that is, to provide for the future financial security of his four children.<sup>523</sup> Yet a failed official appointment within the arts administration, financial disputes, delayed payments, and a contentious relationship with Denon constitute only one aspect of David's growing dissent. We will return to this dissent shortly.

#### David's *Coronation* and the Influence of Rubens

The *Coronation of Napoleon and Josephine* is considered by many to be one of David's greatest paintings and the ultimate expression of his artistic supremacy. Measuring twenty feet in height and nearly thirty-one feet in width, David's painting is filled with a vast number of life-size and over life-size figures and has a strong horizontal orientation—similar to his *Oath of the Tennis Court*. Not since the *Oath of the Tennis Court* had David attempted to portray so many figures individually, that is, as portraits. Furthermore, as in the *Oath of the Tennis Court*, the architecture provides an apt setting for the event. David's painting focuses on the humble figure of Josephine kneeling in prayer before her husband. One of the most striking characteristics of the painting is its ability to absorb the viewer into the scene, due in large part to the semi-circular

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<sup>520</sup> Denon, vol. 2, p. 1293.

<sup>521</sup> Jacques-Louis David 1748-1825, 361-64; 366-74.

<sup>522</sup> For more on David's financial resources and expenses, see Antoine Schnapper, "David et l'argent," in *David contre David*, II: 919-29.

<sup>523</sup> David to his pupil, Wicar, 14 Feb. 1801, Custodia Foundation, Paris, inv. 5541; cited in Bordes, *Empire to Exile*, 44 and Jacques-Louis David 1748-1825, 610-11.

arrangement of the figures. The background contains spectators arranged horizontally and by importance in the constructed tribunes designed by court architects Charles Percier and Pierre Fontaine. The background is separated from the middle ground by the fabricated neoclassical architecture covering the cathedral's Gothic interior and contains the central characters of the painting—Napoleon and Josephine, the court and entourage, the Pope and Clergy. On the bottom right of the picture plane, Napoleon's four ministers extend slightly into the foreground on the right of the altar. The placement of these figures (especially the one who has his back to us) contributes to the feeling that we are physically present at the event – similar to the position of the viewer in Gros's *Jaffa*. We become part of the foreground – the experience becomes immediate and intimate.

An ethereal light falls on Josephine, Napoleon, and the Pope while the majority of figures are drenched in a soft, mysterious haze that contributes to the solemnity of the occasion. Many figures are even obscured by the light radiating from the clerestory windows above and are difficult to discern clearly. Rich with deep reds and sumptuous greens, the lighting contributes to the golden tonality of the painting, resulting in an almost Rubensesque palate. David's metaphorical use of light and shadow in the *Coronation*, an aspect of the painting first revealed by Dorothy Johnson, is a powerful comment on imperial policy and the role of the Church. Johnson writes:

Opposite the Pope, prelates, and priests, who are depicted in a relatively clear light, stand the figures of the secular Imperial Court; most are literally (and metaphorically) represented in a much dimmer light, including the two prominent individuals in the far left foreground, Joseph and Louis Bonaparte. So too, to the far right, in the foreground, Napoleon's ministers, all with new titles—the Archtreasurer Lebrun, the Archchamberlain Cambaceres, Marshall Berthier, and the Grand Marshall Talleyrand—stand in a dim light and are enveloped, in part by shadows, but their vulgar, naturalist, yet almost caricatural profiles depicted in sharp detail, are clearly visible and pronounced enough to convey their pomposity, arrogance, and self-importance... The shadows that partially obscure their forms come to symbolize a state of mind and character (David here revives a device he was so proud of having invented for the *Brutus*). And, in a spectacular caricature

of Enlightenment values and class hierarchies, the secular are the unenlightened creatures.<sup>524</sup>

As Johnson makes clear, David employed a pictorial device first put to use in his *Brutus* to reveal the corruptibility of those that constitute Napoleon's regime without directly pointing to the Emperor himself (see Fig. 61). By depicting important members of the imperial court in relative shadow, David is able to subtly display his personal criticism without overtly compromising the image's propagandistic intent. As Johnson demonstrates, in the *Coronation*, David has represented a restructuring of the Three Estates and with it, a reversion to the *ancien régime* and the establishment of a new social order.<sup>525</sup>

Although Napoleon wished to erase the memory of the Bourbon dynasty, David cunningly brings it back in a major way. He does so in his clear reference to Rubens's *Coronation of Marie de' Medici*, a work long acknowledged as a source for David's *Coronation* and one that, paradoxically, commemorates the Bourbon monarchy and all that the Revolution hoped to eradicate. By referencing Rubens, David was also associating himself with an artist he greatly admired and one who worked for the kings and courts of Europe. Executed by Rubens between 1624 and 1626, the *Coronation of Marie de' Medici* is part of a planned allegorical cycle of twenty-four large-scale paintings depicting the life of the King and Queen of France (Fig. 128).<sup>526</sup> Marie, the

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524 Johnson, *Art in Metamorphosis*, 178.

525 Ibid., 199-200.

526 The bibliography for the cycle is vast. For the seminal texts, see G.-P. Bellori, *Le Vite de Pittori, Scultori et Architetti Moderni* (Rome, 1672); André Félibien, *Entretiens sur les vies et les ouvrages des plus excellents peintres anciens et modernes* (Trévoux, 1725); Jean-Marc Nattier, *La Galerie du Palais de Luxembourg peinte par P.P. Rubens* (Paris, 1710); Max Rooses and Charles Ruelens, *Correspondance de Rubens* (Antwerp, 1898); Jakob Burckhardt, *Erinnerungen aus Rubens* (Basel, 1898); Karl Grossman, *Der Gemäldezyklus der Galerie der Maria von Medici* (Strassbourg, 1906); Otto von Simson, *Zur Genealogie der weltlichen Apotheose im Barock, besonders der Medicigalerie des P.P. Rubens* (Strassbourg, 1936); Jacques Thuillier and Jacques Foucart, *Rubens' Life of Marie de' Medici* (New York, 1970); Susan Saward, *The Golden Age of Marie de' Medici* (Ann Arbor: UMI Research Press, 1982); and Ronald Forsyth

daughter of the Duke of Tuscany, commissioned the series to decorate two wings of her new residence at the Palais du Luxembourg: the Gallery of Henri IV and the Medici Gallery. The nature of the commission is largely shrouded in mystery, similar to David's *Coronation of Napoleon and Josephine*.<sup>527</sup> We can only speculate why Marie chose Rubens for the work as opposed to a native Frenchman, yet his superb reputation and international fame must have played a large role in her decision.<sup>528</sup> Twenty-one panels were completed and can be divided into three sections: the youth, education, and marriage of the Queen; the birth of Louis XIII and Marie's assumption of the regency following the death of Henri IV; and the political relationship of the Queen to Louis XIII. The cycle's first public viewing was held on 27 May 1625 in honor of the royal wedding between Henrietta-Maria (the youngest sister of the King) and Charles I of England. The panels remained in the west wing of the Luxembourg on public display until 1779 when the Comte de Provence, the brother of Louis XVI, decided to make the palace his Parisian residence.<sup>529</sup>

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Millen and Robert Erich Wolf, *Heroic Deeds and Mystic Figures: A New Reading of Rubens' Life of Maria de' Medici* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1989).

527 A formal contract for the decoration of the Luxembourg dated 26 February 1622 presents us with extremely limited information. The contract cites that twenty-four paintings will be dedicated to the life of Marie de' Medici, yet it is less specific concerning the accompanying series devoted to Henri IV. See Seward, 2.

528 Seward also makes note of correspondence between Marie and her sister, the Duchess of Mantua. From 1600-1608 Rubens worked in Italy under that patronage of the Duke of Mantua, Vincenzo Gonzaga. It was Gonzaga who enabled Rubens to visit important centers of artistic production in Rome and Madrid. It is likely that the Gonzaga family served as a source for the Queen as to Rubens's character and artistic ability. Seward, 51.

529 Andrew L. McClellan, "The Musée du Louvre as Revolutionary Metaphor During the Terror," *The Art Bulletin*, Vol. 70, No. 2 (June 1988): 302. See also *Catalogue des tableaux du Roi au Luxembourg* (Paris, 1774). Following the closing of the Gallery at the Luxembourg, it was the goal of the Comte d'Angiviller to create an ambitious museum project in the Grand Gallery of the Louvre. This project was subsequently interrupted by the Revolution and was revisited in 1793. See J. Connelly, "The Grand Gallery of the Louvre and the Museum Project: Architectural Problems," *Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians* 31 (1972): 120-32.

The Coronation of Marie de' Medici took place at the abbey church of St-Denis on 13 May 1610, whereby her claim to the regency of the French realm was established (Figs. 129-30). Since the early seventh century, St-Denis had been considered the "particular patron" and "singular protector" of the monarchy.<sup>530</sup> The bond between the abbey and the monarchy reached its pinnacle under Abbot Suger, an adviser and friend to both Louis VI and Louis VII. In the thirteenth-century, Louis IX undertook the rebuilding of the church and—following in the footsteps of ancient royal tradition—had great admiration for St-Denis. The abbey is also noteworthy as the traditional burial site of the kings of France dating back to the sixth century and includes the tombs of Dagobert, Clovis II, Charles Martel, and Pepin the Short. The architecture of the abbey asserts the glory of the monarchy and, as a result, St-Denis suffered greatly during the Revolution (Figs. 131-32).<sup>531</sup> Royal tombs were pillaged, sculpture on the portals was defaced, and lead was removed from the roofs to be used for war supplies. Alexandre Lenoir saved what remained – namely tombs and glass – placing the recovered objects in the Musée de monuments français between 1795 and 1799 (the influence of Lenoir's museum on David's aesthetic in general and the *Coronation* in particular will be addressed in the pages that follow).<sup>532</sup> The urban ruins of the once glorious church must have been a disturbing sight prior to the renovations initiated by Napoleon in 1806 who, not surprisingly, envisioned St-Denis as an imperial burying place.<sup>533</sup>

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<sup>530</sup> Caroline Astrid Bruzelius, *The 13th Century Church at St. Denis* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1985), 9.

<sup>531</sup> See Naginski, *Sculpture and the Enlightenment*, 25-9.

<sup>532</sup> Bruzelius, 17. Prior to the removal of the roofs in 1794, St-Denis was converted into a Temple of Reason and was used for services. It was later used for a short time as a storehouse for wheat and cereals, and was converted into a military hospital in 1795. St-Denis narrowly escaped destruction in 1800 when a proposal to convert the church into a covered market was thwarted.

<sup>533</sup> Baron François de Guilhermy, "Restauration de l'église royale de Saint-Denis," *Annales archéologiques* 5 (1846): 212-14; and E. E. Viollet-le-Duc, "L'Église impériale de Saint-Denis," *Gazette des architectes et du bâtiment* (1867): 33-36.



In Rubens's *Coronation*, Marie, like Josephine, is dressed in layers of finery and shown with her hands joined reverently. She is shown kneeling on the stairs at the base of the altar and surrounded by a royal entourage that includes the Dauphin, the Prince de Conti, the Duc de Ventadour, and the Chevalier de Vendome. Rubens portrays two figures—the Princess de Conti and the Duchess de Montpensier—carrying the burdensome train of Marie de' Medici.<sup>534</sup> Similarly, David's *Coronation* depicts Madame de la Rouchefoucauld and Madame de la Valette assisting the Empress with her long and heavy mantle. Personifications of *Abundantia* and *Victoria* shower the figure of Marie with blessings, while looking down on the scene from a tribune above, seemingly approving of the event, is the figure of Henri IV who would be assassinated in the streets of Paris the next day.<sup>535</sup> In his painting, David included the figure of Madame Mère, the mother of Napoleon. Napoleon insisted she be represented, despite her refusal to attend the event.<sup>536</sup> Her insertion by David in the central tribune, coupled with the femininity of Josephine and sanctity of the Virgin who hosts the event, reinforce the maternal overtone of the painting (more will be said later on David's decision to focus on the moment of Josephine's crowning rather than Napoleon's).<sup>537</sup>

The *Coronation of Marie de' Medici* was and continues to be a propagandistic image that celebrates monarchical rule. The painting is a "historical" document that serves as a record of the Queen's legitimate claim to the throne.<sup>538</sup> It is this point that

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534 Seward, 97.

535 Ibid., 97.

536 Johnson, *Art in Metamorphosis*, 198. See also *Jacques-Louis David 1748-1825*, 534-39.

537 See Porterfield and Siegfried, 155-69.

538 I use the term "historical" loosely here because Rubens not paint "history" in the literal sense. As Millen and Wolf aptly write, "...his [Rubens] concern was with *Dichtung* not *Wahrheit*, with poetic transformation rather than reportage." See Millen and Wolf, 5.

lies at the center of my efforts to demonstrate that David's *Coronation* is, in part, a meditation on the aesthetic, philosophical, and political problems associated with authoritarianism. The Medici cycle is an example of blatant monarchical propaganda whose ideals were completely at odds with Revolutionary ideology. As such, I would suggest that the decision to reference the Rubens cycle in David's painting was the idea of the artist – not Napoleon or Denon. The reason for this is simple. One can hardly imagine that the pageant-master of the Republic – a man who voted for the death of the king, helped abolish the state-sponsored Academy, suffered imprisonment and narrowly escaped death for his radical political positions and allegiance to Robespierre – would simply lay down his personal convictions at Napoleon's feet. To assert that the painter of the *Horatii*, the *Lepelletier*, and the *Marat* would abandon his ardent republican sympathies in favor of an imperial image that celebrates all the Revolution fought to abolish is to ignore the identity that David constructed for himself. However, it was necessary for David to fulfill the commission, thereby providing him with financial gain, possible power within the arts administration, and renewed popular acclaim as the greatest living artist. At the same time he could not abandon the zealous republican beliefs for which he nearly lost his own life. The example of Rubens, as we shall see, would allow him to achieve all of these goals.

David was well-aware of the political power monarchical imagery like the Rubens cycle could convey. While his contentious relationship with the Academy is well-known, David's strong opposition to the role of the Museum Commission in transforming the Louvre into a public museum during the Revolution remains little discussed by scholars. Established in 1792 to oversee the management of the king's former art collection, the goal of the Museum Commission was to create the most complete, rational art museum in the world – one that would demonstrate the Republic's intellectual progress over that of

the *ancien régime*.<sup>539</sup> With the support of the National Convention, Jean-Marie Roland (the new Minister of the Interior) appointed five artists and one mathematician to the panel. The main tasks of the commission were to select works of art for display in the Louvre's Grand Gallery and to decide how those works would be displayed once selected.<sup>540</sup> David formally took issue with the commission on two occasions (once in 1793 and again in 1794), arguing that it was composed of men whom he viewed as either unqualified for the position or exhibited a lack of enthusiasm for the Republican cause.<sup>541</sup> As a solution to these perceived inadequacies, David, as mentioned earlier, proposed the creation of the Conservatoire, a panel of ten men of unquestionable standing and devotion to the Republic to replace the Museum Commission. In his second report to the Committee of Public Instruction, dated 16 January 1794, David criticizes the Museum Commission, specifically the works selected for exhibition and the method of display. Furthermore, he emphasizes the importance of the museum as a teaching device and source of inspiration:

... Ne vous y trompez pas, citoyens, le Museum n'est point un vain rassemblement d'objets de luxe ou de frivolité, qui ne doivent servir qu'à satisfaire la curiosité. Il faut qu'il devienne une école imposante. Les instituteurs y conduiront leurs jeunes élèves, le père y mènera son fils. Le jeune homme, à la vue des productions du génie, sentira naître en lui le genre d'art ou de science auquel l'appela la nature. Il en est temps, législateurs, arrêtez l'ignorance au milieu de sa course, enchaînez ses mains, sauvez le Museum, sauvez des productions qu'un souffle peut aénantir, et que la nature avare ne reproduirait peut-être jamais...<sup>542</sup>

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<sup>539</sup> McClellan, "The Musée du Louvre as Revolutionary Metaphor During the Terror," 304.

<sup>540</sup> A. Tuetey and J. Guiffrey, eds., *La commission du Muséum et al création du Musée du Louvre 1792-93* (Paris, 1910), 23; McClellan, "The Musée du Louvre as Revolutionary Metaphor During the Terror," 304.

<sup>541</sup> McClellan, "The Musée du Louvre as Revolutionary Metaphor During the Terror," 308.

<sup>542</sup> Wildenstein, no. 783.

The Convention ultimately agreed with David's call for the suppression of the Museum Commission and the Conservatoire was established.

In order to create the most modern gallery in Europe, one that served as a reflection of Enlightenment principles and Republican ideals, the old "eclectic" arrangement of hanging pictures had to give way to a more modern system of display in which works would be divided by schools and arranged chronologically.<sup>543</sup> The desire of the Conservatoire to remove works from display at the Louvre which glorified the monarchy and conjured memories of former customs and allegiances posed a unique problem, specifically with regard to paintings.<sup>544</sup> Conflict arose when undisputed masterpieces, such as the Marie de' Medici cycle, clashed with the museum's Revolutionary beliefs and ambitions. The purpose of the Rubens cycle was monarchical glorification. To display such a work within the context of a Revolutionary museum would prove complex. How could the Conservatoire acknowledge the cycle as an artistic masterpiece (thus solidifying the goal of the Conservatoire to reveal the progress of the arts and the perfection achieved by various nations) while dispelling royalist sympathies?<sup>545</sup>

Ultimately, a compromise was reached in which two less overtly royalist paintings from the Marie de' Medici cycle were chosen for display: *The Conclusion of the Peace* and *The Treaty of Angoulême*.<sup>546</sup> It is important to remember that the content of the paintings exhibited in the Louvre's Grand Gallery became neutralized upon removal

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<sup>543</sup> McClellan, "The Musée du Louvre as Revolutionary Metaphor During the Terror," 309.

<sup>544</sup> Y. Cantarel-Besson, ed., *La naissance du musée du Louvre*, 2 vols, (Paris: Réunion des musée de nationaux, 1981) I, 18-19.

<sup>545</sup> Y. Cantarel-Besson, II, 228.

<sup>546</sup> McClellan, "The Musée du Louvre as Revolutionary Metaphor During the Terror," 309.

from their original context – such as the Rubens cycle. Many works were valued only for their stylistic superiority and historical resonance rather than for any monarchical reference they might have possessed. Yet this was not the case for Rubens's *Coronation*. Not only did the *Coronation of Marie de' Medici* deliberately glorify the monarchy, it is also a religious image. Roman Catholicism conflicted with the Cult of Reason, thereby making the painting dually unsuitable for display.<sup>547</sup> In short, David's involvement in the establishment of the Conservatoire had a direct result on the accessibility to and exhibition of Ruben's *Coronation of Marie de' Medici* – a work that he knew well. Does it not seem paradoxical that he would model his *Coronation of Napoleon and Josephine* after a monarchical work he was largely responsible for having removed from public view in the 1790s?

By the time of Napoleon's Coronation in 1804, paintings that would have been seen as clearly royalist under the Conservatoire were being exhibited again in the Grand Gallery.<sup>548</sup> The debate concerning the subject matter of paintings and the consequences of public display had calmed considerably, as had the tense political climate following the Terror. David looked to Ruben's *Coronation of Marie de' Medici* for his image of the *Coronation of Napoleon and Josephine* because it famously depicted one of the great coronations of France. On the surface, David's strong allusion to Ruben's painting in his own work could be viewed as an attempt to legitimize Napoleon's empire by referencing the Bourbons who came before. Indeed, with rare exception, this has been the prevailing

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547 Ibid., 310.

548 By 1801, two additional paintings from the Marie de' Medici cycle were on view: *The Education of Marie de' Medici* and *The Birth of the Dauphin*. *Notice des tableaux des écoles françaises et flamande (sic)...et des tableaux des écoles des Lombardie et de Bologne*, (Paris, an IX), 75. At this point in my research, I have been unable to uncover the location of Rubens's *Coronation of Marie de' Medici* during the Revolutionary and Napoleonic periods. This is something I hope to investigate further, as it would be interesting to note its location during the execution of David's *Coronation* and explore the accessibility the artist would have had to Ruben's painting.

position held by scholars to this point. Yet I would suggest that David used the precedent of Ruben's *Coronation* to his advantage in a way that only a painter-philosopher of his caliber could. The use of complex allegory, epitomized by Rubens, would allow David to artfully mask his message of disillusionment, his belief that Napoleon was a usurper of the throne – revealing his true intent only to those who could uncover the multiple layers of meaning within the painting. David was certainly aware of Rubens's expert use of allegory, as eloquently described by de Piles in 1706:

No man ever treated Allegorical Subjects so learnedly as Rubens; and as *Allegories* are a sort of Language which consequently ought to be authorized by Use, and generally Understood, he always introduced those *Symbols* in his *Pieces*, which *Medals*, and other Monuments of Antiquity, have rendered familiar, at least, to the learned.<sup>549</sup>

Of particular note for this study is Rubens's deep interest in architecture which would have been especially intriguing to David. The enlargement and modification of his home in Antwerp marks the only occasion in which Rubens constructed an actual building, nonetheless an examination of his paintings and drawings – specifically his title-page designs for the triumphal arches of the *Pompa introitus Ferdinandi* – reveal the artist's architectural inventiveness (Fig. 133).<sup>550</sup> Anthony Blunt has suggested that Rubens's taste in architecture was largely cultivated in Italy, specifically Rome and Genoa, and it is known that he traveled throughout the country studying both ancient and contemporary buildings.<sup>551</sup> While no drawings by Rubens after antique structures are

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<sup>549</sup> Roger de Piles, *Dialogue des Coloris*, in *The Art of Painting and the Lives of Painters* (London, 1706), 293.

<sup>550</sup> Anthony Blunt, "Rubens and Architecture," *The Burlington Magazine*, Vol. 119, No. 894, Special Issue Devoted to Peter Paul Rubens (Sept. 1977): 609. The *Pompa introitus Ferdinandi* commemorates the entry of Cardinal-Infante Don Ferdinand of Austria, Regent of the Spanish Netherlands, into Antwerp on 17 April 1635. The designs by Rubens illustrate the entire decorative scheme, including eleven triumphal arches erected along the route. Pierre Cabanne, *Rubens*, trans. Oliver Bernard (London: Thames and Hudson, 1967), 236-8.

<sup>551</sup> See also Michael Jaffé, *Rubens and Italy* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1977).

extant, many of his paintings contain buildings loosely inspired by those he must have seen during his Italian sojourn.<sup>552</sup> In many paintings, several designs for the *Pompa introitus*, and a garden screen constructed for his house in Antwerp to name but a few, Rubens was often inspired by the late works of Michelangelo in the development of his own highly inventive ideas.<sup>553</sup> This ability of Rubens to capture the spirit of Michelangelo's designs while avoiding exact imitation would have appealed to David's own architectural proclivity, that is, David's remarkable ability to take an existing work of architecture and modify it to suit the aesthetic and philosophical demands of an image or event.

In addition to his architectural interests, David could also identify with Rubens's position as a politically involved artist. One must not underestimate Rubens's own place among the social elite, which assuredly contributed to the elevation of artists in society. As evidenced by his complex representations of ancient historical and mythological subjects, Rubens, like David, was intimately familiar with the great works of classical Greek and Roman literature. Rubens was an active figure in European diplomacy and his own level of sophistication placed him in the same class of individuals who purchased his paintings.<sup>554</sup> It is critical to note that David's reliance on the *Coronation of Marie de' Medici* helped to assert his own authority as an artist as being equal to that of Rubens; David understood that the *Coronation* was as much about his glory and legacy as an artist as it was about Napoleon's. While Rubens's usage of an ornate allegorical language and

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<sup>552</sup> For example, the background in his *Triumph of Caesar* is based on Mantegna and includes allusions to the Pantheon and Temple of Venus in Rome. See Blunt, "Rubens and Architecture," 609-610.

<sup>553</sup> Rubens was particularly inspired by the Porta Pia and Michelangelo's idea of combining a straight and a curved pediment. This is evident in several works by Rubens, including the *Stage of Isabella* and the *Stage of Welcome* for the *Pompa Introitus*, as well as the *Madonna of the Rosary*. See Blunt, "Rubens and Architecture," 614.

<sup>554</sup> Hans Vlieghe, *Flemish Art and Architecture 1582-1700* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1998), 49.

rhetorical devices sought to amplify and embellish the principles of monarchy, as we shall see, David would continually use monarchical references found in the Cathedral of Notre-Dame to undermine Napoleon's imagery of Empire.

### The Ceremony

The Coronation of Napoleon and Josephine took place on 2 December 1804 at the Cathedral of Notre-Dame in Paris. As mentioned earlier, Percier was in charge of designing the imperial carriage and Fontaine oversaw the creation of a huge tent that was erected in front of the archbishop's palace, next to the cathedral on the Île de la Cité (Figs. 134-35).<sup>555</sup> In the interior of the cathedral, side altars and choir screens were removed to allow room for tribunes draped with curtains, thereby hiding the decorative medieval sculpture along the nave and in the choir. Carpets covered the floor and curtains of velvet were draped throughout the great church, frequently embroidered with the letter *N*, the imperial coat of arms, tiaras, laurels, eagles, and bees.<sup>556</sup> Jean-Baptiste Isabey (1767-1855), the famous miniature painter and student of David, designed the costumes for the ceremony that, according to decree, had to follow an established etiquette.<sup>557</sup> Chevallier, Leroy, and Raimbault executed the designs for the imperial couple's *grands* and *petit costumes*. The *petit costumes* were worn only to and from the cathedral, while the *grand costumes* were worn for the ceremony itself. The majority of

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<sup>555</sup> For a description of the tent and its surroundings, see Biver, 69-70.

<sup>556</sup> Le Bourhis, 138. Bees were emblematic of Clovis, the first Frankish king.

<sup>557</sup> For seminal sources on Isabey, see *Jean-Baptiste Isabey, Abrégé de ma biographie par Jean-Baptiste Isabey, document manuscrit déclassé, 1843* (Paris, Bibliothèque nationale de France, cabinet des Estampes, Z-56-4); Étienne Delécluze, "J.-B. Isabey," *Journal des débats* (27 avril 1855): 173 (Paris, Bibliothèque nationale de France, cabinet des Estampes, SNR); Madame de Basily-Callimaki, *J.-B. Isabey—Sa vie—son temps/1767-1855. Suivi du catalogue de l'oeuvre gravée et lithographiée par et d'après Isabey* (Paris: Frazier-Soye, 1909); Marion W. Osmond, *J.-B. Isabey: the Fortunate Painter 1767-1855* (London: Nicholson and Watson, 1947); and *Jean-Baptiste Isabey, portraitiste de l'Europe*, exh. cat. (Paris: Reunion des musées nationaux, 2005).



embroidery on Napoleon's costumes was completed by Picot, the Emperor's embroiderer, and represented the most beautiful and intricate work from this period.<sup>558</sup> For the ceremony, Josephine wore a crimson velvet robe lined and bordered with ermine, adorned with gold embroidered bees and oak, laurel, and olive leaves that surrounded the cipher *N*. The dress beneath was made of embroidered silver brocade, dotted with gold bees and embellished with gold fringe. Diamonds were affixed to the bodice and puffs at the top of the long sleeves and the sixteenth-century inspired, Medici-like standing collar was comprised of lace and gold thread. The Empress's hair was arranged in a simple Grecian style, complemented by a silver and gold tiara adorned with 1,040 diamonds.<sup>559</sup> The court dress created by Isabey for the Empress would be copied all over Europe.

It is curious, given his drawings, preparations, and intense involvement with the Coronation that Fontaine's journal entry for 2 December is surprisingly brief and lacking in detail:

L'Empereur est couronné des mains du Pape dans l'église de Notre-Dame. 20,000 personnes ont assisté à cette auguste solennité. Tous les préparatifs ont été finis à temps, on n'a cessé de travailler jusqu'au moment même où le cortège est entré dans l'église. Dès six heures du matin on avait ouvert les portes, un grand nombre d'invités qu'une impatiente curiosité avait amenés avant le jour circulait dans tous les rangs, dérangeait les ouvriers et pendant près d'une heure et demie le plus grand désordre a régné dans l'église. Ce n'est qu'avec une peine infinie que je suis parvenu à déterminer les autorités militaires à établir l'ordre des entrées. Les maîtres des cérémonies et leur aides n'étaient pas à leurs postes. Des écritures sans fin, des avertissements, des précautions, des projets d'ordre de toutes espèces avaient occupé toute le monde à l'avance; et pour le jour de l'exécution personne n'était à son devoir. Enfin le zèle de quelques chefs subalternes a su réparer les torts des premiers. L'ordre s'est établi et la fête s'est passée avec la majesté et la décence convenables. L'illumination des Tuileries était très belle.<sup>560</sup>

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<sup>558</sup> le Bourhis, 139-140.

<sup>559</sup> Ibid., 127.

<sup>560</sup> Fontaine, 91-2. In addition to making Notre Dame a glorious backdrop for the coronation, Fontaine was also in charge of illuminating the Tuileries Palace and

Regrettably, there is little in terms of documentation describing the nature of the commission between Percier and Fontaine and Napoleon. In a journal entry dated 18 October 1804, Fontaine does mention presenting drawings for the Coronation to the Emperor, but little else is revealed:

Les plans, les dessins et les vues perspectives des constructions et des dispositions de la fête du couronnement et de la distribution des drapeaux ont été mis sous les yeux de l'Empereur qui désire que les choses soient faites avec magnificence et majesté, et qui en même temps prescrit la plus sévère économie. Cependant il a paru satisfait de nos projets. Il a demandé qu'il fût construit une espèce de tente pour descendre à couvert au pied de l'Archevêché, et un couloir couvert pour venir de l'Archevêché à l'église. Nous profitons de cette occasion pour employer la tente qui avait été faite dans le mois prairial an IX à l'époque où le roi d'Etrurie vint à la Malmaison, et qui ayant été décommandée était restée entre les mains du menuisier sans avoir été payée.<sup>561</sup>

Given that the architectural elaborations constructed by Percier and Fontaine cover much of the original gothic interior like a stage set, it becomes understandably difficult for the viewer to clearly discern where the ceremony took place in the cathedral. In his portrayal of the *Coronation of Napoleon and Josephine*, David—like Rubens—chose a perspective to the right of the chancel with figures arranged in a similar fashion. David had models of the cathedral interior constructed in his atelier and relied on a set designer for the Paris Opéra to ensure an accurate architectural perspective.<sup>562</sup> It was important, given the nature of the commission, that David correctly represent the cathedral interior. After all, thousands of witnesses were present at the Coronation and an imprecise rendering of a historical event would have been obvious and moreover, criticized.

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gardens which, thanks to recently completed renovations, served as the Pope's residence during his stay in Paris.

<sup>561</sup> Fontaine, 88.

<sup>562</sup> Brookner, 155.

The ceremony itself took place at the high altar and this is confirmed by the artist in a study in which David has depicted an aerial view of the cathedral interior with the choir, prie-Dieus of the Emperor and Empress, imperial throne, and main altar clearly identifiable (Fig. 136). Three extant preparatory drawings for the *Coronation* reveal that the general figural arrangement as well as the chosen architectural perspective were well-established by the artist early in the creative process. While small details change from one drawing to the next, the composition, as prescribed in these preparatory drawings, remains largely unchanged in the final painting. What is significant is the moment David has chosen to represent in the drawings. Rather than depict Napoleon crowning Josephine, the significant moment represented in the final painting, David has chosen to capture the moment when Napoleon crowns himself. These preparatory drawings confirm that David was initially going to choose the moment of the self-crowning as the subject for the final painting. The reason why David abandoned his initial idea in favor of Napoleon crowning Josephine has, in my opinion, yet to be convincingly explained. Various theories have been put forth, including one that suggests Gérard, a protégé of Princesse Pauline Bonaparte and pupil of David, advised the artist to capture "...the moment when most hearts appear to have melted, the moment of Napoleon's coronation of Josephine". According to this theory, David, upon hearing Gérard's suggestion, rubbed out the figure of Napoleon that he had already begun to paint.<sup>563</sup>

Nonetheless, of these three preparatory drawings illustrating the Coronation ceremony, of particular importance for our purposes is a drawing that provides a great deal of architectural specificity concerning the interior of Notre-Dame. The drawing, entitled *Napoléon s'auto-couronnant*, provides remarkable insight into David's artistic process, specifically, how he conceptualized the architecture of the cathedral as a kind of

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<sup>563</sup> Brookner, 153. See also *Jacques-Louis David 1748-1825*, 534-7.

substructure within the painting (Fig. 137).<sup>564</sup> In keeping with his sculptural aesthetic, we know from preparatory drawings and incomplete works that it was typical for David to first depict a figure nude in order to correctly render the body before the addition of clothes. I would suggest that David used this same methodology in his conception for the architecture in the *Coronation*. In order to correctly represent the fabricated neoclassical architecture, draperies, tribunes, and ornament erected for the ceremony, he first had to understand the gothic architecture that constituted Notre-Dame's original interior.

Before we begin an investigation of the architecture in David's drawing of Napoleon's self-crowning, let us first examine the tremendous fabricated neoclassical archways in the final painting and the constructed tribunes contained therein. In the final painting, immense velvet curtains run the length of the archways, separating at the middle to reveal three tribune levels, each containing important spectators of the event – including Napoleon's mother and the artist himself. Very little of the actual architecture of Notre-Dame (that is, elements of its original Gothic interior) is visible through the constructed archways in the painting. However, in *Napoléon s'auto-couronnant*, the heavy curtains have been omitted to reveal the original gothic architecture of the cathedral, namely, the existence of rib vaulting and rounded windows that are complete obscured in the final painting. In fact, the architecture *is* the focus of this drawing. This point is emphasized by the rendering of the individuals that comprise the tribunes (as well as the tribunes themselves) with a comparatively lighter touch than the architecture. An interest in and emphasis on line constitutes this drawing which, coupled with the absence of shading and ornamentation, reveals David's desire to achieve correct architectural perspective by removing any and all visual excess. This point is further underscored by the rendering of these excesses (including curtains, ciphers, eagles, and censors) with a

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<sup>564</sup> See Rosenberg and Prat, p. 209, no. 199.

much lighter touch – again, an artistic device used by the artist to suggest the presence of such details without making them the focus of the drawing.

Preparatory sketches for the *Coronation* also convey an awareness of and interest in the inclusion of a sculptural tableau in the final painting, one that was conceived of as part of Louis XIII's famous vow of 1638 (Fig. 138). While suffering from a terrible illness, Louis XIII vowed that, if he were to recover, he would devote himself personally to the Virgin. He did recover and in 1638 Louis XIII vowed to make Notre-Dame the center of a national cult dedicated to the Virgin.<sup>565</sup> The project consisted of replacing the Gothic choir (including the altar, stalls, rood screen and hemicycle) with a new ensemble, complete with wooden stalls, marble floors and decorative panels made of marble and stucco.<sup>566</sup> The renovations culminated with the sculptural group located behind the high altar. It consists of a Pietà by Nicolas Coustou, flanked by the kneeling figures of Louis XIII and Louis XIV with six bronze angels bearing the instruments of the Passion surrounding the scene (Fig. 139).<sup>567</sup> By including the Lamentation group in the *Coronation*, David is again making an overt reference to the Bourbon dynasty. Although the figures of Louis XIII and Louis XIV are obscured in the final painting (their inclusion would have been too obvious a reference), David includes enough of the central Pietà group to make the reference clear to the viewer. Furthermore, one cannot help but associate David's sensitive rendering of the dead Christ with his earlier depictions of the

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<sup>565</sup>Alain Erlande-Brandenberg, *Notre-Dame de Paris*, trans. John Goodman (New York: Harry N. Abrams, Inc., 1998), 163. See Maurice Vloberg, *Notre-Dame de Paris et le voeu de Louis XIII* (Paris, 1926).

<sup>566</sup> Ibid.

<sup>567</sup> Ibid. The kneeling statues of Louis XIII and Louis XIV were by Guillaume Coustou and Antoine Coysevox, respectively. In one of David's preparatory drawings for the *Coronation*, two large sculpted angels flank the central tribune and are shown holding instruments of the Passion (See Rosenberg and Prat, p. 212, no. 201). Interestingly, these angels are omitted from the final painting. It is my hope to conduct further research on these sculptures, their iconography, and the likely reason for their omission in David's final work.

slain Revolutionary martyrs Lepelletier and Marat. The intense religious emotion present in David's depiction of the deposed Christ echoes the sacrifice of the Catholic Mass while, at the same time, alludes to the sacrifices of Lepelletier and Marat for the ideals of the Revolution.

Percier and Fontaine were also commissioned to design a grand imperial throne, which was raised on a platform beneath a crimson velvet canopy at the entrance to the nave, facing the high altar. In a preparatory drawing for the Coronation, David represents the throne beneath a triumphal arch that spanned the width of the nave (Fig. 140).<sup>568</sup> The constructed neoclassical triumphal arch was erected by Percier and Fontaine for the ceremony – a work which bears an uncanny similarity to the Arc du Carrousel that would be completed by the architects in 1807. The arch in David's drawing shows a large central bay flanked by two smaller bays. Four classical columns support the entablature, which contains some kind of indiscernible sculptural decoration. Above the temporary arch, the great rose window of the western façade of Notre-Dame is clearly visible. The drawing is a study not for the *Coronation* but rather for what was to be the second painting in the series, the *Enthronement*, which was never realized. What is significant about the drawing in relation to the *Coronation* is that it helps us to visualize what another portion of the cathedral looked like on that day.<sup>569</sup> The *Enthronement* was to

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<sup>568</sup> Sérullaz, *Inventaire général des dessins*, 319-20. Sérullaz's description of the drawing reads: "Cette vue du transept de Notre-Dame de Paris a souvent été mise en rapport avec le tableau de *Couronnement*. On peut cependant se demander s'il ne s'agit pas plutôt d'une étude destinée à l'Intronisation, composition prévue dans le cycle des commémorations des fêtes du couronnement de Napoléon, mais non réalisée. Les annotations pourraient, en effet, correspondre aux termes de la fameuse description adressée le 19 juin 1806 par David au comte Daru, Intendant général: 'L'Intronisation. L'empereur assis, la couronne sur la tête et la main levée sur l'Évangile, prononce le serment constitutionnel en présence du président du Sénat, du président du Corps Législatif, de celui du Tribunal et du plus ancien des présidents du Conseil d'État, qui lui a présenté la formule (...)' (W. no. 1474). A comparer avec un dessin (d'attribution discutée), conservé au Musée de Narbonne."

<sup>569</sup> Two other drawings likewise illustrate the throne on the day of the Coronation. See Rosenberg and Prat, nos. 193 and 194.

depict the Emperor at the moment when he takes the constitutional oath, thereby demonstrating his lawful obedience to the Constitution and as well as to the previously established legislature, tribune and Conseil d'État.<sup>570</sup>

Let us compare David's drawing for the *Enthronement* with an engraving of the central nave of Notre-Dame on the day of the Coronation after a drawing by Percier and Fontaine (Fig. 141). The perspective in the Percier and Fontaine image is taken from the crossing, affording a broader and more complete view than the David drawing of both the nave and the temporary triumphal arch. As with David's drawing, the engraving after Percier and Fontaine conveys the enormous size of the constructed neoclassical architecture which has been oddly juxtaposed within this religious and deeply historic Gothic interior. The magnitude of the architecture is made clear through the representation of the figures in the engraving; the figures are diminutive in comparison with the architecture and, with the exception of the Emperor shown seated on his throne, remain anonymous among the sea of spectators. The triumphal arch constructed by Percier and Fontaine contains no religious symbolism, no suggestion of subservience to either the Church or the Pope. The inscriptions on the arch's multiple friezes contain words like "honneur," "patrie," and "Napoleon. Empereur des Français". The engraving reveals, if there had been any doubt, that the Coronation was about Napoleon and his glory – not the glory of God. The erection of a classically-inspired triumphal arch (indeed, an architectural structure used in antiquity to commemorate a victory or great battle) within one of the greatest monuments in Christendom leads us to investigate the place of the Gothic aesthetic in early nineteenth-century France and, moreover, why Napoleon sought to cover it up.

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570 Johnson, *Art in Metamorphosis*, 188-9.

### The Impact of the Gothic Aesthetic

The architectural site in the *Coronation of Napoleon and Josephine* was prescribed and chosen by Napoleon, not David. However, David used the architecture and architectural sculpture to interpret the event. While the majority of royal coronations had taken place at Reims, Napoleon was crowned at Notre-Dame—the Cathedral of Paris—and this decision reaffirms his desire to solidify Paris as the central and most important city in his Empire. Begun c.1160 and with the main body of the cathedral completed by c.1245, Notre-Dame was constructed under Bishop Maurice de Sully during the Capetian dynasty. The Cathedral of Notre-Dame was a part of a larger dialogue concerning the reassessment of Gothic art that began in the 1790s. This reevaluation of the Gothic cathedral and the French medieval period was due in large part to the establishment of the Musée des monuments français, which was officially recognized by the government in 1795 and remained open until the Bourbon Restoration.<sup>571</sup> As mentioned earlier, largely the creation of Alexandre Lenoir, the museum consisted of French sculpture and tomb monuments dating from the Middle Ages to the early nineteenth-century. The nationalization of Church property in 1789 and the vandalism that followed led to the institution of the Commission des monuments, a panel comprised of two dozen artists, antiquarians, and scientists, whose primary responsibility centered on the conservation of objects deemed to be of artistic and historical importance.<sup>572</sup> Early in 1791, works considered to be valuable by the commission were taken to a depot for safekeeping. The depot, located in the former

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<sup>571</sup> Andrew McClellan, *Inventing the Louvre: Art, Politics, and the Origins of the Modern Museum in Eighteenth-Century Paris* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1994), 155. For the seminal source on Lenoir's museum, see *Inventaire général des richesses d'art de la France. Archives du Musée des monuments français*, 3 vols. (Paris, 1883-97).

<sup>572</sup> McClellan, *Inventing the Louvre*, 157-8.



convent of the Petits-Augustins, was to be managed by Lenoir.<sup>573</sup> In 1793, Lenoir published his *Notice succincte des objets de sculpture et d'architecture réunis au Dépôt provisoire des Petits-Augustins*, which he intended to serve as a visitor's guide to accompany an exhibition of the depot's contents. Aside from Lenoir's desire to legitimize the collection, the exhibition and accompanying guide asserted his own authority and expertise over the works on display in the Petits-Augustins.<sup>574</sup>

The collection of monuments and sculptures at the Petits-Augustins provided Lenoir with the foundation for the creation of a new museum – one based on the republican values of public instruction and artistic advancement: the Musée des monuments français. Lenoir's museum encountered the same problem as the Conservatoire in the establishment of the Louvre, that is, how to reconcile the display of great art works that represented subjects contrary to the philosophy of republicanism. To destroy such works ran contrary to Enlightenment principles, yet to openly display them would convey a message that contradicted the goals of the Revolution. Again we see that a distinction had to be made between the aesthetic value of a work and its historical significance. Lenoir's museum sought to emphasize the artist, the historical circumstances surrounding the work, and the artistry of the monuments rather than the subject itself. National history would dictate the understanding of the works rather than royal tradition and local memory.<sup>575</sup>

In eighteenth-century France, the aesthetic value of medieval and French Renaissance sculpture was not highly regarded. Lenoir came to identify with his collection despite lacking a strong personal preference for pre-Renaissance art himself.

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<sup>573</sup> Ibid., 158; and S. Thouroude, "Le couvent des Petits-Augustins," *L'Information d'histoire de l'art* 4 (1964): 161-77. In 1816, the Petits-Augustins (located on the Left Bank opposite the Louvre) would house the Ecole des Beaux-Arts.

<sup>574</sup> Ibid., 162.

<sup>575</sup> Ibid., 165-7.

Lenoir's museum appealed to what Andrew McClellan has called "the historicizing impulse" that existed during the late eighteenth-century, that is, the increased demand in art for accurate representations of historical subjects.<sup>576</sup> Thus, in keeping with Revolutionary ideology, Lenoir arranged his museum chronologically in an effort to construct a history of French art through sculpture, monuments, and architecture remnants. In 1795, Lenoir divided the collection into four categories: antiquities, Celtic antiquities (a category which attempted to bridge the gap between the ancient world and medieval France), monuments from the Middle Ages, and monuments from the Renaissance. Galleries were constructed around the cloister of the Petits-Augustins in which sculpture from the thirteenth to nineteenth centuries was displayed within a religious architectural environment.<sup>577</sup> By late 1795, the Petits-Augustins contained approximately 200 marble sculptures, 350 marble columns and fragments, and over 2,000 paintings largely recovered from churches in and around Paris.<sup>578</sup>

David's friendship with Lenoir is well-known and we can assume he enjoyed unlimited access to the museum's collection.<sup>579</sup> After the destruction of religious art and artifacts during the Revolution, David was strongly in favor of the preservation of medieval sculpture and several students of his would later become associated with *le style troubadour*. In preparation for his massive painting of the Coronation, David himself studied small-scale medieval manuscripts and looked to paintings by his students that

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<sup>576</sup> Ibid., 167.

<sup>577</sup> See Jean-Baptiste Réville and Lavallée, *Vues pittoresques et perspectives des salles du Musée des monuments français* (Paris, 1816). In addition, the Département des Arts Graphiques in the Musée du Louvre contains a collection of Lenoir's plans for the museum. See RF 5279.

<sup>578</sup> *Inventaire général des richesses d'art de la France*, II, 240ff.

<sup>579</sup> Lenoir published his "Mémoires, David, Souvenirs historiques" in the *Journal de l'Institut historique* in 1835. He also owned one of David's drawings for *The Triumph of the French People*. See Johnson, *Art in Metamorphosis*, 116. David also painted a portrait of Lenoir.

illustrated medieval genre scenes. Dorothy Johnson notes that David copied figures from the *Grandes Heures d'Anne de Bretagne* and the *Psaumes de David* in order to properly imbue the religious participants in the *Coronation* with a true sense of religious emotion.<sup>580</sup> David recognized that this kind of religious sincerity was to be found in the medieval period.

One must also acknowledge the overwhelming influence of the Gothic Revival in French literature and, perhaps most notably, Chateaubriand's *Le Génie du Christianisme*. Published in 1802, *Le Génie* attempted to legitimize Christianity as a source of inspiration for literature and the arts. Chateaubriand suggested that ideal beauty could not be found in modern France. Rather one must look to the Gothic and the chivalry of the Middle Ages; through medievalism, France could regain a sense of nationalism. *Le Génie* praised the historicism that exists within the walls of Gothic cathedrals and placed great value on sacred ceremonies and the religious experience. "In a word," writes Chateaubriand, "every thing in a Gothic church reminds you of the labyrinths of a wood; every thing excites a feeling of religious awe, of mystery, and of the Divinity."<sup>581</sup> Napoleon looked favorably on *Le Génie* because it helped to spread the new compromise between France and the Papacy as expressed in the Concordat, thus providing a positive image of the Emperor to the people.

The architecture constructed for the Coronation was anything but Gothic. As mentioned previously, the only element of Gothic architecture in David's *Coronation* is a hint of medieval tracery found on a window in the central tribune of the lower arcade; we find no trace of rib vaulting, walls of stained glass, or medieval sculpture enveloped by elegant drapery with exaggerated folds; the rhythmic, pointed arches of the lower arcade

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<sup>580</sup> Johnson, *Art in Metamorphosis*, 194. See also Rosenberg and Prat, nos. 1571, 1577, and 1579.

<sup>581</sup> Viscount de Chateaubriand, *The Genius of Christianity*, trans. Charles I. White (Philadelphia and London: John Murray and Company, 1856), 386.

were covered with round ones and columns originally crowned with ornate gothic capitals were refaced with smooth, marble-like pilasters. If Napoleon wanted to celebrate the Gothic style and its associations with Catholicism, he assuredly would not have covered it up with neoclassical veneers. It is possible that Napoleon's decision to cover the existing architecture was entirely practical. We must remember that Notre-Dame was severely damaged during the Revolution. The possibility that the court architects were instructed to cover the damaged church interior with constructed architectural veneers is plausible. In this case, the decision to abandon the Gothic style in favor of the Neoclassical is worth considering, yet the question still persists – why abandon the Gothic aesthetic? I would suggest that by covering up the Gothic interior with fabricated neoclassical architecture, Napoleon was attempting to divert attention away from Roman Catholicism and the religious associations with Gothicism. Despite the recent signing of the Concordat, Napoleon wanted to make it clear that he was the supreme ruler of France – not the Pope – as was made clear by his self-crowning. Furthermore, the decision to use neoclassical architecture not only downplayed religious associations but it also suggested Napoleon's keen aesthetic sense and his modernity, while concurrently referencing the great rulers and architectural monuments of antiquity. The use of neoclassical architecture at his Coronation would allow Napoleon to redirect attention squarely where he wanted it – on himself and the grandness of his regime.

David's interest in the medieval is also revealed in his interest in *la porte rouge*, or *The Red Door*, situated on the north façade of Notre-Dame, three bays east of the north portal (Fig. 142). Unlike the large portal of the northern transept, the Red Door was intended for daily use by the canons to provide easy access to their choir. In 1260 chapels were constructed between the buttresses of the northern wall of the choir, and it was at this time that the doorway was decorated with a sculptural ensemble.<sup>582</sup> The

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<sup>582</sup> Erlande-Brandenberg, 184-9.

sculptural group primarily consists of a tympanum depicting the *Coronation of the Virgin* and six archivolt reliefs that evoke the legend of Saint Marcel (Fig. 143). In the center of the tympanum we see Christ blessing his mother, the Virgin Mary, who is being crowned by an angel flying overhead. Flanking the central group are two kneeling figures, whose identification is still a mystery. Traditionally the figures have been identified as Louis IX—St. Louis—and his wife, Marguerite.<sup>583</sup> A striking similarity that has not been noted before exists between the *Coronation of the Virgin* tympanum and David's figural arrangement in the *Coronation of Napoleon and Josephine*. The Virgin, like Josephine, is shown with her hands together in a prayerful, reverent position. Both the Virgin and Josephine are portrayed the moment immediately before they are crowned—one by an angel of God, the other by an emperor. While Josephine is shown kneeling on a pillow on the steps of the high altar, the Virgin is seated and has turned slightly towards her son. Jesus, like the Pope, is seated in profile with his right arm raised; Christ blesses the Virgin as the Pope blesses Josephine.

The artist's reliance on the *Coronation of the Virgin* tympanum as a source of inspiration for the painting contributes to our understanding of the messages he conveyed by using elements of the building itself. We know that David loved sculpture and had used it as a way to transform his own art.<sup>584</sup> He used Coustou's *Christ and the Virgin* as a major element of the Coronation. We can readily imagine him studying the sculptural element of the Cathedral and encountering another episode of Christ and the Virgin that would inspire him. During the Revolution any imagery at Notre-Dame associated with the monarchy was removed, mutilated or destroyed.<sup>585</sup> Surprisingly, given the presumed depiction of Louis IX and his wife, the tympanum was spared. If David did

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583 Ibid, 189.

584 See Johnson, *Art in Metamorphosis*.

585 Erlande-Brandenburg, 211.

look to the tympanum for inspiration, as I believe he did, we are again confronted with the artist's continual reference to imagery directly associated with the Bourbons – references he deliberately included in an effort to undercut Napoleon and his regime. Furthermore, in a drawing of the Red Door completed by Percier in the late eighteenth-century, the tympanum and its figures are clearly discernible (Fig. 144). The existence of this drawing – coupled with the knowledge that David, Percier, and Fontaine shared such drawings – reaffirms that the figural composition for David's painting was likely inspired by the Red Door tympanum. While the presence of Gothic art and architecture is seemingly absent within the painting, it was, in fact, center-stage in David's conception for the *Coronation*.

In the *Coronation*, the Pope's eyes are fixed on Josephine and not Napoleon as is often presumed. David portrays the Empress as virginal, dressed in a white gown with rosy cheeks that suggest her youth, femininity, and fertility despite her age; in 1804, Josephine was forty years old. The Pope, who sits inertly behind Napoleon, has effectively served only a ceremonial role and was by no means pleased with the arrangements that had been made. While still in Rome, the Pope was of the understanding that he would both crown and anoint the Emperor. The Pope – the representative of Christ on earth – was allowed only to bless the crown before Napoleon placed it on his own head.<sup>586</sup> David portrays the Pope as humble, subservient, and the embodiment of true modesty, morality, and religious conviction. He depicts a very different view of the aggrandized, heroic figure of Napoleon dressed in imperial finery.

Aside from studying drawings and engravings by Percier and Fontaine of the church interior and consulting ritual objects and costumes, David also requested portrait sittings from those who had attended the Coronation—including the Pope. David's

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<sup>586</sup> Edward Hales, *Napoleon and the Pope: The Story of Napoleon and Pius VII* (London: Eyre and Spottiswoode, 1962) 70.

admiration for Pius VII is evident in a separate portrait of the Pope painted by the artist in 1805 and is further supported by Delécluze's account:

Le caractère noble et simple de ce pontife était sans doute de nature à faire naître, même chez les Français si peu dévots alors, le sentiment de bienveillance et de respect que tout le monde exprima à ce vieillard; mais il serait difficile de se faire une idée de l'espèce de ravissement où se trouvait David après les visites qu'il rendait à Pie VII. 'Ce bon vieillard, disait-il, quelle figure vénérable! Comme il est simple...et quelle belle tête il a! Une tête bien italienne; l'enclassement de l'œil grand, bien prononcé!... Celui-là est vraiment un pape; c'est un vrai prêtre...Il est pauvre comme saint Pierre; les dorures de ses habits sont fausses!... Mais cela n'est que plus respectable...Enfin, c'est évangélique, à la lettre...Ce brave homme, continuait David en souriant, il m'a donné sa bénédiction... Eh! Mon Dieu oui... Cela ne m'était pas arrivé depuis que j'ai quitté Rome... Oh! Il a bien la tradition, il porte bien sa main avec sa bague... Il était beau à voir; cela m'a rappelé Jules II que Raphaël a peint dans l'Héliodore du Vatican... Mais notre Pie VII vaut mieux. C'est un vrai pape, celui-là! Pauvre, humble; il n'est que prêtre, tandis que Jules II, Léon X même, étaient des ambitieux, des mondains. Il faut cependant leur rendre cette justice: ils aimaient les arts; ils ont poussé Michel-Ange et Raphaël. Enfin, ajoutait l'artiste, entraîné par le souvenir de ces grands protecteurs et par l'idée de l'homme qui venait de lui commander quatre immense tableaux, les grands souverains peuvent faire de grandes choses. Jules II, Léon X, François I, Louis XIV, tous ces genslà ont été de grands princes et ont fait fleurir les arts... Mais Pie VII aime les arts... J'avoue que j'ai longtemps envié aux grands peintres qui m'ont précédé des occasions que je ne croyais jamais reconstrer. J'aurai peint un *empereur* et enfin un *pape!*'<sup>587</sup>

While the Pope was obliged to accept Bonaparte's unwillingness to receive the crown from anyone's hand other than his own, he was insistent that Napoleon and Josephine be properly married if he was to have any part in the ceremony. Only a day before the Coronation, Josephine informed the Pope that she had been married in a civil ceremony but not a religious one. Napoleon and Josephine, therefore, were not married in the eyes of the Roman Catholic Church.<sup>588</sup> By waiting until the day before to tell the Pope, Josephine shrewdly prevented Napoleon—unable to change the proceedings at

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587 Delécluze, 247-9.

588 Hales, 70-1.

such a late date—from removing her from the Coronation entirely. It was, after all, as much her Coronation as it was Napoleon's. On the afternoon of 1 December, the couple were secretly married by Napoleon's uncle, Cardinal Fesch.

The benefits for Josephine were two-fold. First, the religious ceremony solidified her grasp on Napoleon, which was growing weaker and weaker because she had failed to produce an heir. Secondly, it strengthened her friendship with the Pope. If Napoleon were to cast her aside, the Pontiff would assuredly come to her aid by attesting to the validity of their marriage.<sup>589</sup> Pius had developed a stronger relationship with Napoleon's wife than with the defiant Bonaparte himself, and this kind of confidence that existed between Josephine and the Pontiff is clear in David's painting. Pius VII returned to Rome after the Coronation and the already strained relationship between Napoleon and the Pope was now shattered. It was the Pope who stood in the way of Napoleon's grandiose plans for Italy—"a mistress whom he would share with no one".<sup>590</sup> Three years later, French troops invaded Rome after the Pope's refusal to ally himself with France against the British. Napoleon annexed the Papal States to France in 1809 and the Pope responded by excommunicating both Napoleon and the French invaders. The following year, Napoleon obtained a decree of nullity that enabled him to marry Marie-Louise of Austria. The Pope, who at the time was imprisoned by Napoleon, was unable to come to Josephine's defense.

### Conclusion

As principal architects of Emperor Napoleon I<sup>er</sup>, Percier and Fontaine were essential in the establishment of the Corsican general's imperial vision. The architectural manifestations and elaborate décor developed by Percier and Fontaine helped to fashion

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<sup>589</sup> Ibid.

<sup>590</sup> Roberta J. M. Olson, "Representations of Pope Pius VII: The First Risorgimento Hero," *The Art Bulletin* LXVIII, no. 1 (March, 1986): 83.



Napoleonic iconography through the implementation of bold ideas, refined details, and a love of Antiquity. This fusion of architecture and decoration can be seen in many of their elaborate works, beginning with the revitalization of Malmaison. Likewise, David himself became a major figure in the conception of the imperial style and became a vital component in shaping the mythical image of Napoleon in painting. Although his artistic freedoms were largely inhibited under Napoleon, David—like Percier and Fontaine—was nonetheless given the power to reflect on the events of modern history in a permanent way. The *Coronation of Napoleon and Josephine* visually and theatrically encapsulates the pinnacle of *le style empire* and all its finery.

Beyond its mere illustration of the imperial style and the accessible representation of a grand historical event, the *Coronation* was to serve as an homage to the Emperor and his transformation of the Republic to Empire. The painting signals the birth of a new social order, one legitimized not by birth but by rising above mediocrity to become a self-made man.<sup>591</sup> On the surface, David represents the *Coronation* as a promising new vision for France; Napoleon as a truly modern leader replete with military expertise and graced with personal genius. The Emperor's glowing reception of David's painting in the artist's studio after its completion in 1808 proves that the painting succeeded in achieving its intended propagandistic intent.<sup>592</sup> It is important to note the extent to which Napoleon's ceremonial visit to David's studio honored the artist and his remarkable accomplishment. Both Emperor and artist mutually benefited from the painting's success. It was David's intent with the *Coronation*, as I have reiterated throughout this chapter, to represent and commemorate one of the most important events in the inception

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<sup>591</sup> Johnson, *Art in Metamorphosis*, 187.

<sup>592</sup> See *Description du tableau Représentant le Couronnement de Leurs Majestés imperiales et royales, peint par M. David, peintre de Leurs Majestés* (Paris: Aubry, 1808), 5, 6; and Sylvain Laveissière, *Le Sacre de Napoléon peint par David* (Paris, 2004), 109-17.

of the new empire while concurrently asserting his own artistic importance. To do this, David did not have to abandon his own closely held republican principles in favor of monarchical sympathies. Rather, he utilized a complex language of allegory and symbolism – complete with art historical as well as architectural prototypes – to ostensibly depict the *gloire* of Napoleon's regime while simultaneously revealing its hypocrisy and despotism by including numerous references to the Bourbon past.

As mentioned earlier in this study, we know that David was commissioned by Napoleon to paint the pivotal moments associated with the birth of his new empire: the *Coronation*, the *Enthronement*, the *Arrival at the Hôtel de Ville*, and the *Distribution of the Eagles*. What has been neglected by scholars to this point is the acknowledgment that each of these ceremonial events was deeply associated with architectural sites.<sup>593</sup> Together the architecture and the ceremonial events included therein represented Napoleon's reinvention of the French nation – it served as his attempt at establishing new *lieux de mémoire*.<sup>594</sup> The first two commissioned works, the *Coronation* and the *Enthronement*, relied on Percier and Fontaine's reconfigured interior of Notre-Dame, affording the French people a new construction of memory through the replacement of the Gothic interior (and all its associations) with dominant elements of neoclassical architecture. With the *Arrival at the Hôtel de Ville*, the third planned painting of the commission, a preparatory drawing reveals that David intended to present a new civic *lieu de mémoire* (Fig. 145). The backdrop to this public ceremony was the architecture of the Hôtel de Ville itself which, it must be remembered, served not only as the city hall of Paris but also as the stage for several famous and horrific events during the French Revolution. At the time of the Coronation, a pivotal period of political change, *The*

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<sup>593</sup> I would like to thank Dorothy Johnson for bringing this most relevant and perceptive point to my attention.

<sup>594</sup> See Pierre Nora, *Rethinking France = Les lieux de mémoire* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2001).

*Arrival at the Hôtel de Ville* would cathartically replace *lieux de mémoires* associated with the building's Revolutionary past. Thus David's painting would celebrate a new point of memory – the Emperor's arrival at the city hall – one that would help to order, concentrate, and solidify notions of France's national identity under Napoleon. Similarly, the *Distribution of the Eagles* attempted to establish a new site of military memory during a period when France was struggling to define itself in the wake of Revolution. The painting, completed by David in 1810, depicts the Emperor atop the steps of the Ecole militaire at the Champs de Mars (see Fig. 123). There he is shown (rather undistinguished, in fact) in front of a grand temporary façade erected by Percier and Fontaine for a ceremony in which the former flags of the armies were relinquished. The predominant use of neoclassical architecture and classical décor in service of the Emperor's image – an imperial style first evidenced in David's *Coronation* – again takes center stage, contributing to the grandness of the military ceremony in the foreground.

These four commissioned works (of which only two were completed) centered on a desire to provide new points of memory – memories that, Napoleon hoped, would constitute the beginning of his regime in the minds of the French people. In order for his empirical ambitions to come to fruition, Napoleon had to erase memories of the Revolution and its associations with democracy, freedom, and equality. Yet I would suggest that David, an artist defined by a sense of historical continuity and a will to remember, used the entire commissioned series – one intended to celebrate the birth of empire – to commemorate the French Revolution and all it represented, namely, the death of autocracy. We must remember that during the Revolution David was an integral component in the design and execution of grand Republican *fêtes* which took place throughout the city of Paris – similarly to the Napoleonic ceremonies associated with the Coronation held throughout Paris that David was charged with representing.

As I discussed at length in Chapter Four, the erection of temporary architecture at various “stations” throughout the city, and the importance of Paris itself in these

processions constituted major characteristics of the Revolutionary festivals. It was the goal of these grand pageants to celebrate and promote ideas of patriotism, political solidarity, and moral unity.<sup>595</sup> While on the surface the Napoleonic series appears to have achieved these ends through the depiction of grand events associated with the empire's inauguration, in actuality David was again undercutting Napoleon's imperialistic message, one that wanted to push France's memory of Revolution to the side in order for ideas of empire to be accepted. After all, Napoleon was not the fulfillment of Revolutionary ideals. On the contrary, Napoleon would come to represent the tyranny that Revolutionary martyrs gave their lives to eradicate. Thus in his great Napoleonic series – one that, on the surface, celebrates the glories of empire – David found himself the pageant-master of the ultimate Revolutionary festival.

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<sup>595</sup> See Mona Ozouf, *Festivals and the French Revolution*.

## CONCLUSION

### Freedom in Exile

Nous ne nous entendrons jamais, mon bon ami, tant que vous vous persuaderez qu'on ne peut être heureux qu'en France; moi je suis bien fondé à penser le contraire. Depuis mon retour de Rome en 1781, je n'ai jamais cessé d'y être persécuté, tourmenté dans mes travaux par tous les moyens les plus odieux, et si le ciel ne m'avait pas favorisé d'une certaine force de tête, j'aurais pu y succomber... Vous m'aimez, mon bon ami, vous ne voulez que mon bonheur et ma tranquillité; eh bien! soyez content, vos vœux sont remplis; laissez-moi jouir en paix du repos que j'éprouve en ce pays et qui m'a été inconnu jusqu'à présent.<sup>596</sup>

In 1816, following the fall of Napoleon and the restoration of the Bourbon dynasty, Jacques-Louis David was exiled to Brussels having voted for the death of the king in 1793 and swearing allegiance to Napoleon during the Hundred Days. Despite frequent pleas from students and friends, David refused to return to France and would ultimately die in Brussels in 1825. Despite his exile, David gained a new daring sense of artistic freedom and creative energy, all the while surrounding himself in a French milieu and creating works intended for a French audience. It was David's hope, as his active correspondence during these last years reveal, that he could continue to influence the direction of the French School from abroad. David's paintings executed in Brussels – including *Amor and Psyche* (1817), *The Farwell of Telemachus and Eucharis* (1819), *The Anger of Achilles* (1819), and *Mars Disarmed by Venus and the Graces* (1824) – can best be described as experimental, exploratory, and innovative (Fig. 146).<sup>597</sup> As we have seen in throughout this study, David's oeuvre is characterized by his ability to transform his style, technique, compositional arrangement, and choice of subject to meet the demands of an image and the circumstances surrounding its creation.

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<sup>596</sup> Letter from Jacques-Louis David to Antoine-Jean Gros, 2 Nov. 1819, Brussels. Reproduced in Wildenstein, no. 1756.

<sup>597</sup> Johnson, *Art in Metamorphosis*, 222.

Yet the originality, innovation, and complexity of David's works created in exile was, with rare exception, largely lost on contemporary viewers and critics.<sup>598</sup> It has only been in recent decades, thanks principally to the scholarship of Dorothy Johnson, that the artist's late work – his corpus of drawings, portraits, genre and major mythological paintings – has been given the attention it deserves.<sup>599</sup> Despite this reexamination of David's late period, little attention has been paid to the significance of the architecture in David's artistic tour-de-force executed in Brussels, *Mars Disarmed by Venus and the Graces*, specifically in connection with the architecture represented in earlier mythological works by the artist completed in Paris: *The Loves of Paris and Helen* (1789) and *Sappho, Phaon and Amor* (1809). David's relationship with architecture did not end with his exile to Brussels. While his period in exile was largely characterized by artistic transformation and the further exploration of mythological themes, David nonetheless continued to place architecture prominently in his work as he had throughout his career. It is my hope that, through future research, the significance of the architecture in the aforementioned works can be fully revealed.

David, Ingres, and the Architectural Legacy of the  
Nineteenth-Century

L'apparition de *l'Apothéose d'Homère* marque la limite où s'arrête pour nous l'histoire de l'école de David... Voilà soixante-quatorze ans que l'influence de cette école règne (1780-1854) en

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<sup>598</sup> Baudelaire was one of the view contemporary critics who valued David's late works. See Johnson, *Art in Metamorphosis*, 221 and Charles Baudelaire, "Salon de 1859," in *Oeuvres complètes*, ed. C. Pichois (Paris, 1976), II: 610-611.

<sup>599</sup> Dorothy Johnson's *Jacques-Louis David: Art in Metamorphosis* (Princeton, 1993) ignited a surge of interest in David's late works. Other recent texts that seek to place importance on David's art created in exile include Mark Ledbury, ed., *David after David: Essays on the Later Work* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2007); Philippe Bordes, *Jacques-Louis David: Empire to Exile* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2005); and Dorothy Johnson, *Jacques-Louis David: The Farwell of Telemachus and Eucharis* (Los Angeles: The Getty Research Institute, 1997).

France, et c'est M. Ingres qui est chargé maintenant de conserver et de transmettre ce précieux héritage.<sup>600</sup>

This study has demonstrated the significant role architecture played throughout the oeuvre of Jacques-Louis David. I have argued that David turned to the language of architecture to imbue his works with added meaning, using the medium, as he often did, in symbolic and metaphorical ways. This unique dialogue with architecture did not die with David, and it is for this reason that this discussion is vital not only to Davidian studies but also to the broader context of nineteenth-century French art. This symbolic use of architecture and its cultural associations was continued by a number of David's students including Drouais, Girodet, and Ingres. In these final pages, I would like to briefly examine Ingres's inherited interest in architecture by analyzing a select work completed by the artist in 1840: *Antiochus and Stratonice* (Musée Condé, Chantilly) (Fig. 147). It seems fitting that, to end my discussion of David and architecture, I return to the theme of Antiochus and Stratonice in art – a subject that, as we know, finally afforded David the Prix de Rome at the onset of his remarkable career (see Fig. 2).

Before I embark on an examination of Ingres's fascinating painting, we must first acknowledge the influence of Rome on Ingres's conception of architecture. Like David, Ingres was remarkably affected by the art, architecture, and culture of Italy.<sup>601</sup> During his stay at the Villa Medici from 1806-1811, Ingres was ignited by a rediscovery of the works of Raphael and the potential for what Stéphane Guégan has called “a classicism detached from the knee-jerk antiquarianism”.<sup>602</sup> There has been a traditional acceptance in the Ingres literature that both teacher and pupil experienced a profound opposition to

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<sup>600</sup> Delécluze, 397.

<sup>601</sup> Andrew Carrington Shelton, “From Making History to Living Legend: The Mystification of M. Ingres” (Ph.D. diss., New York University, 1997), 321.

<sup>602</sup> Stéphane Guégan, “Ingres and David: Remarks on a Persistent Misunderstanding,” in *David After David*, 271.

one another.<sup>603</sup> Simply put, Ingres simultaneously rejected and accepted the Davidian model. While a professional competitiveness between the two painters certainly existed, recent scholarship (as well as the 2006 Ingres retrospective at the Louvre) has attempted to place Ingres's aesthetic rupture with David, as well as the components of classicism that he upheld, within the larger context of the Davidian heritage.<sup>604</sup> It is from this perspective that I will consider the architecture and its significance in Ingres's *Antiochus and Stratonice* and, moreover, the striking architectural components that exist throughout the artist's oeuvre.

Ingres's *Stratonice* is a marvelously complex work. Before I begin, let it be said that a thorough investigation of the painting, its symbolism, emotionalism, oedipal associations, and creative independence would require more space than this conclusion will allow. In her recent reexamination of the artist and his works, Susan Siegfried has devoted nearly a chapter to the painting and specifically the architectural environment constructed by Ingres and its significance to the work as a whole.<sup>605</sup> It is worth briefly recounting here the story of Antiochus and Stratonice in order to fully understand Siegfried's reading of the interior space in Ingres's painting. It is, above all, a story of forbidden love. The drama takes place in Syria and tells the story of Antiochus, a young Macedonian prince, who was dying for the love of his stepmother, Stratonice. The cause of his mysterious malady was discovered by the court physician, Etasistratus, who observed that the boy's pulse rose when the queen entered the room. In a desperate

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<sup>603</sup> See Henry Lapauze, *Ingres, sa vie and son oeuvre (1780-1867) d'après des documents inédits* (Paris: G. Petit, 1911).

<sup>604</sup> See principally Guégan, "Ingres and David: Remarks on a Persistent Misunderstanding," in *David After David*, 271-287; Vincent Pomarède et al., *Ingres*, exh. cat. (Paris: Gallimard/Musée du Louvre, 2006); and Norman Bryson, *Tradition and Desire*, 124-75.

<sup>605</sup> See Siegfried, *Ingres: Painting Reimagined*, 214-235.



attempt to save Antiochus, the boy's father, Seleucus, gave Stratonice to be married to his son – along with half of the kingdom for them to rule together.<sup>606</sup>

In Ingres's painting (dramatically more so than in David's version), we are struck by the richness of the décor – the influence of the Orient, the inundation of luxurious textures, materials, antique patterns, and sumptuous colors. Through the use of interior decoration and architecture, Ingres has visually transported the viewer to an exotic land. When the painting was exhibited publicly for the first time in 1846, critics seemed unsure how to approach the figures in relation to the interior. For example, the critic Paul Mantz writes:

Ce qu'on voit d'abord dans la *Stratonice*, c'est une colonne, puis des draperies, puis des murailles peintes, puis un lit. Ce n'est qu'après de longues recherches qu'on aperçoit, dans ce lit, la figure du jeune Antiochus, et d'un autre côté une femme immobile, Stratonice, et ensuite un médecin, et enfin des serviteurs égarés dans la chambre, agenouillés, accroupis, allant et venant comme des ombres... Pas d'unité, pas de center, les figures, jetées comme au hasard, n'ont entre elles aucun lien... Tout s'éparpille, tout se disperse sans raison.<sup>607</sup>

The interior is dominated by a large bed constructed in the style of a Greek temple (complete with Corinthian columns, an entablature, and acroterion) that is partially enveloped by a curtain which reveals the love-sick Antiochus, Seleucus, and Etasistratus below. To the left of the bed, the eerie pale pink figure of Stratonice is visible before a monumental column that extends beyond the picture plane. Unlike the figure of

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<sup>606</sup> Ancient accounts of the story of Antiochus and Stratonice which, it is believed, was based on real historical figures, can be found in Plutarch's *Life of Demetrius* (early first century CE), Appian's *Roman History* (second century CE), and writings by Lucian (second century CE). It is likely that Ingres referred to the texts by Plutarch and Lucian for Antiochus and Stratonice, as both works were paraphrased by Ingres in his notebooks. See Siegfried, *Painting Reimagined*, 216-217; and Wolfgang Stechow, "'The Love of Antiochus and Faire Stratonica' in Art," *Art Bulletin* 27 (Dec. 1945): 221-37.

<sup>607</sup> Paul Mantz, "Beaux-arts: Une exposition hors du Louvre: M. Ingres et son école," *L'artiste*, 4th ser., 5 (18 Jan. 1846): 198-201. Reprinted in Fondation Taylor, *Le Baron Taylor, l'association des artistes et l'exposition du Bazar Bonne-Nouvelle en 1846* (Paris: Fondation Taylor, 1995), 260.

Stratonice in David's painting (who is presented as an *exemplus virtutis*), Ingres's female protagonist appears dangerous both in her sexuality and in her potential to change the course of politics.

In *Ingres: Reimagined*, Siegfried notes the important association of Stratonice with the column:

... The unreal coloring of Stratonice, a luminous pale pink that detaches itself from the surround so that she seems an apparition, enhances the suggestion that she is a liminal figure, neither inside nor outside the room. The stone column anchors her and lends her substance. She mimics its verticality and pale coloring, as the folds of her drapery echo its fluting... Far from being a phallic form, the column has feminine connotations. Ingres's repeated association of Stratonice with it was probably indebted to classical (Vitruvian) architectural theory, which maintained that columns had their origins in the body of a Corinthian maiden... 608

Siegfried continues in her discussion of the interplay of the figures and their environment in Ingres's painting:

... If the column and the threshold are Stratonice's architectural elements, the bed belongs to the men... He [Ingres] drew out the funerary connotation of this temple type or *naiskos* to define the bed as a place of impending death. He plunged the baldachin into shadow and draped one of its corners with a dark green curtain, creating a shadowy enclosure that contrasts with the strong light falling on Stratonice and filtering across the other half of the room. The contrast between dark and light divides the canvas along its diagonal axis, a little like an inversion of the *Lictors Returning to Brutus the Bodies of his Sons* by David...

While the author does mention the implementation of shadow (a technique frequently utilized by David to express the psychological state of the central figure in his paintings), she omits any reference to David's innovative use of architecture as a source of inspiration for Ingres's utilization of the aforementioned architectural devices. The most important Davidian architectural reference in Ingres's painting is this association of

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608 Siegfried, *Ingres: Painting Reimagined*, 224-225.

Stratonice with the column.<sup>609</sup> As was demonstrated previously in this study, David used the stark, Doric column shafts in the *Oath of the Horatii* to mimic and reinforce the figures of the Horatii brothers in the foreground (see Fig. 47). In the *Oath*, the columns emphasize the masculinity and strength of the male figures, just as the Corinthian column that supports Stratonice physically supports her and echoes her femininity. Likewise, we see in the *Stratonice*, as in David's *Oath of the Horatii*, the gendered division of space. In the *Oath* (as well as in the *Brutus*), David situates the female figures on the right of the composition while the men are positioned on the left. In Ingres's painting, Stratonice is similarly isolated from the male figures who exist on the right of the image. I would suggest, therefore, that Ingres must have looked to David's canonical painting in his decision to associate Stratonice with the column, as well as in this separation of male and female figures within the built environment. Above all, one cannot ignore the theatrical staging present in Ingres's painting – a characteristic that is unquestionably of Davidian influence.

The impact of the *Oath* on Ingres is well-known. The artist completed a drawing after David's famous painting in circa 1800, likely with the intent of it being engraved (Fig. 148).<sup>610</sup> By copying David's work, Ingres would have gained a clear understanding of his master's use of architecture while attempting to define his own aesthetic style. I would suggest that the influence of architecture on Ingres's artistic development was likely enhanced by access to David's Roman albums prior to his own departure for the Eternal City. As this study has demonstrated, this kind of shared artistic

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<sup>609</sup> This reference is even more pronounced in a drawing for the *Antiochus and Stratonice* executed by Ingres in circa 1838 (located in The Cleveland Museum of Art), in which the temple-like bed in the final painting has been removed to reveal two massive columns. This interplay of the columns and their reference to the figures in the foreground bears a strong resemblance to the architecture and its symbolic importance in the *Oath of the Horatii*.

<sup>610</sup> Guégan, 275.

exchange did exist and, as a result, must have had an effect on Ingres's architectural curiosity and inventiveness. Ingres's drawings completed during his period as a Prix de Rome recipient – including his *View of the Villa Medici* (1807) and *The Stairway of Santa Maria d'Aracoeli in Rome* (1806-20) – reveal an interest in architectural exactitude, clarity of line, and symbolic spaces (Fig. 149). It is my hope that future research will afford me the opportunity to more fully explore Ingres's Italian drawings and their connection with David's symbolic language of architecture.

The association of the architectural interior with politics – seen in the majority of works by David discussed in this study – also exists in Ingres's painting of *Antiochus and Stratonice*. The duc d'Orléans, the figure-head of the ruling family, was the patron of the *Stratonice*, and the painting was on display at his apartments in the Tuileries Palace in Paris as well as for the court at Saint-Cloud.<sup>611</sup> Like David's *Oath of the Horatii* and the *Lictors Returning to Brutus the Bodies of his Sons*, Ingres's painting can be seen as a commentary on the importance of civic duty over personal, familial matters (Seleucus has, after all, relinquished his wife to save his son, thus ensuring the survival of the kingdom). Of course the irony in all this is that the painting, which I suggest is a convoluted image of public servitude based in the Davidian tradition, was initially only seen in private, aristocratic circles. We are left to question, therefore, the political dimensions surrounding the duc d'Orléans and his dynastic ambitions (which were never realized due to his premature death in 1842) and the representation of such ambition in Ingres's painting through his use of grand architecture and opulent décor.<sup>612</sup>

Ingres's symbolic use of architecture is by no means relegated to his Italian drawings and its implementation in the *Stratonice*. Works throughout Ingres's oeuvre –

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611 Siegfried, *Ingres: Painting Reimagined*, 214.

612 See Nora Heimann, "The Road to Thebes: A Consideration of Ingres's *Antiochus and Stratonice*," *Rutgers Art Review* II (1990): 1-20.

including *Virgil Reading the 'Aeneid' to Augustus, Octavia, and Livia* of 1812, *The Apotheosis of Homer* of 1827 (as well as the drawing, *Homer Deified* of 1865), and the *Martyrdom of Saint Symphorien* of 1834 – bear witness to his interest in and reliance on an architectural language acquired in David's atelier (Fig. 150). The importance of architecture throughout Ingres's career can be extended to include a larger preoccupation with architecture and the construction of urban space that existed in Paris in the nineteenth-century. The influence of Haussmannization had a tremendous impact on the way people saw and experienced Paris. The dream of creating a rational, ordered space that had its origins in the eighteenth-century finally had come to fruition. This interest in a "modern" Paris, its buildings programs, and the effects of industrialization is unavoidable in art created during the later nineteenth-century. Countless artists including Monet, Manet, and Caillebotte were fixated on these ideas and included architectural elements prominently in their work, often as a demonstration of "progress" – reflections on modern life – and its visual ramifications on the Parisian environment. Thus while styles changed, new subjects were adopted, and artistic techniques evolved, the complex and symbolic language of architecture in drawing and painting – one which was reinvigorated and fully exploited by David in the eighteenth-century – persevered. It is for this reason, among many others, that David is and shall always be the father of modern art.

APPENDIX: FIGURES



Figure A1. Jacques-Louis David, *The Death of Seneca*, 1773, oil on canvas, Musée du Petit Palais, Paris.



Figure A2. Jacques-Louis David, *Antiochus and Stratonice*, 1774, oil on canvas, École Nationale Supérieure des Beaux-Arts, Paris.





Figure A3. Paris, Place Louis XV (Place de la Concorde). Engraving by Née after Lespinasse, 1782. Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris.



Figure A4. Jacques-Louis David, *The Blinding of Elymas, after the Zuccari*, c. 1775-80, pen and black ink, Washington, The National Gallery of Art.



Figure A5. Jacques-Louis David, *The Healing of the Cripple at Lystra, after the Zuccari*, c. 1775-80, pen and black ink with black and gray wash, Musée du Louvre, Paris.

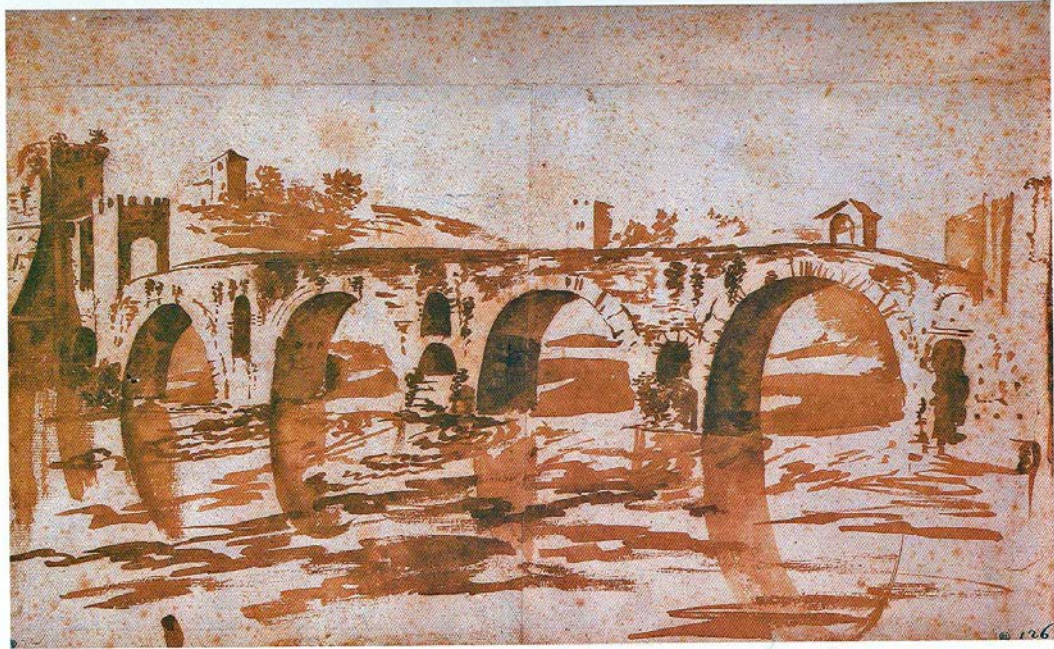


Figure A6. Nicolas Poussin, *The Ponte Molle*, c. 1624, brush, brown wash, black chalk underdrawing, École Nationale Supérieure des Beaux-Arts, Paris.



Figure A7. Nicolas Poussin, *View of Rome from the Monte Mario*, 1625, pen, gray wash over black chalk, Graphische Sammlung Albertina, Vienna.



Figure A8. Jacques-Louis David, *Paysage avec une fortification et deux personnages au premier plan*, c. 1775-80, The Pierpont Morgan Library, New York.



Figure A9. Claude-Joseph Vernet, *Jousting on the River Tiber at Rome*, 1750, oil on canvas, The National Gallery, London.



Figure A10. Gaspar van Wittel (Gaspere Vanvittelli), *The Castel S. Angelo and the Ponte S. Angelo from the South*, c. 1700-1710, oil on canvas, private collection, New York.





Figure A11. Jacques-Louis David, *La Place du Panthéon à Rome avec une calèche traversant la place sur la gauche, des personnages autour d'une table*, c. 1775-80, pen and black ink with black and gray wash, Washington, The National Gallery of Art.

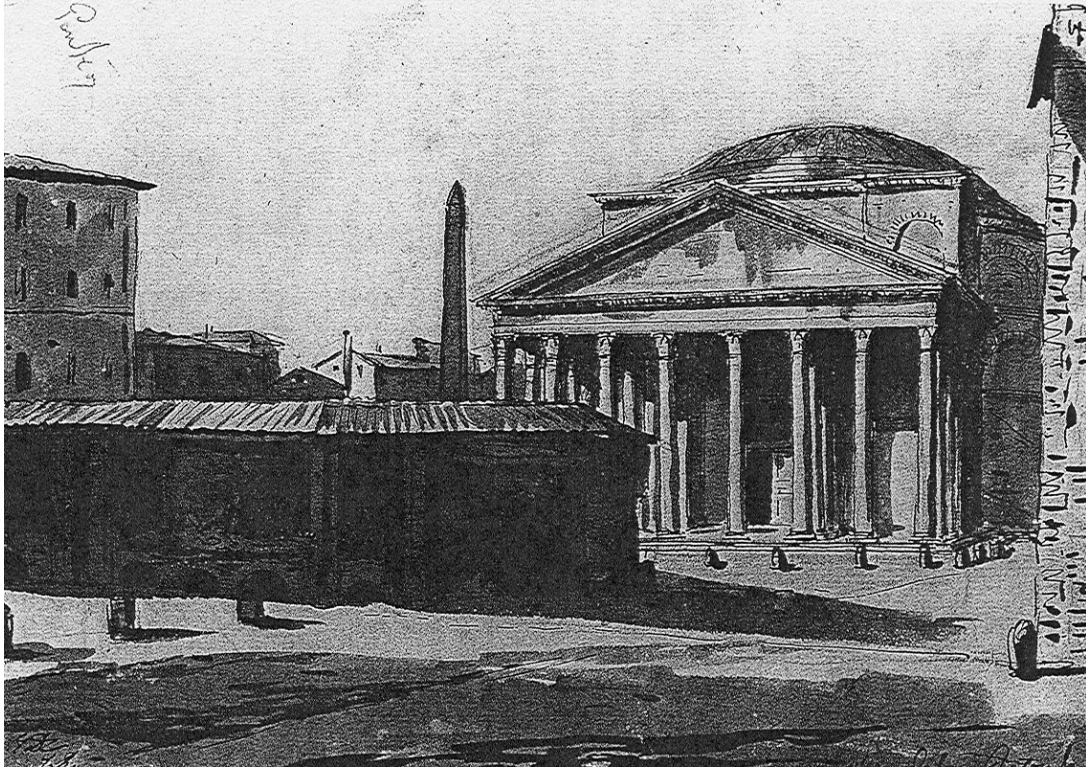


Figure A12. Jacques-Louis David, *Vue du Panthéon à Rome*, c. 1775-80, pen and black ink with black and gray wash, Washington, The National Gallery of Art.



Figure A13. Giovanni Battista Piranesi, *Veduta del Pantheon d'Agrippa oggi Chiesa di S. Maria ad Martyre*, engraving from *Vedute di Roma*, 1778.

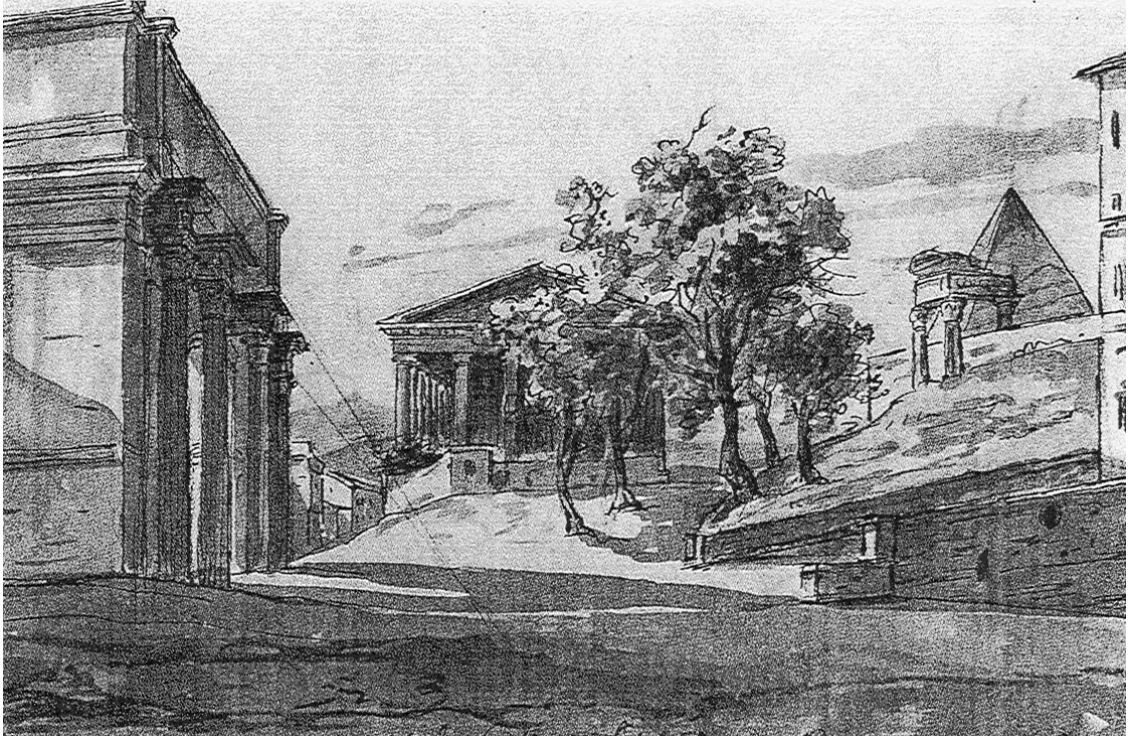


Figure A14. Jacques-Louis David, *Vue du Forum, avec l'arc de Septime Sévère*, c. 1775-80, pen and brown ink with gray and black wash, private collection, New York.



Figure A15. Giovanni Battista Piranesi, *Arco di Severo, e Caracalla*, engraving from *Le Antichità Romane I*, 1756.



Figure A16. Jacques-Louis David, *Vue intérieur du Colisée à Rome, trois personnages assis au premier plan*, c. 1775-80, pen and black ink with black and gray wash, Musée du Louvre, Paris.

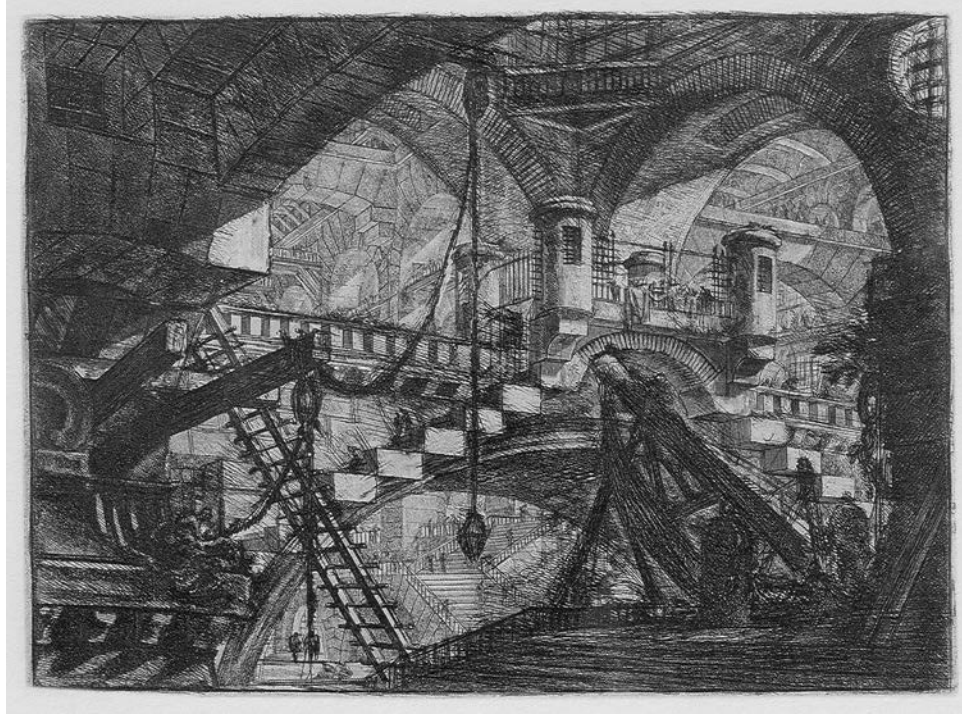


Figure A17. Giovanni Battista Piranesi, [Carcere XI] *The Arch with a Shell Ornament* (2<sup>nd</sup> state), engraving from *Invenzioni Capric. di Carceri all'acquaforte datte in luce da Giovanni Buzard in Roma Mercante al Corso*, c. 1749.



Figure A18. Giovanni Paolo Panini, *View of the Piazza del Popolo, Rome*, 1741, oil on canvas, The Nelson-Atkins Museum, Kansas City.



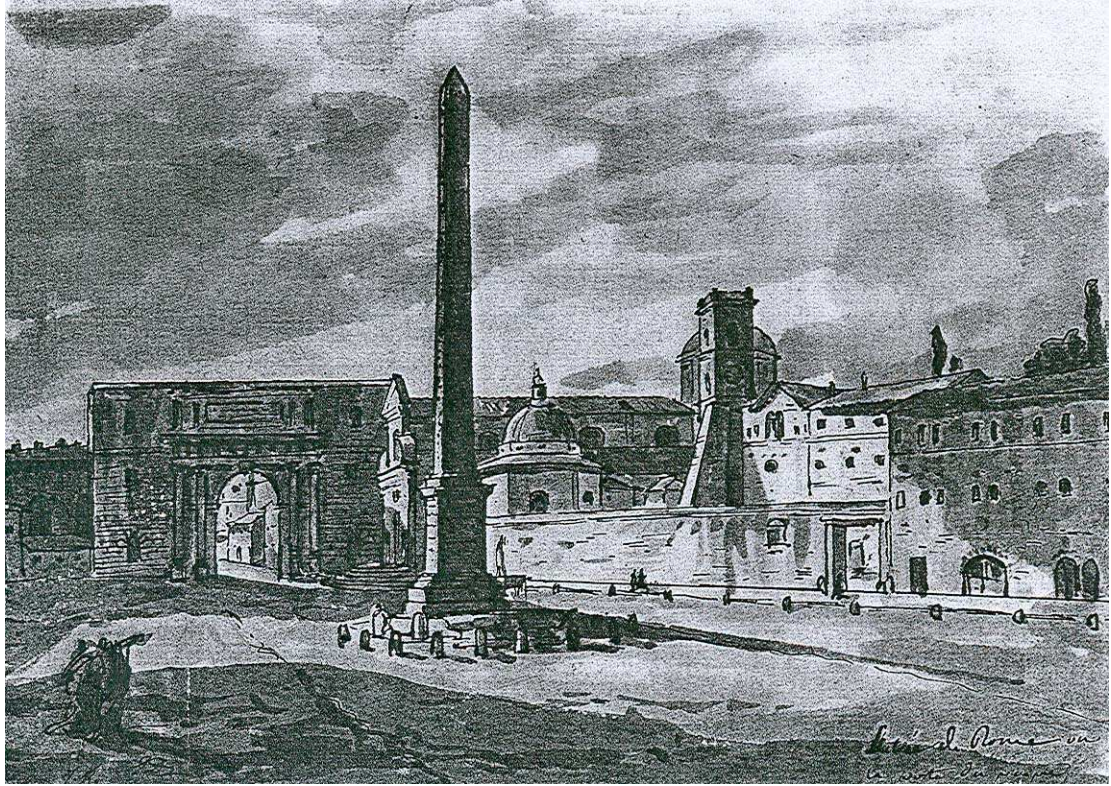


Figure A19. Jacques-Louis David, *Vue de la Porta et de la Piazza del Popolo à Rome, avec l'obélisque*, c. 1775-80, pen and brown ink with gray and black wash, Washington, The National Gallery of Art.

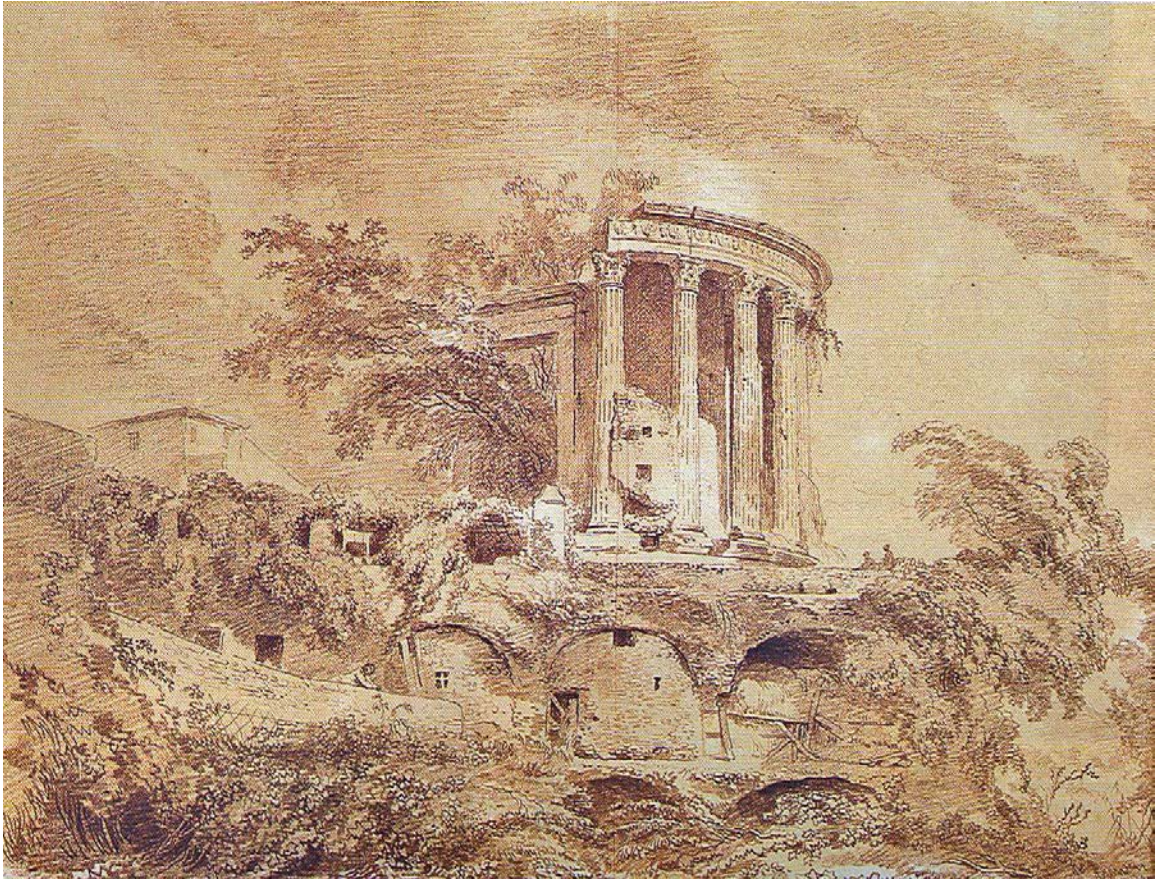


Figure A20. Jean-Honoré Fragonard, *The Temple of Vesta and the Temple of the Sibyl at Tivoli*, 1760, Musée des Beaux-Arts, Besançon.

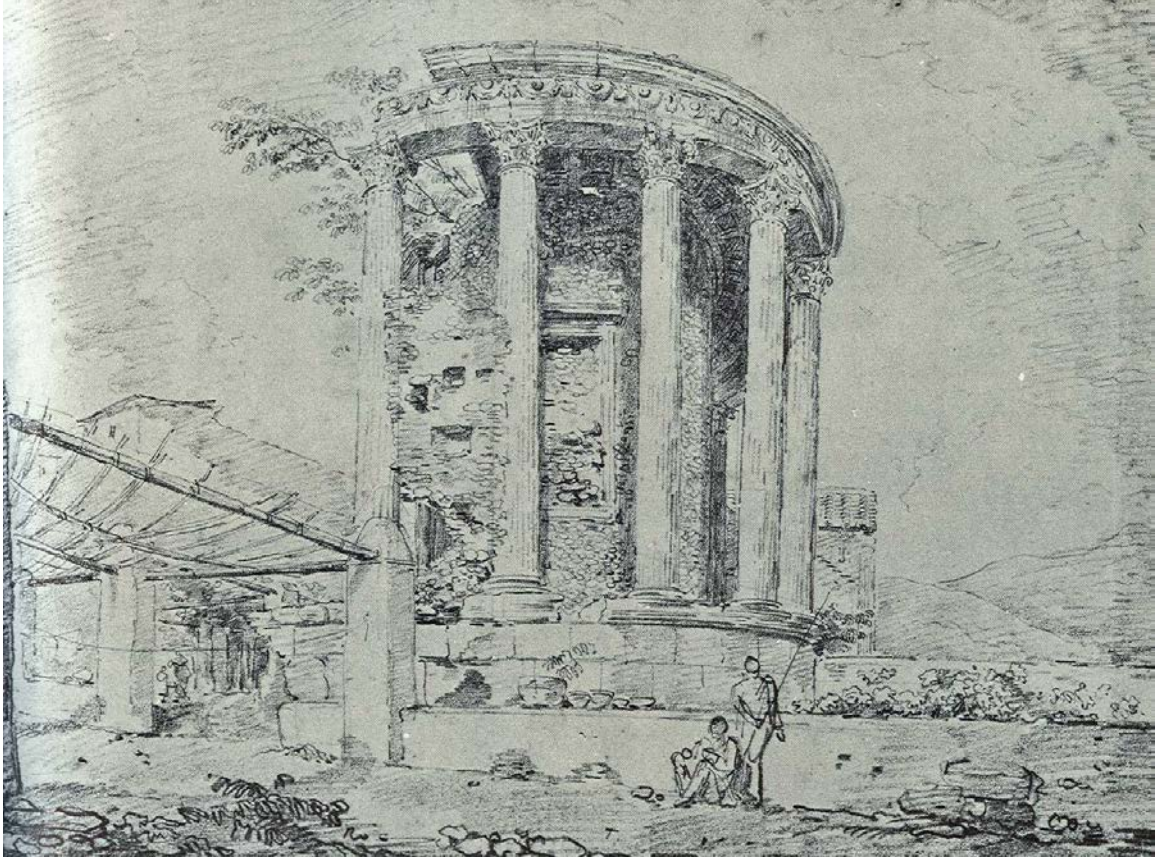


Figure A21. Hubert Robert, *The Temple of Vesta and the Temple of the Sibyl at Tivoli*, c. 1760, red chalk on off-white laid paper, Musée des Beaux-Arts, Besançon.

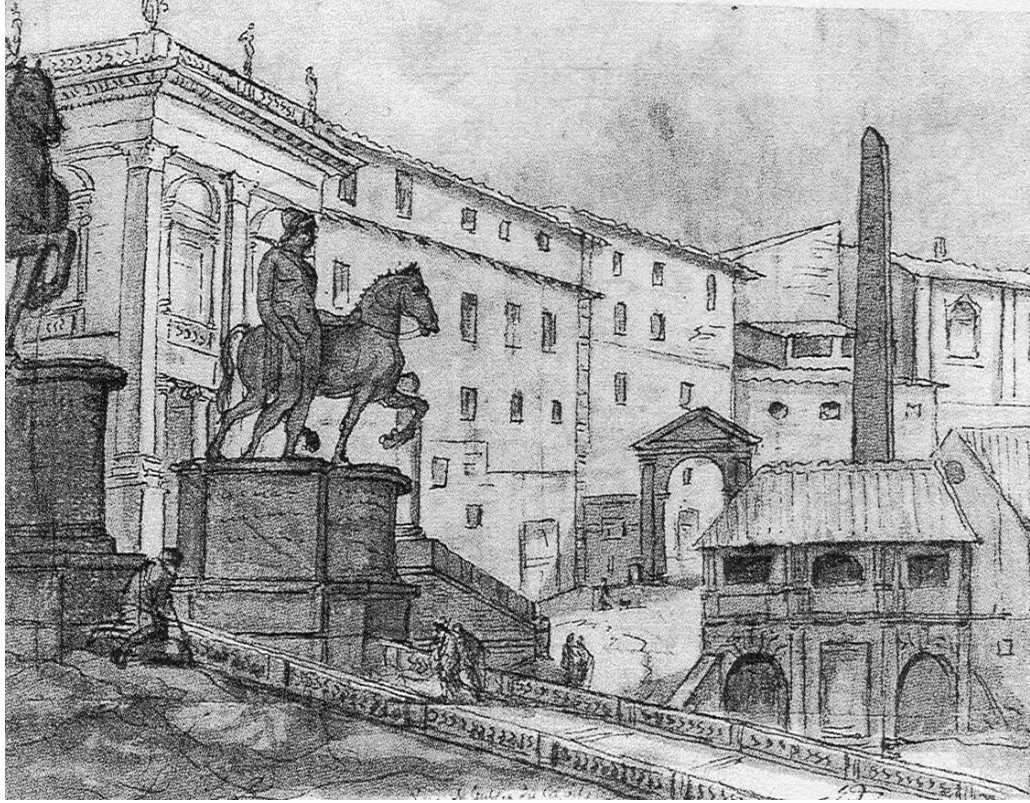


Figure A22. Jacques-Louis David, *Vue prise de la place du Capitole*, c. 1775-80, pen and black ink with gray and black wash, present location unknown.

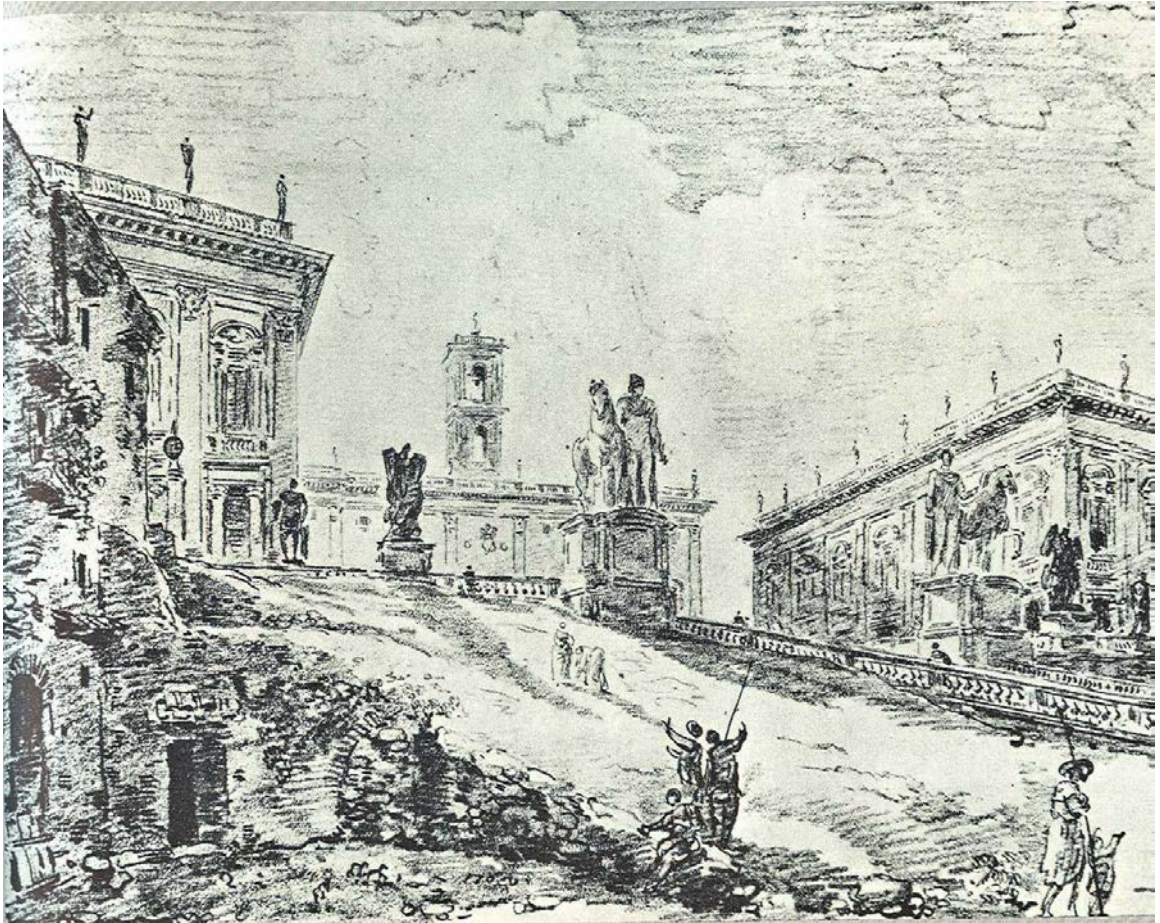


Figure A23. Hubert Robert, *Vue de la Place du Capitole*, 1762, red chalk on white laid paper, Musée des Beaux-Arts, Valence.



Figure A24. Hubert Robert, *Musiciens sur un balcon de la Villa Médicis*, c. 1764-1765, pen and brown ink, brush with brown wash and watercolor, over black chalk, on off-white laid paper, Musée du Louvre, Paris.

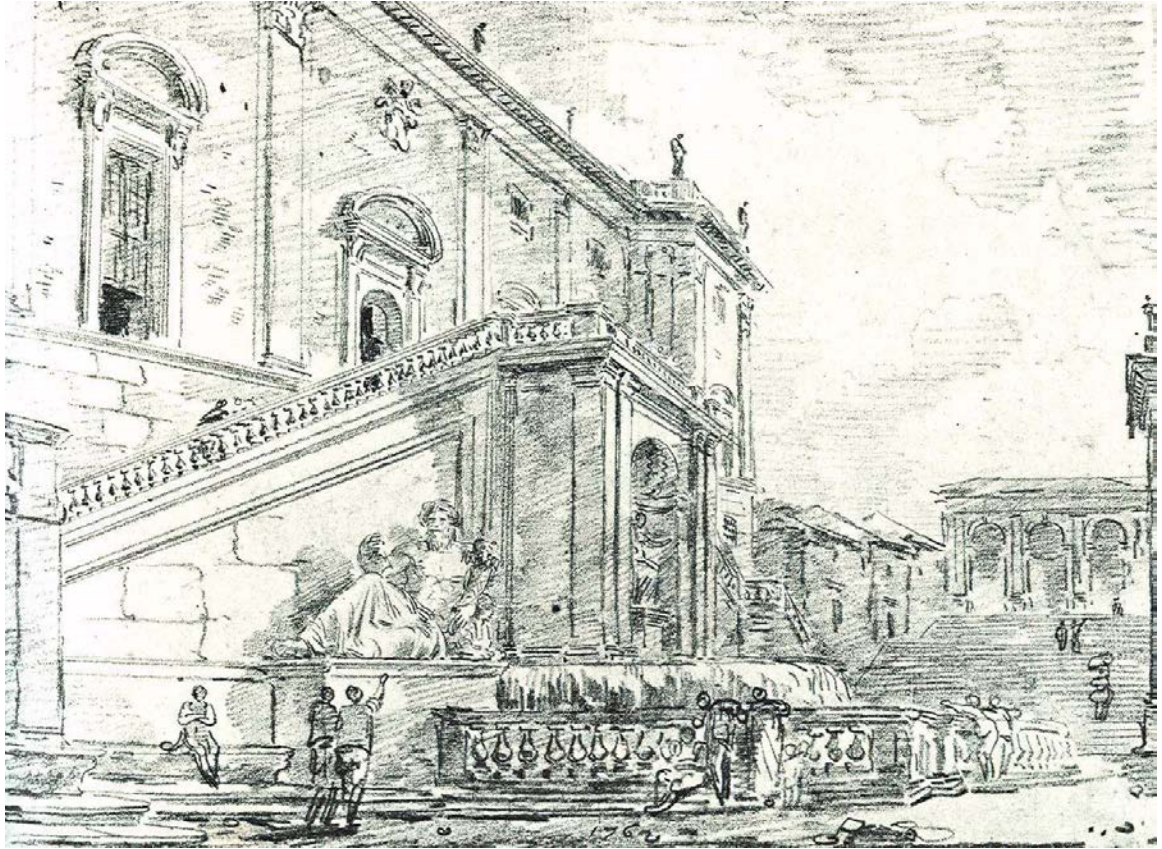


Figure A25. Hubert Robert, *Capitole, Fontaine de la Place du Capitole*, 1762, red chalk on white laid paper, Musée des Beaux-Arts, Valence.



Figure A26. Hubert Robert, *Interieur du Colisée*, 1759, oil on canvas, Musée du Louvre, Paris.





Figure A27. Jacques-Louis David, *Vue de la loggia de la Villa Médicis à Rome*, c. 1775-80, The Pierpont Morgan Library, New York.



Figure A28. Hubert Robert, *Vue de la loggia de la Villa Médicis*, 1777, oil on canvas, private collection, Paris.



Figure A29. Hubert Robert, *Portique de la villa romaine avec personnages*, c. 1760, Musée du Louvre, Paris.

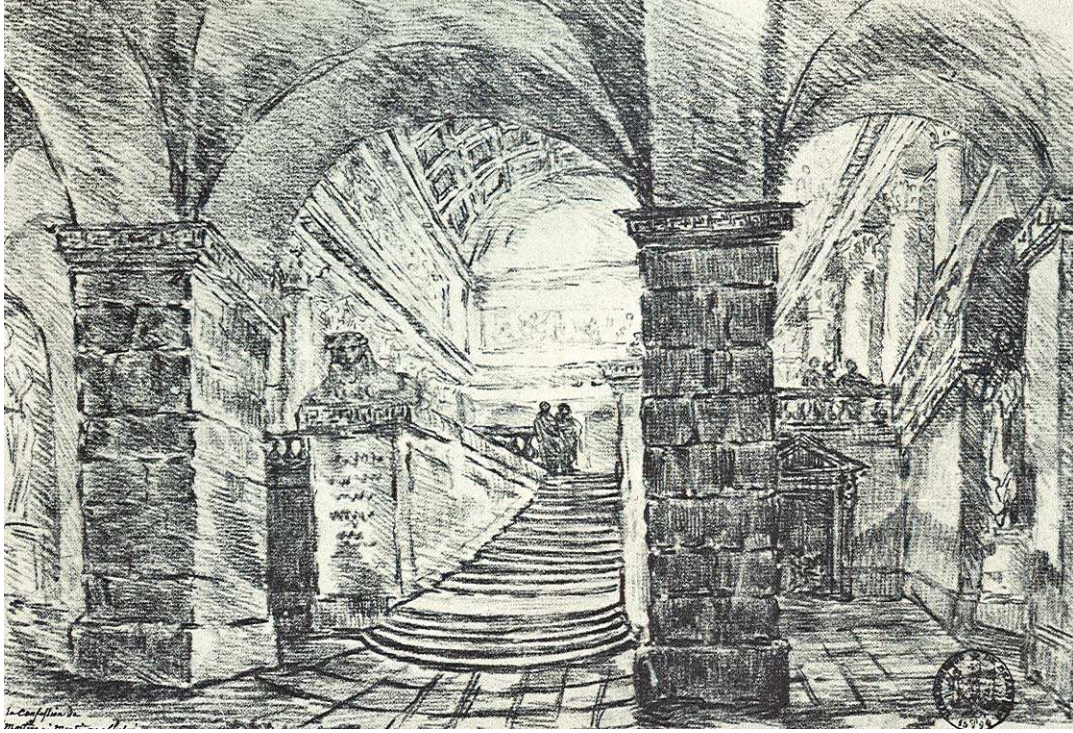


Figure A30. Jean-François-Thérèse Chalgrin, *Crypt of San Martino, after Robert*, c. 1757?, chalk counterproof, Bibliothèque Municipale, Besançon (Collection P.-A. Pâris, album 453, no. 47).

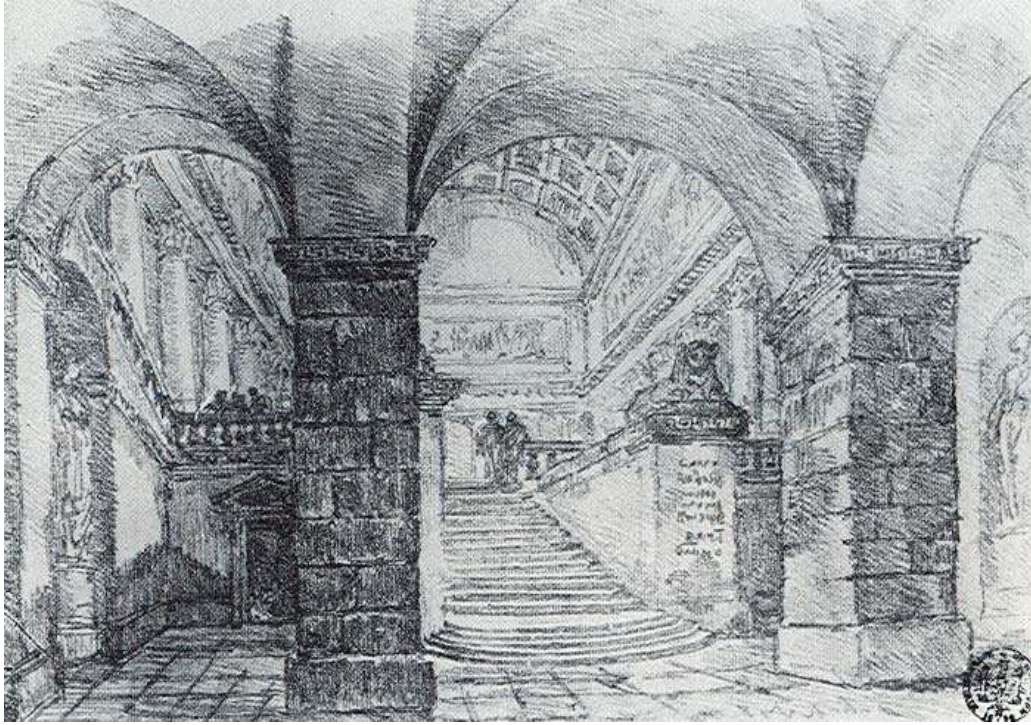


Figure A31. Hubert Robert, *San Martino ai Monte*, chalk counterproof, Bibliothèque Municipale, Besançon (Collection P.-A. Pâris, album 451, no. 49).



Figure A32. Hubert Robert, *Le Sommeil de Marat*, watercolor, pencil, and ink, c. 1793.



Figure A33. Jacques-Louis David, *St. Roch Interceding for the Plague Stricken*, 1780, oil on canvas, Musée des Beaux-Arts, Marseille.



Figure A34. Jacques-Louis David, *Portrait of Count Stanislas Potocki*, 1779, oil on canvas, Museum Palace Wilanów, Varsovie.





Figure A35. Jacques-Louis David, *Belisarius recognized by a soldier who had served under him at the moment that a woman gives him alms*, 1781, oil on canvas, Musée des Beaux-Arts, Lille.



Figure A36. François-André Vincent, *Belisarius*, 1776, oil on canvas, Musée Fabre, Montpellier.

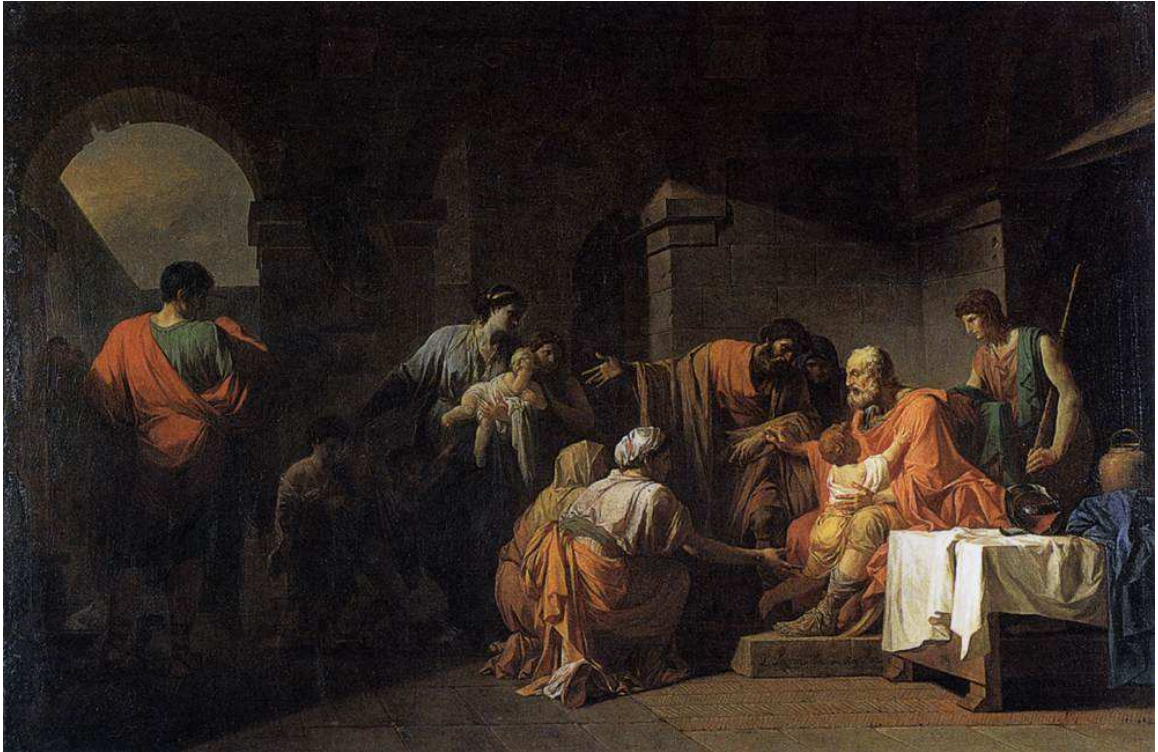


Figure A37. Jean-François-Pierre Peyron, *Belisarius receiving hospitality from a peasant who had served under him*, 1779, oil on canvas, Musée des Augustins, Toulouse.



Figure A38. Engraving after Jean-François-Pierre Peyron's *Death of Seneca* of 1773 (now lost).



Figure A39. Jacques-Louis David, study for the *Belisarius*, 1779, ink, wash, and gouache on paper, École polytechnique, Paris.



Figure A40. Jacques-Louis David, *The Death of Julius Caesar*, c. 1779, brown ink and gray wash on cream antique-laid paper, Fogg Art Museum, Harvard University Art Museum, Cambridge.



Figure A41. Jacques-Louis David, *Belisarius recognized by a soldier who had served under him at the moment that a woman gives him alms*, 1781, oil on canvas, Musée du Louvre, Paris.

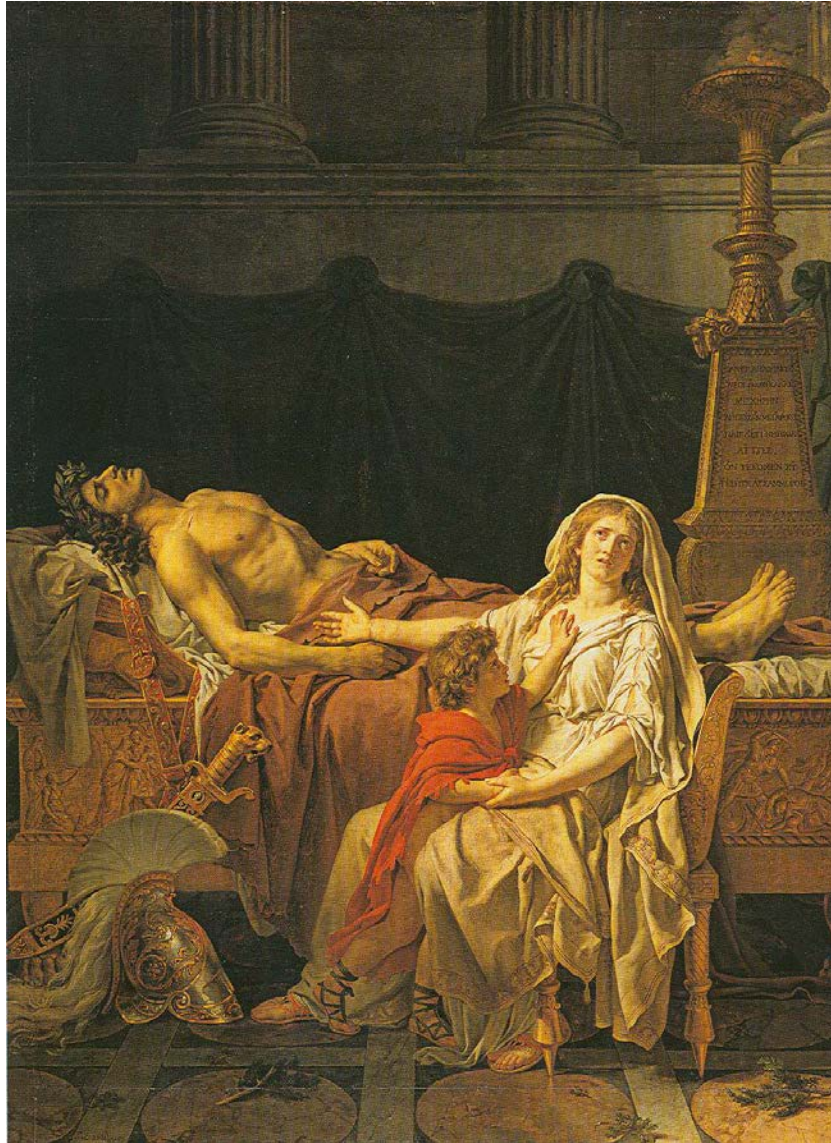


Figure A42. Jacques-Louis David, *Andromache Mourning Hector*, 1783, oil on canvas, Musée du Louvre, Paris.





Figure A43. Jacques-Louis David, *Funeral of a Hero*, c. 1780, black chalk and gouache on blue-gray paper, Crocker Art Museum, Sacramento.



Figure A44. *Andromache Mourning Hector*, engraving by D. Cuneo after Gavin Hamilton, 1764.



Figure A45. Jacques-Louis David, *Un piédestal orné de têtes de béliers et de sphinges*, c. 1775-80, black pen and gray wash, Fogg Art Museum, Harvard University Art Museum, Cambridge.





Figure A47. Jacques-Louis David, *The Oath of the Horatii*, 1784-85, oil on canvas, Musée du Louvre, Paris.



Figure A48. Jacques-Louis David, study for *The Oath of the Horatii*, c. 1784, black chalk, ink, and wash heightened with white on paper, Musée Wicar, Lille.



Figure A49. Jacques-Louis David, study for *Andromache Mourning Hector*, 1782, black chalk and gray wash, Musée du Petit Palais, Paris.



Figure A50. Jacques-Louis David, *La Cour du Palazzo Vecchio à Florence*, black pencil and gray wash, Musée du Louvre, Paris.



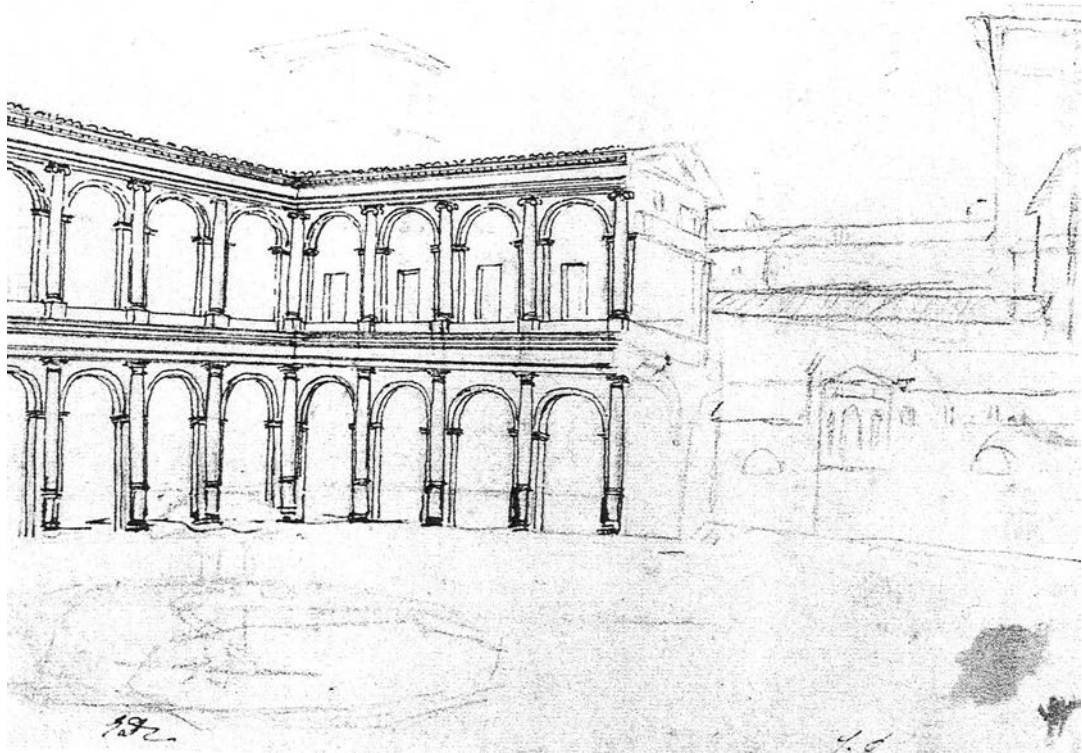


Figure A51. Jacques-Louis David, *Vue de la cour du Palazzo Venezia à Rome*, c. 1775-80, black pencil, pen and black ink, and gray wash, The Pierpont Morgan Library, New York.



Figure A52. Jacques-Louis David, *Vestibule du palais Farnèse à Rome, plusieurs personnages au premier plan à gauche, un autre assis à droite, derrière des colonnes*, c. 1775-80, pen and black ink, gray wash, and black pencil, Musée du Louvre, Paris.



Figure A53. Cancelleria, begun c. 1485, courtyard, Rome.

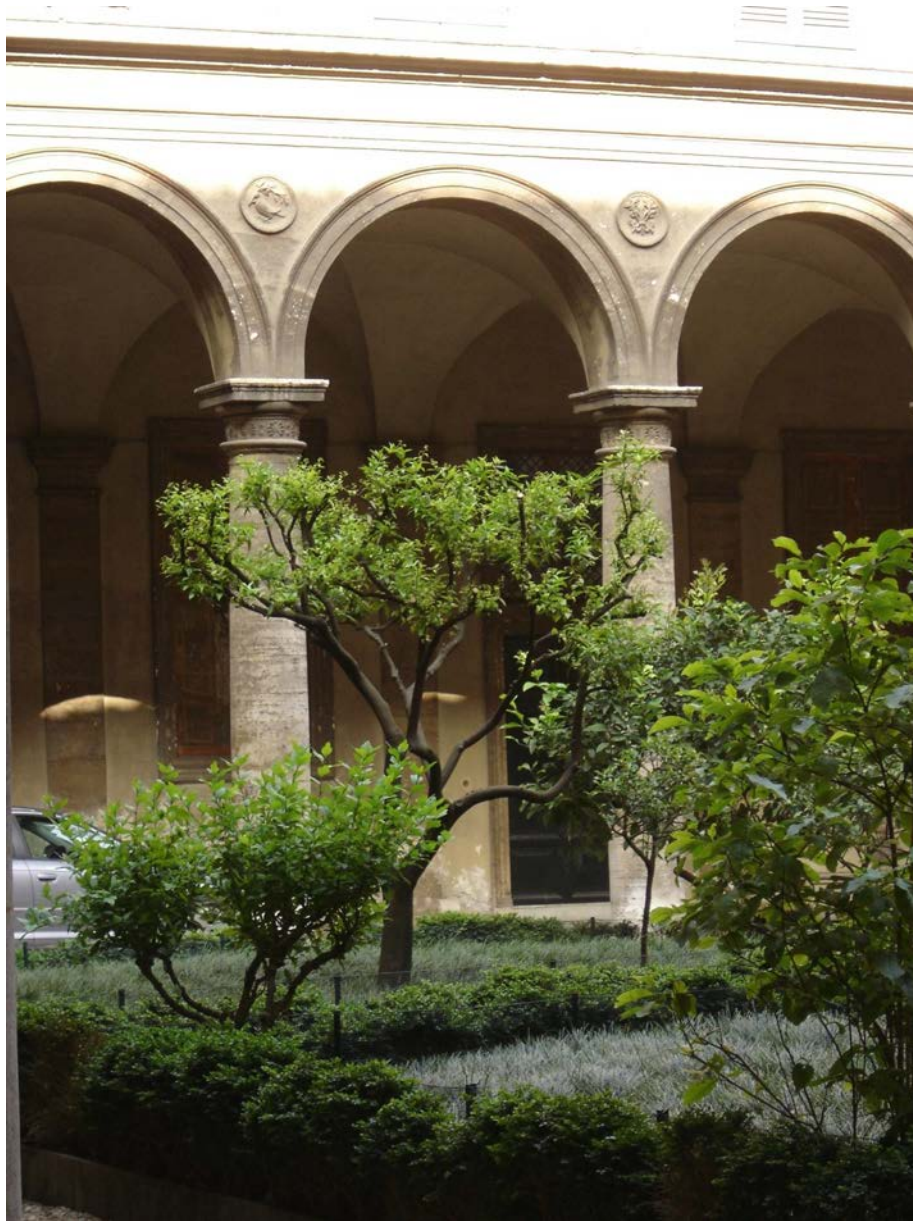


Figure A54. Palazzo Doria Pamphilj, begun c. 1505, courtyard, Rome.



Figure A55. Jean-François-Pierre Peyron, *The Funeral of Miltiades* (or *The Sacrifice of Cimon*), 1780, oil on canvas, Musée du Louvre, Paris.



Figure A56. Jean-François-Pierre Peyron, *The Funeral of Miltiades (or The Sacrifice of Cimon)*, c. 1782, etching, Joslyn Museum of Art, Omaha.



Figure A57. Jean-François-Pierre Peyron, *The Death of Socrates*, 1787, oil on canvas, Statens Museum for Kunst, Copenhagen.



Figure A58. Jacques-Louis David, *The Death of Socrates*, 1787, oil on canvas, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York.





Figure A59. Jacques-Louis David, study for *The Death of Socrates*, 1782



Figure A60. Jean-François-Pierre Peyron, *The Death of Socrates*, 1788, oil on canvas, Joslyn Art Museum, Omaha.



Figure A61. Jacques-Louis David, *The Lictors Returning to Brutus the Bodies of his Sons*, 1789, oil on canvas, Musée du Louvre, Paris.



Figure A62. Illustration for Voltaire's *Irène*, 1786, engraving by Moreau-le-Jeune and Le Mire, published 1786. Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris.



Figure A63. Jacques-Louis David, study for *The Lictors Returning to Brutus the Bodies of his Sons*, 1787, black pencil, Musée du Louvre, Paris.

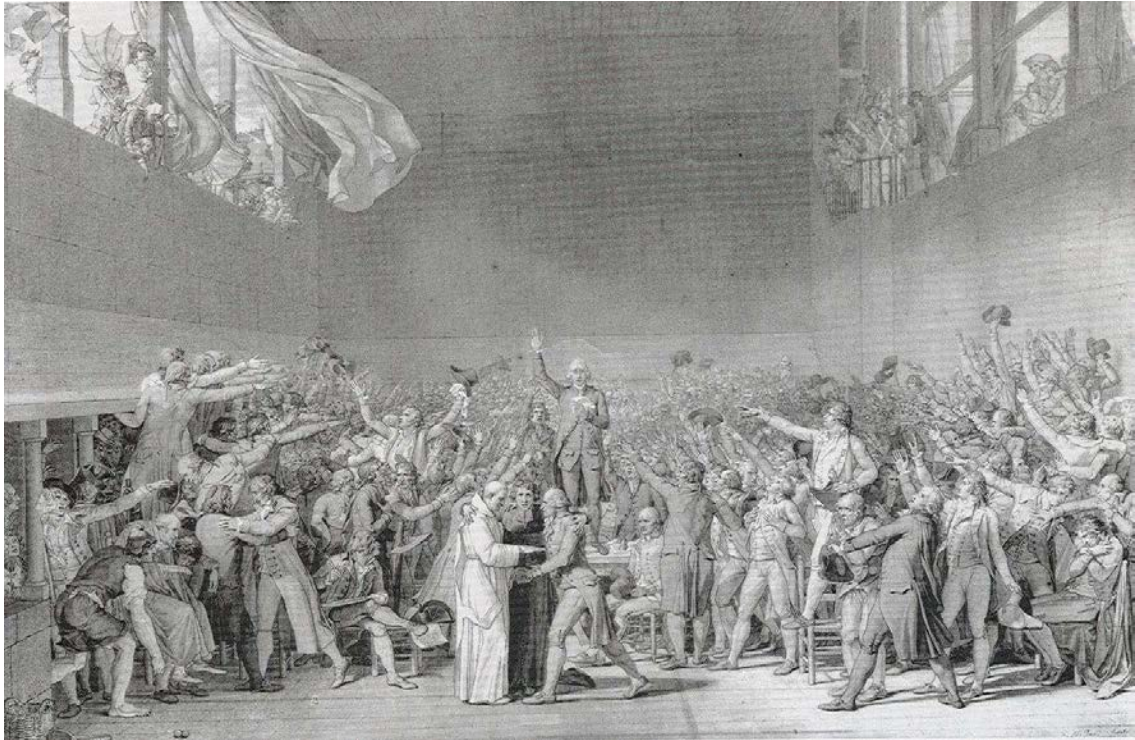


Figure A64. Jacques-Louis David, *The Oath of the Tennis Court*, 1791, pen and brown ink, brown wash, and white highlights, Musée national du Château et des Trianons, Versailles.

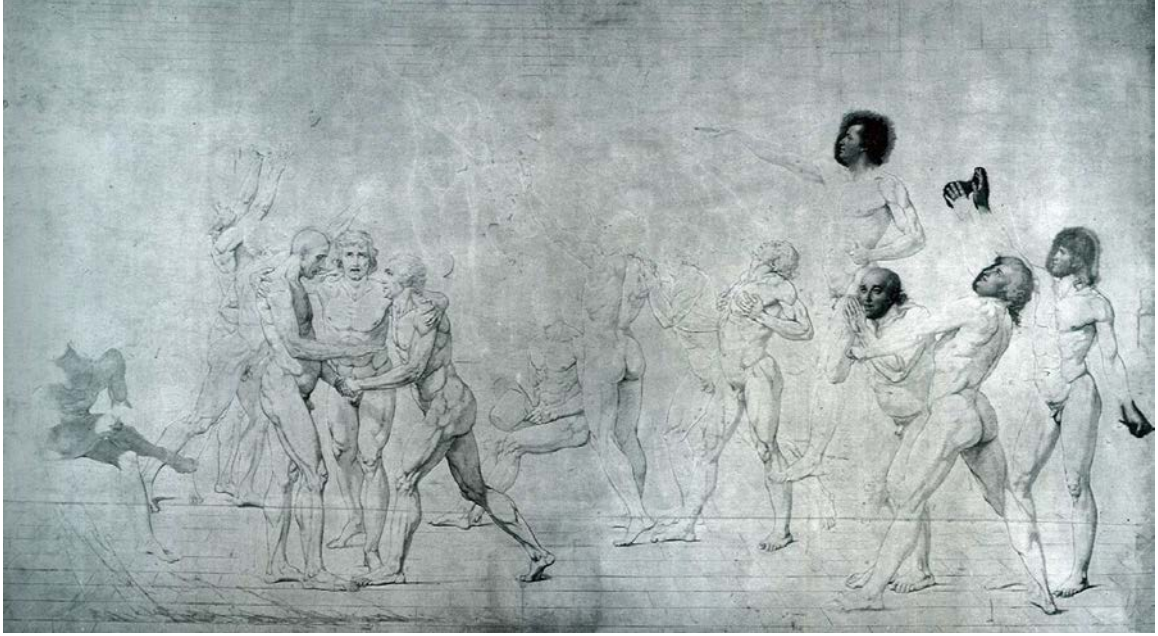


Figure A65. Jacques-Louis David, *The Oath of the Tennis Court*, fragment, Musée national du Château et des Trianons, Versailles.



Figure A66. Jacques-Louis David, *Le toit de la chapelle royale de Versailles*, c. 1790-91, black pencil, Musée du Louvre, Paris.



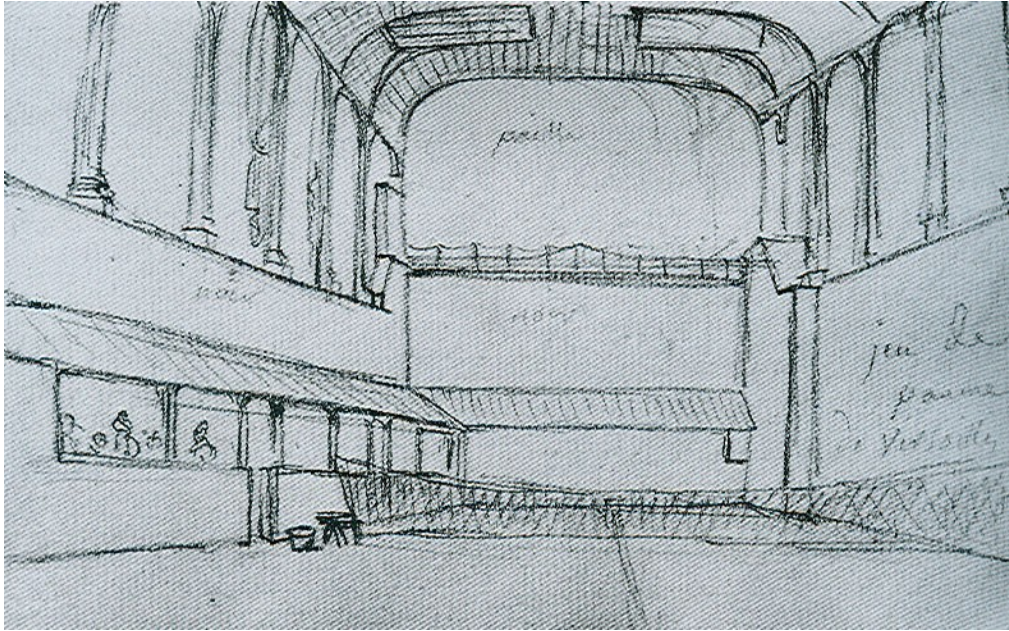


Figure A67. Jacques-Louis David, *La salle du Jeu de Paume de Versailles*, c. 1790-91, black pencil, Musée national du Château et des Trianons, Versailles.

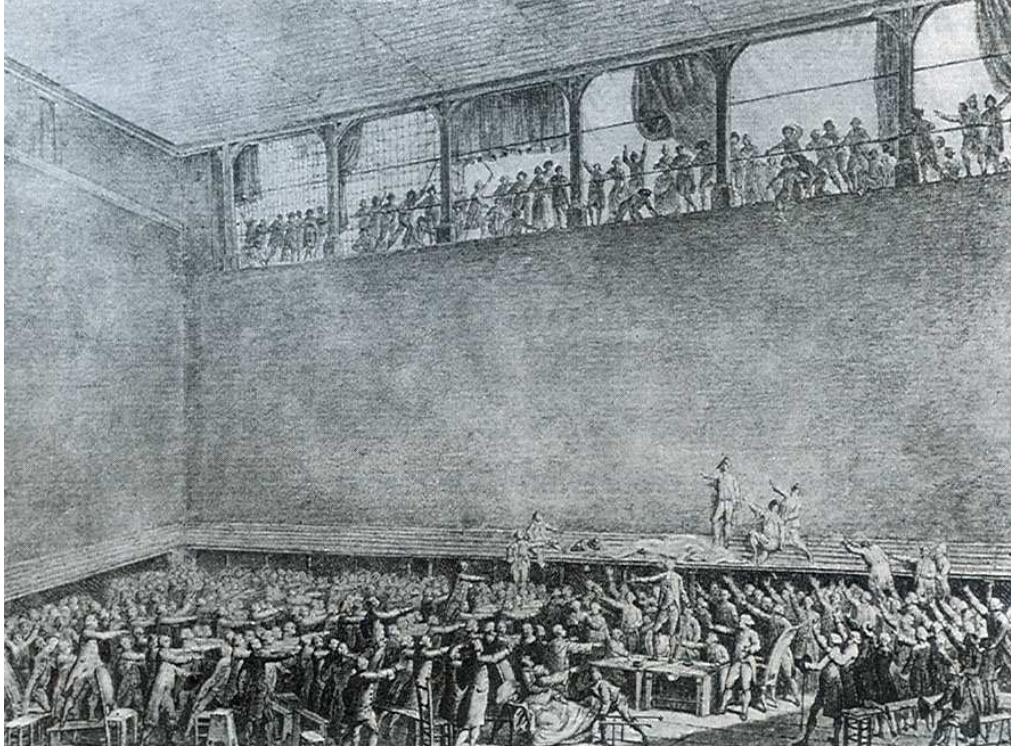


Figure A68. Jean-Louis Prieur, *The Tennis Court Oath*, Tableau 1, June 20, 1789, Musée Carnavelet, Paris.



Figure A69. Column of Trajan, Rome, detail of bas relief.



Figure A70. Jacques-Louis David, *The Oath of the Tennis Court*, detail of figures in lower left of the composition.



Figure A71. Jean-Baptiste Chapuy after Angelo Garbizza, *Vue de l'église Ste. Geneviève, Panthéon français, sépulture destinée aux mânes des grands homes et des dignitaires de l'empire*, engraving, from *Vues de plus beaux édifices publics et particuliers de la ville de Paris...* ([Paris: Esnauts, 1810]), pl. 57.



Figure A72. C. Malapeau and S. Miger, *Voltaire's Remains Transported to the Panthéon*, 1791, etching and engraving, Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris.

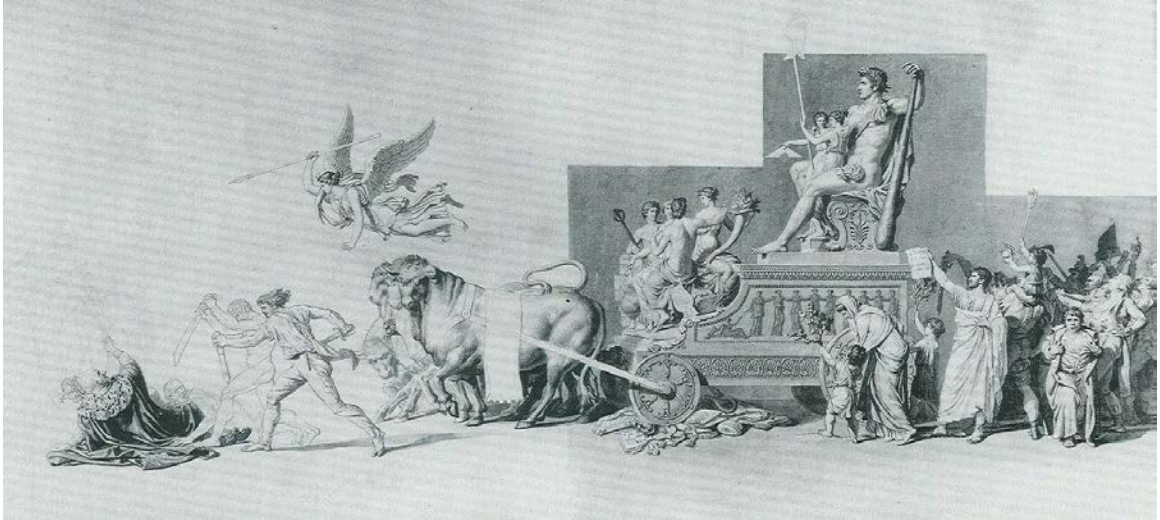


Figure A73. Jacques-Louis David, *Triumph of the French People*, black pencil and pen, brown ink, gray wash, and white highlights, Musée Carnavelet, Paris.



Figure A74. A. Devosge, *Drawing after David's Lepelletier de St.-Fargeau*, Musée des Beaux-Arts, Dijon.





Figure A75. Allais, *The Exhibition of the Body of Lepelletier de Saint-Fargeau*, print, Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris.

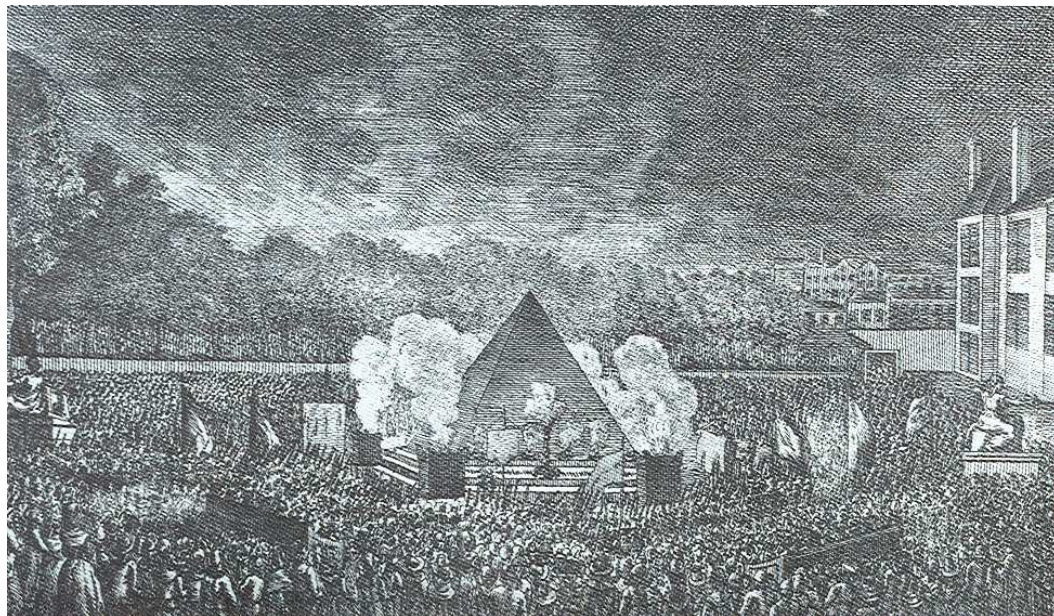


Figure A76. *Ceremony in the Tuileries Garden on 26 August 1792 honoring the dead of 10 August.*



Figure A77. *Monument on the Place des Victoires*, engraving, Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris.



Figure A78. Jacques-Louis David, *Vue de la Porta San Paolo à Rome*, c. 1775-80, black pencil, pen and gray ink, and gray wash, Nationalmuseum, Stockholm.

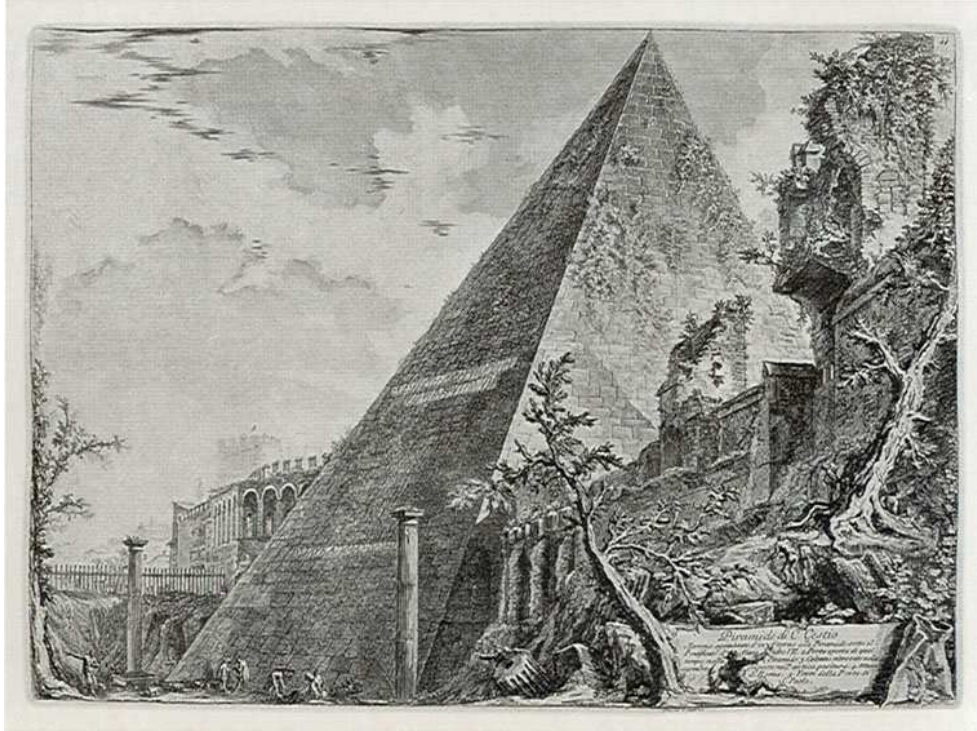


Figure A79. Giovanni Battista Piranesi, *Piramide di C. Cestio*, engraving from *Vedute di Roma*, 1778.

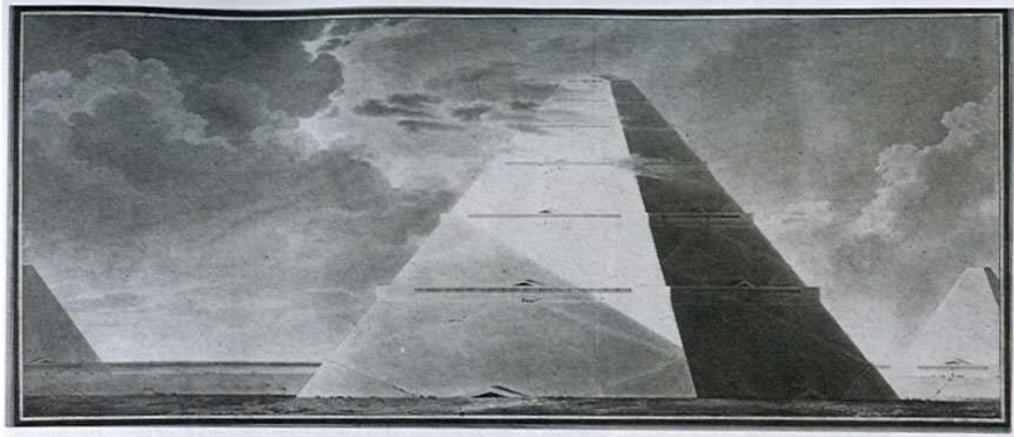


Figure A80. Étienne-Louis Boullée, *Cénotaphe dans le Genre Égyptien*, c. 1785, Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris.



Figure A81. Jacques-Louis David, *Croquis d'une pyramide*, very pale black pencil, location unknown.



Figure A82. Jacques-Louis David, *Croquis d'une pyramide*, very pale black pencil, location unknown.



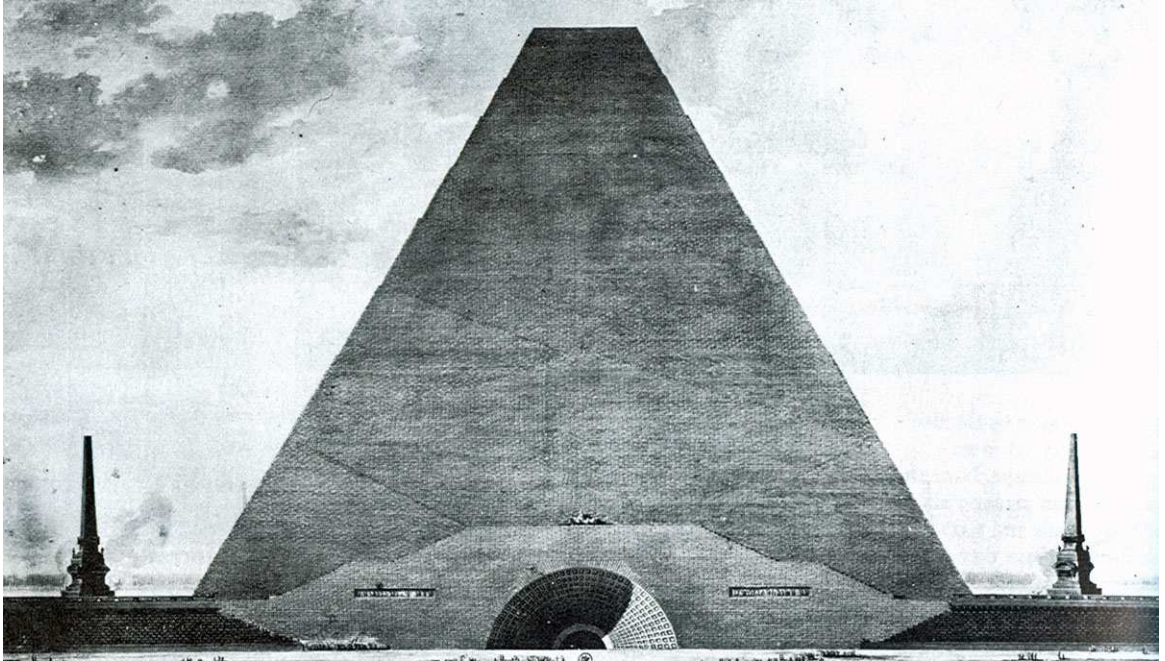


Figure A83. Étienne-Louis Boullée, *Cénotaphe* c. 1781-93, Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris.

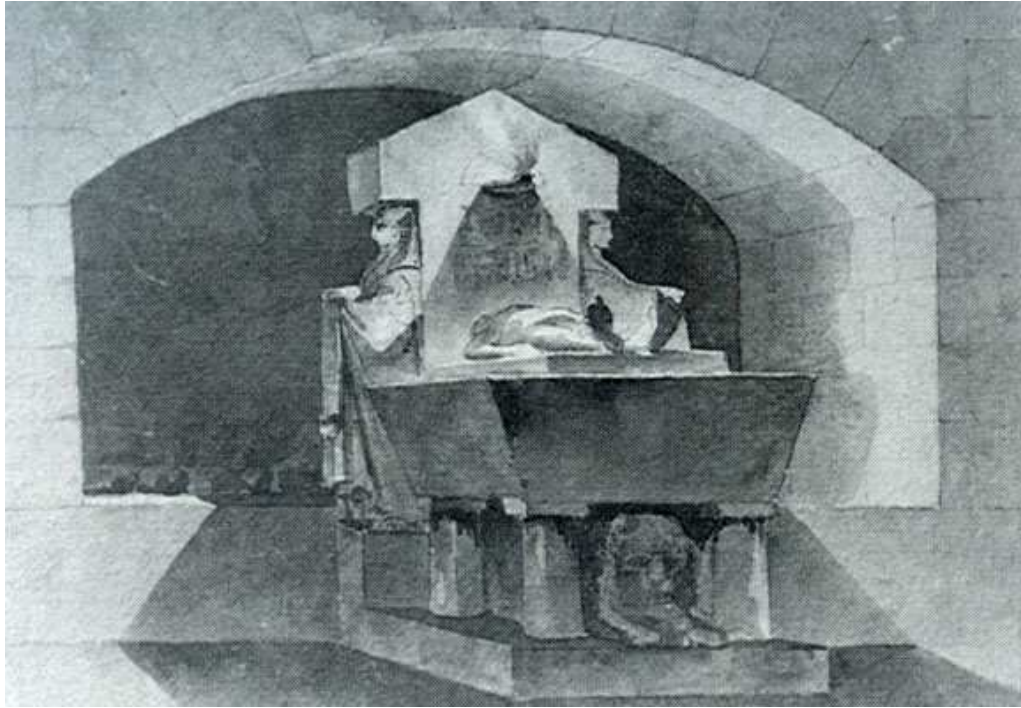


Figure A84. Louis-Jean Desprez, *Sepulchre in an Egyptian style with Egyptianising figures and a lion*, c. 1779-84, pen and black ink, brush and brown, gray, and blue-gray wash with traces of graphite on off-white laid paper, Cooper-Hewitt, National Design Museum, Smithsonian Institution.

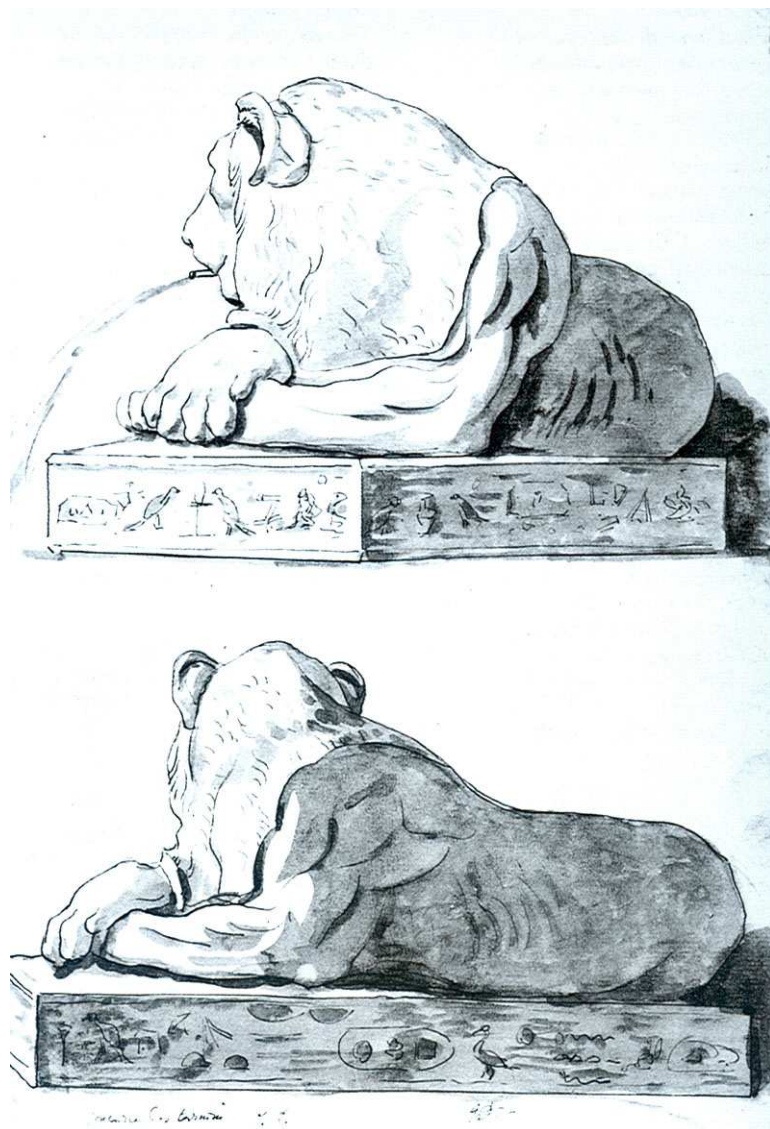


Figure A85. Jacques-Louis David, *Tête de lion (élément de fontaine)*, c. 1775-80, black pencil, The Pierpont Morgan Library, New York.

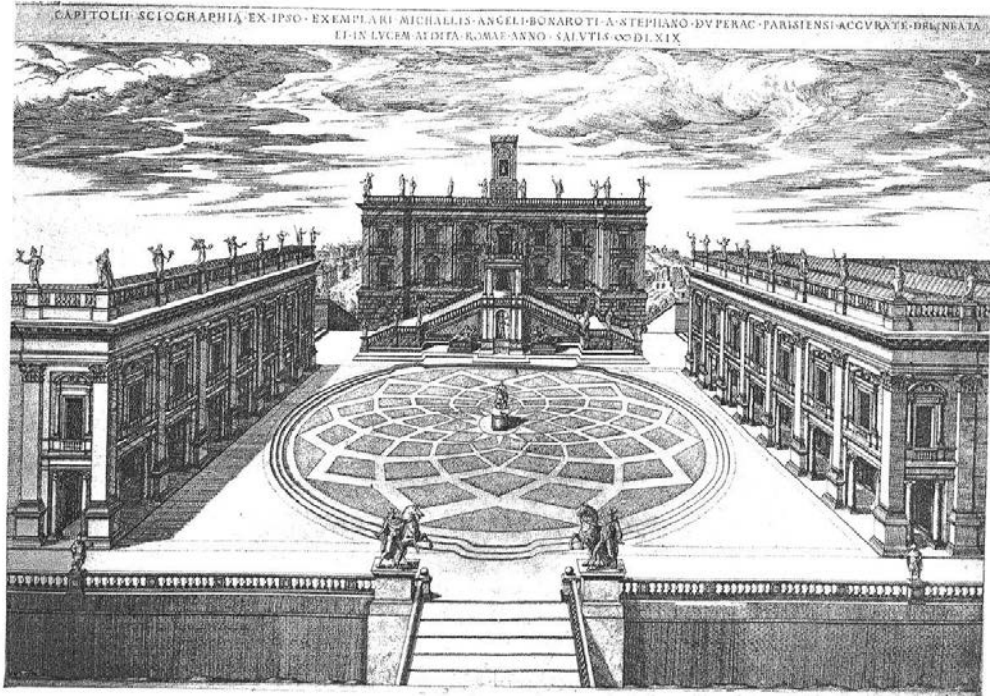


Figure A86. Michelangelo, Capitoline Hill (*Campidoglio*), Rome, sixteenth-century.



Figure A87. Paris, Place Louis-le-Grand (Place Vendôme), engraving by Aveline, Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris.



Figure A88. Paris, Place Louis-le-Grand (Place Vendôme), engraving of temporary ballrooms constructed for the wedding of the Dauphin to Marie-Thérèse of Spain, 23 February 1745, Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris.

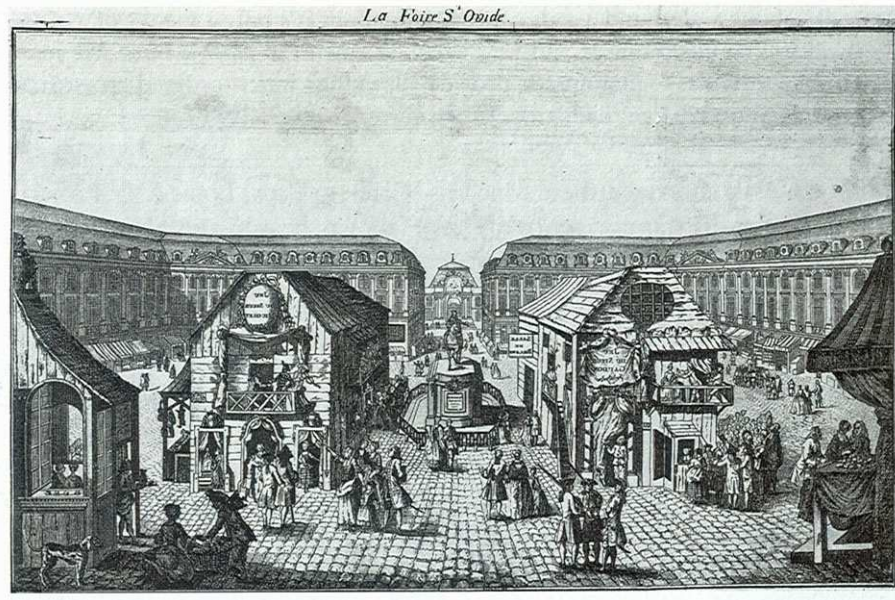


Figure A89. Paris, Place Louis-le-Grand (Place Vendôme), engraving of the Foire St. Ovide installed in the *place*, 1777, Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris.



Figure A90. Jacques-Louis David, *Vue présumée du jardin du Luxembourg* (View from the Luxembourg), 1794, oil on canvas, Musée du Louvre, Paris.



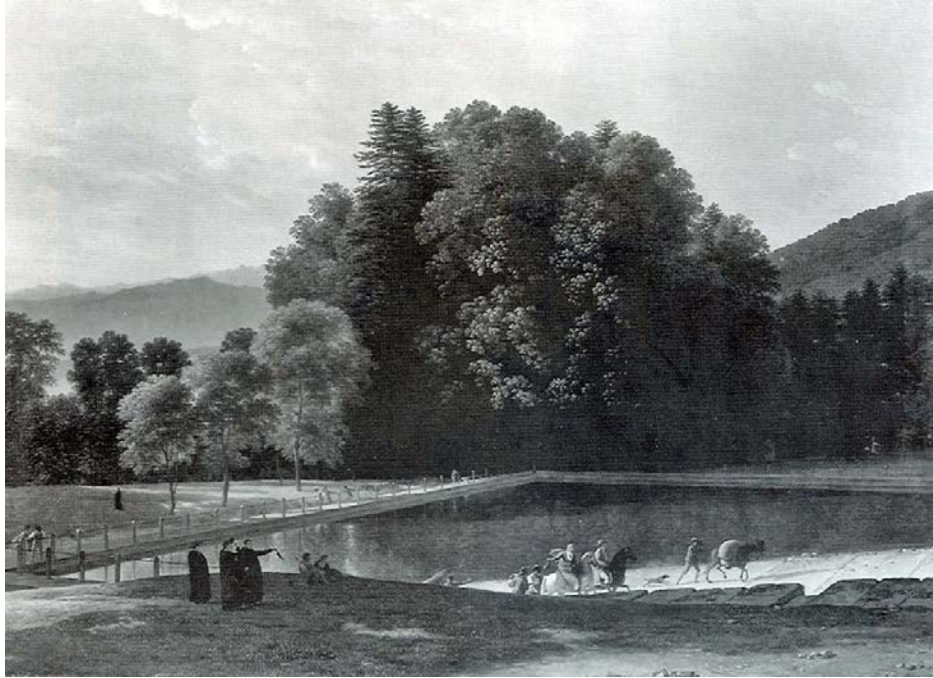


Figure A91. Louis Gauffier, *The Fishpond at the Monastery of Vallombroasa with Horseman and Monks*, 1797, oil on canvas, Musée Fabre, Montpellier.

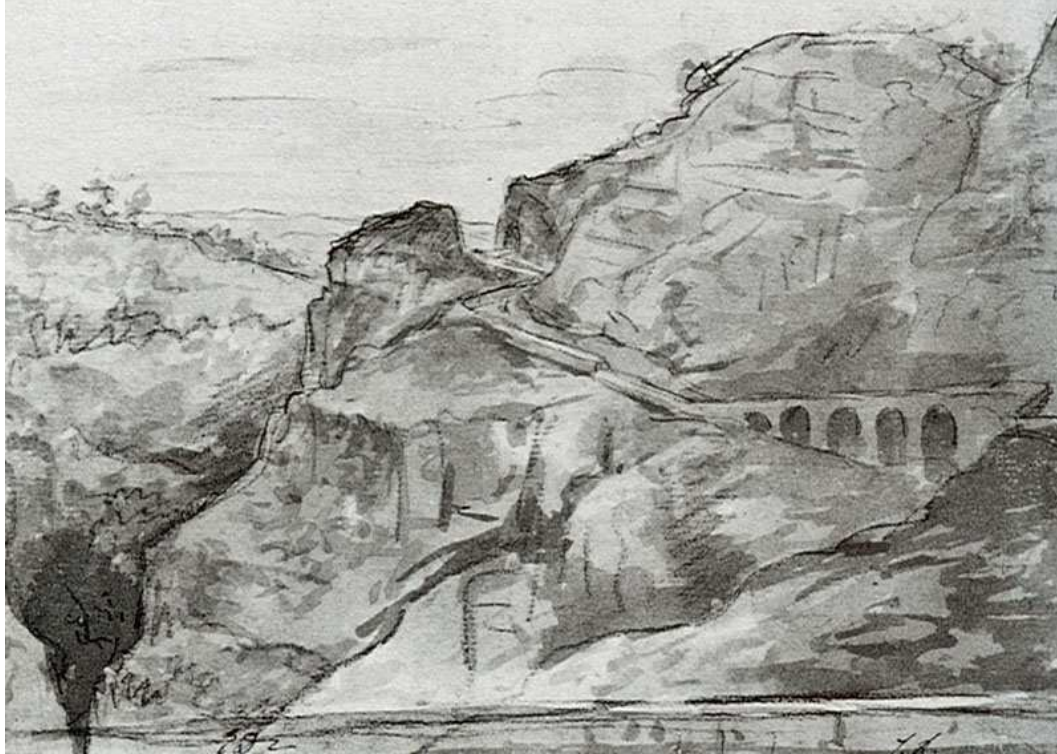


Figure A92. Jacques-Louis David. *Paysage montagneux avec un viaduct*, c. 1775-80, gray wash and black pencil, The Pierpont Morgan Library, New York.



Figure A93. Jacques-Louis David, *Self-Portrait*, 1794, oil on canvas, Musée du Louvre, Paris.



Figure A94. Jacques-Louis David, *Vue de Rome avec l'église San Sebastiano fuori le Mura sur la gauche*, c. 1775-80, pen and black ink, gray wash, and black pencil, The Pierpont Morgan Library, New York.



Figure A95. Jacques-Louis David, *Vue de l'église Sant'Onofrio à Rome*, c. 1775-80, black pencil and gray wash on light blue paper, The National Gallery of Art, Washington.

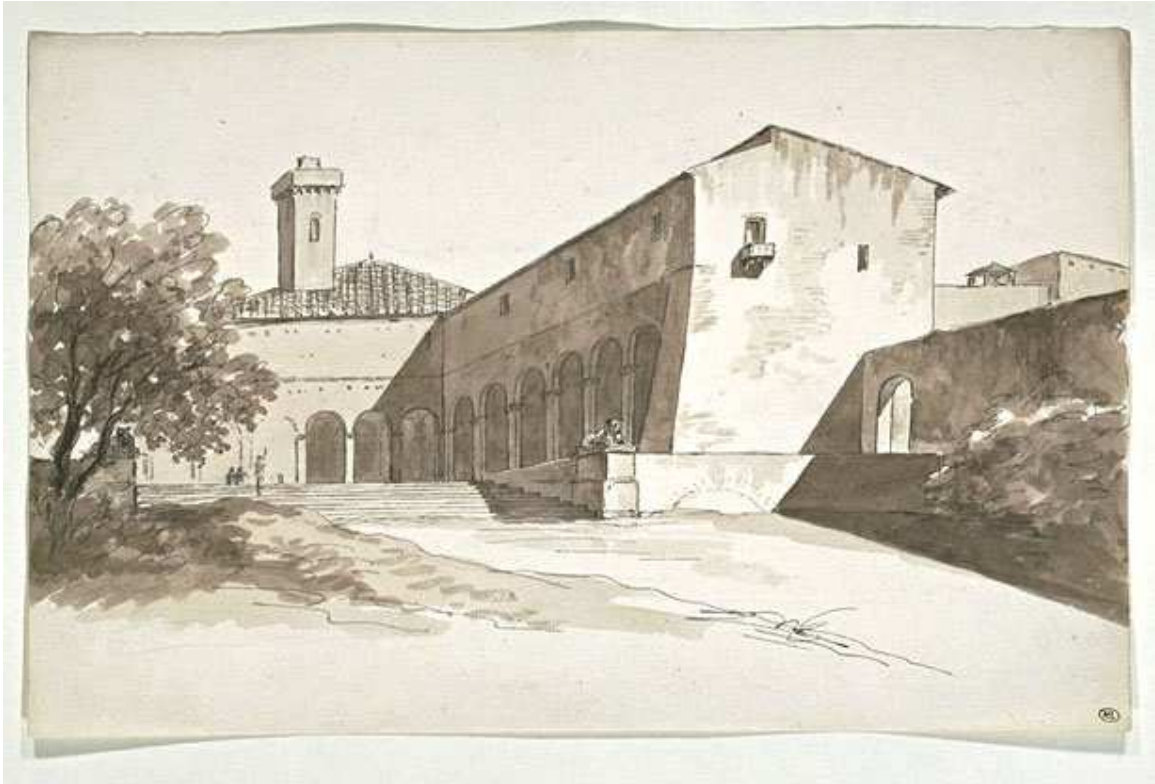


Figure A96. Pierre-Henri de Valenciennes, *Rome: l'église Sant'Onofrio*, c. 1782, graphite, pen and brown ink with wash, Musée du Louvre, Paris.



Figure A97. Louis Gauffier, *View of Saint John Lateran*, c. 1785, pen and black ink with gray and brown washes on paper, The Getty Research Institute, Los Angeles.



Figure A98. Jean-Germain Drouais, *Landscape with Santa Agnese Fuori le Muri*, c. 1788, graphite and bister wash on paper, Staatliche Museen zu Berlin-Preussischer Kulturbesitz, Berlin.





Figure A99. Pieter Bruegel the Elder, *The Fall of Icarus*, c. 1558, oil on canvas, Musée royal des Beaux-Arts de Belgique, Brussels.



Figure A100. Titian, *The Pastoral Concert*, c. 1508-9, oil on canvas, Musée du Louvre, Paris.



Figure A101. Annibale Carracci, *The Flight into Egypt*, c. 1603-4, oil on canvas, Galleria Doria-Pamphili, Rome.



Figure A102. Claude Lorrain, *Landscape with Ascanius Shooting the Stag of Silvia*, 1682, oil on canvas, Ashmolean Museum, Oxford.

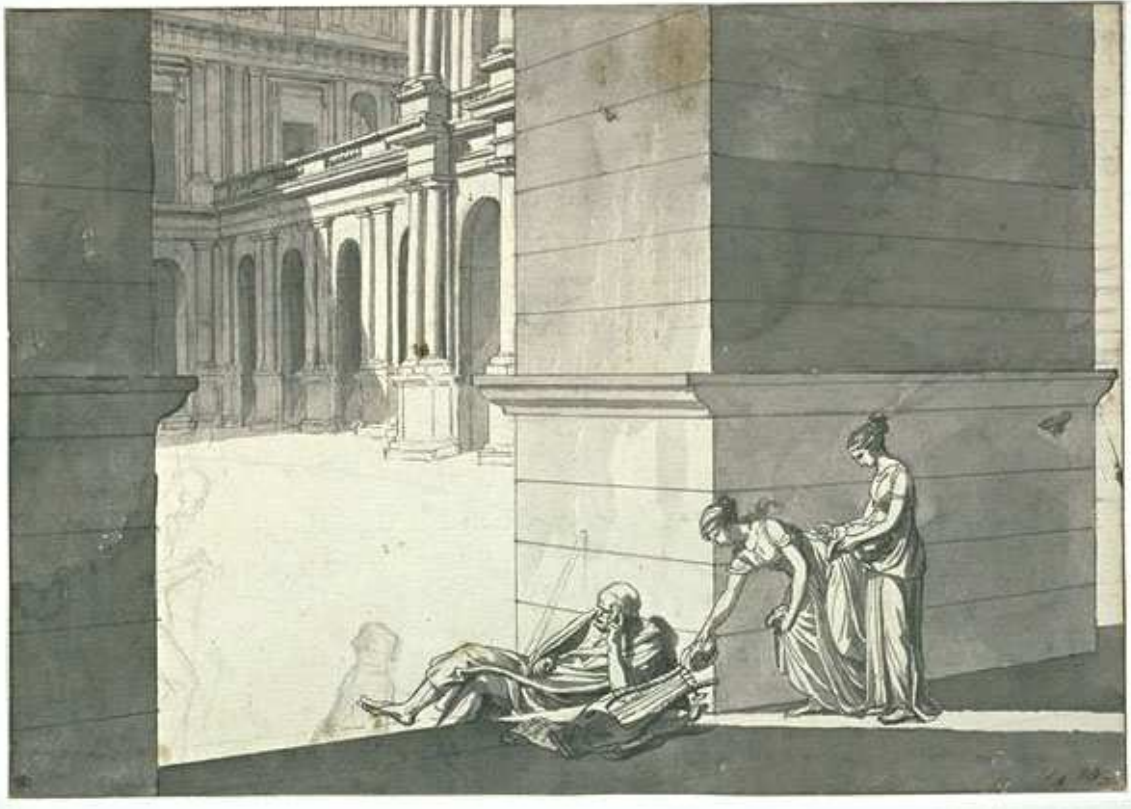


Figure A103. Jacques-Louis David, *Homer Asleep* (*Homère endormi*), c. 1794, black crayon, black ink, gray wash and white highlights, Musée du Louvre, Paris.



Figure A104. Jacques-Louis David, *Homer Reciting His Verses*, c. 1795, ink wash, Musée du Louvre, Paris.

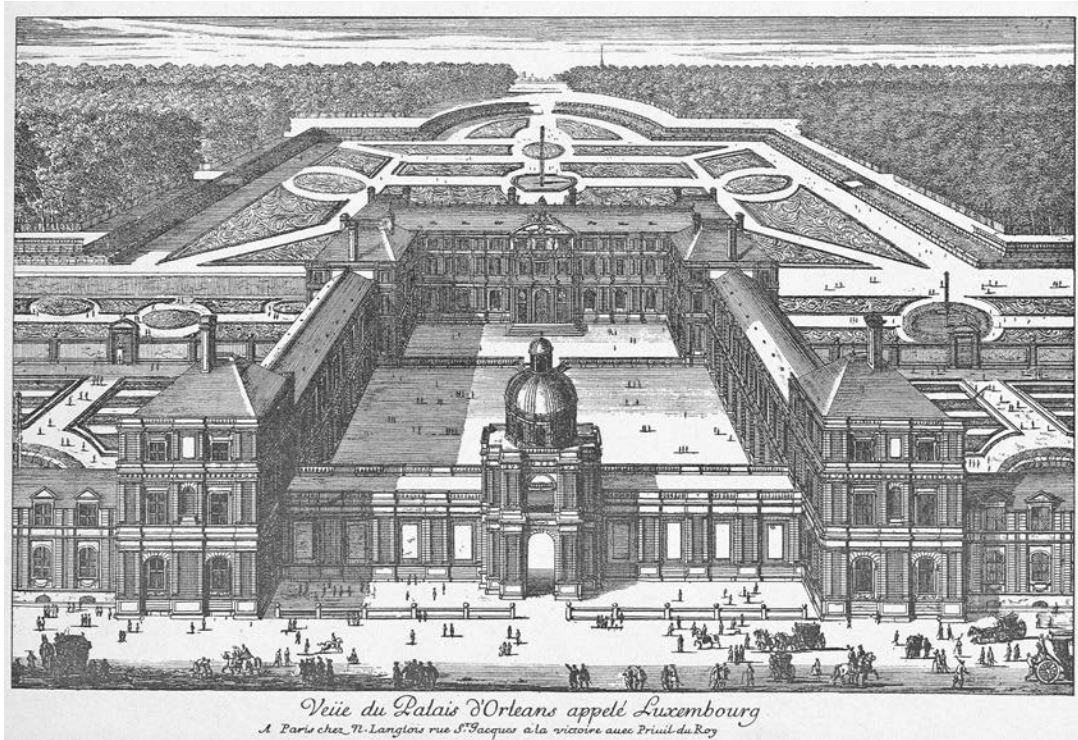


Figure A105. Anon. The Luxembourg Palace, Paris, engraving.

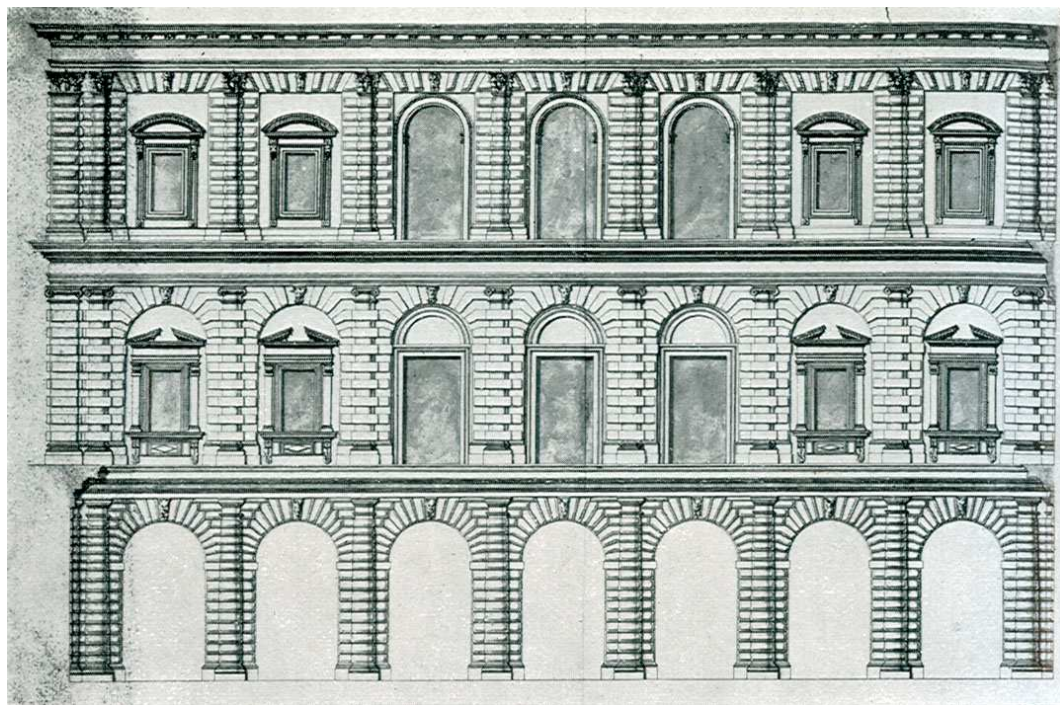


Figure A106. Anon. Façade of Ammanati's Court, Pitti Palace, Florence, drawing.



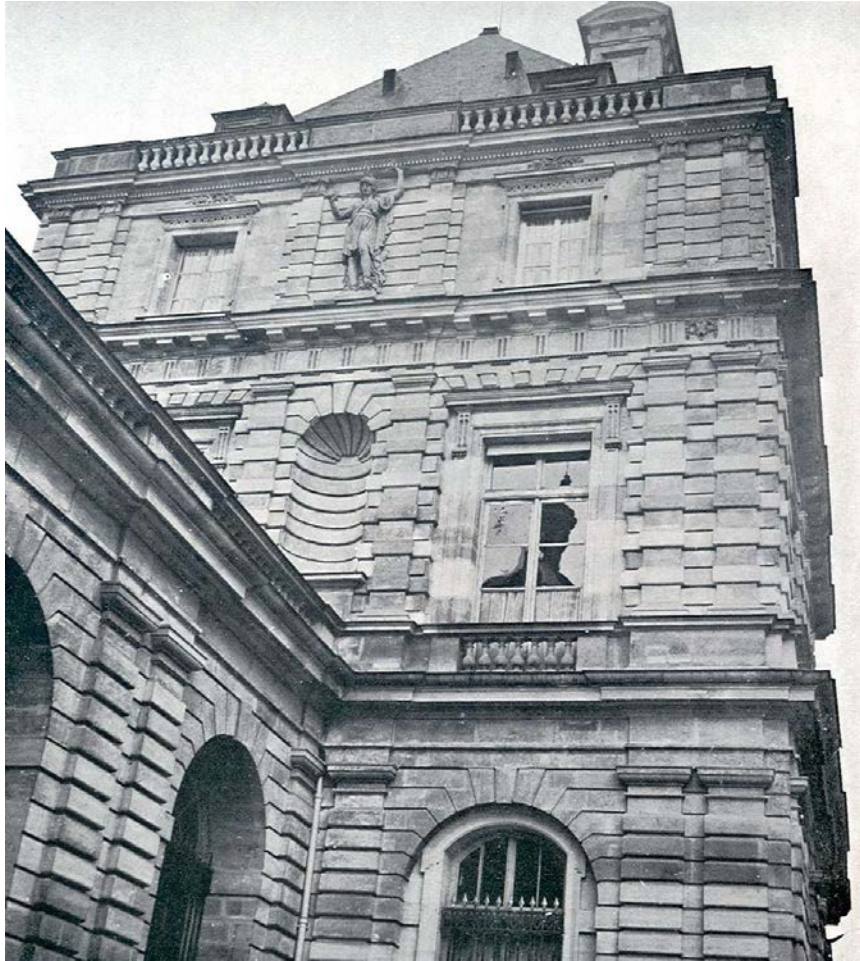


Figure A107. Luxembourg Palace, Paris, Northwest Pavilion.

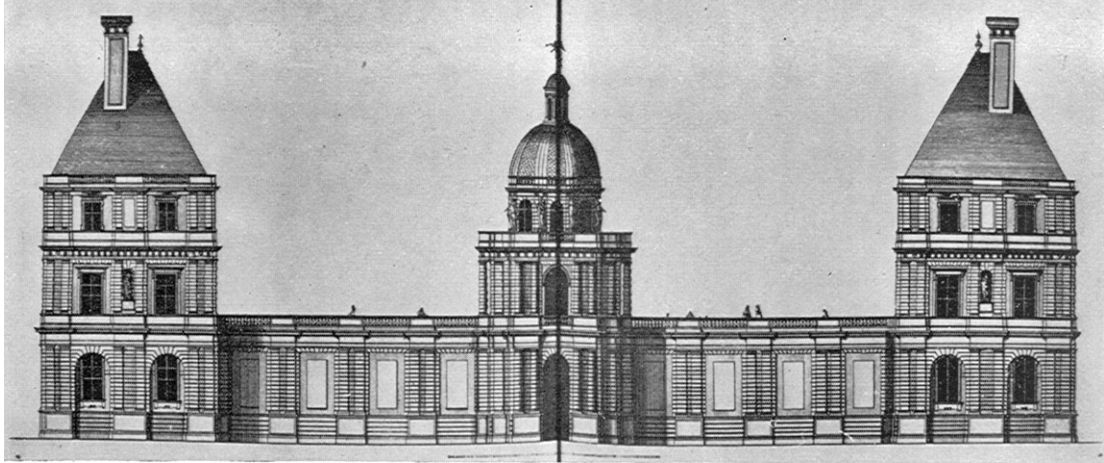


Figure A108. Luxembourg Palace, Paris, Entrance front (screen).



Figure A109. Luxembourg Palace, Paris, Entrance Pavilion.



Figure A110. Jacques-Louis David, *The Intercession of the Sabine Women*, 1799, oil on canvas, Musée du Louvre, Paris.

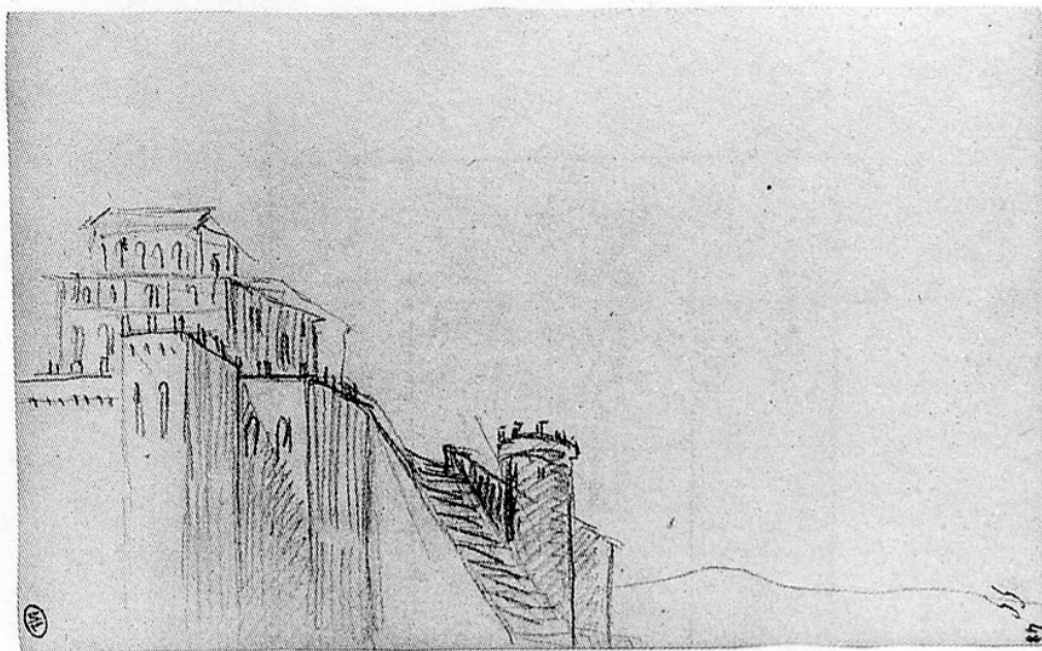


Figure A111. Jacques-Louis David, *Étude pour la citadelle, dans le fond à gauche des 'Sabines,'* c. 1795, graphite, Musée du Louvre, Paris.



Figure A112. Jacques-Louis David, *Tour fortifiée et mur d'enceinte, d'après Enea Vico; femme en buste, les bras écartés, d'après Raphaël*, c. 1795, black pencil, Musée du Louvre, Paris.



Figure A113. Nicolas Poussin, *The Rape of the Sabines*, 1634-35, oil on canvas, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York.



Figure A114. Nicolas Poussin, *The Rape of the Sabines*, 1637-39, oil on canvas, Musée du Louvre, Paris.



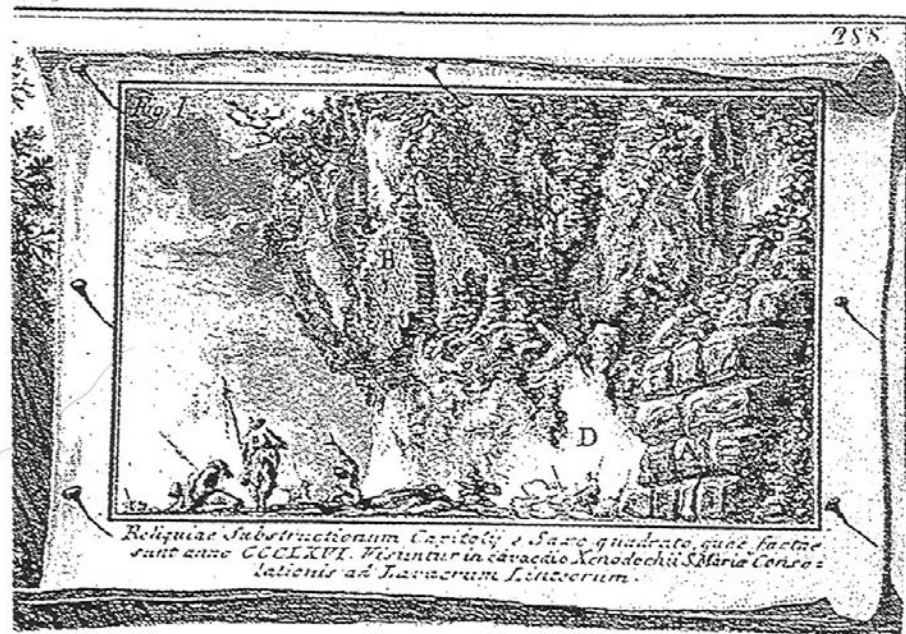


Figure A115. Giovanni Battista Piranesi, *Reliquiae Substructionum Capitolij...*  
engraving from *Della Magnificenza ed Architettura de' Romani*, 1761.



Figure A116. The Tarpeian Rock, present day, photograph, Rome.



Figure A117. Raphael, *The School of Athens*, 1509, fresco, Apostolic Palace, The Vatican.



Figure A118. Porta Appia (Porta San Sebastiano), outer side, present day, photograph, Rome.



Figure A119. Jacques-Louis David, *Vue de la Porta San Sebastiano à Rome*, c. 1775-80, pen and black ink, gray wash, and black pencil, The Pierpont Morgan Library, New York.



Figure A120. Porta Asinaria, outer side, present day, photograph, Rome.

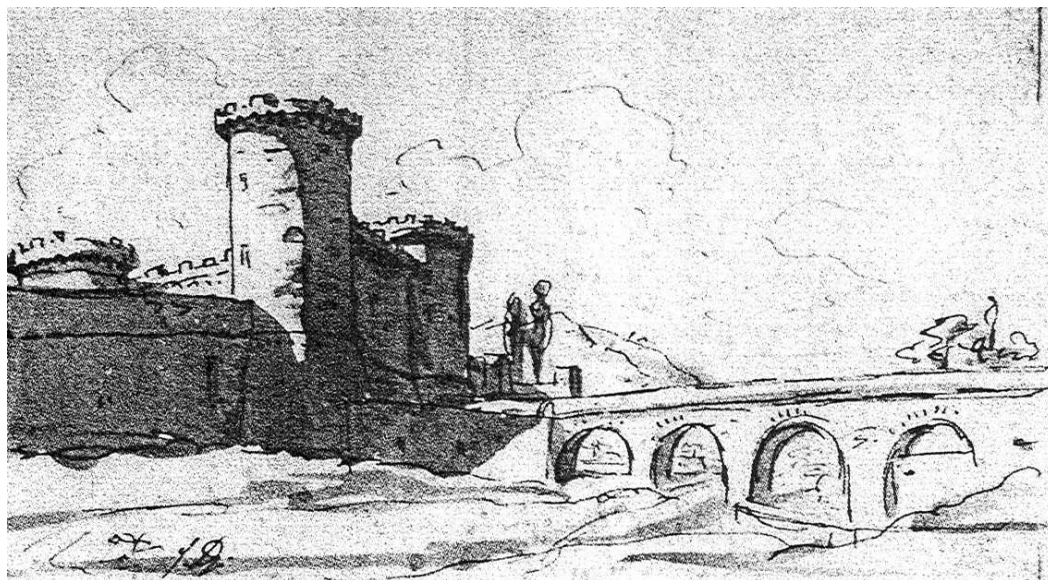


Figure A121. Jacques-Louis David, *L'entrée d'une citadelle avec un pont*, c. 1775-80, pen and black ink, gray wash, and black pencil, location unknown.

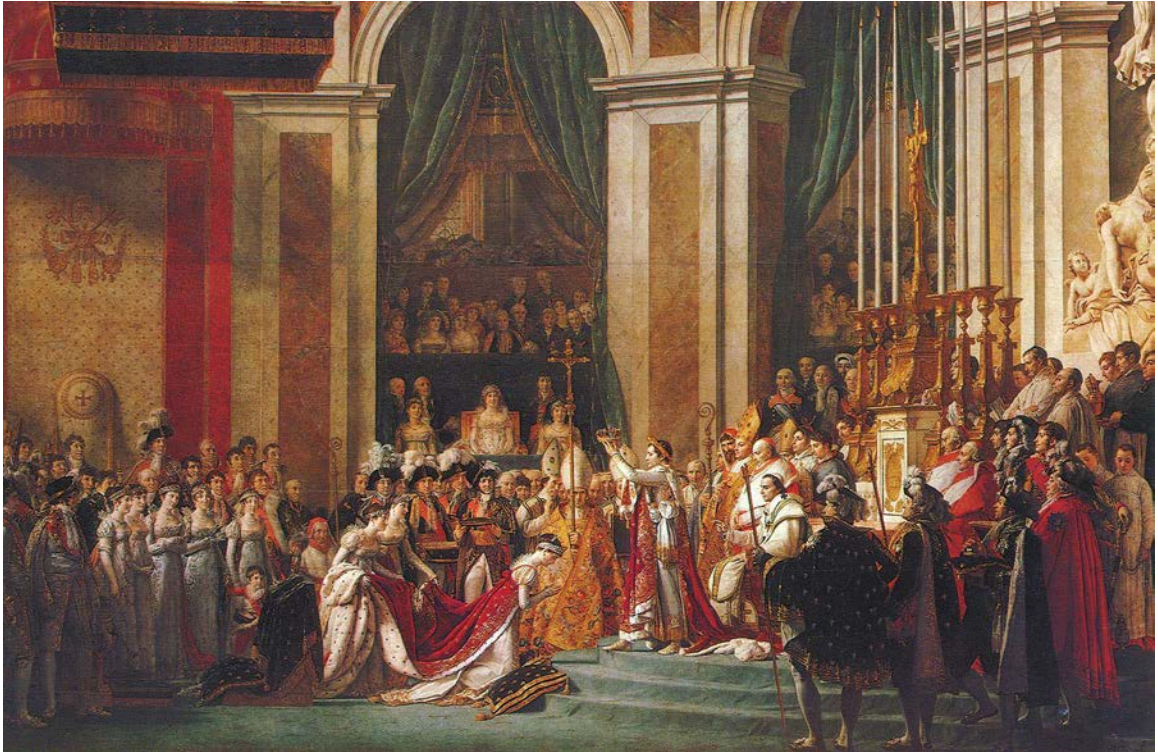


Figure A122. Jacques-Louis David, *The Coronation of Napoleon and Josephine*, 1805-8, oil on canvas, Musée du Louvre, Paris.





Figure A123. Jacques-Louis David, *The Distribution of the Eagles*, 1808-10, oil on canvas, Musée national du Château et des Trianons, Versailles.



Figure A124. Antoine-Jean Gros, Bonaparte at the Bridge of Arcole, 1796, oil on canvas, Musée national du Château et des Trianons, Versailles.

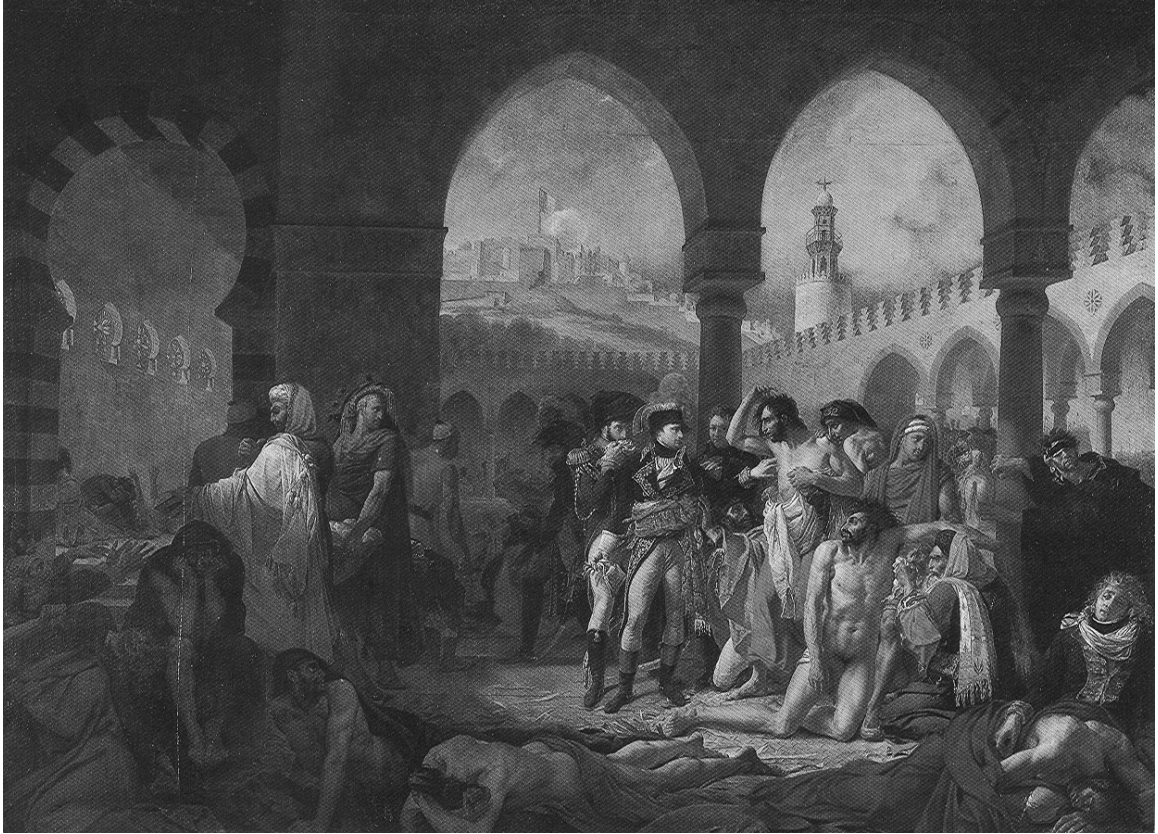


Figure A125. Antoine-Jean Gros, *Bonaparte Visiting the Plague-Stricken in Jaffa*, 1804, oil on canvas, Musée du Louvre, Paris.



Figure A126. Jacques-Louis David, *Study for a Portrait of General Bonaparte*, 1797-98, oil on canvas, Musée du Louvre, Paris.



Figure A127. Jacques-Louis David, *Bonaparte Crossing the Alps at Mont Saint-Bernard*, 1800-1, oil on canvas, Rueil-Malmaison, Musée national du Château de Malmaison.



Figure A128. Peter Paul Rubens, *The Coronation of Marie de' Medici*, 1622-25, oil on canvas, Musée du Louvre, Paris.

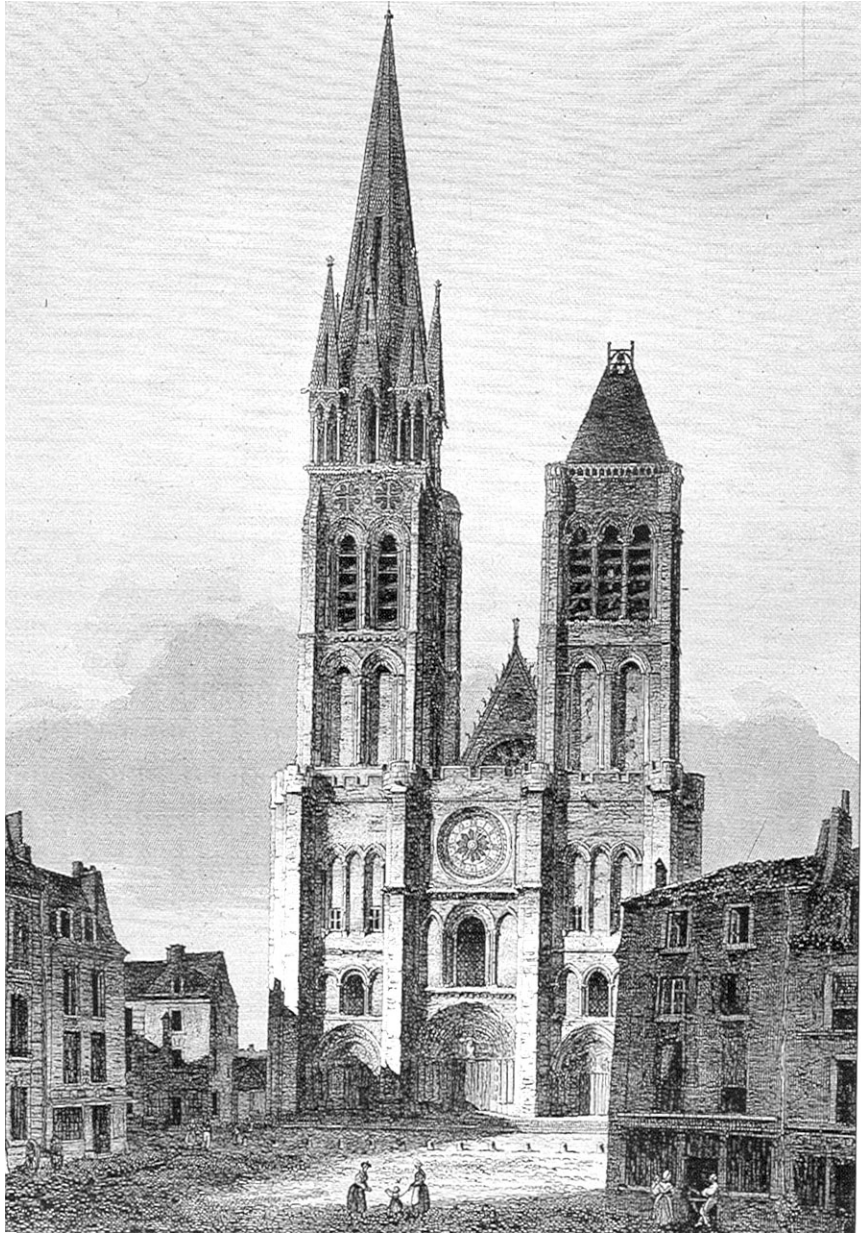


Figure A129. Chapuy and Ransonnette, General view of the façade of Saint-Denis, early nineteenth-century, engraving.

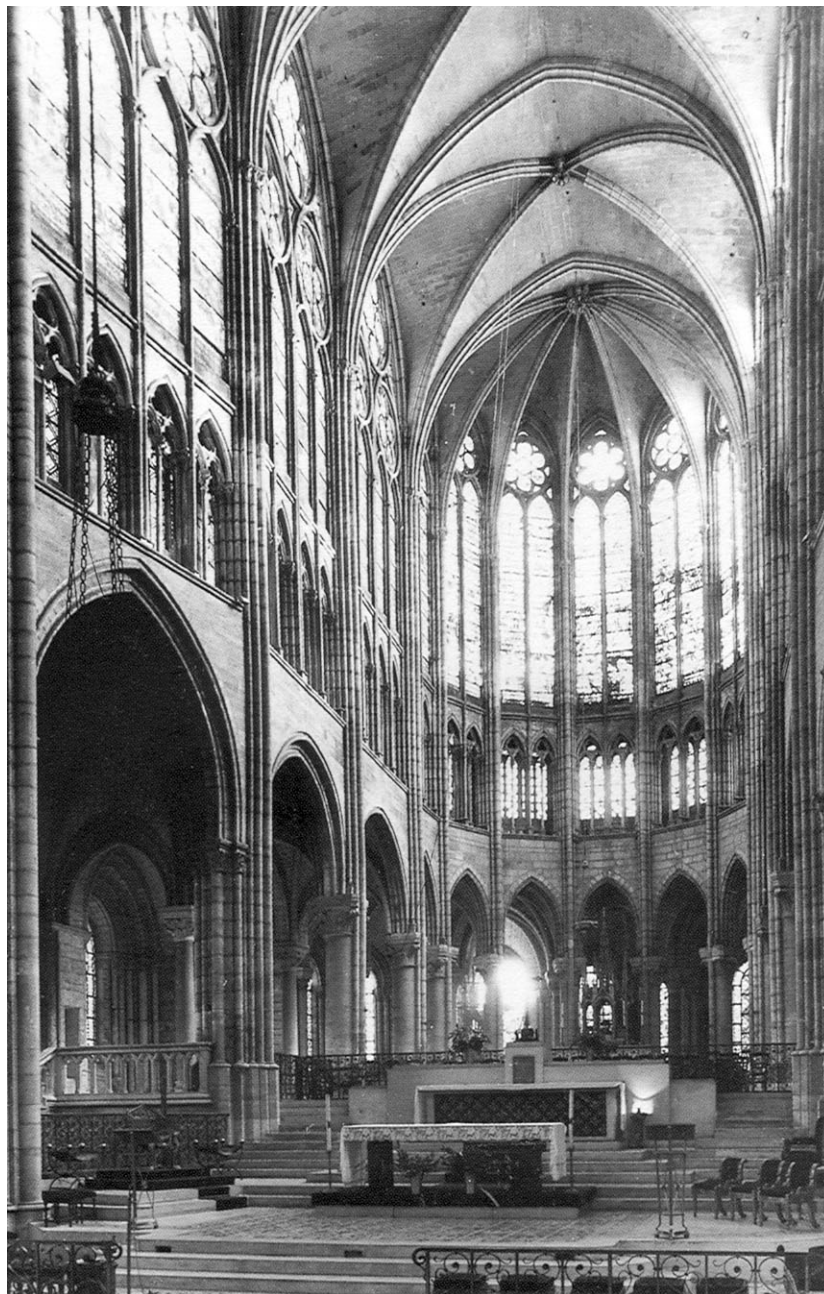


Figure A130. Interior view of Saint-Denis looking towards the high altar and chevet, present day, photograph.



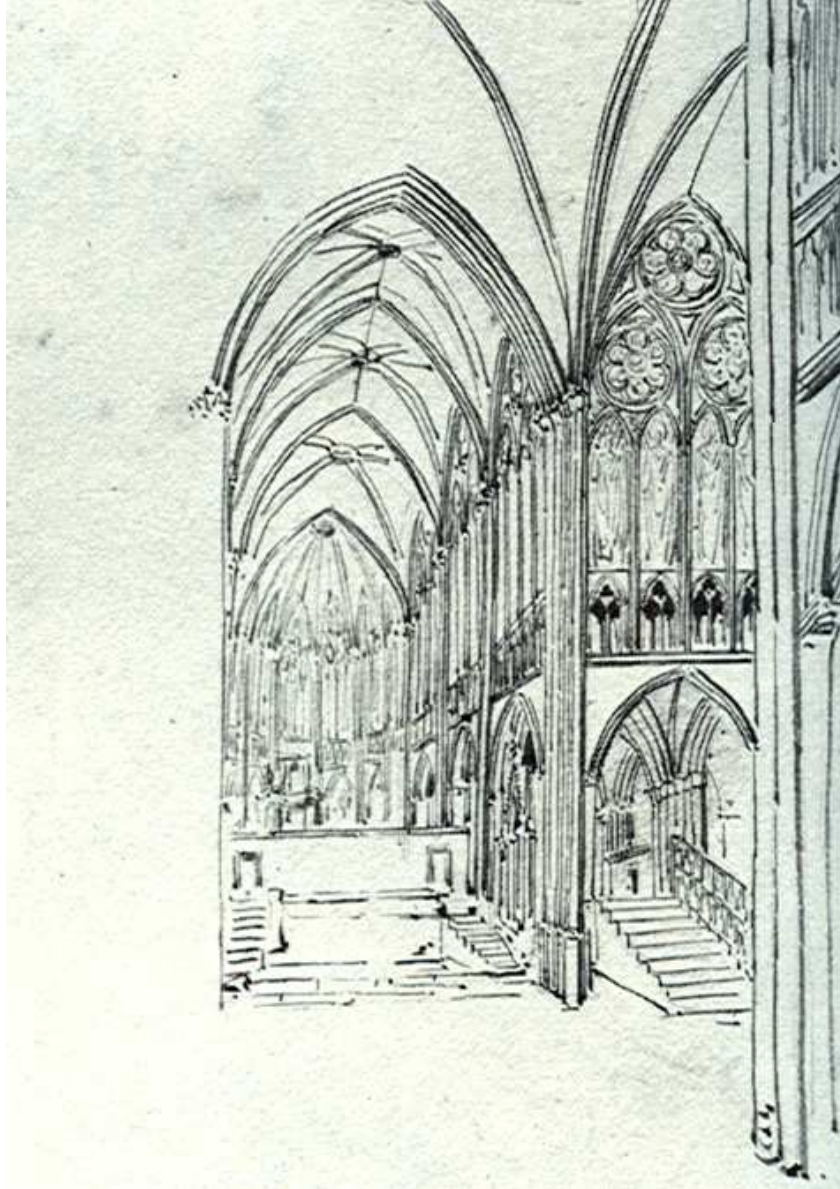


Figure A131. Charles Percier, View of the crossing and chevet of Saint-Denis from the west, early 1790s (prior to vandalism).

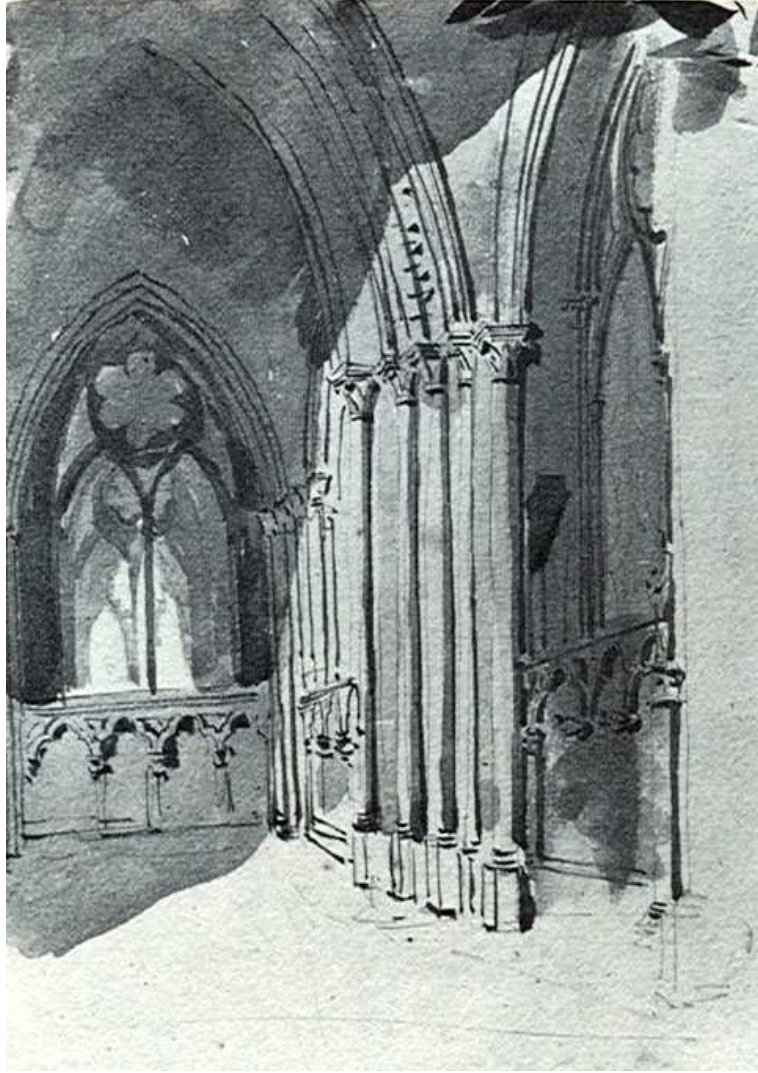


Figure A132. Charles Percier, The western bays of the north transept arm of Saint-Denis, early 1790s (prior to vandalism).

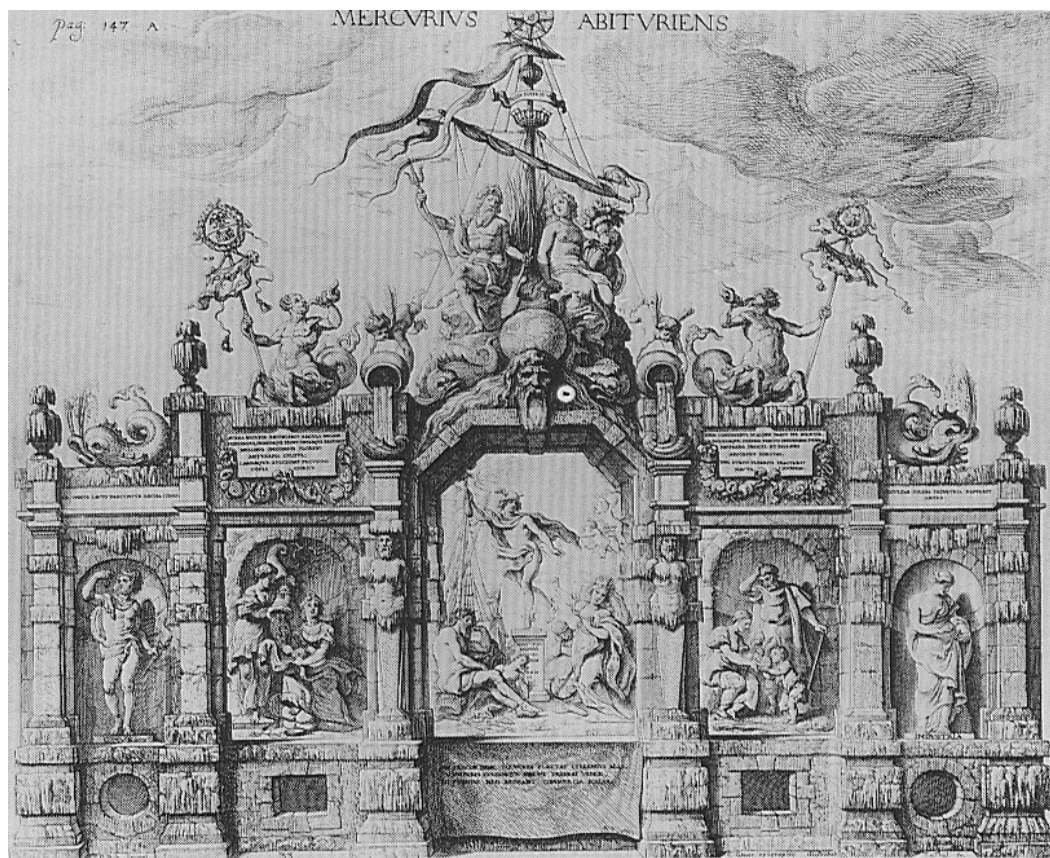


Figure A133. Theodore van Thulden, after Rubens, *Scene of the Departure of Mercury*, from Caspar Gevaerts, *Pompa Introitus Ferdinandi* (Antwerp, 1642).

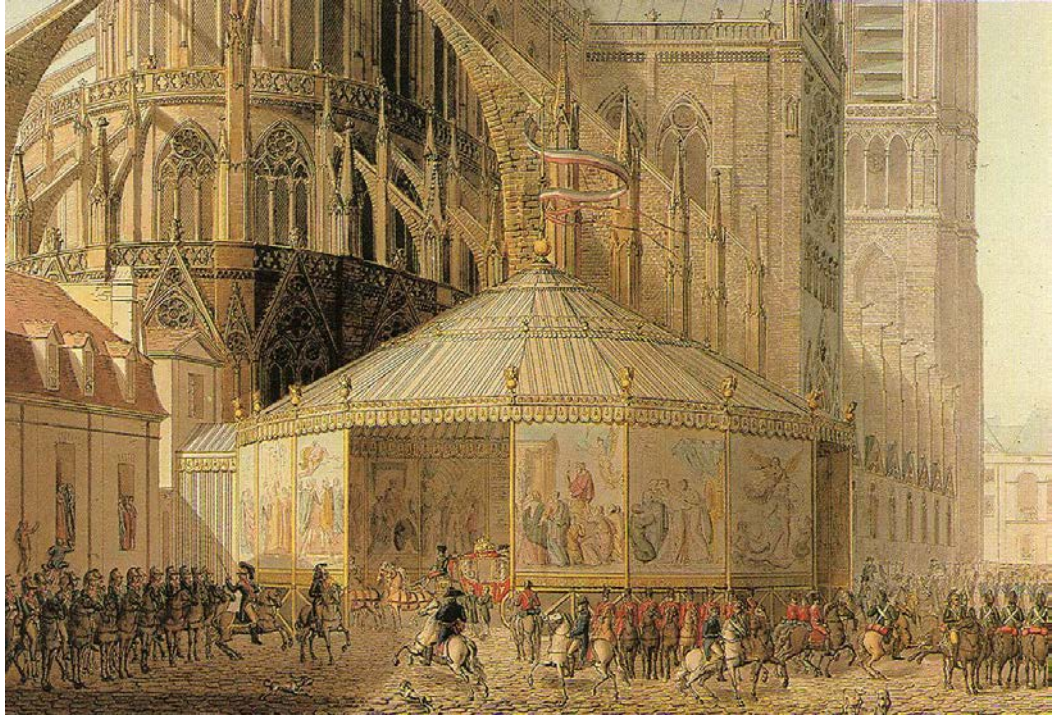


Figure A134. Charles Percier and Pierre-François-Léonard Fontaine, *View of the tent and entrance to the Archbishop's palace on the day of the Coronation*, from Percier and Fontaine, *Le Livre du Sacre de S M l'Empereur*, 1805.

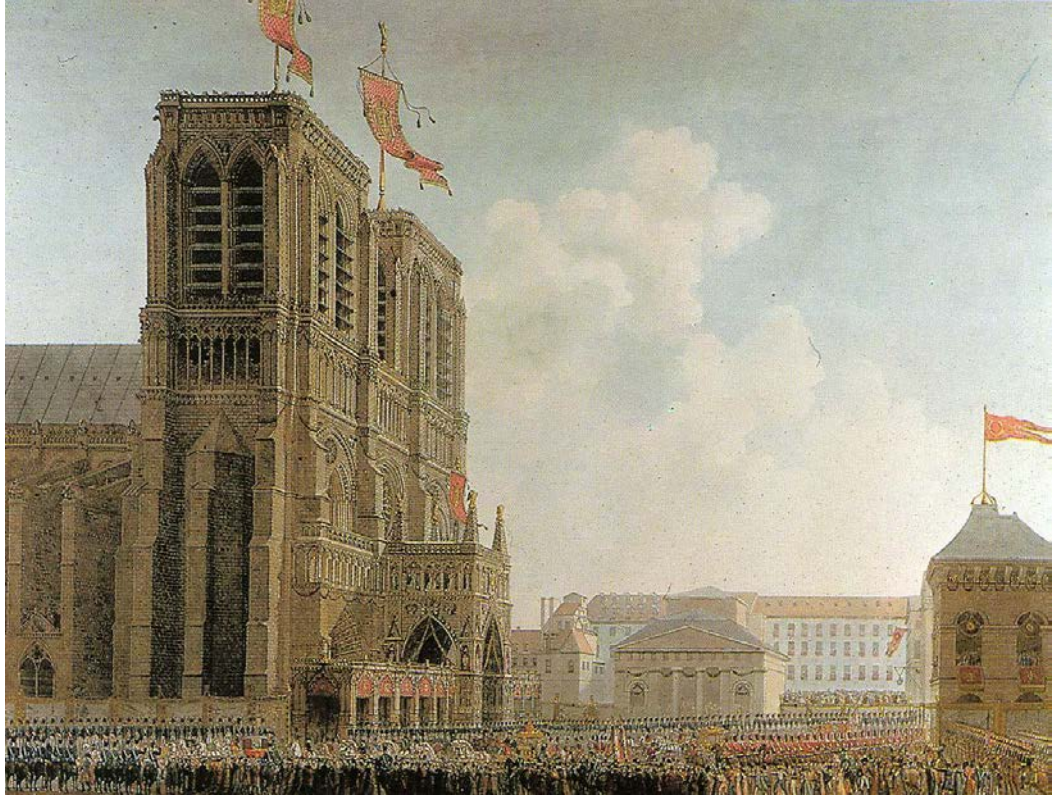


Figure A135. Charles Percier and Pierre-François-Léonard Fontaine, *View of the façade of Notre-Dame on the day of the Coronation*, from Percier and Fontaine, *Le Livre du Sacre de S M l'Empereur*, 1805.

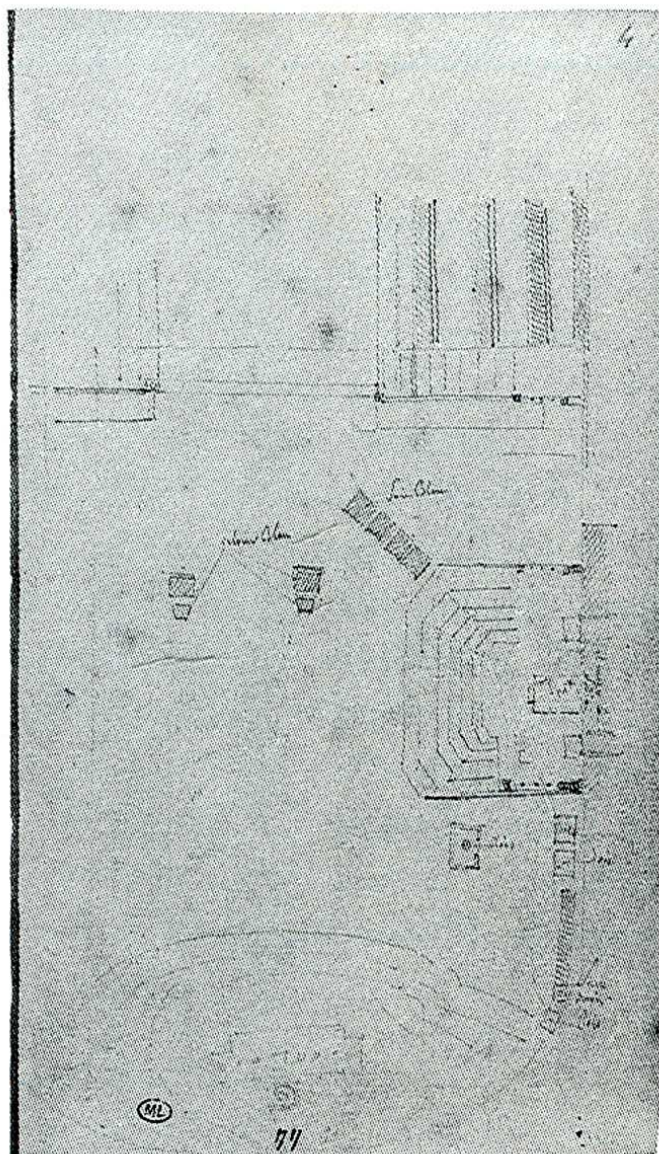


Figure A136. Jacques-Louis David, Plan of the interior of Notre-Dame for the *Coronation*, 1804, graphite, Musée du Louvre, Paris.

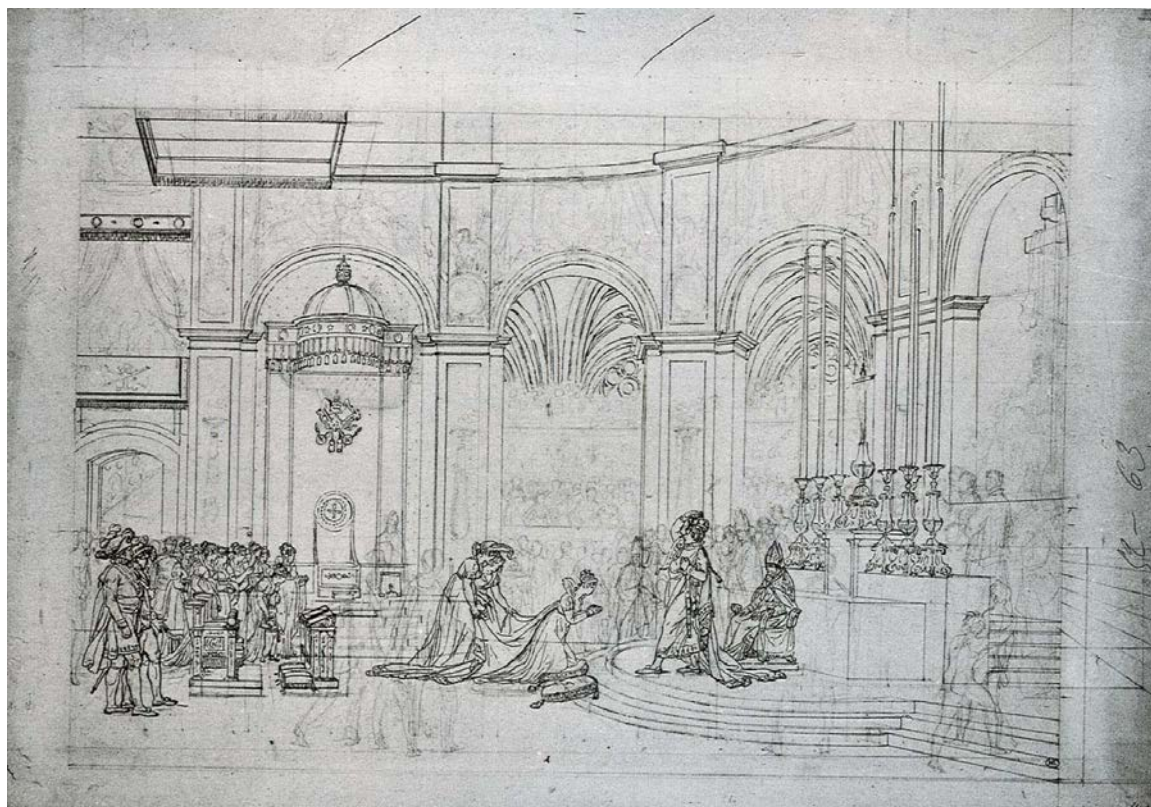


Figure A137. Jacques-Louis David, *Napoléon s'auto-couronnant*, c. 1804-5, graphite, pen with black and brown ink, Musée du Louvre, Paris.



Figure A138. Jacques-Louis David, *Pietà*, d'après Nicolas Coustou, black crayon, location unknown.



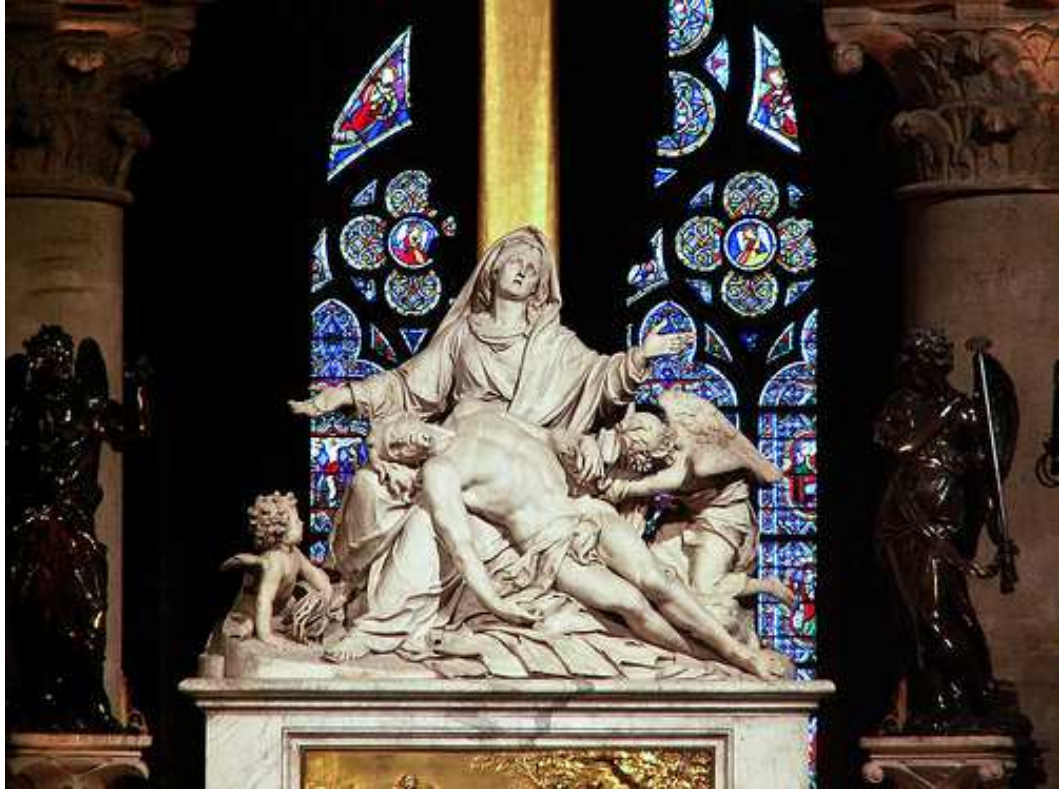


Figure A139. Nicolas Coustou, *Pietà*, c. 1712-28, Cathedral of Notre-Dame, Paris.

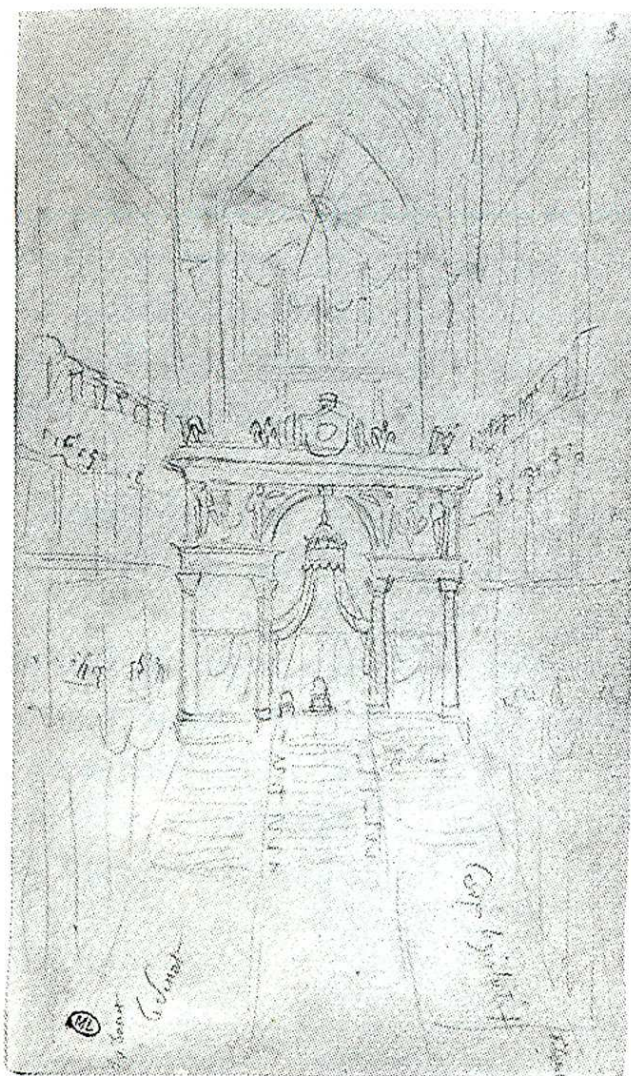


Figure A140. Jacques-Louis David, *Vue intérieure d'église (Vue du transept de Notre-Dame de Paris a souvent été mise en rapport avec le tableau du 'Couronnement')*, 1804, graphite, Musée du Louvre, Paris.



Figure A141. Charles Percier and Pierre-François-Léonard Fontaine, *Nef centrale de Notre-Dame*, from *Recueil de décorations exécutés dans l'église de Notre-Dame de Paris et au Champs-de-Mars, d'après les dessins et sous la conduite des architectes de l'Empereur*, 1807, private collection.



Figure A142. The Red Door, Cathedral of Notre-Dame, Paris, photograph, present day.



Figure A143. The Red Door, view of the tympanum and archivolt, Cathedral of Notre-Dame, Paris, photograph, present day.

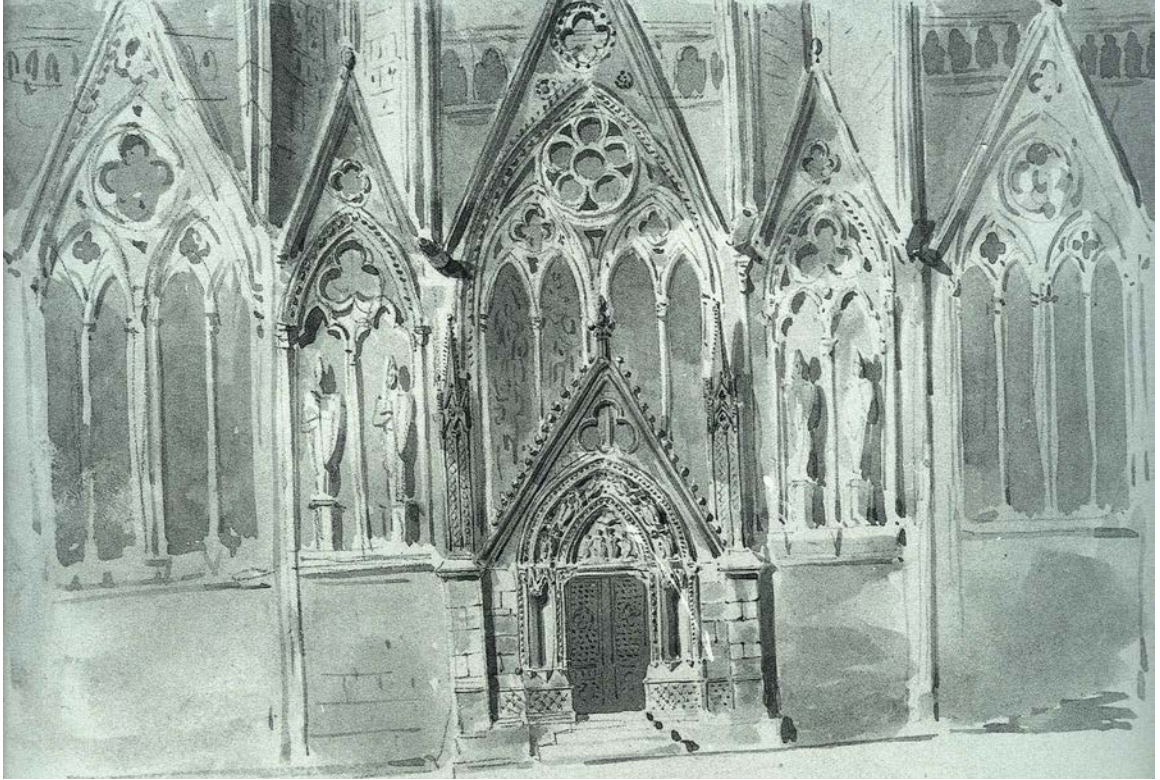


Figure A144. Charles Percier, study of the Red Door, c. 1790s, watercolor.



Figure A145. Jacques-Louis David, *L'arrivée de l'Empereur et de l'Impératrice à l'Hôtel de Ville*, pen with black and brown ink, gray wash, and graphite, 1805, Musée du Louvre, Paris.



Figure A146. Jacques-Louis David, *Mars Disarmed by Venus and the Graces*, 1824, oil on canvas, Musées Royaux, Brussels.



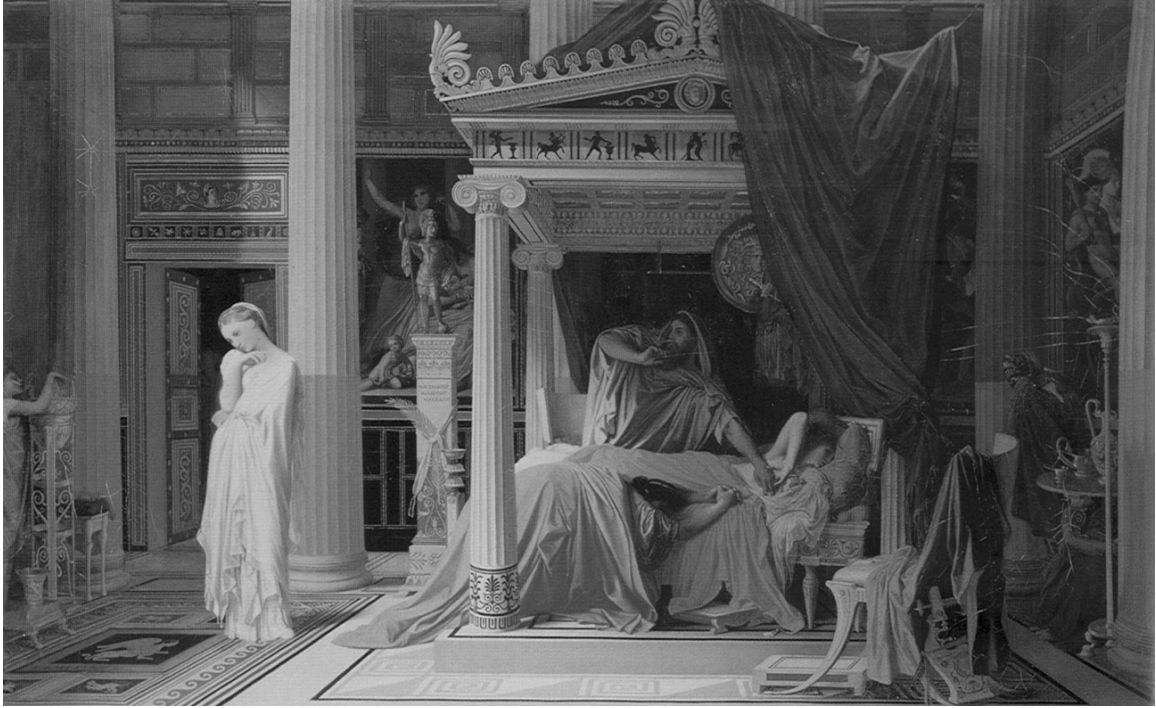


Figure A147. Jean-Auguste-Dominique Ingres, *Antiochus and Stratonice*, 1840, oil on canvas, Musée Condé, Chantilly.



Figure A148. Jean-Auguste-Dominique Ingres, after Jacques-Louis David, *Oath of the Horatii*, c. 1800, pen and ink, gouache, and white highlights on beige paper, Musée du Louvre, Paris.

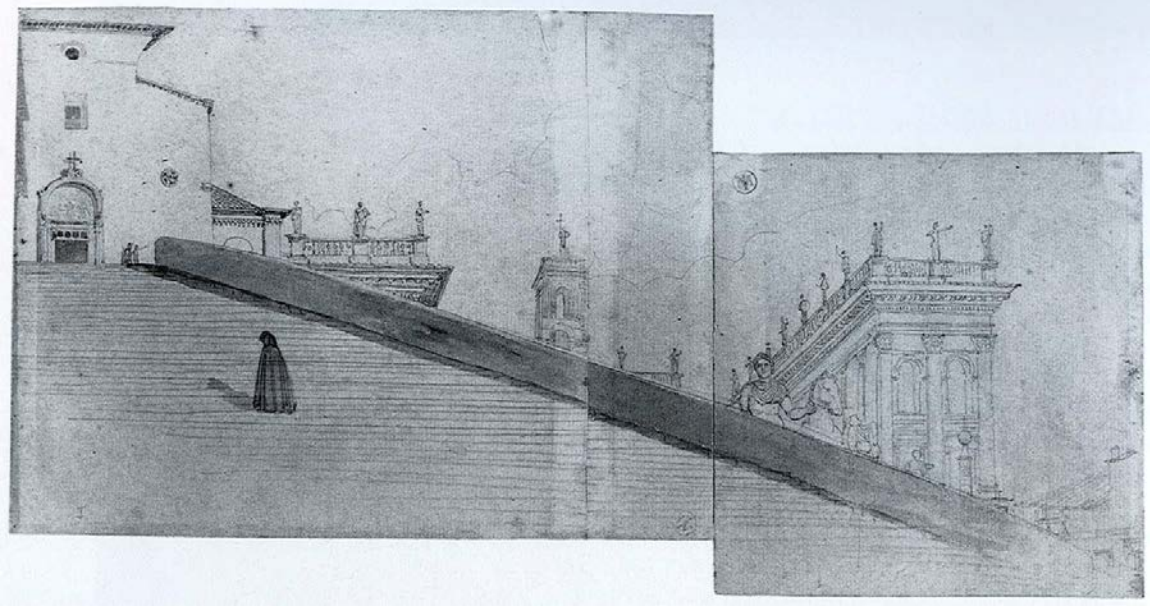


Figure A149. Jean-Auguste-Dominique Ingres, *The Stairway of Santa Maria d'Aracoeli in Rome*, 1806-20, graphite and brown wash on three attached sheets of paper, Musée Ingres, Montauban.



Figure A150. Jean-Auguste-Dominique Ingres, *Martyrdom of Saint Symphorien*, 1834, oil on canvas, Cathedral of Saint-Lazare, Autun.

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