Recreating Time, History, and the Poetic Imaginary:
Alexandre Lenoir and the Musée des Monuments français (1795-1816)

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To David, Max, Brae, and Ellie with love

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Abstract

This dissertation is a hermeneutic and philosophical study of the emergence of the narrative museum in late eighteenth-century France. An early example of this genre, Alexandre Lenoir's creation of the short-lived Musée des Monuments français (1795-1816) out of the deposits to a post-revolution sculpture depot at #14 Rue de Petite-Seine on Paris's Left Bank, purported to recount the history of the French nation through the chronological and aestheticized arrangement of a collection of sculpture, funerary monuments, and architectural fragments. These objects had, since mid-October 1790, found temporary refuge at the former monastery of the Petits-Augustins, and under Lenoir's guardianship they became the nucleus of an evolving display that highlighted the evolution of French art and history. In his scenographic installations in the cloisters and halls, church, courtyards, and garden at the Petits-Augustins, Lenoir recreated a philosophical *parcours* that sought to materialize through the art object six centuries of French artistic heritage and history, beginning with the thirteenth century and culminating with the birth of the French republican nation in the last decade of the eighteenth century.

Part monument to French accomplishment, part mythic narrative, Lenoir's project was an embodiment of Enlightenment ideals in its deliberate attempt to provide moral and didactic instruction to its visiting publics through the sequencing of objects in choreographed spaces. Yet the Musée's claim to didacticism must be qualified, for the reality was that this museum was born of the unique social, historical, and political circumstances of the French Revolution – a singularly tumultuous and radically transformative moment in modern social history – and in form and content the Musée bore witness to a society coming to terms with beginnings and endings in ways that recalled the paradoxes of the very horizon in which the institution first took shape. Lenoir's almost fanatical obsession with fragments and their reconfiguration, and his desire to evoke mythic origins and traditions, proved fertile concepts in the psychological recovery of a nation emerging from revolution and the denial of its feudal and monarchical past, while the highly original and controversial museum he created introduced innovative and lasting traditions to the modern museum institution emerging throughout Europe at this time.

Résumé

Cette dissertation est une étude herméneutique et philosophique sur l'émergence du musée narratif à la fin du XVIIIe siècle en France. Un des premiers exemples de ce genre, le Musée des Monuments français (1795-1816) a été créé par Alexandre Lenoir à partir d'une collection de sculptures d'un dépôt post-révolutionnaire au # 14 de la rue de Petite-Seine sur la Rive Gauche de Paris. Ce musée prétendait présenter l'histoire de la nation française par l'arrangement chronologique et esthétique d'une collection de sculptures, de monuments funéraires, et de fragments architecturaux. Depuis le mois d'octobre 1790, ces objets avaient trouvé refuge dans l'ancien monastère des Petits-Augustins, et sous la direction de Lenoir, ils sont devenus le noyau d'une collection qui allait mettre en lumière l'évolution de l'art et de l'histoire de France. Dans les installations scénographiques du cloître, des halls, de l'église, des cours, et du jardin des Petits-Augustins, en recréant un parcours philosophique Lenoir cherchait à matérialiser par des objets d'art, six siècles d'héritage artistique et historique en commençant par le treizième siècle et en culminant avec la naissance de la République Française dans la dernière décennie du XVIIIe siècle.

En partie monument en l'honneur des accomplissements de la nation fraçaise, en partie narratif mythique, le projet de Lenoir est une matérialisation des idéaux des lumières dont le but délibéré était d'assurer une instruction morale et didactique aux visiteurs par la présentation d'une suite d'objets dans des espaces chorégraphiés. Cependant, ces intentions didactiques doivent êtres précisées, parce qu'en réalité ce musée est né des circonstances sociales, historiques et politiques particulières qui caractérisent la Révolution Française – une époque particulièrement tumultueuse et radicalement transformative de l'histoire sociale moderne – et dans sa forme et son contenu, le Musée témoigne d'une société qui est en train de se réconcilier avec sa propre histoire d'une façon qui rappelle les paradoxes du contexte même dans lequel cette institution a pris forme. L'obsession presque fanatique de Lenoir pour les fragments et pour leurs reconfigurations ainsi que son désir d'évoquer des origines et des traditions mythiques ont été des concepts fertiles pour le rétablissement psychologique d'une nation au sortir de la Révolution et de son passé féodal et monarchique. De plus, le musée très original et controversé créé par Lenoir a introduit des traditions novatrices qui ont influencé l'institution du musée moderne qui émergeait à travers l'Europe à cette époque.

Les arts éprouvent des révolutions comme les empires: ils passent successivement de l'enfance à la barbarie, et retournent peu-à-peu au point d'où ils étaient partis.

Lenoir, *Musée des monumens français*, Volume 1

Figure 1. View of the Elysium

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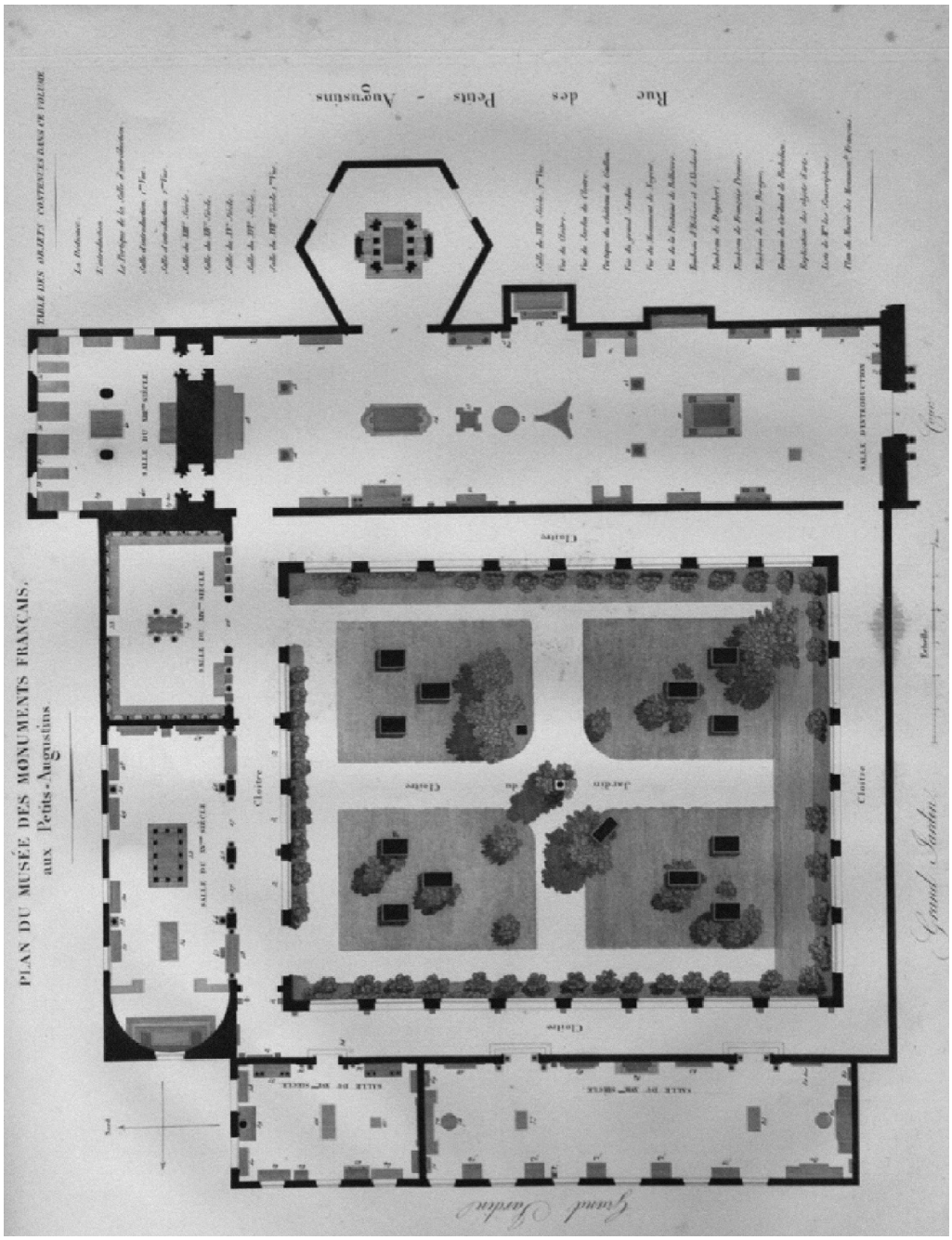

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Dissertation Overview

This project had as its departure point a concern for how "history" is being represented and transmitted in national museums in our contemporary moment, and a desire to determine how this condition came about. In this era of impoverished social understanding of time and durability, an understanding that is reinforced by the all too often uncritical celebration of technologies of representation, event-generated institutions have become our new national museums, and visitors, these museums' simulated victims. Today, the larger industry that has developed out of our desire to connect with history in an evocative way is in crisis, marred by a culture dominated by the narrow definition that it has given to the notion of experience. Re-enactment in this context has been re-defined through the lens of simulacra – to trivializing effect – and has dramatically altered our capacity to relate authentically with the past. At the Holocaust Memorial Museum in Washington, D.C., for example, visitors check their own human experience at the door in order to assume that of a victim of the Holocaust, while the visitor to the Apartheid Museum in Johannesburg is arbitrarily assigned a race and skin colour in order to proceed through the museum according to one of two different paths. These two approaches to mediating an experience with history in the museum are highly problematic, in that they deny the visitor their own personal relationship with the objects on view, and impose a narrow framework for engaging with the past. Their premise and actualization have led to the increasing disembodiment of the self in the public sphere, through the dual positioning of the visitor as victim, and the increased use of video technology in the museum.

Determining a modern origin for historiographical traditions in the museum, I have theorized the emergence of the narrative museum, a genre that I define in opposition to the scientific model of most history museums. The narrative museum is one that purports to represent events in a continuous and cohesive narrative environment, effected through the aesthetic, spatial, temporal, and architectural *mise-en-scène* of the museographical setting and the placement of objects within this setting. As distinct from a history museum, whose mandate is to collect objects of history, the narrative history museum uses objects to tell a cohesive story about history. By definition, the narrative museum is philosophical, not rational, and creates meaning through the combined narrative of its collections, scenography, and architectural program. As a synthesized or "total" narrative environment, it is the museographic equivalent of the *gesamkunstwerk*. Today, this genre

has undergone profound change, owing to transformations in societal attitudes toward time (with emphasis on the here and now through technologies that permit instantaneous representation and the continual "making" of historical events; also leading to the phenomenon of telescoped time), representation (our sensationalist attitude toward representation which privileges trauma, victimization, and shock value), and technological innovations that permit simulated rather than authentic experience. But to understand the intentions of the narrative museum at its genesis, indeed to appreciate the very concept of the national museum at its origins, it is imperative to restitute these institutions within their own historical and social conditions.

Recreating Time, History, and the Poetic Imaginary: Alexandre Lenoir and the Musée des Monuments français is a hermeneutic and philosophical study of the emergence of the narrative museum in late eighteenth-century France. Recent scholars have theorized the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum as a narrative museum, with its organizational premise following that of a strong story line.[1] I suggest the narrative museum has roots dating back to the late eighteenth century, and developed contemporaneously with the birth of the modern museum institution in France. The significance of my argument arises from the fact that a very different intention for animating the past through narrative existed in the eighteenth century from the one we encounter today, and this study endeavours to reveal the vision that lay at the origin of the seemingly paradoxical idea of representing history in the museum – and to what effect.

My dissertation derives its terms from the specific political, cultural, and historical context that was late eighteenth-century France, however my questions are necessarily those of a scholar of the twenty-first century, and have arisen from my engagement as an academic and professional immersed in the museum field. These questions stem from a profound concern over institutional approaches to historiographic representation that arose in the late twentieth century, the origins of which – however abused in contemporary context – are a direct legacy of France's post-Revolution museographic context. As a hermeneutic project, I give great latitude to the notion of the "text": in this study, written document, physical artifact, and spatial program are all alternatively

[1] Jeshajahu Weinberg and Rina Elieli, *The Holocaust Museum in Washington* (New York: Rizzoli, 1995) 17.

examined for the "textual" insights they yield. This means that my study of the Musée des Monuments français as a national museum of art does not ground its analysis uniquely in theories of art and aesthetics, nor does it endeavour to trace a stylistic or typological genesis of the national museum in the tradition of Pevsner or Seling, but considers issues related to narrative as well.[2] To paraphrase the historian Ranke, the modern practice of hermeneutics is premised upon our belief that the very act of understanding history, of which we are always an active part, requires our on-going participation within this process.[3] In keeping with the tradition articulated so eloquently by Gadamer, one must fully engage with historical texts by entering into a dialogical relationship with the past. Hermeneutics insists, by its very nature, on a truly comparative approach in order to gain a better understanding of history.

I have sought to engage the world of the Musée des Monuments français through a parallel reading of eighteenth-century texts on the subjects of historiography, conservation, and pedagogical reform, in addition to landscape and architectural theory. These texts have permitted me a greater understanding of the larger spatial, representational, and cultural practices that shaped modern historical consciousness and the construction of subjectivity in the narrative museum. My project considers how a changed sense of history led to significant innovations in scenography and architectural program in the Musée des Monuments français. For Lenoir, the concept of an art museum was inherently tied to the display of history, and this display was to be apprehended experientially by the visitor. Lenoir's empirical ideas were clearly informed by Enlightenment conceptions of subjectivity and indebted to Lockean theories on the processes of human memory, the imagination, and sense perception, and the sensationist theories of the French philosopher Étienne Bonnot de Condillac (1714-1780).

I therefore use the architectural concept of the "program," which I define as the theme of the arrangement of a series of spaces into a coherent whole, as key to understanding the Musée's meaning and philosophical purpose. Its use in this sense has enabled me to interpret the site of the museum as the embodiment of two alternating and complimentary intentions – narrative and performance – while equally providing the literal ground of the

[2] Nicolas Pevsner, *A History of Building Types* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1976) and Helmut Seling, "The Genesis of the Museum." *Architectural Review* CXLI (February 1967) pp.103-114.
[3] Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy. "Hermeneutics." http://plato.stanford.edu/entries/hermeneutics/. Accessed January 2007.

project as a study of interior and exterior scenographic techniques. Through a combined consideration of the narrative voice of the museum catalogue, of the architectural program of the diverse conceptual spaces of the museum, of the scenography of the museum as *gesamkunstwerk*, and of the texts of visitor accounts, the concept of the national museum in late eighteenth-century France may be understood in its most comprehensive, and richest, sense.

The development of the narrative museum in the late eighteenth century is extremely prescient, for it emerged in the moment that history and art – hitherto two related and mutually enforcing human endeavours – would become irrevocably disengaged through the subsequent creation and institutionalization of academic disciplines. Alexandre Lenoir's project of the Musée des Monuments français, a self-proclaimed history of nation and art, developed at the dawn of this new age, and thus it had the distinction of defining what was essentially a nineteenth-century phenomenon (the public museum) with an eighteenth-century sensibility. In other words, Lenoir's project was premised upon the strong belief that some form of access to truth derived not strictly from a factual or analytic presentation of material (as it would in later museographic forms), but rather from sense experience and engagement with the object – even, or perhaps it is more accurate to say especially, if this object embodied truth through the coalescence of *techne* and *poesis*. How quickly would Lenoir's vision be compromised by nineteenth-century concerns for rational and scientific displays, displays premised upon the model pioneered by the contemporaneous Louvre in the case of the art museum, and by the Musée d'histoire naturelle, in the example of the natural history museum. Thus one of the crucial considerations for a discussion of the Musée des Monuments français arises from the more fundamental problem of how to reconcile history and art through representation, and how to ensure that a meaningful and open engagement with the past occurs. In the late eighteenth century, there was no inherent inconsistency in an epistemology that understood art through history and history through art, and in this respect, it can be said that Lenoir's vision of history was that of a philosopher historian, and his vision of art that of the poet.

The Musée des Monuments français

Alexandre Lenoir's creation of the short-lived Musée des Monuments français (1795-1816), in a post-revolution sculpture depot at #14 Rue de Petite-Seine on Paris's Left Bank, purported to recount the history of the French nation through the chronological arrangement and aestheticized representation of sculpture, monuments, and architectural fragments. These objects had, since mid-October 1790, found temporary refuge at the former monastery of the Petits-Augustins, and under Lenoir's guardianship they became the nucleus of an evolving collection that highlighted the evolution of French art and history. In his scenographic alterations of the cloisters and halls, church, courtyards and garden at the Petits-Augustins, Lenoir recreated a philosophical *parcours* that sought to materialize through the art object and its setting six centuries of French artistic heritage and history, beginning with the thirteenth century and culminating with the birth of the French republican nation in the last decade of the eighteenth century.

Part monument to French accomplishment, part mythic narrative, Lenoir's project was an embodiment of Enlightenment ideals in its deliberate attempt to provide moral and didactic instruction to its visiting publics through the sequencing of objects in choreographed spaces. Yet the Musée's claim to didacticism must be qualified, for the reality was that the Musée des Monuments français (Musée) was born of the unique social, historical, and political circumstances of the French Revolution – a singularly tumultuous and radically transformative moment in modern social history – and in form and content the Musée bore witness to a society coming to terms with beginnings and endings in ways that recalled the paradoxes of the very horizon in which the institution first took shape. Lenoir's almost fanatical obsession with fragments and their reconfiguration, and his desire to evoke mythic origins and traditions, proved fertile concepts in the psychological recovery of a nation emerging from revolution and the denial of its feudal and monarchical past, while the highly original and controversial museum he created and curated introduced innovative and lasting traditions to the modern museum institution emerging throughout Europe at this time. Thus it was as a direct consequence of the Revolution, to which the Musée owed its fortuitous origins, and in response to this Revolution, that the Musée truly realized its poetic dimension as an evocative narrative of history. The Musée was both museum of art, and museum of history, and in the fissures of the discursive historical/chronological structure that Lenoir

gave to the Musée's program lay a poetic intention that served to open up this museum to other possible relationships with history, through the very unity that Lenoir gave to the building and the objects this building housed.

Although not all national museums have been the product of such momentous political change as those of the revolution that created France's first democracy, increasingly in the contemporary moment the content and context of our major history museums are being generated by specific historical (often traumatic) events rather than a collective of historical phenomena. Witness the generation of Holocaust, Apartheid, and Human Rights museums that have proliferated around the world and consider their narratives and scenographies. It is these museums, with their common subjects rooted in civil war and human oppression, that are our latest national museums, and their *raison d'être*, like the context of their creation, has signalled a profound change in attitudes toward history and its uses in the public sphere. Commensurate with this is a changed subjectivity and positioning of the visiting public, from witness to victim, from the detached observer of the history museum to the engaged participant of the increasingly popular narrative history museum. My research has concluded that, far from a desire to render the visitor a "victim" of the traumatic historical narratives that are the focus of many contemporary national history museums, Lenoir's museographic innovations were entirely different. Beyond realizing the larger pedagogical and historiographical objectives of the French Revolution, Lenoir's ambitions for the Musée des Monuments français were to restitute the fractured ethos of a nation recovering from a severed past. Lenoir's work at the Musée proffered catharsis within a physical and psychological landscape that had undergone profound and traumatic change.

This dissertation positions the Musée des Monuments français as one individual's endeavour to explore the new aims of history and its uses in the expanded social and public spheres of France's post-*Ancien régime*. Lenoir had many critics, notably the influential theorist and architectural historian, Antoine-Chrysostome Quatremère de Quincy,[4] who ultimately forced the closure of the Musée, and Lenoir's career was not infrequently marred by accusations of his non-scholarly behaviour. The intention of this dissertation is not to exonerate Alexandre Lenoir of these accusations, but rather to

[4] Antoine-Chrysostome Quatremère de Quincy, 1755-1849.

explore and contextualize the imagination and intentions of the mind that lay behind such activities. Furthermore, as an investigation of the traditions of the narrative museum at this seminal moment, this dissertation formulates a new critical discourse and framework for theorizing an ontology of the modern museum.

As a consequence of the admittedly singular political context in which the Musée des Monuments français emerged, my focus is to trace the museological intentions of Alexandre Lenoir through an analysis of the parallel endeavours of his corpus of writings as well as the scenographic installations he realized throughout the Musée, from this curator's first involvement with the depot as a volunteer in the autumn of 1790, to its transformation under his leadership into a museum installation in 1795 and its forced closure in 1816, and to analyze how the Musée des Monuments français introduced novel foundational traditions to the modern museum institution at large. This study considers the museum institution to be, at its essence, a site for choreographing objects and experience, and in this seemingly simple definition, a wealth of spatial and philosophical models were open to Lenoir's consideration in his design of the Musée. My questions centre around the issue of the museum conceived as a space of experience, and how this particular spatial conception modulated the problem of historiography and its representation in the museum in the late eighteenth century. My conclusions derive from a unique understanding of the object and visitor and their relationship to space in eighteenth-century context.

The Musée des Monuments français was a multi-dimensional project, constructed through the coalescence of language, objects, and history. Language imparted an idea and a way of being in the museum, objects (in this instance sculpture and architecture) introduced a material, temporal, and spatial dimension to the project, while history provided the overall narrative framework by which meaning was intended to be made. These three elements were inextricably linked throughout Lenoir's work, and informed one another in order to create a heightened and unified experience of art. By considering Lenoir's undertaking in its tripartite form, and by relating it to other contemporaneous spaces of representation, this dissertation aims to determine a theory of narrative structure in the work of Alexandre Lenoir, while considering how this narrative provided meaning for its contemporary public. Examples of emplotment, such as achieved by the spatial

device of the *parcours* and the literary genre of the catalogue, are manifest in the Musée and Lenoir's professional curatorial and publishing activities. An analysis of these and other forms of emplotment serve to uncover alternative antecedents to the ideas that shaped the modern museum, while elucidating specificities of the Musée and the traditions that informed it.

A second intention of the dissertation is to locate Lenoir's project and its intentions within existing traditions of urban spaces of representation, such as the cemetery, and to establish rapports between discourses of the self, history, and its enactment. The dissertation considers how the subject of history translated into the realm of representation in the eighteenth-century museum; thus at the heart of such a project are questions of transliteration and reception. In the narrative history museum, these questions pertained specifically to the aesthetics and the perception of space, while at the heart of Lenoir's museum lay the rudiments of the very dialectic that today has reached near-fatalistic proportions: the question of simulated vs. authentic experience as a means of coming to know the past. If novel within the tradition of the art museum, Lenoir's impetus to display the past, and the manner he chose to do so, had other significant precursors in projects that perpetuated the Classical episteme of unity, in this instance, unity of experience and representation. The city of Rome, whose monuments are a constant reminder of one's place in the continuum of history, is one such example.

The dissertation thereby brings the prevailing theoretical and conceptual basis of the modern art museum institution into question (traditionally understood as a derivative of the *kunst*- and *wunderkammern*, the princely collection, and the Renaissance and Baroque sculpture garden) through the positing of other possible foundational themes of investigation originating in landscape, myth, and historiography. These themes are not arbitrarily imported and grafted onto the museum but rather they have surfaced from correspondences with established social discourses and practices, both synchronic and diachronic, in the civic sphere. Thus, the departure point for this investigation is the assumption that the narrative museum is, and historically has been, both an expression of historical consciousness and the product of social actions brought about by this consciousness and, in this way, its study affords insight into how architecture and objects provide the space of poetic experience in order to open up history for the future –

recalling Nietzsche's "unfashionable meditation"[5] – rather than memorialize the burden of the past. By understanding the traditions of the narrative history museum in this way, this project posits a second theory: that in its ontological essence, Lenoir's narrative museum, like theatre, responded to a social and psychic need to rehearse for the transformational experiences of the *conditio humana*.

It must be emphasized from the outset that the Musée des Monuments français was not a museum institution in the traditional sense of an organization mediated by a community of professionals; rather it was the vision and creative undertaking of a single, highly motivated, and arguably idiosyncratic, individual. In this observation lies the suggestion of the personality of the collector as an important consideration above and beyond the parameters assumed by the traditional institutional framework of the museum. As founder and director of the Musée, Alexandre Lenoir was also its only administrator and curator.[6] It was Lenoir who conceived of transforming the temporary storage depot into a museum, and it was Lenoir who had begun, even before the idea of a museum was officially sanctioned by the relevant governing authorities, to undertake the measures toward a more permanent, and choreographed, installation of objects in the halls surrounding the cloisters of the former monastery. In short, Lenoir was the Musée, and the Musée was Lenoir's project – and a highly original project it was.

In his design of ambient, century-specific halls, Lenoir inaugurated one of the earliest examples of the period room,[7] while his museum was one of the first in Europe and the first in France to realize a chronological sequence of galleries for the arrangement of art.[8] Both of these display strategies would shortly thereafter be incorporated into the museographic practices of the "modern" museum, and the chronologically organized (read scientific) collection is now a mainstay in many museological traditions. In his creation of a historical narrative, Alexandre Lenoir thus popularized both a modern

[5] Frederick Nietzsche, "On the Utility and Liability of History for Life," *Unfashionable Observations* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1995), 83-167.
[6] There has been at least one mention of an assistant curator, Pierre Claude Binart, in Lenoir's employ in the *Archives du Musée des Monuments français*. Pierre Claude Binart was Lenoir's father-in-law. His wife, Adélaïde (née Binart), was a respected portraitist.
[7] The idea of the period room entailed the design of a hall so as to evoke historical attributes suggestive of the period in which the objects on display were created.
[8] The chronological arrangement of galleries had previously structured the lay-out of two museums in Northern Europe. Lambert Krahe and Christian von Mechel oversaw the design of the Düsseldorf Gallery in 1755, and, on the basis of his work there, von Mechel was subsequently involved with the re-design of the Imperial Collection in the Belvedere in Vienna, in 1781.

museological genre, and the framework of modern display practices, while inaugurating these in the museum he created in post-Revolution Paris. Through a heightened attention to the conditions of exhibition, and innovations he brought to the arrangement of works of art that disrupted the Baroque paradigm of decorative patterns of display, Lenoir radically altered the spatial structure and ideological premise of the collection of art at a transitional moment in the museum institution's history. However, if Lenoir's scenographic interventions seemed innovative, many of them were in fact inspired by existing traditions outside of the museum paradigm, and born not of the French Revolution, but rather from established literary and urban contexts, most notably the *histoire monumentale* and the picturesque garden. In these alternative spaces, where questions of representation were no less central than they were in the narrative history museum, new pictorial and literary discourses altered conventional historiographies and constructions of subjectivity.

Despite almost single-handedly administering the Musée, Lenoir and his project were nevertheless constantly and relentlessly mediated (and in some events compromised) by several intervening forces and circumstantial factors. Both the city's and the nation's political structures underwent significant changes throughout the life of the Musée as France re-invented itself following the overthrow of the *Ancien régime*, the years of the Terreur, the Napoleonic Empire, and the Bourbon Restoration, and various organizations, ranging from the *Commission des monuments* to the *Commission temporaire des arts* and the *Commission d'instruction publique*, alternately oversaw Lenoir's work. From the outset, these commissions were responsible for authorizing Lenoir's requests to expand the collection and to transform the depot into a permanent collection and public museum through various architectural and design-related undertakings, and equally for distributing the wealth of France's national heritage amongst the nation's other developing museums, most importantly, the Musée du Louvre [alternately known as the Muséum français (September 1792), the Musée de la République (July 1793), the Muséum des arts (August 1793), and the Musée Central des arts (January 1797)] and the Musée Versailles (after 1797 known as the Musée spécial de l'école française). Most often, the Musée des Monuments français and the Louvre developed as competing national collections of fine arts, and Lenoir was often instructed to transfer objects from his own museum to

supplement the growing painting and sculpture collection at the Louvre – much to his frustration.

Having said this, it must be emphasized that there were important differences between the collection of art objects displayed by the Louvre and the Musée Versailles, and those at the Musée des Monuments français. If Lenoir stressed that the Musée des Monuments français was a museum of fine art, under his leadership it diverged from emerging museographic practices in significant, and sometimes crucial, ways. As I shall demonstrate, issues such as conservation and collecting policies were key aspects in the shaping of modern museographic practice, and Lenoir's position on these matters was highly unorthodox. Even though he was avant-garde in his endorsement of a chronological arrangement of the Musée (pre-dating any comparable position at the Louvre), it is perhaps more accurate to say that his legacy would be more keenly felt in projects whose focus is some form of popular story-telling, be it history writing, the narrative history museum, or historical documentaries in television or film.

These considerations notwithstanding, it would be difficult to over-emphasize the significance of Lenoir's project and the impact it had on both the artistic and popular imaginary in late eighteenth-, and early nineteenth-century Europe: numerous artists depicted views and scenes of the Musée's galleries and Elysium (Hubert Robert, J.-E. Biet, Jean Lubin Vauzelle); various novelists and historians referred to formative childhood experiences at the Musée (Jules Michelet, Victor Hugo); and members of the visiting public recorded impressions of their visits to the Musée in their letters and correspondences (Barbeau, Napoleon). Remarkably, this short-lived institution has had an even lengthier afterlife in scholarship dedicated to exploring and contextualizing the historical moment that was the French Revolution and the cultural institutions that this volatile but pivotal political situation spawned, and in this scholarship, the Musée has figured prominently. In discussions on Romanticism and the Neo-Gothic, on French nationalism and modern historiography, on the birth and rise of the historic monument movement and the modern museum institution, the Musée des Monuments français continues to be discussed as a phenomenon that had far-reaching and diachronic implications.

As previously mentioned, however, and despite its decidedly popular afterlife, this dissertation seeks to consider what lay at the genesis of Lenoir's project. If this dissertation further elucidates the imagination, intentions, and influences of the man who conceived of the Musée des Monuments français in all the complexity of its literary and spatial facets, while contextualizing the project within the broader spectrum of late eighteenth-century debates pertaining to history and representation, it will have achieved the ambitions I have set out for it.

Structure and Method

This dissertation mirrors the spatial and narrative organization of the Musée des Monuments français by analyzing the Musée according to its interior and exterior parts. "Foundations (1790-1795)" introduces Lenoir's project to transform a temporary storage depot into the Republic's first national museum of sculpture. It considers the politico-cultural horizon of the post-*Ancien régime* and Republican France, the historical development of the depot, and its theoretical underpinnings. Part II, entitled "Enlightenment by Design: Freemasonry, Scenography, and Performance at the Musée des Monuments français, 1796-1816," discusses the program of the interior of the Musée des Monuments français, its architectural and scenographic development, and its theoretical and historiographic premise. In Part III, "Monuments, Narrative, *Parcours*: Emplotment in the Elysium and a Restorative Poetics of time, 1796-1816," I consider the exterior garden, or Elysée, of the Musée according to emerging principles of landscape architecture and design, ruins, and the *fabrique*.

The justification for using a spatial division as a structuring device for this dissertation is drawn from Lenoir's own conceptual understanding of the different narrative and representational possibilities of the Musée's interior and exterior spaces as mediated by two different historiographies and constructions and representations of time: in the interior, linear, on the exterior, episodic. This fundamental duality necessarily entailed differences in the nature of the objects on display and their choreography within the exhibition spaces, which underlay Lenoir's basic philosophical intent and understanding of "history." Significantly, this duality is not as rigid as one might at first imagine, and I shall demonstrate how various compositional and programmatic concepts permeated Lenoir's conception of both interior and exterior spaces. To this end, a careful

investigation and explication of these spaces, in addition to the nature and positioning of the objects they housed, will serve to elucidate a theory of narrative structure at the Musée des Monuments français, as well as the manner Lenoir intended "history" to be apprehended, both as a visual discursive practice, and as an environment in which the visitor participated in the continuum of time.

Two interludes provide insights of a different sort: "A Portrait of Alexandre Lenoir" and "The Elysium as Topos: The Resurgence of the Idealized Garden in Late Eighteenth-Century France" extend the narrative beyond the main organizational frame that I have set for this dissertation, while still adding to this project in important ways. For this reason, I have identified these passages as separate – but complimentary – segments within the overall dissertation.

The concluding chapter of this dissertation brings the foundational questions of the dissertation into the present, by briefly considering the legacy of Lenoir's work on later museographic and representational practices. As mentioned previously, the departure point for this dissertation has been a critique of the approach of narrative history museums in the late twentieth century, owing to a shift in the post-modern understanding of experiential towards simulation, and the means deployed to achieve such a space and relationship with the past. The overriding concern of this dissertation has been to consider what shape history has taken through its representation in the museum, while determining the broader implications that treating history as a subject in the museum may have. It is a question that is considered with some urgency, as we undergo an increasing loss of experiential depth in the world we inhabit, particularly in those spaces that privilege visual relationships over other sensorial experiences, as the museum institution has traditionally done. Juhani Pallasmaa speaks of this urgency in his timely essay on architecture and the senses, *The Eyes of the Skin* (first published in 1996), in which he argued that "the weakening of the experience of time" is one such manifestation of an impoverished and de-sensualized relation to reality. He claims that projects that do not incorporate the dimension of time – those that aim toward "ageless perfection" such as we see in modern History's march toward progress – betray a fear of death.[9] In such an instance, the ability to participate in the larger processes of history, in "processes that

[9] Juhani Pallasmaa, *The Eyes of the Skin: Architecture and the Senses* (Chichester, England: Wiley-Academy, 2005), 32.

supersede the span of individual life,"[10] as American therapist Gotthard Booth has written, becomes crucial. In his own way, Lenoir considered the circumstantial project that was the Musée just such an opportunity: his museum opened up history, reconsidering it under different guises, before inviting the visitor to viscerally partake in its path.

The method for this study is primarily hermeneutic. As an investigation of Lenoir's intentions for the Musée des Monuments français and its significance as an example of historical representation, Lenoir's own writing of his project constitutes the primary material under investigation. This body of literature is both comprehensive and extensive. Lenoir was in fact somewhat of a problematic and transitional figure of prevailing antiquarian and emerging romantic practices in late eighteenth-, early nineteenth-century intellectual and artistic circles, a finding to which his literary oeuvre attests. While he was best known as the founder and curator of the Musée des Monuments français, Lenoir equally devoted his time to the pursuit of research and writing, was a free-mason and a member of many antiquarian organizations both in France and abroad, and produced a substantial body of writing on subjects as diverse as the origins of free-masonry (*La Franche-Maçonnerie rendue à sa véritable origine, ou, L'antiquité de la franche-maçonnerie prouvée par l'explication des mystères anciens et modernes*, Paris, 1814), the architectural and monumental heritage of France (*Recueil de gravures pour servir à l'histoire des arts en France, prouvée par les monumens*, Paris, 1812), and the roles of the imagination and the fine arts (*Considérations générales sur les sciences et les arts: rapports qui existent entre les beaux-arts, et ce que chacun d'eux emprunte ou prête à l'imagination*, Paris, 1816). He worked with the Empress Joséphine as Curator of her collections at Château Malmaison, and following the closure of the Musée, Lenoir became Administrator of the monuments repatriated to Saint-Denis Basilica.

Despite his broad interests, the publications that would dominate most of Lenoir's writing career pertained to the Musée itself: two separate and extensive catalogues exist of the collection of the Musée des Monuments français, one illustrated in eight volumes,[11] the

[10] Ibid., 32.
[11] The eight-volumes of the *Musée des Monumens français* were published out of sequence, and had slightly different subject matter and sub-titles. The first five volumes discuss the collection of the Musée and are century-specific, however

other, a single-volume publication expanded and re-printed in 12 editions[12] over a 23-year period, from 1793 to 1816. A careful textual analysis of the multiple volumes and editions of these two museum catalogues, *Description historique et chronologique des monumens de sculpture, réunis au Musée des monumens français* (of which the Canadian Centre for Architecture holds seven editions, those of 1796, 1797, 1803, 1806, 1810, 1815, and 1816) and the eight-volume *Musée des monuments français, ou Description historique et chronologique des statues en marbre et en bronze, bas-reliefs et tombeaux des hommes et des femmes célèbres, pour servir à l'histoire de France et à celle de l'art* (1800-1821), reveals Lenoir's personal and evolving ambitions towards the potential of a museum dedicated to presenting history, and how he envisioned that architecture and design might be used to further this endeavour. That Lenoir's undertaking had philosophical intent is perhaps less controversial an idea than the manner this curator proposed to restore France's past through a parallel, though questionable, restoration of its art. My readings of Lenoir's work attempt to elaborate a theory of Lenoir's philosophy of history and representation, by examining the imagination that understood the museum and its catalogues as corresponding and complimentary spatial and literary endeavours. Fundamental concepts in Lenoir's work were the mythological underpinnings of France's conception of itself and its past, as well as a quest to determine the Republic's Gallic origins and to render these origins concrete through the display of the object. These myths were equally a foundational element of Lenoir's own world view.

In addition to Lenoir's writing on the subject of the museum and its related topics, several contemporaneous treatises provide useful insight into the eighteenth-century world of Alexandre Lenoir. English and French landscape treatises, in the tradition of Claude-Henri Watelet's *Essai sur les jardins* (1774), inaugurated a new literary genre and spatial sensibility when first published in the mid-eighteenth century, while introducing several foundational compositional and literary concepts adopted by Lenoir at the Musée.

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the final three volumes are dedicated to more specialized subjects. The title of volume 6 is *Musée des monumens français : histoire de la peinture sur verre, et description des vitraux anciens et modernes, pour servir à l'histoire de l'art, relativement à la France; ornée de gravures, et notamment de celles de la fable de Cupidon et Psyché, d'après les dessins de Raphaël*, and the title of volumes 7 and 8 is *Aperçu historique des arts du dessin*. Please see *Musée des Monumens français; ou, Description historique et chronologique des statues en marbre et en bronze, bas-reliefs et tombeaux des hommes et des femmes célèbres pour servir à l'histoire de France et à celle de l'art. Ornée de gravures: et augmentée d'une dissertation sur les costumes de chaque siècle*. Lenoir, *Musée des Monumens français* 8 vols. (Paris: Guilleminet, 1800-1821).

[12] Louis Courajod cited 12 editions of this catalogue, published between 1793 and 1816, in his work *Alexandre Lenoir, son journal et le Musée des monuments français*, 3 vols. (Paris: Champion, 1878-1887).

Contemporary museum catalogues and historiographic publications, such as those of Bernard de Montfauçon and Aubin Louis Millin, were also important literary, pictorial, and conceptual sources. Finally, early nineteenth-century publications which combined both discursive and illustrated descriptions of the Musée des Monuments français, such as those of J.-B. Réville and Jacques Lavallée, *Vues pittoresques et perspectives des Salles du Musée des monuments français* (Paris, 1816), and J.-E. Biet and J.-P. Brès, *Souvenirs du Musée des monuments français* (Paris, 1821-1826), serve to reconstruct the lay-out and contemporary reception of the museum by providing several views of specific galleries and the Elysium garden.

Two other publications constitute primary archival material in this study. The three-volume *Inventaire général des richesses d'art de la France. Archives du Musée des monuments français* (Paris, 1883-1897), produced by the *Commission de l'inventaire général des richesses d'art de la France*, contains archives that chronicle the formation and eventual closure of the Musée. Lenoir's son, the architect Albert Lenoir, contributed archives to the first volume of this publication, while the addition of archives to the second and third volumes was overseen by the editor Jules Guiffrey. The three-volume publication *Alexandre Lenoir. Son journal et le Musée des Monuments français* (Paris, 1878-1887), written by Louvre curator Louis Courajod, Lenoir's first and only biographer, provides a transcription of the first catalogue Lenoir composed of the Musée (his *Notice* of 1793), in addition to a comprehensive journal of Lenoir's activities and a brief annotated bibliography of his written works.

Historiography of Alexandre Lenoir and the Musée des Monuments français

A substantial number of writers have produced secondary source material on Alexandre Lenoir, and this beginning within a generation of his death. With few exceptions, these sources pertain to Lenoir's work as founder and administrator of the Musée des Monuments français, and consequently discussions of Lenoir have tended to focus on his curatorial work at the Petits-Augustins. These discussions have typically interpreted Lenoir's work within a polemic that situated Lenoir's intentions as motivated by either artistic or historical impulses. What has been less explored, however, are Lenoir's other activities: his many memberships in antiquarian and Celtic societies throughout France and abroad, his membership with the Free-Masons, and how these professional

associations conditioned his life-view and his work. A consideration of the issues generated by these other relationships opens up the discussion on Lenoir to wider cultural phenomena such that his intensely personal project may nevertheless be understood within the larger cultural and historical horizon that shaped it.

Within the twentieth century, Lenoir was treated by most scholars as somewhat of a curiosity on account of his unorthodox curatorial practices. A handful of writers, all of them French, published articles and short papers on Lenoir throughout the first half of the twentieth century, notably Louis Dimier (1903), L. de Lanzac de Laborie (1913), Louis Réau (1924), G. Huard (1940), while interest intensified in the second half of the century in France and abroad: Paul Léon (1951), Suzanne Thouronde (1964), Bruno Foucart (1969), M. Gallet (1969), J. Vanuxem (1971), Frances Haskell (1976, 1993), Dominique Poulot (1986, 1994, 1997), Alain Erlande-Brandenburg (1977, 1979), Pierre de Lagarde (1979), Stanley Mellon (1979), Christopher Greene (1981), Stephen Bann (1984, 1988, 1995), Richard Etlin (1984, 1994), G. Hubert (1986), Anthony Vidler (1987, 1988), Guy Cogéval (1993), Andrew McClellan (1994), Alexandra Stara (1999), and Deborah Jenson (2001).

There have been two writers in particular over the past quarter century who have contributed greatly to the scholarship on Lenoir: architectural historian Alexandra Stara wrote a doctoral dissertation on the subject of Lenoir and Quatremère de Quincy, seeking reconciliation in their seemingly contradictory views on the museum institution. Stara both identified and explored the significance of the Musée des Monuments français and concluded that Lenoir's project was motivated by a quest to establish identity and order in history through the medium of art and through a poetic engagement with its fragments. Despite, or perhaps rather because of, its unique status as an individual's project, she concluded that the Musée was an important instance in the history of the modern museum institution. Stara's work in fact continues in the tradition of another prominent defender of Lenoir's work, historian Dominique Poulot who, outside of Courajod, has contributed most widely to our understanding of Lenoir.

The subjects of Lenoir and his museum have caught the fascination of scholars from many different disciplines and methodologies, ranging from psychotherapy and history,

to art and architectural history, and these disciplines have, by their very specificity, brought different insights to the fore with respect to the meaning and historical, symbolic, and cultural significance of Lenoir's project. However it is an oversight that more attention has not been devoted to Lenoir from the discipline of architectural history (with the important exceptions of Suzanne Thouronde and Anthony Vidler), even if Lenoir himself was not trained as an architect. The implications of this observation are apparent when one considers the place of Lenoir in modern and contemporary historiographies that explore such widespread cultural phenomena as romanticism and the neo-Gothic. To this end, the observation of Jean-Pierre Bady, *Directeur de la Caisse Nationale des Monuments Historiques et des Sites*, is very telling. In his preface to the 1979 exhibition catalogue *Le Gothique retrouvé avant Viollet-le-Duc*, Bady noted that three pivotal events marked the resurgence of the Gothic in the eighteenth century: the construction of Horace Walpole's Gothic villa Strawberry Hill in 1753, Goethe's dedicatory hymn to Strasbourg Cathedral in 1772, and the creation of the Musée des Monuments français in Paris "en pleine période révolutionnaire" by Alexandre Lenoir.[13] Bady's observation is important for two reasons: it singled out Lenoir's project within the architectural context of Viollet-le-Duc, whose work is considered to demonstrate the culminating moment in neo-Gothic structures in France, and secondly, it recognized that the desire to return to the Middle Ages, that synchronically manifested itself in literature, archaeology, architecture, and the ambient century halls that Lenoir designed and created at the Musée des Monuments français constituted, in Bady's words, "un véritable phénomène de civilisation"[14] – a genuine and authentic phenomenon of civilization that marked a specific historical moment and condition.

Given the nascent "neo-Gothic" horizon into which Lenoir's project was realized, it is perhaps not entirely serendipitous that the first pivotal event cited by Bady that marked the Gothic revival, Horace Walpole's commission of a Neo-Gothic residence at Strawberry Hill and one of the first instances of the return of the Gothic style in England, was also home to a treatise on modern gardening and landscape design. I will demonstrate in Part III of this dissertation the importance that this specific body of literature – written almost a half century before the creation of the Musée des Monuments

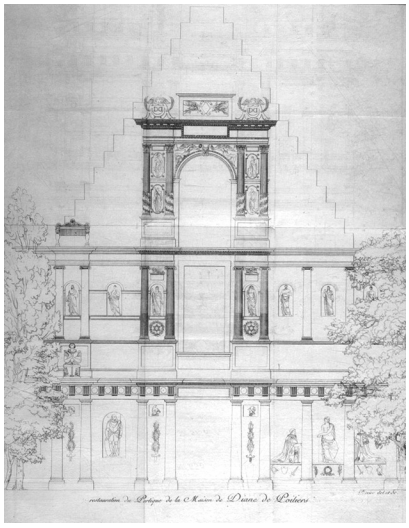
[13] *Le Gothique retrouvé avant Viollet-le-Duc* (Paris: Caisse Nationale des Monuments Historiques et des Sites, 1979), 3. Published in conjunction with the exhibition held at the Hôtel de Sully, 31 octobre 1979 – 17 février 1980. This exhibition explored the rediscovery of medieval art and architecture in Europe throughout the eighteenth and early nineteenth century.
[14] Ibid., 3.

français – manifested on Lenoir's conception of scenography and the subjective experience, and how this genre's ideas led to the creation of an elysium in the far grounds of the monastic site. Further, the Elysée constituted an important alternative narrative to the chronological *parcours* of the interior century halls.

Let us first delve into the *Foundations*, where I will begin by situating the Musée des Monuments français within the politico-cultural context of the post-*Ancien régime*, while drawing upon contemporary debates that informed the philosophical project that was the Musée.

Part I

Foundations, 1790-1795



I. A New Order for a Revolutionized Society: Conservation, Pedagogy, and Historiography in the First Republic

Theorizing Cultural Heritage: Origins of a Concept of History

In the immediate aftermath of the events we now collectively refer to as the "French Revolution," a series of debates occurred in France's *Assemblée nationale constituante* (1789-1792) and this provisional government's replacement, the *Convention nationale* (1792-1795), which served to underscore the new cultural ideals and policies of the earliest governing bodies of the post-*Ancien régime*. At a time when France's democracy was in its infancy, and the nation was orchestrating the most radical changes to its political and social structure ever – from the adoption of its first constitution (*Déclaration des Droits de l'homme et du citoyen*, 1789) to the abolition of absolute monarchy and feudal rights (1789), from the confiscation of ecclesiastical goods to the nationalization of this property (1790), from the reorganization of the justice system to the creation of an elected legislative assembly (1791) – these debates determined the fundamental preeminence of culture not only in the regeneration of French society, but as a crucial means for maintaining the First Republic's (1792-1804) newly achieved liberties and freedoms. For the first time in French history, the very concept of a cultural heritage was being formulated. The administrative guidelines born of this period not only constituted the earliest official French policies to govern heritage preservation, museum management, and curatorship in the modern era, but through the very definition these guidelines gave to culture, they also revolutionized notions of art, history, and cultural identity.

It is thus no exaggeration to claim that it was in the revolutionary era that the modern foundations of France's political views on culture – its theories on heritage and preservation, and its sense of republican ethics – were theorized.[15] Art and politics have historically manifested deep ties and served mutually reinforcing purposes, however that which changed inalterably after the Revolution was the rhetoric that surrounded art and its social uses. Never before had artistic production been so self-consciously positioned as the keystone to social and political harmony. Addressing the *Convention* in *pluviôse an* II (13 February, 1794), Boissy d'Anglas confirmed that "Les fondateurs de la liberté

[15] Please see Jack Lang's preface to Bernard Deloche and Jean-Michel Leniaud, eds., *La Culture des Sans-Culottes: Le Premier Dossier du Patrimoine 1789-1798* (Paris-Montpellier: Éditions de Paris/Presses de Languedoc, 1989), 5.

d'un grand peuple doivent donc (aussi) cultiver et encourager les sciences et les arts, comme l'un des moyens de conserver leur propre ouvrage; mais ils le doivent encore à cause de leur influence sur les moeurs et le caractère des nations qui l'accueillent."[16] The state, according to Boissy d'Anglas, was utterly dependent on the nation's cultural well-being, and to not heed this observation, warned his colleague, could prove ruinous: "La France entière," l'abbé Grégoire grimly proclaimed, "est persuadée que le dépérissement des arts serait celui de son existence, et leur tombeau celui de la liberté."[17]

When spoken, these powerful statements reflected innovative thinking, at least at the official levels of government at which they occurred. The idea of conferring upon the nation's existing buildings and monuments a historic purpose and endowing them with a cultural vocation was, as Pierre Lagarde in *Mémoire des Pierres* has demonstrated, a modern one. Despite their desperate appeals for public support, the voices of Boissy d'Anglas, Joseph Lakanal, and Abbé Grégoire were in the minority; the very notion of safeguarding the "historic monument" – of protecting material heritage invested with the powerful collective memory of a society – was completely new. And yet, unexpected supporters of the movement lay in the imaginations and projects of several contemporaneous and influential figures, many of these in other domains. If Lenoir's fascination with the evocative potential of monuments at the Musée des Monuments français is the obvious example, there were others. The monumental, mid-eighteenth-century texts of François Volney and Julian David Leroy, whose lavishly documented publications popularized a poetics of the ruin; the elegant architectural descriptions of Victor Hugo in *Notre-Dame de Paris*; the restoration practices of Viollet-le-Duc; all attest to a changed historical consciousness that lay at the origins of the historic monument movement in France.

[16] François-Antoine Boissy d'Anglas, "Quelques idées sur les arts, sur la nécessité de les encourager, sur les institutions qui peuvent en assurer le perfectionnement, et sur les divers établissements nécessaires à l'enseignement public, adressées à la Convention Nationale et au Comité d'Instruction Publique," in *Culture des Sans-Culottes,* eds. Deloche and Leniaud, 155.
[17] Abbé Henri Grégoire, "Rapport et projet de décret présenté au nom du comité d'instruction publique, à la séance du 8 août (relatif à la suppression des académies)," in *Culture des Sans-Culottes*, eds. Deloche and Leniaud, 83.

The Quatre Instructions Initiales (1790-1791) and Vicq d'Azyr and Dom Poirier's Instruction (1794): Guidelines to an Ethics and Praxis for Historic Monuments

A first attempt at determining an ethics and praxis for governing historic monuments was in fact made in 1790-1791, when the *Commission des monuments* produced four documents over a six-month period (22 November, 1790; 15 December, 1790; 20 March, 1791; 15 May, 1791) that was intended to serve as basic guidelines for the care of objects.[18] These guidelines were issued as a response to a 1790 report by the French diplomat Talleyrand that called for the conservation of monuments following the secularization of ecclesiastical properties. Before this, various committees at municipal levels had unsuccessfully attempted to safeguard objects and properties against theft, sale, or general deterioration, however it was becoming apparent that the country urgently required a national policy to circulate to all regional and local administrators, in order to prevent the loss of the goods and properties confiscated from religious institutions, aristocrats, and counter-revolutionaries as early as 1789.

The significance of the *Quatre Instructions Initiales* lay in the manner they determined what was considered national heritage and valued for conservation – and what was not. Establishing a set of rules by which all new "cultural property" was to be governed (and France, according to Boissy d'Anglas, was an immense depot), France's first administrative policies on cultural heritage envisioned four foundational principles that were so pervasive that they would become the pillars of heritage preservation and museum management in the modern era. These principles were conservation; inventory; preservation; and cataloguing.

Focusing on issues of conservation, the first *Instruction* (22 November 1790) broadly outlined seven major categories of objects: 1. manuscripts, charters, and seals; 2. printed books; 3. medals, coins, inscriptions, vases, weights, and measures, tombs, mausoleums, and monuments from Antiquity; 4. paintings, drawings, prints, maps, mosaics, tapestries, and stained glass; 5. machinery and the mechanical arts; 6. natural history; and 7. costumes, clothing, armour, and utensils. These categories revealed a concern for objects that were of historical interest, objects that through their making or form instructed not

[18] The four "Instructions Initiales," composed by the *Commission des monuments* between November 1790 and May 1791, have been reproduced in Deloche and Leniaud, eds., *Culture des Sans-Culottes,* 50-73. The first "Instruction," 51-58; the second "Instruction," 59-60; the third "Instruction," 61-62.

only on the development of an art form's progress and methods – thereby giving an indication of aesthetic ideals – but more importantly, these objects provided insight on the cultural habits of the social body itself. Many, such as clothing, costumes, and arms, were neither strictly of historical nor aesthetic concern, but met ethnographic interests as well. Such objects, which might once have been considered mere objects of curiosity, were singled out for the knowledge they provided on customs and cultures, and for their import for improving French arts and manufacturing.

Setting out the requirements for the making of inventories, the second *Instruction* (December 1790) formalized a tendency that already existed in the French tradition: the task of compiling a comprehensive record of a collection of objects, texts, or images. The concept of the inventory derived from the same scientific intentions as the *Encyclopédie*, yet in the context of a national register of cultural property, it became much more than a simple record of "authentic" objects. In addition to a description of paintings, sculptures, prints, and drawings, the inventory was also to catalogue "copies" of valuable objects that existed in French collections.

Besides the broad material scope that the *Instructions* gave to the very definition of cultural heritage, there was a parallel effort to define the temporal parameters of this heritage in the third *Instruction* (20 March 1791). Historically, artifacts of Classical heritage were valued for their aesthetic properties. Yet here, the origins of a theory of the monument were attempted. This *Instruction* called for <u>all</u> monuments dating earlier than 1300 to be conserved, owing to their importance for costumes; <u>any</u> monuments precious for the beauty of their workmanship, or offering instruction on history or the epochs of the arts, to be conserved, even if the workmanship was not considered valuable; <u>all</u> monuments of interest to history, customs, and usages to be conserved; while inscriptions, medals, bas-reliefs, and engraved stones were themselves to be removed from monuments and conserved. Notably, medieval objects were considered worthy of protection and, when possible, these were to be left in their location under the supervision of a guard. In short, these guidelines overturned the centuries-old bias for Classical imagery by substantially altering the criteria for historical inclusion and by valorizing medieval objects – if not for their inherent beauty, then for their "historical" significance.

Though these guidelines were not entirely successful (ensuring that the new reforms be uniformly enforced by non-specialists throughout the *départements* proved to be a formidable challenge), as foundational concepts of cultural heritage, the principles of conservation, inventory, preservation, and cataloguing impacted upon the collective psyche in unforeseeable and enduring ways. Implicit in the notion of conservation at this time was the parallel project of the inventory. By its very nature, the inventory sought totality – an impossible yet real ambition characteristic of the projects born in the revolutionary era. Vast cultural enterprises such as the national library or museum, whose mandates were to collect a copy of every book or artistic endeavour as a record of French accomplishment, became the logical ideological manifestations of this particular concept of cultural heritage – and to near-obsessive results. The Musée des Monuments français is a remarkable example of just such an inventory, where both the principle of the copy (such as the plaster cast), and the description (the textual equivalent of the copy), permitted Lenoir to amass a collection far larger than any he would have otherwise been able to do.

The four initial *Instructions* were followed by another series of guidelines on management and conservation, *Instruction sur la manière d'inventorier et de conserver, dans toute l'étendue de la République, tous les objets qui peuvent servir aux arts, aux sciences et à l'enseignement*, written by Félix Vicq d'Azyr and Dom Germain Poirier, and issued on 25 *ventose an* II (1794), and late *messidor an* II.[19] This second attempt at formulating a national policy on culture was an initiative of the *Commission temporaire des arts*, which had replaced the earlier *Commission des monuments*. Where the *Instructions Initiales* sought to determine the material essence of the nation's cultural heritage and its administrative policies, d'Azyr and Poirier's guidelines made the equally important provisions for determining their application. In keeping with the republican vision of a morally reformed society, the fundamental objective of this second series of guidelines had shifted from the basic safeguarding of objects as seen in the first *Instructions*, to their pedagogical use in the work of d'Azyr and Poirier. Significantly, what was absent from either document was the specific articulation of a policy on restoration, to accompany those on conservation and preservation. Vicq d'Azyr and Dom

[19] Félix Vicq d'Azyr and Dom Germain Poirier, "Instruction sur la manière d'inventorier et de conserver, dans toute l'étendue de la République, tous les objets qui peuvent servir aux arts, aux sciences et à l'enseignement, proposée par la commission temporaire des arts, et adaptée par le comité d'instruction publique de la Convention nationale, 25 ventôse an II (15 March 1794)," in *Culture des Sans-Culottes*, eds. Deloche and Leniaud, 175-242.

Germain Poirier had come closest, mentioning in "Section X, Peinture et sculpture. L" that paintings on wood required additional evaluation and should be sent to a special branch of the *Commission des arts*, however the policy was vague, and no parallel existed for the restoration of sculpture.[20] Art restoration was an uneven practice at this point in time; Vicq d'Azyr and Dom Germain Poirier confirmed that "Il n'y a qu'un très petit nombre d'hommes qui soient capables de toucher aux productions de ce genre, sans les dénaturer." However they further indicated that it was not the place of their document to instruct on such practices

> Nous déclarons ici qu'annoncer un secret pour la réparation des tableaux, est une véritable imposture; car il n'existe point de secret semblable: mais il est des soins particuliers que les artistes habiles et très exercés connaissent, et qu'ils savent appliquer à propos, suivant qu'ils ont à traiter les productions de certains maîtres ou de certaines écoles, dont les procédés sont différents. Cette connaissance tient immédiatement à celle de l'art, et ne peut se transmettre dans une instruction.[21]

One of the reasons the concept of cultural heritage commanded such attention at this time was due to a change in the status of the object and its role in upholding some of the foundational principles of the First Republic. The republican ideal of societal regeneration, an ideal popularized at once in the philosophical writing of Rousseau and in the official political reports of the *Convention nationale*, was pervasive rhetoric. It was primarily articulated in terms of education, where instruction was considered to have become "le moyen le plus puissant de régénération et de gloire," according to Vicq d'Azyr and Dom Germain Poirier.[22] They further argued that objects themselves had been conferred with a new vocation as an essential tool of public instruction

> Les objets qui doivent servir à l'instruction, et dont un grand nombre appartenait aux établissements supprimés, méritent toute l'attention des vrais amis de la patrie: on les trouvera dans les bibliothèques, dans les musées, dans les cabinets, dans les collections sur lesquelles la

[20] Ibid., 230.
[21] Ibid., 230.
[22] Ibid., 175.

> République a des droits; dans les ateliers où sont rassemblés les instruments les plus nécessaires à nos besoins; dans les palais et dans les temples que décorent les chefs-d'oeuvre des arts; dans tous les lieux où des monuments retracent ce que furent les hommes et les peuples; partout, enfin, où les lecons du passé, fortement empreintes, peuvent être recueillies par notre siècle, qui saura les transmettre, avec des pages nouvelles, au souvenir de la posterité.[23]

That public instruction depended upon collections also implied that these objects be dispersed across France, and d'Azyr and Poirier's report carefully specified that objects not be centralized in Paris. In this report, it is clear that the pedagogical project launched by the Republican government depended upon new concepts of education, notably a broader vision of where education occurred, both inside and outside of schools. "C'est dans les écoles, c'est dans les ateliers, c'est partout où le public est rassemblé," wrote d'Azyr and Poirier, "qu'il convient de répandre cet esprit régénérateur; et l'architecte, par ses relations continuelles avec les ouvriers, avec les artistes et les citoyens de tous les états, est plus que tout autre a portée de le transmettre."[24] As the "arts of history," painting, sculpture, and architecture were particularly potent instructive tools whose veritable purpose lay in their ability to prolong the memory of charitable or heroic deeds, and to this end they served the moralising aims of the First Republic.

The philosophical change in emphasis in these two reports on heritage, from conservation to pedagogy, was part of the larger cultural-political discourse that occurred after 1792, when cultural matters came under the aegis of the *Comité d'Instruction Publique* (Committee of Education), itself acting on the authority of the newly-elected constitutional and legislative assembly known as the *Convention nationale* (National Convention).[25] In this context, matters of culture were determined alongside those of pedagogical reform – and often in conjunction with them. The most vocal of the committee's members, deputy François-Antoine Boissy d'Anglas, Joseph Lakanal, Abbé

[23] Ibid., 176-177.
[24] Ibid., 232.
[25] The French National Convention was the constitutional and legislative assembly which sat from the l0th of September 1792, following the storming of the Tuileries by the populace demanding the abolition of the monarchy, until the 26th of October 1795 (the 4th of *Brumaire* of the year IV). The sitting Legislative Assembly decreed the suspension of the king and convened a national convention mandated to write a constitution. Its deputy members were to be elected (all French men, at least 25 years of age, were permitted to vote), thereby making the National Convention the first French assembly elected by (quasi-)universal suffrage.

Henri Grégoire, mathematician Charles-Gilbert Romme, Jean-Baptiste Mathieu, anatomist Félix Vicq d'Azyr, Dom Germain Poirier, and artist Jacques-Louis David, presented reports to the Convention over an eighteen-month period, from June 1793 to December 1794, that called for the state's protection of the arts and for the foundation of the institutions meant to perpetuate them. Addressing issues ranging from the conservation of objects and methods for inventorying them, to the necessity for linguistic and pedagogical reform, their reports not only provided the blueprints for France's new cultural policies, but did so within the context of a committee concerned with matters of national education. France was thus determining a theory and a politics of culture that saw culture as foundational to the nation's educational mandate; culture, art, and education were indissolubly linked in the reforms generated by the State and the policies it developed at this time.

This alliance is nowhere more explicit than in the report by François-Antoine Boissy d'Anglas, "Quelques idées sur les arts, sur la nécessité de les encourager, sur les institutions qui peuvent en assurer le perfectionnement et sur divers établissements nécessaires à l'enseignement public," who asserted the primacy of the arts in general public education and argued that the arts played a central role in the development of the new state. The arts, he argued, were the pillars of society, and must be reflected in all acts of government: "Que l'éclat des arts se réfléchisse sur tous les actes de votre gouvernement; qu'il embellisse toutes vos fêtes, orne toutes vos cérémonies, s'associe à toutes vos institutions; et que le talent de vos artistes s'agrandisse encore par l'usage que vous en saurez faire; que l'enseignement soit partout; que l'émulation naisse de toutes parts, et que la gloire puisse répandre ses plus précieuses faveurs sur tout homme qui en sera digne."[26] Monuments of art and science should not only be conserved, he argued, they should be united in grand museums – even at the expense of pillaging one's neighbours. If in this centralizing vision Boissy d'Anglas preached radical cultural politics, what was striking in his report was his tendency to position the national museum and library as a forum for public education – alongside the more traditional institutions of the *lycée* or college, signifying a greater unity of purpose amidst these collecting organizations.

[26] Boissy d'Anglas, "Quelques idées sur les arts," in *Culture des Sans-Culottes*, eds. Deloche and Leniaud, 158.

How distinct from the ideas of Boissy d'Anglas was the argument of Baron François-René-Jean de Pommereul, a prefect and protégé of Napoleon, who advocated a more liberal education for the artist – and more open exhibition policies. Unlike Boissy d'Anglas, Pommereul was critical of the tendency to concentrate teaching academies in Paris, and advocated their decentralization. Encouraging French artists to establish their own national identity, rather than blindly imitating Classical traditions, Pommereul called for no less than the conceptual overhaul of traditional teaching academies in his publication *Réflexions sur la sculpture, la peinture, la gravure et l'architecture; suivies des Institutions propres à les faire fleurir en France* which he produced in the late 1790s. Where Pommmereul's and Boissy d'Anglas's ideas converged was in the expanded view of pedagogy that they conferred upon the public sphere: "qu'elles (public places and promenades) y deviennent par-tout une leçon continuelle de vertus et de patriotisme,"[27] wrote Pommereul. As staunch defenders of the arts, both Boissy d'Anglas and Pommereul envisioned strong national artistic identities for France and French artists: Boissy d'Anglas in his vision of Paris, artistic capital and "l'école suprême de l'homme,"[28] and Pommereul in his call for a truly national artistic identity and overhaul of the traditional beaux-arts teaching system.

The New Role of History in Pedagogical Reform

Though France's political structure advocated a strong cultural policy for the survival of the state, culture itself was to be promulgated through public instruction. The matter of education was of particular interest to reform-minded thinkers who logically argued that the implementation of the achievements of the revolution necessitated an overhaul to the current educational system. Thus, a discussion of cultural reform would be lacking were it not also to include mention of the synchronous pedagogical modifications that allowed for these reforms to occur at a truly national and multi-disciplinary level.

Ideas for pedagogical reform came from all sectors of society: Mirabeau, Talleyrand, Condorcet had each penned essays extolling the virtues of public education. Stressing the importance of morality and natural law as the philosophical basis of an improved pedagogical system, the educational reform movement insisted on notions of visibility

[27] François René Jean Pommereul, *Réflexions sur la sculpture, la peinture, la gravure et l'architecture; suivies des Institutions propres à les faire fleurir en France, et d'un état des objets d'art dont ses musées ont été enrichis depuis l'an 2* [Paris: Chez Bernard, an VII (1798 or 1799)], 254.
[28] Boissy d'Anglas, "Quelques idées sur les arts," in *Culture des Sans-Culottes*, eds. Deloche and Leniaud, 162.

rather than theoretical principles as the pillars of the new social order. The basic tenets of these reforms can be found in the writing of Louis François Emmanuel Mermet, a teacher of literature in Eastern France. In 1802, Mermet published an essay on educational reform entitled *Essai sur les moyens d'améliorer l'enseignement de plusieurs parties de l'instruction publique*, in which he criticized the lack of uniformity and precision in France's pedagogical system, calling instead for a nationalized system that would bring greater clarity and standardization to language and to methods of instruction.

Of the many specific recommendations Mermet made in this text, there were two core ideas that bore consideration within the larger context of societal reform. The first pertained to methodology, whereby Mermet called for a pedagogy that stressed the use of concrete over abstract principles, arguing that the effectiveness of teaching was directly related to its applicability to daily life. His argument suggested the influence of sensationist theories then circulating amidst his contemporaries in France. Using the example of morality, Mermet claimed that

> Des principes de morale dont l'enfant ne verroit aucune application, ne le toucheroient pas assez; mais quel effet ne produiront-ils pas sur lui, s'il les voit réduits en pratique dans la vie des grands hommes? Cela prouve qu'il conviendroit de joindre à l'explication des préceptes de la morale, la vie des grands hommes qui les ont le mieux suivis: dans cette vue, on feroit un choix des grands hommes de Plutarque, de ceux de l'histoire de France, & des traits les plus frappants de vertus morales & patriotiques que la révolution a produits; c'est ainsi que la première impression que l'explication des préceptes auroit faite, seroit fortifiée par celle des actions.[29]

That instruction and learning needed to be grounded within the empirical framework of nature and human actions was an observation shared by many of the era's thinkers, however the emphasis Mermet gave to the individual's perceptions in the learning process is significant for its broader influence on the methodologies of alternative places of pedagogy. He argued that the quintessential element of education, if it was to be

[29] Mermet, *Essai sur les moyens d'améliorer l'enseignement de plusieurs parties de l'instruction publique* (Bourg: Chez Bottier, 1802), 19-20.

retained by the student, was its relevance to personal experience. Hence Mermet concluded that "nos connoissances les plus certaines sont celles qui sont fondées sur nos sensations: viennent ensuite celles qui sont fondées sur la réminiscence, parce que tout ce que conserve la reminiscence, a pour premier principe les sensations."[30] Mermet's concerns were not unlike those of several other contemporary thinkers who followed the Classical tradition and stressed the need for moral lessons to be integrated into the fabric and experience of daily life. Antoine Vaudoyer had articulated similar views in relation to the role that sepulchral monuments might play in public life,[31] as did Jacques Cambry after him.[32]

Mermet's second key idea concerned the teaching curriculum, where he found that the subject of history – a subject to precede all others in matters of education – was in particular need of pedagogical improvement. Mermet advocated a diversified approach to instruction: an animated and colourful style, a range of literary conventions (dialogue, oratory, drama), in addition to a focus on local, rather than strictly Classical, subject matter. Mermet's observations in this regard were significant because they were an early attempt to introduce new standards to the discipline of history and these, on a national scale. His concern for overcoming the perils of traditional historiography – laden with errors, he argued, and itself the subject of political manipulation – and his assertion of the discipline's centrality to public education as a fundamental principle of this education – yielded important insight into societal attitudes towards the past at this pivotal moment in French history.

Mermet's essay on pedagogical reform, highly praised in a foreword written by the Minister of the Interior, François de Neufchateau, did not entirely anticipate Lenoir's work – it is more appropriate to say that it was synchronous with it. Nevertheless, Mermet's eloquently articulated views were part of a larger cultural movement at the turn of the nineteenth century in France that sought both to animate the past while making sense of its lessons in highly moral and personal terms. Mermet's advice to teach by concrete example and his observations on the merits of comparative history that focused

[30] Ibid., 47.
[31] Antoine Vaudoyer, *Idées d'un citoyen françois sur le lieu destiné à la sépulture des hommes illustres de France* (Paris: Marchands de nouveautés, 1791).
[32] Jacques Cambry, *Rapport sur les sépultures: présenté à l'Administration centrale du Département de la Seine* (Paris: Pierre Didot l'Aîné, 1799).

on custom, not kingdoms, and his theories of narrative voice had already found expression in Lenoir's pedagogy at the Musée des Monuments français. Nevertheless, his remarks re-affirmed a social fascination with the past and an openness to engage in projects that constituted alternative historical memories such as those at the Musée, even as these redefined the parameters of this past.

II. The Founding of the Musée des Monuments français

The Birth of the Revolutionary Institution: From Symbol to Political Sign

The new order that the First Republic brought to French society, with its dual emphasis on heritage and pedagogical reform, constituted the unique cultural and political horizon in which Alexandre Lenoir founded and created the Musée des Monuments français. The primacy of culture and arts in public life and in pedagogy, the understanding that education occurred on the broader platform of the public sphere and not strictly in schools and the vast new potential this entailed, the genesis of the concept of cultural heritage and the new expressive and pedagogical role this concept conferred upon the object; all found their logical manifestation in the very institutions born of the Revolution: its libraries, archives, conservatories, and museums. As a revolutionary institution, the museum in particular served the new republican ideals of pedagogy, where objects were utilized to provide tangible, concrete expression of republican values. The monument in this museological context, newly conferred with an historic status, found an even greater republican vocation, for it married pedagogical principles with yet another of the era's interests: the concept of living history. This concept, which relied not only on objects but on public performance for its realization, epitomized the new republican aims of history in the public sphere.

However in as much as the museum conferred an additional status on the art object, it also, significantly, detracted from it. As Quatremère de Quincy argued, the very appearance of the art object in the museum simultaneously signalled a loss: a loss of the original context in which the art object both derived and provided its meaning, and more importantly, a loss in the power of the art object to function as a symbol of a higher meaning or human intention. The object's gradual transmutation – from symbol to political sign – by its placement in the modern museum had the additional implication of reducing its status from art to that of artifact, and this to meet the larger cultural imperative of establishing narratives of national progress in the public sphere.

The cultural dimension of the Revolution occurred in several phases, from the suppression of former monarchical, feudal, and ecclesiastical privileges and the nationalization of their properties (1789-90), to the period of cultural reconstruction that

saw the creation of cultural policy and reform and major heritage institutions that followed (1790-1794), and which was complicated by a two-year interim period of intense vandalism that ensued under the *Terreur* (August 1792 – August 1794),[33] one that targeted architectural and monumental reminders of the *Ancien régime*. These are broad, schematic divisions that do little to explicate the overlap of the nascent preservationist consciousness that emerged as early as 1790, nevertheless they elucidate on a more general level the major sociological and political changes that constituted the historical moment in which Lenoir came to conceive of his project for a national museum of monuments.

After the suppression of absolute monarchy and feudal and ecclesiastic rights in 1789-90, a decree in October 1790 announced the sale of their goods[34] to enrich the coffers of the state and subsequently, two committees were formed to oversee this process: the *Comité des affaires écclésiastiques* and the *Comité d'aliénation des biens nationaux*. Countless objects were sold to foreign countries before protective measures were officially put into place to avert their dispersal. Only small, localized efforts – and these were few and far between – existed at this time to prevent such loss. In Paris, the *Bureau d'agence générale de la municipalité* had initiated such efforts when it assembled a team of specialists to visit the collections of religious buildings in the fall of 1790 with the specific mandate of identifying objects they deemed worthy of preservation. Known as the *Commission des monuments*, the team was an influential body of artists and members of several royal academies, and collectively this team visited hundreds of sites throughout Paris during the years of its existence, from 1790 until December 1793. The thirty-some members were all residents of Paris (which had implications for visiting sites further afield), and served without pay on a voluntary basis.

In addition to the need for an inventory of newly nationalized objects, there was the added challenge of locating storage spaces that could temporarily house and triage these objects. The recently vacated monasteries presented the perfect opportunity: these were

[33] The *Terreur* was a period of dictatorial reign that used extreme force to govern the nation at two distinct periods during the French Revolution. The first occurred following the abdication of the monarchy on 10 August 1792 until the founding of the Republic on 21 September 1792, and the second followed the expulsion of the Girondins deputies on 2 June 1793 and concluded with the arrest of Robespierre on 27 July 1794. It was throughout this second Terreur government, headed by Robespierre, Saint-Just, Couthon, Collot d'Herbois, Fouché, and Billaud-Varenne, that a major suspension of liberties occurred.

[34] The property of *émigrés* was nationalized a year later, on 9 November 1791.

large, spacious, and located on prime properties throughout the city. Four principal depots were originally designated in Paris in 1790: Petits-Augustins to house paintings and sculpture; Capucins, Grands-Jésuites, and Cordeliers to house books and manuscripts.

From Depot to National Museum

Gabriel-François Doyen,[35] a portrait and history painter by profession and a prominent member of the *Académie de peinture et de sculpture*, was an early advocate of the conservation movement in Paris.[36] No sooner had the *Bureau de liquidation des biens nationaux ecclésiastiques du département de Paris* been created was Doyen invited by letter on 10 September, 1790, to evaluate ecclesiastical collections in Paris – a duty Doyen felt privileged to accept. From this moment onward, Doyen was a major figure in the assessment of these ecclesiastical collections and the nascent conservation field that circumstantially arose from the Revolution's cultural politics. From October, 1790, to mid-June, 1791, in the company of members of the *Bureau de liquidation*, Doyen made no fewer than 18 visits to local churches and monasteries, such as the Carmes de la place Maubert; Saint-Louis-Sainte-Catherine; Dominicains Saint-Honoré; the sacristy of Notre-Dame; Sainte-Chapelle; Sainte-Opportune; couvent des Cordeliers; Monastère des Barnabites; chapelle Sainte-Anne du faubourg Poissonière; couvent de la Madeleine; couvent des Théatins; and Saint-Nicolas du Chardonnet on 16 June, 1791.

A letter from the *Comité d'aliénation* sent October 5, 1790, confirms that Doyen was made responsible for overseeing transfers to, and the protection of, objects accumulating at the Petits-Augustins. In this letter, the *Administration des Biens nationaux* "l'a chargé de surveiller, l'a autorisé à se transporter dans les différentes maisons religieuses pour y prendre connaissance des tableaux, morceaux de sculpture et autres monumens qu'elles pourroient contenir, pour sur son rapport être statué par l'Administration sur ceux qu'il seroit à propos de transférer dans l'église des Petits-Augustins pour y être conservés."[37] A large archive of correspondence on the subject of the depot at the Petits-Augustins, addressed to Doyen by the *Bureau d'agence générale*, confirms not only Doyen's

[35] Gabriel-François Doyen, born in Paris in 1726 and died in St. Petersburg in1806.
[36] An excellent article on Doyen was written by H. Stein, "Le peintre G.F. Doyen et l'origine du Musée des Monuments français," *Réunion des sociétés des beaux-arts des départements* (1888): 238-268. This article attempts to correct previous biographical errors on the life of Doyen and to bring new insight on his activities.
[37] Ibid., 255.

involvement, but the high degree of responsibilities with which he was conferred by this same office. We know, for example, that Doyen compiled an inventory of the paintings and sculptures that had accrued on-site at the Petits-Augustins, from 30 September to 13 November, 1790.[38]

Doyen's dedication to the *Bureau de liquidation* thus makes his departure for Russia in 1791 – where he remained until his death in 1806 – unexpected. Doyen had not only risen to the obligations that his new appointment entailed, he had become a vocal member of the preservation movement, instructing colleagues on how to properly inventory art works and thereby taking the lead in matters of conservation. His departure was all the more surprising because he seems not to have made this departure official. A document entitled *Commissions pour la conservation des Monuments des Sciences et Arts* which appeared in October 1792 continued to list Doyen as one of its members. The commission only removed his name on 22 May, 1793.

It is conjectural whether Doyen feared that his previous influential association with the monarchy as court painter to Louis XV and Louis XVI would implicate him in political controversy. When Doyen left France to accept a teaching position at the Academy in the court of Catherine II in St. Petersburg, the *Terreur* had not yet taken hold. Nevertheless, following his departure in late 1791 (possibly October or December), the revolutionary authorities labelled Doyen an *emigré* and seized what property he had left behind in France. While in France, Doyen had taught popular painting classes in the Louvre, and he was known to use his position of influence to intervene on behalf of artists and colleagues, notably his students, Lenoir and David. If I have dwelled in a lengthy way on the involvement of Doyen at the Petits-Augustins, it is to clarify the chronology of his role there, preceding Alexandre Lenoir's accession to the position of guardian at the depot.

During his tenure as "*responsable*" at the Petits-Augustins, Doyen employed his student of fifteen years, Alexandre Lenoir, as his assistant, and conflicting evidence exists as to when Lenoir actually assumed full responsibility of the depot. In his own account, provided in the introduction to his catalogue *Musée des Monumens français*, Lenoir

[38] According to Stein, this document is located at the Archives Nationales (S.3641).

claimed that he was officially appointed guardian on 4 January, 1791,[39] and that previous to this, he accompanied city officials on site visits to churches;[40] others confirm his involvement with the depot (though not in the capacity of guardian with full responsibility) as early as October 1790. A decree issued by the *Bureau d'agence générale*, under the auspices of the *Administration des biens nationaux de Paris*, nominated Lenoir to the position of "*garde général*" on 6 June 1791, while correspondence in the *Archives* confirms his participation in the inspection of churches as early as September 1790, and actively thereafter.[41] During his church visits prior to June 1791, Lenoir was limited in his responsibilities; his notes indicate that he was compiling an inventory of objects – and nothing more. When he did attempt to remove objects from their locations prior to his official appointment in June 1791, such as was the case at the Église de la Pitié in early spring 1791, he was repeatedly refused access. Even though Lenoir was named guardian in June 1791, this was approximately six months before Doyen's departure for Russia, and it is notable that in his correspondence after this date, Lenoir continued to refer deferentially to Doyen as his master.[42]

Lenoir himself made no mention of succeeding Doyen as guardian of the Petits-Augustins in his official accounts of the Musée des Monuments français. This is not surprising: as a general rule Lenoir neglected to credit the role of colleagues in his multiple enterprises, preferring to give the impression that he acted alone. There is in fact a cultivated mythology surrounding Lenoir, his biographical details, and his earliest involvement at the Petits-Augustins, a mythology that Lenoir did little to dispel and much to nurture. In addition to the conflicting dates of his birth (Lenoir was born in Paris on either 25, 26, or 27 December 1761 or 1762),[43] which may or may not have had a

[39] Lenoir, *Musée des Monumens français*, 3-4.
[40] France. Ministère de l'Instruction publique, *Inventaire générale des richesses d'art de la France: Archives du Musée des monuments français*, Vol. 2 (Paris: E. Plon, Nourrit, 1883-1897), 5, fn 1.
[41] Ibid., Vol. 1, 1-6. Ibid., Vol. 2, 1-4 contains notes Lenoir made of his multiple visits to churches from autumn 1790 to June 1791.
[42] Ibid., Vol. 2, 8.
[43] The birth date of 26 December, 1761, is given by most biographical dictionaries, including *Nouvelle biographie générale depuis les temps les plus reculés jusqu'à 1850-60*, sous la direction de M. Le Dr. Hoefer (Paris: Firmin Didot, 1852-1866); Reprint, Copenhagen: Rosenkilde et Bagger, 1963-1969; Vol. 30; 671; Émile Bellier de la Chavignerie and Louis Auvray, eds., *Dictionnaire général des artistes de l'école française depuis l'origine des arts du dessin jusqu'à nos jours* 2 Vols. (Paris: Renouard, 1882-1887); Reprint, Facsimile in 5 volumes, New York and London: Garland Publishing, 1979; Vol. 3, 1003; and E. Bénézit, *Dictionnaire critique et documentaire des peintres, sculpteurs, dessinateurs et graveurs de tous les temps et de tous les pays par un groupe d'écrivains spécialistes français et étrangers*, Nouv. Éd., sous la direction de Jacques Busse (France: Librairie Gründ, 1999), Vol. 8, 515; Michaud's *Biographie universelle ancienne et moderne*, Nouv. Éd. (Paris: Michaud, 1854), Vol. 24, 133, gives the date of 26 December, 1762. In volume 5 of *Musée des monumens français*, Lenoir gives the date of December 24th, 1762, as the date of his birth. This contradicts the date provided on the monument represented on the frontispiece at the beginning of the same volume: 25 December, 1762. The choice of December 25th may have had symbolic significance due to its coincidence with the Nativity in the Christian tradition. The

particular significance according to the Masonic brotherhood of which he was a member,[44] the beginnings of Lenoir's artistic career and his accession to the position of guardian at the depot have been the subject of considerable debate. Michaud wrote that Lenoir completed "brilliant" studies at Mazarin college, before entering the studio of Doyen, *peintre du roi*. Conversely, the *Dictionnaire général* placed Lenoir as a student in the *Académie des Beaux-Arts*, while Firmin Didot indicated that Lenoir received tutelage under the abbé Lenoir, before embarking on studies at the *Collège des Quatre-Nations*. All concurred, however, that Lenoir eventually entered into Doyen's studio, where he studied for a number of years – 15 according to Lenoir, who provided little other information on the early years of his education.[45]

In a surprising number of biographical accounts that conflict with the historiography I have just provided, Lenoir has been personally credited with the idea of safeguarding art objects by removing them from the State's larger project of the sale of national domains.[46] According to this alternate account, Bailly, mayor of Paris, approved of Lenoir's idea to do this and, in the company of his teacher Doyen, Lenoir is said to have presented his project for a depot to the *Assemblée nationale*, which decreed Lenoir with the authority to collect art objects throughout the city, and for which Lenoir was named curator (*conservateur*) of the Petits-Augustins. Archival evidence does not support this account, and a more accurate rendition of events would consider Lenoir fortuitously placed owing to his connection/friendship with his former teacher, the more accomplished Doyen.

Beginning in late 1790 and continuing through 1794, there were regular sales at the Petits-Augustins – one archive refers to an eight-month period before July 1791 in which everything except paintings and sculptures were sold off from the depot[47] – and Lenoir

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Bibliothèque nationale de France gives the date of December 27, 1761, as the date of Lenoir's birth. There is less controversy over the date of Lenoir's death: he died in Paris on June 11, 1839.

[44] A footnote in the Dedication of Lenoir's *La Franche-maçonnerie rendue à sa véritable origine* (Paris: Fournier, 1814) indicates that the free-masons resurrected their meetings in Paris on 25 December, 1777. Lenoir gave his date of birth in *Musée des monumens français* as 25 December, 1762. Given that Lenoir was intent on reconciling different traditions through his work, it is possible that this synchronicity of dates was intentional, and that Lenoir modified the date of his birth to coincide with this event.

[45] Lenoir also indicated that he had drawn and painted from the collection at Orléans for ten years. See Ministère, *Archives*, Vol. 2, 203.

[46] At least three biographical dictionaries support this theory: Firmin Didot's *Nouvelle biographie générale*, Vol. 30, 671; Michaud's *Biographie universelle ancienne et moderne*, Vol. 24, 133; and the *Dictionnaire général des artistes de l'école française depuis l'origine des arts du dessin jusqu'à nos jours*, Vol. 3, 1003.

[47] Ministère, *Archives*, Vol. 2, 6.

was routinely asked to prepare objects for transfer from the Petits-Augustins. At the same time, Lenoir continued to receive and to solicit objects to the depot from other religious institutions that were being vacated. The depot was filling quickly with numerous art objects and Lenoir regarded seriously his responsibilities as guardian, that is, as responsible for the safekeeping of the objects under his supervision. By the fall of 1792, royal residences had also been added to the list of buildings to be inventoried and ultimately transferred to depots by the *Commission des monuments*. We note that in October 1792, a unified *Commission temporaire des arts* was created out of the two committees formerly established by the *Assemblée constituante* and the *Assemblée législative*, and replacing the former *Commission des monuments*.[48] This committee of 33 members was to be overseen by the *Comité d'Instruction Publique* and the *Ministre de l'Intérieur*. Despite his absence from France, Doyen was named a member of the committee; Lenoir was not.

The period of cultural reform from 1790 -1794 was anything but stable as committees were formed and eliminated, only to be replaced by others. It is important historically because it reveals an internal debate regarding the preservation of objects and their governing authorities that directly influenced Lenoir. As guardian of a depot housing "national" goods but established by the "municipality" of Paris, Lenoir was circumstantially embroiled in the political differences occasioned by the overlap of bureaucratic departments assigned to oversee the nation's cultural heritage. The confusion over authority was exacerbated by laws that were passed 15 September and 18 October, 1792, which ordered that all estates that had been transferred to the "Nation" (and these included the objects housed at the depot of the Petits-Augustins) be placed under the supervision of the Minister of the Interior, and by extension, all depot guardians were accountable to the Minister of the Interior as well.[49] Lenoir was loyal to the *Administration des biens nationaux*, the municipal department that had appointed him, even as Roland, Minister of the Interior, demanded in a letter dated December 1792, that Lenoir answer only to him.[50] The situation continued to worsen throughout the spring of 1793, as curators from the Muséum (du Louvre), acting under the authorization of the

[48] The *Commission des monuments* was heavily criticized for its negligence in a report submitted by Mathieu and supported by David, on December 18, 1793.
[49] Ministère, *Archives*, Vol. 2, 52.
[50] Ibid., Vol. 2, 38-39, for the correspondence from the *Commission de l'administration des Biens nationaux* (4 January 1793), and Ibid., Vol. 1, 10, for the correspondence from Roland, Minister of the Interior (6 December 1792).

Minister of the Interior, sought to develop the museum's collection from the objects now stored in the city's depots – only to be denied entry at the Petits-Augustins by Lenoir. Despite direct intervention by Minister Garat, on behalf of the *Commissaires du Muséum*, Lenoir continued to refuse to comply with their requests to remove art works, and this until a resolution was reached in May 1793,[51] when the *Commission de l'administration des Biens nationaux* ordered Lenoir to comply with all orders of the Minister of the Interior.

For this reason and others, Lenoir's position within the artistic milieu of which he strived to be a respected member was at best tenuous. He was not a member of the *Académie* as Doyen had been, which made him particularly susceptible to attack by those aspiring to the coveted position of depot guardian. Nevertheless, he did have vocal supporters, such as *Commission des monuments* secretary Leblond, who confirmed that Lenoir's experience and commitment to his responsibilities at the depot would serve him well

> Il n'y a point de doute que qui que ce soit de la Commission, de la Municipalité, du Département et de chez le Ministre, n'a plus travaillé que vous pour procurer à la nation des chefs-d'oeuvres, non pas oubliés, mais perdus; (…) qui que ce soit n'a pu faire ce que vous avez entrepris avec moins de dépenses ni en aussi peu de temps. Ces considérations réunies font de vous l'éloge le plus flatteur; mais il faut encore les faire valoir auprès du Ministre afin que vous soyez quelque chose dans la Commission. Il semble que cette société ne soit ouverte qu'à la majorité des membres de l'Académie, et non à l'homme essentiel à la chose; car, sans la révolution du 10 août dernier, qu'aurait-on à offrir au public, si ce ne sont les objets que réellement vous avez soignés?[52]

It is clear from Leblond's letter to Lenoir that he was an outsider within the tight community of artists and scholars with whom he sought acceptance. We know now that Lenoir would remain on the margins of this elitist society; he gained greater acceptance from some of his other professional associations, notably the antiquarian societies and the free-masons, with whom he associated.

[51] Ibid., Vol. 2, 43-45.
[52] Ibid., Vol. 2, 22. The *Municipalité* issued its own decree on 4 January, 1793, upholding its position to retain control.

It is evident that Lenoir considered the very survival of his depot in direct competition with the galleries of the Louvre that were then being planned as a public museum, particularly his collection of paintings. In a letter dated 16 April, 1793, Lenoir protested to the *Comité d'Instruction Publique* the uselessness of removing objects from his depot, only to transfer them to another "depot."[53] In fact, Lenoir was less bothered by the transfer than by the potential risk it posed to viewing the totality of the work he had done to date, and for which he evidently sought professional recompense. His letter concluded that "Le garde du Dépôt des Petits-Augustins observe particulièrement que ces enlèvements multipliés pour enrichir un autre dépôt détruisent indubitablement l'évidence des nombreux travaux dont, depuis quatre ans, il n'a cessé d'être écrasé, et ses droits aux fruits qu'il espère en recueillir un jour."[54] But the galleries of the Louvre were being prepared for an opening that would coincide with the *fêtes nationales* of 10 August, 1793 – hence the urgency of the requests. For these same festivities, Lenoir was instructed by Garat to open the depot for daily visits by the public, morning and evening, from 3 to 18 August. The idea seems to have been a precipitous one. Lenoir was only alerted of the decision on 31 July.

This shows the extent to which there was internal wrestling, confusion, and a narrow path for Lenoir to navigate outside of the beaux-arts mainstream. Policies were only being formulated as the need for them arose, and Lenoir's personal obsession with what would become the "historic monument" was an early one in the history of the movement. The period of confusion over authority coalesced with Lenoir's own insecurity in his position as guardian. As long as he remained under the perceived patronage of Doyen (that is, while authorities awaited Doyen's return from Russia), Lenoir's position as depot guardian was relatively secure. However in May 1793, Doyen's name was definitively struck from the membership register of the *Commission des monuments*, and Lenoir felt his support falter as members of the Academy argued that the position of guardian should be awarded to one of them. Lenoir merely had to ride the wave of time. When, later that year, the *Commission des monuments* was replaced by the *Commission temporaire des arts*, his position became more secure. Lenoir did not, however, leave all to chance. He invested, as an ambitious curator would have been wise to do, in the project more than the nature of his responsibilities would have logically called for him to do. Thus in June

[53] Ibid., Vol. 2, 48-49.
[54] Ibid., Vol. 2, 49.

1793, two-months prior to the depot opening to the public, Lenoir had compiled the depot's first catalogue: a 28-page *Notice succincte des objets de sculpture et d'architecture réunis au Dépôt provisoire des Petits-Augustins* of all of the paintings, sculpture, monuments, and architectural fragments held in the depot, a catalogue which he distributed for free to the public and various authorities.

One can begin to formulate a mental picture of the collection accruing at the Petits-Augustins depot. Pre-1793, collecting art objects was fairly straightforward and orderly, in the sense that they arrived relatively intact at their destinations – even if transfers to and from the depot were numerous and frequent. As the curator Louis Courajod has observed, Lenoir's great strength was his administrative ability, his capacity to keep methodical lists of objects entering and exiting the depot, these objects' provenance, and the dates of their making. If nothing else, Lenoir epitomized the modern registrar.[55] Yet as a collector, Lenoir had begun to behave in a manner that surpassed the custodial responsibilities that were required of him, and he must have revelled in the notion that people began to consider him an alternative resource to the members of the *Commission des monuments* in matters of art. As Lenoir's reputation increased, he began to receive news of works that might be of interest to him as guardian of the Petits-Augustins.[56] By late 1793, Lenoir was also composing letters that were sent to various departments requesting that objects be transferred to the "national depot." In October 1793, we note in Lenoir's request for a lectern that a more permanent installation process was occurring at the depot, that the lectern was "digne de tenir une place remarquable dans le Dépôt des Petits-Augustins."[57] At the same time, Lenoir showed great initiative by saving certain monuments from the foundry.[58] He also located objects that the *Commission des monuments* had overlooked in its inventories, and which he hoped to add to his collection at the depot.

The year 1793 marked a turning point and the height of vandalist activity. Paintings and sculptures continued to enter the depot from numerous locations from across the city, many of these mutilated. One of the more remarkable scenes of vandalism occurred on

[55] It is also interesting to note that Lenoir was simultaneously building his own private collection of objects, which he culled from sales that occurred at his depot.
[56] Ministère, *Archives*, Vol. 2, 58.
[57] Ibid., Vol. 1, 11.
[58] Ibid., Vol. 1, 13.

the nights of August 6 - 8, when the royal tombs of Saint-Denis Basilica were vandalized by revolutionaries. These acts were not only encouraged by the governing *Terreur*, they were considered legal. Lenoir was personally very affected by these events. Remains of monarchical sculptures and tombs were transferred to his depot; some were so badly damaged that their conservation was considered impossible. Yet Lenoir's fixation with Saint-Denis far exceeded the brutal acts of August 1793, for in December he returned to record the exhumations of the very figures whose sarcophagi had been mutilated. Lenoir's fascination with these unearthings was palpable; it was an obsession bordering on necrolatry. Lenoir sketched the various decomposed states of kings, which he described as surprising in their freshness: "J'ai eu le plaisir de toucher à ces restes aimables; sa barbe (referring to Henry IV), ses moustaches rougeâtres étaient bien conservées; j'ai pris ses mains avec un certain respect dont je n'ai pu me défendre, quoique je fusse vrai républicain."[59] Lenoir attended no fewer than half a dozen exhumations, if not more. He watched and recorded as Turenne, Louis XIV, Louis XV, Saint-Louis, Catherine de Médicis, Henry II, Francis I, and Dagobert were exhumed, a site he described ambiguously as "piquant": a term that can be understood as a description of appearance (beauty) or odour (pungent).

By late 1793, early 1794, the first signs of Lenoir's plans for a more permanent installation at the depot became manifest and it was then that the sketch for a museum of monuments began to take shape. Correspondence by and to Lenoir in 1793 already referred to an "order" that existed in the depot, although what specifically was intended by this term is not explicit in these letters. Not long after, Lenoir unleashed a debate regarding the proper conservation of monuments, arguing for the need to assemble the monuments that lay in pieces in his storehouse. Yet the most telling indication of Lenoir's designs for a museum lay in the corpus of his writing projects, notably the catalogue.

Lenoir had routinely produced accounts of the depot's holdings since late 1792, or possibly early 1793. They are the logical outgrowth of the on-site notes that Lenoir had made of his visits to church properties between 1790 and 1791, when he would summarily identify specific objects to be conserved, their approximate location on the

[59] Ibid., Vol. 1, 16-17.

site, the artist responsible for the work and its subject matter, and occasionally he would provide a brief description of the object's significance. In scope, these earlier notes were informal precursors to the catalogue entry, yet they were equally journalistic in their descriptive writing style, and they were far more complete than the schematic lists (*états des tableaux*) that Lenoir prepared throughout 1792 and 1793, in which he recorded objects to be both culled from various locations or that had entered the depot's collection, sometimes on a weekly basis.[60] In these later lists, Lenoir limited each entry to an essential enumeration of objects and their dates of entry. For the lists of 1792/93, hundreds of objects were identified from dozens of ecclesiastical properties in Paris, including Saint-Honoré, Sainte-Geneviève, Minimes, and Blancs-Manteaux. In 1793, these lists were produced monthly, and eventually weekly (after October 1793 they were known as the *états décadaires* in accordance with the newly-introduced republican calendar), once the *Comité d'Instruction Publique* replaced the *Commission des Monuments* in December 1793. Though several of these lists were compiled posterior to the dates they covered (probably in 1799 – 1800), they are valuable testaments to the sheer volume of objects that had entered the depot since 1791. Far more than a mere list, Lenoir regarded the act of compiling objects as fulfilling the underlying pedagogical goals of the Republic. In one inventory sent to the *Comité d'Instruction Publique*, Lenoir claimed that he was "Toujours occupé du rassemblement des objets d'arts qui doivent un jour servir à l'instruction."[61]

A Prelude to the Museum: Lenoir's Catalogue and Manifesto

The modest catalogue that Lenoir first produced in June 1793 is best described as a synthesis of Lenoir's site notes and the *états décadaires*. *Notice succincte des objets de sculpture et d'architecture réunis au Dépôt provisoire des Petits-Augustins* was an enumeration of the depot's collection in the two years of its existence.[62] How distinct from this version was the second edition that Lenoir prepared in August 1794, in which he first articulated his philosophical vision of the Musée.

Lenoir sent the second edition of his catalogue to the *Commission temporaire des arts*. He admitted to feeling more secure under this new commission ("Déjà je voyais un jour

[60] Note that some of these lists were made by Lenoir in 1800.
[61] Ministère, *Archives*, Vol. 2, 120.
[62] Ibid., Vol. 2, 59.

calme et serein luire dans le Dépôt, et la Commission des arts me paraissait un rempart sûr pour le protéger"),[63] whom he wrote immediately after its appointment to inform them of his work: "Recevez, Citoyen, l'hommage d'un artiste isolé qui, seul, par la nature de sa place, a rendu à la République une foule de services, en conservant à l'instruction future des Monuments précieux qui eussent été perdus sans son zèle actif et conservateur, et qui n'a eu pour récompense que la persécution de la corporation que vous venez de détruire."[64] Lenoir clearly felt more at ease with the new administration and it is entirely conceivable that he embarked on the second edition of his catalogue only after this commission was put in place, knowing that his designs for an eventual museum would be regarded more favourably.

Certainly the form and content of the second edition catalogue would suggest that Lenoir was developing plans for a museum. In his introduction, Lenoir described the publication as "une notice exacte qui vous mît à même de connoître les richesses nationales en peinture, sculpture, marbres, colonnes, etc., et qui procurât en même temps aux artistes la facilité d'en tirer avantage pour leurs études."[65] The outline of Lenoir's project lay in the very organization he gave to the catalogue, which contained entries for objects listed chronologically (antiquities, medieval, post-Renaissance) and by provenance (Egyptian, Hebrew, Greek, Etruscan, Roman). This structure in a collection catalogue was itself not new. Yet Lenoir indicated that he would focus on medieval objects ("j'insisterai davantage sur les antiquités du moyen âge") and on providing a chronological survey of French art, "trop négligée jusqu'à ce jour."[66] It was also in this introduction that Lenoir justified the intentions of his project, as well as its humanist historiographical premise. "J'ai eu soin," he wrote,

> chaque fois qu'il m'a été possible, de réunir au Dépôt dont je suis le conservateur, tout ce qui peut donner des idées des anciens costumes, soit civils, d'hommes et de femmes, soit militaires, selon les grades. J'espère que cette réunion sera intéressante par la suite, pour les artistes qui voudraient rendre des vêtements, qu'ils auraient peine à trouver si la surveillance et les attentions de la Convention nationale n'eussent point

[63] Ibid., Vol. 2, 25.
[64] Ibid., Vol. 2, 107-108.
[65] Ibid., Vol. 2, 170.
[66] Ibid., Vol. 2, 170.

> autorisé ces conservations par le décret ci-dessus cité. Ces monuments, réunis ainsi, ne doivent être regardés que comme un rassemblement de mannequins, vêtus selon les époques auxquelles ils appartiennent et suivant les places qu'occupaient ceux qu'ils représentent.[67]

The last sentence of this quotation merits further contextualization. Lenoir claimed that the monuments under his care were mere mannequins: inanimate models and nothing more. In other words, these objects functioned purely as aestheticized reminders of the past, and were intended for artists of the present. Lenoir's was a very deliberate attempt to divorce these objects from the specific historical and ideological context of the *Ancien régime*, to divest them of all symbolic content, and to present them as visual tools for the artist. This is not unlike the approach that Jean-Nicolas-Louis Durand (1760-1834) adopted in his pedagogy of architectural education. Durand's publications on the subject of historic architecture, such as his *Recueil et parallèle des édifices de tout genre* (assembled between 1799 and 1801), were little more than formal overviews of building typologies, emptying these buildings of all symbolic significance.

At this particular moment during France's revolutionary era, Lenoir could not be seen to condone the past, least of all through the historic object. For obvious reasons, much of Lenoir's collection of funerary sculptures derived from the monarchy and nobility, not the working classes, and therefore they were potent reminders of the very system the revolutionaries were attempting to overthrow. In the interest of protecting these historic objects, it was crucial for Lenoir to disempower their originary, participatory significance and re-imagine their evocative potential according to different criteria. While these objects were no longer participatory in their original sense as individual mediators between the living and the deceased, they were intended in the context of the Musée to function collectively as aesthetic representations of a specific national narrative of the past.

Lenoir was thus very consciously re-inventing the museum and its pedagogical role with the nature of the objects his depot housed, and the publication of his second catalogue attested to his intentions. It is evident in a follow-up letter that Lenoir composed that the

[67] Ibid., Vol. 2, 174.

catalogue was always intended to accompany a pedagogical-museum. In this letter, Lenoir stated that Paris was lacking a building to house "des objets essentiels pour former les jeunes peintres et leur faire oublier des routines qu'ils adoptent d'après leurs maîtres, et dont ils ne font très-souvent ensuite, dans leur coloris, que porter la livrée."[68] Thus he hoped that a national museum would be "perpétuellement ouvert aux artistes ainsi qu'aux amateurs studieux."

Lenoir clearly believed that the education of the artist needed to be founded on the museum – rather than on the traditional beaux-arts system of the Academy. His depot, "précieux par ce qu'il renferme" presented Lenoir with an opportunity unrivalled by other museums. Yet his caution for careful reflection also suggested that Lenoir had not only conceived of the museum as a container for objects, but as an instructional device that would enable a certain relationship with history to occur. "Ce monument important," he wrote of the museum, "ne peut donc s'exécuter que sur des plans sages, profondément médités et longtemps réfléchis, puisque c'est là où la jeunesse doit prendre connaissance de l'histoire vivante des différents siècles et des différents âges qui nous ont précédés."[69]

That Lenoir intended the museum as a philosophical project is nowhere more apparent than in the passage in which he called for philosophers and scholars to lead the museum ("Le Muséum national ne peut être dirigé que par des savants et des artistes vraiment philosophes").[70] The modern museum was, in his eyes, in the lineage of the world's first museum, the Museum of Alexandria, where philosopher-scholars mingled with the arts. Yet he also understood the museum to be seminal to the revolution's other key cultural endeavour: educational reform. "C'est à vous seuls," he argued, "représentants philosophes, qu'appartient l'éducation française; c'est donc à vous à mettre en concours, sur votre programme, le Muséum français; c'est alors que vous réunirez les lumières des véritables artistes et que vous écarterez l'intrigue qui n'a que trop dominé."[71]

Reception of Lenoir's second catalogue was mixed. The *Commission temporaire des arts* was highly enthusiastic and its president, Mathieu, praised Lenoir in a letter sent the day after the catalogue was published. Mathieu noted with satisfaction "l'ordre (that

[68] Ibid., Vol. 2, 202-203.
[69] Ibid., Vol. 2, 203.
[70] Ibid., Vol. 2, 203.
[71] Ibid., Vol. 2, 203-204.

Lenoir) a établi dans le Dépôt"[72] and the care Lenoir had taken to conserve objects of arts and science. Lenoir's professional colleagues, the artist Lebrun among them, were more critical of the catalogue as a republican endeavour. The catalogue contained too many reminders of "tyrants" for it to be a useful tool for the public, they argued, while the catalogue itself was misleading and contained too many factual errors.

The timing of this document was entirely fortuitous. If indeed Lenoir had undertaken the second edition after December 1793 when the *Commission des arts* and the *Comité d'Instruction Publique* were in place, he could not have anticipated that on 25 October, 1794, the Comité would then name all of the guardians "curators" of their depots, and confer them with the power to do whatever was necessary to preserve the monuments inside.[73] In spite of this decree, Lenoir received criticism for many of the initiatives he had undertaken to date, notably for his placement of objects in the depot, and Lenoir was repeatedly forced to seek support from the *Commission des arts* for his activities at the depot.

It was at this time that Lenoir unleashed another debate (his catalogue being the first) regarding the status of monuments at the depot. For in addition to putting "order" to the depot, Lenoir had also begun to assemble monuments that arrived at the depot in pieces, a measure he referred to as conservation. "Un monument démonté et laissé dans un coin est nécéssairement livré à une destruction lente,"[74] he argued in a letter to the *Commission des arts* dated October 1794. The reply from the Commission found Lenoir's request to reassemble the monument of François I a waste of funds for what was only a temporary depot. Lenoir's nemesis LeBrun, and David LeRoy, were two of the signitaries of the letter Lenoir received in December 1794. Lenoir eventually did receive permission to proceed with his project for the monument, on 20 October, 1795, by Rondelet, at the *Commission des Travaux publics*. Rondelet fully supported Lenoir's plan, on the basis that the monument was as valuable for history as it was for the instruction of artists and the progress of art. The following day, on 21 October, 1795, Lenoir also received word that his plans for a national museum of monuments were at

[72] Ibid., Vol. 1, 19.
[73] At this point, Paris had a total of 12 depots. They were as follows: 2 depots for antiquities, paintings and sculptures (Maison de Nesle, with Naigeon, conservateur, and Livernois, guardian; and Petits-Augustins, with Lenoir, conservateur); 8 depots for books; one depot for music; one depot for machines and physics.
[74] Ministère, *Archives*, Vol. 2, 217.

last to be considered. The *Comité d'Instruction Publique* had issued a decree that a museum of national monuments be created in Paris, that it be named the *Musée national des monuments français*, that its monuments be organized in chronological order, and that the project would be referred for further consideration. In the mean time, no monuments were authorized to be removed from the depot at the Petits-Augustins. The future of the Musée des Monuments français was all but decided.

A letter that Lenoir drafted to the *Comité d'Instruction Publique* in July 1795 would have been seminal to this decision. In this letter, Lenoir summarized the history of the depot and his involvement with it, and the genesis of his idea for a larger museological project. He wrote that

> La grande quantité de monuments recueillis dans le Dépôt, le besoin d'ordre, tout m'engagea à les replacer autant qu'il serait possible dans leur premier état, toujours persuadé que c'est le seul moyen de les conserver, et que des monuments démontés et oubliés dans un coin sont bientôt perdus et anéantis.
>
> En les replacant, j'ai eu le soin de ménager les clairs et les ombres, de manière à en faciliter le dessin à ceux des artistes que ce rassemblement pourrait intéresser: ce qui est arrivé. Déjà plusieurs vues du Dépôt ont été dessinées.[75]

In this letter, Lenoir confirmed that he dedicated his life to the good of art, while clarifying the new pedagogical role that art would play in republican society. He also referred to the "main conservatrice" that guided his intentions in matters of preservation. Despite the symbolic dimension with which the monument was naturally invested, Lenoir saw no other value for it but for the progress of arts and education. "Je vous prie de croire, citoyens, que ce n'est point à la mémoire de François Ier que je demande de réédifier le monument dont je vais vous entretenir; j'oublie ses moeurs avec sa cendre."[76] His philosophy toward the conservation of monuments was, in his own words (though we

[75] Ibid., Vol. 2, 24.
[76] Ibid., Vol. 2, 26.

know otherwise) “de (le) retablir tel qu’il était.”[77] Further he would write that “Ce n’est que par la conservation des objets d’art que nous possédons que nous pourrons faire des élèves; nous n’avons plus d’écoles, et nous ne pouvons offrir à l’instruction que des monuments, des statues et des tableaux. La République française veut des écoles publiques et des musées, où ses enfants puissent étudier tous les arts sans bourse délier.” Thus the “solitary artist” Lenoir, as he preferred to think of himself, made his project an integral project of the larger goals of the Revolution.

[77] Ibid., Vol. 2, 27.

III. Evoking a National Past: The New Aims of History in the Public Sphere

To Preserve, Study, and Communicate:
The Musée des Monuments français as Popular Pedagogy

It is not an exaggeration to say that the Musée des Monuments français was born of the French Revolution. Were it not for the events of this revolution, France's first national museum of modern sculpture would likely never have seen the light of day – at least not in the late eighteenth century. Its collection accrued from the properties of the monarchy, nobility, and clergy that the *Assemblée nationale* had mandated as "national" collections, its site was inherited from a monastery of an outlawed religion and also consequently entered the public domain, and its views toward public access and instruction were distinctly those of the republican era. If the claim that the modern museum was entirely a product of the Revolution's democratic ideals is not entirely an accurate one – well before 1789 the public had gained at least partial access to view royal collections at the Musée de Luxembourg, for example, and talks for a museum to be housed in the Louvre had been seriously underway since Charles-Claude Flahaut de la Billarderie, Comte d'Angiviller, was appointed Director general of royal buildings in 1774 – it nevertheless took the events of the Revolution to fully overturn social systems of privilege and to make the modern museum a truly public and democratic institution.

Yet, despite its circumstantial beginnings, the Musée des Monuments français, like many other art museums created in the aftermath of the French Revolution, inaugurated three principles that have become a mainstay in modern museological practice: to preserve, to study, and to communicate. During its short-lived existence, the Musée epitomized these three principles: the first, in the manner it offered sanctuary to objects either targeted for their subject-matter by Revolutionary vandals or in need of a new locale following the obliteration of former privileged classes; the second, in the manner its founder and administrator made novel forms of instruction the primary focus of the collection; and the third, in the introduction of new scenographic principles to the programme and exhibition spaces of the museum.

The Musée des Monuments français's formative period were the years it operated as a depot, from 1791 – 1795. During this time, Lenoir addressed several issues that, owing

to the way he dealt with them, prefigured his intentions for converting a temporary depot into a more permanent museum. That Lenoir transformed a weekly written inventory into a catalogue, that he initiated the conservation and repair of objects, that he reflected upon issues of pedagogy and its reform in the beaux-arts milieu, that he introduced a logic and principles of display, that he began to orient the collection toward the under valorized field of medieval (read: national) sculpture; these were all telling signs that Lenoir had more than the basic responsibilities of depot guardian in mind as he conducted business at the Petits-Augustins.

Lenoir provided a formal explanation of the genesis of his idea for creating a museum out of the depot's growing collection in the introduction and first volume of *Musée des Monumens français*. Compelled by the circumstances of the site, he wrote that

> Une masse aussi importante de monumens de tous les siècles me fit naître l'idée d'en former un Musée particulier, historique et chronologique, où l'on retrouvera les âges de la sculpture française dans des salles particulières, en donnant à chacune de ces salles le caractère, la physionomie exacte du siècle qu'elle doit représenter, et de faire refluer dans les autres établissemens et les tableaux et les statues qui n'auraient aucun rapport, soit à l'histoire de France, soit à l'histoire de l'art français.[78]

This brief statement succinctly articulated the foundational principles on which the Musée des Monuments français was premised, and by which Lenoir intended to serve the modern museum's aims of preservation, instruction, and communication. Fundamental to Lenoir's vision of a museum was not only its capacity to communicate a historical narrative, but equally that this narrative be supplemented with scenographic installations. These principles will be developed in the following sections in order to elucidate their contextual significance and Lenoir's specific intentionality, with the aim of demonstrating how Lenoir's project came to epitomize the new aims of history in the public sphere.

[78] Lenoir, *Musée*, Vol. 1, 6-7.

Undoubtedly, the closure of the artistic academies in 1793 by Robespierre and their replacement by alternative teaching institutions contributed in no small way to new conceptions of education. Museums were one such alternative to the former *Académie de peinture et de sculpture* and the *Académie d'architecture*: the Muséum de la République (the Louvre), the Musée de l'École française at Versailles, and the Musée des Monuments français enabled artists to sketch on-site the masterpieces of their respective collections, thereby changing the traditional master-student relationship of the academy. For Lenoir, who despised the academy system, the museum offered far greater autonomy and latitude as a place of instruction which, he argued, constituted one of two underlying principles: "Un musée doit (…) avoir deux points de vue dans son institution," he affirmed, "vue politique et vue d'instruction publique; dans la vue politique, il doit être établi avec assez de splendeur et de magnificence pour parler à tous les yeux; (…) dans la vue d'instruction, il doit renfermer tout ce que les arts et les sciences réunis peuvent offrir à l'enseignement public."[79]

Lenoir's vision of the museum derived from the Classical tradition. He traced a historico-philosophical lineage of the museum from Alexandria and Athens to Paris, re-affirming the original orientation of the museum as a forum for discussion, and how the Musée des Monuments français fit within this tradition. The museum, he argued, was both an idea and a structure. As a physical space it existed to house objects and to awe the public, but more importantly it provided a social space for members of the community to meet and to discuss the arts and sciences. This was the true and original role of the museum, and this was its potential in republican society. But his argument needed sharpening. The modern museum could not be perceived as an elitist domain, least of all because it would be housing objects from the *Ancien régime*. To counter this potential argument, Lenoir invoked some of the very rhetoric that had motivated republican sensibilities for educational reform. He emphasized the museum as a place of public instruction and as a fulfillment of republican ideals, which he offered as an alternative to the Academy – from which he himself felt excluded.

At the same time, Lenoir was pioneering the modern professional standards of the museum curator – one who was well-versed in the most current theories both artistic and

[79] Ibid., Vol. I, 50. Emphasis my own.

scientific – and he used his catalogues as a medium for publishing his avant-garde views on the subject of curatorship

> Si le bien des arts nécessitait la destruction des académies si vicieuses par leur organisation, leur progrès demandait aussi un moyen d'enseignement clair et facile qui procurât à tous les citoyens, sans bourse délier, les facilités de consulter les grands maîtres; ces moyens d'étude se trouvent de fait dans un Musée chronologiquement disposé; c'est là que la jeunesse trouvera par les rapprochemens qu'elle pourra faire d'elle-même, des modeles sûrs pour diriger la marche de ses études (…) C'est en raison de cet impérieux besoin où se trouvent les jeunes éleves qui suivent la carrière des arts, que j'ai reconnu l'indispensable nécessité de placer dans un Musée tous les monumens des arts par école et par ordre chronologique. En observant ce classement chronologique pour l'arrangement du Musée central de peinture, il devient naturellement une école savante et une encyclopédie où la jeunesse trouvera mot à mot tous les degrés d'imperfection, de perfection et de décadence par lesquels les arts dépendans du dessin ont successivement passé. Cet ordre méthodique est celui que les conservateurs des Musées doivent suivre, s'ils veulent embrasser ces établissemens nationaux dans tous leurs rapports politiques et philosophiques, et surtout s'ils veulent les voir comme le flambeau qui doit éclairer la génération prochaine, dont l'absence de la lumière avait pendant plus d'un siecle maintenu le mauvais goût. Ce sont ces motifs qui ont dirigé les travaux que je me suis proposés dans le Musée des Monumens Français.[80]

Lenoir's insistence on the museum as a space of on-site public instruction reveals that he envisioned education in the museum occurring in a manner analogue to Mermet's theories of pedagogical reform: as concrete, personalized, and colourful lessons in history. His own designs at the Musée attempted far more than to create a "space" for

[80] Alexandre Lenoir, *Description historique et chronologique des monumens de sculpture, réunis au Musée des monumens français*, 4ème éd. (Paris: Au Musée, An VI), 53-54. Emphasis my own. Note that Lenoir was highly critical of what he termed "decadence" in artistic production, begun, he believed, in the previous century under Charles Lebrun, when an absence of "genius" (one might understand originality) and uniformity set in. Lenoir believed that it was not until the Neoclassical painter Joseph-Marie Vien (1716-1809) arrived in Paris from the South of France, and endorsed models from antiquity that had previously been criticized, that this trend was reversed.

artists to work and for objects to be displayed. Lenoir's scenographic innovations sought to personalize a national narrative and to render this narrative visceral. In effect, through his creation of ambient century halls, Lenoir attempted to introduce within the museum that which Mermet would advocate for schools: a pedagogy that appealed to the senses. In this regard, Lenoir's conception of history was not unlike that of the era's empirical philosophers who saw history as a vital process. Lenoir sought to reconstruct a living history of the ages, an appreciation of which was formative to the young artist's career.[81] Pedagogy and historiography in this new museographic context were explicitly used by Lenoir to evoke a national past, and in this way inaugurated a new aim of history in the public sphere.

Performance as Pedagogy

If museums were acknowledged as important sites of education under the new order and valued for their evocative potential, there were others. It is probably not an exaggeration to claim that the close ties established between pedagogy, morality, and the arts throughout the revolutionary era found their greatest expression in projects that had no permanent site at all. The revolutionary festivals that followed in the lineage of the royal entry or allegorical parade – themselves a favoured form of propaganda under the *Ancien régime* – introduced a significant ideological innovation to traditions of pageantry in their aspiration to impart lessons and morals to the citizens of France, and this, in a collective and choreographed setting. The nation's annual festivals were recognized as highly public occasions to celebrate virtuous deeds, be these the taking of the oath of allegiance that was the basis of the military federative festival, or the naming of citizens' new inventions announced during the *fête décadaire*. Early on in revolutionary traditions the festival assumed its typical structure: a long procession, a mass, and an oath, concluded by an evening banquet and fireworks generally constituted the program of these events. Yet within this schema, regional variations did in fact occur, through recourse to costumes and variations in visual representation, among other things.

Though historically the intention of the ceremonial display had been to overwhelm the spectator through the sheer scale and magnificence of the décor, in revolutionary times the spectator had become more of an actor and participant in this event, much like the

[81] Ministère, *Archives*, Vol. 2, 203.

visitor to Lenoir's museum. The first of the Festivals of Federation in Paris, dated 14 July 1790,[82] choreographed by the architect Cellerier, and the funerary festival of 20 September 1790, commemorating the transfer of Mirabeau's remains to the Panthéon, marked the beginning of a tradition for revolutionary rituals that brought the arts, spectators, and a moral agenda into synthesized form within the public sphere. Artists and architects collaborated closely in these new endeavours: in 1791, the Neo-Classical painter Jacques-Louis David was appointed Director of festivals, and he worked with Quatremère de Quincy to choreograph these staged rituals.[83]

Like Lenoir's Musée, the Festival of the Federation in Paris permitted to reverse the partitioned world of the *Ancien régime* by virtue of its inclusion of the citizen, the *fédéré*, within its choreography. It served to celebrate, according to Mona Ozouf, "the passage from the private to the public, extending to all the feeling of each individual "as by a kind of electrical charge." It allowed "that which despotism had never allowed" – that is to say, "the mingling of citizens delighting in the spectacle of one another and the perfect accord of hearts."[84] It would be imprudent not to mention, however, that the newly minted concept of the "citizen" did not in itself preempt certain social exclusions. As Ozouf has further observed, beyond the mass of *fédérés* who made extensive journeys to attend the Festival of the Federation (for many the first and only journey they would make from their native towns), there was a large number of citizens deliberately not included in the event: the aristocrat and the ordinary person (neither soldier, nor notable, the "ordinary person" made up the unpoliticized mass). This truth notwithstanding, there is much to be said for the nature of the experience of those who were invited to participate in the festival and did: the coming together of citizens as a social mass within a collective ceremony, the dramatization of the "federative pilgrimage" to Paris, which for many provincials was both long and arduous, and the obsession with bringing home a relic or memento from this journey (such as the federative banner) – all are elements that

[82] In her Foreword to Mona Ozouf's ground-breaking study, *Festivals and the French Revolution* (Cambridge, MA and London, England: Harvard University Press, 1988), ix-xiii, Lynn Hunt identified the varying stages in Revolutionary life, ranging from the riotous festivals of 1789 and 1790, to the grandiose festivals of the Federation beginning in July 1790, to the local and satiric festivals of 1793-1794.

[83] The deputy Boissy d'Anglas wrote an essay on the festival, entitled *Essai sur les fêtes nationales suivi de quelques idées sur les arts* (Paris, an II), which he addressed to the Convention in year II of the Republic (1793-94) and in which he argued for the role of the festival in the body politic; quoted in A. Détournelle, *Aux Armes et aux arts! Journal de la Société populaire et républicaine des arts* (Paris, n.d.), 155; quoted in Andrew McClellan, *Inventing the Louvre: Art, Politics, and the Origins of the Modern Museum in Eighteenth-Century Paris* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1994), 95.

[84] Ozouf, *Festivals and the French Revolution*, 54. Within the quote is a comment by a certain S. de Girardin describing his experience of the Federation Festival on the Champ-de-Mars. Emphasis my own.

marked the revolutionary festival and are significant for the manner they altered the experience of the public partaking in this event.[85]

Beyond the shared attitude toward dramatization and the inclusion of the citizen, a second underlying similarity between the festival and the Musée was the notion of their utility, specifically pedagogic and moral. The festival was deemed to be a lesson in morals, and an opportunity not only to continue the instruction of adults whose formal education had long-since ended, but more importantly, an opportunity to right this education according to new Republican ideals. Thus by virtue of the regularity of the festivals planned throughout the calendar year, and the act of gathering people together to attend them, as well as the didactic content of these festivals which aimed to summarize accomplishments by citizens and government, the festival was, in essence, a school. Like Lenoir, who considered the Musée a training ground for artists and an alternative to the powerful *Académie*, and whose project clearly demonstrated Lockean affinities in its dependence on the role of human reflection in the act of experiencing the museum, the festival also relied on empiricist psychology, as Ozouf further demonstrated

> The festival organizers, who were never in any doubt about this commonplace of empiricist psychology, also borrowed its vocabulary: "soft wax" and "clay" provided them with ready metaphors, as did the "seal," the "stamp," or the "imprint" with which the school, the festival, or the institution seemed to them necessarily to mark men. The empiricist references were also reinforced by a return to the Revolutionary events themselves and by an act of collective psychology: unstable, fickle, impressionable as the French nation was, it was also more sensitive than any other to the power of images.[86]

As Heurtault-Lamerville observed in his oration on festivals, "Your commissions are entrusted with two great tasks: the one to instruct children in the schools and the other to form men in institutions."[87]

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[85] Ibid., especially Chapter 2, "The Festival of the Federation: Model and Reality," 33-60.
[86] Ibid., 203.
[87] Heurtault-Lamerville, "Opinions sur les fêtes décadaires," 28 Messidor, Year VI; quoted in Ozouf, *Festivals and the French Revolution*, 325.

In ways not unlike the Musée, the festival premised itself upon the evocative power of the image, similarly inspired by sensationist theories and the festival's impact on the senses. Sculpture, of all the sister arts, was deemed to have the greatest power over the individual, in part due to its capacity for verisimilitude. Yet this aspect of festival theory and practice was not conducted without the utmost suspicion of too close an alliance to theatre, and too perfect the creation of illusion. Quite the opposite was true. As Ozouf remarked, "A whole pedagogical art of the image may be deduced from their (festival organizers') projects and their productions."[88] This to say that in their essence, festival theory and Lenoir's museological theory shared in a fundamental way in their attitudes toward representation. Maintaining a certain distance was the aim in the images produced for festival use: allegory and allusion rather than simulation or mimesis were the preferred orders of the day. In a not unrelated way, Lenoir's attitude toward restoration and the *fabrique* was similarly informed, an argument I shall develop further in Part III.

Invested with the persuasive power of extreme emotion, objects thus became signs in an event that borrowed further from other contexts of representation, notably the liturgy with its theatrical use of choreographed gestures and movements. Pedagogy in this context was tied to a highly complex web of representational and referential theories and practices. Both the revolutionary museum such as that of Lenoir and the revolutionary festival are significant instances of a synthesis in artistic and pedagogical traditions that innovated methods of public instruction. The shift in conception of subjectivity from observer to participant, and the emphasis on enactment and theatricality that these alternative sites of moral and pedagogical instruction were premised upon, provide important insight into how modern spaces of representation were conceptualized in Republican France as experiential spaces of learning.

It should be qualified, however, that the programs of these festivals and of Lenoir's museum, while innovative in the manner of their participatory dimension, were in themselves examples of modern propaganda. Formerly, the royal entries and heraldry organized under the *Ancien régime*, while rich in spectacle and decorum, nevertheless upheld universally valid cultural orders. After the revolution, in the manner that festivals

[88] Ozouf, *Festivals and the French Revolution*, 209.

fulfilled the new agenda of Napoleon, it might be more accurate to say that projects like those of Lenoir positioned the spectator as an active voyeur: necessary for the *déroulement* of the event, yet ultimately powerless to challenge this event or its political significance. But even within the space of the Musée, this condition was not absolute. Where the interior galleries presented a linear, progress-oriented vision of national history, the Elysium garden enabled a more associative and empowering individual engagement with the past, as will be demonstrated in Part III.

Character, Chronology, Program

After preservation and pedagogy, communication constituted the third foundational principle of the modern museum. In Lenoir's museum, the act of communicating the narrative was largely achieved through scenographic means, and in this regard, narrative relied upon an understanding of contemporary architectural theory. The Vitruvian concept of "character" received renewed attention in the eighteenth century in the work of architect and pedagogue Jacques-François Blondel (1705-1774), who sought legibility in architectural composition through the recourse to appropriate modes of architectural expression. The concept of *caractère* assumed even greater complexity in the writing of Blondel's student, Étienne-Louis Boullée, who tied the visual stimulus of "expressive" character to the feeling or impression it created in the viewer, thereby introducing notions of architectural sensation and "metaphorical" and "symbolic" character to the topical debate on architectural expression.

Lenoir's use of the term had a different inflection than either Vitruvius or Blondel had intended for it. Far from communicating the building's functional purpose, which in Lenoir's project was to house objects, the invocation of "character" was meant to further the philosophical purpose of the project's chronological program by creating unity of human actions in the continuum of time: in doing so, Lenoir sought to communicate instruction through narrative. The use of "character" in this sense was scenographic, not architectural, and was achieved strictly through decorative intervention: to compliment the objects on display, modulations of light and ornamental paint work were the primary methods Lenoir used to suggest what he referred to as the "physiognomy" of an age.

Yet the concept of pairing century-specific objects with an equally specific spatial décor in the museum – what has come to be known as the "period room" – was an innovation pioneered by Lenoir in the late eighteenth century. No other museum project had theatricalized the site to such a degree. At the Louvre, whose development paralleled that of the depot's transformation from 1793-1795, the choice of objects for the museum and their arrangement was heavily debated. Under the original *Commission du Muséum*, an eclectic and ahistorical mixed-school arrangement was preferred to the more scholarly, chronological sequence that Lenoir would employ at the Musée des Monuments français:

> The arrangement we have adopted is like that of an abundant flowerbed that has been planted with great care. If, by choosing a different arrangement, we had demonstrated the spirit of art in its infancy, during its rise and in its most recent period; or if we had separated the collection into schools, we might well have satisfied a handful of scholars, but we feared being criticized for having ordered something which, in addition to serving no useful general purpose, would actually hinder the study of young artists, who, thanks to our system, will be able to compare the styles of the Old Masters, their perfections as well as their faults, which only become apparent upon close and immediate comparison.[89]

When the *Conservatoire* assumed power in January 1794, however, plans for a "decorative" arrangement were replaced with a new scheme which called for "a continuous and uninterrupted sequence revealing the progress of the arts and the degrees of perfection attained by various nations that have cultivated them,"[90] a scheme akin to Lenoir's chronological lay-out. Yet owing to financial restrictions and severe delays in renovations at the Grand Gallery of the Louvre, this new scheme was not fully realized either, and the Grand Gallery was closed completely between 1796-1799 while repairs to walls, floors, even paintings, were undertaken. A series of temporary exhibitions in the Salon as well as a permanent exhibition of Old Master drawings in the Galerie d'Apollon

[89] Arch. Nat., F17 1059 (I): "Considérations sur les arts et sur le Muséum national," reprinted in Tuetey and Guiffrey, *La Commission du Muséum*, 187; quoted in McClellan, *Inventing the Louvre: Art, Politics, and the Origins of the Modern Museum in Eighteenth-Century Paris* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1994), 107. Translation by author.
[90] C. Varon, *Rapport du Conservatoire du Muséum national des arts*, Paris, an II; quoted in Yveline Cantarel-Besson, *La Naissance du musée du Louvre: La politique muséologique sous la Révolution d'après les archives des musées nationaux*, Vol. 2, (Paris: Ministère de la Culture, Éditions de la Réunion des musées nationaux, 1981), 226-229; quoted in McClellan, *Inventing the Louvre*, 113.

bridged the gap, and adopted the arrangement by school method that would ultimately characterize the installation program of the Louvre. In the end, the scientifically-progressive chronological design that had already been realized by Lenoir at the Musée des Monuments français gave way to a more traditional aesthetic lay-out at the Louvre, and interior décor was largely limited to wall colours and moldings.[91]

The museological precursor to Lenoir's work at the Musée des Monuments français was clearly not the neighbouring Louvre museum, with which Lenoir nevertheless competed for objects to enlarge his collection. The Musée's precursors lay outside of France, and were programmatic, not scenographic. Previous to the Musée des Monuments français, a small number of museums had begun to incorporate scientific principles of organization into their programs, arranging works chronologically by century. These projects, by the very logic of their organization, were models of didactic learning, and akin to the philosophical enterprise of the *Encyclopédie* of Didérot and d'Alembert in that they were modelled on the concept of the inventory. Lenoir himself described the mandate of the chronologically-arranged museum as an encyclopedia for instruction. "Si l'on considère la chronologie des siècles passés comme un livre ouvert à l'instruction, et dans lequel on lit la marche des événemens, on sentira la nécessité de classer les monumens selon leurs époques, en suivant la ligne de démarcation que la nature a tracée elle-même."[92] Yet as Debora Meijers has argued, the most famous museological precursor to Lenoir's project, the print-maker Christian von Mechel's re-hanging of the Imperial galleries in Vienna in 1781 by school and by date, was not as radical a shift in method as many would have. Von Mechel's approach itself derived from an existing tradition for comparative study, whose origins lay usefully in the branch system or taxonomic model of the natural sciences.[93] Yet it is what the new method yielded that had such a significant impact on future display practices in art museums. Chronology in von Mechel's scheme was still secondary to an overriding taxonomic model structured around the "class" of the "school" and its various "orders" (be these defined by geography, *genres*, or date), however the introduction of chronology nevertheless undermined previous systems of

[91] This was true of the gallery's organization until the arrival of Dominique Vivant-Denon as Director of the Louvre (and all Paris art museums) on November 19, 1802. Denon intended to re-hang the Louvre, yet continued a non-cyclical narrative of post-Renaissance art, in stark contrast with the views of Quatremère de Quincy and Winckelmann.
[92] Lenoir, *Musée*, Vol. 1, 50.
[93] Debora Meijers, "La classification comme principe: la transformation de la Galerie impériale de Vienne en "histoire visible de l'art,"" in *Les musées en Europe à la veille de l'ouverture du Louvre: actes du colloque organisé par le Service culturel du musée du Louvre à l'occasion de la commémoration du bicentenaire de l'ouverture du Louvre les 3, 4 et 5 juin 1993*, sous la direction scientifique d'Edouard Pommier (Paris: Klincksieck: Musée du Louvre, 1995), 593-606.

thought: in von Mechel's systematic approach, the unity afforded by chronology emphasized similarity over the diversity of prior "decorative" hanging methods, which themselves emphasized difference. Unity, rather than difference, was the very historiographic principle that Lenoir sought to achieve at the Musée des Monuments français in his quest to demonstrate a national historical lineage.

Yet even as Lenoir himself credited the exact sciences with providing the rational model for the chronologically-arranged museum, that is, even as he argued for a scientific program for the museum, Lenoir was clearly aiming to supplement this organizational model with another, one that was more visceral than it was cerebral. Thus when he emphasized the role of the Musée des Monuments français in visibly demonstrating the history of France and French art as concurrent and mutually enforcing narratives, he was not simply intending to invoke the traditional didactic metaphor of the museum as an encyclopedia (although he did that too), but rather his metaphor was decidedly a bodily one. He would render history visible to the visitor by putting both space and objects to the service of history-telling, largely through the Musée's program conceived as an experiential trajectory through time.

Living History and the Narrative History Museum

Most discussions of history-writing will inevitably broach the subject of narrative as an on-going source of debate among historians. Whether history is everything that human beings have ever done – or a fable socially and commonly agreed upon, to paraphrase Thomas Carlyle[94] – the very rudiments of the discipline involve some form of story-telling, even if the underlying intention of the historian to portray a specific event-based narrative or a broader perspective (such as philosophers of history are wont to do), vary greatly. In the eighteenth-century, before "History" had severed its ancestral ties with philosophers to gain an autonomy and "objectivity" of its own, French writers and thinkers such as Condorcet, Turgot, and Voltaire had largely defined the practice in the latter terms, seeking an understanding of human nature from the perspective of its progress from "primitive" states to its current condition. Through their interpretations and by placing their writing in philosophical context, these writers saw history as something vital, and history-writing as the means by which to determine patterns in the

[94] Thomas Carlyle, *The French Revolution* (New York: G.P. Putnam's Sons, 1902), 312; quoted in Robert Carneiro, *The Muse of History and the Science of Culture* (New York: Kluwer Academic/Plenum Publishers, 2000), 13.

underlying structures and themes of historical processes. The task of the historian in composing the narrative of history was to make meaning and to derive order from such sequences of human events.

Robert Carneiro has claimed two principal components in the practice he calls narrative history, which he defines as "the stringing together of particular facts in a chronological sequence."[95] The first concerns the recounting of events, while the second considers the stylistic way in which these events have been described. Of the second, a seasoned debate over the role of the historian has divided historiographers for several centuries. According to Classical tradition, History was a branch of literature – the oral art of Rhetoric – and its writing bore a foundational relationship to literary conventions of style. Necessary to its success was the freedom of the literary imagination to enliven the past beyond a mere chronicle of events. In the words of the nineteenth-century historian Archibald Alison, on whom the Classical debt of historians still was not lost, historical writing was an artistic skill: "Though founded on fact, though based on reality, though dependent for its existence on truth, History is still one of the *Fine Arts*…. However the stones may be cut out of the quarry, however fashioned or carved by the skill of the workman, their united effect will be entirely lost if they are not put together by the conception of a Michael Angelo, a Palladio, or a Wren. Genius is still the soul of history; its highest inspiration must be derived from the Muses."[96]

This valorization of the literary style in the presentation of history had several consequences in eighteenth-century historiography. For some, the debate concerned the degree to which the literary imagination should prevail over factual exactness. For Voltaire, who upheld the longstanding belief that historical narrative was a work of art, the motive was undoubtedly poetic – not blindly factual. His ambitious concept of history – of composing a history of civilization – was encyclopedic in scope and focussed on the manners and customs of nations. In his introduction to *The Age of Louis XIV*, for example, Voltaire distinguished between the tradition of archival histories saturated with battles and treaties, and "that which merits the attention of the ages (…) – that which

[95] Carneiro, *The Muse of History*, 16. See all of Chapter 2, "The Changing Faces of History," 13-46.
[96] Archibald Alison, "Michelet's France," in *Miscellaneous Essays* (Philadelphia: Carey and Hart, 1846) 188; quoted in Carneiro, *The Muse of History*, 20.

depicts the genius and manners of men."[97] The very title he gave to his work, promising the exegesis of an age, provides insight into the depth and latitude Voltaire willingly gave to the historical project. His was not so narrowly construed as to be only the biography of kings or queens, rather it documented the cultural history of the arts and sciences and "all that is needed (…) to trace the onward march of the human mind in philosophy, oratory, poetry and criticism; to show the progress of painting, sculpture, and music; of jewelry, tapestry making, glassblowing, gold-cloth weaving, and watchmaking."[98] While Voltaire's mode of history writing was not entirely new, it did characterize the age's strong desire to articulate the scope of human accomplishments in more than political terms.

When viewed through the lens of contemporaneous historical writing and its culture, Lenoir's own historiographic tendencies are elucidated more clearly. Even in the guise of a museum of art, Lenoir's project was never not construed as a history of France, and thus it is not unreasonable to compare his historical narrative with that of France's official historians. In both content and form (Carneiro's "recounting of events" and "stylistic way"), Lenoir appropriated the strategies of some of the most famous writers of his time, by writing a national history that was nevertheless related to the larger history of civilization, or Voltaire's "onward march of the human mind" as we have just witnessed. Like Voltaire, Lenoir recorded the manners and customs of the French age through his catalogue essays on costumes, fables, and various art techniques,[99] however his entire history of art relied precisely on its connection to universal traditions. Thus Lenoir frequently quoted writers from Greco-Roman antiquity and other cultural traditions in order to show historical continuity in artistic production. Furthermore, the very basis of the Musée's collection was not confined to sculptures of monarchy and nobility (even if, for practical reasons, these constituted a significant proportion of his collection), but contained sculptural fragments and reconstructions of near-legendary historical personalities, those of Héloïse and Abélard being the most popular. The means by which Lenoir gave order to his collection of art was directly inspired by the subjects of the modern historian, and it is entirely significant that the designation "French history"

[97] Voltaire, Introduction to *The Age of Louis XIV*, 43-44, quoted in *The Varieties of History*, ed. Fritz Stern, revised edition (New York: World Publishing Company, 1972), 35; quoted in Carneiro, *The Muse of History*, 38.
[98] Voltaire, quoted in Stern, *The Varieties of History,* 504n; quoted in Carneiro, *The Muse of History*, 39.
[99] Volume six of *Musée des Monumens français* was in fact entirely devoted to the subject of that archetypal French tradition of stained glass-making; it included a historical treatise and extensive illustrations of the principal works from the origin of the practice.

precedes that of "art" in the extended title Lenoir gave to his catalogue *Musée des Monumens français; ou, Description historique et chronologique des statues en marbre et en bronze, bas-reliefs et tombeaux des hommes et des femmes célèbres pour servir à l'histoire de France et à celle de l'art*.

In form, too, Lenoir borrowed from the formulaic construction of what we would refer to today as "universal history" writing. Lenoir described the scenography of the ambient century halls as a series of progressive stages, when he claimed that

> L'artiste et l'amateur verront d'un coup d'oeil l'enfance de l'art chez les Goths, ses progrès sous Louis XII, et sa perfection sous François Ier; l'origine de sa décadence sous Louis XIV, époque remarquable dans les arts dépendans du dessin, (…) Enfin on suivra pas à pas, sur les monumens de notre âge, le style antique restauré dans nos contrées par les leçons publiques de Joseph-Marie Vien.[100]

The Prussian art historian and archaeologist Johann Joachim Winckelmann[101] used the same evolutionary construction in his enormously successful and influential, *Geschichte der Kunst des Alterhums*, 1764, which was translated into French four years later. Quoting from this archaeologist and art historian, Lenoir situated the monuments of the ancient Gauls contained within his collection within the same Egyptian-Greek-Roman lineage that Winckelmann had traced in his own historiography of art, and which was also a lineage popularized by Masonic teachings, as we shall see in Lenoir's publication *La Franche-Maçonnerie rendue à sa véritable origine*.

This is not to say that Lenoir did not also promote a national "version" of universal history. His own celebration of the place of Celtic and Gothic art and architecture in France's artistic heritage was distinctly French historiography, inaugurating the challenge to the supremacy of Greco-Roman art sanctioned by the official teachings of the *Académie* and *Beaux-Arts* traditions. Lenoir was one of the first of his generation to do so, and as such he was an important catalyst to architects, theoreticians, and historians

[100] Lenoir, *Musée*, Vol. 1, 8.
[101] Winckelmann, born in Prussia in 1717 and died in Trieste, Italy in 1768.

such as Eugène Viollet-le-Duc who pioneered the Gothic Revival movement in France later in the nineteenth century.

The historiographic and pedagogic influences of his esteemed contemporaries and predecessors coalesced in Lenoir's work and resulted in a highly original conception of the museum. Though much of Lenoir's own training as a painter hailed from the Classical tradition, his curatorial ambitions for the Musée des Monuments français innovated the Classical template of the museum or royal collection in several key ways: the nature of the collection and the museographic program devised to exhibit this collection brought new insight to the educational possibilities of the museum institution, and this at a time of intense social reform. Lenoir himself claimed that the Musée des Monuments français was an alternative to the Beaux-Arts tradition, of which he was highly critical for its teaching methods. Departing from the Beaux-Arts, Lenoir instead encouraged visitors to engage in an interpretation of the historical process, an act that was the hallmark of the eighteenth-century philosopher historian. In his vivid depiction of the life and spirit of the times, a spatial depiction he realized so successfully that it rivaled any portrait achieved by a historian in pen, Lenoir adopted the credo of the historians whose concern was to preserve the poetry of the past. In this regard, I would agree with Dominique Poulot who has argued that Lenoir's desire to provide a philosophical history of civilization was informed by a search for mythic origins and truth.[102] To understand Lenoir's particular conception of history, his search for universal principles, and his desire to uncover truth and common origins in diverse mythological practices, is to give coherence to the Musée's narrative that has elsewhere been described as chaotic.

In other words, despite what Lenoir said about his collection as one dedicated to the preservation and the pedagogy of the fine arts, his actions proved otherwise. At a time in French history when the very concept of the modern art museum was being formulated, largely through the establishment of policies pertaining to display, collecting, and conservation that were then being debated,[103] Lenoir's own curatorial work was largely antithetical to the modern trend, and leave one to conclude that his true commitment to

[102] Dominique Poulot, *Musée, Nation, Patrimoine, 1789-1815* (Paris: Gallimard, 1997), especially Chapter 11, "Alexandre Lenoir et l'enjeu des origines," 305-339.

[103] These debates were critical to the creation of the Louvre, which would become the paradigm of museological standards in France and beyond. For an in-depth discussion on these debates, see McClellan, *Inventing the Louvre*. I am indebted to my supervisor, Alberto Pérez-Gómez, for his insightful observations and ideas on the subjects of *techné* and *poesis* in this regard.

the arts was not through any contribution to the fine arts, but rather to aestheticized crafts – or *techné*.

Objects as History Lessons: Alternative Narrative Discourses

Lenoir told the story of history through the art object, which doubled in his museological program as the historical object. This alignment of the subjects of art and history as discursive compliments was an important phenomenon precisely because it demonstrated how multiple discourses served to shape historical memory, and this in unconventional means. While there was no shortage of formal, written "histories" of France (the texts of royal historiographers André Félibien or Voltaire are primary examples), new and innovative forms of visual and material representation emerged in the eighteenth century which challenged the primacy and status of the traditional textual canon as authentic and official historiography. Increasing attention to the artifact inalterably shifted the focus of historical sources from texts to objects which, owing to their physicality, were considered by some to be more authentic witnesses of this past, thus making the narrative history museum an ideal site for engagement.

Architecture was the main purveyor in the new methodology, due in part to the effect of antiquarian activities and the preeminence of the print as a form of representation at this time. Printed images of monuments and architecture allowed for greater dissemination than their textual counterparts, and thereby reached larger, not strictly literate, audiences. Furthermore, the pictorialization of historical subjects, as Dana Arnold has shown, allowed the individual an added form of engagement with the past: notwithstanding the problematics that the new form of representation itself engendered, one could now visualize the materiality of the artifact, rather than simply reconstruct it in the imagination.[104] For the first time in history, visual representation was not subservient to the verbal text, but constituted a legitimate alternative historiographic account, one that was highly valued for its empirical content.

A second factor arose as a consequence of this important and symbolic shift in historiographic writing. As the proliferation of object-based histories gained wide-spread acceptance and greater circulation throughout the century, their narratives were

[104] Dana Arnold and Stephen Bending, eds., *Tracing Architecture: The Aesthetics of Antiquarianism* (Oxford: Blackwell, 2003) especially "Introduction: Tracing Architecture: The Aesthetics of Antiquarianism," 1-10.

themselves incorporated into an increasing number of localities in the public sphere. The tremendous appeal of the narrative history museum and the illustrated *Voyages pittoresques* – each with their own specific representational strategies – demonstrates how the narratives of history were shaped by the conventions of the discourses that told this history – and this, to highly different ends.

That these alternative discourses existed at all underlined the centrality of the secularism and cultural dimension of France's new republican age as the public expression of this age. History as a discipline and concept was being re-defined according to new criteria, while its own parameters were adjusted to account for a new self-referential awareness. In the narrative history museum, this meant creating spaces for contemporary commissions that would one day "become history," as was the case of the nineteenth-century gallery that Lenoir anticipated building into the Musée's chronological program.

In the context of a museum of historical and aesthetic objects, the issue of conservation was fundamental. As we have seen, the very concept of conservation was new in eighteenth-century thought. The guidelines produced in the *Quatre Instructions Initiales* (1790) and Vicq d'Azur and Dom Germain Poirier's follow-up document (1794) did little to address the issue of an object in need of repair, which vandalist activity in France had more than made necessary. Focusing on the techniques of a preventative praxis, rather than an ethical one, these initial forays into a theory of conservation sidestepped the very issues that the revolution had made an urgent reality.

For Lenoir, whose depot was brimming with mutilated and dismantled monuments, the question of conservation was not only fundamental to the realization of his project for a museum, it incarnated its very purposeful intention, as a passage from Lenoir's catalogue made clear. Describing an event that marked him deeply, Lenoir recalled the three consecutive nights in August 1793 when the royal tombs at Saint-Denis were mutilated by revolutionaries and remarked that he would be "heureux si je puis faire oublier à la postérité ces destructions criminelles!"[105] Lenoir was determined to restore these objects because he hoped to counter the memory of their actual destruction. In only a dozen words, Lenoir expressed the inner intent of his work and the philosophy of his museum:

[105] Lenoir, *Musée*, Vol. 1, 4.

to over-write the history of France and the processes of memory through the restored object.

Interlude I

A Portrait of Alexandre Lenoir (Paris, 1761-1839)

The story of Alexandre Lenoir is well-known amongst contemporary historians, in no small measure because the fastidious administrator assured that his own involvement with the Musée des Monuments français would be recorded for posterity in the catalogues he published of the museum's collection. Indeed, it is a curious "portrait," replete with heterogeneous references, that Lenoir published of himself in the frontispiece of volume 1 of his eight-volume, *Musée des monumens francais*.[106]

Figure 3. Tombstone monument to Alexandre Lenoir

This frontispiece, designed by Beauvallet (*in t*) and engraved by Guyot (*sculp t*), two artists with whom Lenoir worked frequently on the illustrations of his catalogues,[107] features the profile of Lenoir embossed on a large coin, surrounded by the accoutrements of the Classically-trained artist (palette and brushes, lyre, compass and canvas), the whole set atop a tombstone monument. The coin bears the name Alexandre Lenoir, and is artfully framed by an acorn bush at the top of which is located a flaming torch.[108] The tombstone is inscribed with the date and location of Lenoir's birth in Paris, on 25 December, 1762, followed by the Latin inscription "Non terret fortem labor," or hard work does not intimidate the bold - suggesting Lenoir's untiring work ethic. As was previously stated, this specific birth date most likely had a certain significance for Lenoir, especially in this context. Two bas-reliefs in small rectangular frames constitute the only images on the lower portion of the tombstone. On the left, three birds preparing for flight perch atop a bull; behind them a branch extends

[106] The frontispiece was re-published in Volume 5 of *Musée des Monumens français*.
[107] *Invenit* (Latin, abbreviated inv., in.) "He designed"; and *Sculpsit* (Latin, abbreviated sculp., sc.) "He engraved", from Fritz Eichenberg, *The Art of the Print* (New York: Harry Abrams, 1976), 581-589.
[108] The oak tree, of which the acorn is a fruit, is a central motif in Celtic culture. Druids are said to have retired to forests made only of oaks.

across the background of the scene. A thin cloth stretches across the torso of the bull and touches the ground. An inscription identifies the animal as "Tarvos Trigaranus," the Gallic bull god. In the second bas-relief, a young and robust Esus – generally regarded as the Gallic equivalent of the Roman gods Mercury or Mars – leans on a tree trunk and holds an axe behind his back.

The frontispiece is a compelling one for several reasons. Lenoir's fascination with origins led him to seek reconciliation in cultural differences and establish unity in corresponding truths through myth; his publication on the origins of Free-Masonry and their rapport with ancient Greek and Egyptian rites presented just such a thesis.[109] Lenoir further demonstrated this intention by combining Celtic and Greco-Roman mythological references in the very design of his tombstone, first in the depiction of himself as the Classically trained artist, and then in the Celtic imagery of god and bull that ornamented the monument. The juxtaposition of images of Esus, a bull, and three cranes has traditionally been interpreted as a Celtic version of a creation myth, although Celtic mythology is said to have no creation myth of its own. Some authors have attributed the myth to Persia, similarly an Indo-European culture, which would support Lenoir's interest in establishing common ancestral roots. According to the creationist myth, a sacrificial bull stands before a tree (symbolizing the World Tree, or the world axis) and awaits sacrifice by Master Esus, whose act restores order to the world. Conversely, from the body of the slain bull, the world is created and order brought about. Although the iconography is relatively obscure (only two representations of Esus cutting a tree are known to exist, and in both Esus has been depicted in the company of *Tarvos Trigaranos*, or Taurus of the three cranes), the image would have been familiar to Lenoir from reliefs that were discovered under the choir of Notre-Dame in 1711.[110] Two of the six reliefs bore remarkably similar images to the ones Lenoir had engraved in his catalogue, and originated from a pillar dedicated to Jupiter by Parisian mariners in the reign of Tiberius, some time between AD 14 and 37. According to one Celtic scholar,

> Esus prunes the tree for sacrificial purposes. It may be that there is a cyclical imagery in the destruction and rebirth of the Tree of Life in

[109] When commenting on the similarities in Gallic and Greek mythologies, Lenoir wrote in his introduction to French monuments that Christianity was but "une suite dégénérée des ces religions antiques," quoted in *Musée*, Vol. 1, 97.
[110] The other is a first century AD stone at Trier. The Nautes pillar is now in the collection of the Musée de Cluny in Paris.

> winter and spring: the birds may represent the soul in flight, perhaps the soul of the tree itself; the bull could himself be a sacrificial beast. Seasonal imagery may also be present in the symbiotic relationship enjoyed between bull and birds, which are of mutual benefit to one another. Finally, it should be recalled that trees are associated with Esus not simply in the iconography but also in the Berne commentaries which describe the fate of Esus' sacrificial victims.[111]

Lenoir provided his own historiography of the bas-reliefs, not in relation to his "tombstone monument," but in the same volume's introduction to Celtic monuments, where images of the bas-reliefs have been re-printed in the context of the monuments found at Notre-Dame.[112] Lenoir claimed that, according to the accompanying Celtic-Latin inscriptions, the six monuments formed five altars which were erected by wealthy Gallic-Parisian[113] mariners under Tiberius, and dedicated to the Roman god Jupiter, god of Justice. Lenoir traced the history of these bas-reliefs, quoting Classical sources such as Strabon, Pliny, and Tacitus, in addition to modern and contemporary historians (Baudelot, Félibien, Leibnitz, Montfauçon). Yet Lenoir's textual description of the monuments did not always correspond with the images he included of them, and at times his work is confusing.

[111] Miranda J. Aldhouse-Green, *Dictionary of Celtic Myth and Legend* (New York: Thames & Hudson, 1992), 93-94. See also http://www.maryjones.us/jce/esus.html
[112] Lenoir, *Musée*, Vol. 1, 120.
[113] The term "Gallic" refers to continental Celtic.

The placement of the two reliefs that match Lenoir's tombstone is reversed in the chapter on Celtic monuments. The bas-relief representing Esus, or Mercury-Mars, preceded that of the bull, and was the third of the relief cycle. According to this passage, it was believed to honour the god the Celts considered their supreme divinity. Lenoir suggested that the figure was collecting sacred mistletoe, perhaps for the Druids who would then use it as a remedy for moral or physical ailments, as part of an important and "mysterious" annual ceremony. He then wrote that other authors had interpreted the scene as one in which Esus was receiving a mysterious egg from the Druids – the egg, he further elaborated, which in most ancient cultural traditions such as those of the Persians and Christians bore special "mysterious" significance. Despite these multiple possibilities, Lenoir left his analysis of the iconography open-ended, and his own interpretation of the figure as related to either remedy, the source of life (egg), or the religious intervention of the Druid, remained unresolved. The reader senses, in fact, that Lenoir preferred to preserve the ambiguity of the "mysterious rite" rather than to unlock its meaning in his catalogue. As for the *Tarvos Trigaranus*, beyond affirming the centrality of the bull cult in Celtic mythology, Lenoir did little to confirm its meaning, though he avoided making any sacrificial interpretation, preferring instead the ideas of Baudelot: "Le taureau, comme on le voit ici, est peut-être une image de la paix dont les peuples jouissaient sous la domination des Romains. Les grues qu'on y voit tranquilles y seraient aussi par la même idée et par le même motif…Il n'y a point de doute qu'elles sont là comme symbole du courage."[114]

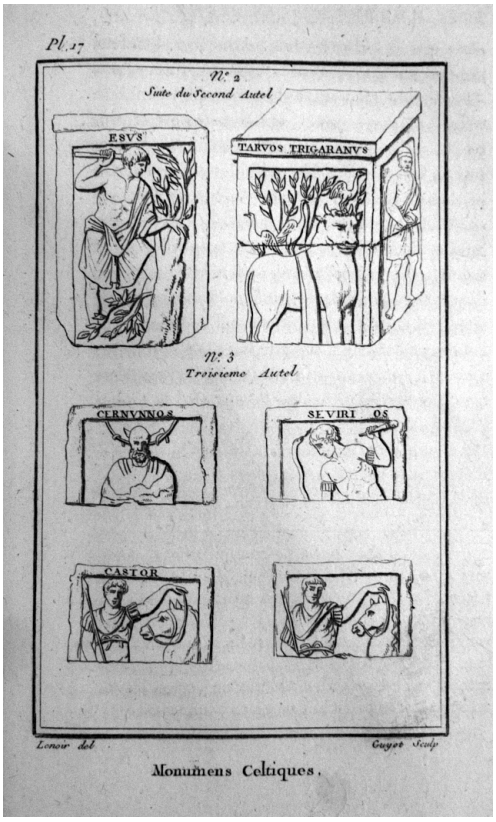

Figure 4. ***Monumens celtiques***

[114] Lenoir, *Musée des monumens français*, Vol. 1, 130.

What is problematic about this entry is not the plurality of interpretations that Lenoir allowed by multiple readings of its iconography, rather, it is how he intended the imagery to relate to his own use of it in his tombstone. The hypothesis that the figure was a Druid, and not Esus, is doubtful. Lenoir seemed more convinced that Esus was the Celtic variation of Mars, the Roman god of war, although his earlier form as the god of spring and agriculture, purveyor of the cycles of life, seems to present a more appropriate connection to his own world view. Furthermore, Esus was considered a supreme Celtic divinity, and was one of the more powerful guardians from whom Lenoir could have sought association.

The paired bas-reliefs both bear the signs of age as cracks seep through the porosity of stone, but on closer reading one becomes acutely aware that these fissures are the only marks of weathering on the otherwise pristine surface of the tombstone. As Lenoir did not, according to his usual exacting fashion, include explanatory notes or at the very least passing reference to this curious image in the text that followed, the reader is left with two lingering questions. Why would Lenoir, himself a painter, forgo a more traditional portrait composition in favour of an image that suggested in no uncertain terms death? A minor celebrity, Lenoir had, in the years leading up to the publication of his catalogue, sat for various portrait artists such as Marie Geneviève Bouliard and Maximilien Delafontaine, both of whom produced traditional compositions of Lenoir, the first in 1796 standing next to a stone monument bearing the inscription "Monumens français," the second, in 1799, standing on-site in the museum with objects and accoutrements in hand.[115] Beyond the ambiguity of this peculiar portrait of Lenoir, was that of the intended sense of his message.

[115] Lenoir would pose twice for the renowned Republican painter, Jacques-Louis David: in 1809 David produced a pair of pendant drawings of Lenoir and his wife, Adélaïde Binart. He rendered a more formal portrait of Lenoir in 1817, featuring his sitter as a recipient of the prestigious Chevalier d'Honneur.

Figure 5. M.G. Bouliard, *Portrait of Alexandre Lenoir*, 1796

Figure 6. P.M. Delafontaine, *Portrait of Alexandre Lenoir*, 1799

One can only surmise that the general meaning of this plate was poignant enough for its eighteenth-century audiences to glean the full import of its message: France was indebted to the Classical tradition but was also capable of surpassing this tradition in its cultural and artistic achievements by recovering its Celtic origins. France was in the process of becoming a republic to rival its Athenian model and precursor. France's evolutionary journey to progress was a rhetoric that Lenoir relayed through language in his catalogues, and through scenography in his designs for the halls. Yet on the subject of Lenoir's portrait, the question is somewhat more complex. On one hand, Lenoir depicted himself using the formal conventions and iconography of the very object he ardently argued deserved protection as France's artistic and cultural heritage – the historic monument – literally placing himself above "his" collection of relief monuments, of which he chose some of the oldest in the Musée's collection. At this date, the concept of the historic monument was in its very infancy: in 1790 Aubin Louis Millin introduced the term in a speech he gave to the *Assemblée constituante*, however it was only following several subsequent initiatives by the likes of Pierre Legrand d'Aussy, le comte de Montalivet, and Alexandre de Laborde, that the concept gained enough momentum for François

Guizot, France's Minister of the Interior, to create the position of Inspector of Historic Monuments (to which he appointed Ludovic Vitet, and, four years later, Prosper Mérimée) in 1830. A modest *Commission des Monuments historiques* was eventually formed in 1837, with the mandate of inventorying and classifying, and training architects (famously Eugène Viollet-le-Duc) in matters of restoration. Thus Lenoir truly was in the vanguard when, in the early 1790s, he defended the need for the protection of funerary sculpture. To portray himself indelibly linked to an object not yet widely sanctioned as "museum worthy" as Lenoir did in his introductory frontispiece, the curator was both affirming the status, and the museological ties, of the historic monument. On the other hand, by making himself – a young, energetic, and idealistic curator – the subject of the design of a tombstone, Lenoir was laying bare, as early as 1800, the very paradox of the project that had marked the Musée des Monuments français since its precarious beginnings and that, unbeknownst to him, would anticipate the tenor of museological debate for centuries thereafter: did the philosophical premise of the museum serve to celebrate the memory of the past, or petrify this memory for posterity?

Part II

Enlightenment By Design: Freemasonry, Scenography, and Performance at the Musée des Monuments français, 1796-1816

I. Freemasonry, Myth, and Design

Speculative Freemasonry, the French Enlightenment, and the Cultural Functions of Enlighteners

"As close as oak, an absolute freemason for secrecy"
George Colman the Elder, *The Deuce is in Him*, Act II

The portrait of Lenoir discussed in Interlude I could just as easily be read in light of its veiled references to Freemasonry and the Brotherhood, of which Lenoir was a member. The judicious placement of the compass, a device to circumscribe moral behaviour, amongst the tools of Lenoir's craft; the lush branch of acorns adorning the coin bearing Lenoir's profile, fruit of the symbolic oak; the unconventional portrait-as-tombstone alluding to the Masonic Craft's origins in stone-work and its foundational ties to ancient initiation practices; the monument as *fabrique* and the syncretism of cultural motifs and mythologies it embodied: all could convincingly be interpreted as allusions to Freemasonry and Lenoir's place within the fraternity.

In eighteenth-century Europe, Freemasonry was paradoxically both a popular and discrete association, with corresponding public and private dimensions. A vast and complex organization founded on claims for possessing hidden knowledge and Hermetic wisdom, Freemasonry was also premised on a strict code of conduct, elaborate initiation rituals, and a canon of emblems and allegories referring to the Craft's legendary beginnings in remote Antiquity. Numerous scholars have asserted the primacy of Masonic traditions and beliefs within Enlightenment traditions, suggesting that the intellectual dimension of Masonic doctrines was itself a reflection of philosophical, moral, political, and artistic currents of Enlightenment thinking. Still, until recently, the centrality of Freemasonry to eighteenth-century culture has been much maligned by scholarship, and its true cultural functions have been largely ignored. As one scholar has observed of the importance of the nonsectarian, anti-establishment organization to European (and American) eighteenth-century society,

> Freemasonry had within it a potential of becoming something like a new religion, for it gave a new sense of belonging to men who were

> disillusioned with the Church, with notions of Providence, and with belief in the Supernatural. Freemasonry could offer a philosophy perhaps similar to a natural religion based on observations of the power of Nature, Reason, and Wisdom. Ceremony and Ritual were present in Lodge meetings, and the Craft claimed descent from mysteries older than Christianity, linking the greatness of Ancient Egyptian Civilization with the Temple of Solomon (Wisdom again), and the very beginnings of Time itself.[116]

Unlike its much earlier progenitor Operative Masonry (whose members were necessarily a class of skilled workers engaged in working with stone), the more philosophically-inclined "Speculative" category evolved in eighteenth-century Europe largely as a cultural movement, promoting and disseminating knowledge and ideals of legal, educational, and moral reform. The counter-movement to the foundational Operative organization had emerged in England in 1717 when four lodges coalesced to form the Grand Lodge of London, and in less than a generation the association of "gentleman scholars," composed of "honorary" members who were not – by profession or obligation – connected with building trades, had spread from London to the Continental capitals, notably Paris, Vienna, and Prague, each with their own variants and identities.

The Grand Lodge of France[117] arose as an outgrowth of the Modern Grand Lodge of London when it was established in Paris in 1725,[118] developing its own modified organizational and ritualistic structure. Insofar as it provided a forum for sharing emergent theories pertaining to science, philosophy, political thought, literature, ethics, and morality, the Masonic lodge was the epitome of the Enlightenment institution, and through their membership Masons often actively worked to improve educational and legal systems within their city and nation. Masonic teachings were so synchronized with the profusion of Enlightenment doctrines and beliefs then circulating in Europe, that Paris in the last quarter of the eighteenth century, with its excess of 90 Lodges and some 8,500

[116] James Stevens Curl, *The Art and Architecture of Freemasonry* (Woodstock and New York: The Overlook Press, 2002), 26.
[117] According to Masonic historian William Weisberger, there is much debate amongst scholars regarding the origins and activities of this Lodge.
[118] This Lodge was preceded by France's first Masonic Lodge, in Mons, established in 1721.

members,[119] has been described by the Masonic scholar William Weisberger as a hub of Masonic and Enlightenment activity.[120]

Membership to many of Paris's numerous chapters was regarded as influential, and Masonic intellectuals, of which there were many, actively used lodges to popularize their erudite views. Weisberger has observed that in the late eighteenth century, there were more Masonic artists and sculptors from Paris than in any other European city. Membership to Speculative Freemasonry consisted largely of members of the Aristocracy and the middle-class (in Paris they accounted for 50% of the demographic make-up of the Brotherhoods), and included musicians and merchants, writers and intellectuals, architects, philosophers, theorists, Churchmen, and patrons of the arts and sciences as well. Members were likely to belong to other learned societies in addition to the lodge, and cross-over with the more public organizations of the *Académie des Sciences*, the *Académie de Peinture et de Sculpture*, the *Académie des Inscriptions et Belles-Lettres*, and the *Académie Française* was not uncommon.

James Curl has hypothesized that one reason for the growing popularity of Masonic organizations in Europe and America was that they offered something that other organizations, such as formal religion, did not. Beyond the tolerant and stimulating milieu of the Lodge there lay an extensive network that in some way filled a void, or at least, accounted for changing religious and political sensibilities by its espousal of foundational myths and universal and eternal Truths. These Truths, with their links to esoteric knowledge and lost mystery cults, produced a social and cultural longing for the recovery of the rites and rituals of forgotten civilizations, especially amidst the profound socio-political changes brought about by French Revolutionaries. As Curl noted, the popularity of Masonic Lodges at this time demonstrates that there was a need for mystery and belief as a genuine alternative to Enlightenment's espousal of Science, Progress, and Reason. It was perceived that "lost" traditions were at least partially reenacted in the

[119] Anthony Vidler provides an excellent overview of the Masonic scene in Paris in the eighteenth century. Please see Vidler, "The Architecture of the Lodges; Ritual Form and Associational Life in the Late Enlightenment," *Oppositions 5* (Summer 1976): 75-97.

[120] R. William Weisberger, *Speculative Freemasonry and the Enlightenment: A Study of the Craft in London, Paris, Prague, and Vienna* (Boulder, CO: East European Monographs, 1993). See also Alain Le Bihan, *Francs-Maçons parisiens du Grand Orient de France* (Fin du XVIII^{e} siècle), (Paris: Bibliothèque nationale, 1966) and the same author's *Loges et chapitres de la Grande Loge et du Grand Orient de France* (2^{e} moitié du XVIII^{e} siècle), (Paris: Bibliothèque nationale, 1967).

elaborate ritual processes of Masonic initiation ceremonies, and the granting of Degrees by which members advanced within the Masonic organization.

Indeed, myth lay at the heart of Speculative Masonry's intricate teaching and belief system, and a tendency toward syncretism, or the coalescence and blending of legends, cults, and ideas, produced overlapping themes and a vast iconography of rich allegorical symbolism which permeated Masonic endeavours. Masonic iconography and allusion was, without doubt, more familiar to eighteenth-century society than the twenty-first-century public might readily concede, for this iconography appeared not just in the design of Lodges, but equally in many popular literary, musical, and artistic oeuvres of the era, of which Mozart's opera, *Die Zauberflöte*, and Didérot and d'Alembert's *Encyclopédie*, are significant examples. Much of the iconography circulating in the eighteenth-century harkened back to Curl's "recovery" hypothesis to infuse contemporary projects with a broad vocabulary of ancient motifs: "the Garden of Eden, the Temple of Solomon, the Wonders of the Ancient World, the glories of Greek and Roman Architecture, and the stories of Lost Continents and Lost Tribes," he wrote, "are potent examples of that sense of loss, and a desire to rediscover something infinitely precious, essential, uplifting, noble, and powerful. The realms of magic, of divine authority, of mystery, and of super-creativity are never far away."[121]

The social and cultural functions of Freemasonry provided the foundational structure to the Brotherhood's convivial gatherings and its ritualistic practices, such that banquets, lectures, and feasts were central events in the Masonic calendar. The predominance of the cultural functions of Masonic rites has led Weisberger to suggest that ritualism was in fact at the core of Speculative Masonry, a concept I shall return to when discussing Lenoir. Rules regarding moral conduct and ethical behaviour were, by and large, founded on Christian doctrines of Brotherhood, justice, charity and virtue. Individual Parisian lodges were known to have different procedures and teachings, owing to different interpretations of traditional Masonic doctrines, yet the comparison has often been made between the lodge and the *Salon*, in the manner the former exposed members

[121] Curl, *Art and Architecture of Freemasonry*, 18.

to new ideas and concepts of Enlightenment thinking, versed in reason, Nature, natural rights and liberties, and societal improvement.[122]

Thus at the heart of Masonic traditions lay an interest in education and a concern for civic modes of being, and many of the Brotherhood's most prominent members were both professionals and teachers of their craft in the public sphere. In Lenoir's circle alone, Quatremère de Quincy, Vaudoyer, and Brongniart all had known memberships to Masonic lodges, as did the architects Lequeu, Ledoux, and Boullée, whose work was infused with Masonic imagery. The list, at this significant moment in Masonic history, is extensive.

Beyond the "private" side of initiation rites, Freemasonry had a visible public presence in eighteenth-century society, and Freemasons were also known for their sponsorship of a wide array of cultural and charitable endeavours. In Vienna and Prague, these included libraries, *lycées* and *musées* (in the sense of "club"). In France, the cultural endeavours with Masonic ties were equally impressive. The dominant literary undertaking of the century, Didérot and d'Alembert's *Encyclopédie*, was known to have had numerous Masonic ties. Most telling was its frontispiece, designed by Charles-Nicolas Cochin II, bearing explicit Masonic iconography, however many of the *Encyclopédie's* contributors and publishers also had deep Masonic connections. Collectively, these charitable undertakings provide some insight into the role and pervasiveness of Freemasonry in the cultural development of European institutions in the late eighteenth century, as well as the visual codes by which the Brotherhood's key activities pertaining to education and civic comportment were both elaborated and given meaning in the public sphere.

[122] Despite having been shown otherwise, a strong current of conspiracy theory in Masonic historiography has attributed the Masonic support of civil liberties to events that catalyzed the French Revolution.

Masonic Iconography and Design

One of the elements that is most compelling about Freemasonry is the profound nature of its ritualistic component. Masonic rites are realized as a "lived through" experience, to borrow Weisberger's terminology, and as such, an entire system of allegorical emblems and motifs was elaborated to facilitate the spatialization of the ritualistic experience. In the eighteenth century there developed a mnemonics of some of the Craft's most potent and important foundational symbols originating in legends and beliefs, many of which were directly related to the lineage of the Craft itself. These narratives related to the Temple of Solomon and the Isiac mysteries, and their architectonic imagery both permeated Masonic literature and ritual practices, and popularized a syncretism of largely Greco-Roman-Egyptian cult motifs. As Curl has observed, Masonic designs sought to spatialize a memory of the beginnings, thus the Lodge represented a mnemonic of the Temple of the Solomon, while the Masonic floor-drawing, a typical feature of the Lodge, elaborately laid out the ritual route, or "space" of the Lodge, performing, in the words of Vidler, "all the roles of architecture itself."[123]

Masonic iconography not only marked the first attempts at designing a permanent meeting place, or Masonic Lodge, it was also incorporated into the design of many public spaces in late eighteenth-century society as well, such as buildings, gardens, and cemeteries. Central to such designs were the theme of death and the notion of the journey, or path, which was alluded to both metaphorically and spatially. European gardens of allusion, with their range of experiential qualities, were one such manifestation, of which several notable examples exist. In the Elysium garden at Maupertuis, whose château and *fabriques* were (re)designed in the 1780s by Ledoux and Brongniart respectively, Marquis de Montesquiou held Masonic meetings. Louis Carrogis, known as Carmontelle, designed an emblematic Geometric Garden for his long-time patron, the Grand Master of French Freemasons Duc de Chartres, on his estate at Monceau. Carmontelle began the designs for what was one of Paris's first landscaped parks in 1773, and completed the project in 1778.[124] A compelling argument has been put forward by David Hays that Monceau contained emblematic Masonic content, and was used for Masonic meetings. Images of the garden were circulated in at least two

[123] Vidler, "The Architecture of the Lodges," 81.
[124] An excellent account of the Masonic garden is given by David Hays, "Carmontelle's Design for the Jardin de Monceau: a Freemasonic Garden in Late Eighteenth-Century France," *Eighteenth-Century Studies* Vol. 34, No. 4 (Summer 1999): 446-462.

publications in the late eighteenth century, Carmontelle's own, *Jardin de Monceau* (1779), and Georges-Louis Le Rouge's *Jardins anglo-chinois à la mode* (1776), making the imagery accessible and well-known to garden enthusiasts.

Other contemporary French gardens purporting to contain Masonic-inspired allegorical elements include the curious Désert de Retz, near Marly, designed in the 1770s by its wealthy owner and friend of the Duc de Chartres, François Racine de Monville;[125] Ermenonville, Morfontaine, Méréville, and Franconville-la-Garenne. In addition to their Masonic ties, these parks drew their initial formal inspiration from English, mid-century innovations in landscape design and the irregular garden, and were considered to have educational and associational import. Within these sites, concepts of the route or path (the *parcours*), the monument and the tomb, the mythological Elysian field, and an entire range of Egyptian funerary motifs, were explored and realized for the first time in English, French, and German garden design.[126]

The Masonic idea of incorporating the garden into the setting for a philosophical or metaphorical journey may have derived from the same sensibility that Vidler theorized when he described the shift toward the real in the Brotherhood's initiatory practices. It is worth quoting at length Vidler's comments on this subject

> In the various occultist and mystical lodges built in the period of masonic "disintegration" between 1780 and the Revolution, the spatial and social order of the early lodges – with all-embracing qualities such as the floor-drawing which *signified* a route leading to the space of brotherhood, or the banqueting room equipped with the horseshoe-shaped table – was overlaid and transformed by this increasing stress on the initiatory rites and their real, physically built, routes. And these routes, even as those traversed by the legendary initiates, were no longer confined to the space

[125] Please see Magnus Olausson's article, "Freemasonry, Occultism and the Picturesque Garden Towards the End of the Eighteenth Century," *Art History* Vol. 8, No. 4 (December 1985): 413-433.

[126] As Olausson argued, Masonic gardens existed outside of France as well. Louisenlund, in Schleswig, German, was designed for Landgrave Charles of Hesse-Cassel in the 1770s; the three-storey neo-Gothic Tower in the English-style garden of the palace of Drottningholm, Sweden, designed for King Gustavus III, brother-in-law to Hesse-Cassel, by architect Louis Jean Desprez in the 1790s; and the masonic cross on the island of Skattholmen, opposite the royal palace of Rosersberg, for Duke Charles, in the 1780s, are notable examples. In her article, "Freemasonic Symbolism and Georgian Gardens," Patrizia Granziera has suggested that Lord Burlington's villa and garden at Chiswick (1726-29), Nicholas Hawksmoor's and John Vanbrugh's designs at Castle Howard, among many other examples, manifested Masonic content. http://www.esoteric.msu.edu/VolumeV/Freemasonill.html Accessed November 4, 2006.

> of the lodge building itself, but extended out into the landscape. For a second and equally powerful vision of initiatory space had asserted itself in the late seventies as the corollary to the Egyptian temple – that of the jardin-anglais – allegorically representing the landscape of the Elysian fields.[127]

This move toward the real, physical route was a significant departure in Masonic design practices, which clearly had important implications in the practice and theory of landscape design just as the discipline was emerging from strong Classical traditions (particularly in France) to define modern, new gardening principles. That the Masonic metaphorical pilgrimage towards education and enlightenment that was central to the Brotherhood's initiation rites found expression in the late eighteenth-century garden and was spatialized to this effect implied a transcendence of traditional private Masonic practices into the public sphere. Establishing just what was understood by the non-initiated public, or what was meant to be understood by this public when exposed to such spaces, is perhaps not as crucial as determining how the foundational metaphors of Masonic beliefs, of which the Great Architect was one, began to permeate urban projects at this time.

The use of Egyptian imagery, for example, which characterized much of the formal vocabulary of French Neo-Classical architectural designs, equally bore strong Masonic allusions. Pyramids, obelisks, sphinxes, and the massive bold forms of ancient Egyptian architecture at times were invoked for reasons other than the Egyptomania craze that surfaced as a result of contemporary political phenomena, notably Napoleon's turn-of-the-century Egyptian campaigns of 1798-1801 or the discovery of the Rosetta Stone by French soldiers in 1799. Freemasons were also exploring alternative origins of Freemasonry to the Ancient Biblical lineage that traditional Masonic scholarship had previously claimed, and these origins lay in Egypt and the sun-cult of Isis. According to this understanding, the role of light in initiatory enactments of rebirth or visionary enlightenment, such as evoking the celebrant's path from darkness to light, symbolically harkened back to the Brotherhood's own foundational myths.

[127] Vidler, "Architecture of the Lodges," 89. Italics Vidler's own.

History, Distance, and Time in Masonic Context

In his preface to Pierre Chevallier's history of the Masonic lodge, *Saint Jean d'Écosse du Contrat Social*, Roger Dachez observed the flip side of this process of "realization" that Vidler characterized so well, in the collapsing or "telescoping" of time that occurred in Masonic traditions and which was innate to the very structure of the Order. Dachez remarked that

> Pour une société comme la franc-maçonnerie, dont la particularité est de se dire "traditionnelle", c'est-à-dire non point figée mais liée par la transmission de savoirs et de valeurs à ses fondateurs et à leurs épigones, cette approche revêt une importance plus grande encore qu'en tout autre domaine de l'histoire des institutions et des hommes. Il y a dans la structure même d'une loge maçonnique, depuis bientôt trois siècles, une volonté d'abolir symboliquement la durée et l'espace, comme pour atteindre à un temps et un lieu originels. Quel plus bel instrument que l'histoire "authentique" pour y parvenir? La vivante restitution d'un passé et d'un ailleurs dès lors rétablis montre à quel point cette étude, pour le franc-maçon qui n'est pas lui-même historien, est bien plus qu'un divertissement de dilettante ou une curiosité d'érudit: à bien y réfléchir, c'est presque une méthode initiatique.[128]

By articulating this condition of the "authentic past," Dachez has, in addition to Vidler, touched upon another significant feature of Masonic design: the desire to overcome distance and time. Inside the lodge, this was achieved by the metaphorical apparatus of the initiation rite. Outside of the lodge, the transmission of Masonic allegory was mediated by other factors. In his capacity as Freemason and pedagogue, artist and curator, Lenoir experimented with both notions of the physical route and the authentic past in the work he engaged in at the Musée. The narrative symbolism of Lenoir's catalogue histories and his scenographic realizations, his Elysium garden and his creation of *fabriques*: these were all endeavours that clearly demonstrate that Freemasonry had more than a passing influence on Lenoir. In the following section, I will examine Lenoir's status and contributions as a Freemason, before considering the influence of

[128] Pierre Chevallier, *Histoire de Saint Jean d'Écosse du Contrat Social, Mère Loge Écossaise de France à l'orient de Paris, 1776-1791* (Val d'Oise, France: Éditions Ivoire-Clair, 2002), 7-8.

Masonic symbolism and initiation rituals on Lenoir's concept of history and its representation in the halls at the Musée des Monuments français.

II. Lenoir and La Franche-Maçonnerie rendue à sa véritable origine (1814)

St.-Jean d'Écosse du Contrat Social, Mère Loge Écossaise

Very little is known of Lenoir's Masonic activities and affiliations, beyond that which his publication, *La Franche-Maçonnerie rendue à sa véritable origine, ou, L'antiquité de la franche-maçonnerie prouvée par l'explication des mystères anciens et modernes*, of 1814, tells us. For obvious reasons Lenoir chose not to include mention of his involvement in the Brotherhood amidst the long list of professional memberships that graced the title pages of his works relating to the Musée des Monuments français and his other professional publications. On the title page of volume V of his catalogue *Musée des Monuments français*, published in 1806, Lenoir first recorded his membership to the *Académie celtique de France*, and the *Académie des Sciences, Lettres et Arts de Nancy*; in previous volumes he had merely noted his position as founder and administrator of the museum. It would seem likely, then, that the inclusion of this information was meant to indicate Lenoir's recent enrolment within these societies. Indeed, Lenoir was one of the original members of the *Académie Celtique*, co-founded in March 1804 by Jacques Cambry (its first president), Jacques Antoine Dulaure, and Jacques Le Brigant. Lenoir was clearly an active member, composing not only the *Académie*'s formal dedication to Empress Joséphine, but contributing as one of several authors to its 1810 publication, *Mémoires de l'Académie Celtique ou Mémoires d'antiquités Celtiques, Gauloises et Françaises*.[129] The absence of any reference to

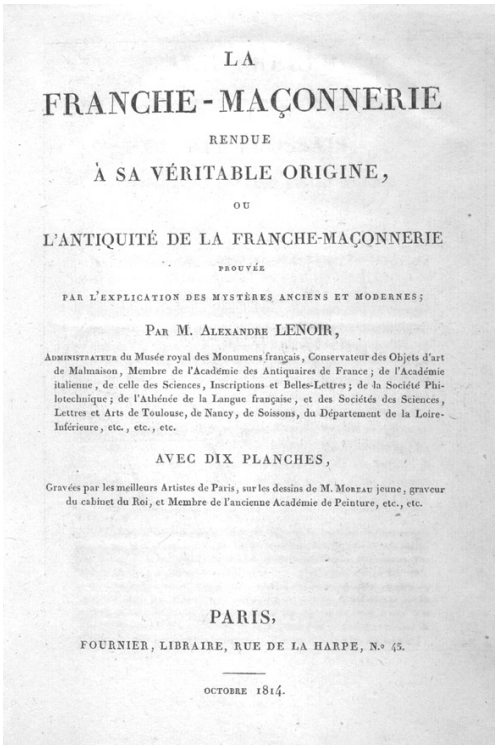
LA
FRANCHE-MAÇONNERIE
RENDUE
À SA VÉRITABLE ORIGINE,
OU
L'ANTIQUITÉ DE LA FRANCHE-MAÇONNERIE
PROUVÉE
PAR L'EXPLICATION DES MYSTÈRES ANCIENS ET MODERNES;
PAR M. ALEXANDRE LENOIR,
ADMINISTRATEUR du Musée royal des Monumens français, Conservateur des Objets d'art de Malmaison, Membre de l'Académie des Antiquaires de France; de l'Académie italienne, de celle des Sciences, Inscriptions et Belles-Lettres; de la Société Philotechnique; de l'Athénée de la Langue française, et des Sociétés des Sciences, Lettres et Arts de Toulouse, de Nancy, de Soissons, du Département de la Loire-Inférieure, etc., etc., etc.
AVEC DIX PLANCHES,
Gravées par les meilleurs Artistes de Paris, sur les dessins de M. MORIAU jeune, graveur du cabinet du Roi, et Membre de l'ancienne Académie de Peinture, etc., etc.
PARIS,
FOURNIER, LIBRAIRE, RUE DE LA HARPE, N.° 45.
OCTOBRE 1814.

Figure 7. Title page, *La Franche-Maçonnerie*, 1814

[129] This dedication summarized the need for France to develop its own national "antiquity": "le désir de retrouver et de réunir les titres de gloire légués à leurs descendants par les Celtes, les Gaulois et les Francs a fait naître l'Académie Celtique. Un sentiment tout à la fois aussi noble et national a dû se manifester à une époque où les Français se montraient si dignes de leurs ancêtres." From Anne-Marie Thiesse, "La modernisation du passé au XIX^{e} siècle" (Lecture, University of Texas, Austin, 29 October, 2005). http://www.utexas.edu/cola/insts/france-ut/archives/Fall2005/thiesse.pdf. Accessed

freemasonry in this volume, however, should in no way suggest that Lenoir was not already involved in the Brotherhood at this time.

Lenoir's membership and participation in the *Académie Celtique* are significant, and on the surface, might even seem contradictory to the philosophy and universalizing tendencies of Speculative Masonry. The *Académie Celtique* was founded in the very moment that France was resurrecting and constructing its own national past as an alternative to the Greco-Roman lineage that dominated most art and architectural circles. The *Académie's* deliberate identification of a French *patrimoine* or heritage rooted this *patrimoine* in the recovery of language, rituals, and customs of the Celtic-Gallic lineage specific to the French nation, and produced some of the first ethnographic studies in France. However it is precisely this project for recovery with its antiquarian tendencies that makes Lenoir's activities at the *Académie*, and as a Freemason, complimentary.

It is also worth noting that masonic scholarship is quick to correct the common misconception that the Brotherhood was a highly secretive one. It was, rather, discrete. Having said this, Lenoir's connection with the Freemasons was quite explicit, owing to his publication, *La Franche-Maçonnerie*. If claims that he was a member of the prestigious *Loge Saint Jean d'Écosse du Contrat Social* are correct, it also seems clear that Lenoir had an affiliation with the higher degree-granting *Souverain Chapitre Métropolitain du Rit Écossais*, for whom he delivered a series of lectures in 1812, and which resulted in his later publication on the origins of Freemasonry in 1814.

Lenoir's Masonic activities have in fact been the subject of speculation amongst several scholars. In *Musée, Nation, Patrimoine, 1789-1815*, Dominique Poulot claimed that Lenoir was undoubtedly a member of the *Loge Saint-Jean d'Écosse du Contrat Social*.[130] For reference, Poulot cited renown Masonic scholar Alain Le Bihan, in whose 1966 publication it was suggested that Lenoir's membership within the Scottish Rite likely began under the Empire (1804-1814), that is, once Freemasonry had been revived in France from its period of dormancy during the Revolution.[131] Yet Le Bihan only tentatively placed Lenoir as a member of *Saint-Jean d'Écosse du Contrat Social*, citing

December 15, 2006.
[130] Poulot, *Musée*, 323.
[131] Alain Le Bihan, *Francs-maçons parisiens*, 313.

the earlier work of Gustave Bord as his source, and he did not provide the specific years of Lenoir's affiliation with the lodge. Bord himself was more committal in his research on Lenoir, citing him as one of 167 members of the Lodge between 1773 and 1791.[132]

Similarly, Pierre Chevallier, who has written extensively on the history of modern French Freemasonry and whose history of the *Saint Jean d'Écosse du Contrat Social* (published posthumously) is the most extensive history of the lodge to date, has argued that Lenoir was likely a member of the lodge before 1789. He first made this observation in his 1974 publication, *Histoire de la Franc-maçonnerie française*,[133] and later included Lenoir's name in an index of members related to his *Histoire de Saint Jean d'Écosse du Contrat Social Mère Loge Écossaise de France (1776-1791)*, published in 2002. The updated index of 600 names was compiled from the *Grand Register of the Mère Loge*, which recorded the list of its initiates and affiliates from 1775 to 1789 and which passed from the hands of Claude-Antoine Thory, curator-for-life of the *Mère Loge* seals and archives, indirectly to the collection of Pierre Chevallier in 1976.

Both Bord's and Chevallier's findings support my own theory that Lenoir was not only initiated into the Brotherhood prior to 1804/5 (which, by deduction, implies that he joined the Freemasons some time in the 1780s or 1790s before the dormancy of the Masonic Lodges during the Revolution), but that he was also quite possibly a member of significant standing, and likely well advanced in the higher Masonic degrees, when he delivered his lectures to the members of the *Souverain Chapitre Métropolitain du Rit Écossais* in 1812. Though it seems unlikely that Lenoir was ever a prominent member of the *Contrat Social* before its definitive closure in July 1791, it is significant that Chevallier invoked Lenoir's name in particular in relation to a passage he penned on the emerging Egyptomania trend of the Empire. Mixing his metaphors, Chevallier went so far as to claim that Lenoir was the "Coryphaeus" – or chorus leader – of this cult. What is less apparent, however, is the genealogy of Lenoir's membership in Masonic lodges following his initial affiliation with the *Contrat Social*. The final meeting of the *Contrat Social*, which was also the Mother Lodge of the Scottish Rite in Paris, occurred on July 31, 1791. When, in 1801, the Mother Lodge was revived, it became the *Mère-Loge du*

[132] Gustave Bord, *La Franc-Maçonnerie en France des origines à 1815. Tome 1: Les ouvriers de l'idée révolutionnaire (1688-1771)*, (Paris: Nouvelle Librairie Nationale, 1908), 380.
[133] Pierre Chevallier, *Histoire de la Franc-Maçonnerie française. Tome II: La Maçonnerie: Missionnaire du libéralisme (1800-1877),* (Paris: Fayard, 1974), 92.

Régime Écossais Philosophique en France. The *Contrat Social*, whose members had all dispersed throughout the Revolution, was replaced by the *Loge Saint-Alexandre d'Écosse*. There is no mention of Lenoir having changed Lodge affiliations (which in itself was not an uncommon practice in Masonic circles), although some believe that Lenoir became a member of this successor lodge.

Lenoir and the Significance of the Scottish Rite

It is entirely significant that Lenoir chose to pursue the obedience of the Scottish Rite, rather than that of the French Rite under the rivaling Grand Orient, when he joined the Brotherhood. Scottish Rite Masonry originated in Paris in the early 1740s, a generation after Speculative Masonry first made its appearance in the French capital and provinces in the 1720s. The principles of the Scottish Rite derived from the writings of the Scottish Presbyterian Andrew Michael Ramsay, originator of the Templar theory in Masonic history and author of *The Philosophical Principles of Natural and Revealed Religion. Unfolded in A Geometrical Order* (1751).

The Scottish Rite was, in many ways, viewed as a more "authentic" derivation of Operative Masonry than the French obedience of the Grand Orient. Under the Scottish Rite,[134] the three Speculative Degrees constitutive of the traditional Craft, or Blue Lodge (Entered Apprentice; Fellowcraft; Master Mason), evolved into an elaborate system of 33 degrees: those of the Craft Lodge conferred under the authority of the Grand Lodge or Grand Orient, and an additional 30 degrees conferred by the Scottish Rite. In content, the Scottish Rite built upon the ethical teachings and practices of the Blue Lodge, with one crucial difference. With its large number of additional degrees of instruction, the very premise of the Scottish Rite challenged the egalitarian basis of the traditional order, which believed there to be no degree higher than that of Master Mason. Attempting reconciliation, the Scottish Rite (whose membership was limited to those having achieved the Master Mason degree of the Blue Lodge) defended its members as neither of higher nor more privileged rank than their brethren in other lodges – they had merely made a lateral move in Masonic education.

[134] Masonic rites are a series of progressive degrees that are conferred by Lodges or Masonic bodies which operate under a higher authority, such as the Mother Lodge (Mère Loge).

It is worth emphasizing the central role of education that the pursuit of higher degrees reinforced in the Scottish Rite tradition. The fundamental aims of the Scottish Rite were to provide further exposure to the moral, ethical, and philosophical principles of Freemasonry, while maintaining the Craft's tradition for dramatic presentations of rites and degrees through an initiatory process based on ritual, allegory, and symbolism. As additional degrees to the basic Speculative three, the system of offices conferred by the Scottish Rite functioned strictly within the Scottish Rite order, and different Masonic jurisdictions were at odds as to their acceptance of this appendant body as a legitimate development of Freemasonry. The Scottish Rite was governed by its own Supreme Council, was sovereign unto itself, and membership required belief in the Supreme Being.

In France, the Lodges that constituted the Scottish Rite and practiced the High Degrees congregated under the *Mère Loge du Rit Écossais Philosophique*. In its capacity as a Mother Lodge, *Saint-Jean d'Écosse du Contrat Social* had the authority to grant Scottish Rite status to other Lodges. *Saint-Jean d'Écosse* had in fact a rather complicated history. In March 1766, a small lodge by the name of St. Lazare was founded by Lazare-Philibert Bruneteau. Owing to conflicts within the Brotherhood, Bruneteau was suspended from the lodge and St. Lazare was subsequently renamed and re-structured as *l'Equité* in 1775. Enter the figure of Laurent-Jean-Antoine Deleutre in the winter-spring of 1776, who was likely responsible for importing the Scottish Rite tradition from Avignon to Paris through his affiliation with *Saint Jean d'Écosse de la Vertu persécutée* in Avignon, itself a "daughter" lodge of the *Mère Loge* in Marseilles. Le Bihan suggests that Deleutre, whose ambition it was to create a "*Mère Loge Écossaise de France*" and not specifically a "*Saint Jean d'Écosse*," met a certain Marquis de La Salle while visiting Paris, and their discussions ultimately led to the transformation of the *Saint-Jean d'Écosse de la Vertu Persécutée* into the *Contrat Social* in 1776, thereby becoming a lodge of the Scottish Rite, and its eventual merger with the former *St. Lazare-l'Équité*, becoming *Saint Jean d'Écosse du Contrat Social, Mère Loge Écossaise*.[135] The pursuit of "high degrees" and a certain fascination with hermetic knowledge and alchemy distinguished the Scottish Rite from the lodges of the nation's other obedience, the Grand Orient. *Saint-Jean*

[135] The Lodge's simultaneous formation as a Mother Lodge was due to Article 18 of Title 1 of *Règlements Généraux de la Maçonnerie*, which stipulated that the first *Saint Jean d'Écosse* lodge to be established in Paris would become the Mother Lodge for all "Scottish" lodges located in that jurisdiction. Please see the commentaries by Alain Le Bihan, in Pierre Chevallier's *Histoire de Saint Jean d'Écosse du Contrat Social*, 59.

d'Écosse du Contrat Social came into almost immediate conflict with the Grand Orient over its designation as a Mother Lodge of the Scottish Rite, a conflict which lasted several decades and which never had more than temporary resolution.[136]

The fact that the Paris-based *Saint-Jean d'Écosse du Contrat Social* had adopted the Scottish Rite had made of it a Mère Loge, thereby necessitating a higher body to oversee its activities. This higher body was the *Souverain Chapitre de la Mère Loge Écossaise*, or *Souverain Chapitre Métropolitain*,[137] also founded in 1776. Though the term "chapter" in Masonic terminology typically refers to the Masonic lodge, it also refers more specifically to lodges practicing higher degrees, such as those of the Scottish Rite. According to Ligou's definition of "chapter" in the *Dictionnaire de la Franc-Maçonnerie*, "les loges des trois Premiers Grades étudieraient ce qui se rapporte aux petits mystères de la tradition initiatique, les Ateliers de perfection, ou Ateliers supérieurs consacrant leurs travaux aux Grands mystères."[138] For its duties, rules, regulations, and obligations, the chapter closely followed constitutions transmitted from the Mother Lodge of Marseilles to Avignon to Paris, most notably the *Status Généraux de la maçonnerie* and the *Règlements Généraux des Chapitres Écossais*, which outlined, among other things, rituals and their protocol.

Very little has come to light regarding Lenoir's involvement at the *Contrat Social*, nor his lectures at the *Souverain Chapitre Métropolitain*. As previously mentioned, we have yet to determine the exact year of his initiation into the Lodge, and the nature of his involvement there (specifically with respect to social projects and the more "public" side of the Brotherhood). In what context did Lenoir deliver his lectures at the *Souverain Chapitre Métropolitain* in 1812? Were they composed and presented as part of a higher degree that Lenoir was pursuing? In light of these lingering questions and Lenoir's choice for practicing within the Scottish Rite, it is worth emphasizing what precisely was

[136] Chevallier wrote that the *Contrat Social* constantly refused to acknowledge the Grand Orient and that it acted as an authentic Mother Lodge, constituting several lodges in the Scottish Rite in the South-East of the kingdom, abroad, and in the French colonies in the Americas. Whether the conflict stemmed from the Scottish Rite's granting of high degrees, the legitimacy of the rivaling Scottish Rite, or whether it was merely a question of overshadowing the Grand Orient's authority as Le Bihan has suggested, is speculative. Relations between the Scottish Rite and the Grand Orient were at best tenuous, both pre-Revolution and during the Empire. See Chevallier, *Histoire de Saint Jean*, 168.

[137] And above it, the *Académie philosophique*. The *Souverain Chapitre Métropolitain du Rit Écossais* is not to be confused with the similarly-named, *Souverain Chapitre Métropolitain* created by the Grand Orient to grant higher degrees, in February 1788.

[138] Daniel Ligou, ed. *Dictionnaire universel de la Franc-Maçonnerie* (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1987), 215-216.

distinctive about this branch of Freemasonry: its emphasis on unity and harmony, and its commitment to moral perfection and continued education by virtue of the Rite's system of higher degrees. The very objective of the Scottish Chapters, in the words of Le Bihan, was to prepare Master Masons for the "Grand Écossais" Degree, "de faire des maçons d'élite qui comprendraient que leur perfectionnement moral, leur connaissance, leur activité auraient un rôle pour leur propre personne et pour l'Ordre entier."[139] Yet in the short history of the *Contrat Social* (1776-1791), in fact very few high degrees were actually issued. Of the 550 members either initiated to or affiliated with the Mother Lodge, only 12 Brothers earned higher philosophical degrees. Note also that, under the Empire, the political orientations of Freemasonry were often subject to wild conspiracy theories. Worse still, the Scottish Rite was viewed with suspicion even by other members of the Order.

Many Masons were in fact moderates: they were Royalists and Constitutional monarchists, philosophically connected to the "bourgeoisie voltairienne libérale" (to borrow from Chevallier) in their quest to replace Catholicism with a rational and natural religion. Napoleon, who did not have great esteem for the Freemasons, nevertheless tolerated the Order, which, by 1802, had 27 newly "awakened" lodges in Paris alone, according to the Grand-Orient, while another 607 remained dormant in France. Despite legends to the contrary, Napoleon was not a member of the "tas d'imbéciles,"[140] as he is known to have called the Freemasons, but he was surrounded by people who were. In 1804 Napoleon named his older brother, Joseph Napoleon Bonaparte, to the position of Grand Master of the Grand Orient de France, and his wife Joséphine was known to have participated in lodge gatherings, even those of the Scottish Rite.[141] For these reasons and others, it was entirely significant that Napoleon chose not to suppress Masonic activity outright during the Consulat and the Empire, preferring instead to keep the Order in check by placing it under police surveillance (whose staff were themselves members of the Brotherhood) and severely limiting their intellectual freedom, which was perhaps worse.

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[139] Chevallier, *Histoire de Saint Jean*, 184.
[140] Chevallier, *Histoire de la Franc-Maçonnerie française, Tome II,* 17.
[141] A *Loge Impératrice Joséphine* was even planned under the Scottish Rite. Please see Chevallier, *Histoire de la Franc-Maçonnerie française, Tome II,* 16. Joséphine did attend a meeting at a *loge d'adoption* in Strasbourg in September 1805, at the visiting *Loge des Francs-Chevaliers de Paris.*

Significantly, Chevallier has suggested that Masonic activity under the Empire was necessarily restricted and conformist. The principal activities of the Masons, after that of recruitment, consisted of charitable works and hosting banquets, which were nevertheless often solemn and theatrical affairs, heavily guised in Classical and Egyptian mythologies. If Masonic activities became less oriented towards philosophy at this time, it was a question of sheer survival in the climate set by Napoleon. In the words of Chevallier

> Il fallait bien se dédommager, puisque l'expression libre de la pensée était sévèrement contrôlée et qu'il eût été de la première imprudence de la part des frères de paraître en désaccord avec les thèmes officiels. Les cérémonies brillantes et mondaines masquent le vide intérieur d'un ordre qui offre une façade resplendissante, un vernis qui frappe la vue, mais rien de plus. Les cérémonies maçonniques à Paris sont du même ordre que celles de la cour impériale. On y parade dans le luxe; peut-être s'y ennuyait-on moins qu'à la cour en présence de l'Empereur, parce que sa présence ne glaçait pas. Ce n'est en somme rien d'autre que de la représentation.[142]

And later,

> Le destin de la Maçonnerie pendant la période consulaire et impériale, ainsi qu'on a pu s'en rendre compte, a revêtu deux aspects principaux. Le moins intéressant, le moins noble, le moins utile, parce que tout de parade, de pompe, de représentation et, le plus souvent, parfaitement vide, c'est celui que l'Ordre a donné sur les scènes de théâtre que furent les Loges de la capitale et des grande villes de l'Empire…[143]

With such charges of vacuity and frivolity, it is difficult not to consider how Freemasons would have been forced to pursue their activities in alternative ways – not in the tradition of their "discrete" meetings, but more daring still, overtly in the public eye. Chevallier's stark comments about the "void" in Masonic practices under the Empire oddly recall an observation Anthony Vidler made of Lenoir's scenographic interventions at the Musée

[142] Chevallier, *Histoire de la Franc-Maçonnerie française, Tome II,* 90.
[143] Ibid., 98.

des Monuments français, when he likened the historical narrative of the museum to a "line of movement (that) circulated endlessly about an empty centre."[144] Contemporary cultural projects in which Brothers were involved presented Freemasons with the opportunity to address certain masonic themes and to bring foundational masonic symbolism and ritual into the public sphere. It has been said that Mozart composed his opera *Die Zauberfloete* as a form of defense and apologia of Freemasonry. I would suggest that Lenoir was heavily influenced by Masonic narrative, allegory, and symbolism in his own scenographic work at the Musée des Monuments français.

Lenoir's Lectures at the Souverain Chapitre Métropolitain du Rit Écossais

Thus we have sound evidence that Lenoir was associated with at least two factions of Freemasonry and more specifically, the obedience of the Scottish Rite. Both affiliations are important for different reasons: *St.-Jean d'Écosse du Contrat Social* for its charitable activities and its active membership (of which Brongniart, Beauvallet, and Moreau were but three members with whom Lenoir would either intellectually or professionally have crossed paths), and the *Souverain Chapitre Métropolitain* for its system of high degrees, of which the theatricality of their ritualistic enactments probably had an important influence on Lenoir.

After the values of fraternity and pedagogy, themselves based on moral and virtuous teachings which the Scottish Rite emphasized, the role of ritual was also an important element of the obedience. The consecration of the Mother Lodge's principal temple in Paris, l'Hôtel de Bullion, in December 1779, is known to have been a particularly grand affair – where symbolism and allegory were central motifs – perhaps the most elaborate in the lodge's history. The climate in the lodge was intellectual: members of the Mother Lodge conducted research on a range of related subjects in which emblems and their iconography, astrology, and the natural kingdoms all intersected. This research was presented at the *Souverain Chapitre Métropolitain*, and undoubtedly had a direct rapport on the higher degrees and their rituals. Several Brothers, such as Antoine Court de Gébelin (*Histoire naturelle de la parole,* 1776; *Monde primitif, analysé et comparé avec le monde moderne*, 1773-1778), and Charles-François Dupuis (*Origine de tous les cultes,*

[144] Anthony Vidler, *The Writing of the Walls: Architectural Theory in the Late Enlightenment* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton Architectural Press, 1987), 173.

1773), published advanced studies of their investigations and thus their ideas circulated fluidly.

Lenoir's own publication began as a series of lectures at the *Souverain Chapitre Métropolitain du Rit Écossais* in 1812 and had as their basis the study of ancient religions and primitive mythologies. These lectures were in fact delivered within the context of an ancient Masonic practice known as the *convent philosophique*, from the Latin term *conventus*, meaning assembly, or more commonly, congress. In the tradition of the meetings of the Philosophers in Antiquity, or the Hiérophantes in Egypt, or the Wisemen in Persia, wrote Lenoir in his Preface to *La Franche-Maçonnerie rendue à sa véritable origine*, the philosophical congress permitted learned Masons to discuss all that was necessary to further the pursuit of enlightenment and the good of the Order. The congress was, more specifically, a gathering of Masons notwithstanding their chosen rite of obedience, who had both earned high degrees and distinguished themselves by their philanthropic or scientific work. A footnote in the dedication of Lenoir's *Franche-Maçonnerie* claimed that the tradition of the *convent philosophique* was "renewed" under Antoine Court de Gébelin, who had chaired an assembly of the *Souverain Chapitre Métropolitain du Rit Écossais* on 25 December, 1777, when he delivered what was the first of seven meetings on the subject of allegory in Masonic degrees.[145] Gébelin had been initiated into the *Loge des Amis réunis* in 1771, and later became Secretary of the prominent *Loge des Neuf Soeurs*, and became famous for his theories on the Tarot as allegories of esoteric wisdom.[146] The convent at the *Souverain Chapitre métropolitain* assembled ten times from 1777 until 1789, before being interrupted by the Revolution.[147] After Gébelin, Lenoir revived the assemblies a second time, belatedly in 1812, with his own eight-lecture course on the origins of Freemasonry. The significance of the subject on which Lenoir spoke, and his involvement in a forum in which as distinguished a figure as Court de Gébelin had participated, can hardly be missed, nor that it was Lenoir, of all members, who revived the Masonic congress. Following the lull of Masonic activity occasioned by the Revolution, Lenoir's decision to revisit the origins of the Brotherhood,

[145] Court de Gébelin was followed in this capacity by Savalette de Langes. Marquis Charles-Pierre-Paul Savalette de Langes was an officer and a Deputy of the Grand Orient. Please see Le Bihan, *Francs-Maçons parisiens*, 443.
[146] Gébelin's essay on the Tarot is published in volume 8 of his *Monde primitif, analysé et comparé avec le monde moderne* (1773-1778).
[147] The precise years the congress met were 1777, 1778, 1779, 1780, 1782, 1784, 1785, 1786, 1788, and 1789.

if not entirely original in their premise, was nevertheless an important assertion in Masonic scholarship.

It is plausible, as was suggested earlier, that Lenoir delivered these lectures as part of his own "work" toward a higher degree. Lenoir shared a moment of identification with his Masonic brethren in his Preface to *La Franche-Maçonnerie* when he observed that, having been admitted into the instructional secrets of the Scottish Rite,

> c'est avec vous, mes Frères, que je me suis instruit dans les grands mystères de la Franche-Maçonnerie; c'est avec vous que j'ai appris à les connoître et à les approfondir. Loin de partager avec les profanes un sentiment d'ingratitude que tout initié désapprouve, j'ai dû consacrer à mes supérieurs, le fruit de mes méditations, le résultat de mes pensées et l'ensemble de mes recherches, sur ce qui a fait naître la Franche-Maçonnerie, ainsi que les rapports qu'elle présente dans ses principes, avec la doctrine philosophique que l'on enseignoit dans les mystères d'Isis et de Cérès.[148]

Lenoir's "new" explanation of Freemasonry may have been none other than the first rite of passage for the Master Mason seeking a higher degree, for, in addition to "sharing" his finding with his superiors, as he claimed to be doing, he further alluded to the channels of this wisdom: "…vous savez combien elle est nécessaire aux Néophytes qui se présentent, pour la première fois, devant le tribunal de la sagesse suprême, tenus par nos véritbles maîtres."[149] Furthermore, Lenoir's references to the Supreme tribunal and the Grand Architect of the Universe are specific to the tenets of those practicing the Scottish Rite.

Lenoir's thesis in *La Franche-Maçonnerie rendue à sa véritable origine* was premised upon the concept of cultural synchronicity and universal history. He sought to trace the origins of Freemasonry through a detailed analysis of ancient initiations and mystery rites, notably those of the Egyptian cults related to Isis and Ceres. Lenoir argued that the traditions of the Masons were none other than continuations of those practiced by other

[148] Lenoir, *La Franche-maçonnerie rendue à sa véritable origine, ou l'Antiquité de la franche-maçonnerie prouvée par l'explication des mystères anciens et modernes* (Paris: Fournier, 1814), Preface, n.p.
[149] Ibid., Preface, n.p.

cults in antiquity, and insodoing he endeavoured to legitimize the practices of the Freemasons with the authority of history. The "institutions mystérieuses et secrètes," he wrote of ancient practices, "renouvelées sous une autre forme dans les temps modernes…c'est du moins l'opinion la plus universellement adoptée sur l'origine des assemblées mystérieuses et philantropiques auxqelles on a donné le nom de Franche-Maçonnerie."[150] This assertion refuted traditional scholarship on the origins of the Freemasons, which related the birth of the organization to the construction of the Temple of Solomon, in Biblical time. Significantly, Lenoir brought the origins back even further, aligning them with the Egyptian gods Isis and Ceres. "Pour prouver l'antiquité de la Franche-Maçonnerie, son origine, ses mystères et ses rapports avec les mythologies anciennes," he wrote, je remonterai aux Égyptiens; je développerai les mystères de leur religion, et je ferai connoître leurs principales divinités; car il est convenable de traiter des causes avant de parler des effets."[151]

The initiation rite was thus a central theme of Lenoir's research, and *La Franche-Maçonnerie* was largely an exposé of initiations and sacred allegories of the world's most ancient cultures. By way of explanation, Lenoir described a grand allegorical system whose source was none other than nature itself. From this system, the dual principles of light and dark, good and bad, became the symbolic basis of moral teachings to humanity. According to Lenoir, to adhere to this belief required re-interpretations of the symbols of Antiquity which had been understood over time as historic facts, rather than the sacred allegories that they truly were. "Je prouverai donc dans cet ouvrage," wrote Lenoir, "que les théogonies anciennes doivent le jour aux Égyptiens, qui en étaient les inventeurs; c'est assez dire qu'elles avoient pris naissance dans les mystères sacrés institués par les Mages."[152] The work was a double recovery: Lenoir sought both to unveil a hidden lineage in mythological teachings, while simultaneously restoring to Freemasonry its true dignity.

[150] Ibid., 4.
[151] Ibid., 7.
[152] Ibid., 7.

La Franche-Maçonnerie rendue à sa véritable origine (1814)

Lenoir structured *La Franche-Maçonnerie*[153] according to two principal sections: the first based on history and theory, the second, on practice. In Section I, Lenoir explored the foundations of theogony, the origins and genealogy of the gods, arguing in Chapter 1 that the sun was the oldest deity of the universe. From this basis, Lenoir proceeded to build his argument for a universal understanding of religion, nature, morality, and the Universe, and an overarching system of allegories as this universal religion's legacy. In chapters 2 and 3, Lenoir discussed Egyptian mythology, in particular the mysteries of Isis and Ceres, and the fundamental principles of Indian mythology, respectively. Lenoir devoted Section II to the practices of the Mason, specifically discussing the centrality of initiation rites and the higher degrees in Masonic traditions, by comparing the texts and trials undergone by initiates with those of older cult practices. He provided elaborate descriptions of the three degrees of symbolic freemasonry, and in a final chapter, he discussed the higher degrees *Grand-Élu écossais*, *Chevalier d'Orient,* and *Rose-Croix*.[154]

Figure 8. Frontispiece, *La Franche-Maçonnerie*, 1814

[153] In a footnote on page 220, Lenoir referred the readers of *La Franche-maçonnerie* to the published work *Histoire de la Fondation du Grand-Orient de France*, published in 1812. This text elaborates on the different rituals of Freemasonry, and modern variations in Masonic practices, including the inclusion of women.

[154] It is interesting to note that for general clarification on questions of Freemasonry, Lenoir referred the reader to the following text: *Histoire de la Fondation du Grand-Orient de France*, published in 1812 (Sold at P. Dufart, libraire, quai Voltaire, no.19). No author given.

The illustrations of *La Franche-Maçonnerie* were designed by artist, Academician, and engraver Jean-Michel Moreau, or Moreau le Jeune (1741-1814). Moreau was himself a freemason, and member of the same lodge as Lenoir, *Saint-Jean d'Écosse du Contrat Social*, from 1778-1779.[155] According to Poulot, Moreau's drawings were originally intended to illustrate a work by F.H. Stanislas Delaulnaye, *Histoire générale et particulière des religions et du culte de tous les peuples du monde tant anciens que modernes*, an ambitious undertaking which was to have been published in twelve volumes,[156] however a single, incomplete volume was the only to ever appear – in 1791.[157] Of the ten plates illustrating *Franche-Maçonnerie*, six were devoted to Egyptian divinities, notably Isis and Osiris; two were elaborate comparative iconological tables; one, said to be inspired by Egyptian priest-king Séthos to show synchronicity of ritualistic practices, portrayed an initiation practice under the four elements, demonstrating continuity in ritual practices of the Ancients and the Freemasons; while an elaborate frontispiece served as a visual preface to the work, to paraphrase Lenoir, demonstrating universal syncretism in cult practices and a common origin to world religions.

Lenoir provided an extensive iconographical explanation of this frontispiece in his introduction, describing eight major cultures and their religions, represented emblematically in this image: Egyptian, Persian, Hebrew, Christian, Roman, Greek, Muslim, and the more primitive bull-cult. In this image, a dense weave of figures, monuments, and religious paraphernalia fills foreground and background with an almost impenetrable display of ritualistic practices. Jewish high-priest, Muslim prophet Muhammad and Persian god Mithra reveal the importance of light, scripture, and sacrifice in traditional cult practices, and the whole functioned as an elaborate allegory of human enlightenment. Lenoir named Zoroastre as the inventor of sacred initiation rites, and identified the gods Saturn, Pan, and Jupiter Ammon as alternate personifications of the primordial sun god. By way of Zoroastre, Lenoir sought a universal system by which to explain a common ancestry of religious, metaphysical, and (natural) scientific beliefs.

[155] Alain Le Bihan, *Francs-maçons parisiens*, 366. Le Bihan also stated that Moreau was a member of the *Loge les Neuf Soeurs* in 1778.
[156] Delaulnaye has not been listed as a Freemason by Le Bihan.
[157] For a brief discussion of Delaulnaye and Moreau, see Poulot, *Musée*, 324, especially footnote 1.

Dupuis, Origine de tous les cultes (1795)

Lenoir considered the orders and symbols of Freemasonry "comme un tableau parfait des causes agissantes dans l'Univers, et comme un livre dans lequel on auroit inscrit la morale de tous les peuples."[158] He described Freemasonry as a religion which shared its principles and moral features with all other religions. In the context of this dissertation on the Musée des Monuments français, Lenoir's involvement with Freemasonry is an important consideration because the organization profoundly informed his views on world history, and history, as we have seen, was a prominent theme in the museum, both as a mode of arrangement, and as a subject of narrative. Lenoir's world view was by no means an original one, especially in Masonic circles. For his fundamental idea of a universal or common basis to religion, Lenoir borrowed heavily from the scholar and lawyer, Charles-François Dupuis. In 1795, Dupuis had published his epic, 12-volume, *Origine de tous les cultes, ou Religion universelle*, which he re-published in much abbreviated form as *Abrégé de l'Origine de tous les cultes*, shortly thereafter. Doubtless, the synthesis and republication of *Origine de tous les cultes's* main arguments brought Dupuis's theories to the attention of an even greater audience than had the original edition.

In his text, Dupuis outlined his theory of a universal nature religion based on a concordance between the astronomical and mythological beliefs of ancient cultures, stemming from the Egyptians. Dupuis explained myth through astronomy, aligning astrological and physical principles of the Universe, such as the movements of the sun at the equinoxes and solstices, with mythological "poetry," in order to explicate various human (cultural) understandings of the world. *Abrégé de l'origine de tous les cultes* was in fact a series of explanations or re-interpretations of sacred myths and their allegories: "nous analyserons toutes les traductions et les légendes sacrées, sous quelque nom que les agens de la Nature se trouvent déguisés dans les allégories religieuses."[159] Dupuis dedicated entire chapters to the subjects of Isis, Dionysus, and Christ, harmonizing these myths with astronomical signs and revealing the natural system on which these sacred fables and myths were founded. The final chapters of *Abrégée* are an evaluation of the necessity of religion and the legitimacy of its practices, especially initiation rites.

[158] Lenoir, *Franche-Maçonnerie*, 6.
[159] Charles-François Dupuis, *Abrégée de l'Origine de tous les cultes* (Paris: Chez André, 1798), 70.

In much the same vein, Lenoir sought himself to establish and legitimize a form of universality. La *Franche-Maçonnerie* traced concordances between ancient practices and those of modern Freemasons. In particular, Lenoir drew connections between the prominence of the natural elements in Ancient initiation practices and how these elements played a seminal role in the first Masonic degree of the Blue Craft. The Ancients' theory of the Soul "voyaging" in the afterlife, and the very concept of the Elysium, also had their corollary in Masonic initation rites. Finally, the centrality of the sun-cult to Masonic initiations was a continuation of Ancient practices that had their origins with the Egyptians. By providing proof that the initiation rites of the Freemasons were performed in the very tradition of those of Isis and Ceres, Lenoir argued that both had as their objective social harmony and order (Dupuis also argued that religion served to preserve social order), while legitimizing or authenticating the very history of the Freemasons. Giving a hint of the Brotherhood's ethical imperatives, Lenoir stated that "la Franche-Maçonnerie est une institution fort ancienne, dont la connaissance des mystères donne à l'homme la force de pratiquer la vertu, et lui inspire l'éloquence nécessaire pour la répandre."[160]

It is my assertion that Lenoir's work as a Freemason, and his participation in Masonic gatherings, played more than a passing role in his other professional activities. While I would not argue that there is a latent Masonic programme at the Musée des Monuments français as other distinguished scholars have argued was the case for certain public spaces in France,[161] I do believe that there is a strong case to be made in support of the idea that certain Masonic traditions, notably the notion of the journey or path leading to enlightenment, the dramatization of rituals, the use of allegory and Egyptian imagery, the quest for origins and lineage, the theorizing of historical-temporal frameworks that included discussions of realms of the after-life, especially the Elysium, and the role of light in initiatory enactments, informed Lenoir's own scenographic and curatorial practices at the Musée. Fundamentally, the Masonic narrative underlying initiation rituals and the narrative Lenoir sought to create at the Musée shared in a common desire to overcome distance and time and to reconnect authentically with origins and "deep" time. The program or *parcours* that Lenoir introduced at the Musée was intended to

[160] Lenoir, *Franche-Maçonnerie*, 272.
[161] As David Hays has done for the Jardin de Monceau by Carmontelle. Please see Hays, "Carmontelle's Design," 447-462.

achieve a similar transgression with time as did the initiation rite for Masons earning their degrees – although admittedly Lenoir's *parcours* was much more limited in temporal scope. In the following section, I will examine three concepts that are central to Masonic practices (scenography, allegory, and iconography) and consider how these concepts were equally important to Lenoir's design work at the Musée.

III. Restoring the Rites: Masonic Influences at the Musée des Monuments français

In his Preface to volume 1 of *Musée des Monumens français*, Lenoir described his design intentions for the museum in the following way: "un Musée particulier, historique et chronologique, où l'on retrouvera les âges de la sculpture française dans des salles particulières, en donnant à chacune de ces salles le caractère, la physionomie exacte du siècle qu'elle doit représenter."[162] Previously I remarked upon how physiognomy had become a preoccupation in eighteenth-century architectural theory and practice, particularly as it pertained to human anatomy and contributed to contemporaneous theories of character such as those developed by Blondel, Laugier, and Ledoux. That the term was invoked by Lenoir in his explanation of design strategies suggests an important connection between his understanding of the potential of a place of representation such as the museum, and its ability to enact upon the subject's perception of this space in a meaningful way.

From whence this attention to spatial attributes and their effect on the visitor? Certainly Lenoir was not excluded from contemporary architectural discourse: he collaborated closely with architects at the Musée des Monuments français such as Antoine-Marie Peyre, and he was a dedicated member of Paris's artistic community, so it is not altogether inconceivable to assume that Lenoir would have been familiar with the theories of Blondel or Laugier. But it is nevertheless significant that in all of his catalogue descriptions in which he related his design intentions for the Musée, gallery by gallery, century by century, not once did Lenoir mention the influence of his contemporary architectural theorists – though he did name his mentors in art history and historiography.[163] Furthermore, Lenoir would typically describe his decorative strategies using painterly analogies: he was recreating the "portrait" of a century, which required "painting." Light and colour in this context were not only the major concerns of the decorator that was Lenoir, but of Lenoir the artist-painter as well.

[162] Lenoir, *Musée*, Vol. 1, 6.
[163] Lenoir was exceedingly complimentary of certain figures, such as Winckelmann and Montfauçon, for whom he erected and displayed a bust and *fabrique* at the Musée.

Thus in spite of contemporaneous interests by Lenoir's peers relating concepts of physiognomy to architecture and design, one is nevertheless tempted to look elsewhere for potential influences to Lenoir's design theories, in addition to and beyond his own background in painting. I wish to suggest that Lenoir's ideas for creating the circumstances for representing the past in as visceral a manner as he did came from another tradition entirely: that of Freemasonry. When viewed within this conceptual framework, Lenoir's preoccupation with light, his design interest in funerary monuments, tombs, and death in general, his search for cultural origins, his attempts to create unity in architecture and design, the centrality of allegory and symbolism in his work, and his tendency to harmonize seemingly discordant features can all be said to derive from the world of the Freemason.

Scenography as Dramatization of Time

There was just cause for a natural link between Masonic traditions and Lenoir's own curatorial practice. Rooted in Masonic custom was a continual looking back to the very origins of the Brotherhood. In this scenario, the past was always a reference point for the present, and underlying many Masonic customs was the very notion of bringing history forward – into the lived present. This idea of resurrecting history – one might say of re-enacting history – necessarily assumed a performative dimension in Masonic initiation ceremonies, whereby initiates were led through various trials based on narratives of Masonic knowledge, such as the legend of Hiram, toward greater enlightenment. In the elaborately staged rituals that these initiation ceremonies inevitably intended to be, a certain dramatization of time occurred, such that past and present merged through the participant and the act of performance.

Not infrequently in Masonic initiation practices, the rituals assumed the form of a voyage, or journey, a concept that underlay Lenoir's narrative enterprise as well. Recalling Vidler's observation of the extension of Masonic initiatory rites into physical routes such as the English garden, and more specifically, the Elysian field, it is compelling to link Lenoir's *parcours* at the Musée to a similar sensibility. The notion of the *parcours* for Lenoir was articulated spatially through the path of the building, temporally through the chronological narrative he introduced, and symbolically through the introduction of the highly unusual Elysian garden on the precincts of the Musée. This

parcours directed the visitor both physically and symbolically through the Musée's narrative trajectory.

The centrality of the *parcours* emphasized by its physical nature a second important element of Masonic practice that was at play in Lenoir's Musée: the idea that learning occurred more effectively through active participation than passive spectatorship, in the body of the visitor partaking in this *parcours*. To this end, the performative or experiential element assumed a significant dimension in the museum program as the visitor physically progressed through space and bodily apperceived these spaces' experiential qualities. Not unlike the aims of the elaborate dramatization of initiation rituals in Masonic practices, the importance of affect in the apprehension of knowledge for Lenoir was absolutely crucial. One might conclude that just as Masonic initiation rites ended with a cathartic enlightenment in the temple, so too did Lenoir conclude the Musée's *parcours* with a cathartic reunion with the nation's greatest and most virtuous historical figures in the Elysium garden.

In light of this discussion on scenography and dramatization, it is worth noting that the world of the theatre was not unknown to Lenoir: in 1786 he produced a short morality play entitled *Les amis du temps passé* which is the earliest known publication by him. This first theatrical foray was nevertheless a literary one, and not as close to the sensibility that guided his design efforts at the Musée which were influenced by his Masonic penchant for enactment. In freemasonry, Lenoir found a rich tradition and deep respect for the roles of drama and performance in apprehending the past, and it was precisely this appreciation which resulted in new practices of installation and exhibition being introduced into the art/history museum, practices which gave a strong affective character to recreations of the past.

Scenography within this context of affective representation thus assumed a position of primary significance for Lenoir. By scenography I imply the theatricalized placement of objects, the conception of design elements such as paint, light, and architectural details as décor, in addition to architectural interventions, toward the rendering of the exhibition halls and the Elysium at the Musée to convey a unified narrative of time as chronology in the interior galleries, and as cycle, in the exterior garden. The term "scenography" has,

since Antiquity, referred to the perspective elevation and representation of a building, and in the early eighteenth century was also used in the context of theatrical scene-painting, while maintaining its originary link to architecture and a unified perspective. For this study of Lenoir's work, however, I wish to place a slightly different inflection on the term, one that more accurately reflects its late eighteenth-century usage. In this later instance, scenography retained ties to the design of theatrical scenery, however its invocation shifted the primary focus from a unity of perspective to a unity of space. In this context, the total effect of the space was valorized such that colour, light, and the placement of objects were all quintessential and interrelated features of the design. When taken this way, Lenoir's work at the Musée can be said to have helped shape a distinctly modern understanding of the term, and a new attitude to "viewing" the past.[164]

In Part III of this dissertation, I discuss the centrality of the chronological narrative to Lenoir's design intentions at the Musée, and its historiographic precedents in textual accounts of France's national history. The choice of grouping objects according to historical rather than typological criteria was deemed scientific and avant-garde, and few museums had chosen to arrange their collections in this way in the late eighteenth century.[165] But when considered in Masonic context, the idea of ordering a collection of objects chronologically such as Lenoir did at the Musée assumed another dimension than that conveyed by a purely scientific understanding of this intention. The very process by which Masons earned their degrees, a process that was central to the act of being a Mason, relied upon a progressive accumulation of knowledge – toward ultimate enlightenment or the attainment of perfect light. Lenoir's chronological sequence of halls achieved much the same intention of building upon knowledge toward an ultimate understanding of progress. Thus the narrative that Lenoir created at the Musée necessitated a "primitive" starting point (the thirteenth-century hall), a craft or practice to be followed (the art of sculpture), and the ability to observe the unfolding of this craft over an extended period of time (through the succession of century halls).

[164] Art historian Stephen Bann has considered the issue of modal shifts in the history of representation, particularly throughout the period 1750-1850, in a compelling article entitled " 'Views of the past' – reflections on the treatment of historical objects and museums of history (1750-1850)" in *Picturing Power: Visual Depiction and Social Relations*, eds. Gordon Fyfe and John Law (London and New York: Routledge, 1988), 39-64.

[165] On-going discussions at the Musée du Louvre, for example, had explored the possibility of adopting such a scheme, but its actual realization would occur much later.

This Masonic reading of Lenoir's design intentions would explicate why Lenoir chose not to observe a strict chronological sequence of objects within each century hall. Through his scenography, Lenoir sought to recreate an overall impression, rather than any individual or object-specific effect, such that colour and light were equally fundamental elements of his design. In other words, at the Musée, the overall effect was always more than the sum of its parts. In this regard, reference to Masonic precedent is helpful in elucidating certain details of décor. In a surprisingly revealing passage in *La Franche-Maçonnerie*, Lenoir marvelled at the interior design of the Masonic temple which he described in the following way

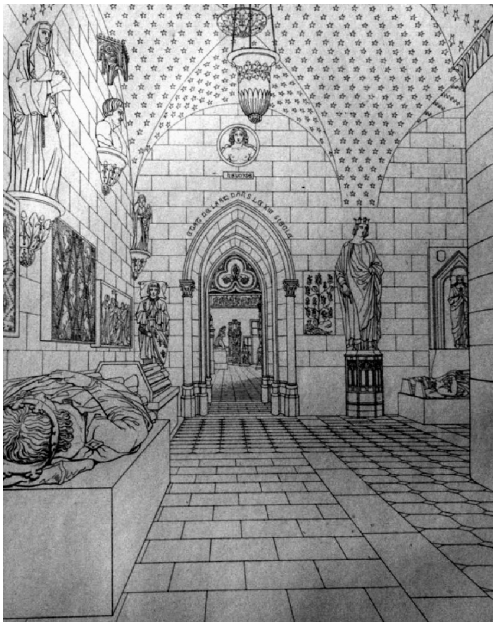

Figure 9. Thirteenth-century Hall (Biet)

> Si ensuite on entre dans le temple des Francs-Maçons, on sera surpris de la splendeur du lieu, où règne cependant une noble simplicité; on sera surtout émerveillé du silence religieux qui s'y observe, de la soumission respectueuse qui anime chacun pour le maître qui y commande, et la devise suivante: *ici l'on obéit sans dépendre, et l'on gouverne sans commander*, est bien applicable à tout ce qui s'y passe. On y voit une voûte peinte en bleu d'azur, ornée des images du soleil, de la lune et des étoiles qui remplissent le firmament. Tout enfin dans le sanctuaire, rappelle la puissance de Dieu, et par conséquent du grand architecte de l'univers.[166]

Lenoir's description of a celestial vault ornamented with stars in the Masonic temple bears remarkable resemblance to the effects he re-created in the famed thirteenth-century hall at the Musée. That Lenoir singled out this symbolic celestial sphere in his writing on

[166] Lenoir, *Franche-Maçonnerie*, 238.

the Masonic context – a particular feature that continues in Masonic traditions even today[167] - is quite significant while providing insight into spatial and symbolic sources that were of influence to Lenoir's scenographic interventions at the Musée. As a Freemason, Lenoir's use of these emblems, while also a Christian tradition, heralded a more transcendent notion of time.

In addition to the objects on display, Lenoir used a combination of architectural interventions, paint, and architectural and sculptural fragments culled from various public and private French buildings to communicate the "portrait" of a century, a design process which dictated his unique approach to each of the century halls at the Musée. This was a new curatorial endeavour, one that Lenoir took great pains to guard as his own, and he was careful to delineate the 'technical' work of the architect ("il (Peyre) est chargé de maintenir la solidité dans la construction, et de la vérification des mémoires de l'établissement"[168]) as distinct from his own creative curatorial responsibilities, which included "l'érection et le placement des Monumens s'exécutant sur mes dessins et sous ma direction, la distribution des localités, les couleurs, et tout ce qui sert à donner à chaque siècle le caractère qui lui convient."[169]

Lenoir aptly used colour as a metaphor for describing his approach to recreating the tenor of an era: "Pour présenter aux amateurs des arts et de leur histoire la vue d'un siècle aussi éloigné, j'ai cherché à me rendre compte de tous ces détails qui peignent avec les couleurs les plus vraies: recherches que je me suis proposées dans toutes les salles que j'ai créés, et que je me propose de continuer dans celles qui me restent à produire."[170] Of his architectural interventions, they were relatively minor: Lenoir worked with architects Peyre and Moreau to remove walls, recreate ceilings, create and block windows, and conceal doorways. For the following section, I have relied heavily on the research of Suzanne Thouronde and her architectural reconstruction of the Augustin Convent,[171] in addition to the contemporary descriptions of Jean-Baptiste-Bonaventure de Roquefort (*Vues pittoresques et perspectives des salles du Musée des monuments français*, 1816),

[167] As evidenced from my tour of the Grand Lodge of Québec, located at 295, rue Saint-Marc, Montréal, Québec H3H 2G9 (info@glquebec.org) on 17 January, 2007. Their ceremonial hall was ornamented with ceiling motifs featuring a constellation of stars.
[168] Lenoir, *Description*, 4ème éd. (Paris: Au Musée, An VI/1797-1798), Avant-propos, 6.
[169] Ibid., Avant-propos, 6.
[170] Lenoir, *Musée*, Vol. 1, 181.
[171] Suzanne Thouronde, "Le couvent des Petits Augustins," *Information d'histoire de l'art*, Vol. 9 (October 1964): 161-177.

Jean-Pierre Brès (*Souvenirs du Musée des Monumens Français*, 1821), and of course, the catalogue entries of Lenoir.

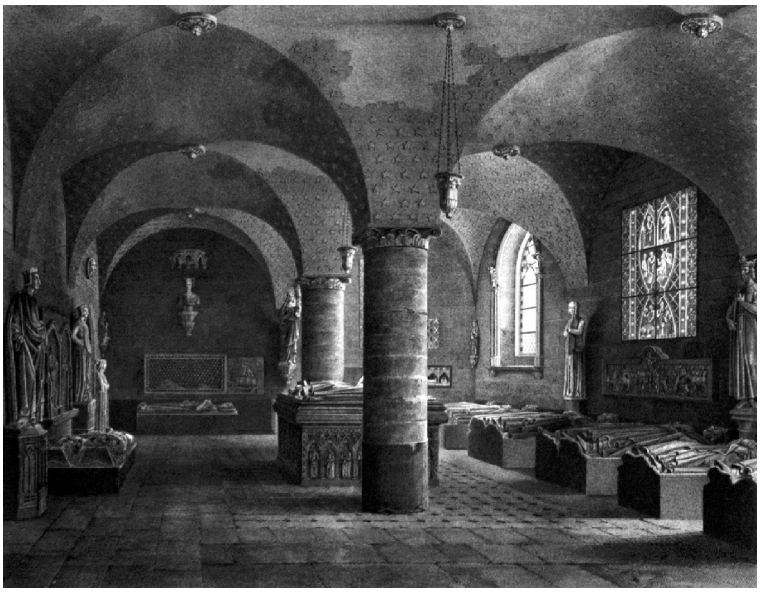

Figure 10. Thirteenth-century Hall (Vauzelle)

Of all the halls Lenoir adapted at the former convent, the sacristy required the least architectonic modifications for his needs. Both the location and the spatial configuration of this room nearest the large Introduction Hall suited Lenoir's conceptual intentions for a chronological narrative premised upon a "primitive" beginning. In fact, Lenoir cheated a little: the geo-political beginnings of the French monarchy dated back to the families of the Merovingian dynasty or "Première race" – the first of which was Clovis, who died in the sixth century. From this perspective, Lenoir's choice of the thirteenth century as a starting date for his chronological cycle was problematic, particularly because he did have a critical mass of older Celtic objects – such as the stone altarpieces from Saint-Leu erected by Parisian marine merchants from at least the time of Childebert and discovered in 1711 during archaeological excavations in the choir of Notre-Dame Cathedral in Paris. These authentic Gallic monuments might have served as a more plausible starting point in Lenoir's national historiography of France, particularly in light of Lenoir's own assertion that "la culture des lettres et la pratique des arts d'imitation, en France, remonte aux premières époques de la monarchie."[172]

[172] Lenoir, *Description historique et chronologique des monumens de sculpture, réunis au Musée des monumens français; suivie d'une dissertation sur la barbe et les costumes de chaque siècle, et d'un traité de la peinture sur verre, par le même auteur*, 8ème éd. (Paris: Chez l'Auteur, 1806), 63.

I would suggest that Lenoir's rationale for beginning his cycle in the thirteenth century – which nevertheless contained monuments to monarchical figures from the earlier medieval Merovingian and Carolingian dynasties[173] – had more to do with historiography and French legend than it did Lenoir's collection of objects. Lenoir explained that many of the cenotaphs contained in the thirteenth-century hall, and dedicated to seventh-, eighth-, and ninth-century kings, were in fact commissioned by Louis IX sometime during his reign from c.1234 – 1270. As we know, historical accuracy was much less of a guiding principle for Lenoir than the narrative of history, and the significance of the thirteenth century as a starting date for the Musée's narrative and chronological cycle lay in the fact that Louis IX's rule, or Saint Louis, was generally considered the Golden Age of France. It was at this time that the kingdom of France was politically and economically at its height in Europe, and as king of France, Saint Louis was not only highly regarded as *primus inter pares* among rulers in Europe, he was also considered the epitome of the Christian prince. In terms of the temporal cycle at the Musée, the choice of the thirteenth century as a departure point for a narrative trajectory allowed Lenoir to start, and finish (in the Elysium) this trajectory within two conceptual "Golden Ages" – even if a competing narrative required that the former Golden Age be somewhat more primitive than the latter.

Though deceptively larger than it appeared in contemporary representations – the thirteenth-century hall measured 10,8 X 8,5 metres – the effect was somewhat oppressive, owing to the proportions of the two blunt pillars in the middle of the room, and the six low groined vaults that these pillars helped to support (4.8 metres from the keystone). Adapting the thirteenth-century décor to this space thus required little intervention, and Lenoir claimed in the fourth edition of his *Description historique et chronologique des monumens de sculpture, réunis au Musée des monumens français*[174] that he had already successfully completed the transformation of three century halls by 1797: those of the thirteenth, sixteenth, and seventeenth centuries. Most striking in the room was its ceiling: a metaphoric "vault" of silver stars on an azure background descended upon thick pillars, themselves decorated with vegetal forms. The painted

[173] The Merovingian Frankish kingdom was the first French dynasty, and was founded by Clovis I in 486. This dynasty was later replaced by the Carolingian Dynasty, which ruled from 843-987. The Carolingians were replaced by the Capetian Dynasty in 987.

[174] This is the fourth edition of the publication. Lenoir was still at work on the fourteenth- and fifteenth-century halls. He was also working on renovating the sepulchral chamber of Francis I, located off of the sacristy, in collaboration with the architect Peyre.

celestial effect was in juxtaposition with the material heaviness of the monuments and architectonic features of the space. The doorway and arched windows were reconstructed using materials Lenoir had salvaged from Saint-Denis, and were inspired by the vogue for Arabic architecture popularized by Montreau. The room itself was filled with cenotaphs, statues, and bas-reliefs dedicated to the monarchy and nobility of France during the earliest stages of its monarchy, which Lenoir arranged primarily around the periphery of the room. Of these, dedications to Clovis and Frédégonde, Héloïse and Abélard, Charles Martel, Hugues Capet, and especially Louis IX and his relations figured prominently.

With such a concentrated number of monuments bearing statues of reclining figures, the effect of the thirteenth-century hall was one of somber repose. The heaviness of the hall's architectonics, and the dark palette, imbued the space with Lenoir's intended aura of enclosure and corroborated the literary account he provided of the period as one subdued by superstitions. Lenoir commented on the artistic ability of the artists of the period, claiming that it was "au treizieme siecle (sic), où de timides artistes, serviles copistes de la nature et des costumes du tems, ont commencé à tracer des ensembles et à donner une sorte de forme à leurs statues: on y trouve l'origine de l'architecture Arabe en France, introduite à la suite des Croisades."[175] Lenoir decorated the vaults with rosettes he obtained from the abbey of Saint-Victor, and elegant sepulchral lamps, and the floor treatment retained the original octagonal tiles of marble and limestone.

In his description of the room, Roquefort remarked upon the specific character of the space, claiming that "Un jour mystérieux pénètre l'ame et invite au recueillement…Les cénotaphes en pierre, sur lesquels sont couchées des statues de rois, étant des ouvrages du XIIIe siècle, tous ces monuments ont la même physionomie; par-tout le même style dans les draperies, par-tout le même caractère de tête."[176] No less a personality than Napoleon Bonaparte, accompanied by his wife Joséphine, commented on the success of the museum scenography in general, and that of the thirteenth-century in particular, when he proclaimed, "Lenoir, vous me transportez en Syrie : je suis très content; continuez vos

[175] Lenoir, *Description*, 4ème éd., Avant-propos, 11. Note Lenoir's theory on the origin of Gothic architecture in France.
[176] Roquefort's description in *Vues pittoresques et perspectives des Salles du Musée des monuments français: et des principaux ouvrages d'architecture, de sculpture et de peinture sur verre qu'elles renferment; gravées au burin, en vingt estampes par MM. Réville et Lavallée, d'après les dessins de M. Vauzelle: avec un texte explicatif par B. de Roquefort* (Paris: Imprimerie de P. Didot, l'Aîné, 1816), 32.

recherches, et j'en verrai toujours les résultats avec plaisir."[177] While his association with Syria may have been questionable, the intention is nevertheless obvious.

By contrast, architectonic techniques introduced following the Crusades led by Louis IX permitted new architectural innovations to be used in France in the fourteenth century, which Lenoir described in the most celebratory terms in volume 2 of *Musée des Monumens français*. According to Lenoir, the ribbed vaulting achieved in this century was elegant, the era's temples, majestic, and their interiors, luxurious. Lenoir replicated these effects by recycling materials from some of the era's most renowned buildings, notably Sainte-Chapelle and Saint-Denis.[178] He undertook bold changes to the ceiling of the

Figure 11. Fourteenth-century Hall (Vauzelle)

[177] Lenoir *Description historique et chronologique des monumens de sculpture, réunis au Musée des monumens français; augmentée d'une dissertation sur la barbe et les costumes de chaque siècle, et d'un traité de la peinture sur verre, par le même auteur*, 7ème éd., 113. Lenoir claims that Bonaparte appeared at the Musée, unannounced, the 6 nivôse, An XI.

[178] "Au retour des croisades, vers la fin du treizième siècle, les arts dépendans du dessin furent très-cultivés, et les artistes qui avaient voyagé en Asie avec Louis IX en apportèrent un nouveau genre de décoration, et introduisirent particulièrement dans l'architecture le goût arabesque; dès-lors les ogives alongées et élégantes prirent la place des voûtes surbaissées, et l'on vit bientôt, à l'imitation des mosquées, nos temples s'élever majestueusement, et leur intérieur chargé de dorures, de verroteries et de couleurs brillantes, montrer le luxe le plus imposant. Tel est le but que je me suis proposé dans la décoration de mon quatorzième siècle, que j'ai composé avec des débris pris à la Sainte-Chapelle de Paris, bâtie vers la fin du treizième siècle, et terminée dans le commencement de celui dont je parle. Les apôtres sculptés en pierre de grandeur naturelle, qui ornent cette salle, sont tirés de la même basilique, et sont très-remarquables par la naïveté de leur expression et la simplicité de leur exécution. Leurs vêtemens donnent une idée exacte des étoffes et des broderies que l'on employait à cette époque, étoffe assez semblable, pour la finesse de la fabrique, aux schals des Indes que nous connaissons, et apportée alors en France par les croisés. J'ai formé l'espèce de fond mosaïque en sculpture saillante qui couvre les murailles, les plafonds, etc. avec des détails que j'ai relevés dans l'abbaye de Saint-Denis, que j'ai adaptés et coloriés comme il convenait pour l'ensemble général de la salle.
Les ogives qui décorent l'intérieur de ce siècle sont également tirées de l'abbaye de Saint-Denis, ainsi que les culs de lampes et les supports de la retombée des voûtes. Ces ogives sont garnies de vingt statues des personnages les plus célèbres, tous vêtus de leur costume militaire, montés sur des lions, placés chronologiquement dans l'ordre qui suit, et tels qu'on les voit dans la gravure que je joins à cette description…" *Musée*, Vol. 2, 39-41.

hall's two-storey space adjoining the north side of the cloister, by introducing ribbed vaulting which contrasted with the heavier groined vaults of the previous century hall and produced a space with a remarkable soaring effect. Lenoir filled the hall with twenty statues of renowned historical figures – all formally dressed in military attire – which he placed chronologically in elaborate arched niches culled from Saint-Denis surrounding the periphery of the room. These figures included Philippe IV, le Bel; Louis X; Louis de France, comte d'Évreux; and Charles IV, dit le Bel.

Figure 12. *Fabrique* of Charles V (Biet)

Greatly influenced by the architecture of this era which, Lenoir claimed, was itself inspired by mosques, Lenoir sought for his own century hall an extravagant environment "chargé de dorures, de verroteries et de couleurs brillantes."[179] This statement highlights the importance of the aesthetic role of colour, reflection, and light in Lenoir's rendering of space, and contextualizes Roquefort's regret that circumstances prevented Lenoir from completing his intentions to paint the hall's sculptures in colour and gold.[180] Lenoir nevertheless achieved a polychromatic effect by covering the entirety of the hall's walls and ceiling with a sculptural mosaic whose pieces he had retrieved from Saint-Denis and later painted, "comme il convenait pour l'ensemble général de la salle."[181] Significant in Lenoir's statement was his attempt to portray the general over the specific – a very different intention from the object-centered philosophy of our own contemporary museological practice.

[179] Lenoir, *Musée*, Vol. 2, 39.
[180] *Vues pittoresques*, 33.
[181] Lenoir, *Description*, 7ème éd., 132.

In addition to introducing a more elegant ceiling design, a series of nine coloured bas-reliefs affixed to the interior and exterior of the hall featured representations of devotional scenes, a theme which could be said to characterize the overall iconography of the space. In the centre of the room, a commanding canopy covered the cenotaphs of Charles V and his wife, Jeanne de Bourbon, entries Nos. 58 and 60 in *Description*. This particular monument was in fact a *fabrique* by Lenoir, composed from the "débris" of bas-reliefs from Sainte-Chapelle and a stone Gothic edifice from Saint-Denis. Brès described the hall in *Souvenirs du Musée des Monumens français*, commenting in particular on the "agreeable" play of light.[182]

Figure 13. Fifteenth-century Hall (Vauzelle)

Lenoir's scenographic ambitions were felt most keenly in his descriptions of the fifteenth-century hall, "siècle," he wrote, "le plus remarquable pour l'histoire des arts relativement à la France."[183] This was the century, confided Lenoir, in which artists undertook well-planned building projects, and Gothic architecture gave way to the Renaissance ideas of Raphaël and palaces with arabesque ornaments. Lenoir was particularly committed to conveying a sense of this misunderstood period in art and architectural history, and yet, with so few examples at his disposal ("Paris nous offrait peu de palais, de châteaux ou de maisons décorés, du siècle dont je parle"[184]), Lenoir was obliged to extract the essence of the character of the century from a single object: the massive tomb of Louis XII and Anne de Bretagne from the abbey of Saint- Denis, entry

[182] Jean-Pierre Brès, *Souvenirs du Musée des Monumens français: collection de 40 dessins perspectifs gravés au trait représentant les principaux aspects sous lesquels on a pu considérer tous les monumens réunis dans ce Musée. Dessinés par M. J.-E. Biet et gravés par MM. Normand père et fils avec un texte explicatif par M. J.-P. Brès* (Paris: Chez l'Auteur, 1821), 20.
[183] Lenoir, *Musée*, Vol. 2, 93.
[184] Ibid., Vol. 2, 94.

No. 94 in *Musée des Monumens français*.[185] This was not the only monument dedicated to Louis XII, however it was certainly the most ambitious, and Lenoir wrote extensively about this late Gothic monument, remarkable for its "détails précieux et un grand caractère de dessin" in addition to writing about the colourful life of Louis XII himself. Surprisingly, Lenoir wrote that this monument "dont la conservation est importante pour la chronologie de l'art, est celui qui a le plus souffert des révolutionnaires. Des têtes, des nez, des bras et des mains ont été abattus. J'espère, avec le temps, le rendre à son premier état. C'est un engagement sacré que je me suis imposé pour tous les monumens que j'ai été assez heureux de réunir dans ce musée, malgré les dangers qu'il y avait à courir à certaines époques."[186] A little further on, Lenoir indicated the extent to which he had intervened toward the conservation of this monument: "Les figures que l'on voit dans ce tombeau sont des archétypes que j'ai fait lever sur les marbres, afin de procurer aux artistes et aux amateurs la vue de ces statues précieuses, dont ils n'auraient pu jouir si je les eusse placées dans le monument comme elles y étaient originairement."[187]

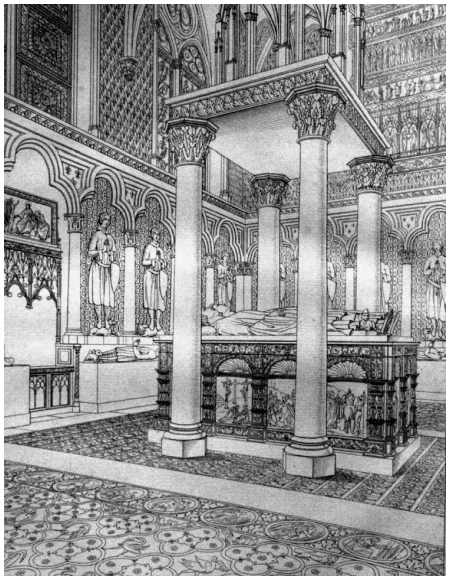

Figure 14. *Fabrique* of Louis XII and Anne de Bretagne (Biet)

Lenoir's brief overview of this hall in edition seven of *Description* reads like the colourful guided tour of a romantic historiographer: "la statue de Juvenel des Ursins frappe les regards…(of the work of the little-known sculptor Pierre Bontemps) admirez cette statue couchée et seulement parée des belles proportions…On voit, dans l'ombre, le criminel Birague à genoux…Les yeux de Charles sont encore livides, et son front paraît ressuer le sang qu'il a versé. Pilon, ton ame sensible a dû souffrir en modelant cette tête."[188] The curator's excitement and his desire to bring the objects to life is palpable.

[185] Ibid., Vol. 2, 144.
[186] Ibid., Vol. 2, 149-150.
[187] Ibid., Vol. 2, 150.
[188] Lenoir, *Description*, 7ème éd., 5-6. Emphasis my own.

The remaining renovations in the hall (the ceiling, the windows, and all of the hall's decorations) were a composite of monuments assembled from visits to castles and churches throughout France, inspired by the archetype of the tomb of Louis XII. Of this practice Lenoir wrote

> J'ai composé mon plafond, mes croisées, et en général toute la décoration de cette salle, sur le type du tombeau de Louis XII, qui en fait le milieu, avec des détails que j'ai apportés du château de Gaillon, qui vient d'être démoli; avec des archétypes que j'ai levés moi-même, tant à Chartres qu'à Blois, etc. Les colonnes ornées de chapiteaux et de piédestaux arabesques qui soutiennent les portes, sont un présent des administrateurs du département d'Eure et Loir, qui, sur la demande que je leur en ai faite pour mon établissement, ont ordonné la démolition d'un portique de l'église Saint-Père, à Chartres, pour en mettre les détails à ma disposition…Les deux bas-reliefs qui décorent les archivoltes de cette salle, méritent d'être remarqués, et notamment celui qui représente Dieu le père au milieu des anges. Le style en est sévère et le dessin vigoureux; je l'ai tiré du cimetière des Innocens; le second, qui vient de l'église Sainte-Geneviève, représente la Pentecôte.
>
> Les fonds violet et bleu, les encadremens dorés et la légende carminée, *cominùs* et *eminùs* (de près et de loin) sont les traits caractéristiques de la décoration du siècle que je représente; j'ai fait exécuter toutes ces choses d'après les notes que j'ai prises sur les lieux mêmes, et sur des autorités que j'ai apportées pour me servir au besoin (and in a footnote: J'ai cru devoir insérer ces notes pour lever tous les doutes sur le véritable auteur du monument, et pour faire connaître les autorités que j'ai consultées, et dans lesquelles j'ai puisé mes richesses; et pour montrer aussi les effets que l'on peut produire en décoration par des rapprochemens justes d'anciens détails.)[189]

[189] Lenoir, *Musée*, Vol. 2, 94-96.

This lengthy passage yields three important insights into the working method of Lenoir, who conceived of his scenographic installations less as authentic accumulations of objects, and more as exemplars – a concept that is even more apparent in his creation of the *fabrique*. Objects were stand-ins, archetypes, and material triggers to the larger project that was the recreation of the era, and for this reason, fictional elements – so long as they were authentically inspired (such as by site visits) – were neither unethical intrusions nor inaccurate depictions of the past. Secondly, this lengthy passage is revealing for Lenoir's unapologetic attitude to removing objects from their original, functional, and contextualizing milieux, and repositioning them within the nationalist narrative of the Musée (such as the remains of the Château of Gaillon, which Lenoir ordered transferred to Paris and installed in one of three courtyards at the Musée). Thirdly, Lenoir's colour scheme of blue, gold, and carmine, in addition to being "Christian" like the buildings that inspired Lenoir, were also described by the curator as mysterious colours in his solar theory of ancient cult practices.

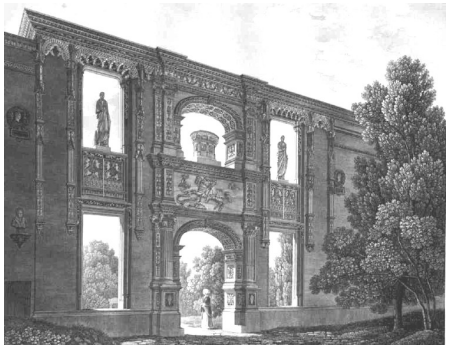

Figure 15. Vestiges from the Château de Gaillon (Vauzelle*)*

Lenoir did not elaborate extensively on his colour theory, however he did make brief mention of colour symbolism in a passage related to medieval architecture in the eighth edition of *Description*

> Les trois couleurs dont on décoroit les églises gothiques nous paroissent aussi une imitation de celles qui étoient consacrées dans les temples dédiés au Soleil ou à la Nature, suivant les anciennes théogonies. Nous y voyons l'*or*, le *bleu* et le *rouge* y briller exclusivement. Les premiers sectaires même de la religion chrétienne aimoient à retrouver dans leurs temples ces couleurs sous lesquelles les anciens mages avoient désigné la lumière, le ciel et le feu, et qu'elles leur rappeloient sans ceese l'auteur de toutes ces choses. Quelquefois on employait le *noir* pour peindre les *ténèbres* ou le *mauvais génie*; mais alors cette couleur étoit toujours

> dominée ou absorbée par une plus grande quantité d'or, le symbole de la *lumière* (…) Voilà les raisons qui m'ont déterminé à rappeler ces couleurs mystiques dans les anciens siècles, que j'ai essayé de peindre dans ce Musée. Jetons un coup d'oeil sur l'antiquité, et nous verrons que l'or, le bleu et le cinabre étaient les couleurs consacrées à la divinité.[190]

By divinity Lenoir understood both polytheistic and monotheistic universes, pagan and Christian traditions.

In the chapter house or meeting room of the former convent, Lenoir located the sixteenth-century hall. His portrait of the sixteenth century was largely developed from verbal descriptions made by historians and poets, and from object-based research into monuments of the period. For this era, Lenoir had his models: architects Lescot, Bullant, and Philibert de l'Orme, from whose works he made casts. Colour seems to have been less crucial to Lenoir's scenography than the sculptures and ornamentation with which he populated the space, possibly owing to the larger number of remains he had for the period.[191] Clearly from the number of entries in *Description*, Lenoir possessed a far greater number of sixteenth- and seventeenth-century monuments than any other period.

The room was qualitatively different from the previous century halls insofar as its walls of brick and its ceiling of joists provided not only a modern, non-Gothic feel to the space, but equally a sense of regularity and a more human dimension to the design. In spite of the presence of religious iconography on the windows and monuments, the space did not soar to the heavens, it celebrated the works of humankind, largely through allusions to chivalry. Hence Lenoir decorated the ceiling with arabesques and salamanders in addition to chivalrous elements, whose five laws – Religion, Nation, Honour, Friendship,

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[190] Lenoir, *Description*, 8ème éd., 93-94. Italics by Lenoir.

[191] "Pour peindre comme il convenait la salle qui renferme dans ce Musée les monumens de cet âge, j'ai levé des plans et dessiné les monumens bâtis par les Lescot, les Bullant, les Philibert, etc. J'ai même fait archétyper les détails des décorations sorties de leurs mains, pour réunir dans mon cadre tout ce qui peut rappeler aux yeux des amateurs éclairés le beau siècle de la renaissance. La porte de cette salle a été exécutée avec soin et dans le style convenable. (FN Elle est faite d'après le dessin du citoyen Peyre jeune, architecte, fils d'un artiste recommendable, dont j'ai eu occasion de parler dans le premier volume de cet ouvrage) Les colonnes qui portent le fronton sont d'un marbre rare, désigné sous le nom de *brèche dorée*; elles se trouvent supportées par des piédestaux, dans lesquels j'ai introduit de petits bas-reliefs en cuivre doré, exécutés par Quermézel, représentant la Nativité de Christ, l'Adoration des Mages, la Résurrection, et plusieurs sujets du Nouveau Testament. Les incrustations et les figures que l'on remarque sur le fronton, décrites sous le numéro 130, sont une imitation du genre d'ajustement adopté dans ce temps-là, ainsi que les plafonds que j'ai décorés d'arabesques, de salamandres, de chiffres enlacés, et même des devises de la chevalerie, placées dans leur ordre exact…" *Musée*, Vol. 3, 45-47.

and Love – provided inspiration to Lenoir in determining the aura of the sixteenth century. Unlike the arched windows of the previous century halls, those of the sixteenth century were rectangular.

Figure 16. Sixteenth-century Hall (Vauzelle)

Apart from his reference to the "majestic" seventeenth-century hall, one dominated by an imposing central sculpture of Louis XIV, Lenoir's description of the hall is sparse and monument-specific.[192] From Thouronde we learn that this hall, of all the century halls, was by far the largest: the former refectory of the convent measured 6,8 metres X 24 metres. She compared the room to an enormous vessel, or boat, one that was covered by a barrel vault with lunettes containing six arch-like windows in the upper tier of the room. This particular type of vaulting was characteristic of the enormously popular Jesuit or Baroque architecture of the seventeenth

[192] "Nous allons donc décrire les monumens du dix-septième siècle, si remarquable par le nombre des grands hommes auxquels il a donné naissance; et, comme nous l'avons observé plus haut, les arts dépendant du dessin n'y furent pas brillans. Nous y voyons une dégradation bien sensible dans la sculpture, si nous comparons les monumens dont nous allons parler avec ceux du seizième siècle, décrits dans nos deux derniers volumes, et nous conviendrons que l'on doit une reconnoissance plus éclatante au zèle que le grand Colbert a mis dans ses nombreux encouragemens, qu'aux artistes qui les ont sculptés. D'abord, si on entre dans cette salle majestueuse, la statue de Louis XIV, posée debout et dans une attitude imposante, (page 46) sculptée par Anguier, et numérotée 214, frappe les regards.
Au milieu des grands hommes de son siècle, Louis XIV semble encore environné de sa gloire, près de lui, sous les Nos 282 et 286, les bustes, en marbre, de Turenne et de Condé, ainsi que ceux, aussi en marbre, des ministres Richelieu, Mazarin, et de Colbert; sous les Nos 276, 280 et 283, M. Peyre fils, architecte, auteur des portes qui décorent cette salle, devenue, par les nombreux monumens qu'elle renferme, le sanctuaire des historiens et des poètes, a mis dans leur composition un caractère de noblesse et de simplicité qui cadre parfaitement avec l'ensemble du local. Ces portes sont composées chacune de quatre colonnes de marbre d'ordre ionique, ornées de bases et de chapiteaux en marbre blanc du plus beau travail. Dans le centre de l'archivolte, on voit deux lions sculptés en marbre blanc par Anguier, No. 254. L'inscription suivante, *Etat des arts dans le dix-septième siècle*, décore la frise. On remarque, sur les saillies de la corniche, quatre statues en pied, sculptées par M. Foucou, représentant Nicolas Poussin, sous le No. 236; Eustache Lesueur, No. 237, Jacques Sarrazin, No. 238, et Pierre Puget, sous le 9 Page 47) No. 239. On voit, près des portes, les bustes en marbre des personnages ci-après décrits No. 273, Claude-Fabri de Peyresc, célèbre en 1610, et mort en 1637. Peyresc fut l'ami des sciences, qu'il cultiva avec succès, et le protecteur zélé des savans, avec lesquels il partagea son immense fortune: sa vie fut employée à des recherches profondes sur l'antiquité; il fut le premier qui publia un mémoire sur la fameuse *Agate de la Sainte-Chapelle*, pierre gravée, d'un volume extraordinaire, représentant l'apothéose d'Auguste. No. 311, Jacques-Bénigne Bossuet, évêque de Meaux, né à Dijon en 1627, et mort à soixante-dix-sept ans; No. 490, Fran- (page 48) çois Salignac de la Motte-Fénélon, archevêque de Cambrai; No. 312, Nicolas Boileau-Despréaux, de l'académie française, mort en 1711, par le célèbre Girardon…" *Musée*, Vol. 5, 45-48.

century, of the type incorporated into the designs of Val-de-Grâce (1645), Saint-Louis (1627) and Notre-Dame-des-Victoires (1629).

The décor of the hall was remarkably less ornate than that of the fourteenth-century hall, its walls less encumbered with hanging busts and statues than any of the previous century halls. One is struck by the dramatic shift from sacred to secular in the overall appearance of the space: statues of Cardinal Jules Mazarin and Anne d'Autriche, Minister Jean-Baptiste Colbert and Louis XIII, many of them life-sized, outnumbered symbolic and allegorical sculptures of angels and saints. The effect was elegant and modern, and yet surprising given Lenoir's characterization of the seventeenth century as one of decadence and decline. "L'abandon entier du beau idéal et de l'étude de la nature devint une *mode* générale pour les artistes," lamented Lenoir, who kept the hall's scenography to a sober minimum as if to counter what he perceived to be the descent of artists into a period of uniformity and technical mastery – but little more. Without the leadership of artists like Poussin or Lesueur, the artist, Lenoir argued, had lost the capacity for genius.

Figure 17. Seventeenth-century Hall (Vauzelle)

Figure 18. Seventeenth-century Hall – View 2 (Vauzelle)

Lenoir never completed an eighteenth-century hall, though he had plans to do so. His designs for the Elysium garden, which contained monuments dedicated to his contemporaries in addition to more historical figures, may best be considered the Musée's eighteenth-century space. The very notion of the "Elysium" was undergoing a resurgence in this century, and thus Lenoir's creation of this garden type on the grounds of the Musée was intrinsically linked to urban and literary attitudes of his time. I will develop the discussion of the Elysium in a more elaborate way in Interval II and Part III of this dissertation.

In spite of the incomplete state of the later halls (a nineteenth-century hall also remained an idea on paper), there are connections to be drawn between the Masonic tradition for transforming the temple into an elaborate stage for the "performance" of initiation ceremonies, and Lenoir's impulse to transform the space of each century hall according to the era's major artistic and architectural accomplishments. Both were dramatizations of time, conceived as an event whose catalyst – be it the death of Hiram or the return of the Crusaders – required repeated retelling in order to ensure their continued existence. Consider the precedent in Freemasonry: Lenoir began his account of the third degree, that of Master Mason, in *La Franche-Maçonnerie* with a description of the décor of the temple, underscoring the centrality of the physical experience of space in the transmission of knowledge: "En entrant dans la loge du maître, un jour de réception, je vois sur tous les visages l'expression du deuil, et partout les caractères de la mort. Il y est question d'un assassinat, et ce meurtre est celui d'Hiram, constructeur du temple de Salomon. Dans le milieu du temple on voit un cercueil (and in a corresponding footnote: L'intérieur du temple est tendu de noir, et orné de larmes et de têtes de morts. Le trône du respectable maître, ainsi que l'autel, sont également drapés en noir, et lugubrement décorés. Sur l'autel on voit une lampe, dont la lumière foible (sic) ne réfléchit que sur le respectable maître. Tous les maîtres sont vêtus de noir, le chapeau en tête et rabattu; ils ont chacun un glaive à la main.)"[193] This décor, in addition to a narrative pronounced by the Master of the Lodge and enacted by various member Masons, served to communicate some of the most fundamental knowledge of Masonic education. Even today, Masonic initiations continue to be lavish theatrical performances enhanced by lighting and sound systems, stage sets and scripts. In the conferring of Masonic degrees, Masons and

[193] Lenoir, *Franche-Maçonnerie*, 259-260.

initiates routinely engage in extensive dramatic performances, assuming historical roles and pronouncing lengthy passages from texts that ensure literary lineage and a measure of continuity to this tradition.

Lenoir recognized in the foundations of Freemasonry a manner and a model for relating with history that was desperately lacking in contemporary French society. In his conclusion to *La Franche-Maçonnerie*, Lenoir claimed that the ultimate goal of Masonic teachings, as was that of the ancients, was to inspire wisdom, virtue, reason, and bliss in its initiates. These social values held strong currency, particularly in the post-Revolution moment, yet it is striking how much they resonated with Lenoir's ambitions regarding the social function of the Musée

> Enfin, j'observerai que tout initié parvenu au complément de la Franche-Maçonnerie, connoîtra la haute sagesse que j'appellerai vertu; il jouira de la suprême félicité; car la connoissance du grand oeuvre de la nature, inspire à l'homme un sentiment de raison qui l'élève au-dessus de ses semblables, sentiment profond, que lui seul est en état d'apprécier, et qui le porte naturellement à tourner ses regards vers un Dieu créateur, conservateur et bienfaisant, pour lui rendre un culte et des hommages…Voilà quel étoit le but des grands mystères chez les anciens; tel est encore de nos jours celui de la Franche-Maçonnerie.
>
> La Franche-Maçonnerie, ajouterai-je, embrasse, dans les questions qui sont proposées au nouvel initié, les points les plus essentiels de la doctrine des anciens philosophes : l'initié lui-même, dans le cours des épreuves obligatoires, rend hommage à un Dieu créateur et unique, qui renferme en lui toutes les puissances. D'ailleurs la Franche-Maçonnerie rapproche les hommes, les lie entr'eux par tous les noeuds qui constituent véritablement le contrat social; c'est-à-dire par des principes d'union et de force, par des formes douces, par des actes de bienfaisance, et enfin par tout ce qui persuade. En effet, la France-Maçonnerie, antique dans son institution, noble et sévère dans ses formules, soutient l'homme

> vertueux, et inspire la vertu à celui qui la méconnaît: puisse-t-elle durer autant que Dieu lui-même dont elle célèbre les hauts faits.[194]

Allegory of Light, Trajectory of Enlightenment

Lenoir was particularly attentive to light as a unifying feature in his century hall compositions. In his article on representation and museums of history in the century spanning 1750 and 1850, Stephen Bann described a new modality of representation that took hold in this era, one in which distinctly historical – rather than aesthetic – concerns modified the way objects of history were represented. In this new modality, which articulated the concepts of Riegl's "age-value" and Nietzsche's "antiquarian" sensibility, objects were assembled with a view to creating an affective character, countering the previous tradition of displaying historical objects according to the ideal – and timeless – temporality of the Classical tradition. Bann cited the museological projects of Sir John Soane, and Alexandre Lenoir, as seminal examples of the new direction taken in the installation and exhibition of historical objects, remarking upon the tendency to "fuse individual objects into an overall visual effect"[195] by means of light. Stained glass, mirrors, and gilded surfaces were used by Soane towards these ends, while Lenoir used light "to unify and distinguish a given space"[196] in order to achieve a unified milieu.

This discussion assumes particular significance in the instance of Lenoir who was, by training, an artist. As such, Lenoir's design sensibilities tended naturally toward an artistic conception of space, rather than any historically-scientific (in the nineteenth-century sense of the term) one. While this may sound like the antithesis to Bann's observation regarding historical and aesthetic concerns, there is a slight distinction to be made. Light to an artist meant something very different than it did to a collector of historical objects such as Alexandre du Sommerard (whose later installations at the Musée de Cluny are often positioned in the same lineage as those of Lenoir).[197] To the eighteenth-century artists who were contemporaries and colleagues of Lenoir, such as Jacques-Louis David or Jean-Honoré Fragonard, light was a crucial element of the pictorial composition and a defining feature of neo-classical painting, and was used

[194] Lenoir, *Franche-Maçonnerie*, 300-301.
[195] Bann, "Views of the Past," 53.
[196] Ibid, 53.
[197] Du Sommerard's display method should be qualified, for although he exhibited his collection of historical artifacts in evocative spaces, he organized them according to type and not chronology.

judiciously by Lenoir to both highlight and unify significant features of the Musée's halls.

There can be no mistaking the significance of light in Lenoir's trajectory at the Musée and its implied narrative of enlightenment, of progress or decline in French artistic practice. This metaphor was most explicit in the very first century hall of the Musée where, with its low, rib-vaulted ceiling painted a dark, celestial blue, the thirteenth-century space was undoubtedly the most effective in recreating Lenoir's intended effect of an oppressive space. Lenoir used recycled materials from the church of Saint-Denis to decorate the doors and windows of the hall, while the stained glass was imported from a thirteenth-century monument designed by the French artisan Montreau. Lenoir described a dark, somber scene to characterize a period in French history that he wanted to portray as undeveloped and repressed: "La lumière sombre qui éclaire ce lieu est encore une imitation du temps; magie par laquelle on maintenait perpétuellement dans un état de faiblesse des êtres que la superstition avait frappés d'effroi. Car j'ai observé que plus on remonte vers les siècles qui se rapprochent du nôtre, plus la lumière s'agrandit dans les monumens publics, comme si la vue du soleil ne pouvait convenir qu'à l'homme instruit."[198] Lenoir's explicit reference to "superstition" and its near petrifying hold on the populous might well be interpreted as a Masonic criticism of Christianity.

Thouronde described the space as "primitively lit" by four rectangular windows: one to the west, another to the north, and two to the east. After 1796, Lenoir and the architect Peyre added another two bays on the north side, which faced the exterior of the convent, while eliminating one of the two east-facing windows. Roquefort remarked upon the hall's "magnificent" windows in his description, particularly the stained glass representing the scene of Reine Blanche distributing alms to the poor (and seen in the accompanying engraving in Réville and Lavallée).

Such a vast difference characterized the light of the fourteenth-century hall. By nature, the hall was far more spacious owing to its double height, in addition to the effect of the arches spanning the entire room. By virtue of its location to the north of the cloisters, the hall received light from two levels of windows, the first indirectly from the interior

[198] Lenoir, *Musée*, Vol. I, 180-181.

walkway surrounding the cloister, and the second directly onto the cloister to the south, and to the street to the north. In all, six large stained-glass windows, "garnies de vitraux de la plus grande beauté pour la force des couleurs,"[199] admitted light into the hall. In addition, hanging *cul-de-lampe* also lit the space, the central ornament said to be a most distinguished fixture.

Like the fourteenth-century hall in the slightly smaller room to the east, Lenoir made major architectonic changes to the fifteenth-century hall. The room was remarkably spacious: measuring 19,5 metres by 6,5 metres, the hall was three times as long as it was large. Two bands of south-facing windows gave onto the cloisters, while to the north, a series of four semi-circular windows rested upon a large cornice, beneath which a second series of four rectangular bay openings can be seen to admit light. The upper glass was clear lozenge, with a simple coloured border, while the lower windows were stained glass featuring a mixture of New Testament and historical (Louis IX) scenes.

The five stained glass windows illuminating the sixteenth-century hall were particularly noted for their quality of execution and design. Roquefort commented on the beauty of their colours, the harmony of the tones, and the ambition of the compositions. "Il suffit, en un mot," he concluded, "d'ajouter que ces chefs-d'oeuvre sont dignes du pinceau des plus grands maitres." The subjects combined New Testament scenes from the life of Christ's life, the Apocalypse, and historical scenes inspired by the actions of François I^{er}.

Curiously, Roquefort made no mention of the quality of light or the placement of windows in his description of the seventeenth-century hall, despite the fact that, as the former refectory, this was the Musée's largest hall. We are left to deduce the effect of the room from visual representations of this space, which would suggest that most of the windows were filled with clear glass. We know from a separate section on stained glass in *Description* that there were a few panels in the hall, but no cohesive narrative determined the use of the panels which combined historical scenes (a royal entry of Henri IV into Paris and another of Dom Jean de la Barrière, founder of the couvent des Feuillans) with Biblical scenes of the Virgin, martyrs, and relics.

[199] Alexandre Lenoir, *Musée royal des monumens français, ou Mémorial de l'histoire de France et de ses monumens* (Paris: Chez l'Auteur, 1815), 47.

Lenoir's scenographic effects were undoubtedly most successful in the thirteenth-century hall, and his intentions to represent history as an affective presence were not lost on the Musée's visitors, notably a future generation of Romantic writers and historians, including Victor Hugo and Jules Michelet. Years after his childhood visits to the Musée, Michelet would recall their lasting effect on his sense of history in a particularly poignant passage of his mémoirs: "C'est là, et nulle part ailleurs, que j'ai reçu d'abord la vive impression de l'histoire."[200] He would further describe his childhood visits to the Musée in equally vivid terms

> Even now I can recall the feeling, still just the same and still stirring, that made my heart beat when, as a small child, I would enter beneath those dark vaults and gaze at the pale faces; and would then, keen, curious and timid, walk and look, room after room, epoch after epoch. What was I looking for? I hardly know – the life of the time, no doubt, and the spirit of the ages. I was not altogether certain that they were not alive, all those marble sleepers, stretched out on their tombs. And when I moved from the sumptuous monuments of the sixteenth century, glowing with alabaster, to the low room of the Merovingians, in which was to be found the sword of Dagobert, I felt it possible that I would suddenly see Chilpéric and Frédégonde raise themselves and sit up.[201]

Though he intended for his praise to pertain to the Musée's evocative nature as a whole, Michelet was referring of course to the thirteenth-century hall, a hybrid hall containing objects made in the thirteenth century yet representative of the nation's first monarchs, who dated back to the middle ages. For this very reason, the hall was strongly associated with France's myths of origins, through the combined presence of the personalities Michelet identified – Dagobert, Chilpéric, and Frédégonde among others – each of whom hailed from the Merovingian dynasty and the first line of founders of the French monarchy. Chilpéric was named King of Soissons in 561, and of Paris in 570, before being assassinated on orders given by his third wife, Frédégonde, in 584. Frédégonde

[200] "It's there, and nowhere else, that I first experienced a vivid impression of history." Translation my own. This quote, from a letter to M. Edgar Quinet, has been paraphrased by Haskell in *History and Its Images* (p. 252); from Michelet, *Le peuple*, ed. Robert Casanova (Paris, 1965), 65.

[201] Jules Michelet, *Histoire de la Révolution française*, Vol. 2 (Paris: Pléiade, 1952), 538-539 n. (Book 12, ch. 7); quoted in Frances Haskell, *History and Its Images: Art and the Interpretation of the Past* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1993), 252.

went on to rule the state until her own death at the age of 50 in 596. Both were buried in the historic church of St.-Germain-des-Prés. Dagobert (c.603-639),[202] who reigned as King of all the Franks from 629-624, made Paris his capital, was founder of the royal monastery of Saint-Denis Basilica and was the first French monarch to be buried in the sepulchral chamber of this abbey. Following Dagobert's interment at Saint-Denis, all French monarchs – with few exceptions – were buried at this royal necropolis. Clearly, of the mythologies that underlay the historical narratives of the Musée, that of the Merovingian dynasty was vital.

Michelet's characterization of the thirteenth-century hall and its obvious effects on the public and popular imaginary contrast markedly with the perceived effect of the seventeenth century hall, a majestic room described by artist Joseph Lavallée as spacious and bright. Lavallée's lengthy description of the Musée was included by Lenoir in the preface to his catalogues, and is instructive insofar as it records a visitor's impression of the interior displays. Consider how Lavallée's description of the thirteenth- and seventeenth-century halls heightened the intended visual and experiential effects of the two spaces

> Dans un vaste caveau dont les voûtes en arêtes sont parsemées d'étoiles, faiblement éclairé par des croisées gothiques, sont couchés ces princes fainéans qui séparent Clovis de Charles Mantel…Le conservateur a donné à ce caveau le titre générique de treizième siècle, parce qu'il termine en effet la liste des tombeaux qui y sont renfermés, quoiqu'il contienne les effigies des personnages vivans dans le commencement du sixième jusqu'à la fin du treizième…Les âges ont usé presque toutes ces figures, dont aucune n'est de marbre, sans pouvoir effacer l'ignorance qui les a sculptées.[203]

The reader's interest is that much more attuned to the changes in scenography when they read the passage citing Lavallée's feigned surprise by his encounter with space and light further on in the Musée's trajectory. "Mais quelle est cette salle spacieuse, éclairée,

[202] The tomb of Dagobert, dating from the reign of Louis IX, merited a place in the Elysium garden. After part of the Gothic monument was vandalized in 1793, Lenoir had the remaining elements placed in the Elysium. Lenoir quoted at length from Montfauçon in his description of this monument. See *Musée*, Vol. I, 152-156.
[203] Ibid., Vol. I, 9-10.

soigneusement décorée, où je pénètre en sortant de ce temple?" he asked of the seventeenth-century hall.[204]

There was a meta-narrative at work in Lenoir's characterization of French art history, even if this meta-narrative was not entirely supported by the evidence of the century halls at the Musée. For what Lenoir wished to convey in a general sense was the dream of continual progress. Well versed in the metaphor of light, Lenoir conceded that "plus on remonte vers les siècles qui se rapprochent du nôtre, plus la lumière s'agrandit dans les monumens publics, comme si la vue du soleil ne pouvait convenir qu'à l'homme instruit."[205] Yet this myth of eternal (and inevitable) progress was not entirely sustained, even by Lenoir, whose characterization of the fifteenth- and sixteenth-centuries as "remarkable" and "regenerative" was nevertheless followed by an avowal of bad taste and decadence in the arts in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. What was most important, however, at least for Lenoir, was to concretize the idea of a resurrection in art and this, within his own time, in order to make the entire project of the Revolution worthwhile. "Ralliez-vous aux David, aux Vincent;" he wrote in his description of the eighteenth-century hall, "ces artistes célèbres sont les élèves de (Joseph Marie) Vien:[206] c'est son école qui a fixé en France la *quatrième époque* de la restauration des beaux-arts (…) et que le dix-neuvième siècle, par des études suivies et des productions remarquables, rappelle aux Français les beaux temps de la Grèce et le grand siècle de François I^{er} et de Médicis."[207]

One might therefore expect that the seventeenth- and eighteenth-century galleries would have been designed with obvious references to this period of decadence, rather than with the effect of simplicity and grandeur that Lenoir described.[208] However this is not the case, at least not as it pertains to the metaphoric message of light admitted to the seventeenth-century gallery, as we have seen in the description by Lavallée. As for the eighteenth-century gallery, a space that was not physically completed by Lenoir though it did merit a description in the catalogue, the curator predictably avoided a spatial and scenographic description altogether. Rather, Lenoir launched directly into a stinging

[204] Ibid., Vol. 1, 12.
[205] Ibid., Vol. 1, 181.
[206] Joseph-Marie Vien, Neoclassical painter, 1716-1809.
[207] Lenoir, *Musée*, Vol. 5, 128-129.
[208] Ibid., Vol. 5, 46.

account of the causes of the "decadent" state of the arts in eighteenth-century France, and an indictment of its main perpetrators, Simon Vouet and Charles Lebrun, court artists who had preceded Vien.[209]

It does seem curious that Lenoir did not entirely carry through with his metaphor of light, despite having provided an indication of its centrality to his aesthetic theory of French art. As distinct from the thirteenth- and seventeenth-century halls, the others lack specific references to light. The allegorical concept of light as an illumination of progress became, like many other undertakings by Lenoir such as the *fabrique*, more of an overarching and general idea than a specific scenographic template. Still, it is worth bearing in mind that Lenoir's plans were often compromised by lack of funds (both for his renovation projects and for transporting objects from the provinces to the Musée) and thus the curator's intentions were not always executed to their fullest. We must nevertheless take them at face value, because Lenoir's written works were as legitimate an articulation of his aims as was the Musée, if not more.

Lenoir's metaphoric use of light was not at all uncommon in Enlightenment rhetoric. In the opening pages of volume 1 of *Musée des Monumens français*, Lenoir quoted Winckelmann's portrayal of the arts in Florentine public life, under whose effect "les ténèbres (obscurity) de l'ignorance" had been banished.[210] Aided by the "lumières des hommes de lettres" (knowledge of men of letters) wishing to "éclairer" (enlighten) the path of Lenoir, one notes that eighteenth-century speech was filled with allusions to light as an allegory of knowledge. Yet that which was novel in Lenoir's work was his desire to materialize the metaphor of enlightenment in the space of the exhibition. His manipulation of light was thus intended to reinforce this metaphor, both in the control of natural light that penetrated the stained glass windows of the halls, and in the introduction of artificial light by way of lanterns within the halls themselves. An on-going discussion at the Louvre at this time had also centered on the subject of light, however from an entirely different perspective. As a panel of artists discussed how to reform the large central hall and viewing space for future exhibitions, the idea of overhead lighting became central. As early as 1776, under the directorship of d'Angiviller as Director General of royal buildings, the architect Soufflot had been asked to visit the Grand

[209] Ibid., Vol. 5, 125.
[210] Ibid., Vol. 1, 2.

Gallery and to comment on the need for its reform. Soufflot made the issue of lighting at that time one of three main considerations (in addition to the subdivision of space and the issue of the decoration of the vault).

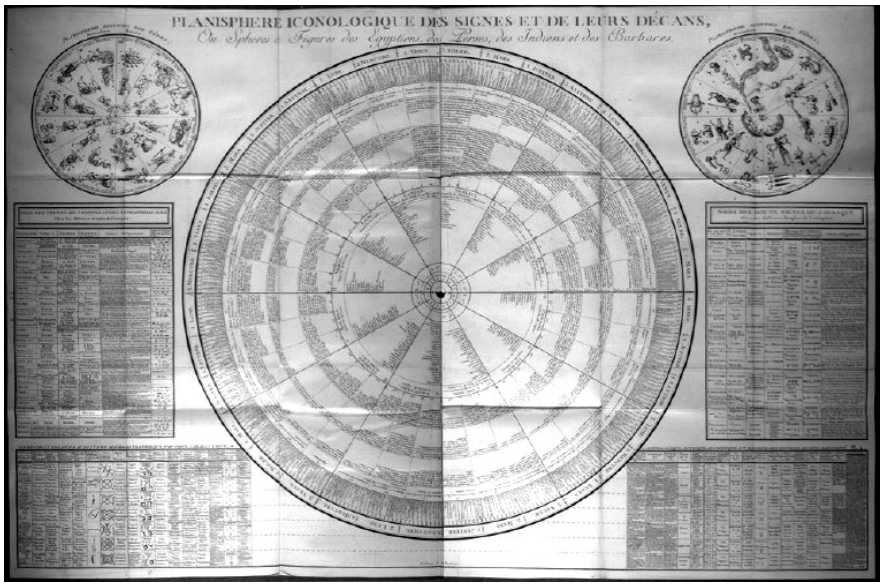


Figure 19. ***Planisphère iconologique***

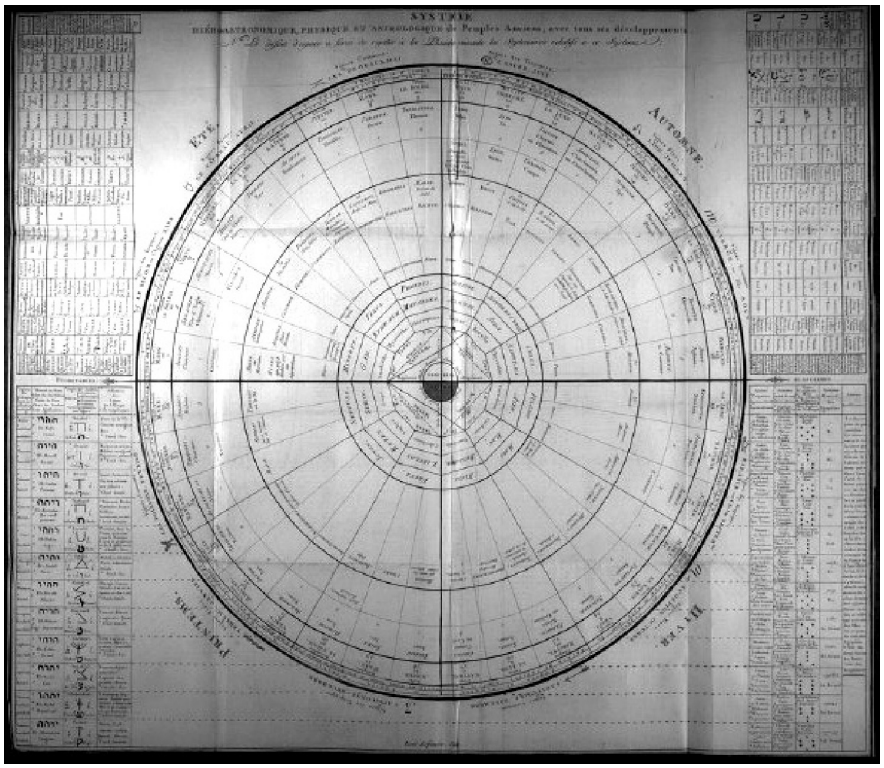


Figure 20. ***Système hiéro-astronomique, physique et astrologique de peuples anciens***

One might easily interpret Lenoir's symbolic use of light as simply that: a custom of the enlightenment period. Yet in the context of Lenoir's other professional activities, this metaphor assumes an even more complex meaning if one considers the role of light in Masonic practices. Central to the very rituals that marked the passing from one Masonic degree to another was light. Thus initiates were blindfolded (denied light) as they progressed toward knowledge (enlightenment) through the initiation process, a process which literally took them from the periphery to the centre of the initiation space, and from darkness to (candle) light.[211] For the Freemasons, light was understood in terms of its allegorical potential, and had deep roots in Masonic beliefs about the origins of world cultures and foundational Isiac myths.

Drawing upon Dupuis's work, Lenoir wrote specifically about allegories of light in the opening chapters of his *La Franche-Maçonnerie rendue à sa véritable origine*. He claimed that light and darkness, as the two reigning principles of the world, were in antiquity once considered opposite divinities, and the complimentarity of these divinities brought world harmony. Lenoir illustrated his discussion of the world's grand allegorical system with the inclusion of a complex plate entitled *Systême hiéro-astronomique, physique et astrologique des peuples anciens, avec tous ses développemens*.[212] The plate, designed by Louis Lefrançois, features a large sphere divided into the 12 segments of the zodiac, and each segment was further subdivided into sub-categories, each of which bore the name of a divinity, all of whom were responsible for overseeing the earth. Hence Egyptian mythology was founded on 36 "subaltern" gods, while Indian mythology represented their principal divinity with 36 heads. This zodiacal understanding governed the belief that sky and earth were intimately involved in the morals of human behaviour, and the sun and the moon in this conception of the universe were considered supreme entities. The symbolic parcelling up of the sky became the basis for sacred allegories and these, as Lenoir demonstrated, made their way into Masonic initiation rites. I would argue that this indebtedness to the ancients that Lenoir described – the ancients who were themselves very attuned to the natural elements – provides the reader with insight into Lenoir's own position regarding light and its organic and divine meaning.

[211] This passage is informed by discussions about Masonic initiation rites that I had with Mason Peter Snickaers at the Masonic Temple on Sherbrooke Street in Montréal on 17 January, 2007.
[212] Lenoir, *Franche-Maçonnerie*, plate inserted between pages 42 and 43.

Lenoir confided that the same organic conception of the universe and the sun's positioning within this zodiac continued to provide the symbolic foundations for Masonic rituals as it did the rituals of cultures in antiquity. In other words, Masonic rituals were no more than the representation of phenomena occurring in nature. The first three Masonic degrees, intended to provide moral education, were themselves, according to Lenoir, representations of the different ages of the world. The first Masonic degree, performed at autumn equinox (also the Egyptian New Year), was in fact modelled on the idea of solar revolution and, more broadly speaking, darkness and light. The initiate was blindfolded and partially undressed and divested of his material possessions as an allegory of the harmony and peace that reigned in Masonic brotherhoods and the Masonic aversion to violence. The initiate was then led into a sparsely furnished and darkened room, suggestive of the underworld ruled by Ahriman or Minos. Left to reflect on his merit, he was confronted with moralizing inscriptions intended to discourage the insincere or the merely curious from pursuing the Brotherhood further.

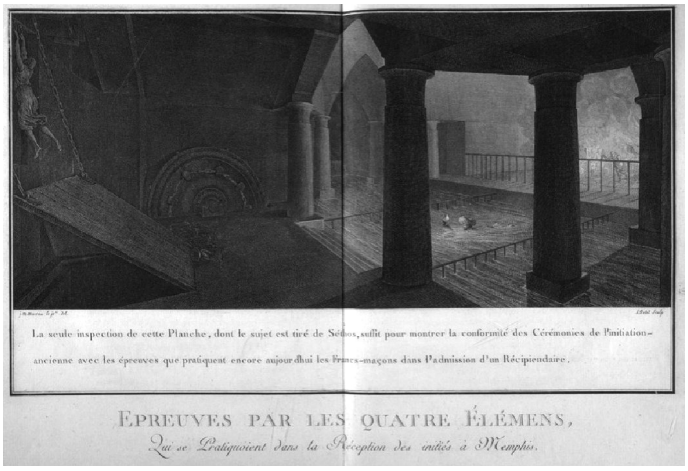


Figure 21. ***Épreuves par les quatre élémens***

Following this experience, and as a prelude to the multiple trials that lay ahead, the candidate was then introduced to the temple with the following saying: "c'est un aveugle qui demande la lumière, un cadavre qui demande la résurrection." Lenoir went on to write: "Il est facile de reconnoître dans cette phrase, la peinture des deux principes, *ténèbre* et *lumière*, *mal* et *bien*, *mort* et *résurrection*. On livre ensuite le récipiendaire aux épreuves les plus rigoureuses, ainsi que cela se pratiquoit dans les mystères d'Isis et de Cérès."[213] These Masonic "épreuves" or voyages, as Lenoir referred to them, are not described, they are merely alluded to by a description of Egyptian initiation rites from which they were directly inspired. "Il seroit à désirer que l'on s'en tînt invariablement à l'imitation des

[213] Ibid., 240.

épreuves qui se pratiquoient dans l'initiation égyptienne, puisque l'on doit voir, dans les formules allégoriques de la Franche-Maçonnerie, tout ce que les anciens entendoient par celles des mystères d'Isis et de Cérés."[214] Lenoir did concede that the natural elements – water, fire, air, earth – played an integral role in these trials, and suggested that they were, by nature, quite vigorous, and demanded courage and perseverance on the part of the initiate. The trial concluded with the ceremonial meeting of the initiate and Master of the Lodge, at which time the initiate took an oath of allegiance and pledged secrecy to the Brotherhood, before ultimately being led to light.

That which can be deduced from Lenoir's veiled descriptions of the Masonic "trials" leading to the three Masonic degrees is that the rituals were all characteristically primordial. For the first degree, the unarmed initiate was placed in a subservient relationship with each of the four elements and required to overcome certain feats. The reader surmises that the second "Apprentice" degree, which Lenoir described less clearly, was intended to instill a deep respect for virtue, and may have involved a form of purification or baptism (as it did for the ancients) and culmination in an Elysium setting. For the final degree, that of Master, the temple was elaborately decorated and the foundational Masonic narrative, that of the assassination of Hiram, architect of Solomon's Temple and none other than Grand Architect of the Universe, was performed.

The remarkable synchronicity between Lenoir's use of light at the Musée and its centrality to Masonic ritualistic practices is apparent in yet another form in his curatorial endeavour: in its incarnation as coloured light, or stained glass. Lenoir devoted an entire volume of *Musée des Monumens français*, volume 6, to the subject of stained glass, for which his publication served as a treatise on the history and artistic practices related to ancient and modern stained glass-making. This treatise is followed by a room-by-room description of the stained glass exhibited at the Musée, a description that was elaborately illustrated by over fifty engraved plates.

One might well question why Lenoir added a series of stained glass windows to his already large collection of objects (as we have already seen, each of the century halls had significant displays of glass), particularly when the Musée was ostensibly dedicated to

[214] Ibid., 244.

preserving and exhibiting French sculpture and architectural fragments. There are several reasons for this, and several perspectives from which to consider this line of inquiry. Of all the objects that Lenoir collected in his museum, stained glass was the least contested – and therefore the least likely to be removed from the Musée. Sculptures and canvases were constantly being transferred to the Louvre, however stained glass had a unique tradition and relationship with religious buildings, of which the monastery of the Petits-Augustins provided the ideal setting. One might well conclude that Lenoir would also have been attracted to the particular subject matter that was historically featured on stained glass – the "allegorical fiction," as Lenoir referred to it. While the subject matter of the various pieces of stained glass dispersed throughout the Musée varied from Biblical scenes to portraits of patrons, by far the most important series of stained glass in the collection was the sixteenth-century cycle based on the drawings of Psyché and Cupidon by Raphaël, and located in the gallery.

Like the *fabrique* Lenoir created for Héloïse and Abélard – the Musée's other main allegorical depiction of love – this cycle was crucial for the morals it illustrated to visitors of the museum. The subject itself, a fable and allegory of love from Apulée's *Ane d'Or*, had been the subject of a publication by Delaunay (with engravings overseen by the artist Girodet, student of David) and popularized Platonic ideals that served to promote the contemporary ideals of the Revolution. A passage from Lenoir's catalogue expresses this conviction

> Apulée adopta la morale de Platon, qui était fort en vogue à Rome de son temps, et l'on a cru découvrir dans sa fable de Cupidon et Psyché des mystères analogues au systême du philosophe athénien. Par example, dans la ville dont il parle, on a vu le monde; l'esprit et la matière dans le roi et la reine; l'amitié intelligente dans Psyché; et le principe actif de toute chose dans l'Amour: comme on a vu aussi deux substances matérielles dans les deux soeurs de Psyché…[215]

[215] Lenoir, *Musée*, Vol. 6, 101-102.

With its strong republican resonances, the iconography of the cycle served to valorize the Revolution's principle aims of good citizenry, reminiscent of the Athenian model of Greco-Roman traditions.

Lenoir evaluated the quality of the stained glass in the Musée's collection according to the same model of rise and decline that structured the display of sculpture in the century-specific halls, and in all cases his opinion paralleled the trajectory of sculpture. His assessment of thirteenth-century stained glass – and the origin of the art form – revealed a practice that lacked taste and technical mastery. Clearly, stained-glass making was in its infancy, revealing a primordial state that Lenoir valued precisely for this reason. Predictably, the cycle of images ornamenting the fourteenth-century hall marked a stylistic improvement ("des progrès sensibles"), according to Lenoir, while the fifteenth-century artists produced masterpieces, with brilliant colours and vigorous articulations. Of the sixteenth century, which Lenoir characterized as a Renaissance and "siècle régénérateur" in French artistic practices, Lenoir had this to say of stained glass-making: "La peinture sur verre, parée de toutes les perfections de l'art, parut alors comme un astre lumineux fait pour conduire dans la route du beau et du grand les artistes que la nature ménageait aux siècles qui devaient suivre…Parler des six vitraux qui décorent la salle du seizième siècle, c'est compter autant de chefs-d'oeuvre."[216] But adhering closely to the period of "decadence" and "degradation" that descended upon France in the seventeenth- and eighteenth-centuries, stained glass "tomba tout à coup dans la plus grande désuétude"[217] in the seventeenth century.

Yet in spite of these arguments – the appropriateness of exhibiting stained glass in a purpose-made building, their relative security in Lenoir's collection, Lenoir's ability to make these works "conform" to the Romantic mode of narration that characterized his work – we have not yet addressed the issue that was perhaps the most central to Lenoir's concerns. This issue concerns the public perception of stained glass as a craft manifesting a highly mysterious character, and perpetuated by secretive means. Lenoir did little to dispel this myth in his essay, and it is worth quoting the passage at length for a full sense of the language in which the art of stained glass-making was steeped

[216] Ibid., Vol. 6, 78-79.
[217] Ibid., Vol. 6, 89.

On ne doit pas s'étonner si la peinture sur verre, qui a tant d'avantages aux yeux du peuple sur la peinture à l'huile, et qui présente tant d'éclat par la vivacité de ses couleurs, a long-temps passé pour un art *magique* qui, soi-disant, ne pouvait s'obtenir que par des *secrets*, dont les maîtres peintres verriers, qui les avaient reçus de maîtres plus anciens qu'eux, faisaient mystère pendant leur vie, et qu'ils ne communiquaient à leurs enfans ou à leurs élèves qu'au moment de la mort. Non seulement la peinture sur verre exige des connaissances chimiques, pour obtenir les couleurs qui lui sont propres; mais encore son exécution force le praticien de cet art à appeler la chimie à son secours pour la cuisson de ses pièces et la confection totale de ses tableaux. Tout le monde sait que dans les temps d'ignorance, et l'origine de la peinture sur verre remonte à ces temps-là, les arts et les sciences n'étaient pratiqués que par des religieux, des médecins, et en général par un très-petit nombre d'hommes; que le résultat de leurs recherches scientifiques, et notamment ce qui était ostensible et frappait fortement la vue, devait nécessairement étonner le peuple, pour lequel chaque ouvrage était un phénomène nouveau. Peu accoutumé à raisonner, ce même peuple, toujours ami du merveilleux, frappé de ce qu'il voyait, ne pouvant se faire une idée de l'étude, trouva plus facile d'imaginer qu'il existait des secrets pour faire des tableaux, des livres, de la chimie, de la médecine, etc.; que ces secrets ne pouvaient être communiqués qu'à un petit nombre d'hommes dont le choix lui paraissait être, dans les uns, un effet de la grace divine, et, dans les autres, celui de la méchanceté du démon : il disait, ce même peuple, que celui-ci, voulant se faire des créatures et rivaliser avec la divinité, insinuait finement à certains hommes qu'il savait choisir, que s'ils voulaient s'abandonner entièrement à lui, ils obtiendraient, en retour, l'art de faire de l'or, des livres, de la chimie, ou des tableaux, suivant le goût de celui sur lequel il avait jeté les yeux. Ces extravagances des temps superstitieux, soutenues par des écrivains de ces temps-là, et fidellement répétées par d'autres, se sont tellement accréditées, que, de nos jours, le peuple croit encore au *secret de la peinture sur verre*. Voici ce que dit Le Vieil, qui écrivait en 1774, à l'occasion de Léonard Gontier qui a

> peint les belles vitres de l'Arquebuse à Troyes en Champagne: "Combien de productions, semblables à celles des frères Gontier, faute d'avoir été *révélées* ou rendues publiques, ont accéléré la ruine de certains arts! Nous osons même assurer que celui de la peinture sur verre n'a point eu d'autre cause physique de son oubli. Ces habiles peintures sur verre et en émail, qui se distinguèrent sous le règne de Francois Ier, contens de mériter les graces d'un souverain qui témoignait une singulière prédilection pour ces deux arts, et de l'emporter sur les autres artistes par l'excellence de leurs ouvrages, ne donnèrent à leurs élèves que d'un certain genre de couleurs, et se réservaient les plus belles et les plus précieuses; encore les leur donnaient-ils souvent toutes prêtes à êtres mises en oeuvre. A l'égard du *secret*, ils le laissaient à leurs enfans ou héritiers en qui ils connaissaient les qualités requises pour le faire valoir, sinon il restait enseveli avec ces hommes rares, et se perdait pour leur propre famille." D'après le paragraphe que je viens de citer, il paraît que Le Vieil croyait aussi au secret de peindre sur verre.[218]

What is immediately apparent in this passage is the similarity of the narrative voice to Masonic histories and lore: that is, the suggestion of a rite of passage and the highly hermetic environment that characterized the transmission of knowledge and technique in the craft of stained glass-making. One cannot help but to be reminded of alchemical fascinations, and of the very elemental technique of glass-making and the earthly pigments used to produce its astonishing palette.[219]

Not unlike Masonic historiography, Lenoir emphasized the antiquity of glass-painting in his historical treatise, quoting the Roman philosopher Pliny and the eighteenth-century, Paris-based stained glass-maker Le Vieil on the subject.[220] "On pourrait faire remonter…l'origine du verre jusqu'au temps de la construction de la tour de Babel,"[221] wrote Lenoir, a finding by which he ambiguously located the tradition in a Biblical yet somewhat mystifying context. Further emphasizing this mysterious nature, Lenoir

[218] Ibid., Vol. 6, 90-93. Emphasis my own.
[219] Ibid., Vol. 6, 38-40.
[220] Lenoir gives no details as to which of the pair of Le Vieil brothers he was quoting. Pierre and Jean Le Vieil were responsible for replacing the south-facing stained-glass windows of Notre-Dame Cathedral in Paris. See *Musée*, Vol. 6, 38. According to Lenoir, Le Vieil published a text entitled *L'art de la peinture sur verre*.
[221] Ibid., Vol. 6, 6.

claimed that "les grands monumens qui nous les ont transmis sont les châteaux, les palais et les églises. Je crois que, dans ces derniers édifices, les vitraux, ainsi peints, étaient d'une nécessité absolue, non seulement pour retracer à l'imagination les sujets de culte, conserver un air de mysticité, mais encore préserver de l'action du soleil des êtres réunis en plein jour dans un lieu où ils restaient long-temps, et qui religieusement ne pouvaient être privés de cet astre bienfaisant; ce qui fût arrivé en y mettant, soit des volets, soit des rideaux.[222] Thus in addition to affixing a revered lineage to the practice, Lenoir also rather curiously introduced solar rhetoric suggestive of Masonic beliefs.

Beyond having located the development of the art within a Romantic historiography that established models of rise and decline, Lenoir's treatment of stained glass did little to further any scientific knowledge of the subject. His discussion of the glass in the collection of the Musée, though lengthier, was not unlike the previous catalogue entries detailing sculpture and architectural fragments, and his appreciation was largely an aesthetic one. Lenoir remarked upon the quality of drawing and execution of design, and the coherence of the composition, yet it was in his assessment of the effect of colour that one derives a sense of the importance of these objects to the overall affective presence that Lenoir sought to achieve in the museum. In the richness and brilliance of colour lies the suggestion of the capacity of stained glass to induce physical effects, effects that not only "frappent la vue" in the words of Lenoir, but which radically transform the beholder's perception of space.

The Entrance, the Column, the Obelisk, and the Fabrique

There is always a risk when reading a work through a particular lens of attributing influence to something that is either not explicitly intended, or part of a larger field than the one under scrutiny. So it is with the wide range of Masonic emblems and motifs that also circulated as part of a larger Enlightenment culture. Such is the case with the eighteenth-century preoccupation with death, the column, and the obelisk, all of which may, or may not, have been invoked with specific Masonic intent in the social landscape. Bearing in mind the enormous popularity of Freemasonry in late eighteenth-century France, and the significance and singularity of Lenoir's position within the Brotherhood as both an active member and museum professional, it is not entirely inconceivable that

[222] Ibid., Vol. 6, 13.

Lenoir's predilection for various objects, and their methods of display, should have revealed Masonic sympathies.

Figure 22. Introduction Hall (Vauzelle)

In this final section on the subjects of Freemasonry and scenography, I would like to consider four specific features of the Musée, and their potential Masonic connections and symbolic meaning within the museum context. These features are the celebration of the 'entrance'; the column; the obelisk; and lastly, the concept of the *fabrique*.

The Entrance

The Introduction Hall served several purposes for Lenoir. As a space to accommodate an abundance of objects, or objects that did not, by their chronology, character, or scale suit the corresponding century hall, the Introduction Hall harmonized a great number of discordant features within a museological setting that in most other cases sought to isolate these features (at least in chronological terms). And particularly by its inclusion of monuments from antiquity (which far exceeded the temporal scope of the Musée's collecting aims), the space incarnated the search for origins that was a primary concern in Masonic epistemology.

Yet another way to consider the significance of the Introduction Hall was in connection with the Masonic celebration of the entrance way. According to Masonic terminology, a Mason has "entered" when they have received the First Degree, while the entrance proper (to the Temple of Solomon) was suggested by the placement of two columns in surrogate temples and lodges throughout Europe.

Lenoir conceived of the Introduction Hall near the beginning of his plans for the Musée. He briefly described his intentions for this hall as early as the fourth edition of *Description*: "des archetypes (antiques) que je placerai dans une salle particulière pour servir à la chronologie de l'art, base principale de mon travail. Cette suite précieuse est composée d'un monument Egyptien, vu sur ses deux faces, d'une suite de tombeaux antiques apportés en France par l'ambassadeur Nointel, qui avait voyagé pour Louis XIV dans la Gréce (sic) et dans l'Archipel, et de plusieurs statues antiques que Robert Strozzi avait données à François Ier."[223] The two views of the Introduction Hall that Réville and Lavallée recorded in their elegant *Vues pittoresques et perspectives des Salles du Musée des monuments français* reveal a space unlike any other at the Musée. Located in the monastic complex's seventeenth-century church, the Introduction Hall fully occupied this church's long rectangular nave.[224] The simple barrel roof was a deliberate choice by the mendicant order over the more elaborate construction of a barrel vault which would have required buttressing, thus permitting Lenoir great artistic liberty in an otherwise luminous and spacious room.

Figure 23. Introduction Hall – View 2 (Vauzelle)

[223] Lenoir, *Description*, 4ème éd., Avant-propos, 11.
[224] In her study of the architecture of the Petits-Augustins convent, Suzanne Thouronde states that the nave measured 11 metres X 41 metres.

From a short footnote in Lenoir's own description of the Musée, we know that Lenoir intended for the Introduction Hall to contain plaster casts of antique monuments that had been removed from the depot and transferred to the collection of the Louvre.[225] Lenoir, who had these casts made at his own expense, clearly desired for them to serve the dual purpose of illustrating a "universal" history of sculpture, while preserving an image of the Musée's collection intact. It is entirely curious then that Lenoir did not provide a written overview of this room as he did the other century halls of the Musée in the early catalogues (although one did appear in the 1815 edition of *Musée royal*).[226] Réville and Lavallée's visual renderings and Roquefort's literary accounts of the hall, in addition to the drawings of Biet and the accompanying description of Brès, and Hubert Robert's rendition of the room, reveal a striking space – and perhaps this is why Biet devoted a total of 12 of 40 plates to accurately recording the room. It was here that Roquefort claimed the visitor could come to "connaître les principaux caractères des différens âges des arts du dessin en France. L'observateur, en la parcourant, est transporté depuis l'enfance de l'art, sous les Gaulois, jusquà sa décadence vers la fin du XVII^{e} siècle, en passant par l'heureuse époque qui fit éclore, sous Louis XII, ces talens dont l'influence amena la perfection sous le règne de François I^{er}."[227] And it was here that Lenoir placed some of the most unusual objects of his collection, notably the Longueville obelisk[228] dedicated to Henri I, duc de Longueville, as well as the two twisted columns (one dedicated to Henri III and the other to Anne de Montmorenci)[229] placed opposite one another to suggest a pair. Within the larger landscape of the sizeable sarcophagi that lined the walls of the Introduction Hall, these

Figure 24. Introduction Hall – View of twisted column (Biet)

[225] "Les monumens antiques qui composent la première partie de cet ouvrage ont été retirés de la destruction par mes soins; ils font encore partie de ce Musée, et les amateurs retrouveront par suite, dans la salle d'introduction de mon établissement, une grande partie des archétypes de ces morceaux précieux que j'ai fait lever, à mes frais, avant de les envoyer à leurs musées respectifs." *Musée*, Vol. 1, 95.
[226] Lenoir, *Musée royal*, 26-37.
[227] Brès, *Souvenirs*, 2.
[228] Ibid., plate 10.
[229] Ibid., plates 3, 10, 11, and 12.

objects stood out by their distinctive shapes and the prominence of their placement in the middle of the room. The floor featured a large marble rosette, containing the twelve signs of the zodiac, possibly from the Château d'Anet.

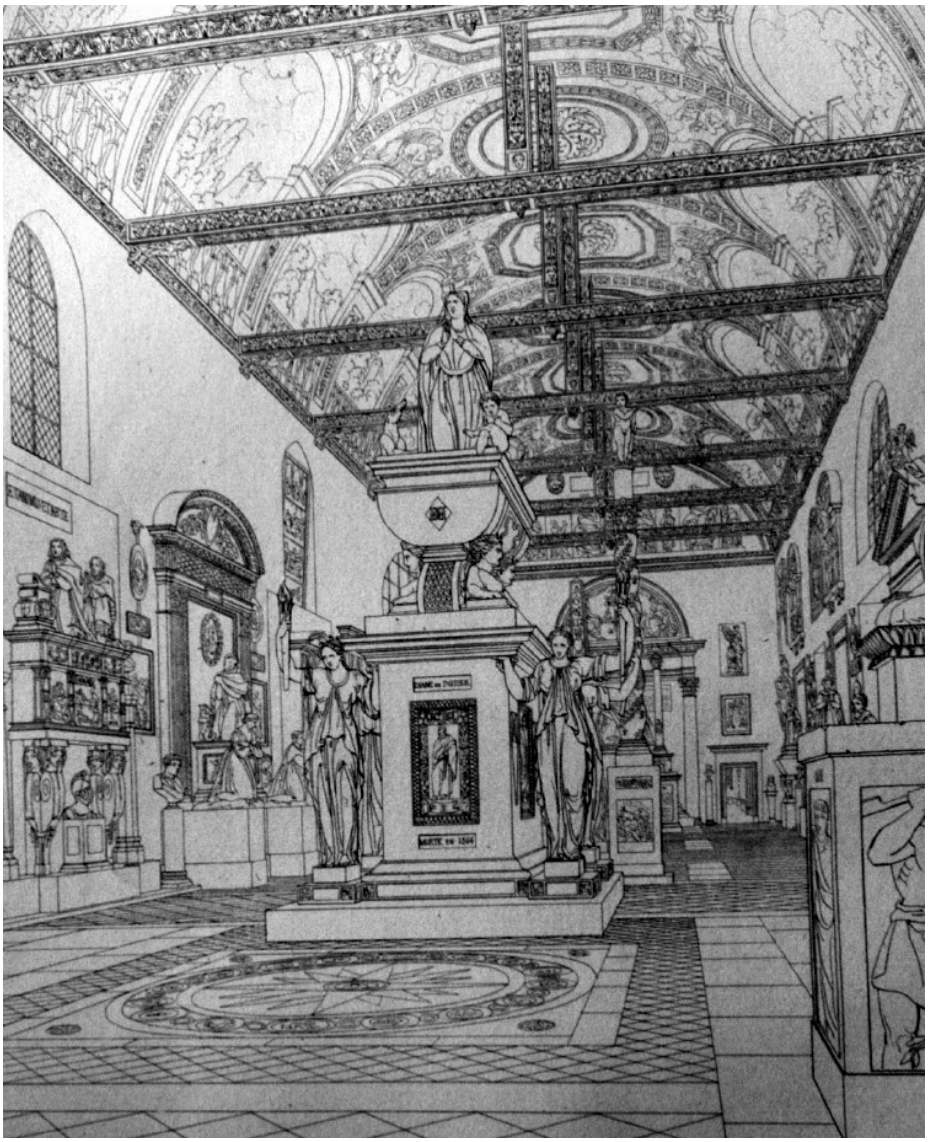


Figure 25. Introduction Hall (Biet)

Boaz and Jakin

Particularly striking in the hall as Lenoir conceived it was, beyond the profusion of funerary sculptures that lined the periphery, the presence of two towering columns, spiral in form, reminiscent of Bernini's *Baldacchino* at St. Peter's Basilica in Rome. Centrally positioned in the nave, the two columns were placed in relation to one another and by virtue of this placement, appear to frame the monuments that are immediately before and behind them. While not uniquely specific to Masonic symbolism, the spiral column did have strong connections to Enlightenment designs for the reconstruction of the Temple of Solomon, in addition to the designs of altars and shrines in early medieval times.

The French architect Ribart de Chamoust had, for example, designed a French order consisting of three columns on a triangular base and adorned with a spiralling garland, which appeared in his 1783 publication, *L'Ordre François trouvé dans la Nature*, and which bore startling Masonic overtones. Lequeu had also produced a garlanded column in his 1794 design for a monument for Victory Square. In this context, the Musée's spiral columns may be understood as slightly grandiose funerary markers holding court in a room of more traditional funerary sculpture, or they may, by their precise location in the Musée's "entrance" and Introduction Hall, signify something quite different. In this alternative instance, a pair of twisted columns celebrating an entrance could be understood as a Masonic allusion to the Temple of Solomon, and the legend of Jakin and Boaz, whose spiral columns were located at the east entrance to the Temple. Jachin invoked the idea of foundations, or establishment, while Boaz implied strength.

According to James Curl, "the significant thing about Jachin and Boaz, as far as we are concerned, is their importance as celebrations of entrance, as mnemonics of the Temple and of the legends of how esoteric knowledge was preserved, and as sources for the design of columns and pillars, especially in the Renaissance and Baroque periods. The spiral form, indeed, can be found in reconstructions of the Temple by artists of the Enlightenment, in the *Baldacchino* of St. Peter's in Rome, in designs for a new architectural Order suitable for the eighteenth century in France, and in the décor of Continental Lodges."[230] The column in a more general sense disproportionately filled the Musée's collection, such that the number of columns that were salvaged from various

[230] Curl, *The Art and Architecture of Freemasonry*, 32.

sites and housed in the original depot was striking.[231] As Curl remarked, "by 1776 the spiral column and Egyptian features were becoming common features of Masonic décor, mingling ideas of the Temple with elements from Ancient Egypt."[232]

Both Roquefort and Brès accounted for both columns in their respective descriptions of the Introduction Hall. The white marble "*colonne torse*," or twisting column, that appears in Plates 10 and 11 of *Souvenirs*, was erected in memory of Anne de Montmorenci, a high-ranking French general. The design for the column was provided by Barthelemi Prieur, who spent 20 years completing the monument which would be placed at the Célestins. Originally topped by an urn containing the heart of the *connetable*, when the urn broke, it was replaced by a small bronze statue representing the allegorical figure of Justice. To the left of this column (in Plate 11), Lenoir placed a second marble "*colonne torse*," also executed by Barthelemi Prieur. It was commissioned by Charles Benoise, secretary of Henri III (assassinated in 1589), and was erected at Saint-Cloud. It too originally supported an urn containing the heart of Henri III, but was replaced by a small putto in white marble bearing a torch, when the urn broke.

The Obelisk

The obelisk, or sun dial, was another prominent Masonic motif, venerated for its connection to ancient sun mythologies and Ancient Egyptian mysteries and perceived origins of the Craft. According to Curl, the obelisk was often invoked in association with Continental Masters' Degrees – or the third of the basic Masonic degrees before the Scottish Rite. The obelisk, which appears frequently in Masonic iconography, dominated the second of two views provided by Réville and Lavallée, and bore a series of intriguing icons down its long shaft, including a compass and the allegorical figures of Force, Justice, Temperance, and Prudence. Roquefort referred to the thirteen-foot black marble obelisk as the pyramid of Longueville, which was completed in 1663 by Michel Anguier and placed in the Church of the Célestins. "Ses quatre faces sont ornées de bas-reliefs allégoriques aux sciences et aux arts," he wrote. "Dans le piédestal, on a incrusté deux

[231] The preponderance of columns in the Musée's collection is apparent when consulting the various editions of Lenoir's *Description* and the *Archives du Musée des Monuments français*.
[232] Curl, *The Art and Architecture of Freemasonry*, 132.

bas-reliefs en bronze dorés qui représentent la bataille de Senlis et les secours accordés à la ville d'Arques."[233]

Lenoir specifically discussed this commemorative monument to Henri, duc de Longueville, and his family under entry #207 of volume 5 of *Musée des Monumens français*. It is a particularly significant entry because in it, Lenoir differentiated between the obelisk and the pyramid – both of which were considered solar monuments. The distinguishing feature between the two was not formal, but rather functional and symbolic, the pyramid being a funerary monument dedicated to a family burial. "L'obélisque s'employait comme décoration dans les places publiques, ou dans les temples comme monument du culte dont il étoit l'objet. La pyramide étoit réservée à l'usage des tombeaux; c'était un véritable mausolée, enfin une chambre sépulcrale…Il est donc certain que la pyramide est un monument solaire comme l'obélisque, mais dont l'usage est différent, puisqu'elle est faite en maçonnerie, et qu'elle sert, pour ainsi dire, de toiture aux chambres souterraines destinées à des sépultures."[234] Thus the Longueville monument was originally intended as a mausoleum, and strictly speaking was a pyramid – not an obelisk – even if in the context of the Musée des Monuments français it had been divested of its original function. It is also significant, as Lenoir duly noted, that Egypt's great pyramid, etymologically related to the Egyptian Sun God Osiris, was none other than the *Taphos Osiridis* – one of Osiris's tombs. The connections that Lenoir made in his catalogue entries to Masonic fields of interest is striking.

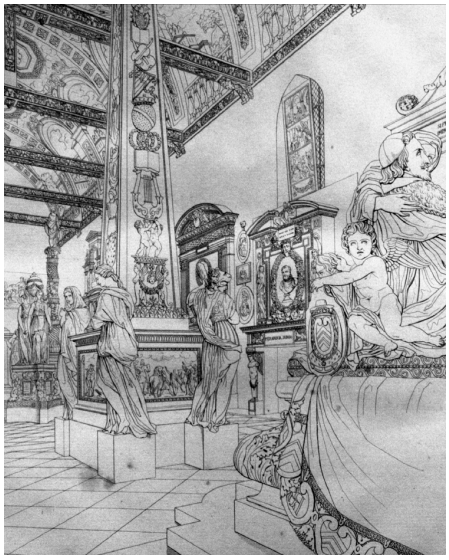


Figure 26. Introduction Hall – View of obelisk (Biet)

To late eighteenth-century Masons, these time-telling devices were equally a reference to a highly symbolic and hermetic world and stressed the Masonic concept of the Brotherhood as guardians of knowledge. Without overstating the significance of

[233] Roquefort, *Vues pittoresques*, 32.
[234] Lenoir, *Musée*, Vol. 5, 113.

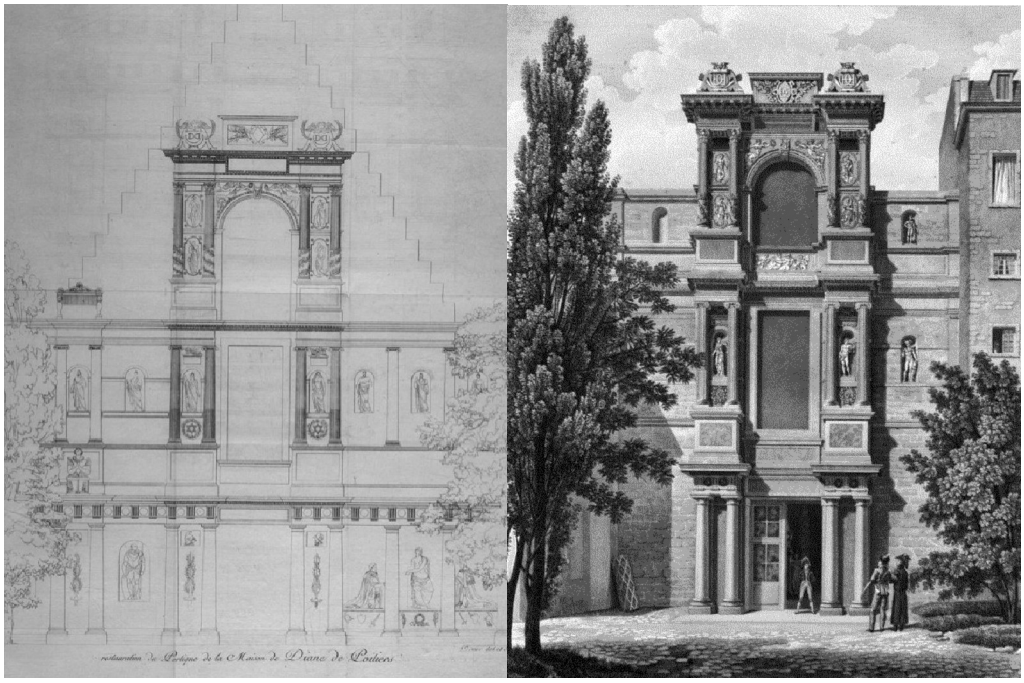
Egyptian elements in a period known for its Egyptian Revival following Napoleon's famous campaigns, 'Egyptian' rites were known to have spread throughout continental Masonic lodges – notably in Paris and in Germany – under the auspices of one duplicitous Count Alessandro Cagliostro (1743-95). These rites were inspired by Isiac ceremonies, and celebrated the idea of the trial – even if it should result in death – recalling parallels in Christian martyrology.

These objects with masonic overtones may simply have been part of the larger cultural landscape of which Lenoir was a part, or they may have been placed so as to make a masonic interpretation of the experience of the space more apparent. Lenoir did not extrapolate on the subject; indeed, Masons were highly encouraged to be discrete about their activities. This being said, two more details must be mentioned when assessing the significance and intended interpretation of these objects in a potentially masonic context. In the seventh edition of *Description*, published in 1803, the "pyramide de Longueville" as the obelisk was referred to was located in the seventeenth-century hall, not the Introduction Hall, as would later be the case.[235] Although we don't know why Lenoir would have moved the object at such a late date, images of the seventeenth-century hall do not communicate an overly crowded space – quite the opposite. It therefore would seem plausible to suggest that Lenoir moved the obelisk not as a matter of necessity, but rather by design, to compliment an already existing mass of Masonic-inspired motifs.

One final design feature corroborates the theory that Lenoir displayed a certain openness to Masonic traditions in his scenography at the Musée, and this in connection with the celebrated entrance to the Musée. It is well known that Lenoir accentuated this entrance to the Introduction Hall by placing Philibert de l'Orme's towering, mid-sixteenth-century portico from Diane de Poitiers's[236] château at Anet on the façade of the church. The portico was particularly instructive for its elegant combination of the orders, and Lenoir highly praised de l'Orme's work. Yet it's curious to note that Lenoir's original intention for the entrance of the former church, one that he outlined in a document to the *Conseil des bâtiments* in October 1797, was to affix a portico bearing an Egyptian pyramid atop

[235] Lenoir, *Description*, 7ème éd., 241.
[236] Diane de Poitiers was the famous lover of Henri II. At the château, the sculptures were completed by Jean Goujon, and the paintings by Jean Cousin. The Château d'Anet was demolished during the Revolution and its portico was salvaged.

four columns.[237] Given this archival evidence, it is not difficult to consider this intended imagery for the entrance of the Musée as part of a larger masonic choreography.



Figures 27 and 28. Sketch (Lenoir) and Portico from Château d'Anet (Vauzelle)

The Fabrique

By 1797, Lenoir boasted that he had already conserved over 200 monuments at the Musée. The procedure by which Lenoir "conserved" funerary monuments was, to be sure, one of his more unusual curatorial endeavours, and in many cases he referred to the result of such practices as a *fabrique*. Lenoir produced different types of *fabriques*, from full sculptural constructions of recycled materials, to partial repairs to existing sculptures that were heavily damaged during the Revolution. He described his work very innocently as a necessary antidote to the mass destruction occasioned during the Revolutionary era ("Ces Monumens ont été exécutés d'après mes plans et mes dessins, ainsi qu'une grande partie des Monumens renfermés dans ce Musée, que j'ai été obligé de recomposer et de rajuster selon leur âge, à cause des prodigieuses mutilations qu'ils avaient souffertes."),[238]

[237] AN F13 871 (17 vendémiaire An VI); quoted in Alexandra Stara, "Lenoir, Quatremère and the hermeneutic significance of the Musée des Monuments français," PhD Diss. (Worcester College, University of Oxford, 1999), 73-74.
[238] Lenoir, *Description*, 4ème éd., Avant-propos, 13.

however Lenoir's interventions went far beyond the traditional conservation efforts of his colleagues – and he received much criticism for them.

Lenoir was aware of the charges levelled against him and defended himself in his writing. He included a quote by a supporter in the fourth edition of *Description* which justified his actions

> Puisqu'enfin voilà un véritable Musée de sculpture française, pourquoi ne l'enrichirait-on pas d'une foule de Monumens épars dans les départemens? Il existait à Bourg en Bresse, des tombeaux très-précieux de la maison de Savoie; à Joinville, on voyait ceux des Guises; à Ploërmel, à Nantes, ceux des ducs de Bretagne; à Josselin, celui du connétable de Clisson; à Moulins, celui de Montmorency; à Vienne, celui de Montmorin; à Dijon, ceux des ducs de Bourgogne, ect. Il est desirable que le citoyen Lenoir presse le gouvernement de l'autoriser à rassembler tous ces Monumens historiques, dont on risque de perdre les débris; car ils ont partout eu à souffrir du dernier vendalisme (*sic*). Il appartient sans doute de les restaurer à celui qui a développé un vrai courage pour nous en conserver un si grand nombre, et montré un talent réel à les bien disposer.[239]

In Part III, I elaborate on the subject of the *fabrique*, particularly in relation to the Elysium garden, in which it featured prominently in the landscape of funerary monuments. Its importance to the present discussion pertains to the very conceptual horizon of the *fabrique* as an object of both eclecticism and syncretism. In Masonic practices, legends were often intermingled and iconographies blended – such was the case for the legends of the Two Columns or Pillars that appeared in the Old Charges and which were not, although they would come to be, the same as the two columns located at the eastern entrance of the Temple of Solomon. Similarly, in the very creation of the *fabrique* Lenoir was able to harmonize discordant features, and to produce a synthesis and syncretism of ideas. There were countless examples of *fabriques* at the Musée, from the monument erected to *Reine Blanche* (and subsequently transferred to Saint-Denis), to

[239] Ibid., Avant-propos, 14-15.

the mausoleum of Charles V and Jeanne de Bourbon, centre piece of the fourteenth-century hall,[240] to Lenoir's most famous *fabrique*, the sepulchral chapel of Héloïse and Abélard. Even the century halls, "re-constructed" with architectural débris, may be considered a form of *fabrique*.

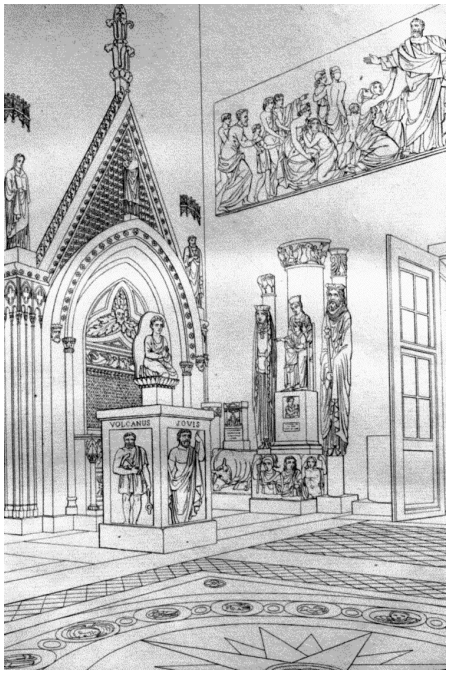


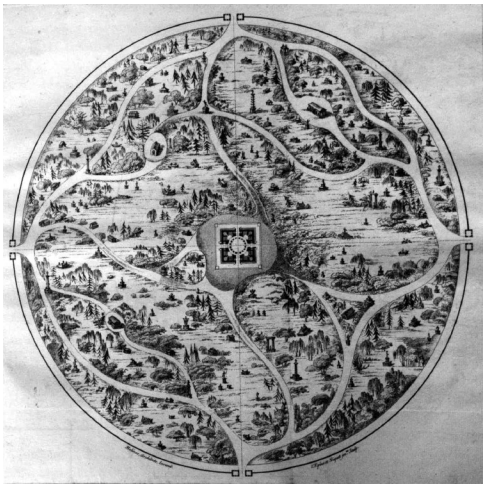
Figure 29. Introduction Hall with view of the *fabrique* of Reine Blanche

Of the tomb of *Reine Blanche*, located in the Introduction Hall, Roquefort specifically remarked upon the harmony of its parts ("il est composé de divers morceaux d'architecture du XIIIe siècle. On remarque l'heureux résultat de la réunion de ces débris. L'ensemble a de la grace, et toutes les parties sont en harmonie")[241] and it was precisely this harmony, this salvaging of parts, this piecing together of the past, that Lenoir ardently sought in his reconstructions at the Musée. Lenoir's obsessive preoccupation with death – with monuments and tombs, cemeteries and exhumations – culminated in the presence of an Elysium in the museum setting: an ironic affirmation if any were needed of the contention of the museum as tomb. If there is a case to be made for a Masonic narrative at the Musée, I would suggest that it served another purpose than that of furthering Masonic fraternity in the social sphere. Within the context of a museological installation that pioneered a new view of the past, one that premised itself upon successfully creating an affective presence while just as obsessively undertaking to "show" time, Lenoir's quest was to suggest the possibility of reconnecting with a "deeper" notion of time and to harmonize this past with present practices.

[240] Brès, *Souvenirs*, plate 19.
[241] Brès, *Souvenirs*, 2. Plate 1, monument in background.

Interlude II

The Elysium as Topos:
The Resurgence of the Idealized Garden in Late Eighteenth-Century France



Interlude II: The Elysium as Topos:
The Resurgence of the Idealized Garden in Late Eighteenth-Century France

The Garden-Pantheon: Theorizing New Ideals of Death

The theme of the Elysium, or Elysian Field, was a literary and architectural preoccupation in late eighteenth-century France. That it should become the basis for Lenoir's designs in the garden of the Musée des Monuments français was entirely significant, and to a certain extent, avant-garde, both by urban planning and museological standards. Inspired by the Greco-Roman land of the afterlife, philosophers, gardeners, and architects from Jean-Jacques Rousseau to Alexandre Brongniart conceived of garden utopias that would provide respite from contemporary situations of urban overcrowding and political instability, while offering a space for solitary reflection. Unlike its origins in ancient mythology, in which the Elysium was imagined as the paradisal abode of the blessed after death, its modern incarnation gave greater latitude to the concept. Influenced by innovations in landscape design, ideals of the Elysium informed a surprising variety of public spaces, from the cemetery to the museum, as these emerged in a newly defined, post-Revolution public sphere.[242]

The most famous of these Elysiums, the Père Lachaise Cemetery, was inaugurated in 1804 following an intensive period of cemetery reform and changes in social attitudes toward death. It was designed by the city architect, Alexandre-Théodore Brongniart, in conjunction with the city prefect, comte Nicolas-Thérèse-Benoist Frochot, and the critic and historian Quatremère de Quincy, and it was developed throughout the first two decades of the nineteenth century. As Paris's first modern cemetery, the Père Lachaise quite literally realized the theme of the Elysium as a space of death. Unlike the city's earlier burial sites that were haphazard and unkempt outgrowths of local parish churches, the topography of the Père Lachaise followed the popular Romantic and Picturesque principles of English landscape theory then being introduced in France, and, by virtue of the personalities buried within its precinct, the cemetery quickly assumed the qualities of a garden-pantheon. This new social space in Parisian society – the burial ground conceived in the image of a *champs de repos* (field of rest) – emerged as one of the

[242] The elysium had already been spatialized in the English garden and these gardens were well-known to European visitors. Notable examples include the designs of the architect/painter/landscape architect William Kent at Stowe and Esher. Kent had been proclaimed the "father of modern gardening" by the landscape gardener Horace Walpole in *Anecdotes of Painting*, 1771, Vol. 4, 140; quoted in H.F. Clark, "Eighteenth-Century Elysiums: The Rôle of "Association" in the Landscape Movement," *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes* 6 (1943): 165-189.

paradoxes in the wake of a bloody and violent French Revolution, as Richard Etlin has observed.[243]

Jacques Cambry and the Champs de repos

Before the Père Lachaise, the idea of the landscaped cemetery in France had existed only in project form, such as that envisioned by the Parisian administrator Jacques Cambry (1749-1807) in his *Rapport sur les sépultures: présenté à l'Administration centrale du Département de la Seine*, published in 1799. The commission for Cambry's report in the final decade of the eighteenth century was significant, and his findings even more so, because they demonstrated the beginnings of a changed social attitude toward burial rites in France at the municipal level. Cambry had been instructed to visit the cemeteries of Paris and to comment on their condition. His critique was scathing. "Aucun peuple," he wrote, "aucune époque ne montre l'homme après sa mort dans un si cruel abandon."[244] Cambry's proposed reforms were, in his own words, intended to bring about the cemetery's return to "l'ordre, à la nature, à la douce sensibilité, à la religion des tombeaux."[245] In an eighty-page document that both far exceeded the breadth of the report requested of him, and followed the typical structure, style, and tone of a *parallèle*, Cambry provided an historical overview of various cultural practices pertaining to death and burial rites, and proposed his own ideas for the much-needed reform and repair of existing sepulchral monuments in the department of the Seine.

One of the first issues that Cambry addressed was that of cremation, a practice he argued befitted a 'perfected' civilization because it enabled the body to participate in the universe's eternal metamorphosis. Cambry argued that both burial and cremation must be tolerated in modern day France. France did not condone cremation as had earlier civilizations, and in this attitude Cambry found neglect for the treatment of the dead. In a passage that suggested a romantically inspired vision of death, Cambry described an idyllic resting place amidst a tranquil, natural setting: "la douce idée du repos de la mort, au milieu d'un bois silencieux et solitaire, sur les rivages d'un beau fleuve, sur le sommet d'une montagne, à côté du toit paternel, près de la chaumière où nous connûmes l'amour

[243] Richard Etlin traced the tradition of gardens of remembrance in *The Architecture of Death: The Transformation of the Cemetery in Eighteenth-Century Paris* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1984). Please see Chapter 6: The Field of Rest (1789-1804), 229-301.
[244] Jacques Cambry, *Rapport sur les sépultures: présenté à l'Administration centrale du Département de la Seine* (Paris: Pierre Didot l'Aîné, An VII / 1799), 1.
[245] Ibid., 1.

et l'amitié"[246] – ideals he argued were banned because they were merely a chimera (a similar argument to the one Lenoir would make over the Elysium).

Yet Cambry advocated that the correct treatment of the dead entailed not only their burial in an idyllic setting, but the philosophical and intellectual dimension such a setting should and would impart: "Je veux que mon tombeau répande une idée douce, une pensée philosophique, ou même quelque idée maligne."[247] Throughout his text, Cambry advocated the use of sentimental representations of death, a clear departure from both the neglect and opulence of previous traditions. Nature in this scheme was put to its greatest symbolic potential, with tree species suggesting specific attributes of the dead, such as strength and innocence. Above all, proper burial was to be made a fully public right and expression of Revolutionary ideals.

Cambry concluded his report with a discussion of monuments and the correct measures for adorning burial sites. He was particularly praise-worthy of the Roman *Via Appia* as a model for burial, with its eclectic succession of funeral monuments ranging from temples, mausoleums and columns, to pyramids and sarcophagi, aligned along the 700-kilometre road linking Rome to the Adriatic Sea. For Cambry, the tomb was an occasion to induce sentiment – melancholy, in particular – and to stir the soul (especially the souls of youth, he specified in a footnote), and a means of displaying respect for the dead. This respect emanated from man's basic right to receive a proper burial, which Cambry saw as a counterpart to the individual's basic rights in life. In his concluding paragraph, Cambry wrote that "tout être libre peu disposer de ses ossements après sa mort, comme il dispose de ses actions pendant sa vie…La liberté chez l'homme ne dépend point de la richesse, mais de la faculté d'exercer tous ses droits, de se livrer à ses caprices même, quand ils ne nuisent pas à la société, aux lois, qui seules ont droit de les contraindre."[248]

As an administrative report, Cambry's account in fact told us very little of how France actually was treating its dead. He cited no specific cemeteries in the city, and with the exception of the brief mention of Brittany (his birthplace), no examples that could stand as models outside of the capital either. Cambry was clearly much more interested in

[246] Ibid., 8.
[247] Ibid., 9.
[248] Ibid., 22.

innovating burial practices, and in a further addendum to his report ("Note sur le Champs de Repos", pp.65-72), he portrayed his ideal of a field of rest in very specific terms: he described a potential location for the site (Montmartre, on the outskirts of the city), the appropriate dimensions of the cemetery to suit the size of the population base (he wrote that 10 hectares of land would suffice for the totality of burials in the commune of Paris, though he did not specify for how long this would be an adequate portion of land), and the architectural components of the site, its monuments and buildings. The ideal site should be elevated, aerated, and surrounded by a wall which would double as enclosure and as holder of columbariums for the placement of cinerary urns. The entrances to the cemetery Cambry envisioned allegorically as tributes to the four ages of man (Childhood, Youth, Virility, and Old Age), and would lead by winding road to a central monument: a massive pyramid disguising an incinerator for cremation, a series of ovens, he specified, equipped with modern technology provided by modern chemistry. The interior of this monument was also to house the ashes of illustrious men, those who had sacrificed themselves for the Nation.

This pyramid monument/pantheon/crematorium was the first of several on-site inclusions in Cambry's scheme that suggested a modern attitude toward the cemetery and its rituals of death. Following Cambry's historical overview and praise of Classical traditions, the shift in rhetoric that this description of the new cemetery heralded revealed a transitional moment in the history of cemetery design. If Cambry's main inspiration had been the *Via Appia*, the technological changes he brought to the cemetery were of a purely functionalist nature. In addition to the placement of four depots (called *monument stational*) conceived to temporarily store corpses at various points throughout the city, the cemetery itself would provide the means for most needs to be met on-site: bricks would be fabricated by prisoners obligated by law to perform public works projects; urns to contain ashes, and ornamentation would be designed by artisans in studios located on the premises. Even the site itself – a quarry of stone – anticipated the needs of its users. In accordance, the funeral procession and public body was fully ritualized and regulated in Cambry's account.

Cambry's scheme was accompanied by plans and drawings of his imagined cemetery by an architect and inspector of civic buildings from the same department, Jacques Molinos (1743-1831). A renowned figure in his own right, Molinos was named architect of the Muséum d'histoire naturelle, completing in 1794 the amphitheatre originally designed by Verniquet by order of its curator, the Comte de Buffon, as well as the arrangement of several of its galleries. Molinos also designed the city's morgue, between Notre-Dame and the Seine. A popular architect, his work caught the imaginary of more than one nineteenth-century author and appeared in the works of Henri Heine, Eugène Sue, and Alphonse Daudet.

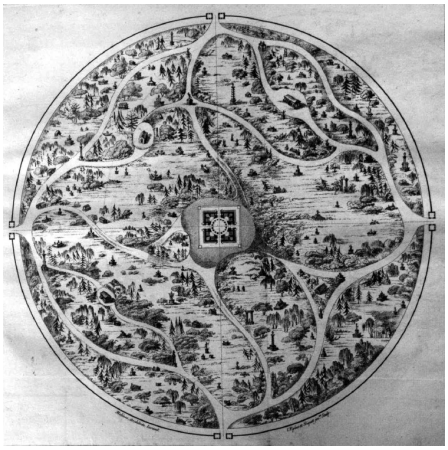


Figure 30. Molinos, Plan of the *Champs de repos*

Molinos's nine plates featured several plans of the proposed cemetery; a plan, section and elevation of the central pyramid monument; and views of each of the four communal depots. These depots, Boulléesque in their insistence on simplified, geometric shapes, were in an odd way reminiscent of the garden folly, as Etlin has already remarked.[249] Their strategic placement at locations around the city were intended as intermediaries between the place of living and the space of death (the newly proposed field of rest). In fact, bodies were to be transported first by funeral procession to these depots, and then, in a more formalized or regulated fashion, by antique chariot to the field of rest at the day's end.

If I have dwelt on this remarkable project, it is to emphasize that the very idea of the garden cemetery was receiving significant attention in the 1790s in France, though like most radical new ideas, there existed a lapse between its first articulation and its actual realization. Cambry's document was highly praised for its new ideas, and both the report and the project ideas were sent to the Bibliothèque Nationale and central administrative centres for further public consultation. Although Cambry's plan received the city's approbation, it was never realized, which makes Lenoir's creation of an Elysium, begun

[249] Etlin, *Symbolic Space: French Enlightenment Architecture and its Legacy* (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 1994), 166.

three years prior to the Cambry-Molinos report and drawings, an important reminder of the novelty of his timely project within Paris.

Vaudoyer and the Commemoration of Character

The Cambry-Molinos scheme of 1799 was preceded by an earlier proposal by architect and planner Antoine-Laurent-Thomas Vaudoyer (1756-1846), "Idées d'un citoyen françois sur le lieu destiné à la sépulture des hommes illustres de France", dated 5 April, 1791. Vaudoyer's report was much briefer than that of Cambry (eight pages), and was written on the occasion of the death of the Revolutionary and political activist, Honoré Gabriel Riquetti, comte de Mirabeau (1749-1791), as an incitement to honour the memory of Mirabeau and others like him by suitable means. For Vaudoyer, the role of the monument was to serve as a daily and intergenerational lesson in patriotic acts, and was a necessary component in the civic landscape.

Vaudoyer's article served as a pretense to articulate this architect's views on how France should be honouring its most illustrious citizens and in this he voiced important opinions on the subject. Primarily, Vaudoyer was opposed to the idea of placing monuments in a converted sanctuary as was currently the practice at the newly inaugurated Panthéon, and he sought an alternative to this custom. In this, Vaudoyer derived inspiration from the Ancients, who drew a clear line between the memorial spaces they dedicated to mortals and those that honoured their divinities. Like Cambry after him, Vaudoyer found inspiration in the Roman model of the *Via Appia*, and called for France to create its own *Voie de l'honneur* along the busy road leading from Paris to Neuilly, to be lined with simple and allegorical monuments honouring the nation's heroes.[250] As an architect, Vaudoyer's concerns were more practical than those of Cambry, and he made sure to specify that the creation of monuments be conducted by competition and open to all French artists. He too used a rhetoric infused with Romantic sensibilities to counter earlier, more grisly representations of death. Artists were encouraged to eliminate all "barbaric" references to skeletons and graves typifying centuries-old traditions, and to replace them with subtler allegories.

[250] Antoine-Laurent-Thomas Vaudoyer, *Idées d'un citoyen français sur le lieu destiné à la sepulture des hommes illustres de France* (Paris: Chez les Marchands de nouveautés, 1791).

It is in his concerns over representation and accessibility that Vaudoyer's article is most compelling. Primarily, he considered the issue of visibility and how monuments would best signify. One of his greatest criticisms pertained to the epitaph, which, he argued, typically was composed to totalize all of the actions of a given individual. Of this tendency, Vaudoyer wrote the following: "Cet usage, moderne et petit, ainsi que celui de mettre les statues des hommes célèbres dans une des plus grandes actions de leur vie, laisseroit croire à la postérité que l'un, pour le seul discours transcrit sur sa tombe, l'autre pour sa seule action dans laquelle le représente la statue, ont mérité ces honneurs distingués de la patrie."[251] He argued that it is in memory, not on stone, that the actions of these men must be engraved, and thus, like the Ancients, the individual's character, and not their actions, must be commemorated in the monument. The Roman statues of Homer and Cicero were a case in point: "Ces statues, chefs-d'oeuvre de l'antiquité, retracent simplement et avec vérité le caractère et l'âme de leurs modèles; et la postérité, en les admirant, se ressouvient de tout ce qu'ont fait ces hommes illustres et de ce qu'elle leur doit."[252] Neither should the epitaph be written in Latin or a language inaccessible to the people. In a final appeal to the cause, Vaudoyer stated that the citizen honoured by a monument on the *Voie d'honneur* would be seen far more frequently, and by a much greater number of individuals, than it would were it housed in the Panthéon, behind closed doors. The daily lesson in patriotism that witnessing the monument would provide, he argued, was a far better way of keeping the hero and their actions alive in the public imagination.

Vaudoyer, whose article preceded Lenoir's own commemorative project by a few years, had several connections with Lenoir and the Musée des Monuments français. As a young architect, he was trained in the studio of Antoine-François Peyre (1739-1823), or Peyre le Jeune,[253] and at the School of Architecture where he was a very successful young student, winning several medals in the school's architectural competitions. In 1783, Vaudoyer won the Grand Prix d'architecture and a three-year pension granted by the King to study in Rome, where he was joined shortly thereafter by Hubert Robert, Pierre F.L. Fontaine, and Charles Percier (all figures who would cross Lenoir's path). Vaudoyer in fact extended his studies in Italy by another two years, in order to continue to sketch the city's

[251] Ibid., 5.
[252] Ibid., 6.
[253] Antoine-François Peyre hailed from a family of architects active in Paris in the eighteenth century. He was the younger brother of Marie-Joseph Peyre (1730-1785) and uncle to Antoine-Marie Peyre (1770-1843).

monuments and antiquities. It is perhaps this experience that helped lead to Vaudoyer's appointment upon his return to France in 1788 to evaluate the country's national estates, and certainly served him well in his later career as a teacher of architecture. Following the suppression of the academies during the *Convention*, Vaudoyer founded a private architecture studio-school which functioned briefly at the Louvre (from 1793-1795), in collaboration with Julian-David LeRoy. Among other projects that Vaudoyer was involved in was that of renovating some of the galleries at the Musée des Monuments français, a commission he received in 1804. Given the status of the well-respected Vaudoyer, whose ideas, built works, and writing were influential to a generation of young architects, one cannot underestimate the impact of his writing on Lenoir.

Vaudoyer and Cambry were certainly not alone in their reflections on the moralizing role of the monument in the public sphere. There was considerable literature generated on the subject of monuments throughout the eighteenth century, notably by the likes of Jean François de Neufforge (1714-1791), whose ten-volume collection, *Recueil élémentaire d'architecture*, published from 1757 to 1780 contained a section devoted specifically to the use of sacred and public monuments. The abbot Charles-François Lubersac (1730-1804) had also written on the subject; *Discours sur les monumens publics de tous les âges et de tous les peuples connus*, published in 1775, concluded with a discussion specifically devoted to Paris's principal modern monuments. Their writings boded well, for with the socio-political and ideological transformations generated by the Revolution and the emergence of newly democratized spaces, so too did a certain urgency lay claim to the public imagination and instill the need for some sort of redress in the area of burials and commemorative practices.

Furthermore, a changed historiography brought the Revolutionary goal and the democratic ideal of the citizen as a model for civic engagement to the fore, replacing *Ancien régime* historiographies dominated by monarchical narratives. Consequently, new design issues emerged as the subjects of monuments and memorial spaces assumed a more democratic tenor. Though hierarchies of wealth and social standing still existed, a new commitment to achieving equality of access and representation in death arose. Toward these ends, the place of burial was conceived as both a place and a space, marked by an object but equally by a feeling or sentiment. These are the aspects that tie the

discussion of burial by Vaudoyer and Cambry to the relatively contemporaneous actions of Lenoir in the Elysian garden he conceived and created at the Musée des Monuments français.

The Elysium and Cemetery Reform

The very idea of the Elysium legitimated the presence of the monument, and more specifically the tomb, in the garden, the latter being a relatively new feature in gardening traditions. Across England and France, the gardens of Stowe and the Leasowes, Twickenham and Moulin Joli not only bore follies and columns, obelisks and busts, but in a growing number of instances, they contained memorials and burial sites as well. Conceptually, the inclusion of the tomb in garden design brought with it a meditation on nature's immutable cycles of life and death.

This novelty in garden design coincided with other urban innovations, notably the cemetery reform movement which had also begun in Paris in the eighteenth century. Indeed, the distinctions between the cemetery and the site of commemoration in reform-minded Paris – which, as Richard Etlin has convincingly argued, was widely developed as an urban space of emulation at this time – were increasingly narrowing owing to a common celebration of moral and rural ideals rooted in the garden, and thus the development of the two paralleled one another in landscaped gardens throughout the city of Paris which itself was at the centre of the cemetery reform movement in Europe.[254]

Though the cemetery reform movement had begun in Paris in the 1740s as architects and intellectuals conceived of projects to render the city a more salubrious and hygienic space, it took the Revolution to finally disrupt the status quo and to implement the kind of projects that had for several decades envisioned a more pastoral setting for the dead. The culmination of these ideas in the form of the Elysium represented however only one aspect of two formal design approaches that characterized the era's attitude toward memorials and the cemetery and that, broadly speaking, hinged upon differences related to the emergence of the aesthetic categories of the sublime and the picturesque. If the tradition in the *Académie Royale d'Architecture* emphasized the architectural monument – and this in the sublime neo-classical language of form, light, and surface – as a focal

[254] Etlin, *Symbolic Space*, specifically Chapters 1 and 6.

point of emerging cemetery design, when allied with the garden, ideals of the picturesque cemetery in the image of the Elysium ultimately won out. In projects and proposals that ranged in date from 1799 to 1801, Paris's most esteemed sites were readily offered as potential Elysiums: the Luxembourg gardens; the esplanade in front of the Invalides (1799); the promenade adjacent the Church of the Madeleine (1799); the Champs-Élysées (1801); Parc Monceau (1801). All had attracted the eye of citizens and city administrators as sites worthy of housing the newly-reformed urban cemetery.

It cannot be emphasized enough, however, the degree to which these two architectural traditions concerning cemetery design differed right up to the beginning of the nineteenth century, when Paris's first public garden cemetery was constructed, definitively changing the course of cemetery design in France, and, within a generation, in Great Britain and North America as well. On the one hand, the Neoclassical vision of death imagined by Boullée, Jean-Charles Delafosse, Etienne-Eloy de La Barre, Louis-Jean Desprez: a sublime and macabre funerary landscape of necropolises, catacombs, and massive mausoleums. These projects, in which the memorial was still architecture and the concerns spatial, shared an emphasis on scale and its effects in re-creating primordial, austere, awesome, and overwhelming places for death that perpetuated the theological tradition of the Middle Ages and its emphasis on mortality as Etlin has already observed. Alternately, there emerged in the eighteenth century a new conception of death and burial, in the image of the picturesque landscape garden that originated in England in the early eighteenth century. This dramatic shift in emphasis occasioned an equally dramatic shift in perspective and scale from the anonymous city of the dead to the monument commemorating the individual. This transformation was underpinned by contemporary works of philosophy, theology, empirical science, literature, and landscape painting, by such writers as Stephen Switzer, Joseph Addison, Christian C.L. Hirschfeld, Alexander Pope, Bernardin de Saint-Pierre, and Abbé Delille, who defined and popularized a new aesthetics of space, landscape, and the garden.

Thus the very experience of the landscaped cemetery in France, like the public art museum, was a relative novelty of the Revolution, and both institutions evolved simultaneously in the democratic climate of the post-*Ancien régime* to provide new urban spaces to which the public not only had wide access, but were invited to visit as

recreational leisure spaces. Both the cemetery and the art museum shared certain fundamental spatial and compositional programmes: at their essence, each consisted of choreographed objects that presupposed a composed movement in an organized setting. It is no coincidence that one of the distinguishing features of these two urban spaces as they evolved in the eighteenth century was precisely their appeal to the activity of the stroll, or the *promenade*.[255]

Yet to speak of the Musée des Monuments français strictly as an art museum, in the tradition of the contemporaneous Louvre, is to neglect a feature that aligned the Musée even closer to the symbolism of the cemetery as a paradigmatic space of absence. In this sense, the funerary monuments choreographed in the Elysium and the landscaped cemetery articulated an abstract presence within a funerary setting, not the place of paradox Etlin ascribed to the French Enlightenment tradition for creating solemn commemorative designs "neither of this world nor of the next,"[256] but nevertheless conceived as a place whose function it was to represent death. Unlike the art museum at this time, which generally developed out of an inherited building, the cemetery was being designed *ex nihilo* and, a measure of its importance as an urban space, had been the subject of several architectural design competitions in France since the mid-1760s. Likewise, by his curious inclusion of a pastoral "cemetery" in the program of the Musée des Monuments français, Lenoir provided an important alternative *parcours* to the inherited building and chronological narrative that structured the interior of the museum.[257]

It is tempting to claim that Lenoir's Elysium garden in fact drew more on foundational museological traditions than did the didactic interior of the Musée, and the fundamental narrative duality that differentiated the Musée's interior and exterior spaces is all the more interesting when one considers that the Renaissance and Baroque tradition of

[255] In fact, it was observed that the recreational trend in landscaped cemeteries in the eighteenth century was so great that city administrators and landscape architects determined that more parks were necessary within the urban setting.
[256] Ibid., 172.
[257] The emergence of the landscaped cemetery and the Musée notwithstanding, there were in fact other contemporary Parisian sites that, through their commemorative and museological orientations, located the display of monuments within a picturesque garden setting. Paris's Jardin des Plantes, formerly the medicinal herb garden planted by Louis XIII's physicians, Bouvard and Guy de La Brosse, in 1626, is one such example. The Jardin du Roi, as it was originally known, was opened to the public in 1650, however it was under the curatorship of the comte de Buffon, from 1739 to 1788, that the institution was greatly enhanced as a centre of botanical research and poised to become, following a revolutionary decree in 1793, the Muséum National d'Histoire Naturelle. The site itself, however, with its expansive botanical gardens, was also a favourite public space for engaging in the *promenade*, and it is notable that monuments to Carolus Linnaeus and the naturalist Louis Daubenton were erected on the grounds in 1790 and 1800 respectively.

displaying sculpture in gardens was itself one of the precursors to the modern art gallery or museum.[258] Yet rather than reinforcing this doubling of the spatial orders of the museum's interior and exterior spaces through an alliance of the museum and sculpture garden, Lenoir did otherwise. In its philosophy and spatial organization, Lenoir's Elysium departed from the earlier traditions of sculpture gardens and by doing so, Lenoir re-imagined an expanded role for the garden that ultimately would innovate the program, composition, and organizational features of the museum institution. In his hands, the Elysium became far more than an aesthetic grouping of objects. For Lenoir, the garden presented the opportunity to address different representational and historiographic issues than those he had on the interior, and arguably with greater freedom, by virtue of the specificity of the monuments he chose to display.

Longing for a Lost Golden Age: The Modern Elysium

Richard Etlin has interpreted two ideological traditions of the Elysium *topos* – the first, that of Classical Antiquity, and the second, modern – as espousing different cultural and philosophical values. Unlike the Elysium of Homer, Hesiod, or Virgil, he wrote, the modern tradition was infused with sentiments of longing for a "lost stage of human existence, the Golden Age, in which material needs had been easily satisfied." It was in this nostalgic context, he argued, that the eighteenth-century garden was imagined, and romanticized, as a space to restore ideals of material wealth and productivity.[259] The City of Paris's most famous incarnation, the Champs Elysées, was not yet an articulation of this longing for a lost ideal. Both in its shape and the iconic identity it conferred on Paris, it continued to retain its founding feature as a space of passage.

The Elysium that Lenoir designed at the Musée des Monuments français, on the other hand, did espouse the modern ideal. There can be no more obvious testament to this than Lenoir's own writing on the subject, and the heroic genealogy of his garden-pantheon, though this genealogy alluded less to an economic narrative than to the mythology of the Classical (now French) hero. Furthermore, the creation of the Elysium in the image of a lost (and perhaps, through the experience of the Musée des Monuments français and its renewal with history, now "found") Golden Age of French history, resonated with the

[258] The term *galleria* or gallery, a term now interchangeable with that of the art museum, originated from the use of the architectural space of the gallery for the display of sculptures during the Renaissance.
[259] Etlin, *The Architecture of Death*, 172.

Republican political and philosophical ideals of Greek democracy and virtue. But for Lenoir, these ideals were not achieved in the "modern" spaces of the chronologically-arranged interior halls which illustrated a cyclical path to progress, but rather in the alternative historical narrative that the garden communicated: through its non-sequential display of monuments (and its preference for representing non-monarchical figures) and by extension through the virtuous talent that these monuments to chosen figures embodied, the Elysium articulated a past that intended for visitors to relate to its narrative emotionally – not intellectually or didactically. The relationship between visitor and space in this context was not only experiential – it was premised upon a sense of longing and communal identification. The most obvious example of this form of identification was anticipated in the very popular monument-*fabrique* commemorating Héloïse and Abélard, and the response it was intended to provoke. Ironically, it was neither as a democratic or rationally organized space that the Musée des Monuments français best realized the goals of the French Revolution, but rather by its celebration of virtue (and mainly through the symbol and topos of the elysium).

Yet while the *topos* of the elysium represented continuity of garden traditions begun earlier in the eighteenth century, it nevertheless inaugurated change through its alliance with a museographic setting. The significance of its appropriation by the museum at this time is two-fold: 1) through the elysium's modern incarnation and association with contemporary garden theory, its realization at the Musée accentuated the role of the experiential in apprehending subjects of history such as these were represented at the Musée des Monuments français; and 2) it sanctioned the use of the *fabrique* within this context. The *fabrique*, which, as a composite artifact designed by Lenoir, ordinarily would have had no place in a museum of art that was increasingly based on scientific principles, nevertheless found acceptance, at least on a popular level, within the philosophical framework of the modern garden. And, unlike the interior of the Musée, the Elysium was in no way designed to illustrate the progress, decadence, or decline of French artistic practices. It was, on the contrary, intended to celebrate human accomplishment and thereby to recast French history into a new, cohesive narrative.

As Jean-Claude Bonnet has observed in *La Carmagnole des Muses*, the artistic projects that emerged following the foundational event that was the French Revolution were

themselves manifestations of a society coming to terms with enormous change. Within this climate, there was tremendous optimism for what this new political reality permitted: "Tout est à faire," wrote Dumont in 1789, "tout est possible, ce qui était rocher il y a six mois est devenu cire. On peut donner au royaume la forme qu'on veut."[260] Lenoir's conception of the museum epitomized this attitude, for in it he both upheld Enlightenment ideals of didacticism, while innovating design features deriving from the picturesque garden and the elysium.

Lenoir provided a lengthy historical introduction to the theme of the Elysium in his museum catalogue of 1810, *Musée Impérial des Monumens français. Histoire des arts en France, et description chronologique des statues en marbre et en bronze, bas-reliefs et tombeaux des hommes et des femmes célèbres, qui sont réunis dans ce Musée*.[261] In this essay, Lenoir traced the ancient lineage of the Elysium in diverse cultural practices, noting that in most cases the Elysian Field was a chimerical invention and remained unattainable except to the most virtuous citizens in society. In fact, the very idea of the Elysian Field – its function and geographic location and strata – has been interpreted differently by various writers throughout Antiquity and the Renaissance. As one of the first writers to locate the afterlife in an Elysian setting, Homer connected the Elysium to the kingdom of Zeus, and described in book 4 of the *Odyssey* how Zeus invited those mortal individuals deserving of eternal happiness to the picturesque meadow adjoining the stream of Oceanus, on the western margin of the earth. Menelaus, by virtue of his marriage to Zeus's daughter Helen, was thus spared the fate of most human bodies in death, where "matter is changed, and varying forms decay." He was sent instead to enjoy Elysium, and

> the blissful pains of utmost earth,
> Where Rhadamanthus reigns.
> Joys ever young, unmix'd with pain or fear,
> Fill the wide circle of th'eternal year:
> Stern winter smiles on that auspicious clime:

[260] Dumont, quoted by Jean-Claude Bonnet, ed., "Le chantier et la ruine," in *La Carmagnole des Muses* (Paris: Armand Colin, 1988), 7.
[261] Lenoir, *Musée Impérial des Monumens français. Histoire des arts en France, et description chronologique des statues en marbre et en bronze, bas-reliefs et tombeaux des hommes et des femmes célèbres, qui sont réunis dans ce Musée* (Paris: Hacquart, 1810), 277-287. Lenoir also described the Elysée in Vol. 5 of *Musée*.

> The fields are florid with unfading prime;
> From the bleak pole no winds inclement blow,
> Mould the round hail, or flake the fleecy snow;
> But from the breezy deep the blest inhale
> The fragrant murmurs of the western gale.[262]

In Homer's conception of the Elysium, inhabitants are said not to know death per se, as they have arrived at this place of immortality without ever having died. This specific designation imbues the Elysium with a liminal quality, for it exists as a transitional domain between life and death. Conversely, the Roman poet Virgil located the Elysium in the Underworld near Hades, giving form to the setting in the passage where Aeneas encountered his father, Anchises, in book 6 of the *Aeneid*. Virgil described the activities of the dead who engaged in poetry, song, feasting, and dance beneath the setting's own constellations and sun

> Aeneas enters and sprinkles his body with fresh water and plants the Golden Bough upright upon the threshold…(In) the happy land of the Elysian Fields, the blessed dwelling places of the Fortunate Groves, Here an ampler air envelops the fields in light…Some spirits are exercising their limbs on grassy lawns, or vying in games and wrestling on the yellow sand, others are taking part in the dance, and singing songs…Here are those who were wounded fighting for their country; and those who in their lifetime were pure and pious priests and trusted soothsayers, whose words were meet for Apollo. And those who had made life better with their skill and inventions, and those who were remembered for their kindly deeds.[263]

Yet it was in the writing of his French compatriot, Fénélon, that Lenoir found his most inspirational account of the Elysium. Though he neither identified Fénélon fully nor indicated in which publication the latter mused over the Elysium, I would suggest that Lenoir was referring to François de Salignac de la Mothe-Fénélon, the first and perhaps

[262] Homer, *The Odyssey of Homer*, Book 4, Translated by Alexander Pope (London: Ingram, Cooke, and Co., 1853), 66.
[263] Virgil, *The Aeneid*. Translated, with an introduction, by James H. Mantinband (New York: Frederick Ungar Publishing Co., 1964), 131-2.

most famous member in an illustrious line of Fénélons dating back to the mid-seventeenth century from the eponymous château in Périgord. Born in 1651, this Fénélon led a distinguished career as a priest and eventually as Archbishop of Cambray,[264] a position to which he was appointed by Louis XIV in 1695 and held until his death in 1715. Fénélon, who pursued an active writing career and published extensively his ideas on education and religion, was posthumously championed by the *Encyclopédists* for his liberal views and sensibilities, and was celebrated as an influence on the Revolution and eighteenth-century utopists.

Lenoir was interested in Fénélon's musings on the Elysium, an account he quoted at length and appreciated not only for its elegance and simplicity – these were mere stylistic conventions – but equally for the eternal happiness that Fénélon's portrait promised. It was a happiness derived from a sense of unity, the unity of a humankind perfectly and harmoniously engaged in communal activity: "They see, they taste their happiness, and know they will always be this way. They sing the gods' praises, together in a single voice, a single thought, a single heart. A common bliss ebbs and flows in these unified souls."[265] Fénélon's emphasis on the Elysium as a space of unity introduced a new dimension to the eighteenth-century appropriation of the term, and in this particular conception of the Elysium Lenoir recognized a model for his own society in the aftermath of the French Revolution and its rejection of the *Ancien régime*. In previous descriptions, the hero who was sent to the Elysian Fields lived in itinerant leisure, without specific purpose or attachment to place; Virgil described it well: "No one has a fixed home; we live in the shady forests, on the soft river-banks, in meadows fresh with streams."[266] However when Lenoir adopted the setting for his own ends, there would be a greater unity of purpose and design. Clearly, a different intention inspired his invocation of the Elysium: under him the Elysium became a vehicle of nationalist display that articulated French nationhood as the sum of the accomplishments of a variety of citizens.

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[264] In an attempt to enlarge his collection of monuments and "national antiquities" at the Musée, Lenoir presented a report on Cambray Cathedral to the Celtic Society in 1806, and published it as an article, "Rapport sur la cathédrale de Cambray," in 1809. In this report, Lenoir made a case for procuring the remains of Cambray Cathedral, notably its allegorical sculptures, for the reconstruction of an 11th-century hall at the Musée, claiming that he could cull from the Cathedral's ruins its most important pieces to add to the collection of the Musée des Monuments français; see Alexandre Lenoir, "Rapport sur la cathédrale de Cambray: Lu à l'Académie celtique, dans la séance du 29 Septembre 1806," in the Vaudoyer collection, *Architecture, Antiquités, Arts mélangés* (1819) available at the Canadian Centre for Architecture, Montréal, Canada.

[265] Lenoir, *Musée Impérial*, 282-284.

[266] Virgil, *Aeneid*, 131-132.

While Lenoir identified with Fénélon and his writing, he still lamented the absence of a real Elysium. To his eighteenth-century sensibilities, such a space would be neither imaginary nor elusive but accessible to the citizen, a space that celebrated good and virtuous deeds in the mortal and moral world: a pantheon of illustrious figures. From his lengthy catalogue exposé, it is clear that Lenoir was justifying the need for his own Elysium – a tangible, sensorial, and evocative *Campo Santo*[267] - to be realized as an integral component of the philosophical and spatial program at the Musée des Monuments français.

[267] Ironically, Quatremère de Quincy, with whom Lenoir would have numerous debates about the very existence and survival of the Musée des Monuments français, proposed in a letter to the *Moniteur Universel* (13 April, 1791) a Parisian version of Pisa's *Campo Santo* as an alternative to the Panthéon then being planned. Quatremère would then retract his views in support of a garden cemetery in a later article on ideal cemeteries published in the *Encyclopédie Méthodique*. Please see Etlin, *The Architecture of Death*, 232.

Part III

Monuments, Narrative, Parcours: Emplotment in the Elysium and a Restorative Poetics of Time, 1796-1816

I. "Un Élysée m'a paru convenir…":
Lenoir's Elysium and Eighteenth-Century Landscape Theory and Design

The Irregular Garden: A Spatial and Narrative Model for Lenoir

As a space mediated both by the human imagination and nature, the garden occupies a privileged position in the realm of human creation. Traditionally the garden has been conceived as an expression of emerging or prevailing philosophical and cultural ideas, and as such the garden is a telling indication of a given era's values: it articulates the narratives that bind human beings and their world into meaningful and ordered relationships. When considered in cultural and historical context, these narratives have alternately imagined the garden as metaphor, theatre, microcosm, and allegory, while the means of realizing these designed landscapes have drawn upon aesthetic, sensory, didactic, and literary sources.

In order to fully appreciate the significance of Lenoir's creation of the garden Elysium at the Musée, one must consider its emergence as specific to the context of the late eighteenth-century world in which it was created, and view it in relation to ideas that preoccupied contemporary thinkers and informed the century in a more general way of its philosophical outlook. Following in the tradition of empiricism begun by Newton and Locke in the previous century, eighteenth-century theorists had turned their attention toward the origins of human knowledge and modes of understanding, seeking an alternative framework to prevailing Cartesian theories of innate ideas and religious ideals of divine supremacy. In the culture of subjectivity that was a direct outcome of their empirical advances, scientific and philosophical investigations of the processes of human memory, the imagination, and sense perception gave the century its experiential tenor, while these theories' impact on contemporary literature, architecture, and the arts brought such theories to bear on "space" and spatial concerns, both literary and physical.

One discipline in particular emerged as a site in which these empirical theories and their spatialization coalesced and dramatically altered the individual's relationship to, and understanding of, her/his environment: landscape design. In the eighteenth century, gardens were increasingly designed according to the pictorial principles of the

picturesque,[268] which, in a 1719 definition given by Abbé du Bos, implied "l'arrangement des objets qui doivent entrer dans un tableau par rapport à l'effet général du tableau."[269] In its earliest usage in English landscape theory, the term derived its compositional meaning from the works of Italian-based landscape painters, notably Claude Lorrain, Gaspar and Nicolas Poussin, and Salvator Rosa, whose carefully composed views provided visual models for changing ideals in garden design. The English garden theorist Horace Walpole went so far as to describe the experience of the landscape garden as a "journey (is) made through a succession of pictures."[270] As the taste for the picturesque in garden design developed throughout the eighteenth century, it popularized the desire for an aesthetic experience jointly produced by a landscape of natural elements untamed by human intervention, and the introduction of monuments, temples, and other architectural features with mythological or historical significance, into this landscape, in order to stimulate poetic associations through the arousal of emotions and the imagination. Such a landscape typically featured winding paths and a variety of views, punctuated by lakes, shrubbery, and groves.

In his treatise on the subject of the modern French garden, and France's dependence on earlier English models, Claude-Henri Watelet identified the importance of the poetic and romantic qualities of the garden in addition to those of the picturesque. If the picturesque served as a compositional model, the poetic and the romantic dimensions of the garden affirmed the role of fiction in stimulating the visitor's senses through recourse to theatrical techniques and illusion. This attentiveness to the visitor's reception of the garden narrative highlighted a changed perceptual sensibility in the eighteenth century, one that focussed on the individual and subjective experience. Far from being a phenomenon limited to the garden, it could be said that new conceptions of subjectivity had characterized the French Enlightenment and the French empirical movement, however it was nevertheless in the garden that the notion of the individual as a fully sentient and receptive being brought about transformational change. Certainly one of the most important of these changes was in the understanding of the role that the garden

[268] The English term "picturesque" is an adaptation from earlier usages in Italian ("pittoresco") and French ("pittoresque") and was used, in the early eighteenth century, to suggest a composition in the manner of a picture. On this subject, Malcolm Andrews, ed., *The Picturesque: Literary Sources and Documents* (Mountfield, East Sussex: Helm Information, 1994), Introduction, 6.
[269] Abbé du Bos, *Réflexions critiques sur la poésie et sur la peinture* (1719); quoted in Andrews, *The Picturesque: Literary Sources and Documents*, 6.
[270] Horace Walpole, *Anecdotes of Painting in England*, 4th edition, Vol. 4 (1786), 309; quoted in Andrews, *The Picturesque: Literary Sources and Documents*, 7.

could play in impressing ideas about the present and past onto the visitor – and these, through the seemingly unmediated interaction between the individual and their environment.

That this "natural" environment suggested both a more innate reception to ideas and a heightened awareness to sensorial stimulation was germane to empirical thinking of the era. It seemed entirely logical that the eighteenth-century irregular garden, with its "untamed" nature and profusion of monuments and memorials, ruins and follies, temples and obelisks, elysian fields and serpentining walkways, should be the ideal place to meditate on things philosophical. Virtue and heroism were largely the themes of the monuments that typically came before the visitor's purview, and Lenoir's Elysium was no exception.

The transition from the regularity of Classical and Baroque gardens in France in the seventeenth century to the country's picturesque and elegiac landscapes of the eighteenth century also signaled a major transition in the era's understanding of the symbolic and formal possibilities of the garden. If, in the Baroque era, architects had ordered nature into strict symmetrical and geometric compliance as a spatial demonstration of monarchical power and specular control, the appeal to sentiment and mental association that characterized emerging landscape practices a little over a century later dramatically shifted the paradigm from that of display to that of discovery, and the associated metaphor of political absolutism to that of a celebration of individual rights in accordance with natural law. The pretense to a master or authoritative narrative that had once characterized André LeNôtre's (1613-1700) famous interventions at Château Vaux-le-Vicomte or Versailles thus gave way to the more personal itineraries of moral virtue epitomized by Henri Watelet's garden at Moulin Joli and René-Louis Girardin's estate at Ermenonville. Through the choreography of their monuments and the association that various monuments were intended to trigger, these gardens deliberately endeavoured to instill "patterns of thought" in the minds of their visitors.[271]

The inspiration for this uniquely tempered relationship with nature in France in fact derived from multiple sources, ranging from the pastoral novel in literature to the

[271] John Hunt provides an excellent account of this in his analysis of Stowe.

landscape painting in art, the sensationist and nature philosophies of Condillac and Rousseau, to the Grand Tour. However the most important influence on the development of the French irregular garden came directly from the English garden and its treatise, for example the estate of Lord Cobham at Stowe, near Buckingham. Celebrated by the poet-gardenist Alexandre Pope, and designed by Charles Bridgeman and Lancelot "Capability" Brown beginning in the 1730s, the gardens of Stowe included a secluded valley, named the Elysian Fields, ornamented with garden buildings and lakes, as one of several character areas given to the estate.[272]

Various garden treatises in England, France, and Germany articulated the radical shift that occurred in eighteenth-century landscape design as contemporaneous advances in perceptual understanding became more widely known. In the early decades of the century, the writing of Stephen Switzer, *Ichnographia Rustica* (1718), and Batty Langley, *New Principles of Gardening* (1728), proved influential in celebrating the rural landscape and in introducing new "modern" ideas to garden design, while a later generation of writers was still refining their ideas even a half century after. The treatises of Thomas Whately, *Observations on Modern Gardening* (1770), Christian Hirschfeld, *Theorie der Gartenkunst* (1779-1785),[273] Horace Walpole, *The History of the Modern Taste in Gardening* (1780), and Humphry Repton, *Observations on the Theory and Practice of Landscape Gardening* (1795) not only revealed a thoroughly transformed aesthetic approach to garden design (one that increasingly conceived of garden design as a space of experience), but equally important and for not unrelated reasons, these treatises attested to a changed notion of the beholder's perceptual role in the reception and production of meaning.

In France, a flurry of publishing occurred in the last quarter of the eighteenth century which articulated this country's own approach to landscape design, as writers such as Claude-Henri Watelet, *Essai sur les jardins* (1774), Jean-Marie Morel, *Théorie des jardins* (1776), Georges-Louis Le Rouge, *Détail des nouveaux jardins à la mode* (c.1776-c.1788), and René-Louis Girardin, *De la composition des paysages* (1783) attempted to define the major tenets of "modern" landscape theory and practice. Their principal concerns pertained to identifying the discipline's practitioners [gardener or architect,

[272] Other character areas at Stowe include the Grecian Valley, the Japanese Gardens, and the Sleeping Wood.
[273] Hirschfeld's text was published simultaneously in German and in French.

gardenist (Walpole), or *décorateur* (Watelet)]; its models (Nature, painting or poetry); its design principles (use of ornament, artifice, imagination, or strictly Nature); and finally its intent (a space to please, to entertain, to stir the senses, to moralize or to invite reflection). Yet on the question of the kind of space that was the modern garden, and how this space was achieved, there was a considerable variety of opinion. Indeed, a comparison of the first generation of French landscape treatises reveals that that which distinguished the discipline of landscape architecture from the outset was an understanding of the narrative potential of the landscape and the visitor's engagement within it – even if not all the theorists were unanimous in their endorsement of imagination, spectacle, or caprice in the design of the garden.[274]

Twentieth-century garden historians and writers such as Agnieszka Morawinska, H.F. Clark, and John Dixon Hunt have explored parallels between the development of landscape gardens and literature, and have observed that this alliance was particularly pronounced in the eighteenth century.[275] The concept of the scene, the recourse to tropes, and the classification of space in terms of "character" and "genre," account for certain compositional and narrative affinities between these two "spaces" of the eighteenth century – the literary and the natural – however another factor must be accounted for in an analysis of the garden space: the role of movement. The predominance of theatrical metaphors in the eighteenth-century French landscape treatise not only corroborated the significance of motion in the conceptualization of the garden in its insistence on theatrical scenes over the more static *tableau* of the landscape painting, it further elucidated a proclivity for a particular type of literature – the play – and a particular type of engagement – performative – that was meant to occur in the garden. Modern landscape design was undoubtedly an art that required the interaction of the observer. Watelet had even envisioned the presence of pantomimes in the garden, animating the landscape at the visitor's every turn.

[274] By narrative, I suggest the specific intention to emplot the visitor's experience of the garden as a sequence of events unfolding in space and time to engage the visitor in a story.
[275] See H.F. Clark, "Eighteenth-Century Elysiums: The Rôle of "Association" in the Landscape Movement," *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes* Vol. 6 (1943):165-189; John Dixon Hunt, "Emblem and Expressionism in the Eighteenth-Century Landscape Garden," *Eighteenth-Century Studies* Vol. 4, No. 3 (Spring 1971): 294-317; and Agnieszka Morawinska, "Eighteenth-Century "Paysages moralisés" *Journal of the History of Ideas* Vol. 38, No. 3 (July-September 1977): 461-475. Also Isabel Wakelin, introduction and critical essay in *Horace Walpole: Gardenist* (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1943).

But to understand the landscape as an unfolding scene, as eighteenth-century theorists did, was also to recognize the role of the visitor in apprehending this space, hence the importance of the concepts of movement and motion which underlined theories of the garden at this time. Indeed, in addition to its theorization as a space of representation, the eighteenth-century garden was also recognized as a space of reenactment. Perhaps more so than any landscape practices had done previously, English and subsequently French gardens of the eighteenth century emerged as intellectual and physical spaces of engagement through their combined appeal to the visitor's mind, body, and senses, encouraging *rêverie* and contemplation through a personal and peripatetic communion with nature. With their profusion of monuments, gardens such as Stowe were not only intended to be "read" and interpreted as a narrative of emblematic features, they were also meant to be apprehended viscerally in their capacity as a physical *parcours*. The apparent stasis of the Classical garden – an effect communicated through the high degree of symmetry and regularity in its design – had irrevocably given way to the perambulations of the irregular garden.

Though historically traditions of sensorial gardens pre-dated the eighteenth century, it was the specific convergence in the garden of new theories of sensation and affective understanding that led to the radical re-thinking of the landscape as a space of heightened experience and narrative potential. Certain key philosophical and theoretical texts published throughout the eighteenth century proved seminal for the development of the aesthetics that made the irregular garden in France a possibility, most notably Edmund Burke's essay, *A philosophical enquiry into the origin of our ideas of the sublime and beautiful* (1757), Immanuel Kant's *Observations on the Feeling of the Beautiful and the Sublime* (1763), and even Uvedale Price's later *Essays on the picturesque* (1794). In the realms of human understanding and modes of perception, John Locke's *Essay Concerning Human Understanding* (1690) was critical, while Etienne Bonnot de Condillac's *Essai sur l'origine des connaissances humaines* (1746) introduced a particularly French lineage to this line of enquiry. Finally, writers such as Abbé Delille, Bernardin de Saint-Pierre, Joseph Addison, and Alexander Pope produced texts that were erudite reflections on the changing perceptions of nature and the imagination and, by bringing these two "landscapes" together, re-imagined the possibilities of the garden in contemporary philosophical and aesthetic terms. Yet another groundbreaking

development popularized the garden as a site for reflection, bringing the spaces of literature and nature together in one work: the birth of the novel. Perhaps no other contemporary work epitomizes this more than Jean-Jacques Rousseau's *Julie, ou la nouvelle Héloïse* (1762), the very plot of which unfolds in the garden.

For these reasons, I argue that the eighteenth-century French irregular garden and its treatise emerged as spatial and narrative models for Lenoir, and I foreground features of the discipline's development in the second half of the eighteenth century as a way of introducing compositional and philosophical principles inherent in Lenoir's design for the Musée. Significantly, the influence of the principles of garden and landscape theory was not limited to the Elysium proper, but rather was manifest in Lenoir's conceptualization of the program for the Musée at large. These principles, related to composition, movement, subjectivity, character, and the monument, and their narrative emplotment in Lenoir's Elysium, are the subjects of Part III of this dissertation.

The Evolution of the Elysium

Lenoir had begun to develop plans for the Elysium as early as 1796, the year following the official inauguration and opening of the Musée to the public on 21 October 1795.[276] An entry in a manuscript from Lenoir to the *Comité d'Instruction Publique* outlining the museum's activities, dated 14 September, 1796, confirms that Lenoir wrote to the Minister requesting permission to ornament the garden of the newly-inaugurated museum with statues, and to render the space public.[277] Lenoir's plans for the Elysium also included a vast horticultural overhaul. In his original request, Lenoir intended to plant over 450 saplings on the site, although he was forced to modify his request to a much more modest number of plantings.

The Elysium was one of the first spaces to be designed by Lenoir, although he had also begun to convert some of the halls of the monastery into century-specific period rooms in the same year. Thus, concurrent to the creation of the garden Elysium, Lenoir was also designing the interior spaces of the thirteenth-century hall (completed in 1796 following extensive reconstruction and decoration), in addition to the sixteenth- and seventeenth-

[276] The depot had already been opened to the public on a temporary basis in August 1793. See *Archives*, Vol. 2 (Paris: E. Plon, Nourrit, 1883-1897), Article 58 (25 July, 1793), 75. A letter from Garat, Minister of the Interior, to Lenoir, authorized Lenoir to open the depot daily to the public from 3 – 18 August, morning and night.
[277] Ibid., Vol. 2, 396.

century halls. Lenoir did not proceed chronologically in his renovations of the interior halls; he only began the fifteenth-century hall in 1798, and the Introductory and fourteenth-century halls in 1799. Contrary to claims in certain secondary source material that Lenoir ceased all architectural and design work on the Musée in 1802, it can be argued that the Elysium, and the entire site of the Musée des Monuments français, remained *en chantier* throughout virtually the entire life of the institution, as passages in the various catalogues and archives demonstrate. Such is the true status of a collection, and psyche of an impassioned collector, that it is never fully complete. It was no doubt to appease the authorities, however, that Lenoir claimed in a letter dated 1809 and sent to the Minister of the Interior that the garden was indeed, completed, and so too was the restoration of its monuments: "Ce jardin est terminé, ainsi que les monuments qu'il renferme."[278] Lenoir had already stated as early as March 1797 that the Elysium, as well as three other century halls, were in a "definitive" state, and to alter these spaces would detract from the Musée des Monuments français as a whole.

Curiously, Lenoir expressed few of his intentions about the design of the Elysium, beyond its initial inspiration from Greco-Roman and French literary sources. His archives and articles contain no references to contemporary gardens that may have served as models to him, this despite the fact that the *jardin à l'anglais* was then in vogue in France, and many examples lay close at hand to Paris (for example, René Girardin's nearby estate at Ermenonville, housing the Hubert Robert-designed tomb of Jean-Jacques Rousseau on the picturesque île des Peupliers). There do not appear to exist plans or sketches which would articulate a theory of design expressive of Lenoir's intentions for the compositional lay-out of the garden and its program of monuments, and Lenoir's basic design intentions must be inferred through contextual documents, later engravings of the site, and comparison to other popular public leisure destinations.

At best, we can trace an organic growth of the garden, which developed through the accumulation of monuments rather than through any major compositional changes barring the initial planning of the garden in 1796. The only exceptions to this occurred when Lenoir was required to concede some of the land of the Elysium to the

[278] *Archives*, Vol. 1, Article 411, 390-391.

neighbouring police in June 1796 and February 1811, as well as to the city's hospices,[279] overseen by the Mont-de-Piété.[280] Consequently, Lenoir sought to reclaim a portion of the garden from an older and "temporary" loan of the Musée's land to the Minister of the police. A plan engraved by L. Sonnet[281] reveals the lay-out of the Musée des Monuments français in 1809, and demonstrates the awkward parcel of land that was formerly the Musée's garden and which had been allotted to the Minister of the police in order to bridge two neighbouring properties: the police's offices, housed in the Hôtel d'Affry, on rue Saints-Pères, at the north-western parameter of the Elysium, and the Hôtel de Bouillon, home of the Minister of police, on the northern parameter of the garden.[282] Specifically, Lenoir stated in his request the need for more space to re-erect the Musée's most famous monument, the tomb of Héloïse and Abélard, which had been displaced by the recent transfer of land to the Mont-de-Piété.[283]

Lenoir's requests to the Minister of Police met with a terse reply, whose reaction was clearly as political as it was territorial. It also gave some indication of the standard criticism levelled at Lenoir by those opposed to his project. The comte Beugnot attacked Lenoir's work on the basis of his practice of looting the nation's departments for the purpose of decontextualizing them in Paris, claiming that "on ne peut faire meilleur usage de ce terrain que d'y reporter un tombeau sans mérite du côté de l'art et sans aucune sorte de charme, puisqu'il n'en pouvait avoir qu'au Paraclet, alors qu'on savait que ces tombeaux n'étaient pas menteurs, mais renfermaient réellement les cendres des deux célèbres personnages. Mais des débris gothiques, lorsqu'ils ne servent pas à l'histoire de l'art, ne servent à rien du tout, et je ne vois point quel prix on peut attacher à ceux dont il est question."[284]

We know that Lenoir himself had attempted to procure these very grounds for the Musée des Monuments français in the year 1800, in order to make a new entrance to the Musée from the quay. The addition of the Hôtel de Bouillon, argued Lenoir, would accommodate an expanded museographic program for the Musée, including a collection

[279] On 7 October, 1814, Lenoir was ordered to concede a portion of the garden to the Mont-de-Piété, based on a plan drawn by Viel, architect of the Mont-de-Piété. Lenoir countered this plan with one drawn by his own architect, Vaudoyer, which he presented on 17 October, 1814. See *Archives*, Vol. I, Article 441, 423-424.
[280] The Mont-de-Piété was a charitable lending organization that gave financial aid to the poor.
[281] *Archives*, Vol. I, following the *Avertissement*.
[282] *Archives*, Vol. 3, 141-143.
[283] An entry in *Archives*, Vol. 1, 199, indicates that the land was already on loan to the Minister of police in 1800.
[284] *Archives*, Vol. 3, Article 471, 141-143.

of portraits of famous French citizens, armor arranged in chronological order, a collection of French medals, and a library specializing in monuments, especially those contained in the Musée's collection. These halls would open onto a garden, which itself would connect to the Elysium and from there, the visitor would begin a chronological visit of the Musée through the Introduction hall, completing the *parcours* at the former entrance of the Musée des Monuments français on rue des Petits-Augustins. These changes, Lenoir confidently proclaimed, would render the Musée "le plus bel établissement de l'Europe."[285] Lenoir sent this letter to the Minister of the Interior in the fall of 1800, at the same time that serious discussions were being held to transfer the Musée des Monuments français to the garden of Monceau, and Lenoir reiterated his plans to Napoleon again in March 1801. Lenoir claimed that the actual site of the Musée des Monuments français, measuring 3762 *toises*, provided ample space for him to complete his project, if only the land that was provisionally on loan to the Minister of Police would be returned.

During the height of these discussions to transfer the Musée to another site, all work on the building and grounds ceased, thus there was rather frenetic activity at the Musée over the course of its development.[286] It does not seem, however, that Lenoir was ever discouraged by talks of the potential transfer of the museum to various locations throughout the city; his determination was only strengthened. When plans to move the Musée to Monceau were definitively aborted in March 1801 after months of negotiations and even some preliminary work at Monceau had been completed, Lenoir seized upon what he considered to be a sign of favourable governmental support to propose yet another significant renovation project: the addition of the subject of architecture to the museum known ostensibly for its collection of sculpture. In a letter to Napoleon, Lenoir proposed to decorate the three exterior courtyards leading from the entrance to the Elysium so as to demonstrate the three ages of (French) architecture

> J'ai pensé que je pouvais, sans demolir le bâtiment qui existe, décorer les cours dans le système que j'ai adopté pour les salles intérieures qui représentent autant de siècles; ce serait remplir le but de l'établissement,

[285] *Archives*, Vol. I, 199.
[286] Lenoir was ordered to suspend all work at the Musée by Lucien Bonaparte on 27 September, 1800. *Archives*, Vol. 2, Article 325, 454.

> et le compléter d'une manière grande et vraiment utile. Le Musée doit présenter aux étudiants non-seulement les ages de la sculpture en France, mais encore ceux de l'architecture, puisque la plupart des monuments sont ornés d'architecture, et que le cadre qui les renferme doit nécessairement correspondre avec eux.[287]

Thus the first court would house fragments from Philibert de l'Orme's sixteenth-century Château d'Anet, notably its façade, a building dedicated to Diane de Poitiers, lover of Henri II; the second court would house the remains of the fifteenth-century Château de Gaillon, built by Jean Joconde, architect of Louis XII; and the third court would represent the fourteenth century, although Lenoir was less specific when mentioning which architectural remains he would use for this space (he surmised a Gothic or Arabic building, built from the remains of a basilica designed by Pierre de Montereau or de Montreuil for Louis IX). Lenoir also re-iterated his plan to take over the neighbouring hôtel de Bouillon, enabling him to enlarge the Musée with the same expanded museological program described earlier. Later in 1808, Lenoir would again seek to enlarge the Musée by purchasing another neighbouring building, this one located on rue Petits-Augustins. Yet despite having garnered the support of the inspector general of civic buildings, P. Garrez, and its council for this project, Lenoir himself seems to have halted the request.[288]

It was to Lenoir's credit that the museum remained relatively intact as long as it did. Several proposals to transfer the museum (and not simply its monuments) arose throughout the autumn of 1800, some more menacing than others. Many of these proposed sites were gardens, such as Monceau, Marboeuf, and Bagatelle, and arguably attest to the prominence that the Elysium occupied within the overall project of the Musée. Of these proposals, that of Monceau[289] received the most attention, and the

[287] *Archives*, Vol. I, 232.
[288] *Archives*, Vol. I, 376-380.
[289] Monceau was created for Philippe d'Orléans, Duc de Chartres, and father of King Louis-Philippe, in 1778. The garden was designed by Carmentelle (Louis Carrogis) in the manner of the *jardin anglais*, with serpentine paths and traditional garden accoutrements such as ruins, fountains and grottoes, and the ubiquitous *point de vue*. The park was designated a national domain on floréal an II (spring 1794) and became a public promenade. Monceau was reinstated to the Chartres family under King Louis XVIII until 1852, when it was returned to the State. Philippe d'Orléans' ties to Free-Masonry and his membership in a Lodge are recalled in the Masonic symbols that appear throughout Monceau. See Michel Makarius, *Ruins* (Paris: Flammarion, 2004).

greatest support, from the government, notably Lucien Bonaparte, then Minister of the Interior.

Bonaparte both confirmed that the Musée des Monuments français would be transferred entirely to Monceau in a letter dated 26 September, 1800, and, in the same letter, appointed Lenoir Administrator of this garden.[290] This is a curious turn of events. Only weeks before (15 August), Lucien Bonaparte had commissioned a report by Fontanes on the possibility of transferring the monuments of the Musée to Monceau. Fontanes, in concert with Lenoir, objected to the idea on two accounts: 1) the sheer cost and risk of damage to the monuments that the transfer might occasion; and 2) the incommensurability of the collection's subject matter with the proposed site. Given that funerary sculpture constituted the majority of the Musée's collection, Fontanes argued that "leur effet s'accorderait mal avec le coup d'oeil riant des jardins de Mousseaux (*sic*). Ils semblent mieux placés dans l'enceinte d'un vieux monastère, qui réveille des sentiments et des pensées analogues à leur destination."[291]

Fontanes further argued that if the monuments needed to be moved at all, they required the setting of a cathedral, rather than a temple or modern garden which "ne parleront jamais à l'âme et à l'imagination comme ces anciennes basiliques consacrées par la vénération des siècles."[292] This comment reveals that for some, the contentions over the Musée's existence was not a question of its collection – of preserving decontextualized funerary monuments and centralizing them in Paris – but rather it was a question of the appropriateness of the site, and more particularly, of its ambiance. The suitability of a religious building over a "modern" garden was defended on the grounds that it was both a more evocative setting (the setting as a sensorial stimulus was considered crucial) and that it had a certain formal connection with the very nature of the objects on display.

Lenoir was also involved in discussions over the development of Bagatelle. For this site located outside of the city, Lenoir proposed another type of sculpture garden, distinct from the Musée by its suggestion to become a *salon*, and to exhibit and sell the work of contemporary artists. Lenoir clearly pictured himself as the modern curator, whose ideas

[290] *Archives*, Vol. I, Article 179, 194.
[291] *Archives*, Vol. I, Article 168, 184.
[292] *Archives*, Vol. I, Article 168, 184.

would give artists far greater autonomy, exposure, and investment in the sale of their work than they presently had in French society, particularly with the end of royal patronage after the Revolution.

Lenoir's Five Principles of the Elysium and Garden Design

When Watelet famously proclaimed the countryside to be the refuge of all citizens, he neglected to mention the profusion of urban sites in eighteenth-century Paris that attracted visitors through their connection with a naturalized environment. The Musée des Monuments français had a tremendous impact on the popular imagination in its time, particularly the Elysium garden, which people were invited to visit independently of the museum – and did. Various literary accounts in the form of correspondence and diary entries are testament to the breadth of attraction that the Musée elicited throughout England, Germany, and France during its short existence, and the translation of Lenoir's catalogue into English in 1803 by Julius Griffiths further confirmed the audience that Lenoir had attracted abroad. Of the most renowned French writers, François René Chateaubriand, Jules Michelet, and an eighteen-year-old Victor Hugo – the last from the proximity of his bedroom overlooking the Elysium – all have mentioned the influence (sometimes formative) of their visits to the Musée, not the least of which was Michelet who credited his childhood excursions to the museum with evoking his early, and lifelong, interest in history – and future career as a historian. Thus it was perhaps a legitimate conceit that Lenoir himself harbored ambitions for creating a museum of international stature, known throughout Europe.

The Musée des Monuments français, and more specifically, the Elysium, were highly popular destinations to Parisians and visiting foreign publics alike from 1796 until the Musée's mandated closure in 1816. Today these spaces survive only in pictorial and literary form, and it is these accounts that I shall now consider in order to highlight the precise philosophical, programmatic, and compositional features that Lenoir derived from the irregular garden and its theories. While I would agree that the discipline of landscape architecture was somewhat peripheral to Lenoir's curatorial activities – that is to say I would not suggest that Lenoir was immersed in the field of landscape architecture *per se* (he did work in the company of various architects and landscape architects at the Musée and at Empress Joséphine's Château Malmaison, and a certain overlap was therefore

inevitable) – I do argue that the discipline's principles nevertheless constituted an important aspect of the horizon in which Lenoir worked, and in this respect there are some remarkable observations to be made regarding its influence on Lenoir.

Lenoir articulated his ideas for realizing an elysium at the Musée in two separate narrative accounts. His first recorded mention of the Elysium, in the final paragraphs of the *Avant-propos* of the fourth edition of *Description historique et chronologique des monumens de sculpture* (1797/98), is a much-quoted passage in which the curator presented his intentions for developing the north-west corner of the Musée's site, amidst a setting of carefully selected trees and plants

> Un Elysée m'a paru convenir au caractère que j'ai donné à mon établissement, et le jardin intérieur m'a offert tous les moyens d'exécuter mon projet. Dans ce jardin calme et paisible, on voit plus de quarante statues; des tombeaux posés çà et là sur une pelouse verte s'élèvent avec dignité au milieu du silence et de la tranquilité. Des pins, des cypres et des peupliers les accompagnent; des larves et des urnes cinéraires posées sur les murs concourent à donner à ce lieu de bonheur la douce mélancolie qui parle à l'âme sensible. Enfin on y retrouve une pierre, debris du tombeau d'Héloïse, sur laquelle j'ai fait graver les noms de ces infortunes époux; les cénotaphes et les statues couchées du bon Connétable et de Sancerre, son illustre ami; plus loin une colonne supporte dans un vase le coeur de Jacques Rohault, digne émule de Descartes. Près de ce coeur philantrope on découvre l'épitaphe touchante et modeste de Jean-Baptiste Brizard, ce favori de Melpomène qui naguère faisait aimer les scènes françaises. On trouvera dans cet ouvrage des gravures soignées, des points de vues les plus intéressans de cet Elysée.[293]

When the Elysium made its catalogue debut, more than 40 statues, in addition to several tombs, urns and epitaphs, ornamented the landscape in haphazard manner. Lenoir had already begun to exhibit human relics and fragments of famous monuments that would become a hallmark of the garden; he listed the heart of Jacques Rohault, disciple of René

[293] Lenoir, *Description*, 4ème éd., 14-15.

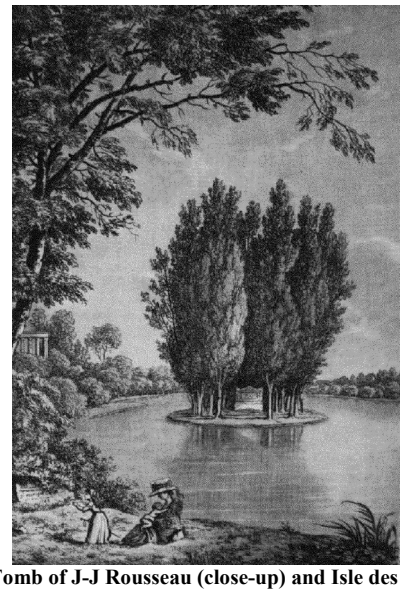
Descartes, and a stone from the tomb of Héloïse, as prominent examples. This necrophiliac practice would flourish in later years as his (and the museum's) popularity grew and he amassed a larger collection of human remains.

Lenoir elaborated upon this passage in subsequent catalogue publications as the very idea of the garden matured in his mind. The eighth edition of the catalogue, published in 1806, included amidst its entries a larger number of sepulchral urns and epitaphs located in the Elysium, as well as a longer and more elaborate description of the features and composition of the garden. The Elysium was to be laid out "à la manière antique," with monuments placed on "une pelouse verte, en forme de colline, parsemée de myrte, de pensées et de violettes."[294] It was also in this catalogue that Lenoir gave some indication as to the sensorial qualities of the site, that its melancholic characteristics would attract "les regards du philosophe, et élèveront l'âme du poète et du peintre."[295]

From the brief but comprehensive passage of 1797/98, we are introduced to five foundational features of the Elysium that have their corollary in eighteenth-century landscape architecture and garden design. We learn from the outset the central place given to the notion of character in the garden, and indeed at the Musée at large. The garden is praised for its peaceful and melancholic qualities, and its connection to the Picturesque garden movement in France was thus made immediately apparent. Secondly, Lenoir provided a bird's eye view of the Elysium, schematically detailing the garden's composition and the particular lay-out of the objects on display. Lenoir described a certain haphazard logic to their placement in the garden ("des tombeaux posés ça et là sur une pelouse verte"; "des larves et des urnes cinéraires posées sur les murs") – a choreographed randomness that was a significant feature of the irregular garden. While enumerating these objects as funerary and architectural, Lenoir described a third innovation of the irregular garden: the presence and ubiquity of the monument. In later catalogues, Lenoir would be more "museographic," categorically enumerating objects by type: "les statues de plusieurs rois et guerriers célèbres." Yet significantly, even in this first discussion of the Elysium, Lenoir's reference to the ruin ("une pierre, debris du

[294] Lenoir, *Description*, 8ème éd., 245.
[295] Ibid., 246.

tombeau d'Héloïse") and the relic or human remains[296] ("le coeur de Jacques Rohault"; "les cendres de Descartes, de Molière, de La Fontaine, de Boileau, d'Héloïse, d'Abélard, de Mabillon et de Montfauçon") called attention to the significance of burial and commemoration within the overall framework of the garden's narrative.

Figures 31 and 32. Tomb of J-J Rousseau (close-up) and Isle des Peupliers (Mérigot)

Lenoir provided some insight into the symbolic import of the natural elements of the Elysium, observing the presence of pines, cypresses, and poplar trees in the garden. These particular trees were popularly understood in terms of their iconographic associations with mourning, death, and eternal life, and were prominent motifs in eighteenth-century depictions of Greco-Roman traditions of the Elysium. For example, Girardin's estate at Ermenonville contained an Island of Poplars on which Rousseau's grave resided. Lenoir's descriptions enabled the absent visitor to fully visualize the physical parameters of the space or perhaps to reconstruct their visit from memory, and by his preoccupation with describing points of view, and more precisely the *parcours*, he thereby introduced the fourth concept of movement. This theme of motion is reinforced through the inclusion of engravings of the garden that picture the Elysium as a perambulating trajectory.

Lenoir included a slightly modified version of the 1797 descriptive passage in volume one of *Musée des Monuments français*.[297] In volume five of this same series, Lenoir also

[296] This recourse to the relic imbues a certain sanctity to the space and reveals the degree to which Lenoir intended the garden to function as a national site of pilgrimage.

[297] Lenoir's meticulous recording of objects, objects that were not always secure in the Musée, in not one but two different types of publications, was a way in itself of securing the memory of the collection at its fullest. Lenoir's biographer, Louis Courajod, commended Lenoir for the meticulous way he recorded the collection.

provided the second of his two narrative accounts of the garden, in a passage he entitled "Observations sur l'Elysée."[298] This essay was much lengthier than any of the previous catalogue descriptions of the Elysium, and provided both a historical and philosophical exegesis of the Elysium topos. Lenoir followed this historical overview and introduction with a closer description of his own Elysium, employing the narrative structure of the walk-through, a favourite literary device of the contemporary garden and landscape treatise: "Entrons avec nos lecteurs dans ce paysage auguste," he enticed his readers, "examinons les monumens qu'une main timide osa consacrer à des hommes célèbres."[299] Following this invitation, Lenoir proceeded through the garden, describing specific monuments, their materiality, their iconography, their placement on the site, a brief biography of the person they commemorated, and a transcription of the accompanying epitaph(s). In addition to his discussions on the subjects of character, composition, monument, and movement, this particular literary trope represented yet another feature borrowed from the discipline of landscape architecture and indicated a fifth highly influential concept to Lenoir's Elysium: the museum catalogue as descriptive walk-through, inaugurating a new literary genre which highlighted the subjective space of the garden.

[298] Lenoir, *Musée,* Vol. 5, 171-204.
[299] Lenoir, *Musée*, Vol. 5, 195.

II. An Elysium for the Mind, Body, and Soul: Lenoir's Experiential Parcours

Figure 33. View of the Elysium garden (Vauzelle)

The Unfolding Landscape: Composition, Movement, and Metaphors of Cyclical Time

Lenoir placed approximately 40 monuments dedicated to the memory of artists, musicians, writers, philosophers, and historians throughout the Elysium, much like in a modern cemetery, without strict chronological or typological order. These monuments, which varied in type and form from the simple urn or towering column to the elaborate *fabrique*, were positioned at the edges of pathways, within a space Lenoir described as a tranquil carpet of flowers and lawn. In their seemingly random placement, the monuments in the Elysium were a strong contrast to the inner organization of the museum, with its monuments arranged in chronologically ordered, century-specific halls. Unlike in the interior, one's encounter with the Elysium's monuments was perforce random, episodic, unanticipated, and for this reason, constituted an important alternative

narrative to that of linear time. Contemporary representations of this space illustrate this intention. The forty plates on the Musée in Brès's evocatively titled *Souvenirs du Musée des Monumens français*, published in 1821, present a meandering movement through the garden, unlike the full-frontal depictions of the interior halls. One is reminded of the serpentining paths that are a hallmark of the picturesque garden, paths which, by their very form, served to emphasize the experience of discovery and serendipity that the gradual unfolding of the landscape permitted. To this end, for example, Watelet advised that a garden's roads must neither be geometrically straight nor precise, only meandering, because "l'indécision sans doute est un état plus commode pour nous que l'exactitude, et plus naturel que la précision."[300]

Time as History, Time as Continuum

Significantly, two distinct historiographic and scenographic principles governed the composition, lay-out, and program of the Musée des Monuments français. In the interior, century-specific exhibition halls conveyed an evolutionary and linear trajectory of history, or time as history, while in the Elysium, much like in the irregular garden, time was construed more broadly as a cyclical continuum, through the combined presence of personalities from several different historical eras within the highly symbolic framework of a living garden. There, the arrangement of the space was deliberately non-symmetrical and non-panoramic, to avoid any summing up of the space in a single view. It is clear from Lenoir's earliest descriptions of the Elysium that this space was to function differently than the interior spaces of the museum. In its seemingly unsystematic arrangement of monuments, there existed a specific intent to transcend the narrative of linear time. It's very telling that Lenoir, who equated the organizing principle of chronology with the linear progress of French art, did not use the term "progress" in his descriptions of the Elysium.

[300] Watelet, *Essai sur les jardins* (Paris: Prault, 1774), 25.

Parcours

In spite of this historiographic distinction, Lenoir's own writing indicates that he considered the Elysium to be essential in completing the museum's intended meaning – and this, through its compositional features and their connection to the Musée's larger *parcours*. Lenoir claimed in the 1810 edition of his catalogue that the Elysium would be visible from the entrance of the Musée, establishing from the outset both an agreeable perspective and the idea of motion or trajectory in the unfolding space. His description of these principles re-affirmed the importance of composition in the design and program of the Musée, as the following passage confirms: "De la salle d'introduction du Musée, donnant sur la rue, on verra le jardin Élysée; ce qui donnera du mouvement à l'architecture et produira une perspective agréable (…) De la verdure et des arbres feront les fonds du bâtiment et laisseront encore des percées propices à multiplier les points de vue."[301] In another passage, Lenoir emphasized the compositional strategy of incorporating deliberate "views" in order to tie together the interior and exterior spaces: "Ces cours mènent à un jardin planté et orné de monuments, lesquels seront vus de l'entrée extérieure par des percés (sic) qui sont ménagés exprès dans le plan général."[302] From these two passages, it is apparent that the compositional features of perspective, points of view, and framed views were intended to function collectively as stopping points along the larger compositional device of the *parcours*. This significant concept of the *parcours* united the physical path of the Musée's program – the trajectory from Introduction Hall, through the sequence of century-specific halls to the Elysium circuit and back again – with the intended larger metaphorical journey from linear time to deep time, or continuum, that one's progression through the Musée des Monuments français was meant to evoke.

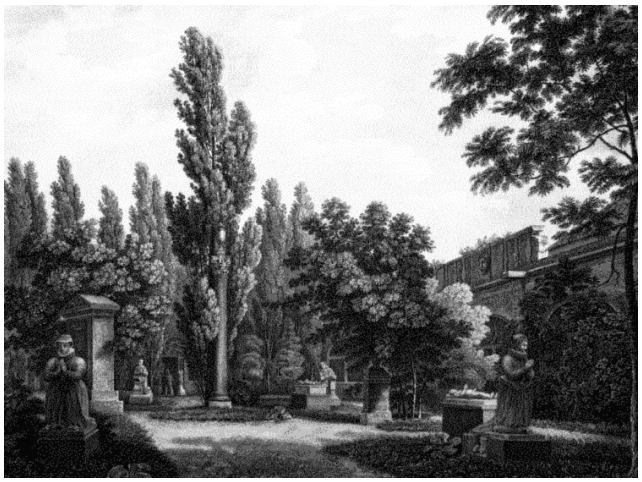


Figure 34. View of the Elysium garden – View 2 (Vauzelle)

[301] Lenoir, *Musée impérial des monumens français* (Paris, 1810), 216. Emphasis my own.
[302] *Archives*, Vol. I, Article 411, 391.

The very notion of the *parcours* derives from the eighteenth-century French garden treatise whose emphasis, like that of Lenoir's, emphasized spatiality and its related concepts of movement and time. It must also be qualified that this emphasis was not strictly intended as a physical conception of space, but extended to subjective perception in space and time as well. That is, in the heightened attention paid to the processes of the unfolding landscape, there was an underlying and unprecedented preoccupation with situating the visitor in the garden and accounting for their subjective experience, one that found literary expression in the narrative of the garden treatise – and Lenoir's own catalogue of the museum.

In Lenoir's Elysium, views were neither sweeping nor comprehensive, but the key to a constantly changing experience with time. It was only as a fleeting and unanticipated, ever-so-rapid *coup d'oeil* that the visitor gleaned what lay ahead. Hence the importance of serendipity as a compositional concept which, by virtue of its emphasis on discovery through the accidental, not only allowed for a form of encounter that was never possible in the panoramic view of the Baroque garden, but also shifted the emphasis of that discovery onto the experience of the subject visiting the garden. "Dans les lieux destinés aux promenades," wrote Watelet, "les distances et des accidens heureux doivent donc décider les repos."[303] Within this framework, as Watelet reminded his reader, both temporal and spatial dimensions were exploited: one must first see something in the space of the landscape they did not expect to see, and then take the time to fully partake in it. "On présentera pour prétexte de s'arrêter, tantôt les dimensions ou l'assemblage de quelques arbres extraordinaires heureusement groupés; tantôt la rencontre d'une source qui promet et donne de la fraîcheur en épanchant ses eaux; une vaste découverte qui demande quelques instants pour la parcourir; un point de vue pittoresque qui attache; un objet *imprévu* qui suspend les pas, en fixant les regards."[304]

The compositional elements of *coup d'oeil* and views, which for Lenoir were crucial to visually uniting the overall composition of the interior halls and garden, hailed from principles outlined in contemporary landscape theory. However the frequent use of terms such as *coup d'oeil* and perspective to apprehend the garden was testament to a new and more pervasive preoccupation with vision. The reader was promised a glimpse, a scene,

[303] Watelet, *Essai sur les jardins*, 26.
[304] Watelet, *Essai sur les jardins*, 27. Italics by Watelet.

a limited or fragmented view of the landscape; these expressions or modalities of vision were astonishingly new and persistent in the treatise discourse, and served to cast the spectral gaze back on the presence of the subject in the garden and their experience of it, while highlighting the notion of the unfolding landscape as a space of personal discovery resistant to the domination of an objectified and de-personalized all-seeing eye.

These principles shared more than a mere etymological rootedness in vision and the seeing subject; they were spatialized in the garden through a parallel emphasis on the subject's movement throughout the garden, and this through the corresponding concept of the garden *parcours*. Watelet had carefully described the pleasure of the path from the perspective of one's continual procession within it and animated by a variety of effects: not unlike the flickering occasioned by the play of shadow and light, he described how one first discovered something, only to lose sight of it and then to regain it in view. The diversity of interests, indeed, the pleasure of the path was largely dictated by movement and change. If designers modelled the materials of nature such as trees, water, grottoes, and rocks into distinct compositional groupings, it was the *parcours* itself that linked these compositional groupings and was the conduit to such views.

Morel too had characterized movement as an essential and indigenous feature of the composition and arrangement of the landscape. By virtue of Nature's basic elements of water, air, and vegetation, he remarked, the very concept of movement was inherent in the scenes and materials of nature. Perhaps, then, it was only an oversight that in Morel's treatise, this concept, with its multiple manifestations both metaphorical and literal, did not merit a chapter of its own, but was included as a digression in his discussion of buildings: "Qu'on me permette de m'arrêter un moment sur cette partie (on the manoir) si intéressante de l'art des Jardins," he implored the reader, "la matière est neuve, et la discution ici ne sera pas déplacée. Deux considérations essentielles doivent servir de guide dans la position du manoir: l'aspect et le mouvement du terrein. L'un a pour but de procurer un marcher facile et des promenades engageantes; l'autre de présenter un ensemble qui plaise au premier coup-d'oeil, et qui cependant intéresse toujours."[305] Positing complimentary and indivisible counterparts of the subject in space, Morel's two essential considerations of aspect and movement, of specular overview and corporal

[305] Morel, *Théorie des jardins* (Paris: Pissot, 1776), 208.

engagement, also succinctly described the designer's dual tasks in arranging the garden, not only as a tableau with views, but also as a moving scene.

The successful garden design was indeed an exercise in motion, one that could be more generally characterized as movement from the general to the specific. The true goal of the garden, Morel wrote,

> outre l'agrément du coup d'oeil général, est que chaque objet soit vu de près; que, dans ses tranquilles et lentes promenades, le propriétaire le puisse parcourir sans fatigue, par des pentes douces, un marcher commode; qu'il en puisse examiner toutes les parties à son aise; que chaque point en un mot lui offre une jouissance facile. Voilà pourquoi tout doit être précieux et fini dans les détails, frais et piquant dans le tableau général, élégant et recherché dans chaque objet en particulier.[306]

The detail, he implied, must always be ready for closer inspection, while the visitor personally modulated her spatial relationship with the landscape.

This marked attention to movement was matched by a corresponding emphasis on spatiality. Regardless of whether the composition of the landscape was likened to the art of painting or theatre, most theorists recognized that its defining feature – space – required a distinct approach, one that accounted for the shifting perspective occasioned by the visiting spectator. For this reason, Watelet argued that it was more appropriate to refer to the various views of the landscape as theatrical scenes, rather than the more static and traditional term *tableau*,[307] and, using a different analogy, to compare the *décorateur*'s concern for creating a multiplicity of points of view to the spatial concerns of the sculptor, rather than the two-dimensionality of the artist's canvas.

Variety

Watelet claimed that variety was essential to good garden design – indeed, as a compositional principle, it was an integral feature of the irregular garden and was intended to retain the interest of the visitor throughout the continuous unfolding of the landscape. Variety was also an expansive category with both qualitative and quantitative

[306] Ibid., 112-113.
[307] Watelet, *Essai sur les jardins*, 56.

dimensions, and thus its manifestation in the landscape was apparent in numerous ways, from the interventions of the designer who introduced a wide array of scenes throughout the garden, to the changing effects of nature registered by modulations of colour and light over time. While neither of these two manifestations was new to garden design – the human element and the natural – their possibilities were nevertheless celebrated in a new and unique way in eighteenth-century garden theory.

As a qualitative expression of diversity and change, the principle of variety had a parallel effect of highlighting movement within the elements of the landscape, and theorists rose to the occasion of celebrating this movement as best they could. They saw movement in light and dark, in seasons and days, in views and paths. Morel cited unique opportunity and a certain responsibility in accounting for the change of seasons and the cycles of nature in landscape design

> la scène change, elle lui offre d'autres tableaux et lui présente d'autres combinaisons. Cette faculté de varier les effets, refusée au Peintre, donne de très-grands avantages au Jardinier;…Il doit avoir présentes toutes ces variations et ces combinaisons; il doit, en composant, prévoir les effets occasionnés par la révolution journalière du soleil; il faut qu'il travaille pour ceux du matin, du midi, du soir et de la nuit: ils influent étonnament sur le caractère de ses perspectives, par le changement continuel des ombres et de la lumière, par la variété dans le ton et la couleur. Enfin il doit avoir égard à la succession des saisons qui modifient et nuancent si diversement les tableaux de la Nature.[308]

The amateur gardenist René-Louis de Girardin also discussed the poetics of the play of shadow and light and the necessity of arranging objects in different "plans" within the landscape

> C'est à donner de la saillie, et du relief à toutes les formes, par l'opposition des renfoncemens, et par un beau contraste d'ombre et de lumière, c'est dans un juste rapport des proportions, et de la convenance

[308] Morel, *Théorie des jardins*, 377.

> avec tous les objets environnans qui doivent se présenter sous le même coup d'oeil; c'est à bien disposer tous les objets sur différens plans, de manière que l'effet de la perspective semble donner du mouvement aux différentes parties dont les unes paroissent éclairées, les autres dans l'ombre…[309]

While the physical (in the Aristotelian sense of *physis*) and conceptual elements of season, nature, and light assured variety of composition, through their association with movement, they equally constituted metaphors of cyclical time. These metaphors formed an important dimension in Lenoir's Elysium, which specifically countered the logic of the interior galleries with an alternative notion of time. When associated with nature's cycles, time in the Elysium was effected so gradually, so seamlessly, that it was both eternal and residual, continuous and enduring, collective and restorative, and these very aspects of deep time heralded important lessons for the other important temporal concept of the Musée: human (linear) time.

The Garden Treatise as Literary Genre

The new emphasis on motion and movement throughout the garden equally manifested a literary dimension in the garden treatise. Watelet concluded his own work, *Essai sur les jardins* (1774), with two personal accounts that served to actualize the theory of the preceding pages. Written in the first person, "Le jardin chinois" and "Le jardin françois. Lettre à un ami" were lengthy passages that contained both descriptions of sites in nature and poetic moralizing induced by visits to these sites – confirmation if any were needed of how the Reader might expect to experience nature. Significantly, Watelet did not describe the solitary visitor, rather he imagined himself in the company of the Reader, whose presence he periodically confirmed: "La vue s'étend surtout l'établissement; & l'on se rappelle, en y promenant encore ses regards, les sensations qu'on y a reçues."[310]

Watelet's treatise innovated the first-person format as a progression through the landscape and its various elements, inaugurating both the literary device of the walk-through and a subjective voice into the traditionally objectified discourse of the treatise.

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[309] René-Louis de Girardin, *De la composition des paysages, ou des moyens d'embellir la nature autour des habitations champêtres* (Geneva and Paris: Delaguette, 1777), 110-111.
[310] Watelet, *Essai sur les jardins*, 41.

In such narratives, authors typically embarked on descriptive journeys of their gardens with an imagined reader, focusing less on the objects themselves and more on the stories they evoked, individually and collectively. Unlike the architectural treatise, then, the garden treatise was primarily experiential in tone, providing a first-hand account of the garden as the author had conceived it.

Girardin's designs and treatise pertaining to his estate of Ermenonville perhaps most explicitly synthesized the period's interest in the experiential space of the garden. An amateur gardener who wished to re-design his estate in the early 1770s, Girardin had originally sought the advice of Jean-Marie Morel. When Girardin's views on the use of monuments for their associative potential rather than their utilitarian function were not well received by Morel, Girardin dismissed him and proceeded to plan his 2,100-acre estate in the manner of the *parc à l'anglaise* on his own. In his landscape theories, Girardin espoused close-up views rather than sweeping, panoramic vistas; he composed scenes in the manner of arcadian and rural paintings; and his garden included the final resting place of Rousseau, in a Roman-style tomb designed by Hubert Robert on the picturesque Île des Peupliers.

Girardin concurrently wrote and published a garden treatise of his own, *De la composition des paysages, ou, des moyens d'embellir la nature autour des habitations, en y joignant l'agréable à l'utile* (1777), a work heavily indebted to principles of the English *ferme ornée*[311] and French Romanticism. At a time when many English treatises (such as those of Walpole, Whately, and Chambers) were being translated into French, Girardin's treatise was the only French garden treatise to be translated into English. Furthermore, while the origins of the French Picturesque in landscape painting and its subsequent influence on landscape development are often a subject of discussion in the landscape treatise,[312] the connection between garden theory and landscape painting in Girardin's situation is explicit: three contemporary French painters and acquaintances of Girardin – Hubert Robert (1733-1808), Francois Boucher (1703-1770), and Claude-Henri Watelet (1718-1786) – were also involved in garden design.

[311] *Ferme ornée* is the French term for ornamental farm, used by Stephen Switzer in *The Nobleman, Gentlemen, and Gardener's Recreation*, 1715. The concept advocated the use of aesthetic principles in agricultural practices, such as the incorporation of monuments to provoke poetic associations, the use of the circuit drive for movement throughout the landscape, and the compositional planting of vines, flowers and hedges in-between fields.

[312] Please see Watelet's treatise and discussion of *Des Parcs modernes* (pp.55-61), in which he explicitly states that the picturesque derived its ideas from painting, in *Essai sur les jardins*.

Girardin's guided promenade included a description of an Elysium setting and its features, and was punctuated by indications of the path the reader must take: "à travers un bois," "en sortant delà," "de l'autre côté," at the end of which the reader found herself back at the beginning of the circuit – at the estate's château. Thus while the ensemble was a tableau for the inhabitants of the château, it was also a promenade for the eyes, in the words of Girardin. The ultimate goal of the garden, Girardin argued, was its ability to stimulate the visitor's senses, and by extension, the soul, with the resonance of an idea or reminiscence.

These two remarkable texts demonstrate how the garden treatise inaugurated a new literary genre in the eighteenth century that served to subjectively spatialize the theorized garden through specific narrative devices. In its insistence on the experiential dimension of the garden, the treatise recognized the primacy of perception and the authority of the subject's experience in the shaping of ideas and the apprehension of knowledge. Inasmuch as the garden was theorized as a narrative space, it popularized the underlying notion and potential of the environment as a catalyst for stirring the senses. Lenoir's aesthetic theory, if one may call it that, relied on just such an interplay, whereby spaces evoked emotive response as a form of engagement. Lenoir's intentions were not unlike basic sensationist views to effecting moral and intellectual progress, and reflected in a broader sense the preoccupation of his age.

In effect, Lenoir appropriated the narrative techniques of Girardin and Watelet. Lenoir's catalogues, indeed his two written compendiums to the Musée (*Description* and *Musée des Monuments français*), are the museological counterparts to the garden treatise. The premise of both the garden and the museum was to invite visitors to activate their imaginative faculties, to enter a landscape of monuments rich in narrative potential, and to engage in their stories. Like the garden promenade, Lenoir's catalogues echoed the organization of the physical space through their description of objects. More importantly, however, were Lenoir's invocations to "enter" the space of the narrative and to experience it as a form of *parcours*. Lenoir seamlessly made the transition from an expository essay on the history and cross-cultural shape of Elysiums – a *parallèle*, if you will – to a description of its actualization in the garden of the Musée, by invoking the voice and the role of the story-teller: in other words, by altering the narrative voice in his

catalogue from a detached overseer to an engaged visitor. Inviting the reader/visitor to enter his Elysium landscape and partake of its narratives, Lenoir himself guided the tour of the garden: "Entrons avec nos lecteurs dans ce paysage auguste, examinons les monumens qu'une main timide osa consacrer à des hommes célèbres."[313] This narrative device contrasted markedly with his previous writing style, and it was by this means that Lenoir prompted the reader to adopt a different relationship with the text by imagining that s/he were physically present in the garden.

Producing Fictions in the Garden: Character, Genre, and "la douce mélancolie"

Jean Marie Morel theorized the concept of character in *Théorie des jardins* (1776) as the product of effects, perspectives, and composition orchestrated by the gardener. Marveling at the richness of Nature, he wrote that its precepts and materials provided immense combinations with nuances so different that they were capable of composing "des tableaux, des scènes de tous les genres, pour produire toute sorte de caractères, et obtenir la plus grande variété d'expressions."[314] Variety was an essential feature of the eighteenth-century garden, and the garden designer had recourse to a number of means to achieve it, from the highly artificial to the mimetic, and combinations thereof. It is evident from Morel's text that the garden was increasingly being conceived as a space in which to design and stage a multiplicity of "scenes", ranging in subject from the fictitious to the historical, and Nature alone was not sufficient to realize these ends. Though Morel himself was critical of too much imitation in the garden, that this discussion of character appeared in his treatise is an important indication of its prominence in the circles of landscape designers from the 1770s onward.

Morel's use of the term character was, to a certain extent, informed by contemporary architectural theory and the search for an expressive architectural idiom – or *caractère* – in the revelation of a building's purpose. As previously stated, the Vitruvian concept was receiving renewed attention in the eighteenth century in the work of Jacques-François Blondel, who sought legibility in architectural composition through the recourse to appropriate modes of architectural expression. The concept of *caractère* assumed ever greater complexity in the writing of Blondel's student, Étienne-Louis Boullée, who tied the visual stimulus of "expressive" character to the feeling or impression it created in the

[313] Lenoir, *Musée*, Vol. 5, 195.
[314] Morel, *Théorie des jardins*, 368.

viewer, thereby introducing notions of architectural sensation and "metaphorical" and "symbolic" character to the topical debate on architectural expression.

It is worth distinguishing between the terms "character" and "*genre*" as these were intended in the eighteenth-century landscape treatise because they appear to have been used if not indiscriminately – at least interchangeably – by various theorists. Character, as has already been defined, connoted the purpose of a building, however in the garden treatise it also implied a certain accessorizing or form of décor. A garden was said to have the character of the rustic, the noble, the serious or the sad, and these were judiciously created through recourse to the garden's natural and imported elements, or "accessories" in the words of Watelet, such as the manner rocks and grottoes indicated the rustic. Character provided effect.

Yet character in this aestheticizing sense is not to be confused with the more complex and totalizing concept of *genre* in the garden treatise, which provided the overall narrative framework for the irregular garden. Watelet made *genre* one of the major themes of his treatise and more specifically of his discussion of the modern landscape, displaying a painterly appreciation of the subject. Watelet celebrated the very possibility of imagination in both garden-making and garden-visiting which, for its enrichment and variety, required picturesque, poetic, or romanesque invention – inventions which "tiennent au merveilleux et à la fiction."[315] As Watelet segued into a discussion of modern parks and their principles, he remarked that the particular challenge of the latter was to approach as much as possible the fictitious, while abandoning as little as possible Nature.

Watelet defined these three categories of *genre*. On the picturesque garden, Watelet made the not uncommon analogy to painting. The picturesque "tient aux idées de la peinture. Le peintre assemble et dispose sous l'aspect favorable à son intention, les objets qu'il choisit dans la Nature. Le Décorateur d'un parc doit avoir sans doute le même but, mais borné dans ses moyens: les qualités du sol, la température du climat, le caractère et les formes inhérentes des terreins."[316] His definition of the poetic garden invoked mythology: "Le poétique…s'emprunte des mythologies, des usages et des

[315] Watelet, *Essai sur les jardins*, 19.
[316] Ibid., 55.

costumes anciens ou étrangers;"[317] while his final category, the romanesque "embrasse en effet tout ce qui a été imaginé, et tout ce qu'on peut inventer encore."[318] For Watelet, the element that bound these three modes together was the level of their invention and their appeal to narrative – through myth, memory, and the visitor's "flexible imagination" – and narrative's ability to make the visitor a participant in the drama of the garden. The role of the poetic in composition, for example, was to evoke the myths of foreign cultures, "de renouer, à l'aide de la mémoire des Spectateurs, quelques fils de ces idées; de faire en sorte qu'on se croie un moment transporté dans des temps et des climats éloignés de nous,"[319] while the romanesque was an incitement to engage in the work of pure fiction and the imaginary, of that which was yet to be imagined.

As a space dedicated to the memory of French personalities, Lenoir's Elysium straddled the poetic and the picturesque. The figures remembered in the garden were virtually all prominent historical personalities and therefore were highly recognizable within French historiography. Descartes, Molière, Montfauçon, La Fontaine: few would have denied them their rightful place in Paris's first elysium cemetery. Yet the monuments that Lenoir created for these figures, and these monuments' iconographical recourse to myth, would make of this space more than simply a *parcours* through the picturesque. The range of personalities including the legendary Héloïse and Abélard, the design of the memorials with their intricate symbols, even the very topos of the space were of the realm of mythology. Indeed, to have partaken in Lenoir's Elysium as he intended for it to function was decidedly a poetic experience. Lenoir himself referred to the Elysium as a mythological fiction in his catalogue.[320]

Activating this poetic experience necessitated the presence of the visitor and their movement throughout the garden. Movement provided the dual function of access to its world and of structural framework for the concepts of character and *genre*. In Watelet's treatise, motion assumed a two-fold dimension as spectators moved physically through space, and temporally through historical time, to participate in evocative scenes. To this end, Watelet foresaw pursuing the possibilities of fiction to their fullest potential, by suggesting the placement of pantomimes in the garden, who would create interesting

[317] Ibid., 78.
[318] Ibid., 86.
[319] Ibid., 78-79.
[320] Lenoir, *Musée*, Vol. 5, 179.

visual effects and imitate rituals around various buildings located throughout the landscape – all with the explicit goal of entertaining the visitor and arousing her curiosity. Thus in Watelet's treatise, the garden was quite literally conceived both spatially and compositionally as a stage set, and metaphors of the theatre punctuated his writing, where views were referred to as "scènes" and the owner of the estate a participating "acteur."

Temporal displacement provided another form of movement as visitors imagined themselves transported to distant times, cultures, and climates. In this web of transition and transposition, the object was much more than a mere accessory: *fabriques*, figures, and inscriptions in the garden served to unleash or activate associations as the basis for an enactment to occur between the visitor and the site, and a lasting impression to be made, to be secured through the act of recall or reminiscence. These objects' combined effects as mementos of past accomplishments functioned as momentary stopping points on the visitor's journey through time, while eliciting engagement through a provoked emotive response. Echoing Watelet's observation of how views aroused sensorial recall ("La vue s'étend sur tout l'établissement; et l'on se rappelle, en y promenant encore ses regards, les sensations qu'on y a reçues"[321]), Lenoir claimed that in the Elysium,

> Quoique les actions et les ouvrages de ceux à qui appartiennent ces précieux restes assurent assez à notre patrie une véritable gloire, il semble que leur réunion, dans le même lieu, n'y concentre cette gloire que pour la répandre au dehors avec plus d'éclat. La diversité des mérites y produit des sentiments divers, mais dont se compose un intérêt général, qui excite nos regrets, nous donne d'utiles leçons et rappelle de touchans souvenirs.
>
> Qu'on suppose ces restes inanimes recevant une nouvelle vie pour se voir, s'entendre et jouir d'une félicité commune et inaltérable…Le tableau de l'Elysée antique est-il donc bien plus séduisant que celui que nous offriroit une assemblée si imposante? Pour moi, témoin nécessaire des justes hommages rendus à leur mémoire, par l'élévation, la consécration de ce monument; moi qui ai eu l'avantage d'être appelé à

[321] Watelet, *Essai sur les jardins*, 41.

> préparer dans des limites trop bornées, une place trop étroite à des hommes qui remplissent l'univers de leur célébrité et de leur gloire, je me fais honneur d'avouer que j'approuve une émotion douce et nouvelle, toutes les fois que je porte mes pas dans cette auguste enceinte; j'ajouterai que la récompense la plus chère à mon coeur seroit de faire passer dans l'âme de mes lecteurs et de ceux qui visiteront cet Elysée, le saint respect dont, en le formant, j'ai été pénétré pour les lumières, les talens et la vertu.[322]

Watelet's comments concerning the role of sensations in an individual's memory of a place and his descriptions of the garden visitor being transported through time, as well as Morel's oblique references to the affective capacity of the object in his own writing on *genre*, both anticipated and highlighted the significance of Lenoir's claim to a visceral reaction to the Elysium, when he stated that he experienced "une émotion douce et nouvelle, toutes les fois que je porte mes pas dans cette auguste enceinte."[323] In bringing together concepts of sensation and emotion with notions of object and place, these theorists identified the landscape, and the irregular garden in particular, as a space in which to create meaning through narrative and purposeful expression, and to this end their ideas clearly resonated with contemporary philosophical theories of behaviour and human understanding. In particular, these landscape theorists' two-fold recognition of the pre-eminence of affect and subjectivity in the garden were based on insights indebted to John Locke's and Étienne Bonnot Condillac's cognitive theories of sensory perception. Locke's and Condillac's claims that knowledge of the world originated from sensory awareness – that all ideas came first from corporal sensations – affirmed the primacy of the subject and the authority of their personal experience in the making of knowledge, and constituted a radical challenge to existing Cartesian views of innate ideas and the mind as a receptacle for revealed Truth.[324] The garden was an ideal space in which to put

[322] Lenoir, *Musée*, Vol. 5, 203-204. Emphasis my own.
[323] Ibid., 204.
[324] The idea that "Nihil ist in intellectu quod non prius fuerit in sensu"[324] – "Nothing is in the mind that has not been in the senses" – was in fact Aristotelian in origin, and its precepts had a long lineage in the works of Thomas Aquinas, Francis Bacon, and Thomas Hobbes. However in the context of modern epistemology, one dominated by Cartesian metaphysical dualism and the concept of the mind/body split, when the concept received renewed attention by British empiricist John Locke in his "Essay Concerning Human Understanding" (1690) and was further theorized in the metaphysical treatises of the French philosopher Étienne Bonnot de Condillac, *Essai sur l'origine des connaissances humaines* (1746) and *Traité des sensations* (1754), the results were nothing less than ground-breaking.

theory into practice – it had an imaginative dimension to it – like a book – with the crucial difference that it appealed to multiple senses.

If John Locke's "Essay Concerning Human Understanding," published in 1690, had brought renewed attention to the Aristotelian dictum of the sensory origin of ideas, Condillac had nevertheless reduced the theory to one simple principle and generative principle. According to Condillac's sensationist theory, all ideas derived from sensations, and it was from these initial sensations that all of the mind's other faculties flowed, including memory, judgment, reflection, and the imagination. In his study of the century's most prominent sensationist philosophers (Condillac, Bonnet and Helvétius), John O'Neal has persuasively argued the centrality of theories of sensationism to enlightenment epistemology and especially French empirical thought, claiming that sensationism was the most widely accepted way of thinking among French intellectuals in its time. Indeed, in its positioning of the body and the authority of experience as the harbingers of human knowledge, sensationist theory had almost immediate implications for literary, spatial, and artistic sensibilities – Lenoir's Elysium among them.

The specific significance of Locke's and Condillac's theories of perception to the work of Lenoir lies in their aesthetic implications, particularly how these theories became linked with emotion, and more specifically, with the concept of sensibility, by the late eighteenth century. The very idea that through our senses we form ideas and thereby gain knowledge reaffirmed the importance of the physical conditions in which the body's experience in seeing, touching, hearing, smelling, and tasting occurred – and in this the concept of site was crucial. The recognition that space, and in this instance, landscape, could be shaped and become a potential catalyst to operations of human perception was evident in the discussions on character and genre that appeared in landscape theory as early as the 1770s. Lenoir clearly considered an emotive response a key factor toward the making of meaning in his own Elysium garden. In his insistence on the experiential and, more precisely, melancholic character of the garden, Lenoir recognized the primacy of sensation for perception and the authority of subjective experience in the shaping of ideas and the apprehension of knowledge.

Melancholy in the Garden

Very quickly in the history of landscape design, the concept of character in the garden became associated with its capacity to elicit a specific response, thereby engendering a slight shift in the understanding of the garden's philosophical role. The garden not only formally created a variety of distinct spaces, it did so towards different evocative ends. Scenes in the garden, or "views," were widely espoused at this time for their ability to induce a multiplicity of emotional responses throughout a given landscape, ranging from melancholy to awe, that were designed to maintain the interest of the visitor. In his treatise *On Modern Gardening*,[325] Horace Walpole endorsed variety in the general views of the garden, while Henry Home (Lord Kames) wrote of architecture and the garden in his treatise *Elements of Criticism* of 1762 that these disciplines "cannot otherwise entertain the mind, than by raising certain agreeable emotions or feelings…Gardening, beside the emotions of beauty by means of regularity, order, proportions, colour, and utility, can rise [sic] emotions of grandeur, of sweetness, of gaiety, melancholy, wildness, and even of surprise or wonder…Gardening indeed possesses one advantage, never to be equaled in the other art; which is, that it is capable, in various scenes, to rise [sic] successively all the different emotions above mentioned."[326] Several of the predominant themes of sensationist theory, such as how the senses might be developed to improve an individual's moral character, and the theory's implications for pedagogy, were equally important issues for Lenoir.

Melancholy in the eighteenth century was an especially popular characteristic of both English and French garden theory, particularly as it pertained to morality, because it implied a certain introspective subjectivity that was an idealized condition of visiting the garden. In his essay on the origin of the beautiful and the sublime, published in mid-century, Edmund Burke had proclaimed melancholy a type of garden-scene ("Garden-scenes may perhaps be divided into the sublime, the beautiful, the melancholy or pensive; to which last I know not but we may assign a middle place betwixt the former two, as being in some sort composed of both"),[327] while William Shenstone, creator of the Leasowes, qualified the ruin in the garden as affording "pleasing melancholy" in his

[325] Horace Walpole's essay, "On Modern Gardening," was first printed in *Anecdotes of Painting in England*, Vol. 4, in 1771. The essay was first published independently in 1780, and translated into French by Duc de Nivernois in 1785.
[326] Henry Home (Lord Kames), *Elements of Criticism*, 3rd ed. (Edinburgh, 1765), II, 426-27; quoted in Morawinska, "Eighteenth-Century "Paysages moralisés"", 471.
[327] Edmund Burke, "A Philosophical Enquiry into the Origin of our Ideas of the Sublime and Beautiful," 1757.

essay "Unconnected Thoughts on Gardening," published in 1764. Alexander Pope's Ovidian heroic epistle of 1717, "Eloisa to Abelard," opened with an especially desolate description of melancholy: "In these deep solitudes and awful cells, Where heav'nly-pensive contemplation dwells, And ever-musing melancholy reigns," and Biet's evocative etching of a young woman stooped at the edge of Abélard's and Héloïse's canopied tombs alluded to just such a melancholic moment in Lenoir's Elysium, which Lenoir confirmed in his own description of the garden.

Eric Gidal has observed, however, that in late eighteenth-century France, the concept of melancholy had far more complex and persuasive implications than a pictorial account of the solitary figure caught in pensive or thoughtful repose might suggest. Gidal has argued that by the eighteenth century, melancholy in the philosophical writing of Voltaire, Montesquieu, and Madame de Staël, had transmuted from its originary and Hippocratic ties to humoral theories of the body and emotional dispositions, malady and even intellectual genius, to espouse explicit socio-political ideals of political freedom and national identity – which they argued had had its genesis in English constitutional gains following the Great Revolution.[328] These influential writers and others identified a civic melancholy in the "foundational temperament of an active and engaged citizenry"[329] that they reasoned was the hallmark of English mores, and under their authorship, melancholy acquired in the French psyche acute civic and moralistic inflections that transposed the traditional solitary image of the melancholic to the public sphere. Staël summarized the conjunction of these two conditions in the following way: "why the English, who are contented with their government and customs, have an imagination so much more melancholy than was that of the French. The answer is that liberty and virtue, those two great results of human reason, require meditation, and meditation necessarily leads to serious pursuits."[330] In light of these seemingly divergent currents of thought pertaining to melancholy – one emotional and mood-based and grounded in the subject, the other meditative and political and a societal predilection – in late eighteenth-century intellectual circles, it is worth considering in what spirit, and with what intentions, Lenoir understood the term when he applied it to his description of the Elysium.

[328] Eric Gidal, "Civic Melancholy: English Gloom and French Enlightenment," *Eighteenth-Century Studies* Vol. 37, No. 1 (Fall 2003): 23-45.
[329] Ibid., 26.
[330] Ibid., 25.

In his catalogue entry, Lenoir linked the concept of character to the topos of the Elysium, and only in an afterthought did he invoke the term "melancholy" to bring these two fields together. He wrote

> Un Elysée m'a paru convenir au caractère que j'ai donné à mon établissement, et le jardin m'a offert tous les moyens d'exécuter mon projet. Dans ce jardin calme et paisible, on voit plus de quarante statues; des tombeaux, posés ça et là sur une pelouse verte, s'élèvent avec dignité au milieu du silence et de la tranquilité. Des pins, des cypres et des peupliers les accompagnent; des larves et des urnes cinéraires, posés sur les murs, concourent à donner à ce lieu de bonheur la douce mélancholie qui parle à l'âme sensible.[331]

Indeed, in Lenoir's historical exegesis on the topos of the Elysium in *Musée des Monumens français*, he had stressed its character as a space of virtue, happiness, and unity. In this literary tradition, however, the characteristic of melancholy was not typically tied to Classical notions of the elysium, nor was it among the observations that Lenoir raised in connection to Fénélon's description of the elysium, one that Lenoir went to great lengths to praise and to emulate. In fact, if Lenoir referred to melancholy at all, it was not as a qualitative remark of the garden space (he had already described the Elysium as a "lieu de bonheur"), but rather in its emotive capacity to stir the soul. This sentimental formulation of melancholy seems to tie his understanding of the term, and his intentions for its invocation, to Rousseauian concepts of perception and intuition, a decidedly more humoral manifestation than either spatial or rational interpretations would allow.

And yet it was precisely in its association with the garden landscape that melancholy assumed a spatial identity in the eighteenth century. As Elizabeth Barlow Rogers has observed,[332] Lockean empiricism and its literary and political developments in Rousseau's philosophy and fiction would popularize the various forms of the garden, from the rural cemetery to the public park, as the ideal sites for honouring citizens and

[331] Lenoir, *Musée*, Vol. 1, 18-19.
[332] Elizabeth Barlow Rogers, *Landscape Design: A Cultural and Architectural History* (New York: Stewart, Tabori and Chang; London: Thames and Hudson, 2001).

heroes of state. The "landscape of moral virtue", as Rogers defined it, promoted solitary contemplation and the idea that perception and intuitive thinking (about man's accomplishments in particular) were governed more by sentiment than by Enlightenment's reason, and constituted the very characteristics of melancholy in contemporary literature and pictorial expressions of *sensibilité*. In such a system, Nature became the greatest ally to inducing contemplation, and melancholic character, the means by which this contemplation was enhanced, as Burke and Shenstone, among others, have made clear.

Lenoir's understanding of melancholy is indeed crucial to formulating an interpretation of the Elysium and its narrative significance within the larger programme of the Musée. Was Lenoir intending melancholy in its behavioural context, and thereby modeling the experience of the Elysium as a celebration of emotion and feeling as a stimulus to the imagination, and by extension, poetic creation? If so, then the Elysium may be interpreted as a celebration of life: of French citizenry and its accomplishments, as epitomized by the monuments to Descartes, Molière and Boileau. When viewed in this framework, the invocation of melancholy would appear to be an early manifestation of Romanticism and the cult of nature, and would contextualize the popularity of the monument to Abélard and Héloïse and its prominence within both the garden *parcours* and the popular imaginary as the product of the romantic penchant for, and revival of, medieval romance. Furthermore, the garden's narrative, founded on a multitude of monuments commemorating non-monarchical and non-mythological figures from different historical eras, was innovative and anti-Classical both in its asymmetrical design and its literary structure. The fixed unities of time, place, and action that defined the Classical plot were here negated in favour of more fluid temporal and spatial strategies and intersecting biographical epitaphs.

Notwithstanding his romantic sensibilities, Rousseau himself had inspired the French desire for liberty and equality, and his influential and widely-read treatise, *Contrat Social,* was nothing less than a revolutionary call to arms when it was published in 1762. It is possible to understand Lenoir's intention for the Elysium as a political statement, as a nod to the achievements of the French Revolution that had just occurred and an incitement to continual civic participation and political action to guard against any future

abuses and wrong-doings. The garden in this interpretive framework functioned as a crucial reminder and *memento mori* that one's political engagement must never be stifled, just as Lenoir lived the recurring threat of the Musée's forced closure, and yet tirelessly defended its cause. The public concept of civic melancholy most aptly resonates with these possibilities and, in modeling the Elysium not in the Classical tradition but in the image of the picturesque garden, a most quintessential English space, Lenoir celebrated the political achievements of the French Revolution (rather than the individual accomplishments of the citizens honoured there), and its ideological precursor, the English Revolution, begun one and a half centuries earlier, brought a more political dimension to the garden.

This alternative and more philosophical reading of melancholy had legitimate claims in the eighteenth century and was the outcome of a modern variation of the term that had begun in the Renaissance. If, as has already been suggested, its etymological origins tied the concept of melancholy to bodily malfunction that would, in the nineteenth century, acquire the status of a mental disease, it had, in the modern era, a parallel cultural life as a temperament and subjective experience. As such, it was linked to an excess of creative energy and idleness, and appropriated by those who lay claim to superior refinement. This particular discourse carried with it the weight of an idealized notion of melancholy as a condition of too much intellectual activity; it was, after all, the pathology and ethos of the philosopher, and thus, in post-Revolution France, was an ideal vehicle for eliciting civic philosophico-engagement.

This model of civic melancholy that Gidal described manifested its own poetics in late eighteenth century French literature that tied the concept to the moral quality of virtue, notably in Jean-Jacques Rousseau's novel *Julie ou la nouvelle Héloïse*. Rousseau's melancholic Bomston, for example, had "an air of grandeur that comes from the soul more than from his station; the mark of courage and virtue, but a little ruggedness and harshness in the fratures. A grave and stoic demeanor under which he barely hides an extreme sensibility."[333] Melancholy was also a staple trope in the British cult of sensibility which reached its apex in the 1790s. With ties to medicine and the body

[333] Gidal, "Civic Melancholy," 30-31.

notwithstanding, in the eighteenth century the melancholic was widely understood as both a person of sensibility and rationality, and often the mark of intellectual genius.

Just as virtue was posited as the moral claim and behavioral counterpart of the melancholic character, it is not inconceivable that Lenoir thought the state of happiness the other side of melancholy, achievable through a subjective *parcours* in the Elysium. Through veneration of the Other, Lenoir proposed a philosophical meditation, one that led inalterably to enlightenment and moral virtue. This meditation was not a meditation on death *per se*, but rather on the idea of the cycle – or revolution – of life and death, accomplishments and failure, losses and gains.

By Lenoir's own admission, his invocation of the Elysium derived from antique literary sources and carried the import of its classical heritage, yet as a concept of happiness, the Elysium had also fully permeated the language and mindset of the eighteenth century

> Nous ne pouvons le dissimuler, il y a une sorte de magie attachée à ce mot qui est devenu de domaine de la langue des arts, et dont on se sert tous les jours pour signifier l'idée qu'on a du bonheur: il est surtout consacré pour caractériser celui qu'on suppose être le partage des hommes vertueux, après qu'ils ont cessé de vivre dans ce monde visible. Et pourquoi ne pourrois-je pas me conformer, sur cela, à un usage qui, grâce aux lumières et à la philosophie, n'a rien de dangereux? Et s'il est permis de faire les rapprochemens, quelle denomination convient mieux que celle d'Elysée, à un lieu vénérable par les restes précieux qui y sont déposés?[334]

With these words, Lenoir tied the concepts of death, virtue and happiness to melancholy and the garden, for it was in the image of a space celebrating man's accomplishments that Lenoir conceived the Elysium, while it was through the emotional lens of melancholy that he fully expected meaning to be made – and more importantly, felt. His emphasis on the emotional tenor of the garden and its appeal to the senses reveal that he intended the Elysium not only as a place of instruction, but also memory.

[334] Lenoir, *Musée*, Vol. 5, 194-195.

III. Emplotment in the Elysium: Monuments as a Meditation on the Cycles of History and Time

Relics, Ruins, Remains

It was largely through the accumulation of human remains that the Elysium truly performed the role of Paris's first modern cemetery, one which predated the Père Lachaise cemetery by almost a decade. The very act of collecting human remains within a museological context transformed the Musée des Monuments français, both philosophically and spatially, and effected significant repercussions on the Musée as a whole. Indeed, with the addition of mortal remains, Lenoir raised the stakes in his ambition to reconnect with the past. In the late twentieth century, the line between artifact and artifice was deliberately blurred in museological settings in order to sustain the greater need for a visceral historical narrative (note the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum in Washington D.C., America's national institution dedicated to Holocaust history, as a prime example of this tradition), but in the eighteenth century, to combine human artifacts (that were not intended for study purposes) with artistic objects in a museum of art was certainly an innovation.

The first human remains to be transferred to the Musée des Monuments français were those of René Descartes in 1795. Descartes's remains had already been exhumed once, from Sweden, where the French philosopher had been working until his death in 1650. His remains had been transported to Paris by d'Alibert and buried at Sainte-Geneviève. Following the Revolution, the Commission des Arts requested that Descartes's remains be unearthed and transferred to the Musée, under the observation of the abbot Saint-Léger.[335] It is unclear what role Lenoir may have had in soliciting these remains; it is true that on many occasions he received letters from citizens throughout France either alerting him to locations of monuments for the Musée's collection or offering to donate their own. The precise dating of the transfer of Descartes's body remains somewhat of a mystery, as there are varying archival accounts and no verbal proceedings of the unearthing. In an undated report issued by Lenoir to the *Comité d'Instruction Publique* on the creation of the Musée, Lenoir wrote that "Bientôt j'eus l'honneur de recueillir les cendres du célèbre Descartes, que je trouvai à l'abbaye de Sainte-Geneviève. Je les plaçai au milieu d'une

[335] *Archives*, Vol. 3, Article 476, 151. The journalist and author of historical fiction, Russell Shorto, is currently writing a history of the exhumation of Descartes's remains.

espèce de portique que je formai avec les six fameuses colonnes cannelées de marbre noir, prises aux Minimes. C'est dans ce temple funèbre qu'il attend la gloire du Panthéon." The editors of the archives in which this report appeared have surmised its date to have been 18 July, 1795.[336] Yet in another document listing accessions to the museum from 1795 to 1799, Lenoir seemed to contradict himself: "Le 24 (10 septembre, 1795), j'annonce au Comité d'Instruction que j'ai déposé les restes de Descartes dans le tombeau de porphyre antique qui avait servi de cénotaphe à Caylus dans l'église de Saint-Germain-l'Auxerrois."[337]

Many years later, when he had become administrator of monuments at Saint-Denis, Lenoir was asked to clarify the details regarding the transfer of Descartes's remains to the Musée by M. Lafolie, conservator of public monuments. Lenoir's reply, dated 4 March, 1819, reveals the extent of the confusion that surrounded revolutionary exhumations

> Je m'empresse de satisfaire à la demande que vous me faites de renseignements sur le transport au Musée des Petits-Augustins des restes de René Descartes, venant de l'ancienne église Sainte-Geneviève, où le corps de ce philosophe fut déposé à son arrivée de Suède à Paris.
>
> Vous n'aurez pas dû trouver, Monsieur, de procès-verbal de l'exhumation de Descartes dans les archives du Musée, car il n'y en a pas eu de dressé. Cette opération s'est faite révolutionnairement, en présence du commissaire de la Section du quartier, à la requête de MM. L'abbé Saint-Léger et Le Blond, tous deux membres de la Commission des Monuments; ils sont morts l'un et l'autre. Les restes, et non pas le corps, car il y a fort peu de chose de cet homme justement célèbre, ont été apportés aux Petits-Augustins par un commissionnaire que j'ai payé. Quant à l'année, je ne m'en rappelle pas. Jamais Descartes n'est entré au Panthéon. Sa translation du Musée dans

[336] *Archives*, Vol. I, Article 25, 24.
[337] *Archives*, Vol. 2, Article 288, 386.

> cet édifice national a été, en effet, proposée à la Convention; mais Mercier, d'heureuse mémoire, s'y est opposé.
>
> A son arrivée au Musée, je l'ai déposé dans un tombeau antique en porphyre, d'où il a été retiré pour être placé dans le jardin, dans le sarcophage où il est encore; ce monument, dont j'ai le dessin, a été exécuté exprès, à l'époque où le tombeau de porphyre a été remis à l'administration du Musée du Louvre.[338]

What does become evident from this correspondence with Lafolie is that Lenoir had presumably not conceived of the idea of the Elysium in 1795 when he received Descartes's remains – he may even have anticipated that they would be transferred to the Panthéon, as were those of many illustrious Frenchmen at the time – and perhaps it was the very acquisition of these remains that generated the idea of the Elysium, which Lenoir began just a few months later. Lanzac de Labordie has argued that the Elysium was a convenience ("convenance") and was born of Lenoir's desire to restitute honour to the ashes of historical figures whose exhumations by vandalists had profaned against their memory. Labordie claimed that while Descartes's body was only held provisionally at the Musée des Monuments français, the real idea for an Elysium only came to Lenoir in 1799, with the arrival of more human remains. I would disagree with this opinion on the basis that already in 1796 Lenoir had begun to pursue other human remains, while descriptions of the space itself appeared in the 1797/98 catalogue (already its fourth edition) that Lenoir prepared for the museum.

Following Descartes, several other mortal remains would be transferred to the Elysium throughout the late 1790s and early 1800s, acquisitions which Lenoir pursued more and more aggressively. In August 1796, Lenoir requested to have the body of the famous seventeenth-century French general, Henri de La Tour d'Auvergne Turenne, transferred from the Jardin des Plantes, where it lay near the Egyptian mummies.[339] On March 22, 1799, Lenoir addressed the Minister of the Interior with a request to transfer the bodies of the famous seventeenth-century writers Molière and Jean de La Fontaine to the Elysium.

[338] *Archives*, Vol. 3, Article 501, 262.
[339] *Archives*, Vol. 2, Articles 212, 316; Vol. I, Articles 175-177, 189-193. Turenne's body was only exhumed and taken to the Musée on 12 June, 1799. His remains were then removed and transferred to the Invalides in a highly orchestrated procession celebrating the Fête de la République on 22 September, 1800.

Their remains, he wrote, had been exhumed in July, 1792, and had subsequently been abandoned in an attic in the neighbourhood of Fontaine Montmartre. By this point, Lenoir had begun to describe the Musée as having a "national character" and as a "worthy asylum" for these writers, whose busts already appeared with those of Boileau and Racine atop a monument to French literature that Lenoir had erected in the Elysium.[340] Verbal proceedings of 1799 confirm that La Fontaine was transferred to the Elysium on 4 August, 1799, and Molière, on 9 October 1799. Similarly, the bodies of the seventeenth-century Benedictins, Bernard de Montfauçon and Jean Mabillon, were also transported to the Elysium in the fall of 1799.[341]

One notes that to date, the figures in the garden were all people of honour, ordinary citizens who distinguished themselves by the importance of their actions rather than the entitlement of their birth. This observation in particular helped to set Lenoir's Elysium philosophically and historiographically apart from the interior collection, which represented (however circumstantially as inherited objects) monarchy and the nobility, and insodoing he claimed the garden as one dedicated to the representation and more specifically the commemoration of moral virtues – not unlike another contemporary public space of commemoration in Paris, the Panthéon. Yet Lenoir went to great lengths to distinguish his garden Elysium from this symbolic space (for example commenting on the different types of sculpture one found in each, as is evident in the debate over Turenne's monument), and he much preferred the comparison to London's Westminster Abbey, even if it was the historical crowning- and burial-place of most English sovereigns (a detail Lenoir conveniently overlooked.) This detail notwithstanding, Westminster contained monuments dedicated to people not necessarily buried in the Abbey, and born without royal or noble lineage, and in this respect Westminster was a symbolic and democratic model for Lenoir. Lenoir's most comprehensive description of the men buried in the garden Elysium is to be found in some of his later catalogues, for example the 1810 edition of *Description historique et chronologique des monumens de sculpture réunis au Musée des Monumens français*, which further served as a memorial device for him. In this edition, Lenoir included both formal descriptions of the sepulchral

[340] *Archives*, Vol. I, Article 132, 140.
[341] Nicolas Boileau-Despréaux was placed in the Elysium on 18 March, 1800. Lenoir also requested the bodies of Racine and Pascal, however these were denied him. On the exhumation of Boileau, see *Archives*, Vol. 2, Article 300, 427; on Pascal and Racine, *Archives*, Vol. 2, Article 201, 432.

urns dedicated to Descartes, Molière, Mabillon, Montfauçon, La Fontaine, and Boileau, in addition to transcriptions of lengthy epitaphs composed and inscribed in their memory.

Invigorated by these acquisitions and their influence on the museum he was creating, Lenoir again wrote to the Minister of the Interior to transfer remains to the Elysium. On 13 February, 1800, Lenoir requested permission to transfer the bodies of the famous twelfth-century lovers, Héloïse and Abélard, from where they lay in the church of Nogent-sur-Seine. He also requested that the mausoleums dedicated to them, which were currently in the municipality of Nogent – that of Héloïse at Paraclet, and that of Abélard at Châlon-sur-Seine – also be included in the shipment. "Le monument d'Abélard peut être placé sous plus d'un rapport dans le Musée des Monuments français. Il suffit d'ouvrir l'histoire pour connoître le mérite de ce philosophe, plus remarquable encore par la force du génie qu'il a développé dans un siècle plongé dans les ténèbres de la superstition, que par l'intérêt qu'excite le souvenir de ses malheurs. Ce monument, précieux pour l'histoire et pour l'homme qui aime à lire dans les pages de l'antiquité, existe, et peut se transporter à Paris."[342] Lenoir made as persuasive an argument as he could, presumably because these monuments were no longer in any danger of being vandalized, and served only to enrich the collection of the Musée, while depleting the provinces of a meaningful symbol of their history. Members of the municipal administration of Nogent had expressed their regret over the loss of these monuments to Paris.[343]

Lenoir's desire to bring remains and monuments to Paris marks the distinction between previous requests for human remains (Descartes, Molière and La Fontaine among them) and this one. What had begun as an intention to have authentic remains in the garden transmuted, over the course of time, to a slightly different sensibility. In a later passage of the afore-mentioned letter, Lenoir indicated his intention to bring the historical figures of Héloïse and Abélard together under a common monument, one he would design as a *fabrique*.[344] "Qu'il seroit doux de rapprocher sous ces antiques marbres les dépouilles

[342] *Archives*, Vol. I, Article 151, 159.
[343] Archives, Vol. I, Article 154, 169.
[344] In contemporary landscape theory, the *fabrique* was a garden structure, closely allied with French Picturesque painting, and popular in the compositions of both English and French gardens. The *fabrique* was likened to another popular garden element of the time, the folly, a structure intended to evoke a poetic past or an exotic place. These architectural constructions varied in form from bridges to huts, grottoes and Gothic ruins, and were placed in select locations throughout the landscape.

mortelles d'Héloïse et d'Abélard."[345] In a gesture to realize the final requests of Héloïse, who had persuaded Abélard's friend, the Abbot of Cluny, Paul the Vénérable, to covertly exhume the remains of Abélard from his final resting place at Saint-Marcel, and to re-bury them alongside Héloïse in a common tomb at the Paraclet, Lenoir re-wrote history by creating a common monument to unite the lovers and to place this monument in a highly public setting.

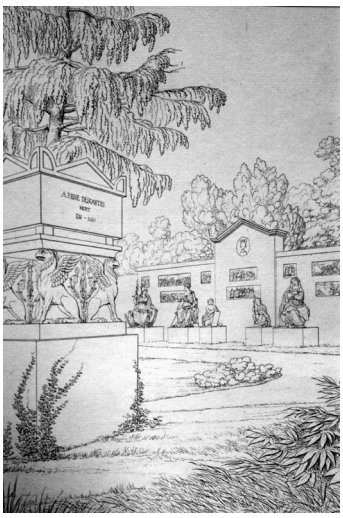


Figure 35. *Fabrique* monument to René Descartes (Biet)

The significance of the monument to Héloïse and Abélard in the context of the Elysium at the Musée was in its attachment to myth, and the highly evocative potential that the combined story and historical artifacts brought to an experience of the Elysium. If the story of Héloïse and Abélard epitomized moral behaviour for the French public and thereby met the criteria for inclusion in Lenoir's garden of virtues, it nevertheless heralded other important features of the garden as well. Notably, it extended the historical narrative of French accomplishments beyond that of the seventeenth century (heretofore all of the figures buried in the Elysium hailed from this century), and did so with characters who elicited immediate identification in the popular imaginary. In this respect, their inclusion in the garden altered the tenor of the space, from one honouring national historical figures, to personalities having achieved the status, and near-universality, of myth. Descartes, Molière, La Fontaine, Boileau, Montfauçon were undeniably all renowned and prolific philosophers and writers, however Héloïse and Abélard had entered the canon of literature to themselves become icons of French identity and in this, their status in the garden invited a different form of contemplation. The story of their troubled love introduced an allegorical dimension to the Elysium which served, like myth itself, to collapse the layers of time that structured the interior "century" halls into a single, experiential continuum in the garden.

[345] *Archives*, Vol. I, Article 151, 160.

The Monument-Fabrique

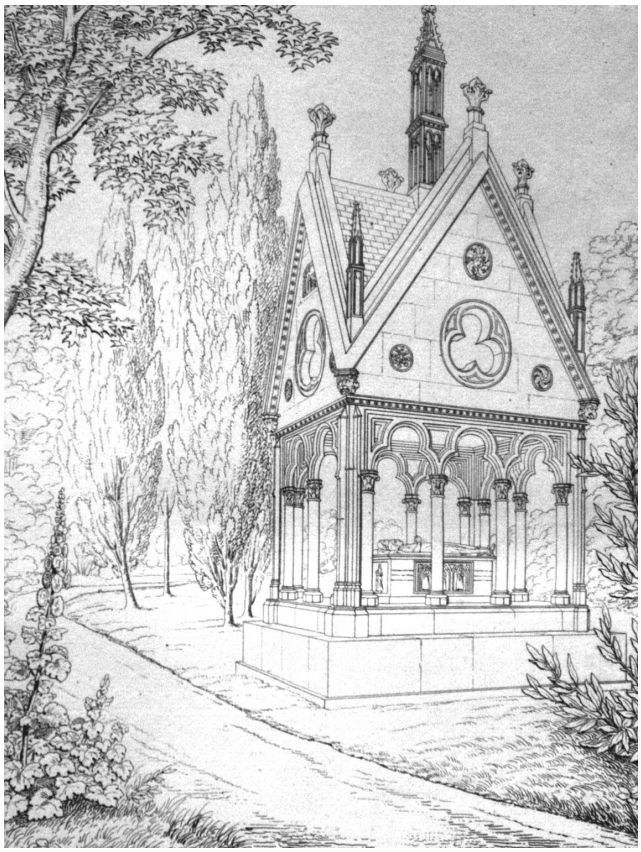


Figure 36. *Fabrique* monument to Héloïse and Abélard (Biet)

The Elysium functioned with all of the accoutrements of what Thomas Whately referred to as the emblematic, or intellectual, landscape, and yet its final and ultimate appeal was to sentiment.[346] Many of the forty monuments that Lenoir collected on the site bore inscriptions: lengthy formal epitaphs in Latin and French verse, impromptu messages engraved by enthusiastic visitors, or even lines composed by the deceased themselves. The fact that Lenoir recorded these epitaphs in full in his catalogue provides an indication of the significance he attributed to these features of the garden, which Bernardin de Saint-Pierre had so famously referred to as the communication between the living and the dead. That he chose not to

[346] Thomas Whately discussed the notion of character in his treatise, *Observations on Modern Gardening*. Like Morel, Whately's treatise was first printed and published many years after it was originally composed. The treatise was probably written around 1756. Drawing a distinction between the emblematic and expressive landscape, Whately defined the emblematic as a space approached as an intellectual endeavour, one that required "reading" as well as a familiarity with historical and literary allusion and a certain degree of "learned attention," while the expressive landscape proffered an opportunity to engage in "allegorical" and "metaphoric" meditations of a solitary kind. He wrote: "Character is very reconcileable with beauty; and, even when independent of it, has attracted so much regard, as to occasion several frivolous attempts to produce it; statues, inscriptions, and even paintings, history and mythology, and a variety of devices, have been introduced for this purpose. The heathen deities and heroes have therefore had their several places assigned to them in the woods and the lawns of a garden; natural cascades have been disfigured with river gods, and columns erected only to receive quotations; the compartments of a summer-house have been filled with pictures of gambols and revels, as significant of gaiety; the cypress, because it was once used in funerals, has been thought peculiarly adapted to melancholy; and the decorations, the furniture, and the environs of a building, have been crowded with puerilities, under pretence of propriety. All these devices are rather emblematical than expressive; they may be ingenious contrivances, and recall absent ideas to the recollection; but they make no immediate impression, for they must be examined, compared, perhaps explained, before the whole design of them is well understood; and though an allusion to a favourite or well-known subject of history, of poetry, or of tradition, may now and then animate or dignify a scene, yet as the subject does not naturally belong to a garden, the allusion should not be principle; it should seem to have been suggested by the scene; a transitory image, which irrestibly [sic] occurred; not sought for, not laboured; and have the force of a metaphor, free from the detail of an allegory;" quoted in *Observations on Modern Gardening*, 5th ed. (London: Stafford, 1793), 154-155.

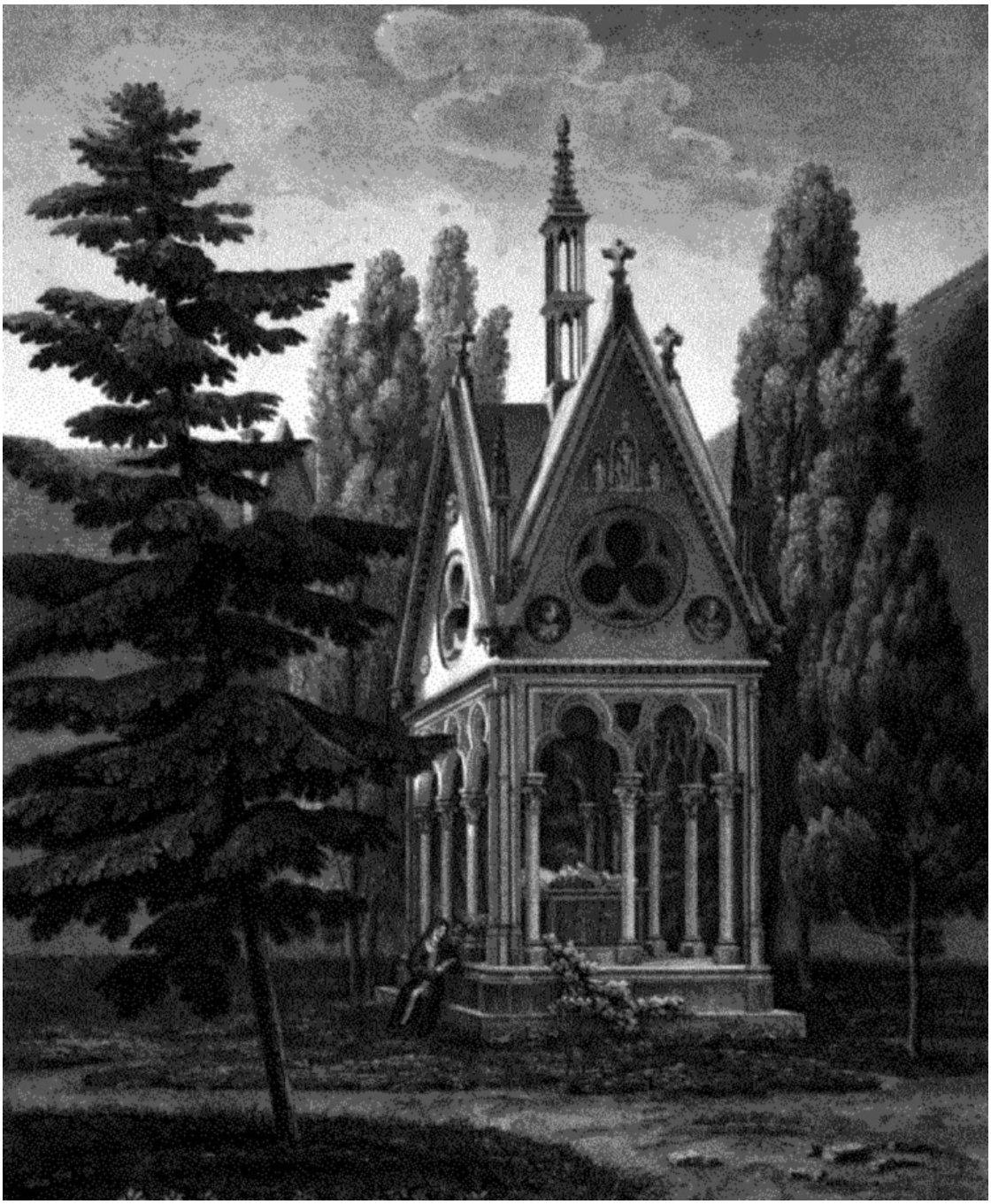


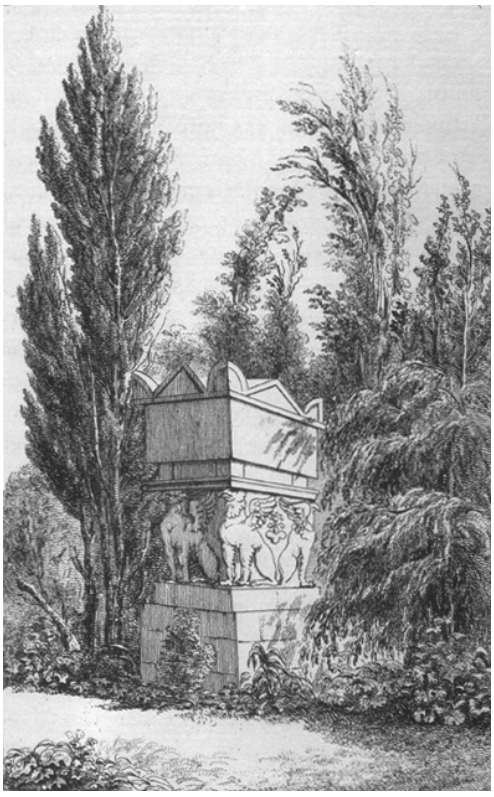
Figure 37. *Fabrique* monument to Héloïse and Abélard (Vauzelle)

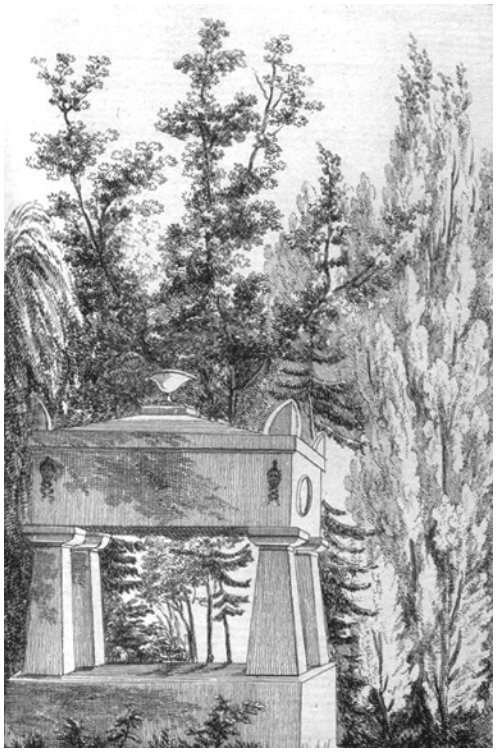
translate these texts but rather leave them in their original linguistic form also suggests that he wanted visitors to approach his Elysium as an intellectual exercise, a space replete with inscriptions to be "examined, compared, perhaps explained, before the whole design of them is well understood" if we recall Whately's characterization of emblematic devices. In such a landscape, the visitor must dwell and linger over the possible interpretations of these inscriptions and their historical and literary allusions, without, perhaps, detecting the full import of their references.

One manner that Lenoir bridged the gap between the diverse collection of individuals buried in the Elysium and the unifying historical narrative he sought to re-create there, was through the medium of the monument-*fabrique*. In the garden, the most common type of monument-*fabrique* was the sarcophagus that Lenoir himself designed to receive mortal remains. More than a simple monument to the deceased, the sarcophagus promised a form of conservation, and was a necessary step for the inclusion of human remains in the Elysium.

The tradition of the *fabrique* had its origins in landscape painting in the mid-eighteenth century. The French artist and landscape theorist Claude-Henri Watelet coined the term *fabrique* in a 1756 entry in the *Encyclopédie*, though his description at that time was confined to the language of painting ('le langage de la Peinture'). Watelet's definition of the *fabrique* was indelibly linked to another popular eighteenth-century topos, the ruin.[347] Of the *fabrique*, he wrote: "Le tems qui exerce également ses droits sur ces différens édifices, ne les rend que plus favorables à la Peinture; & les débris qu'il occasionne sont aux yeux des Peintres des accidens si séduisans, qu'une classe d'artistes s'est de tout tems consacrée à peindre des ruines…Lorsqu'il est bien traité, indépendamment de l'imitation de la nature, il donne à penser: est-il rien de si séduisant pour l'esprit?"[348]

[347] The *Encyclopédie*'s entry for "ruin", on the other hand, reserved a much stricter definition for its appearance in painting: "Ruine ne se dit que des palais, des tombeaux somptueux ou des monumens publics." Didérot and d'Alembert, *Encyclopédie, ou Dictionnaire raisonné des sciences, des arts et des métiers*, Vol. 3 (Neufchastel: Samuel Faulche & Co., 1765; Facsimile, Elmsford, N.Y.: Pergamon Press, 1969), 433.
[348] Ibid., Vol. I, 351.





Figures 38 and 39. *Fabriques* monuments to René Descartes and Molière (Lenoir)

The term, if not the object itself, would re-appear in Watelet's own treatise of 1774 and in his French garden, Moulin Joli. Watelet concluded his treatise with correspondence to a friend, in which he described a contemplative walk in a pastoral French garden containing the popular features of a deserted island and a building-monument to Héloïse. Celebrating a Romantic appreciation of both the landscape and the solitary promenade, Watelet's work anticipated Rousseau's *Reveries of the Solitary Walker*, a series of ten essays or "walks" composed between late October 1776 and the philosopher's death in July 1778, and published posthumously in 1782. However the appearance of the *fabrique* within the museological setting of the Musée des Monuments français introduced a different set of issues than it previously had in the garden setting of Moulin Joli and eighteenth-century landscape traditions. Most significantly, the foundational question of authenticity within the museum institution, which traditionally privileged object over context, was overturned. By their assemblage of diverse sculptural elements, Lenoir's *fabriques* and installations effected an important shift from the didactic aims

of the museum institution to experiential ones, while simultaneously inaugurating new traditions in scenographic and historiographic practices.[349]

At the time, issues of intervention and conservation were ambiguously practiced by Lenoir, especially following the years of the Terreur (1793-1794) when considerable vandalism was undertaken by the *sans-culottes*. Lenoir had first broached the subject of conservation in 1794, when he argued to the *Commission temporaire des arts* that an abandoned monument (of which there were countless throughout France) was just as well a destroyed monument. On this pretext, Lenoir asked the committee to declare the full extent of the conservators' powers. The question was not inappropriate, as the *Comité d'Instruction Publique* had recently assigned conservators to a host of depots across the city designed to protect a range of objects amassed from ecclesiastical collections, émigrés and the otherwise condemned. The objects included antiquities, sculptures, and paintings (for which the Dépôt de Nesle and the Dépôt des Petits-Augustins were assigned); music, for which the Dépôt national de musique was created on rue Bergère; machines and devices, whose depot location was undisclosed; and the largest collection, books, for which eight depots were assigned, each with a conservator and guardian. Following this announcement in August 1794, the government's commitment to some form of conservation could not be questioned, and Lenoir sought to clarify the degree of his accountability – and latitude – as conservator. The reply, some months later, must have alarmed Lenoir, for the Commission reminded Lenoir that the depot was merely provisional, and therefore monuments in his care did not warrant reassembling (presumably to be conserved) as they would only be dismantled in order to be moved to the more permanent space of a future museum.[350]

In spite of this response which emphasized the temporary nature of the depot, Lenoir did make conservation interventions to damaged works, referring to "une grande partie des monumens renfermés dans ce Musée, que j'ai été obligé de recomposer et de rajuster selon leur âge, à cause des prodigieuses mutilations qu'ils avaient souffertes,"[351] in

[349] In his panoramic discussion on ruins in his book of the same name, Michel Makarius treats the *fabrique* as a type of ruin. I would disagree with this interpretation, however it does elucidate the complexity of the fabrique and its various manifestations. In the eighteenth-century garden, a tradition for the fake ruin was inaugurated, to very mixed review. The *fabrique* in this sense is less an assemblage of débris and recycled materials, as its nomenclature might suggest, and more an invention.
[350] *Archives*, Vol. 2, Articles 158, 159, and 168, 215-223.
[351] Lenoir, *Musée*, Vol. 1, 16-17.

addition to commissioning works for what he must have regarded as a cohesive, and growing, collection. In December 1796, Lenoir commissioned the sculptors Michallon and Deseine to design nine marble busts "missing from his collection" to ornament the sixteenth- and eighteenth-century halls, notably those of Rousseau, the German art historian Johann Joachim Winckelmann, French philosopher Claude-Adrien Helvétius, Michel Montaigne, Fabri de Peiresc, and Jean Goujon.[352] And, with every transfer of mortal remains in 1799 and 1800, for example, Lenoir had also designed a sarcophagus.

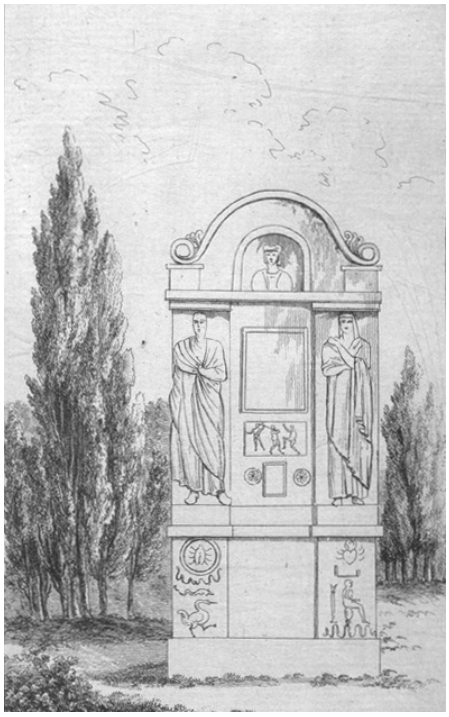


Figure 40. *Fabrique* monument to Bernard de Montfauçon (Lenoir)

The Minister of the Interior himself seemed to have given his consent when he instructed Lenoir, on 4 May, 1799, to "caracteriser chaque tombeau par des attributs symboliques des vertus et du génie du grand homme auquel il sera consacré."[353]

Despite having simultaneously commissioned works by contemporary artists, it was in the designs that Lenoir undertook himself that he seems to have taken the greatest liberty. Though he completed reconstructions and *fabriques* in the interior halls, it was the *fabriques* Lenoir placed in the Elysium that demonstrated the most outlandish and unorthodox designs. The monuments in the Elysium were often odd sculptural constructions in their complex and creative combination of emblematic and symbolic iconographies and it is doubtful that any single reading was intended for these objects. Lenoir described the monument of the antiquarian and historian Bernard de Montfauçon, for example, as a composite of "hieroglyphs, Egyptian figures, Greek reliefs, figures from the late Roman Empire and remains of monuments from the first years of the French monarchy"[354] – a hybrid arrangement of motifs intended to recall the diverse historical interests, and writings, of

[352] Several of these arrived at the Musée in the spring of 1800. Lenoir was not rewarded for the initiative he took, as a letter he composed to Ginguené, the *Directeur général de l'Instruction Publique* in early March, 1797, would suggest. In it, he minimized the importance of the "new" sculptures in his collection, claiming these to be mere decorative additions to the halls.
[353] *Archives*, Vol. I, Article 134, 141.
[354] Lenoir, *Musée Impérial*, 290. My own translation.

the scholar. This was one of many monuments that Lenoir created from the remains of others: a curious conservationist practice by our current standards, and not without significant criticism in his own time as well. Although Lenoir insisted that the monuments he fabricated combined only materials from similar historical eras (much like the criteria by which he organized his period halls), he did not always abide by this dictum. In the very popular chapel he re-created for the medieval lovers Héloïse and Abélard, Lenoir combined a newly-commissioned neo-gothic canopy, the twelfth-century funerary monuments he had purchased from their original setting at the Abbey of Paraclet near Nogent-sur-Seine, and a contemporary death mask of Héloïse he commissioned from the sculptor – and later detractor of his practices – Louis-Pierre Deseine. Brès described the making of this *fabrique*-installation in *Souvenirs*

> Le monument d'Héloïse et d'Abélard, tel que nous le voyons ici, a été construit sous la direction de M. Le Noir. On a employé à cette construction les débris d'une chapelle de l'église de Saint-Denis, et le tombeau que Pierre-le-Vénérable avait fait élever à Abélard, son ami, dans la chapelle de l'infirmerie de Saint-Marcel-lez-Châlons.
>
> L'ensemble de ce monument offre le caractère de l'architecture dans le douzième siècle … On n'a pu se procurer des statues ou des bustes authentiques d'Héloïse et d'Abélard. Les têtes des deux statues qu'on voit ici ont été sculptées par un artiste moderne sur le squelette de la tête de chacun des personnages.[355]

As Lenoir confessed in his own writing, in the absence of authentic objects, an invention will do, providing that it conformed to (one might read "evoked") the architectural "character" of the period. This very viewpoint also underlay Lenoir's spatial conceptions of the period halls. These two examples of *fabriques* – the monument to Montfauçon and the monument to Abélard and Héloïse – equally attest to two traditions of *fabrique* that co-existed at the Musée. The former was pure invention, pure fantasy on the part of Lenoir; the latter was intended to be created in the likeness of an original, be that "original" a human being, or a preceding (but damaged) monument. Neither traditions

[355] Brès, *Souvenirs*, 39.

conformed to contemporary conservation policies, but their distinction is an important one in the museological context of the Musée des Monuments français. In the case of Lenoir, whose intention it was to illustrate a history of progress of French art, the *fabrique* tipped the scale toward artistic innovation over that of conservation, even if, as he famously proclaimed, to leave disassembled monuments in a heap would surely contribute to their ruin. In other words, Lenoir was committed to illustrating progress at all costs.

Regardless of their form, at their essence, these monuments-*fabriques* were assemblages of *débris* – discarded materials and architectural fragments that were in large supply following the Revolution. This *débris* had many useful functions for Lenoir, who often bartered these materials in exchange for labour provided by sculptors such as Deseine. The exchange benefited Lenoir, who was able to supplement his museum with objects at very little expense, particularly when his budget was as severely restricted as it was. Lenoir was well-placed to recycle the materials of unwanted – and unclaimed – sculptures in his collection, however the practice appears to have been widespread. Lenoir had a peculiar relationship with the sculptor Louis-Pierre Deseine, one that began in friendship and patronage and yet transformed into animosity. Despite the souring of their later relationship, Lenoir and Deseine's early correspondence indicates a certain complicity and shared attitude toward the recycling of objects of art to benefit their own ends. On 11 May, 1800, while completing the commission for busts he received from Lenoir in 1797, Deseine wrote to Lenoir requesting more marble to replace a defective supply he had been given, and suggested that Lenoir look to modern tombs: "Vous avez encore plusieurs statues modernes qui peuvent être sacrifiées sans crainte."[356] In light of this propensity to recycle, it is all the more surprising to find the concurrent use of relics in these designs. Again, correspondence with Deseine reveals something of Lenoir's working process. While at work on the *fabrique* for Héloïse, Deseine requested the plaster death masks that had been made using the bones of Héloïse and Abélard, in order to render his design more expressive. It is worth quoting the passage, for the flamboyant language he used: "Songez à me procurer, le plus tôt possible, le plâtre des ossements de nos deux tendres victimes de l'amour le plus passionné. Quoique vieux, je compatis à leurs maux, et j'espère le prouver par l'expression que je m'efforcerai de donner à leur

[356] *Archives*, Vol. 2, Article 270, 358-359. Emphasis my own.

visage. L'une brûle toujours de l'ardent désir de subir la loi du vainqueur, l'autre dans le coeur duquel l'amour exerce toujours son empire, gémit d'être désarmé...Ah! mon ami, que je les plains!"[357]

Lenoir's attachment to the relic is confirmed in numerous entries in the *Archives*, which record the curator's tendency to distribute human remains to friends and acquaintances. In some instances, these appear to have been unsolicited "gifts," such as was the case of the relics of Héloïse and Abélard that Lenoir sent to the Princess of Isenburg following her visit in 1810,[358] while in others, Lenoir was clearly approached with a request by individuals who, like himself, were constructing monuments to famous French personalities. Perhaps Lenoir's obsession was born of the exhumations he attended at Saint-Denis and methodically sketched during the height of the Terreur in the early 1790s, moments that were as intensely destructive as they were revelatory.

The cult of the relic was undeniably significant in the network of associations surrounding Lenoir's design activities. By virtue of its presence in the creative act, the relic, however small a fragment of an authentic object, nevertheless provided the tangible link to the past that Lenoir sought to reconstruct at the Musée. Be it the corporal remains of Molière buried beneath a contemporary *fabrique*, or the use of the relic to make a more "plausible" death mask for a reclining Héloïse beneath a neo-Gothic canopy, the relic promised, in some small way, an affective presence.

When the Monument Became Ruin

If the relic is constituted by the remains of an individual already departed, it is also its surviving trace, a memorial invested with meaning by virtue of its associations with the past. Like the ruin with which it shares metaphoric and metonymic references, the relic symbolizes both present and past, vulnerability and permanence, an object marked simultaneously by what it was, and no longer can be. Yet the ruin and the relic coalesced in a particularly interesting fashion in eighteenth-century Europe, when multiple traditions of the ruin as authentic and artificial object proliferated in literary and artistic circles. These traditions ranged from the Grand Tour's pilgrimage to the Classical ruins of Herculaneum and Rome, a phenomena that promised a brush with the architectural

[357] *Archives*, Vol. 2, Article 270, 359.
[358] *Archives*, Vol. 3, Article 454, 131.

remains of a former Golden Age; to the creation of factitious ruins, such as those designed by a disillusioned John Soane at his country home of Pitshanger Manor or in the landscaped gardens of Mont-Joli or England's Leasowes or Stowe; to the haunting projected future ruins of Joseph Gandy's pictorial renditions of Soane's Bank of England (*View of the Rotunda of the Bank of England*, 1798) or Hubert Robert's *Imaginary View of the Grand Galerie of the Louvre in Ruins* (1796), existential memento mori on the fleeting nature of time, and warnings of a future condition. Significantly, then, the ruin was both an object and an idea, visited *in situ* and the popular subject of paintings and books. When, in late eighteenth-century France, temporality had begun to be linked to the modern notion of progress and posterity,[359] the ruin (both at home and abroad) spawned great meditations on the political and ideological notion of an empire in decline. As the *Ancien régime* crumbled, the ruin and its symbolic associations assumed immediate relevance to the public and provided a potent stimulant for reflection. The eighteenth-century poetic of the ruin that emerged in the writing of Diderot, Chateaubriand, Bernardin de Saint-Pierre, and Constantin-François Volney was, broadly speaking, a meditation on the cycles of history and time.

Of the many traditions that informed popular conceptions of the ruin at this time, one must consider the pictorialization of the monument – the monument recorded as image – as constitutive of the horizon that influenced or co-existed with Lenoir's predominantly antiquarian practices. In particular, the production of scholarly books was an arena in which the monument-ruin received increasing critical attention from the mid-eighteenth century onward. Three genres of these scholarly books intersect in insightful ways with this discussion of Lenoir: the garden treatise (as we have seen), the archaeological book, and the monumental history, also known as national antiquity. Of the last category, influential texts included those penned by Bernard de Montfauçon (*Les monumens de la monarchie française,* in five volumes, 1729-33);[360] Aubin Louis Millin (*Antiquités nationales, ou, Recueil de monumens pour servir à l'histoire générale et particulière de l'empire françois*, in five volumes, 1790); and the nineteenth-century publication of Alexandre Laborde's *Les monumens de la France, classés chronologiquement* (1816).

[359] Ramla Benaissa has written a fascinating dissertation on the subject of historical consciousness and posterity in the eighteenth century. Please see "From history to posterity: The oeuvres completes of Jacques-Francois Blondel and Claude-Nicolas Ledoux (France)," (PhD Diss., University of Pennsylvania, 2002).
[360] Before this, Montfauçon published *Antiquité expliquée*, in 1719, foreshadowing systematic archaeology.

The second genre arose from the nascent discipline of archaeology in the late 1730s and early 1740s, and gave rise to archaeological books and the popular *voyage pittoresque*, a genre of book-writing undertaken notably by architects and antiquarians, such as Comte de Caylus, *Recueil d'antiquités*, in six volumes, 1752-1755; Robert Wood, *Ruins of Balbec*, 1753; *Ruins of Palmyra*, 1757; Robert Adam, *Ruins of the Palace of the Emperor Diocletian at Spalatro in Dalmatia*, 1764; Johann Joachim Winckelmann, *History of the Art of Antiquity*, 1764; Julian David Leroy, *Les ruines des plus beaux monuments de la Grèce*, 1758; Comte de Choiseul-Gouffier, *Voyage pittoresque de la Grèce*, 1782; James Stuart and Nicholas Revett, *The Antiquities of Athens, measured and delineated*, 1762, and translated into French (*Les antiquités d'Athènes*, 1810-1812), and J. Mérigot, *A select collection of views and ruins in Rome and its vicinity*, 1798.[361]

One will notice in these two genres an important similarity to Lenoir's own curatorial practice at the Musée des Monuments français: the use of monuments, or the artifact, rather than text, to narrate history (note that the full title of Montfauçon's epic work was *Les monumens de la monarchie française : qui comprennent l'histoire de France, avec les figures de chaque règne que l'injure des tems a épargnées)*. While this topic invites further discussion on the intersection of the object-artifact and the discipline of historiography in the eighteenth-century, my interest at this point is in the representation of the monument in these works, and the influence that this "picturing" of the monument – intact or fragmented, as a totality or as weathered object – manifested on Lenoir and his museographical practices.

Upon closer observation of the principal texts published throughout the era, it becomes apparent that the manner of representing the monument at this time was in the process of changing in a radical way, owing to two principal movements: the first, the birth of archaeology and visits to excavation sites, inaugurating a new sensibility toward the object as ruin; the second, the rise of the picturesque movement, typically associated with the discipline of landscape architecture and design. Writers themselves were often involved in both disciplines, as was the case with J. Mérigot who, in addition to publishing views of the ruins of Rome, also produced views of the French gardens of

[361] It is interesting to note that J. Mérigot also published a book on the Marquis de Girardin's gardens at Ermenonville, *Promenade, ou, Itinéraire des jardins d'Ermenonville* (Paris: Mérigot, 1788). Mérigot was responsible for drawing and engraving 25 views of the garden; the text was composed by Comte Stanislas Girardin.

Chantilly and Ermenonville, and likewise, Alexandre Laborde, who published two books on French gardens and urban embellishment projects in addition to his history of France.[362] Furthermore, architects designing the ever-popular "artificial ruin" as was the vogue in eighteenth-century garden design, looked to archaeological books for inspiration. Thus the horizon of the monument-ruin at this time was broad and both touched upon, and was informed by, many different traditions.

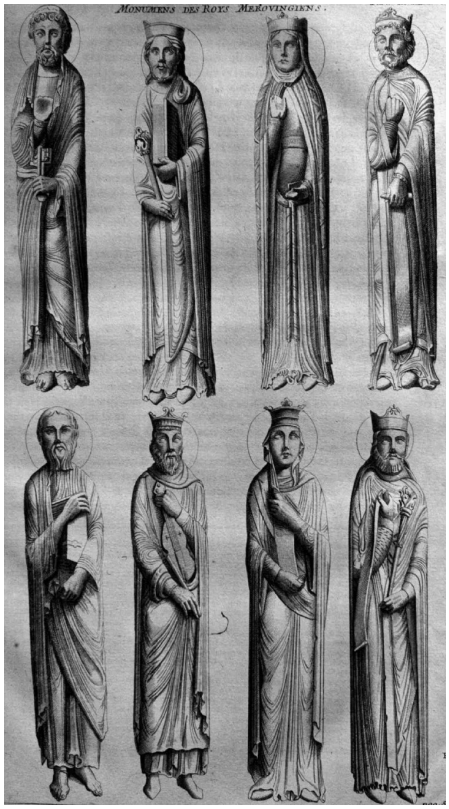


Figure 41. ***Monumens des roys mérovingiens*** **(Montfauçon)**

Both in the synchronism of its subject (the history of France) and in its particular use of images, Montfauçon's *Monumens* merits closer attention for the influence it had on Lenoir's conception of the monument as a means of narrating history. Montfauçon and Lenoir worked in the antiquarian tradition, and Lenoir's eight-volume catalogue, *Musée des Monumens français* – a project which took Lenoir over twenty years to complete – presented an ambitious panorama of French history through the display of monuments as had Montfauçon's multi-volume work before him. Unlike the genre of archaeological texts of which we may nevertheless consider Montfauçon's work a significant precursor, objects and figures in the *Monumens de la monarchie française* were usually represented frontally, set neutrally within empty backgrounds and framed by simple black borders. Typically, text accompanied the image to identify the objects in question, and emblems and objects often intersected within the same frames. In this way, various registers of the image were represented simultaneously. The objects themselves were consistently represented intact, never fragmentary, such that damaged objects were unrealistically represented with "clean" or anaesthetized omissions, and thereby having the effect of

[362] Alexandre Laborde, *Projets d'embellissemens de Paris et de travaux d'utilité publique concernant les ponts et chaussées* (Paris: A. Belin, 1816) and *Description des nouveaux jardins de la France et de ses anciens châteaux mêlée d'observations sur la vie de la campagne et la composition des jardins* (Paris: Impr. de Delance, 1808).

minimizing the relevance of what was not actually there. With their emphasis on totality and wholeness, these representations served chiefly illustrative purposes and were intended as a visual corollary, that was in no way subordinate to the text. The images were, for the most part, portraits of kings and queens (rather than inanimate objects, as the title might lead one to believe), and were intended to illustrate the historical lineage of French monarchy. Only the occasional image illustrated historical personalities within a larger landscape or architectural setting. It is worth emphasizing, however, that the images demonstrating historical moments, rather than historical personalities, were a minority in Montfauçon's text.

Montfauçon had already established a historiographic and pictorial tradition in his earlier, and even more monumental, *L'antiquité expliquée et représentée en figures*, published in 1719 in ten volumes. The title itself is a telling indication of Montfauçon's methodology: a meticulous study and cataloguing of ancient texts, manuscripts, and monuments to elucidate the religious, mythological, domestic, civic, military, and funerary customs and rites of the ancients. Montfauçon was a pioneer of paleography and archaeology, disciplines which relied on an exhaustive study of the monument, and in its methodological originality and scientific rigor, his work was enormously influential to future generations of scholars.

Of this methodology, Montfauçon wrote in the preface of volume 1 of *Antiquitée expliquée* that "monuments teach us a great many things not mentioned by Authors…He (the Reader) will find in these images, mute Histories, which Authors do not mention"[363] and to this end, Montfauçon published more than one thousand plates encompassing an even greater number of illustrations. He took care that these drawings would be made with "great Exactness" and accuracy, and from these images he sometimes derived alternative interpretations to those of Greek and Roman authors. For this reason, the privileged subjects of Montfauçon's history were precisely those that could be seen ("the object of site") (*sic*) and represented by figures, and not those related to the law, policy, or geography.

[363] Bernard de Montfauçon, *Antiquity Explained and Represented in Sculptures*, Translated by David Humphreys (London: J. Tonson and J. Watts, 1721-25), 4-5.

In comparison, Lenoir's illustrations of objects in his catalogue *Musée des Monumens français* were also placed within neutral backgrounds.[364] If, and when, weathering was represented, it was generally alluded to only on the periphery of the object – along its contours – rather than at its core. More often than not, however, tombs and sculptures and other decorative objects suggested, by their impossibly undamaged representation, monuments of a pristine quality. This manner of picturing the intact object – the totality of the object – rather than to document its actual state, was somewhat paradoxical given the original premise of Lenoir's museum as a storehouse for mutilated and vandalized objects. Our own contemporary practice requires truth to the object: precision and exactitude in recording the condition of the object in a museum's collection is standard practice. However Lenoir's intentions were quite different from our own. Outside of his meticulous recording of the arrival or transfer of objects to and from his collection, his attitude toward their depiction served to communicate an idea, not a truth.

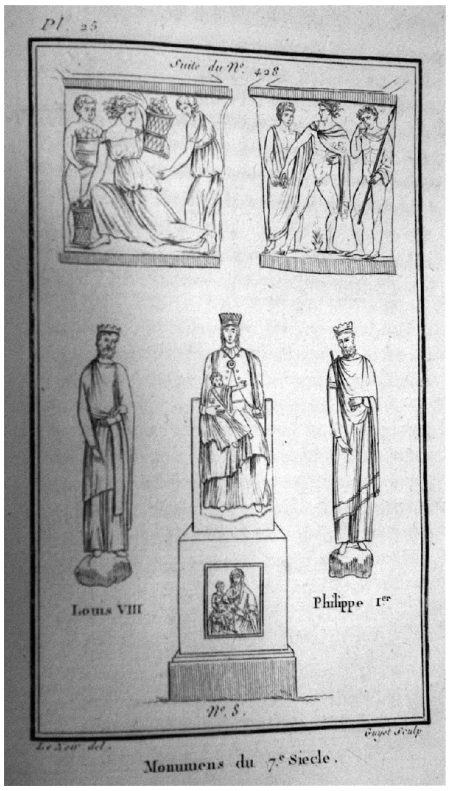


Figure 42. ***Monumens du 7e siècle*** **(Lenoir)**

Any number of plates on the subject of antique or medieval monuments in volume 1 of *Musée des Monumens français* would lead one to believe that these monuments had been meticulously preserved throughout the centuries of their existence. The seventh-century monuments featuring Louis VIII and Philippe I, the cenotaphs depicting France's first kings, even the antique sepulchral monuments are remarkable for their undamaged, or near undamaged, condition.

[364] This contrasts with Lenoir's scenographic strategies in the museum, where it could be argued that the reverse was true. Lenoir placed the monuments within a highly evocative setting.

Lenoir's debt to Montfauçon far exceeded any pictorial influence that the scholar had over him. It was the method of Montfauçon's historiography that was of principal interest to Lenoir, who quoted the Benedictine scholar and historian liberally in his writing. It is also no coincidence that Montfauçon's remains were buried beneath a tributary sarcophagus in the Elysium, one of two sculptural homages to people of influence to Lenoir (the other being Johann Joachim Winckelmann, whose bust Lenoir commissioned to ornament the Introductory Hall).

Figure 43. Portail de l'église des Bons Hommes de Chaillot (Millin)

Later in the century, Millin's *Antiquités nationales* instigated significant changes to the pictorialization of the monument. Millin's panoramic selection of French sculptural and architectural monuments – ranging from chateaux and tombs to churches and convents – presented a dramatically different historiography than Montfauçon's more traditional history of French monarchy had before him. Beyond the change in pictorial subject matter to architecture and sepulchral sculpture, certain formal changes also took place. If some plates recalled Montfauçon's precedent in their placement of images against neutral backgrounds, a far greater number of these plates featured buildings and sepulchral sculpture in context – either within an urban or landscape setting. However in keeping with tradition, these objects manifested few signs of weathering, despite their heritage as icons of national antiquity. Rather, they were immortalized in Millin's work as whole, intact, complete. Exceptions are notably in the depiction of ruins, for obvious reasons.[365]

[365] Under the entry for "musée" in his *Dictionnaire des Beaux-Arts* (published in 1806), Millin provided two examples of contemporary museums in France. He cited the Musée Napoléon, or Musée du Louvre, as the most glorious, however he reserved the category of "most complete" for Lenoir's Musée des Monuments français.

In the frontispiece to his two-volume *Monumens de la France* (1816-1836), Alexandre Laborde used an ornate Gothic window frame to provide a portal onto France's history as told through an eclectic array of monuments. Following in the tradition of Millin, Laborde's plates typically featured monuments in scenic landscape settings, a large number of which were ruins. This is particularly true of Laborde's first volume, which traced the history of Celtic and Greco-Roman monuments (notably ruins) in France. Curiously in Laborde's second volume, published two decades after the first, the monuments of the medieval and Renaissance eras were, with few exceptions, less apt to be depicted in a ruinous state. Facets of buildings, mainly cathedrals, were represented as undamaged. It is particularly interesting to note the representation of the Château d'Anet as intact, which, by the time of the volume's publication, had been pillaged by Revolutionaries, its façade already re-erected at the entrance to the Musée des Monuments français.

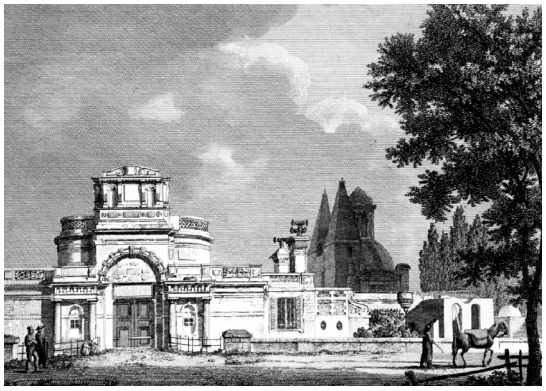


Figure 44. Château d'Anet (Laborde)

When placed in the garden, monuments were more likely to have their picturesque elements emphasized. The illustrations of the emergent genre of landscape and garden treatises in the eighteenth century depicted monuments that were typically represented in fragmentary condition, within a landscape setting that served the added purpose of framing device for the display of these objects. The work of Laborde, who in addition to producing the *Monumens de la France*, also published *Description des nouveaux jardins de la France et de ses anciens châteaux mêlée d'observations sur la vie de la campagne et la composition des jardins* in 1808, is a key example. His plates illustrating the Parc de Betz, outside of Paris, and the Désert de Monville, revealed idyllic settings in which people wandered, engaged in discussion and the activity of the promenade. The monuments themselves, however, were perfectly integrated within the landscape, meriting no distinctive treatment. In fact, the reverse was more often true: monuments were often recorded as if they were miniature buildings, their full view obscured by natural elements such as trees and the shadows these cast.

When the monument became ruin, such as it did in archaeology books and in the genre known as the *voyage pittoresque* in the mid-eighteenth century,[366] its pictorialization became necessarily fragmented, and its depiction in a landscape setting, commonplace. Hailing from the traditions of the garden treatises of Laborde or Mérigot more than from the monumental histories of Montfauçon or Millin, the monument-ruin was often depicted as a Piranesian fantasy, under lush vegetation and from a perspective beneath the horizon line, so as to emphasize scale and mass. Mérigot's *Ruines de Rome*, translated as *Select Collection of Views and Ruins in Rome and its Vicinity* and published in 1798, is an apt example. Mérigot had, a decade earlier, published views of the park at Ermenonville in the afore-mentioned book, *Itinéraire des jardins d'Ermenonville* (1788). In *Ruines*, landscape and climactic elements were used to more dramatic effect than in *Itinéraire*, however both privileged landscape elements over any centralized placement of the monument.

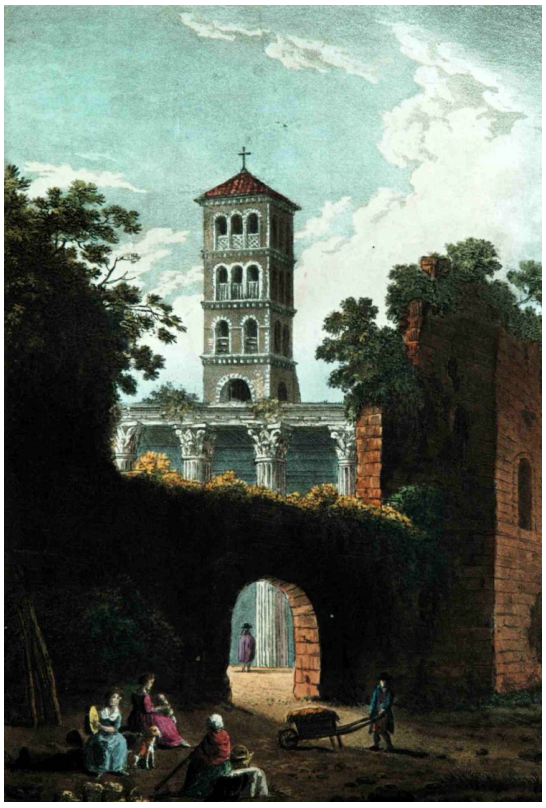


Figure 45. Arch of Pantani, n.d. (Mérigot)

Stuart and Revett's *Antiquities of Athens* presented a mélange of images ranging from the measured and documentary drawings to which their title alludes, to representations of emblems and decorative devices, to the occasional engraving of a monument in a landscape, or "view." Yet the measured drawings, which were clearly the most privileged images of the publication and indeed its raison d'être, were presented in much the same manner as Montfauçon's images: as simple line drawings (though measured and

[366] The landscape designer Dézallier d'Argenville published his *Voyage pittoresque de Paris*, a popular guide to the principal artistic, archaeological, and architectural monuments of the city, in 1749. His *Théorie et la pratique du jardinage* had been published two years earlier.

to scale) placed frontally against neutral backgrounds. Conversely, it was in the plates featuring views that monuments (generally architectural), if whole, were nevertheless pictured weathered, cracks and crevices like visible veins crawling up their exterior surfaces. In other words, once the monument-ruin was contextualized within a setting, its representation assumed a certain aesthetic, or poetic, of the ruin. Before this process of aestheticization occurred, monuments were generally pictured in such a way as to emphasize their totality – even if, or when, significant elements were missing. Such images privileged the overview and the idea of the monument, over its specific attributes.

Given that the tradition of the *voyage pittoresque* was well-established in France as of the mid-eighteenth century, and that the same artists took as their subjects the related domains of monuments and gardens, it comes as no surprise that the Musée des Monuments français itself became the subject of a "*voyage pittoresque*," however the voyage that this publication promised was diachronic rather than geographic. Artists Jean-Baptiste Réville and Jacques Lavallée published one of two books devoted to a pictorial representation of the Musée. Ironically, their *Vues pittoresques et perspectives des Salles du Musée des monuments français* was published in 1816, the same year as the closure of the Musée, when Lenoir's project of the museum itself lay figuratively and literally in ruin. Like Mérigot and Laborde, Réville was yet another figure associated with the discipline of landscape architecture. His engravings of gardens and parks were published in Jacques Lalos's *De la composition des parcs et jardins pittoresques* the following year, in 1817.

Vues pittoresques presented a collection of twenty engravings by Réville and Lavallée, based on views of the halls and Elysium of the Musée des Monuments français made by the artist and watercolourist Jean Lubin Vauzelle, and accompanied by two texts composed by Jean-Baptiste-Bonaventure de Roquefort.[367] Jean-Lubin Vauzelle had studied with the famed "Robert des ruines," Hubert Robert, and like his teacher, a significant number of his works were representations of ruins, though not in this context.

Roquefort's first text, generically entitled "Introduction", presented a survey of the history of French art and used many of the same historiographic, anti-Classical methods

[367] In addition to this work, Roquefort would also publish an inventory of Parisian monuments, *Dictionnaire historique et descriptif des monuments religieux, civils et militaires de la ville de Paris*, in 1826.

as Lenoir in its ambition to argue the origins of a distinctly national French discourse on art and architecture. For Roquefort this origin was rooted in the Gauls (the true inventors of Gothic, he claimed). Roquefort followed up this historical essay on national art with its visual corollary: a guided tour and explanation of the collection and halls of the Musée des Monuments français, as these were arranged by Lenoir, and based on the views provided by Vauzelle. The renderings included one view of the portico from the Château d'Anet framing the Introductory Hall; two views of the Introductory Hall; one view of the cloister seen from the Introductory Hall; one view of the garden of the cloister; one view of the portico from the Château de Gaillon; one view of the garden; followed by several other views of the garden, highlighting specific monuments.

As if to reinforce the programmatic unity of the Musée des Monuments français, Roquefort's circuit, or *parcours*, began and ended with monuments dedicated to the Rostaing family. Through its organization, the text itself preserved what no longer existed at the Musée: rooms were meticulously described and illustrated, and monuments were numbered in plan and keyed to a corresponding descriptive text. Dedicated to the King, this publication intended to celebrate nationhood within the context of a restored and "beneficent" monarchy, and was the official record and memory project of the Musée. Recording dates, provenance, and materials of the objects on display, the descriptions of monuments were succinct and characteristic of a typical catalogue entry. More than Lenoir's own descriptive catalogues of the Musée des Monuments français, his *Description historique et chronologique*, which did not contain illustrations of the site, this guided work emphasized the visit of the Musée as a *parcours*, through the pairing of its text and images. Réville and Lavallée's plates were sumptuous renditions of the Musée's main halls and garden, rich in tonal variety and texture, and detailed in the number of objects they recorded. From the low vantage point that the artist adopted, these perspective views enhanced both the monumentality of the spaces (note, for example, the two registers used to depict visitors and objects/spaces in the view of the sixteenth-century hall) and the grandeur of the objects on display.

By comparison, the only other contemporaneous publication to contain drawings of the Musée des Monuments français was that of Jean-Pierre Brès, *Souvenirs du Musée des Monumens français*, published in 1821. Unlike Réville and Lavallée's plates which

objectified space towards documentary ends, Brès's publication was somewhat more unusual in its intention and representational strategies. The genesis for the publication was a series of forty drawings composed by the artist J.-E. Biet, drawings completed shortly before the closure of the Musée. Significantly, it was Biet and not Brès who composed the dedication of the publication, in which he paid homage to the teachings of the architect Percier.[368] Biet wrote that his drawings were designed to remind him of the Musée des Monuments français, and he subsequently received encouragement from other artists to publish these. Thus *Souvenirs* was the work of an artist, intended for artists, and in the very vantage point that Biet adopted, he heightened the reader's presence in this now absent museum through the pictorial conventions of foreshortening and a low horizon point. Spaces were not featured parallel to the picture plane; rather, they were rendered from a low angle, giving the reader the distinct impression that they, too, were seated in the gallery and sketching its monuments. The garden scenes focussed on the serpentine walkways, which were initiated at the base of the picture, so as to emphasize displacement in the garden. Biet evidently intended this work as an alternative "official" memory of the Musée, in many ways a more authentic reminder because it was offered to the very artists that Lenoir had welcomed into the museum as a space of instruction. Brès wrote

> Nous avons eu pour but d'offrir aux artistes le trait et la description simple de chaque monument, et de leur procurer à peu de frais un ouvrage utile, et dépourvu de ce luxe typographique, qui ne doit appartenir qu'aux livres destinés à de riches bibliothèques. Les grands ouvrages qui ont été sur ce Musée, nous présenteraient une rivalité dangereuse, si nous n'avions pas un but différent de leur.[369]

In other ways, *Souvenirs* perpetuated the tradition of the earlier publication of Réville and Lavallée. Its introductory essay also traced the historical development of French art, tied to a monarchical history, and like Lenoir, Brès also related the progress of art to that of civilization itself, such that "la plupart des nations éclairées pourraient-elles présenter leur histoire dans celle de leurs monumens." This in itself was not original writing. Brès recounted the history of the territory of France through its occupiers and the material

[368] Probably the same architect Percier of Empress Joséphine's employ at Château Malmaison.
[369] Brès, *Souvenirs*, 1.

vestiges they left behind, beginning with the Celts, and continuing with the Phoenicians, the Romans, the Francs, the Visigoths, the Merovingians, Charlemagne, and most significantly the Gauls, using the familiar formula of development, progress and decadence as the basis of his historiography. The second essay was a descriptive walk-through of the Musée, based on Biet's drawings. With double the number of plates, this pictorial reconstruction was much more extensive than that of Réville and Lavallée, and was just as apt to feature a description of Lenoir's design interventions as the monuments themselves.

Biet's drawings were rendered as etchings by the architect and graphic artist Charles-Pierre-Joseph Normand (1765-1840), who specialized in producing illustrated books for the study of architecture. Specifically, he worked in collaboration with Durand (*Parallèle d'architecture* and *Leçons d'architecture*), Landon (*Annales du Musée*), and Legrand and Landon (*Description de Paris et de ses monuments*). For the Musée, Normand completed forty plates: twelve of the Introduction Hall; four of the thirteenth-, fourteenth-, fifteenth- and seventeenth-century halls; three of the sixteenth-century hall; five of intermediary spaces; and four of the Elysium.

Thus, within the corpus of eighteenth- and early nineteenth-century scholarly books on French history, gardens, and antiquities, there were clearly two principal traditions for picturing the monument. The first, as we have seen with Montfauçon, emphasized the totality of the object. Intact and in a neutralized setting, the connection between the object and the idea it communicated, or the sign and signifier, were highlighted through the methods of representation. The second tradition, as epitomized in the work of Laborde, tended toward a more picturesque style. Few authors of French national history, with which Lenoir identified himself most clearly, chose to represent the object in some form of fragmented state, weathered by the vicissitudes of time. More often than not, the monument preserved a degree of wholeness in the manner it was represented. In this respect, both Lenoir's pictorial renditions of the monuments in his catalogues, and the monuments he re-constructed as *fabriques* throughout the Musée des Monuments français, maintained the *status quo* that Montfauçon had established much earlier in the century. So too did both commemorative volumes on the Musée des Monuments français: *Vues pittoresques* and *Souvenirs* pictured Lenoir's collection of historical

monuments as intact, and thereby emphasized the idea of the monument, and the idea of a complete national history, over the reality of the monument ravaged by time.

A Poetics of the Ruin

It could be argued, as Michel Makarius has done in more general terms, that Lenoir's *fabriques* were a form of ruin.[370] But by virtue of their composition of fragments, of sculptural and architectural "ruins," the *fabriques* promised the antithesis of the ruin: regeneration. They were, in effect, the anti-ruin. It is true that in the shape of the *fabrique* lay the demise of one aspect of the ruin's poetic dimension, for in the object re-constituted there could be no acknowledgement of the lived past, at least not through the object itself, and therefore no contemplation of the future – not in the traditional sense. However it is also true that Lenoir was engaged in re-writing France's past, indeed his entire project of the Musée des Monuments français was dedicated to this single goal, even if he did not allow the stones to speak their own history. If, as Christopher Woodward has articulately claimed, "The ruin is a dialogue between an incomplete reality and the imagination of the spectator,"[371] Lenoir's anti-ruins sought the opposite: to restitute a sense of completion and wholeness on a post-Revolution, fractured French psyche. And thus Lenoir's *fabriques* spoke of another truth.

Lenoir's intent in using the *fabrique* was to arouse feelings and emotions, much like the traditions popularized by the eighteenth-century irregular garden and its use of the *fabrique*-ruin. It is therefore no surprise that the most daring designs for the *fabrique* appeared in the Elysium, rather than the interior halls of the Musée, as the monuments dedicated to Descartes and Montfauçon would suggest. Just as the picturesque garden movement with its follies and *fabriques* had emerged as the alter ego of the overseeing château in eighteenth-century traditions, so too did Lenoir's Elysium perform a discursive transgression to the official discourse of the interior chronological narrative and historiography: for some historians this alternative discourse waxed philosophical on virtue (Poulot), while for others, it was somewhat more incidental (Lanzac de Laborie).

But unlike the folly of garden traditions, Lenoir's *fabriques* paradoxically required something of the authentic object for their completion. Divested of the vestige, the anti-

[370] Michel Makarius, *Ruins* (Paris: Flammarion, 2005).
[371] Christopher Woodward, *In Ruins* (London: Vintage, 2002), 139.

ruin could not speak of the future, it merely contained the past, not to erase it, but to present it as something entirely *new*. Ultimately for Lenoir, the *fabrique* was a manner to re-inscribe the past; to borrow again from Christopher Woodward, it functioned as an inversion of the *Ancien régime*'s folly. If the ruin imposed a certain catastrophic image of the present, the *fabrique* inverted that image and invested it with another order, one capable of re-animating the past and the stasis of the ruin.

The *fabrique* in the garden performed a second, no less significant, role in Lenoir's Elysium as a legitimization of opposing styles. As Barbara Stafford has demonstrated,[372] the ruin permitted a certain co-existence of two competing traditions in Northern Europe, one imported (the Classical) and one local (the Gothic), through its unique relationship with the landscape. Indeed, it is no coincidence that the co-existence of Classical and Gothic forms was first valorized within the setting of the garden, where Gothic elements were prized precisely for their poetic associations at the same time they were disregarded within the larger urban landscape. The *fabrique*, which first positioned the Gothic as ruin and therefore as picturesque, was the vehicle by which two separate phenomena gained acceptance by uniting them in the public imaginary. In the same tradition and at virtually the same historical moment, the museum also provided a public space to endorse competing styles.

The *fabrique*, then, permitted Lenoir to pursue his ideal of a museum of progress by illustrating a perfectible history. Contemporaneous to Constantin-François Volney's meditative and highly influential *Ruines, ou, Méditation sur les révolutions des empires* (1791), which used the ruin as a departure point for moral reflections on the decay or decline of empires, there could be no greater antithesis in the creative endeavours produced during France's era of revolution than Lenoir's own project of the Musée, which nevertheless shared a similar pedagogical intention to sum history up through the subjects of empire and revolution. Where Volney sought enlightenment in human actions through his invocation of the ruin (according to Zucker, Volney elevated ruins into

[372] Barbara Maria Stafford, ""Illiterate Monuments": The Ruin as Dialect or Broken Classic," in *Space Site Intervention: Situating Installation Art*, ed. Erika Suderburg (Minneapolis: U. of Minnesota Press, 2000), 64-83.

"universal symbols of the philosophy of history"),[373] Lenoir's was an effort to correct human (read artistic) shortcomings through his very re-construction of the ruin.

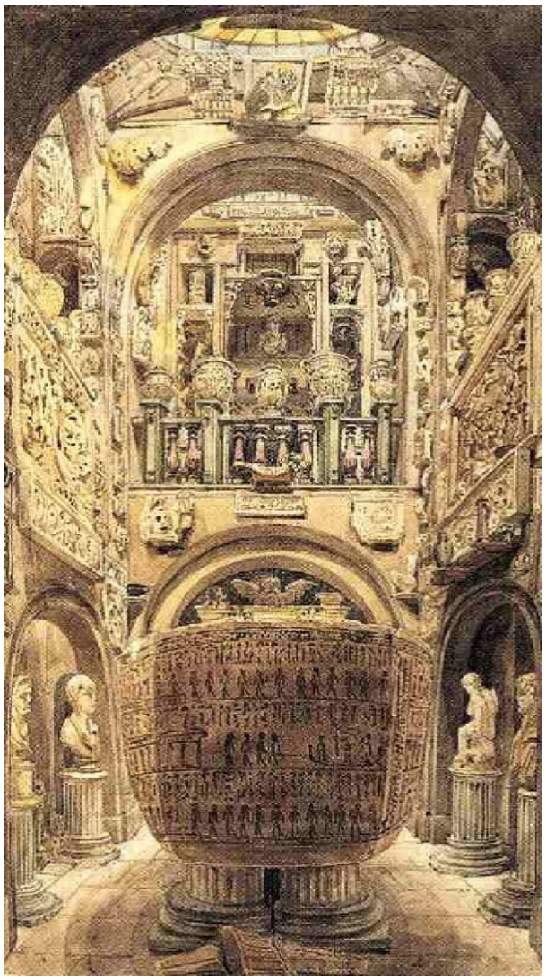


Figure 46. J-M Gandy, Sepulchral Chamber at The Sir John Soane Museum, London

Thus unlike his contemporary John Soane, in whose museum of architecture in London the fragment was valued precisely for its poetic associations, Lenoir did not leave the object in a fragmented state. His obsession with reconfiguring the object to a pristine, though not necessarily "authentic" condition (Stanley Mellon argued Lenoir was separating form and content),[374] seems to have been informed more by a literary sensibility, such as that espoused by Rousseau, than by the prevailing views of his contemporaries and immediate predecessors in architecture and the fine arts. Just like the rhetorical device of the "embellishment" – Rousseau's equivalent to Lenoir's *fabriques* – sought to overcome memory lapses, not to confabulate or to promote falsity ("and if by chance I have used some immaterial embellishment ('quelque ornement indifférent') it has been only to fill a void due to a defect of memory"[375]) so too did Lenoir's impetus seem to have been a post-Revolution need to fill in the void: to re-write a cohesive history of France and to render this history visible,

[373] Paul Zucker, *Fascination of Decay* (Ridgewood, New Jersey: Gregg Press, 1968), 198.
[374] Stanley Mellon gave a slightly different inflection to his interpretation of Lenoir's *fabriques*. He argued that Lenoir was in fact separating form and content when he manipulated objects, in an effort to anaesthetize them of their political and ideological content. The remaining monument could then sustain Revolutionary criticism in light of its historical and artistic merit. See Mellon, "Alexandre Lenoir: The Museum versus the Revolution," *Proceedings of the Consortium on Revolutionary Europe*, IX (Athens, Georgia, 1979), 75-88.
[375] Suzanne Nalbantian, *Memory in Literature: From Rousseau to Neuroscience* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2003), 27. Please see her Footnote 17.

tangible, felt, even as the nation itself was revising its own history. Perhaps Antonio Gramsci best characterized the significance of Lenoir's work within its post-*Ancien régime* context in an unrelated passage he wrote in the *Prison Notebooks*: "The crisis consists precisely in the fact that the old is dying and the new cannot be born; in this interregnum a great variety of morbid symptoms appears."[376]

Not all projects undertaken in the post-*Ancien régime* were of such morbid character, however many were concerted efforts to construct a new modern self, and to this end, public spaces and objects figured prominently. This construction of the new modern self involved adopting a particular attitude to the past and to objects. Monuments in particular were poignant statements about history, but ones that could be modified. Within this context, the ruin was an ambiguous locale, where an unpleasant past could be revisited, and exorcised. The monument speaks of entitlement and disparity, hierarchy and privilege, and in Lenoir's hands it metamorphosed into a tool for democratizing history and the space of a convent-turned-museum. Yet a crucial question was specifically how to recycle these spaces and objects from their former identification with the politics and ideologies of the *Ancien régime*, if they had not already been reduced to their primary materials and commandeered by the war effort. By utilizing the ruin and recomposing it into the *fabrique*, Lenoir believed he was over-writing France's decaying past, while simultaneously repairing this past and putting it to the service of the edifying ideals of the Revolution: to educate, enlighten and lead the new, modern public toward progress. At the Musée des Monuments français, this concept of progress had two registers: the first was visual, in the sense that the collection of the Musée was a series of autonomous objects; and the second was spatial, whereby each hall made sense in relation to others, by demonstrating the century's improvement or decline in the arts. Through the *fabrique*, Lenoir combined two different historiographies into an over-arching museographic narrative: the century halls illustrated France's monarchical lineage and history, while the Elysium provided a more democratic display of French citizens in accordance with the latest achievements of liberty and equality of the Republic.

[376] Antonio Gramsci, *The Prison Notebooks*, quoted in Geoffrey James, *Morbid Symptoms*: *Arcadia and the French Revolution*. (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton Architectural Press, 1986) [3].

Emplotment in the Elysium

In his understanding of the Elysium's ability to engage the visitor, Lenoir was influenced by Rousseau's philosophical ideas about nature as a stimulus to the imagination, and the role of the imagination in appreciating objects and their evocative potential. Rousseau's claim that an object can be a catalyst for memory resonated with Lenoir's own ideas about remembering and engaging the past. As Suzanne Nalbantian has noted in her study of the shape of memory in literature, "Rousseau's memory patterns do not connect moments in time but rather isolate them as prevailing incidents or what might be termed as Wordsworthian 'spots of time', which are building blocks in the formation of that identity considered to be the soul."[377] Lenoir's placement of funerary monuments in the Musée's Elysium themselves created "spots of time" by choreographing historical phenomena as a metaphor of the cyclical orientation of the natural landscape in which it was placed.

Like Rousseau, who freely resorted to invention to fill in the gaps, Lenoir used the compositional freedom of the *fabrique* to achieve veracity rather than accuracy in the individual monument. With their emphasis on verisimilitude as distinct from exactness, these objects functioned outside of an official "national" narrative as poetic suggestions of human accomplishment, and made appeal to the body – not simply the intellect – through the heightened sensorial devices and associations of the mythic elysian garden. These monuments' presence in the garden highlighted universal themes that served to challenge modern historiography and a past burdened by a relentless obsession to record all things historical. In this manner, the Musée des Monuments français can be said to have upheld the aesthetic, historical, and didactic innovations that conditioned the foundations of the modern museum, at the same time that it sewed the seeds for this institution's self-reflexive, philosophical critique. Lenoir's appropriation of the narrative techniques of contemporary landscape theory posited the Elysium as an act of poetry in the manner it put history to the service of life rather than bearing the burden of the past – recalling Nietzsche's caution of the hypertrophic sensibility that conditioned the historical sciences at the turn of the nineteenth century.[378] Only poetry, observed Aristotle, had the capacity to represent the past in universal terms; history dealt with the particulars.

[377] Nalbantian, *Memory in Literature*, especially Chapter 2, 24-42. This passage, 31-32.
[378] Frederick Nietzsche, "History for Life," 83-167.

Thus to speak of a form of emplotment in the Elysium is to recognize the role of the visitor in linking separate monuments – or episodes – into their own personal and cohesive narrative, a narrative that stood as the interior's other within the overall framework of the Musée des Monuments français. The garden for Lenoir presented all of the possibilities that the interior halls did not. With its predominance of *fabriques* and the variety of historical figures to which these paid tribute, through its use of the relic and the reconfigured ruin, through its characterization and alliance with contemporary landscape theory, the Elysium was neither bound by chronology nor monarchical historiography, and in this liberated space Lenoir posited themes that lay outside of the dialectic marked by notions of progress and decline. He was free to explore history as a continuum, rather than as a linear evolution, and to this end it was in the garden that cycles of nature, time, and humanity itself were given full expression.

To consider the Elysium as in some way existing outside of time is to ignore the symbolic significance of this space in relation to a larger project that engaged temporality in the most visceral manner. A poetic alternative to the chronological and progress-oriented sequence of the interior century halls, the Elysium instead incarnated the idea of time as continuum, thereby normalizing the recent Revolution as but one instance of many throughout time. By emploting the visitor within the Elysium's *parcours*, Lenoir was effectively placing the visitor within this continuum. Consciously or not, this very poetic act served to corporeally affirm that we are all part of history, that we have a tangible and visceral connection to the past, and that our memory of the past constitutes an important aspect of who we are today.

...heureux si je puis faire oublier à la posterite ces destructions criminelles!

Lenoir, *Musée des monumens français*, Volume 1

Conclusion

A Space for the Encounter with History

Anthony Vidler has written of architecture's capacity to stand for another imaginary, "to act," he writes, "as a humanist memory theater in the erased absence of all memory from the building site of the city."[379] Our desire to remember, to contain memory in tangible spaces, seems heightened if one is to judge by the prominence given to the act of remembering in the production of art, literature, architecture, and film in our contemporary moment. Present too is an attempt to come to terms with the consequences of destructive human acts, of human suffering, of humanity's inhumanity to itself, through new acts of creation. How does one conceive of an architecture or a space of recollection, when that which is to be remembered is unspeakable, unutterable, or no longer exists? When words fail to give form to human actions, when no language exists to articulate the unimaginable, can architecture provide the space of reconciliation and the program for addressing and redressing social memories of the past?

Historically, the museum as a collecting and exhibitionary complex has reconstructed the world in the breadth and depth of its collections. It has shaped public perception through its display of small, metonymic worlds in significant and far-reaching ways, while providing a place for an encounter with the past to occur. This encounter has been mediated first through the tangibility of the object, and secondly through the very nature of the interaction between the visitor and the object, that is to say, through the mediation of space. As I have suggested, in recent years a fundamental shift in the museum's conception of itself and its privileging of context over content has dramatically altered societal relationships with the past – and these, in many cases, to alarming effect. In the words of philosopher Hilde Hein, "design and spectacle – the semiotics of display – appear increasingly as central elements of museum exhibition, sometimes pre-empting narrative order, as museums shift their emphasis from preservation and study to dramatic delivery."[380]

This shift from the primacy of the object to that of the subject's experience was already significantly at play in Lenoir's work at the Musée des Monuments français, largely due to the broader societal phenomenon of the emergence of the concept of the beholder in

[379] Anthony Vidler, "Building in Empty Space: Daniel Libeskind's Museum of the Voice" quoted in Daniel Libeskind, *The Space of Encounter* (New York: Universe Publishing, 2000), 222.
[380] Hilde Hein, *The Museum in Transition* (Washington and London: Smithsonian Institution Press, 2000), 5.

contemporaneous literary and artistic practices. The collective imagination that gave rise to this particular notion of subjectivity introduced several key issues that we continue to struggle with today, notably how the subject participates (or is invited to participate) in the narrative construct that is literature, the museum, or any artistic practice. More particularly still, in the privileging of context over content, and aura over authenticity – both of which emerged as hallmarks of the narrative museum and in contradistinction to the rational model of the scientific museum of the eighteenth century – lie the seeds of crucial ethical questions pertaining to history, its representation, and how we engage with the past. It is worth distinguishing between the first two terms, "history" and "representation," and the latter act of engaging with the past, because neither presupposes the framework for a relationship with the other. This framework must continually be critically and sensitively examined.

The impulse to use representation as a means of furthering human historical understanding as Lenoir did, was not an innovation of the eighteenth century. Arguably theatre has, since Classical times, been undertaken with the same desire to animate societal understandings of the past. What theatre and museographic representation have in common is a narrative environment and the potential for a spatial reenactment that historical literary sources do not. Lenoir recognized this potential, and sought to harmonize content and context through a fully spatialized representation of the past. In this spatial undertaking – and spatial enactment – is the possibility for an understanding of history that rests upon catharsis, not in the Aristotelian sense of a purification brought about by tragedy and the evocation of pity and fear, but in a more general sense through the process of the museum audience's identification through space and enactment. In museum theory, we speak of various visiting publics, but equally of the "visitor's" response: testament that a certain individual relationship is considered a significant aspect of the exhibitionary complex.

A second consideration has availed itself as a crucial opening onto the world of Lenoir, and this involves the personality of the collector as a line of enquiry. To understand Lenoir's work in its fullest sense forces us to shift our thinking about the Musée des Monuments français and to see this construct less as a museum in the institutional sense, and more as the manifestation of a collector in the tradition of the museums of John

Soane in London, or Scippione Maffei in Verona. When viewed in this light, the collection's affinities with the human act of story-telling are legitimized over the narrowed disciplinarian boundaries imposed by the museum's categorization as one of the fine arts. Furthermore, as creative expressions of their makers, these collections incarnate profound acts of *techné* – making.

As a hermeneutical investigation, the issues that generated the questions in my research were necessarily those informed by our present condition. And while I sought origins to this condition in the eighteenth century, it was not my intention to trace a two-hundred year trajectory of the narrative museum from Lenoir's period rooms to the likes of J. Paul Getty's Villa at Malibu, California, or Daniel Libeskind's haunting designs for the Jewish Museum in Berlin. Though this would be a fascinating endeavour, and yield interesting results to be sure, it is a different project entirely. By proceeding in the manner that I did, I engaged in an in-depth exploration of the mind and creative imagination of my subject, Alexandre Lenoir, and had I not done so, I fear that many of the details that came to light would have been overlooked in the comparative framework of a strictly institutional analysis.

Having said this, perhaps the most valuable insights of this research are nevertheless those that confirm the very universals that bind us together as human beings. Our need to create the context for an encounter with the past, and to guide the specific nature of this encounter, are very telling features of our profound desire as humans to connect to one another through the stories we retain and tell. Our capacity to imagine ourselves in different circumstances, and to place ourselves within the circle of others is the very ability that we harbor as humans to be compassionate and better people.

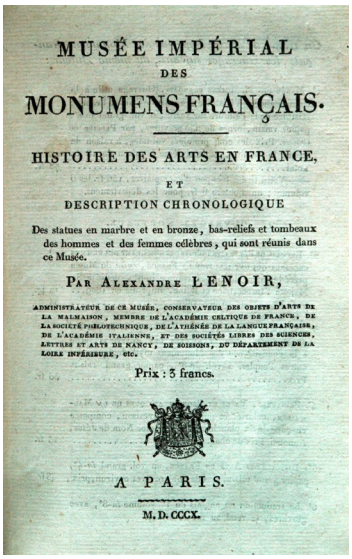
The act and the art of storytelling are a distinctly human act, perhaps the most profound form of expression that we possess as human beings. By combining influences from Masonic and garden traditions in his scenographic interventions at the Musée des Monuments français, Lenoir endeavoured to create a uniquely spatial and popular form of story-telling by creating an affective presence that would render the past real – life-like – in the most visceral manner available to him. Insodoing, Lenoir asserted the on-going

presence of the past, affirming that history is neither dead nor extinct, but the basis of our collective selves.

Ultimately, Lenoir's desire to evoke the character of an era as he did in his century hall creations, and in another manner entirely in the Elysian garden, inaugurated a new sensibility at the close of the eighteenth century. His installations were not the vision of a curator seeking a scientific approach to the display of art; they were far greater than this. Lenoir's installations were the product of a historical imagination at play. And in this imagination – fuelled by a populist, creative, and impassioned outlook – lay the seeds of a vision that would come to dominate the larger and emerging field of historical studies. By his actions, Lenoir sought to recreate the past in highly colourful terms so as to open up a deeply engaging and fulfilling historical "space" – much like history had been conceived in theatrical productions before him. Likewise, Lenoir's *fabriques* were not the products of an intention to deceive. Quite the opposite, they were the creation of an artist willing to animate an *idea*. Not unlike his contemporary Diderot, who saw in the ruin the suggestion of decay and dying, Lenoir sought both the celebration of death in the Elysium he created, and the possibility of renewal in the manner he reconfigured the ruin through the *fabrique*. Few of his contemporaries could have guessed how profound an effect Lenoir's work at the Musée des Monuments français would have on the public imaginary – in its time and for many years to come.

“non terret fortem labor”

Lenoir, *Musée des monumens français*, Volume 1



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Honorer les arts, c'est s'agrandir soi-même.

Lenoir, *Musée des monumens français*, Volume 1

Appendix

A Monastic Inheritance: Les Augustins de la Reine Marguerite

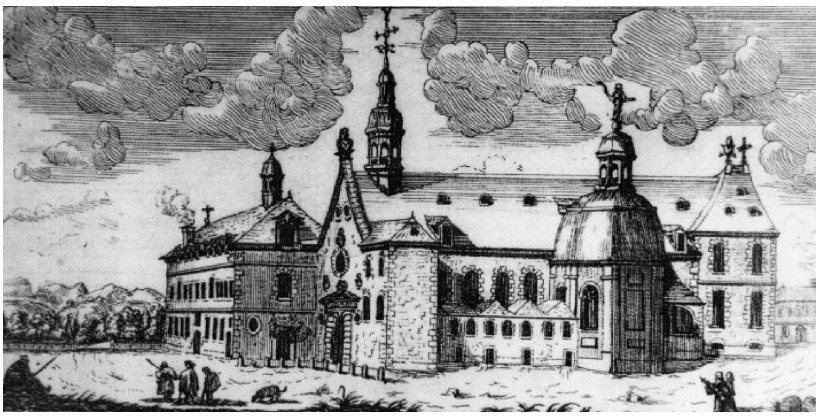

Figure 47. Sketch of the convent of the Petits-Augustins, c. 17th century (after Père Augustin Lubin)

In 1606, Marguerite de Valois, daughter of Catherine de Medici and Henri II, and first wife of Henri IV, returned from her eighteen-year exile from Paris and settled beyond the city's enclosure walls in the faubourg Saint-Germain. There, on the banks opposite her childhood home of the Louvre, the divorcee who nevertheless won her right to retain the title of Queen, purchased undeveloped land from the city's university and a few private owners in an area then known as the "Grand-Pré-aux-Clercs," and created an estate that stretched along the river from the rue de Seine to the rue des Saints-Pères. Her palace was located at what is today #6, rue de Seine, its façade and three pavilions facing the Quai Malaquais. Behind this building, there extended a succession of courtyard, garden (known as le jardin de la Reine Marguerite, it was both cultivated and open to the public), and an immense terrain intended to be transformed into a park. There is very little archival evidence of the palace, which survived Marguerite's premature death in 1615 by only a few years.[381]

[381] In the *Nouveau Dictionnaire Biographique et Critique des Architectes français* (Paris, 1887), Bauchal cites Jean de Brosse, son of Salomon de Brosse, who was himself nephew of Androuet du Cerceau, as the architect of Marguerite de France and who provided the plans for her hotel on rue de Seine. This is problematic, because Brosse died in 1585. Conversely, Andrée Jacob cites master mason Jean Autissier as the architect of the palace. Suzanne Thouronde, who has written the only architectural history of the site, supports this theory. Please see Thouronde, "Le couvent des Petits-Augustins," 161-177.

A few short years before her death, on 26 September, 1609, Queen Marguerite founded a small monastery on her estate (*couvent de la Sainte-Trinité*) which she dedicated to the Augustin order known as the *Augustins déchaussés*. The order was a small one – some six priests and 14 monks – and had existed under the leadership of Père Mathieu de Sainte-Françoise and Père François Amet since late June 1607. In exchange for dispensation from her rather calamitous lifestyle, Queen Marguerite promised to erect a church and chapel for the order, and construction on the chapel was begun on 21 March, 1608. This chapel, "'bastie d'une nouvelle façon, en forme d'exagone,' et couverte d'un dôme," wrote Berty, bore the following inscription

> *Le 21 mars mil six cens huict, la royne Marguerite, duchesse de Valois, petite fille du grand roy François, fille du bon roy Henry, soeur de trois rois, et seule restée de la race des Valois, ayant esté visitée et secourue de Dieu comme Job et Jacob, et lors luy ayant voué le voeu de Jacob, et Dieu l'ayant exaucée, elle a basti et fondé ce monastère pour tenir lieu de l'autel de Jacob, où elle veut que perpetuellement soient rendues actions de grâces, en recognoissance de celles qu'elle a receues de sa divine bonté. Et a nommé ce monastère de la Saincte Trinité, et cette chapelle des louanges, où elle a logé les Pères Augustins réformez deschaux.*[382]

Four years later, in 1612, in disagreement with this particular order and the Père Amet, Marguerite evicted and replaced them with the reformed Augustin order from Lagny-sur-Marne, known as the Petits-Augustins (later also known as the *Augustins de la Reine Marguerite*, or *Augustins Réformez*).[383] Queen Marguerite died before construction on the new church began, however the monastery continued to develop and grow, until its seizure by revolutionary decree in 1791.

Adolphe Berty traced the lineage of the monastery's site according to archival documents in volume III of his five-volume work, *Topographique Historique du vieux Paris*,

[382] Adolphe Berty, *Topographie historique du vieux Paris*, Vol. 3 (Paris: Imprimerie Impériale, 1876), 13-18. The site also included a large enclosed garden and orchard, on which the École des Beaux-Arts would be constructed after 1816.
[383] Marguerite evicted the *Augustins déchaussés* on 29 December, 1612. A new contract for the *Augustins de la Réforme de Bourges* was issued on 12 April, 1613. The *Augustins déchaussés* established another convent, the *Couvent des Augustins déchaussés*, ou *Petits-Pères*, near the Place des Victoires, in 1619.

published in 1866. The monastery was located in a region which, as the author noted, had a complex and confusing history owing both to the frequent changes of property that monastic institutions historically incurred, and to the absorption and mutation of various neighbouring properties that was not well documented in the late sixteenth, and early seventeenth centuries.

Berty noted that the construction of the Augustin monastery and small chapel began in 1609. The original chapel was by all accounts a remarkable building for its time. Following Queen Marguerite's death, the Petits-Augustins remained on the site and erected a church[384] and cloisters,[385] begun in May 1617 and 1619 respectively, and still in existence today. Some time later, and before a sketch of 1635, an infirmary was added at the southern end of the site, and by 1640, another wing with a parlor and poultry yard. A small, seventeenth-century engraving of the church, recorded by Auguste Lubin (1637-1695), and an undated plan illustrating the palace and gardens of Queen Marguerite, have been published in Andrée Jacob's *Vie et histoire du VIe arrondissement* and give some indication of the pre-eighteenth-century appearance of the site (figure 48).[386] Despite a paucity of architectural archives on the original buildings of the monastery, Suzanne Thouronde concluded that Lubin's illustration was a faithful rendition of the site. The architect or architects of these buildings is not known, and in his 1765 description, Piganiol de la Force described the buildings as not well built.[387]

The Petits-Augustins had also been endowed with more land by which to become themselves landlords and, by the time of the French Revolution, their monastery was a very prosperous institution. Queen Marguerite bequeathed her own palace and gardens to the son of her former husband and heir to the throne, King Louis XIII, who sold off this estate in 1623 in order to pay off Marguerite's numerous debts. The estate was then divided, altered, and reconstructed as the city expanded and densified in the former

[384] The foundation stone was laid by Queen Anne d'Autriche on 15 May, 1617.
[385] Of the monastic complex, it was the cloisters, chapel, and church that were transformed into the Musée des Monuments français after 1791.
[386] Andrée Jacob, *Vie et histoire du VI^e arrondissement* (Paris: Édition Hervas, 1987), 34.
[387] Thouronde, "Le couvent des Petits Augustins," 165.

faubourg. Marguerite's famous gardens were sacrificed to private ownership and the *allées* of these gardens later became streets.[388]

The evolution of the site is re-presented pictorially in several seventeenth- and eighteenth-century plans of the city of Paris. Deharme's *Plan de la ville et fauxbourgs de Paris divisé en 20 quartiers*, published in 1763, contains a number of maps of the city with views of the site occupied by the Petits-Augustins, particularly a map of 1643 which illustrates how the western parameter of the city ended near Queen Marguerite's estate.[389] Berty's *Topographie historique du vieux Paris* provides additional urban maps as well as historical documents that account for the development of Queen Marguerite's lands: Nicolay Vassaliev's 1609 plan of the Faubourg Saint-Germain still featured the site as open, whereas in Quesnel's plan of the same year the palace and gardens of the Queen are already apparent; Melchior Tavernier's 1630 plan hints at the encroaching development on the site following the sale of the lands by Louis XIII, though the interior of the block is left empty; in Jean Boisseau's *Plan des Colonelles* of 1649-52, the Petits-Augustins site is a visible presence. By the time Louis Bretez drew his 1739 plan of Paris, known as the *plan de Turgot*,[390] it is apparent that the site had been subdivided into private properties on which private residences had been constructed, and the gardens were preserved only in small sections.[391]

Since its founding in the early seventeenth century, the monastic buildings were frequently renovated, restored, and in several cases, demolished. When, in 1816, Vaudoyer was commissioned to assess the site preceding the Musée des Monuments français's conversion to the École nationale supérieure des Beaux-Arts, he condemned almost all of the buildings to demolition. This is not surprising for a seventeenth-century

[388] For a more extensive account of the site's historical development, see Berty, *Topographie historique du vieux Paris* volumes 3 and 4. Incidentally, Adolphe Berty was commissioned by Albert Lenoir, son of Alexandre Lenoir, to make an archaeological plan of Paris illustrating existing and reconstituted buildings (palaces, monasteries, churches), in the manner of Albert Lenoir's *Statistique monumentale de Paris* (1846), with the intention of creating a plan that would represent the collective monuments of Paris at the origins of the city's urban development. The five-volume work was published in 1866. Novel in this re-tracing of the city's development was the use of written texts in addition to historic maps to provide as comprehensive an account of the city's monuments as possible.
[389] Plates 17 and 22 of this work feature views of the Petits Augustins site.
[390] In honour of the city administrator who originally commissioned the urban plan.
[391] The Turgot plan was the last city plan to be drawn perspectivally, in the manner of a bird's eye view. Following Turgot, cartographers would employ geometric principles to produce more "accurate" maps of the city, such as Edme Verniquet's *Atlas du plan général de la ville de Paris*, published in 1795 (An IV).

complex said to be built of "plâtres et (de) moilons."[392] What is somewhat surprising is that Lenoir, for all his fastidious cataloguing of objects, did not produce a report on the state of the buildings he inherited in 1790. Suzanne Thouronde concluded that the construction of the monastic complex was in keeping with the mendicant order's philosophy of sobriety and simplicity, an order that, unlike the Cistercians, adopted no architectural model or type of its own. Of the original complex, only the church, chapel, sacristy, and cloister (on a much reduced scale) remain today.

No plans of the original monastic complex exist. Two undated plans of the monastery, posterior to its suppression by the *Assemblée Constituante* on 2 November, 1789, record the site after many changes had already been made. Thouronde has given approximate dates of 1801 to both. Their dating thus ties the plans to the complex in its incarnation as the MMF. The first was attributed to Albert Lenoir by Berty, and is said to be the more accurate of the two; the second was published by E. Raunié in his *Epitaphier du vieux Paris.* Yet a third plan of the Musée des Monuments français was commissioned by Lenoir and produced in 1810.[393] This plan, Thouronde finds, was the work of a conscientious architect. However by this point, many alterations had been undertaken by Lenoir as he converted the complex into an experiential museum: the removal of partitions and doorways and the creation of new windows changed the appearance, and more importantly the effect, of the original space. Thouronde drafted her own plan of the convent, and described a hypothetical walk-through of the monastery, to which she has keyed a description of its most significant spaces. This plan provides the most accurate and comprehensive reconstruction and architectural appreciation of the complex to date. Her meticulous research has elucidated the buildings and spaces that Lenoir inherited while placing them in architectural and historical context, thereby leading to a deeper appreciation of the architectonic and aesthetic changes introduced by Lenoir.[394] The one exception to her extensive reconstruction is a description of the transformation of the garden into the Elysium, to which Thouronde made only passing reference.

[392] Arch. Nat. S 3641[1] (a declaration of goods and revenues written in 1728); quoted in Thouronde, "Le couvent des Petits Augustins," 165.
[393] Located in an album of Alexandre Lenoir's archives at the Cabinet des Dessins du Louvre.
[394] It's interesting to note that the chapel, called the chapelle des Louanges, or Praises, originally conserved the heart of Marguerite. See Thouronde, "Le couvent des Petits Augustins," 176. Under Lenoir, this prized space housed the tomb of Francis I.